Identity, Memory and Popular Politics in Sixteenth-Century Kent

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Abstract

This thesis is an investigation of social memory, the landscape, and identity in Tudor Kent, with the aim of obtaining a better understanding of popular politics in early modern England. By the end of Elizabeth's reign, England was in a very different position to the England of Henry VII. In 1603 England was a Protestant nation, the state's reach into the lives of its subjects was further than ever before, and popular rebellion on the scale of 1381 and 1549 had died out. Each of these changes would have had a significant impact on the commonalty. In order to understand the political lives of the common people of England, it is therefore important to explore their experiences. The way people remembered their lives, and the way that these memories were embedded in collective histories and written into the local landscape itself, were vital to the formation of identities, which in turn influenced their political associations and actions. The use of sociological and anthropological theories make it possible to look deeper into the way identity influenced political action, especially in an area where sources are scarce.

This study of Kent, a county with a strong identity and a long history of popular rebellion, examines the overlapping identities available to its sixteenth century inhabitants. It looks at the way in which local layers of identity, based in customs, access to resources, and a relationship with the landscape, combined with external influences such as the Reformation or the Armada to form a variety of identities of different strengths in different contexts. The way in which these identities interacted with each other as well as with the political circumstances is shown to influence collective participation in protest action. Kent's rebellious traditions, with the associated rhetoric and physical spaces, form another layer of identity to be called upon at certain times. The strength of the superordinate and subordinate identities of the Kentish people in such contexts is explored in order to understand the engagement in rebellion, as well as the decline of such engagement in the second half of the sixteenth century. By combining this with the labels applied to the people of Kent in chronicles, plays and other texts, which served to undermine identities such as *Invicta*, this thesis looks at the political ramifications of identity and memory in Kent.

Contents

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Abbreviations

APC	*Acts of the Privy Council of England,* ed. J. R. Dasent, 32 vols (London, 1890-1907)
Arch. Cant.	*Archeologia Cantiana*
CCA	Canterbury Cathedral Library and Archives
Clark, *Society*	Peter Clark, *English Provincial Society from the Reformation to the Revolution* (Hassocks, 1977)
ESRO	East Sussex Record Office, Brighton
HMC, *Twelfth*	*Twelfth Report of the Royal Commission on Historical Manuscripts*, Appendix, Part IV, *The Manuscripts of his Grace and the Duke of Rutland, GCB, Preserved at Belvoir Castle,* vol. I, ed. H. C. Maxwell Lyte (London, 1888)
KHLC	Kent History and Library Centre, Maidstone
SHC	Surrey History Centre, Woking
TNA	The National Archives, Kew

Author's Note

Quotations are given in the original spelling, but standard contractions are silently expanded, and the use of u/v and i/j are modernised.

Introduction

In Shakespeare's *Henry VI Part 2*, Jack Cade, in his last scene, cries 'tell Kent from me, she hath lost her best man, and exhort all the world to be cowards: for I, that never feared any, am vanquished by famine, not by valour'.[1] First printed in 1594, *2 Henry VI* is the second of a trilogy of plays which explore the disastrous reign of Henry VI, and which in turn fall into Shakespeare's sequence of history plays. This instalment, which deals with the king's inability to control his nobles, also focuses largely on Cade's Rebellion of 1450, a popular rebellion based in Kent which carried echoes and influences from the Peasant's Rebellion of 1381, and which would go on to inspire political action in the Rebellions of 1549. Cade's Rebellion, as depicted in *2 Henry VI,* shows just how the past was seen to significantly influence the political actions of the commons, and draws attention to a perceived association between the commons of the county of Kent, the trope of *Invicta*, and popular rebellion.

Shakespeare's source materials for these history plays, a combination of chronicles and popular history, demonstrate perfectly the ways in which earlier histories were remembered and identities were formed.[2] In its efforts to make Cade's rebellion relatable to the people of the 1590s, themes had explicitly been drawn from the series of popular rebellions from 1381 through to 1549, and reworked to address the problems of the day. Although these events were clearly based on exceptional circumstances, when the usual practises of justice and peacekeeping had broken down, the utilisation of memory and identity was no less necessary in politics on a daily basis. The practice of remembering and forgetting was vital to all levels of society in early modern England. Members of the aristocracy and political elite utilised genealogies and precedents to support the legitimacy of their positions and their decisions, while at a popular level, memory, central as it was in systems such as customary law and the day-to-day running of local communities, was absolutely essential to everyday political life as well as occasions such as rebellion.[3] It was also central in contributing to

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[1] William Shakespeare, *Henry VI, Parts I, II, III* , eds. Lawrence V. Ryan, Arthur Freeman and Milton Crane (London, 2005), IV.10.75-7.
[2] Particularly: Raphael Holinshed, *The Chronicles of England, Scotlande, and Irelande, Volume IV* (London, 1577); Edward Hall, *Chronicle, or the Vnion of the Two Noble and Illustre Famelies of Lancastre & Yorke,* ed. Henry Ellis (London, 1809).
[3] Lawrence Stone, *The Crisis of the Aristocracy 1558-1641* (Oxford, 1965); Felicity Heal and Clive Holmes, *The Gentry in England and Wales, 1500-1700* (Basingstoke, 1994) pp. 20-47; Oliver D. Harris, 'Lines of

identity. As Daniel Woolf and Norman L. Jones state, 'individuals have multiple and evolving identities because they belong to overlapping and interlocking communities defined by age, gender, social status, profession, habitation and other things'.[4] These identities were crucial to the way people behave, the political decisions they make, and certain elements, such as 'social status' and 'habitation' were clearly of particular significance in the treatment of Cade's rebellion in *2 Henry VI*.

This study is an investigation of the variety of 'overlapping and interlocking' identities available to the commons of Tudor Kent, and the way these guided their political actions, whether on a day-to-day basis or in religiously or politically turbulent times. Although it primarily focuses on the second half of the sixteenth century, due to the prominent nature of custom and tradition at this time, it is necessary to look back to the later Middle Ages. The years 1381 to 1603 witnessed the Reformation, war, invasion scares, and a series of popular rebellions in the county of Kent, all before customary law arguably started to lose its power.[5] This thesis, then, explores the memories held by local people, how these can be seen to be used in their political actions, and how this could be perceived in different circumstances both by the people themselves and by those outside the county. Of particular interest are the uses made of customary law and collective memories in different Kentish localities – all influenced by their own landscapes – in everyday political life, as well as in the strategies of popular protest when common rights or religious beliefs were felt to be threatened. The act of looking to the past for legitimacy and guidance was prevalent in all levels of society in late medieval and early modern England, but it was particularly relevant for the common, less literate,

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Descent: Appropriations of Ancestry in Stone and Parchment', in *The Arts of Remembrance in Early Modern England: Memorial Cultures of the Post Reformation,* eds. Andrew Gordon and Thomas Rist (Surrey, 2013) pp. 85-102; Jan Broadway, *'No historie so meete': Gentry culture and the development of local history in Elizabethan and early Stuart England* (Manchester, 2006); Peter Sherlock, *Monuments and Memory in Early Modern England* (Hampshire, 2008); Paul Hammer, 'The smiling crocodile: the earl of Essex and late Elizabethan 'popularity'', in *The politics of the public sphere in early modern England,* eds. Peter Lake and Steven Pincus (Manchester, 2007) pp. 95-115; Christian D. Liddy and Christian Steer, 'John Lord Lumley and the Creation and Commemoration of Lineage in Early Modern England', *Archaeological Journal,* 167 (2010), 197-227.

[4] *Local Identities in Late Medieval and Early Modern England,* eds. Norman L. Jones and Daniel Woolf, (Basingstoke, 2007), p. 4.

[5] Under the Stuarts, customary law and oral histories and evidences were increasingly looked upon with distrust, and came under attack from the courts, but it is in the second half of the eighteenth century that customary law lost much of its power: Andy Wood, *The Memory of the People: Custom and Popular Senses of the Past in Early Modern England* (Cambridge, 2013) pp. 126, 160*;* Peter Karston, *Between Law and Custom: "high" and "low" legal cultures in the lands of the British Diaspora – The United States, Canada, Australia and New Zealand, 1600-1900* (Cambridge, 2002) pp. 23-31;

people who depended on customs and memories of events 'time out of mind' to protect their interests and that of their descendants. As these memories and customs were embedded in the local landscape and landmarks and passed down as oral traditions through generations, they were tied up in the identity of individual localities themselves. It is therefore of vital importance to our growing understanding of popular politics in Tudor England to recognise how people saw themselves and experienced events at a local, county, or national level, and how this in turn informed their actions.

<u>Popular politics and protest</u>

The need to understand popular politics and culture in early modern England is vital to our comprehension of early modern England as a whole. In the same way that Patrick Collinson's 1989 call for the study of 'a social history with the politics put back in' brought new aspects of elite and lower levels of politics to light, studies of political culture at a popular level are necessary to understand how the majority of the population, the feared 'many-headed monster', the common people of England, lived their lives.[6] Scholarship of popular politics has advanced dramatically since the days of William Stubbs and his peers. To these Victorian scholars, the commons, when they had any impact at all, were merely passive participants in the machinations of the nobility, with very little agency.[7] Perceptions of the commons' role in politics is also often divided across the period this study covers, across that arbitrary line where 'late medieval' England became 'early modern' England. In the sixteenth century, England underwent several major changes: in addition to the early Tudor kings' centralising efforts, the nature of political engagement across the realm evolved. The shared political language that Christine Carpenter argues was characteristic of fifteenth-century political culture seems to have given way to a far more politicised society with what John Guy terms a 'cacophony of voices compet[ing] for an audience on the public stage.'[8] Another significant change which was felt in almost every aspect of life in England for the rest of the century was the

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[6] Patrick Collinson, *De Republica Anglorum: Or, History with the Politics Put Back* (Cambridge, 1990) p. 14.

[7] William Stubbs, *The Constitutional History of England, Vol. 3,* Third Edition (Oxford, 1884); J. R. Green, *A Short History of the English People, New Edition* (London, 1888)

[8] Christine Carpenter, *Locality and Polity: A Study of Warwickshire Landed Society, 1401-1499* (Cambridge, 1992) pp. 9-10, 628; John Guy, 'General Introduction', in *Tudor Monarchy*, ed. idem (London, 1997), p. 3; Collinson, 'The monarchical republic of Queen Elizabeth I', in *Tudor Monarchy*, pp. 110-34; Guy, 'The 1590s: The Second Reign of Elizabeth I?', in *The Reign of Elizabeth I: Court and Culture in the Last Decade,* ed. idem (Cambridge, 1995), pp. 1-19. For an alternative view, please see Grummitt, *A Short History of the Wars of the Roses,* (London, 2013), p. 158.

Reformation. An event which formed a noticeable 'break' in England's collective memory, the Reformation and the consequences of Henry VIII's desire for an heir impacted on everything from the landscape and land ownership, to economics, to society, to politics.[9] For Alec Ryrie, 'the English state had been reformed – indeed, transformed' in the sixteenth century, and it is evident throughout the mass of historiography on the subject that Tudor England saw the political and cultural changes that ushered in what is termed the 'early modern' period.[10]

These changes, however, were part of a longer, slower progression of politics from further back in the fifteenth century. In the words of John Guy, 'Bosworth was a landmark in dynastic history, but Tudor rule must be seen in perspective.'[11] It is necessary, then, in order to fully grasp sixteenth-century politics (both elite and popular), to take into account the circumstances under which Henry VII came to the throne; a turbulent period of usurpation and civil war which held enormous implications for political theory. With regards to popular politics, it is clear that the changes in political theory and culture which were influenced by the experiences of the Wars of the Roses and the wider European changes had just as much of an effect on politics at a local level as on a national one.[12] Research into popular politics, particularly popular rebellions, has shown that the concept of 'commonweal' went back to the Peasant's Revolt of 1381, developed over the next century and became a legitimate concern in elite politics during the Wars of the Roses before becoming the focus of a linguistic battle of appropriation under the Tudors.[13] While it is therefore evident that England under the Tudors had a particular style of political theory and culture, it is necessary to recognise the ways in which these changes were rooted in the previous century.

This approach of looking to the previous century in order to understand sixteenth-century politics, both in its continuity and in its development, is not just important from a historiographical

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[9] Wood, *The Memory of the People,* pp. 67-71; Alexandra Walsham, *The Reformation of the Landscape: Religion, Identity, & Memory in Early Modern Britain & Ireland* (Oxford, 2011); Christopher Haigh, *English Reformations: Religion, Politics and Society under the Tudors* (Oxford, 1993).

[10] Alec Ryrie, *The Age of Reformation: The Tudor and Stewart Realms, 1485-1603* (Harlow, 2009), p. xiii; *A Companion to Tudor Britain,* eds. Robert Tittler and Norman Jones (Oxford, 2004).

[11] Guy, *Tudor England* (Oxford, 1988), p. 4.

[12] Grummitt, *A Short History,* pp. 133-81.

[13] Although the concept existed in 1381 it was under the term 'common profit'. The phrase 'commonweal' was not coined until the mid-fifteenth century. David Rollison, *A Commonwealth of the People: Popular Politics and England's Long Social Revolution, 1066-1649* (Cambridge, 2010); David Starkey, 'Which Age of Reform?', in *Revolution Reassessed: revisions in the history of Tudor government,* eds. Christopher Coleman and Starkey (Oxford, 1986).

point of view. The events of the previous century were recognised by Tudor contemporaries as still being relevant in their time, and on a variety of levels; whether in the demonising of Richard III to emphasise the rightness and legitimacy of Tudor rule, or in the popular use of previous rebellions to justify a particular method of protest. The popular history plays by Shakespeare and other playwrights in the 1590s are an excellent example of how the reigns of the fifteenth-century monarchs could convey lessons which were still considered applicable over a century later.[14] It is for this reason that this study of Tudor Kent, and the ways in which memory and the past were used in popular politics, looks back over the fifteenth century as well as the sixteenth.

In both historiographical periods, post-revisionist historians reacted to the work of the post-War social historians, who avoided politics in their studies of late medieval and early modern England, and the earlier Marxist reading of history in which feudal structures gave way to a capitalist economy, where economics and class consciousness dictated the political actions of the people.[15] This progression in the scholarship of popular politics has therefore come closer to a comprehensive understanding of the political actions of the commons of England, and the influences and factors involved. Charles Ross' article on late medieval popular politics, published in 1981, clarified the difference between 'popular' and 'public' opinion, with 'public' being the 'politically active classes with a voice in government' and 'popular' consisting of 'the mass of the people of England'.[16] Ross' definitions have since been contested, as the contemporary notions of 'commonweal' meant that by simply being a member of the English realm one had the right to be politically active. I.M.W. Harvey's investigation into popular politics in the fifteenth century challenged the implications of this terminology with its explanation of why *all* the people of England felt they had a right to be

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[14] Shakespeare, *Richard II* (1595)*; Idem, Henry IV, Parts I and II* (-1597, 1596-99)*;* Idem, *Henry V* (1599)*;* Idem, *Henry VI, Parts I, II, III* (1591)*; Idem, Richard III* (1592)*;* Thomas Heywood, *The First and Second Parts of King Edward IV,* ed. Richard Rowland (Manchester, 2005).

[15] For works on social histories see: J. A. Sharpe, *Early Modern England: A Social History, 1550-1760,* 2nd Edn. (London, 1997); P. Slack, *The Impact of Plague in Tudor and Stuart England* (London, 1985); E. A. Wrigley and R. S. Schofield, *The Population History of England, 1541-1871: A Reconstruction* (London, 1981); Roger Manning, *Village Revolts: Social Protest and Popular Disturbances in England, 1509-1640* (Oxford, 1988). For Marxist works see: Paul Sweezy, Maurice Dobb, Kohachiro Takahashi, Rodney Hilton, Christopher Hill, Georges Lefebvre, Guiliano Procacci, Eric Hobsbawm, John Merrington, *The Transition from Feudalism to Capitalism* (London, 1978); Rodney Hilton, *Bond Men Made Free: medieval peasant movements and the English rising of 1381* (London, 1977).

[16] Charles Ross, 'Rumour, Propaganda and Popular Opinion during the Wars of the Roses', in *Patronage, the Crown and the Provinces in Later Medieval England,* ed. R. A. Griffiths (Gloucester, 1981), pp. 15-16.

politically active.[17] It has also been shown by John Watts that Ross' contrasting definitions for a politically involved 'public' and the politically excluded 'popular' mass of people, was more a view held by the political elite than an accurate description of the political situation.[18]

Due to the shortcomings of the documentary evidence, the most obvious way in which we can gain knowledge of the opinions and actions of the lower orders is in the study of rebellions, as it was in these events that the common voice was most loudly heard and incorporated into the written records. A series of popular rebellions spanned the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, uniting the commonalty of the realm, often in protest against perceived corruption and the mismanagement of the realm, or against the oppression of common rights. Starting with the Peasants' Revolt of 1381, progressing through Cade's Rebellion of 1450 and popular involvement in the Wars of the Roses in 1460 and 1470, through the Cornish Rebellion of 1497 and sustained protest against Henry VIII's taxation in the 1520s, and ending with the Rebellions of 1549, popular insurgency became an accumulation of strategies, rhetoric and traditions based in popular memory and the landscape. In this way, it is easy to see how the commons of Tudor England looked to local and oral histories and collective memories of rebellion in the past to guide their actions in their present. What motivated the masses to unite and rebel, however, can be difficult to ascertain.

The existence of petitions, bills and popular poetry can give insight into the issues that troubled the common people enough to rebel, although even these sources which claim to speak for the commons were probably written by members of the gentry or at least by those with formal legal training, and therefore cannot be relied upon to give an accurate representation of popular language and concerns. Bills of complaint and popular poetry were often written in order to appeal for support, to motivate the masses to commit a particular deed, or as a message or accusation on behalf of them to the government, however, so by looking at the common language and themes used in them it is possible to see what the writers thought would strike a chord with its intended audience.[19] On some occasions, too, how these bills and poems fit in with the actual actions made by the commonalty can

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[17] I. M. W. Harvey, 'Was there popular politics in fifteenth-century England?', in *The McFarlane Legacy: Studies in Late Medieval Politics and Society,* eds. R.H. Britnell and A.J. Pollard (Stroud, 1995), pp. 155-74.
[18] J. Watts, 'The Pressure of the Public on Later Medieval Politics', in *The Fifteenth Century IV: Political Culture in Late Medieval Britain,* eds. L. Clark and Carpenter (Woodbridge, 2004), pp. 159-61.
[19] V. J. Scattergood, *Politics and Poetry in the Fifteenth Century* (London, 1971) pp. 9-11.

show how they resonated with the people they were aimed at. Of course, the ephemeral nature of these sources means that the majority of them are unlikely to have survived, leaving only those which had been copied, collected or reported because they were considered interesting or relevant to current events: a highly selective sample.[20]

The details contained within popular petitions, too, cannot be taken at face value. David Grummitt's examination of Cade's manifestos showed that an understood discourse of popular complaint could actually influence the way in which people interpreted events, helping them to make sense of circumstances and experiences.[21] The complaint of the evil counsellor and corrupt official, for instance, were an example of a recognisable rhetoric used to explain the mismanagement of the kingdom, military defeats or higher taxation, whether this was actually true or not. This awareness of the power of complaint rhetoric contributes to the understanding of traditions of rebellion as a whole, as has been shown by historians such as David Rollison and Andy Wood.[22] Both see a long string of connections linking a series of popular rebellions which reached back to 1381, over that line dividing early modern from late medieval England, although when these started to decline is still debateable; Wood has argued that this series of popular rebellions in England died out after 1549, whereas Rollison has suggested that there was a 'long social revolution' which ended with the Great Rebellion of the seventeenth century. This is not to say that popular protest disappeared completely; there continued to be enclosure and food riots into the early eighteenth century and beyond.[23] Nevertheless, the acknowledged united popular identity and repeated strategy and rhetoric maintained in the popular rebellions between 1381 and 1549 seem to have declined in Elizabeth's reign.

One question which has yet to be conclusively answered is why, considering the conditions of England in the 1590s, there was no overt popular uprising in the last decade of Elizabeth's reign, and even before that, only a couple of notable, peer-led, revolts in the Northern Rebellion of 1569-

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[20] Wendy Scase, ''Strange and Wonderful Bills': Bill-Casting and Political Discourse in Late Medieval England', in *New Medieval Literatures, Vol. II,* eds. R. Copeland, D. Lawton, and Scase (Oxford, 1998), pp. 246-7.
[21] Grummitt, 'Deconstructing Cade's Rebellion: Discourse and Politics in the Mid Fifteenth Century', in *The Fifteenth Century, VI; Identity and Insurgency in the Late Middle Ages,* ed. Linda Clark, (Woodbridge, 2006), pp. 107-22.
[22] Rollison; Wood, *The 1549 Rebellions and the Making of Early Modern England* (Cambridge, 2007)
[23] Wood, *Riot, Rebellion and Popular Politics in Early Modern England* (Hampshire, 2002), pp. 82-194.

70, and the earl of Essex's efforts in the last years of her reign.[24] Wood has built on Keith Wrightson's work and suggested that an economic 'polarisation' and the incorporation of local power structures into the centralising efforts of royal government separated the increasingly wealthy middling sorts from the 'burden' of the poor, and removed the motivations of those who had previously held leading positions in popular rebellions to involve themselves in such forms of protest.[25] This argument is supported by Anthony Fletcher and Diarmaid MacCulloch in their work on Tudor rebellions, although they suggest that an increase of literacy as part of the 'culture of the powerful' within yeoman society brought them closer to the level of the gentry and away from the poorer sorts, aided by a shift in the ways common people dealt with political issues: going from forming assemblies and engaging in direct actions of protest, to the more litigious approach of going through the courts.[26] Each of these arguments has merit and doubtlessly contributed to the change in approach of popular protest, although the continuation of riots in the seventeenth century suggests that the more direct methods of protest were still in practice beyond 1600. How, then, did the Elizabethan government avoid uprisings in the 1590s, in such a time of famine, poverty, and political unrest? This is an issue which will be touched upon in this study, particularly stressing the undermining of collective Kentish rebellious identity as an active factor, both in the experiences linked to Wood's 'polarisation' as well as the way in which such identities were targeted and undermined in print, plays and sermons in the second half of the sixteenth century.

Of course, popular protest was only one facet of popular politics, albeit the loudest. More recently, deeper attention has been paid to local experiences in a variety of ways, such as in the types of discourse, the existence of manorial customs, military experience, and parish politics.[27] Wrightson demonstrated just how many levels of power lay at the heart of the local parish in his 'the Politics of

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[24] Anthony Fletcher and Diarmaid MacCulloch, *Tudor Rebellions, Revised 5th Ed.* (New York, 2008), pp. 102-38; Ryrie, *The Age of Reformation,* pp. 309-13

[25] Wood, *The 1549 Rebellions,* pp. 187-207; Keith Wrightson, *English Society, 1580-1680* (London, 1982), p. 181.

[26] Fletcher and MacCulloch, pp. 137-8.

[27] Keith Wrightson, 'The Politics of the Parish in Early Modern England', in *The Experience of Authority in Early Modern England,* eds. Paul Griffiths, Adam Fox and Steve Hindle (Basingstoke, 1996), pp. 10-46; Grummitt, 'Kent and National Politics, 1399-1461', in *Later Medieval Kent, 1220-1540,* ed. Sheila Sweetinburgh (Woodbridge, 2010), pp. 235-50; Rollison; Scase, *Literature and Complaint in England, 1272-1553* (Oxford, 2007); Christopher Dyer, 'The Medieval Village and Its Decline', *Journal of British Studies,* 33 (1994), 407-29; idem, 'The Ineffectiveness of Lordship in England, 1200-1400', *Past & Present,* 2 (2007 Supplement), 69-86.

the Parish in Early Modern England', in which it became clear that the practice of local politics was a complicated mixture of different social structures.[28] He divides these political and social structures into five categories: the politics of patriarchy, of neighbourhood, of custom, of Reformation and state formation, and of subordination and meaning. By examining each of these five different categories of local political structures in their own right, as well as considering how they could influence local politics as a whole, Wrightson succeeded in showing how convoluted day-to-day political life could be for members of a parish in early modern England.

It is therefore clearly important to understand the lens through which people experienced certain events in order to obtain a more complete knowledge of how they lived and the actions they chose. A piece of work which successfully provides a deeper look into the more common experiences at a popular level, Wood's *Memory of the People* has brought new understanding to the topic by looking at the importance of customary law and the use of memory in early modern England.[29] His study covers several counties across England in an attempt to find common trends, highlighting both commonalities and very specific differences in customs depending on location, and in doing so, it manages to cover an extremely broad area despite the fact that at its heart it is a study of the local. It is important, then, to look at popular politics in the context of the local: taking into account local memory, the geographical surroundings and resources, and trying to expose the identities of the local people – all of which would have been a significant influence on their actions. By looking at the different experiences of landscape, religion, war, and local politics, this study hopes to come closer to defining the ways memory and identity shaped political action.

<u>Political spheres, memory and identity</u>

One of the ways in which to discover the identities, memories and actions of local people is to determine where and how they met to discuss or debate relevant issues of the day. The ways in which members of the commonweal communicated and involved themselves in political discourse in early modern England has been the centre of focus for those working on the notion of the public sphere.[30] Building on Jürgen Habermas' work on late-seventeenth and early-eighteenth century

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[28] Wrightson, 'Politics of the Parish'.
[29] Wood, *Memory of the People.*
[30] *The politics of the public sphere in early modern England,* eds. Lake and Pincus.

coffee houses as physical public spheres in which people would gather with newspapers to discuss literature, and, subsequently, political events, further efforts have sought to expand on the theory of the public sphere, as well as show its existence before 1680.[31] Instead of the simplistic theory of one single public sphere where the individuals involved often had similar views, educations and backgrounds, a more complex suggestion has been made for the existence of a plethora of spheres with the potential to overlap and contradict each other.[32] This was criticised by Craig Calhoun for failing to take into account the 'communicative relationships' between these spheres, further arguing that 'clusters' of more intense areas of communication existed, influenced by factors such as religion, profession, geography, and population, among others, all of which were linked by common discourses.[33]

Rejecting the concept of the physical political sphere altogether, Alexandra Halasz placed her emphasis on the unsituated sphere based primarily in the printed word, focusing on the use of pamphlets in early modern England, their authors, readers, and members of the printing industry.[34] A singular focus on print and unsituated spheres, however, ignores the ways in which readers were involved with the discourse as well as the importance of discussion, and disregards the importance of situated spheres in political discourse. This was addressed by Wendy Scase, who, although looking at literature in the form of bill-casting and predominantly in an earlier period, explored the reactions to bills and the subsequent consequences of posting them.[35] Although the most convincing theory, Calhoun's 'clusters' with 'communicative relationships', covers the most ground in identifying a mixture of situated and unsituated political spheres, its primary focus, as with Halasz, on unsituated spheres, means that the importance of geographical location and influence is undermined. It is also hindered by the fact that the most defining aspect of political spheres is their 'haphazardness', as described by Natalie Mears. Her 'Elizabethan public sphere' considers how an Essex widow could gossip with her friend about Elizabeth's relationship with the earl of Leicester, while the queen's

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[31] J. Habermas, *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere,* trans. T. Burger (Cambridge, 1989), p. 32.

[32] Natalie Mears, 'The Elizabethan Public Sphere', in *Queenship and Discourse in the Elizabethan Realms,* ed. idem (Cambridge, 2005), pp. 184-5.

[33] C. Calhoun, 'Introduction', in *Habermas and the Public Sphere,* ed. Calhoun (Cambridge, 1992), pp. 37-8.

[34] A. Halasz, *The Marketplace of Print; pamphlets and the public sphere in early modern England* (Cambridge, 1997), pp. 15-16.

[35] Scase, ''Strange and Wonderful Bills''.

marriage and the claim of Mary, Queen of Scots could be debated in the Inns of Court.[36] In this way, the issue of succession could be addressed in a variety of places among people wholly unconnected with each other, reinforcing the idea of 'haphazardness', and highlighting the equal importance of both the situated and unsituated political sphere in a given situation.

The arguments of Halasz, Scase and Mears also fit in to some extent with other writing on sixteenth century public spheres. Peter Lake, Steven Pincus and Ethan Shagan all challenge historians' use of Habermasian public spheres by examining the political circumstances which made different publics possible in the first place, as well as the very different situation of Tudor monarchy to the political culture explored by Habermas.[37] Lake and Pincus have questioned Habermas' periodisation of phases of the public sphere in relation to the historical development of early modern England. Instead, they go on to identify a 'post-Reformation period' primarily formed in the reign of Elizabeth, in which 'issues of religious identity and division came together with issues of dynastic and geopolitical rivalry to create a series of public spheres'.[38] This manifested in occasional appeals to the population in times of perceived emergency, often as a way of pressuring the queen, political opponents, or the people, with a set of conventions which were 'hazy and ill defined'.[39] It was the 'post-Reformation public sphere' which made possible the existence of the 'post-revolutionary public sphere' and the public sphere observed by Habermas.[40] Shagan goes a step further by rejecting the philosophical system of the Habermasian public sphere altogether, insisting that it was based in a society which was not threatened by violent repercussions, and that it is therefore not useful to the historian studying the sixteenth century. Instead, Shagan looks further back to the Pilgrimage of Grace and identifies public discourses of religion and commonwealth, and the dubious legitimacy that came with themes of loyalty to the regime in the face of rebellion.[41] Both of these works take the concept of the public sphere but place it politically and geographically within the context of the sixteenth century, echoing the 'haphazardness' of Mears's 'Elizabethan public sphere' and exploring

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[36] Mears, 'The Elizabethan Public Sphere', p. 199.
[37] Peter Lake and Steven Pincus, 'Rethinking the public sphere in early modern England', in *The politics of the public sphere,* pp. 1-30; Ethan Shagan, 'The Pilgrimage of Grace and the Public Sphere?', in idem., pp. 31-58.
[38] Lake and Pincus, 'Rethinking the public sphere', p. 3.
[39] Ibid., pp. 3-7.
[40] Ibid., pp. 9-22.
[41] Shagan, 'The Pilgrimage of Grace and the Public Sphere', pp. 32-44.

the irregular and potentially dangerous nature of what it was to be a 'public' in sixteenth century England.

Yet identifying where and, where possible, what locals discussed with regards to political events is only one factor of many when trying to understand popular politics. What they were influenced by and how they identified is much harder to discover. As with any study of the motivations or social activity and memories, there are many levels of uncertainty, as what goes on in people's minds is impossible to accurately determine. This is especially the case in the study of the popular mentality of Tudor England, where extant documentation can be scarce, and when it can be found, was written by the elite members of society. In order to work towards a better understanding of popular activity and the reasons for involvement at a local level, it is therefore necessary to look to sociological and anthropological studies for direction. This is a common approach by social historians who, from when they began to include politics in their studies, have made much use of the work from these disciplines in to order to make sense of political life in early modern England.[42] For, as the anthropologists F. McGlynn and A. Tuden declare, 'Power is immanent in human affairs; by definition, human beings are political animals.'[43] The recognition of the political even at an everyday level in these disciplines can only enhance a study of popular politics, bringing with it new perspectives on the social and political. Studies of place and space, collective and individual memory, political spheres, and cultural theory can all contribute to a more in-depth understanding of early modern popular lives where historical dependence on documents might fail.

Social memory, as described by Jacob Climo and Maria Cattell, is, 'on the one hand, cumulative and continuous, and on the other hand, changing, provisional, malleable, and contingent.'[44] This makes attempts to analyse memory difficult, and its entirely subjective nature means that efforts made to discern highly accurate details of certain events can be futile. Nevertheless, recountings of events are vitally important when one wants to discover the *perception*

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[42] Wood, *Riot, Rebellion and Popular Politics*, p. 10; Steve Hindle, 'Beating the bounds in the parish: order, memory and identity in the English local community, c. 1500-1700', in *Defining the Community in Early Modern Europe*, eds. Michael J. Halvorson and Karen E. Spierling (Hampshire, 2008), pp. 205-28.
[43] F. McGlynn and A. Tuden, 'Introduction', in *Anthropological approaches to political behaviour,* eds. McGlynn and Tuden (Pittsburgh, 1991), p. 3.
[44] *Social Memory and History; Anthropological Perspectives,* eds. Jacob J. Climo and Maria G. Cattell (Oxford, 2002), p. 25.

of those occasions and the possible influences involved. Over the last few decades, both anthropologists and sociologists have been building upon Maurice Halbwachs' theory of collective memory and his argument that all memory is essentially social, as individual memory cannot be separated from social memory.[45] Individual memory, for Halbwachs, grounded as it is in the framework that makes up society, is only unique in that a certain person is the result of a specific combination of groups within a society, and thus their understanding of the past is influenced and guided by this group consciousness.[46] The recognition that memory exists as a social construct has led social scientists to see collective memory as a process which is produced by the conflict between remembering and forgetting, formed by interpretations, and distorted in various ways, thereby reducing accuracy.[47]

This understanding of memory, both collective and individual, as a social phenomenon, is invaluable when attempting to comprehend a society almost entirely based around the legitimising evidence of memories, precedents and customs practised 'time out of mind'. Documents such as formal legal depositions provide a wealth of information in this respect. Although there are certain issues regarding Halbwachs' theory of collective memory when it comes to the tensions in determining the individuality of a person (their accomplishments, troubles and skills) from their use as an example of political and social alignments, local interrogatories aiming to discover what was commonly accepted to be true can give excellent opportunities to see both collective memories and how individuals fit themselves into them.[48]

One cannot talk about memory, however, without discussing its links with identity. Identity, the way in which a person sees themselves and which largely influences what action they choose to take in any given situation, cannot be ignored in a study on popular politics. As Lynn Abrams states, 'Memory is key to our identity; without our memory we have no social existence.'[49] The life and events we have experienced and our memories of them, both collective and individual, are used to fashion our sense of self, and how we ought to act: it is memory 'through which people interpret their

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[45] Maurice Halbwachs, *On Collective Memory,* trans. by Lewis Coser (London, 1992).
[46] James Fentress and Chris Wickham, *Social Memory: New Perspectives on the Past* (Oxford, 1992), p. ix.
[47] Climo and Cattell, p. 23.
[48] Ibid.
[49] Lynn Abrams, *Oral History Theory* (Abingdon, 2010), p. 82.

lives and redesign the conditions of possibility that account for what they once were, what they have since become, and what they still hope to be'.[50]

For some, it goes further. The French philosopher, Paul Ricoeur, considers identity to be the result of an 'abuse' of memory and forgetting, in which some aspects are remembered more and some are forgotten more in order to create a sense of self.[51] The 'fragility' of identity is argued to exist due to its complicated correlation with time, alongside the issues of confrontation and 'the heritage of founding violence'. Regarding the relationship with time, Ricoeur concludes that the 'temptation' of identity:

> consists in the retreat of *ipse* identity into the *idem* identity or, if one prefers, in the slippage, the drift, from the flexibility, proper to self-constancy as manifested in the promise, to the inflexible rigidity of a *character*, in the quasi-typographical sense of the term.[52]

To clarify, as time passes we progress from *ipse* identity (our inherent, flexible, individuality; *who* we are) to *idem* identity (our inflexible classification of *what* the self consists of, regardless of the inevitable mutations occurring over time). The other two problems, confrontation and founding violence, are linked. Regarding the former, Ricoeur argues that we are not capable of dealing with those who think or act differently from us, perceiving it as an attack or threat to our own identity or self-esteem. Regarding the latter, he maintains that as all societies have their roots in some form of war, leading to feelings of disgrace and failure for some and triumph for others, the resulting wounds are forever stored within the collective memory of those societies. In this way, these perceived uncertainties and attacks, whether inherited through a culture, felt in the present or felt to be a threat to the future, each undermines the stability of identity. The language used by Ricoeur about the 'fragility' of identity and the 'misuse' and 'abuse' of memory attributes negative connotations to what is a complicated mental and social evaluation. Nevertheless, these arguments, on the whole, are supported by sociological theories of identity: it is accepted that social identification is partially

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[50] A. L. Stoler and K. Strassler, 'Memory-Work in Java: A Cautionary Tale', in *The Oral History Reader,* 2nd Edn., eds. R. Perks and A. Thompson (London, 2006), p. 288.

[51] Paul Ricoeur, *Memory, History, Forgetting,* trans. by Kathleen Blamey and David Pallauer (London, 2004), pp. 80-2.

[52] Ibid., p. 81.

formed through the 'dialectics of inclusion and exclusion', in which groups develop in competition with others.[53]

With this awareness, we can obtain a better knowledge of what motivated people to act politically to defend their identities and rights, on both the local and national level. Of particular use in this study will be theories that show the connections between memory, identity, and political action, drawing together the theory with historical events. Modern theories of protest participation have shown, for example, that shared grievances are 'at the root of political protest and thus of the politicization of collective identity.'[54] And, while it is important to remember that shared grievances by themselves are not enough reason to participate in protest movement, they are 'fuel of the motivational engine'.[55] As such, they contribute to a politicised collective identity, although it should also be noted that individuals identify with different group identities with different strengths; it is this strength of identification in a particular set of circumstances which shapes the political action taken by an individual or group.[56] Several of these studies of protest movements have proved the logical assumption that the 'more someone identifies with a group, the higher the chances are that he or she will take part in collective action on behalf of that group'.[57] This is taken further when one considers the argument on 'superordinate' and 'subordinate' identities, which states that in order to feel that participation in protest action is worth it, an individual must have a dual identity; by having a strong 'subordinate' (or local) identity considered worth defending, in addition to a strong 'superordinate' (often argued to be national) identity, which demonstrates confidence that the relevant governing

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[53] Abram de Swaan, 'Widening Circles of Identification: Emotional Concerns in Sociogenetic Perspective', *Theory, Culture & Society,* 12 (1995), 25.

[54] P. G. Klandermans, 'Identity Politics and Politicized Identities: Identity Processes and the Dynamics of Protest', *Political Psychology,* 35 (2014), 20.

[55] J. D. McCarthy and M. N. Zald, 'Resource mobilization and social movements: A partial theory', *American Journal of Sociology*, 82, (1976), 1212-41; Klandermans, 'Identity Politics and Politicized Identities', 5.

[56] L. Huddy, 'From social to political identity: A crucial examination of social identity theory', *Political Psychology,* 22 (2001), 127-56.

[57] There is a large amount of material on this subject, but for a general understanding, see Klandermans, 'Identity Politics and Politicized Identities', 8; S. Stürmer and B. Simon, 'Pathways to collective protest: Calculation, identification, or emotion?', *Journal of Social Issues,* 65 (2009), 681-705; B. Simon, 'Collective identity and political engagement', in *Identity and Participation in Culturally Diverse Societies,* eds. A. Azzi, X. Chryssochoou, B. Klandermans and B. Simon (Oxford, 2011), pp. 137-57; C. Kelly, 'Group Identification, Intergroup Perceptions and Collective Action', *European Review of Social Psychology,* 4 (1993) 59-83; M. de Weerd and Klandermans, 'Group Identification and Social Protest: Farmer's Protest in the Netherlands', *European Journal of Social Psychology*, 29, (1999), 1073-95.

body would respond to any action taken.[58] Furthermore, once it has been decided to engage in protest action, J. Drury and S. Reicher have shown how collective identity is in fact reinforced by such participation.[59] Another element is added by the introduction of labelling theory. This works on the premise that individuals or groups labelled in one way or another end up identifying and behaving in the way expected of them.[60] While this is mainly used by sociologists in examining deviant behaviour, it has more recently shown to be applicable to positive labels too.[61] Gregory A. Thompson's conclusions that labelling can be used to positive effect, and that how well the label 'sticks' very much depends on context and mediating interaction, could therefore be applied to external perceptions of a group and the way in which they are treated and portrayed.

There are, of course, some difficulties with using these theories in a historical study. First, Thompson's argument on labelling theory is primarily based on linguistic and verbal interaction, something which is not possible to study in the context of this thesis. Yet it is possible to get an idea of the way in which labelling might have had an effect on the people of Kent through the action and reaction of written sources. Second, these are modern theories being applied to early modern people. This must be taken into account as the early modern mentality might not be completely comparable; certainly, it has been suggested that identity existed in a different, more collective and structured way in 'traditional' societies to the 'post-traditional' societies of today.[62] Nevertheless, it has also been argued that it was in the late medieval and early modern period that 'something like the modern sense of self or subjectivity first appeared as a cultural feature'.[63] Moreover, due to the fact that the theories come from the study of a variety of different cultures, they still have something to tell us, and in the absence of many sources on an early modern popular level, they are a useful way of trying to understand early modern society and political participation. Combined, these theories demonstrate

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[58] R. González and R. Brown. 'Generalization of positive attitude as a function of subgroup and superordinate group identification in intergroup contact', *European Journal of Social Psychology*, 33 (2003), 195-214.

[59] J. Drury and S. Reicher, 'Collective Psychological Empowerment as a Model of Social Change: Researching Crowds and Power', *Journal of Social Issues,* 65 (2009), 707-25.

[60] Howard Becker, *Outsiders: Studies in the Sociology of Deviance* (New York, 1963); Erving Goffman, *Stigma: Notes on the Management of a Spoiled Identity* (New York, 1986).

[61] Gregory A. Thompson, 'Labeling in Interactional Practice: Applying Labeling Theory and Interactional Analysis to Labeling', *Symbolic Interaction,* 37 (2014), 458-82.

[62] See Anthony Giddens, *Modernity and Self-Identity: Self and Society in the Late Modern Age* (Stanford, 1991); Charles Taylor, *Sources of the Self: The Making of the Modern Identity* (Cambridge, 1989).

[63] Jones and Woolf, p. 3.

the significance of identity, and the complex interactions between plural identities and their relative strengths, to political action. Not only this, but that collective identity in turn is strengthened as a result. By applying these to the commons of Kent between 1381 and 1603, we can come closer to a deeper comprehension of Kentish involvement in popular politics.

<u>Space and Place</u>

One of the most significant factors in this study is the use of space. Geographical locations and their use and history, and the ways in which these can be imprinted on the landscape, can have an enormous effect on the people who spend their lives in and around them. As the surrealist artist, René Magritte, put it in a lecture in 1938: 'This is how we see the world…We see it as being outside ourselves even though it is only a mental representation of what we experience on the inside.'[64] The absolute necessity of the landscape to experience and local memory can be summed up in Paul Ricoeur's question, 'What is it that makes for a historical time and a geographical space, allowing for the fact that they cannot be articulated separately from each other?'[65] This is something which has been long accepted by environmental historians and can often be a serious grievance for those who deplore the 'annexation of nature by culture', seeing the landscape as being the victim of exploitation by the culture and capitalism of 'Lord Man'.[66] Thus it is clear the landscape cannot be ignored in a study of popular politics; the use of memory sites and practises to legitimise political actions can be seen in a variety of different ways, and is a phenomenon studied by historians, sociologists, anthropologists and those in the field of cultural studies. Each discipline offers a different approach to understanding landscape and culture, combining to enhance our knowledge of popular politics in early modern England.

The field of cultural studies has been instrumental in helping to understand how cultures are underpinned, there being a difference between 'culture' only in the singular ('a theoretically defined

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[64] Cited in Sara Whitfield, *Magritte* (London, 1992), p. 62.
[65] Ricoeur, p. 146.
[66] Simon Schama, *Landscape and Memory* (London, 1995), pp. 12-13; John Muir, *A Thousand-mile Walk to the Gulf* (New York, 1916), p. 122; William J. Cronon, *Changes in the Land: Indians, Colonists, and the Ecology of New England* (New York, 1978); Carolyn Merchant, *Radical Ecology: The Search for a Livable World* (London, 1992); Victor Ferkiss, *Nature, Technology, and Society: Cultural Roots of the Current Environmental Crisis* (London, 1993); Lynn White Jr., 'The Historical Roots of Our Ecological Crisis,' *Science,* 155 (1967), 1203-7.

category or aspect of social life that must be abstracted out of the complex reality of human existence') and the second meaning of 'culture' ('a concrete and bounded world of beliefs and practices').[67] In this case, it is the first concept of culture which is relevant, looking at the abstract schemes that tie people together within societies, with their traditions, social spaces and complex relationships. One major point of debate is over whether the intricacies of culture are linked by the abstract concept of symbols or by more practical actions. 'Culture as a system of symbols and meanings', the former explanation, is one which has been the foremost explanation amongst anthropologists since the 1960s, when Clifford Geertz and David Schneider used it in their individual works.[68] It looks to abstract the semiotic meanings behind human action, separating them from other types of influences, such as those of demography, biology or geography. By doing this, it assumes an 'internal coherency' and a uniform system of symbolic meaning, with the result that this explanation is too abstract from human behaviour to reasonably work as an analysis of culture. 'Culture as practise', as the latter is called, directly contradicts the idea of 'culture as system' and consists of culture being held together by rituals, routines and actions dictated by power struggles and change.[69] This theory suggests a definite lack of 'coherency', which has been built upon by cultural sociologists in identifying 'tools' which are the products of variables and are 'discrete, local, and intended for specific purposes', thereby providing particular explanatory examples in contrast with the universal meaning of symbols as put forward in the 'culture as system' argument.[70]

William Sewell Jr., however, has argued for a more complex understanding of culture, showing that societies exist as a combination of 'culture as practise' and 'culture as system,' resulting in a 'thin coherence' upon the actions of a social group.[71] In this way, actions can be understood

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[67] William H. Sewell Jr., 'The concept of culture', in *Beyond the Cultural Turn,* eds. Victoria E. Bonnell and Lynn Hunt (California, 1999), p. 39.

[68] Ibid., pp. 43-44; Clifford Geertz, 'Religion as a Cultural System' and 'Ideology as a Cultural System,' in *The Interpretation of Cultures: Selected Essays,* ed. idem (New York, 1973), pp. 87-125, 193-233; David M. Schneider, 'Notes toward a Theory of Culture,' in *Meaning in Anthropology,* eds. Keith H. Basso and Henry A. Selby (Albuquerque, 1976), pp. 197-220. Both were influenced by and contrasted the 'system of norms and institutions' of Talcott Parsons, *The Social System* (London, 1951).

[69] Sewell Jr., pp. 44-6; Sherry Ortner, 'Theory in Anthropology Since the Sixties', *Comparative Studies in History and Society,* 26 (1984), 126-66; Pierre Bordieu, *Outline of a Theory of Practice,* trans. Richard Nice (Cambridge, 1977); James Clifford and George E. Marcus, *Writing Culture: The Poetics and Politics of Ethnography* (Berkeley, 1986).

[70] Sewell Jr., 45-46; Ann Swidler, 'Culture in Action: Symbols and Strategies,' *American Sociological Review* 51 (1984), 273-86.

[71] Sewell Jr., pp. 35-61.

within the abstract layers of meaning attributed to aspects such as language, colours, imagery and objects which are mutable and contested, influenced by physical and political motivations, making them fluid and applicable in changeable circumstances. With this combination of 'culture as practise' and 'culture as system' taken with French philosopher, Henri Lefebvre's concept of the production of space, we can reach a greater understanding of the importance of the landscape in societies. With a main focus on the urban space, Lefebvre shows how spaces can be 'read', posing the query:

> did there not at one time, between the sixteenth century (the Renaissance – and the Renaissance city) and the nineteenth century, exist a code at once architectural, urbanistic and political, constituting a language common to country people and townspeople, to the authorities and to artists – a code which allowed space not only to be 'read' but also to be constructed?[72]

For Lefebvre, there was 'an indefinite multitude of spaces' layered on top of and within each other, including those of geography, politics, and demography, among many others.[73] These are all held within the three fields of the physical, the mental and the social.[74] As such, geographical spaces can be seen to be a mixture of the natural landscape and the accumulation of social histories and signifiers which held layers of meanings for the people who knew them. Although Lefebvre focused on urban spaces in a certain time period, his concept of the production of space is easily applicable to this study; social spaces embedded within the landscape held meaning for inhabitants of England far earlier than the sixteenth century, and before the urban space existed. By accepting social space as a 'thing/not-thing', as an object of neither substantial nor mental reality, but which needs 'an initial bias or foundation' of natural or physical space, we can start to truly grasp the significance of the landscape in the lives of the people who lived on it and with it, and the attributes superimposed upon it, both physical and abstract.[75]

The significance of place and space, as understood within the theories above, can be seen in many examples of scholarship, both by historians and by those in the social sciences. Microhistories are a particular form of historical study which, by their nature, embrace a location or a person and

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[72] Henri Lefebvre, *The Production of Space,* trans. by Donald Nicholson-Smith (Oxford, 1991), p. 7.
[73] Ibid., p. 8.
[74] Ibid., p. 12.
[75] Ibid., p. 402.

study the intricacies surrounding the chosen subject. An in-depth study of a specific area over a certain period of time can capture the sites and routines which held meaning for the society (or other object of focus).[76] Another example of recognition of the importance of the landscape and its inseparable connections with memory, identity and history can be found in Simon Schama's eclectic but excellent *Landscape and Memory*. Calling on the work of artists, environmental historians and his own personal family history, Schama examines the history of particular areas and demographics of the borders of Poland and Lithuania, tracing his family's people, the Jewish 'people of the forest'.[77] He succeeds in conveying the feelings, and almost a form of nostalgia, embedded in long held memories passed down, but inspired and brought closer to the author by the landscape itself, a landscape which dominated the livelihoods of the people who lived there:

> So when [Adam] Mieckiewicz hails "ye trees of Lithuania" as if they
> belonged only to the gentry and their serfs, foresters, and gamekeepers,
> I could in our family's memory lay some claim to those thick groves
> of larch, hornbeam, and oak.[78]

The links of emotions, memories and politics evoked in Schama's investigation of the forests of Poland and Lithuania can be found in anthropological and sociological works and case studies on communities and place.[79] In 'Bricks, Mortar, Memories,' Talja Blokland shows the role played by sites such as ice cream parlours, McDonalds or the butcher's in symbolically representing social groups and identities in the neighbourhood of Hillesluis in the city of Rotterdam in 1994-5.[80] Each individual site held its own memories for the people reminiscing there, and held its own symbolism

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[76] Some examples of the use of place in micro-historical works: Eamon Duffy, *The Voices of Morebath: Reformation and Rebellion in an English Village* (London, 2003); Malia Formes, 'Post-Colonial Domesticity Amid Diaspora: Home and Family in the Lives of Two English Sisters From India', *Journal of Social History*, 39 (2005), 467-482; Paul Monod, *The Murder of Mr. Grebell: Madness and Civility in an English Town* (New Haven, 2003); Wrightson and D. Levine, *Poverty and Piety in an English Village: Terling, 1525-1700* (Oxford, 1995).
[77] Schama, pp. 23-7.
[78] Ibid., p. 29.
[79] P. Wright, *On Living in an Old Country: the national past in contemporary Britain* (London, 1985); P. Wright, *A Journey Through Ruins: the last days of London* (London, 1991); J. May, 'Globalization and the politics of place: place and identity in an inner London neighbourhood', *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers*, 21 (1996), 194-215; D. Massey, 'Power-geometry and a progressive sense of place', in *Mapping the Futures: local cultures, global change,* eds. J. Bird, B. Curtis, T. Putnam, G. Robertson and L. Tickler (London, 1993); Massey, *Space, Place and Gender* (Minneapolis, 1994); idem, 'Places and their pasts', *History Workshop Journal,* 39 (1995), 182-192; *Landscape, Memory and History: Anthropological Perspectives,* eds. Pamela J. Stewart and Andrew Strathern (London, 2003).
[80] Talja Blokland, 'Bricks, Mortar, Memories: Neighbourhood and Networks in Collective Acts of Remembering,' *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research,* 25 (2001), 267-83.

for the types of people who regularly utilised the space, in terms of age, class and gender, particularly when the high street had developed so much over the years. These sites could also influence the types of memories recalled by the participants. In the case of the ice cream parlour, which had existed on the high street for several generations while other buildings had sprung up around it, it was a spot popular with long-time residents: the interior décor had not been changed in years and the owner had worked at the store since he was fifteen, having taken over from his father.[81] As such, although it appealed to all ages, it particularly attracted elderly people who had gone there when they were younger and often led to nostalgic memories of how they used to spend time on the high street, and comments like, 'You didn't get that in the past'.[82] The memory sites in Hillesluis therefore brought people together and inspired specific memories to be shared, combining the abstract meanings and social, demographical and economical spaces with the physical spaces of the parlour and high street.

An interesting finding in Blokland's case study is that several of these individuals had belonged to different social groups in the time they were reminiscing about. However, due to their shared experiences of living in the community and regularly visiting spaces like the parlour, they now identified with one another as members of a generation linked to these sites. This is an example of the dialectics of inclusion and exclusion in group formation; being 'the same' as some, and 'unlike' others.[83] Linked together by physical and temporal or generational space, these people identified as a group within a society in a way that they had not before, simply by occupying a particular memory site and being a long-term resident among the community. This phenomenon, where a certain identity is connected both symbolically and physically with the landscape, can be seen in other studies made in various countries on various cultures. It has been shown, for example, that amongst the mid-Wahgi people of the Western Highlands Province of New Guinea, two competing identities can be discerned to be primarily linked to specific aspects of the landscape.[84] 'Dwelling' metaphors and the identity of tribes as 'clanspeople' were entrenched in the idea of being 'rooted' in a particular location, while at the same time 'travelling' metaphors, the identifying of 'marriage roads' and the feelings of being

[81] Ibid., p. 276.
[82] Ibid., pp. 276-9.
[83] de Swaan, pp. 25-39.
[84] Michael O'Hanlon and Linda Frankland, 'Co-present Landscapes: Routes and Rootedness as Sources of Identity in Highlands New Guinea', in *Landscape, Memory and History*, pp. 166-88.

connected to neighbouring tribes were associated with the roads to and from the tribe's village.[85] In a similar vein, several conflicting identities can be found in the use of maps and in the negotiation over the documentation of the landscape in nineteenth-century Ireland.[86] In the process of creating ordnance survey maps, the different ways of perceiving the landscape, along with the differing social memories and meanings, collided, ultimately encompassing the conflicting views of the colonial, Irish nationalist and local in the finished product. In all of these cases, it is clear that the landscape played an essential part in the construction of memory, culture and identity, all of which had a large influence over the political routines and actions taken by the societies involved.

<center>Kent</center>

It is clear, then, that in order to truly get to grips with the memories, landscapes and identities influencing popular political action, an in-depth study of a certain area can be particularly useful. Although there has been some rightful criticism of 'county community' historiography, with challenges to the idea of the isolation of a county's people from national events, the space of the county, physically and mentally, can still be valuable as a unit of study.[87] Andy Wood, Jane Whittle and Nicola Whyte, with their focus on Norfolk, have all shown the benefit of studying a county and its memories and traditions over a broad period of time, with Wood and Whittle demonstrating the links between the rebellions of 1381 and 1549, and Whyte looking more towards the customs and landscape of the county, building on Wood's *Memory of the People*.[88] As a county which also has a particularly strong identity, coupled with its recurring involvement in popular protest between the years 1381 and 1549, Kent is a particularly appropriate location to study. There were several aspects which made the county stand out, so it is unsurprising that by the second half of the sixteenth century it already had a serious antiquarian community, exemplified most obviously by William Lambarde's

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[85] O'Hanlon and Frankland.

[86] Angèle Smith, 'Landscape Representation: Place and Identity in Nineteenth-Century Ordnance Survey Maps of Ireland,' in *Landscape, Memory and History*, pp. 71-88.

[87] Ann Hughes, *Politics, Society and Civil War in Warwickshire, 1620-1660* (Cambridge, 1987); Alastair Bellany, *The Politics of Court Scandal in Early Modern England: News Culture and the Overbury Affair, 1603-1666* (Cambridge, 2002); Jones and Woolf, p. 4.

[88] Wood, *The 1549 Rebellions*; Jane Whittle, 'Peasant Politics and Class Consciousness: The Norfolk Rebellions of 1381 and 1549 Compared', *Past & Present,* Supplement 2 (2007), 233-47; Nicola Whyte, *Inhabiting the Landscape: Place, Custom and Memory, 1500-1800* (Oxford, 2009).

Perambulation of Kent, first published in 1576.[89] With a motto like 'Invicta', a reminder that William the Conqueror was not able to invade Kent in 1066 but, rather, was forced to negotiate, leaving Kent the only county in England to continue under Salic law, it already stood apart from other counties in England.[90] Its geographical location, between Calais and London, and the location of Canterbury, the religious capital of England, and four of the five ancient Cinque Ports within its boundaries meant that it was also politically prominent.[91] The county had a variety of industries and resources, and was also in the unusual position of having no dominant lay landowner (the largest landowner was the Archbishop of Canterbury), leaving the running of the county to royal office holders and to the local gentry.[92] The people of Kent therefore had a variety of interests and identities, and perhaps, due to the lack of a dominant lord, a stronger sense of community invested in the landscape.

Politics in Kent has been the focus of several works, and yet there is much work still to be done on this historically contentious county. Peter Clark's sweeping study of the county from the Reformation to the Revolution is an ambitious examination across a long, turbulent time spanning several different monarchs and almost as many religious changes.[93] Although deeply entrenched in archival research, it frequently fails to place events in Kent within the national context of events, and also does not often acknowledge the responsibility or agency of the common people of the county or, indeed, of popular politics as a whole. Alan Everitt's work on Kent, culminating in his book on the county in the Great Rebellion, identified a coherent county community, although it tends to focus on gentry families.[94] Other scholars tend to focus narrowly on a specific theme, event, or town, or to incorporate Kent as a portion in a larger study of England in works on national events such as the

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[89] William Lambarde, *A perambulation of Kent conteining the description, hystorie, and customes of that shyre. Written in the yeere 1570 by William Lambarde of Lincolnes Inne Gent* (1576).

[90] One particularly relevant custom retained by Kent was that of Gavelkind: a form of land tenure under partible inheritance, was technically legal until it was abolished in the Administration of Estates Act of 1925.

[91] Kent's Cinque Ports: Sandwich, Dover, Romney and Hythe.

[92] On the various resources and industries: Mavis Mate, 'The Economy of Kent, 1200-1500: An Age of Expansion, 1200-1348', in *Later Medieval Kent*, pp. 1-10; idem, 'The Economy of Kent, 1200-1500: The Aftermath of the Black Death', in idem, pp. 11-24; G. M. Draper, 'Timber and Iron: Natural Resources for the Late Medieval Ship-building Industry in Kent', in idem, pp. 55-78; Mate, *Trade and Economic Developments, 1450-1550: The Experience of Kent, Surrey and Sussex* (Woodbridge, 2006); Alan Everitt, *Continuity and Colonization: The Evolution of Kentish Settlement* (Leicester, 1986).

[93] Clark, *Society.*

[94] Everitt, *The Community of Kent and the Great Rebellion 1640-60* (Leicester, 1966); Claire Bartram, 'The Reading and Writing Practices of the Kentish Gentry: The Emergence of a Protestant Identity in Elizabethan Kent' (Unpublished PhD Thesis, University of Kent, 2005).

rebellions of 1549.[95] Thus far, then, any history of Kent and political protest has lacked a full-blown investigation with regards to the political actions taken by the commons of the land on a day to day basis, or linked them with the unique memories linked to the county and the way that they interact with local, county, national, military, religious or rebellious identities. By studying Kent in this way, it will build on existing scholarship on the county and on popular politics by considering a variety of additional factors regarding the motivation to participate in, and drive, political activity.

<div align="center">Thesis structure</div>

The conclusion that seems to have been reached when trying to pin down theories on social structures is one of uncertainty. Mears' argument that the defining characteristic of public sphere theory was its 'haphazardness', and Sewell Jr.'s determination that 'culture as practise' and 'culture as system' are only contained within a 'thin coherence', show just how unreliable theories can be when applied in a universal way across societies, localities and identities.[96] The difficulties in investigating societies can be seen in Keith Wrightson's analysis of the 'world of the parish' as 'a tangled, messy, skein of overlapping and intersecting social networks'.[97] A study of popular politics in Kent, therefore, requires a flexible investigation using the disciplines of anthropology, philosophy and sociology as well as history in order to cover several different elements: of politics in peace time and in times of war and rebellion; perceptions from both inside and outside the villages and the county; and looking at local and official documentary sources as well as plays, pamphlets and popular poetry.

Chapter 1 will therefore focus upon the customs and local politics in Kent. Through the use of depositions from central courts such as the equity side of the Excehquer, Chancery and Star Chamber, and other local sources such as custumals, it will investigate the collective memory,

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[95] For very narrow points of study, please see work in the journal, *Archaeologia Cantiana*, and for particular themes in Kent please see works like Collinson's 'The Persecution in Kent', in *The Church of Mary Tudor,* eds. Eamon Duffy and David Loades (Aldershot, 2006), pp. 309-33. For Kent as part of other, broader studies, see Amanda Jones, ''Commotion Time': The English Risings of 1549' (Unpublished PhD Thesis, University of Warwick, 2003); Barrett L. Beer, *Rebellion and Riot: Popular Disorder in England During the Reign of Edward VI, Revised Edition* (Ohio, 2005); Beer and R. J. Nash, 'Hugh Latimer and the lusty knave of Kent: the commonwealth movement of 1549', *Bulletin of the Institute of Historical Research,* 52 (1979), 175-178; J. D. Alsop, 'Latimer, 'the commonwealth of Kent' and the 1549 rebellions', *The Historical Journal,* 28 (1985), 379-83.

[96] Mears, 'The Elizabethan Public Sphere', p. 215; Sewell Jr., pp. 49-58.

[97] Wrightson, 'The Politics of the Parish', p. 11.

landscape, and identity in general of particular localities, how these factors were used on a day to day basis, and how they fitted into local structures of government. In Kent, the existence of gavelkind, the Cinque Ports, and connections to London can all be seen in the customs of the localities. The validity of customary law influenced power structures at local level, as well as the methods used in taking particular actions. An examination of localities such as Faversham, Boxley or Whitley Forest, with their different landscapes, resources and experiences, and therefore different customs and motivations, will shed light on how locality influenced identity and political actions in Tudor Kent.

The identities and political activity which were maintained in each community and landscape could be thrown into confusion in times of change, often brought on by external pressures; chapters two and three will therefore focus on national events and how they impacted upon the memory and identities of the localities. First, chapter 2 will look at aspects such as the impact of the monarch and the military experience of the county, taking into consideration Kent's prominent role in conflicts such as the Hundred Years' War, as well as invasion scares such as the Spanish Armada of 1588. The geographical location of the county and its proximity to the Continent meant that it was particularly useful as a place from which to deploy troops, and particularly vulnerable to enemy attack. These experiences were embedded in local histories and the landscape and would have shaped individual and collective memories and identities. Chapter 3 will then look at the religious changes imposed from above. The Reformation stands as one of the most all-encompassing changes to the country, creating a perceived break in what otherwise was seen as a continuous history. Memories of people, tithes and land from before the dissolution of the monasteries compete with those that come after: changing land ownership, activities in hospitals, and the physical reminders contained within the landscape. The effects of events like the Armada, the Reformation, or other smaller occurrences, can be seen in the language used in local descriptions and references and contribute to the collective memory of the village or town in smaller, more personal ways than when taken as a result of high politics. In the face of such external pressures we can also see how identities were formed in response, creating a variety of overlapping identifications to be called upon in particular contexts, and allowing for wider associations with communities beyond the local.

Chapter 4 will go on to examine what happened when the methods and experiences examined in chapters one, two, and three combined in order to express opposition or protest, leading to a new reading of memory, landscape, and identity coming to the forefront of local politics. It will study mild or accepted forms of protest alongside full rebellions, riots, and martyrdoms, while considering the way in which superordinate and subordinate identities might have come into play for the commons of Kent when it came to such activity. Kent's involvement in popular rebellions or riots between 1381 and 1603, and the cumulative traditions of rebellion, commonweal rhetoric and patterns of movement used to legitimise popular protest suggests the existence of a separate reading of the landscape in times of turmoil, and implies that the motivations for the involvement of the commons of Kent in rebellions were partially rooted in their identity as rebellious defenders of the commonweal, as well as in their political and military experiences. The high number of martyrdoms in Kent under Mary Tudor is also suggestive of religious opposition linked to certain locations, traditions and experiences of the Reformation in the county. By looking at examples of religious and political protest, it is possible to explore the variety of ways in which the identities belonging to the commons of Kent could manifest as political action, and that in doing so these identities were reinforced in turn.

The accumulation of the memories and identities of chapters one, two and three, in addition to the traditions and implications of chapter 4, creates certain identities for particular parts of Kent, such as the Weald or the Cinque Ports, as well as an associated identity of Kent and rebellion. Chapter 5 focuses on the self-conscious identities and perceptions of Kent, and the cycle of identity and political action which both results from and feeds into the topics of the previous chapters. It also takes into account the labelling theory, discussed above, in order to explore the idea of the impact of external perspectives in influencing political behaviour. The history of Kent as seen by the rest of the realm (probably mostly London) through pamphlets, ballads, chronicles and plays can be seen to have been appropriated in the 1590s, particularly, to send a message to those who perhaps offered trouble in that difficult decade. The question of how this might influence the self-identification of the Kentish commons when combined with their own memories, customs, and history of rebellion is difficult to answer with any certainty, but is worth posing.

By investigating these four separate areas, this thesis will show how the impact of memory and identity on popular politics in Kent was simultaneously a passive tool in local political life and an active motivator for political action. It will show how, depending on the circumstances, the community of Kent could become less internally focused, and more aware of events affecting places outside their own localities, and of their potential roles in them. This study will therefore contribute to the growing understanding of popular politics in Tudor Kent, and more broadly, the importance of local history, collective memory and identity felt by local communities in Tudor England.

Chapter 1: Customs and Community

In the forty-second year of Queen Elizabeth's reign, a recurring dispute over the enclosure of a section of highway leading from Ford to Sandgate Castle in Folkestone, Kent, led to an investigation through the Court of Exchequer. Provided with a set of interrogatories, people from Folkestone and the surrounding areas were required to produce witness statements calling on their knowledge of the incident. In answer to a question regarding whether the way was common or private, Robert Harte, a sixty-year-old carpenter from Horton and the previous owner of the adjoining land, stated 'that it hath bene the comon voice & fame of the Cuntry that it was a comon way to be used as he hath before declared & he never herd it denied'.[1] Harte's testimony reflects that of many depositions, and encapsulates the way in which common acceptance of an action repeated over time could legitimise that action, consolidating it as a custom within the locality. The fact that it had been 'the comon voice & fame of the Cuntry', and that he 'never herd it denied' meant that as far as the locals were concerned, it was an established common way. It is in statements like this that the immense value of local history and community memory in every-day, political life makes itself known. This chapter will use such depositions to examine how aspects such as local history, custom, and memory were combined with the natural landscape to form unique political conditions which fed into a basic sense of identity.

It is first necessary, then, to look at one of the most prominent examples of the practical and political application of memory, history and landscape: the use of customary law. Manorial customs were sets of rules which dictated the rights and duties of the tenants of the manor, legitimised by the history of the community. In Tudor England, according to Alan Everett, local customs were 'no vague body of tradition, but a rigorous, detailed, and precise *corpus* of local law.'[2] Local customs were indeed specific, detailed, and of vital importance to the ways in which the manor or village was run, from inheritance, to maintenance of roads, hedges and cattle, to the rents, duties and rights attached to the land. Nevertheless, they were not quite as rigid or set-in-stone as Everett implies. In

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[1] TNA, E 134/42Eliz/Hil3.

[2] Alan Everett, 'Farm Labourers, 1500-1640', in *Chapters from the Agrarian History of England and Wales 1500-1750*: *Vol. 2, Rural Society: Landowners, Peasants and Labourers, 1500-1750,* eds. Joan Thirsk and Christopher Clay (Cambridge, 1990), p. 224.

R. H. Tawney's 1912 study of late-medieval customs, they were described as 'a kind of law' and 'a kind of freedom':

> And since it is the custom which most concerns the mass of the
> peasantry, it is not the state, or the law, but the custom of the manor
> which forms their political environment and from which they draw
> their political ideas.[3]

Although considered a 'rose-tinted view' due to the failure to recognise growing divisions among the tenantry and the 'acquisitive individualism of wealthier tenants in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries', Tawney's summary still manages to grasp the essential nature of the impact of manorial customs – in terms of how it formed a vital part of popular politics, as well as its flexibility, gradually changing over time depending on certain contexts.[4] Since then, more work has been done on the topic of customs. E. P. Thompson's *Customs in Common* and R. W. Bushway's 'Rite, legitimation and community' both look deeper into customs and communities, while other local histories look at the details and histories of specific towns or villages.[5] Throughout these studies, though, whether general or specific, it is clear that the most important aspect of custom is the communal memory and history of the community, firmly based in the landscape and resources of the locality.

This emphasis on the complex relationship between a community and the active use of memory and the usable past is evident in the depositions taken by commission for cases heard in the Exchequer, and as a rich, qualitative collection of statements in a local and popular voice, it is this selection of documents for Kent which therefore comprises the majority of the source material for this chapter. It has been argued that the Court of Exchequer went through a 'com[ing] of age' from the middle of the reign of Henry VIII until it was established as a high court in 1649.[6] While the equity side of the Exchequer had existed for at least ten years before Elizabeth came to the throne, court documents were only preserved and kept from 1558, and under Sir Walter Mildmay as

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[3] R. H. Tawney, *The Agrarian Problem in the Sixteenth Century* (London, 1912), p. 131.
[4] Wood, *Memory of the People,* p. 30-1; Tawney, p. 172.
[5] E. P. Thompson, *Customs in Common* (London, 1991); R. W. Bushaway, 'Rite, legitimation and community in southern England, 1700-1850: the ideology of custom', in *Conflict and Community in Southern England: Essays in the Social History of Rural and Urban Labour from Medieval to Modern times,* ed. B. Stapleton (New York, 1992), pp. 110-34.
[6] W. Hamilton Bryson, 'The court of Exchequer comes of age', in *Tudor Rule and Revolution: Essays for G.R. Elton from his American Friends,* eds. Delloyd J. Guth and John W. McKenna (Cambridge, 1982), p. 149.

Chancellor of the Exchequer, the equity side significantly increased in legal activity.[7] Equitable jurisdiction was a system that had begun in the Court of Chancery, and came into play when common law was not adequate in a specific case, or when misconduct or corruption was suspected.[8] In the case of the equity side of the Exchequer, it therefore covered disputes over property, tithes, manorial customs and common lands, and a variety of revenue matters pertinent to the Crown. Cases based outside London, which could require witnesses to travel and could be costly and difficult to arrange, were often investigated by a set of interrogatories taken by local commissioners appointed by the barons of the Exchequer. These county commissioners would then question the witnesses, who were required to swear an oath and give their evidence. These witness statements, as with many of the records which were produced as part of investigations through the equity courts, were written in English and contained information such as names, ages, locations and occupations, as well as qualitative material on local customs and practices. As such, they provide valuable insights into the ways in which locals viewed events and the importance of local traditions, but also what was required to legitimise certain actions or practices within the community. As commissions from a governmental court which interacted with and imposed judgement over local custom, these depositions are also useful as an example of the dialogue between centre and locality. By framing its interrogatories to the deponents in certain ways, the government was directly engaging with specific local customs, and thereby acknowledging the individual traditions of a community. Subsequently, by then using the testimonies of locals to come a judgement over a customary dispute, the centre was able to assert its authority back on the local, effectively completing a communication between the two. For, as Wood puts it, the 'story of dispute of custom is […], in some part, a story about the contradictions of state formation in early modern England.'[9]

Despite the strong qualitative value of the information from this type of source, depositions from the equity side of the Exchequer and other equity courts have rarely been used with regards to customs and communities in England.[10] Those who have made use of them for this topic, with a

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[7] Hamilton Bryson, *The Equity Side of the Exchequer: Its Jurisdiction Administration, Procedures and Records* (London, 1975), pp. 2-3; idem, 'The court of Exchequer comes of age', p. 150.
[8] J. H. Baker, *An Introduction to English Legal History,* 4th Edn. (London, 2002), pp. 47-9, 97-9, 105-11; Hamilton Bryson, *Equity Side of the Exchequer*, p. 7.
[9] Wood, *Memory of the People,* p. 33.
[10] For works which have made valuable use of depositions, see Adam Fox, 'Custom, Memory and the Authority of Writing', in *The Experience of Authority in Early Modern England* eds. Fox and S. Hindle

particular focus on the importance of location and identity, have produced excellent work and provided deeper insights into popular politics, customs, and community. Nicola Whyte's *Inhabiting the Landscape* focuses on Norfolk; a county which has a long history and independent identity of its own.[11] Wood's *Memory of the People*, as already mentioned, contains vast amounts of information for customs and communities across the kingdom, tying together the threads connecting the methods and uses of customary law and perspectives of early modern lower and middling sorts as well as the landowning gentry.[12] With the trends identified on a country-wide scale, but with the definitive conclusion that it was ultimately the uniquely local aspects which made up the 'memory of the people', there is now the opportunity to examine counties against the wider popular political culture to gain a greater understanding of identity and politics at the local level. The information on customs and memories in Kentish towns and villages available in the depositions by commission out of the Exchequer is therefore incredibly valuable to studies of Kent, and of popular politics in general.

It has already been shown in the introduction how different facets of identity can come to the fore when specific circumstances provoke them.[13] In this study of Kent it is therefore important to recognise the different layers of identity and the contexts in which it was possible for them to exist; accordingly, the following chapters will examine the county in different circumstances, culminating in the final chapter, which will determine how that identity was perceived and appropriated as a political tool in and of itself. First, however, it is necessary to look at Kentish politics at its most

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(Basingstoke, 1996) pp. 89-116; Wood 'Custom, Identity and Resistance: English Free Miners and Their Law, c. 1550-1899', in idem, pp. 249-86; Wood, *The Politics of Social Conflict: The Peak Country, 1520-1770* (Cambridge, 1999).

[11] Whyte, *Inhabiting the Landscape*; Norfolk has been the subject of several studies: Wood, *The Rebellions of 1549*; Whittle, 'Peasant Politics and Class Consciousness'; idem, *The Development of Agrarian Capitalism: Land and Labour in Norfolk, 1450-1580* (Oxford, 2000); C. E. Moreton, *The Townshends and their world: Gentry, Law and Land in Norfolk, c.1450-1551* (Oxford, 1992); M. Reynolds, *Godly Reformers and their Opponents in Early Modern England: religion in Norwich, c. 1560-1643* (Woodbridge, 2005); Richard W. Hoyle, '*Cromwell v. Taverner*: Landlords, Copyholders and the Struggle to Control Memory in Mid-Sixteenth Century Norfolk', in *Custom, Improvement and the Landscape in Early Modern Britain,* ed. idem (Farnham, 2011), pp. 39-64; Nicola Whyte, 'Contested Pasts: Custom, Conflict and Landscape Change in West Norfolk, c. 1550-1650', in idem, pp. 101-26; Elizabeth Griffiths, ''A Country Life': Sir Hamon Le Strange of Hunstanton in Norfolk 1583-1654', in idem pp. 203-34.

[12] Wood, *Memory of the People.*

[13] The groups individuals identify with, and the topics discussed and remembered, very much depend on several different elements combining to create a certain circumstance – one excellent example of this is the elderly members of the community of Hillesluis congregating in a particular ice cream parlour, and the resulting types of memories, in Blokland, 267-83; the idea of an 'indefinite multitude of spaces' layered above and inside each other, such as geography, politics and demography, can be found in Lefebvre, p. 8; In a loose parallel, the concept of political spheres as overlapping clusters, connected by aspects like geography, religion or profession can be found in Calhoun, pp. 37-8. For further discussion of the production of space or political spheres, please see the introduction of this thesis.

basic, every day level. In this chapter depositions will be used to examine the customs and communities in Kentish towns and villages, with a particular focus on the way in which the past was used to justify everyday political activity, and the links between collective memories and the landscape. By looking into particular and contrasting types of environment, such as woodland-based, pasture-based or coastal communities, this chapter will come to a more in-depth understanding of the peculiarly local nature of landscape, customs, and day-to-day politics, and the way in which they contributed to local identity in Kent.

<u>Memory language</u>

The significance of collective memory and local history at a local level, particularly in the ways in which it was used to legitimise activities, is evident in the language used by deponents. The weight given to certain phrases which signified the long-term use of a particular action, form of payment, or type of land, suggests just how intrinsic memory and local history was to the guidance and judgement of everyday political life. The culture of 'good faith', with its notions of credit, familiarity, and reciprocity, depended upon knowledge of the local area, its people and their characters and was vital to the ongoing political and economic life of the local community.[14] As such, an individual's behaviour would be something of which they were consciously aware; cultivating and portraying an honest character would have been important to local life and interaction, and would therefore have been a significant part of the identity of the community as well as the individual. Phrases such as 'tyme out of mind' or 'tyme out of memory of man' contain implications of an established discourse concerning the idea that the custom or action under dispute was the way it had always been, and therefore, always should be. The reference to 'sondrie libertyes and Customes of oulde tyme' in a Chancery case in 1587 therefore holds within it the accepted legitimacy of rights belonging to certain people historically linked with a certain piece of land.[15] Similarly, statements on the length of time one had known an individual or place, while providing important practical information as to the usefulness of the deponent to the case, also served another purpose; their

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[14] Pierre Bourdieu, *Outline of a Theory of Practice*, trans. by R. Nice (Cambridge, 1977), pp. 171-97; Craig Muldrew, 'Interpreting the market: ethics of credit and community relations in early modern England', *Social History,* 18 (1993), 163-83; idem, 'The culture of reconciliation: community and the settlement of economic disputes', *The Historical Journal*, 39 (1996), 926-27; Wrightson, *English Society, 1580-1680* (London, 1982), pp. 59-65.
[15] TNA, C 78/62/12.

memories became confirmation of their right to give evidence in local affairs as well as acting as the evidence itself. The emphasis on familiarity of the behaviour, networks and history of other members of the community in a culture and economy based on 'good faith' and credit also contributed to the identities of individuals and the locality as a whole: this network of guidelines and credit forming a backbone for the identity of a community and its members. By stating the length of one's knowledge of a space or person from the area, the deponent was also making a claim about their own identity as part of that community and within that particular 'good faith' economy. The acceptance of these phrases and concepts, indeed, the active inclusion of them within the interrogatories themselves, shows just how intrinsic the concept of memory was to the structure of justice and order, and also demonstrates the particular way in which the Tudor state incorporated local governments and ways of life into its centralising efforts.[16]

In 1600 an investigation was made into a dispute over the rights, rents, and practices of tenants regarding an area of fishing ground called the Pollard, thought to be around four miles from the creek mouth of Faversham and around two miles long.[17] While the commissioners asked many questions covering a range of topics, the main point made in the statements on behalf of the plaintiffs was based on the long held rights and use of the Pollard by the said plaintiffs and their forebears. Humphrey Kibbet, a sixty-year-old man of Faversham, stated that the complainants were:

> tenants to the saied fishinge grownde nowe in question, and that
> their predicessors tyme out of mynde have had and doe houlde the
> same of her majestie, and before of her Auncistors and of the Abbie
> and Convente of ffaversham (TNA, E 134/42Eliz/East10)

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[16] The use of local interrogatories or trials which required the statements of witnesses is obviously something which had been used in various local and central courts for centuries. However, the fact that the Equity side of the Exchequer only came into being in the sixteenth century, and only started increasing in its judicial business in Elizabeth's reign suggests that the methods and questions that were used and therefore the types of answers that resulted were indeed part of the ongoing dialogue between the centre and the local. For discussion of the use of witnesses, particularly their value as sources for the lives of common people, see M. Vaughan, 'Reported Speech and Other Kinds of Testimony', *Journal of Historical Sociology,* 13 (2000), 237-63; M. McGlynn, 'Memory, Orality and Life Records: Proofs of Age in Tudor England', *Sixteenth-Century Journal,* 40 (2009), 679-97; B. J. Shapiro, *A Culture of Fact: England, 1550-1720* (New York, 2000) 14-33; idem, 'Oaths, Credibility and the Legal Process in Early Modern England: Part one', *Law and Humanities,* 6 (2012), 145-78; Charles Donohue, Jr., 'Proof by Witnesses in the Church Courts of Medieval England: An Imperfect Reception of the Learned Law', in *On the Laws and Customs of England: Essays in Honor of Samuel E. Thorne,* eds. Morris S. Arnold, Thomas A. Green, Sally A. Scully, and Stephen D. White (Chapel Hill, 1981), pp. 127-58, esp. 151.

[17] TNA, E 134/42Eliz/East10.

The emphasis on the long history of not only the tenants of the fishing ground, but also of the queen and the institutions of Faversham, gives additional legitimacy to the rights of the said tenants to dredge oysters and mussels. The reference to Elizabeth's predecessors and to the Abbey of Faversham indicates that at the very latest, the tenants had enjoyed their rights to fishing in the Pollard when the abbeys were active in the community. Aged 60 at the time of giving this statement, however, Kibbet was therefore reporting memories from before he was born. The appearance of these types of practical histories of the community in legal documents is a sign of just how important collective memories were to the general running of the kingdom and the links forged between centre and locality. The inclusion of this same phrase in the questions agreed in the Court of Exchequer, as, for example, in the case of the inquiry into whether 'a greate part therof [of Penenden Heath] belongeth and tyme out of mynd hath belonged to the Mannor of Newnham court', not only acknowledged the validity of collective memory within the legal system, but also appropriated local discourses in order to create and retain links and control over the localities.[18]

By the same token, a *lack* of knowledge or memory could be just as significant.[19] In a dispute over a copperas factory in Whitstable, for example, one of the defendants, Arthur Bedolph, was in the weaker position from the outset, due to the fact that he had not been known to the community for very long.[20] As a result, the descriptions of him generally suggest an element of uncertainty, particularly in contrast to the plaintiff, Thomas Gauntlet. Richard Woodsall, a yeoman of Whitstable, stated that:

> He hath knowne the plaintiff two or three yeares and Arthure
> Bedolphe one of the defendants aboute one yeare and he did know
> Cornelias Stephenson late husband to the nowe wiefe of Thomas
> Gauntlett aboute vij yeares. (TNA, E 134/42Eliz/East14)

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[18] TNA, E 134/31Eliz/Hil27.

[19] Similarly, the act of forgetting has been shown to be just as significant, and also often a deliberate decision as an individual or as a group. For theories of forgetting, see Ricoeur; Climo and Cattell; Sinfree Makoni, 'African Languages as European Scripts: The Shaping of Communal Memory', in *Negotiating the Past: The Making of Memory in South Africa,* eds. Sarah Nuttall and Carli Coetzee (Cape Town, 1998), pp. 242-8; For forgetting on a national scale, see Colette Wilson, *Paris and the Commune, 1871-78: The Politics of Forgetting* (Manchester, 2007).

[20] TNA, E 134/42Eliz/East14.

As variations on this statement are repeated by the majority of the deponents, it is clear that Bedolph was considered a relative newcomer, while Gauntlet, although having only been known a year or two longer, was established in a way that Bedolph was not. He was apprenticed to Stephenson, the man who had established the copperas house and had maintained an active relationship with the community. After his death, Gauntlet married his widow and continued the traditions and interactions started by Stephenson, giving him an affiliation with the better-known man, and by association putting him in a more favourable, and therefore more trustworthy, position. A similar judgement can be seen in a witness statement by John Daunton, a fifty-eight year old butcher from Canterbury, in a question over lands of the manor of Willop. His comment that 'he knoweth the land in question menconed & bounded as in the Interrogatory & hath knowen yt of long tyme. But as to the name called Coults Croft he hath heard of that name but of late', again implies the greater legitimacy of something which had been known 'of long tyme' over something which had been heard 'but of late'.[21]

In these examples it is clear that the phrases and time language used had particular meaning for the people who used them; a meaning which was understood and accepted by central government, and used in its dealings with the localities. The fact that these witness statements were situated within a discourse of collective memory and history suggests much about the way in which communities judged the legitimacy of people and their actions within the context of the remembered history of their locality. It shows us how memory and familiarity of people and spaces framed the way individuals saw themselves when it came to defining their rights to act within the community as witnesses, and the manner in which they understood and volunteered certain information. As such, this sense of memory, tied as it was to a particular group of people in a particular geographical location with its own particular topography, is of crucial importance to the formation of local community identity.

<center>Customs and Resources</center>

Collective memory and custom were not only used as a way in which to judge individuals and their actions. It was also used as a tool to guide aspects of community interactions, rights, and rents. In this capacity, custom was intimately connected to the landscape and the resources the

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[21] TNA, E 134/41Eliz/Hil3.

community depended upon. Particularly relevant in regards to this relationship were the rents, tithes and rights of the communities of Kent. The customs of a woodland-based village, for example, would differ vastly from those of a coastal town. In this way, it is possible to see how the landscape could influence the rhythms of life, politics and identity within a certain community.

It was well known amongst the inhabitants surrounding Whitley Forest in the Sevenoaks District that certain groups from certain areas had rights and livelihoods connected to the forest itself. Around 1578, for example, James Wood, a seventy-one year old mercer of Sevenoaks, reported that:

> the tenants and inhabitaunts of Cheveninge and Sevenoke have alwaies during the tyme of the knowledge of this deponent used to have herbage pawnage carteboote & plowghboote within all Whitley aforesaid, and that he dothe not knowe nor hath harde that any the tenants or inhabitants of Otforde or any other parishes besydes have taken or claimed any suche profit or other profit there. (TNA, E 134/20&21Eliz/Mich10)

This was contradicted, however, by one John Pocock, a yeoman aged seventy-five, also from Sevenoaks, who supplied the information that the tenants of Otford 'have used to have plowbote weinbote, and stakewood in Whitley by the appointment of the woodreve'. The payment given to the woodreeve in return for these rights consisted of annual rent hens. Pocock, for instance, as an inhabitant of Sevenoaks, would pay one rent hen yearly in return for the right to cut wood to use to make repairs to ploughs, other agricultural equipment or carts (ploughboot and cartboot), the right to pasture cattle on another's land (herbage), and the right to pasture pigs in the forest, or else, to gather acorns or beech mast to feed pigs (pannage).[22] In this we can see the way in which memory was rewritten, with remembering and forgetting serving as evidence of the flexibility of customary arrangements over time. While the nature of the rights themselves is not under debate, the question of who had access to them shines light on a change over time which denied the inhabitants of Otford certain customs in this area. The deposition of James Wood suggests that local memories had altered: that this particular piece of information was being forgotten, possibly intentionally by those who could still access these resources.

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[22] TNA, E 134/20&21Eliz/Mich10.

Uncertainty and occasional confusion over local rights could easily crop up. A dispute over rights to mussel-beds near Sheerness resulted in a Star Chamber case in the reign of Mary I after the Mayor of Rochester, Edward Browne, and a group of aldermen and citizens of the city descended upon the 'mustell spotte' to claim what they saw as 'theyr auncyente custome and libertye' reaching back to the reigns of Henry VI and Edward IV.[23] The plaintiff, George Brooke, Lord Cobham, had challenged this 'auncyente' claim of the city of Rochester with his more recent claim to have received the rights from Edward VI. Together one June, the defendants took around sixteen boats onto the river and dredged for mussels, gathering over one hundred bushels which were then taken and converted to each fisherman's own use. They denied the accusations that they arrived with weapons, that they proceeded to destroy the mussels that were left, and noted that even if they had, this would not have had any impact upon Lord Cobham, as he did not have the said rights. This friction over rights to the river and its resources, considering it obtained the direct involvement not only of local fishermen and mariners, but also the mayor himself and the aldermen 'in their gownes', demonstrates the importance of such features to local economies and livelihoods, and the actions taken in the event when the rights to them came under question.

This same sort of issue can also be seen over access to the very different resources of Whitley Forest, as described above. Members of the communities around the forest continued to claim rights even if they were not currently able to exercise them. According to Robert Walker, the steward of Otford:

> all the tenants inhabitants of Otforde & Shorham havinge yoke
> lands doe claime Carteboote and plowgh boote in all whytley, But
> he […] hath alwaies denied them the allowance of any suche
> custome, unles yt shoulde please the Quenes Surveior to admytt yt,
> and that he never knew any take the benefit then of cheveninge.
> Howbeyt he hath harde yt saide that before this tyme yt was used
> by divers. (TNA, E 134/20&21Eliz/Mich10)

Although the steward at the time had prohibited the tenants of Otford from actively using the rights of cartboot and ploughboot that had once belonged to them, it is clear that those tenants had not

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[23] TNA, STAC 4/6/18.

accepted that those rights were gone. While no strong action seems to have been taken as in the case of the mussel-beds near Sheerness, the continued local effort to preserve the memory of such rights was a statement of its own. The claims maintained by the tenants and inhabitants of Otford and Shoreham themselves, as well as the statements by Pocock and other deponents of Sevenoaks, Chevening and Leigh that the said inhabitants had or claimed these rights, suggests that an assumption existed that the future would allow them once again to exercise the rights owed to them by the historical relationship between their communities and Whitley Forest. While individuals like James Wood of Sevenoaks could argue to the contrary, many of these deponents clearly had no intention of letting the memory be forgotten. As shown by Paul Ricoeur in the introduction, the choice of what to remember and what to forget is a vital part of the way that identity is formed and developed.[24] This battle between remembering and forgetting would have added a further political element to the experience of the local inhabitants and their relationship to the landscape and its resources, and would have contributed to forging another layer of identity to their communities.

This relationship between Whitley Forest and its surrounding villages did not simply rest upon the memory and exchange of rights and rents. It also involved the building of livelihoods, skills, methods and networks. Wood from Whitley Forest was often used for repairs of properties of the Queen, with warrants served in various parts of the Forest. Ten trees were felled in order to repair the pounds of the manor of Otford and of the hundred of Somerden in c. 1563, and five other trees were taken and used in repairs to the queen's mill at Dartford, Bignars Mill, around 1564. Ten more trees were used to repair Otford mill that same year, as well as five tonnes of timber which were again taken for repairs at Bignars Mill. Eighty trees were cut down to make repairs in the Pale of Otford Park in c. 1566, and ninety-six additional oaks went toward the repairs of the Pale later that same year. Ten trees were felled for further repairs of the Pale around the year 1568, whilst twelve oaks 'for the amending of the Pale of the courtes and walkes at Otforde' were cut down around 1570. In c. 1577, seven more trees were cut down to repair the Pale.[25] In this way, through the particular skills and resources available to them, the tenants in the villages surrounding Whitley Forest had a sense

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[24] Ricoeur, pp. 80-2.
[25] TNA, E 134/20&21Eliz/Mich10.

of their own roles within the larger networks of the queen's properties in Kent, and the particular importance of their local landscape with regards to their own lives, Kent, and the monarchy.

A similar experience can be seen in the inhabitants of the areas around Longbeech Wood, Charing: particularly the members of the parishes of Westwell and Challock. Longbeech Wood, although lying alongside the manor of Westwell, was generally accepted to belong to Christ Church Priory in Canterbury, according to yeoman Richard White, who did 'thinketh it to be so because it hath bene the common voice, and he never hard the contrarie'. Although there seems to have been contention over whether certain tenants had the rights to either Longbeech Wood or the woodlands of the manor of Westwell, the customary rights under debate were those such as fireboot, houseboot, or pannage.[26] The woodreeve of Longbeech Wood, for example, was known to accept payments from those like Thomas Taylor, a 64 year old yeoman and farmer of the manor of Westwell, and his father before him, in return for the right of pannage of their hogs within the said wood.[27] The rights to fireboot and houseboot for the tenants of Westwell, however, as detailed in an investigation from a year before, seem to have been restricted to the lands of the manor itself.[28] Again, the influence of the wooded landscape on the people of the parishes of Westwell and Challock can be felt in the ways in which they could feed their pigs, pasture their cattle, collect their fuel and make their repairs.

The inhabitants of Westwell and Challock did not depend solely upon the local woodland, however. The use of pasture and the cultivation of crops provided another focus, and created other traditions. Tithes of corn were paid by a particular section of the parish of Westwell and had been placed in the 'Parsonage Barne', which at the time of the deposition no longer existed, but was still clearly in the living memory of the inhabitants.[29] There were also pieces of land held within Longbeech Wood, such as Margaret Reed or Simonsfeld, which seem to have been held separately than the wood itself, and provided their own profit. For other areas, of course, the primary focus was upon the use of pasture and farm land, sometimes with small areas of woodland. Much of Boxley Park's woodland, for example, was seasonal, leading John Burtache, a seventy-year-old yeoman from Boxley, to judge the herbage of it to be of 'lytle worthe because the herbage thereof maye not

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[26] TNA, E 134/28&29Eliz/Mich5; TNA, E 134/30&31Eliz/Mich32.
[27] TNA, E 134/30&31Eliz/Mich32.
[28] TNA, E 134/28&29Eliz/Mich5.
[29] TNA, E 134/30&31Eliz/Mich32.

lawfullie be taken without the harte of the springe untill wood be muche overgrowen'.[30] The restriction of the times that herbage was legally allowed demonstrates just how particular some manorial customs could be, and how they governed the utilisation of local resources.

Access to the woodlands of Boxley seems to have been far more restricted than in the areas surrounding Whitley Forest, or even the woods of the manor of Westwell. Much of the wood would be cut down and either used for repairs or sold off. Men such as one Thomas Jenks, then woodreeve to Sir Thomas Wyatt, would order the timber to be felled and sold to other men of Boxley, but also to the people of Maidstone; a practise which provided more work for men like Ibe Clegate (another woodreeve) and one William Boot, whose job it was to take the wood to John Newman, a pewterer in Maidstone. Customs such as fireboot and ploughboot, however, were only available to the people whose properties or offices allowed it.[31]

The village of Boxley, of course, consisted of more than seasonal or private woodland. Penenden Heath is an area of common land which lay in both the parishes of Boxley and Maidstone, and part of which 'tyme out of mynd' had belonged to the manor of Newnham Court. It was an important location for many people, for more than one reason. As a longstanding site of gatherings and mediation with an established gallows, it retained a political significance for the people who had lived there for generations, combining their family and local histories with their landscape.[32] As a common, it also held a more practical use for the people who depended on it. It was commonly accepted that 'two or three poore cottigers have and do claime common of pasture in a certen smale parcell' of the heath, despite the fact that William Mason, a husbandman of Boxley Parish, 'doth not understand that they cold ever shew any thinge.' These 'poore cottigers' were established enough within their claimed area of Penenden Heath that several people could give a precise description of the location as 'betwene one Warrens howse, and the Shers house'. Their continued claim and use of the common land had created a form of perceived right to that particular area.

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[30] TNA, E 134/30&31Eliz/Mich19.
[31] TNA, E 134/31Eliz/Hil27.
[32] The meanings and resulting identities associated with Penenden Heath, particularly those of resistance and rebellion, will be explored further in later chapters.

Further information on the daily customs and politics of the heath can be gained from anecdotal evidence. One example can be found in the deposition of Richard Christian, a labourer of the parish of Maidstone, who could recall:

> one Smyth who was farmor of Newnham court […] would not suffer the drovers to stay or feed there catle upon any parte of the said hoth which was neere unto Newnham court, but hath himself caused the drovers to drive away there catle. (TNA, E 134/31Eliz/Hil27)

In this memory we can see how various layers of the community, sometimes uneasily, worked around each other amongst the same resources and sites. The interactions between those like Smith, with an established claim to an area of the heath, and those of the community who needed to move their cattle from place to place can be seen as a clash of two different lifestyles, each defending their own customs and rights according to status and land ownership. Christian's role of seeing off drovers and their cattle for Smith, connected as he became by his marriage to the niece of Smith's widow, and who lived in the house of her and her second husband, Robert Fenton for a year and a half, demonstrates how links could develop within both familial and working life.

Further connections can be seen in John Thomas' memory of his duties as a child. Although a husbandman at the time of the deposition, he could remember 'being a boy and serving one Grant farmer of Newnham Court about lx yeares synce did usually dryve his masters beasts to feeding in the said parcell of ground called Boxly parke, and hath often dryven his said masters hoggs to be fedd in the said ground'.[33] In the recounting of this memory, Thomas paints an image of a lifetime in the same area, learning from his master when he was a boy the skills and requirements needed to thrive in his environment. Multiple ties therefore drew members of the community together, and set them to sometimes similar and sometimes opposing aims: all of which were covered in some way by the flexibility of local customary law when it came to feeding livestock on either Boxley Park or Penenden Heath. Anecdotes such as Christian's and Thomas', and examples such as the poor cottagers, provide snapshots into the working lives of the people living in the areas around Penenden Heath, and the types of community politics involved in the use of the common and Boxley Park. The

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[33] TNA, E 134/31Eliz/Hil27.

combination of woodland and pasture-land, both common and privately owned, had its own impact on the lives of the local inhabitants and the customs they lived by, and influenced the political power of individuals in a variety of ways, from some of the poorest of the community to those with a stronger position: one which was often linked to Newnham Court. It was these sorts of relationships that made a 'good faith' economy possible, and which formed a community in which to shape collective and individual identities.

There were, of course, different types of land and field, which demanded different methods of cultivation with different produce and therefore different customs and rents were in turn expected of them. This was the case with the parish of Horton, which was divided into uplands and low ground. The statement of Edmund Spicer, aged fifty-five around the year 1594, was corroborated by the majority of deponents when he noted that the 'custome hath beene ever since hee canne remember' a yearly payment of two pence for every acre of low ground used for pasture within the parish. For the piece of upland called 'Pillriggs', which was converted from arable to pasture land, one halfpenny for every acre was due for the first year, and thereafter the price increased to one penny per annum. The yearly payment for the rest of the upland was also known to be one penny for every acre. This payment, according to Spicer, was considered to cover the tithe payments 'for drye Cattell Conyes and wooll of sheepe or of lambe feeding and pasturing uppon anie of the said landes bicause he never knew anie such paide or demaunded.'[34] A half-acre area of woodland seems to have been available to the members of the manor and parish of Horton, as many of them testified in a similar manner to the sixty-eight-year-old John Hannyn, who stated that 'he hath felled and topped manie trees in the said parish both for his father and himself and never payde any tythe thereof nor knew any demaunded'. While there does seem to have been a relevance to the age of the trees 'felled and topped' by the inhabitants of Horton, with several mentions of the trees being of twenty years growth, and there was some controversy over one specific tree that was positioned just outside the churchyard, protecting the church and the court lodge barn and seemingly considered off-limits, the general consensus seems to have been that no tithes were, or had been, required for the action. Another custom specified that the farmer was required to pay 'for the cast of colte, jd, and for calf lambe and

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[34] TNA, E 134/36&37Eliz/Mich25.

pigge a half penny a peece'. Richard Woodland Junior, for instance, had known it himself for forty years, and had 'heard it of awncient men to have beene so longe before'; a statement corroborated by many others.

Beyond the basic rents and rights accepted by the community, however, the customs and tithes of the parish of Horton became inconsistent; this created tension amongst the inhabitants. One of the reasons for the variety of payments or customs experienced seems to have been the failure of certain customs to continue amongst certain people. It could also, despite the fact that Spicer had stated that the manner of tithing was the same for 'the inhabitants and not inhabitants occupying within the said parish', and that he knew this because he had been both at some point, perhaps be that customs had dropped out of use in certain areas. The custom at the root of this confusion was one connected to the produce and income of the farmers. It consisted of the farmer having to pay 'tythe sholders for calves killed in the house and the tenth penny if they were sold'. Richard Mathews, vicar of Eleham, and William Hawkins, vicar of Waltham, recalled 'olde Father Ducke' (Thomas Ducke of Eleham) saying that when he had been rent gatherer he had collected such a tithe. When it comes to the parishioners' answers about it, however, we find something very different. Spicer had never heard of a customary tithe which demanded a shoulder for every calf killed or money for any calf sold, while the eighty year old John Chittenden of Horton said that he had killed and sold calves and had never paid or been asked to pay any tithe for doing so: statements which were repeated several times. In this case, there is a chance that 'olde Father Ducke', at the age of seventy-two, had got confused or misremembered something. There is also the implication here, like in the villages around Whitley Forest, of multiple competing memory strands amongst the community, causing friction between parishioners.

Another reason for certain inconsistencies was the personal agreements made by the parson with certain individuals. Thomas Honyfold, for example, a farmer of the manor of Horton, had an agreement that instead of the monetary payment for his uplands, he would make a yearly payment of four quarters of wool.[35] This was noticed before long by others in the community, with Spicer recounting his reaction to Honyfold's situation:

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[35] TNA, E 134/36&37Eliz/Mich25.

> this examinate hearing thereof demaunded of wherefore he paid
> fowre quarters of wooll since the Custome of the parish was
> otherwise The said Tho. Honyfolde awnswered that it was an
> agreement betweene the said parson and him that he sholde pay
> fowre quarters of yearelie in consideracon of the peny an acre
> which he sholde other wise have payed for his up growndes. (TNA,
> E 134/36&37Eliz/Mich25)

Change from the established custom was something that was clearly challenged in Horton. In Honyfold's case, it seems to have been a mutual agreement. In the case of Steven Broomeman, however, it was entirely different:

> whereas this examinate had paid the deffedant for his pastorage and
> casts of lamb according to the custome hee demaunded for tythe
> woolle when shearing time sholde come so that this examinate not
> knowing the custome was driven to agree with him. And after for
> felling certeine teenet to teene his hedges the said deffendant
> demaunded tythe of him for the same and threatened to scite him
> yf he wold not paie it and that he tooke a penny of him for a calf
> which he solde for ijs. (TNA, E 134/36&37Eliz/Mich25)

Several other grievances appear in the depositions concerning Adam Cleator, parson of Horton, and his disregard of the ancient customs of the parish, showing the clearly negative reaction to these changes. In addition to his own personal complaint, an awareness of the situation of others comes through in Hannyn's statement that 'the deffendant doth refuse to receive his tithes according to the auncient custome and that he hath demaunded and receeved some tithes contrarie to the said custome of one Broome man as he hath hard him saie'. This fits in with other complaints of Cleator's failure to receive tithes according to custom, even when someone like Nicholas Saunders of Lyminge had 'tendered unto him his tithes according to the custome and he [Cleator] hath refused to receive it this ij yeares.'[36]

By refusing to act according to the custom of the parish, by adapting payments for certain individuals, particularly in the case of Broomeman, who at first was ignorant of the details of the customs, and by refusing the traditional tithes, Cleator was rejecting the rules and guidelines that the

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[36] Ibid.

people of the parish and manor of Horton lived by. Given the importance of customs, not just to the daily running of the parish, but also to the history of the area and the investments of the ancestors of the people living there in establishing rights and payments, this rejection could easily be perceived as a form of attack on the community and its values. The general awareness of men like Spicer and Hannyn of the situations of Honyfold and Broomeman suggests that the people of Horton held the continuation of the customs of the parish and the manor to be of immediate importance, and that any changes not collectively agreed upon were *not* welcome.

Unlike the people who depended upon woodland, like the inhabitants of the areas around Whitley Forest, or those who were more focused on the access to pasture lands, like those who lived around Penenden Heath or in the parish of Horton, the communities living on the coast of Kent had an entirely different experience of life. The customary laws of these regions, although similar in essence, had to account for a variety of elements that were not applicable for the inland villages and manors. Their position on the borders of England meant that they could be vulnerable to invading forces from the Continent, but also had structures created to deal with travellers and trade, particularly at the main ports.[37] Sandwich, as one of the Cinque Ports, had a well-established body of customs, particularly with relevance to goods and people entering and leaving the country. So when the *Mary Fortune* of Hull, carrying fifty-eight tons of wine '& other merchandises' from Bordeaux, was wrecked by 'extremitie of weather & tempest' on Goodwin Sands (around six miles off the coast of Deal), it was at Sandwich that the surviving goods were processed and a new ship was provided to continue the journey to Hull.[38] Recounted by Thomas Bulmer, a twenty-three year old merchant from Kingston-upon-Hull, local mariners were hired to come out with their boats in an effort to lighten the load of the ship, and managed to recover around forty tons of wine, which was entered into the custom book in the Sandwich custom house before a new ship, the *Providence*, was provided to continue on to the port of Kingston-upon-Hull. From this incident, several customs were applied as necessary, showing the unique situation of the Cinque Ports amongst all the other ports in England, as well as what was expected when merchandise came into the realm through Sandwich. Impost and tonnage

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[37] Kent's position between London and the Continent, and its subsequent history of vulnerability will be explored in later chapters.
[38] TNA, E 134/33Eliz/Hil12.

were paid in Sandwich before the *Providence* left, and a transire, or certificate, witnessing the payments later arrived at the Custom house at Kingston-upon-Hull via the Exchequer. It was noted, however, by Michael Beesbie, another young merchant from Kingston-upon-Hull, that it was by 'credible reporte that merchaunts landing and unloding their wines w*i*thin the liberties of the Sinke portes are freed of prisage or butlerage'. Bulmer also reported certain merchant knowledge or conversation, having 'heard it held amongest merchants', for example, that 'as a custome, that after a transire be graunted, no furder dutie can be demaunded for the goods mentioned in the same.'

The customs that met people as they came into the country through the port of Sandwich were far more official than those of the other communities studied so far. It shared this focus with the rest of the Cinque Ports (Dover, Hythe, New Romney and Hastings), which had their own offices and specific customs payments and which were governed by the Lord Warden of the Cinque Ports (at the time, William Brooke, 10th Baron Cobham). Due to their history as the key coastal ports facing the Continent, particularly given England's historic links with France, the towns of the Cinque Ports had an awareness of external influences and strangers written into their customs in a way that most communities in England did not. Other coastal towns, however, did not have such an official purpose, and relied on the more insular, local, customary laws in the same way as the people of Horton, Whitley Forest and Boxley. Rights and rents had their own peculiarly local focus.

A particularly prominent example of this would be the coastal town of Faversham. Although perhaps slightly more difficult to identify due to tides and a lack of landmarks, there was an established division of the sea into areas known to locals by names such as 'The Nebb', 'The Oose' or 'The Pollard' (as mentioned above). Each of these designated areas had different rights attached to it, which occasionally were the subject of controversy. A fisherman, John Godfrey of Canterbury, described the 'place commonly called the Nebb' as follows: 'within his memorye the said Nebb did not adioyne to the said Landes [of the late Thomas Cheyney, within the isle of Harty], but ther Ranne a Channell betwene the mayne Lande and the said Nebb which saide Nebb was in manner of a channell.'[39] According to Arthur Foreman, a sailor from Sittingbourne, the Nebb was a shelf alongside a 'deepe channell', across from which was another oyster ground, thought to be known as

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[39] TNA, E 134/31&32Eliz/Mich29.

the Oose, belonging to a farm called the Long House. The Nebb was held within the manor of Faversham, and was considered part of the sea common. As such, as Peter Emery, a 'seafaringe man' of the isle of Harty, described:

> the complainants and divers other fishermen in habitinge within the
> said mannor doe pay a yearly rent to her majestie for fishinge
> within the said mannor And saieth that ther be aboute therty, that
> be fermors to her majestie (TNA, E 134/31&32Eliz/Mich29)

This seems to have been widely known, as 'Godfrey of Canterbury' could also report having known these details 'for the tyme of his remembrance, that is to say for aboute Lv or Lvj yearess'.[40] It was the right only of the men of Faversham to be able to fish on the Nebb. The Oose, or Oose Down, on the other hand, belonged to the Long House, which had been held by Sir Thomas Cheyney. In return for the right to fish on the Oose, Thomas Peramore, a gentleman from the parish of St Nicholas at Wade in the Isle of Thanet, had heard that the farmers of the Long House paid Cheyney 'fower markes by the yeares, and two bushells of muskels every weke betwene shrove sonday, and palme sonday in Lent'.

Among the manor of Faversham's sea grounds was also the Pollard. As has already been said, it was a two square mile sea ground a few miles from the mouth of Faversham creek. When fishermen from the town of Milton encroached on the rights of the tenants of the manor of Faversham by fishing within the Pollard, they were found and punished. Francis Gray, a seafaring man from Ore, was able to describe the events in a way that demonstrated the impact that the fishermen of Milton had on the livelihoods of the men of Faversham:

> the defendants have dregged and fished in or upon the grownde
> now in question called the Pollard and in other growndes, and he
> thinkethe, that they have taken to the quantities of a hundred
> wasshe of oisters, which when they were caught were worthe viijs
> a wasshe. (TNA, E 134/42Eliz/East10)

This had the consequence of doing 'so muche hurte to the Tenants of the hundred of ffaversham, as he thinketh it is the utter undoeinge, and losse of their lievinges'. As a result, 'the water bailive of

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[40] Ibid.

ffaversham did forbide the defendants from dregginge on the oister grownde called the Pollard, and saieth that they that were forbidden'.[41] In this example, it seems definitive that any fishermen from anywhere other than Faversham found fishing on the Pollard were considered to be acting contrary to the customary laws of the manor.

In a separate investigation in the same year, however, that conclusion is thrown into question. One man called John Harker, a yeoman belonging to the town of Whitstable, stated unequivocally that the Pollard did not belong to the manor of Faversham, referring to 'a decree made by the Lorde Admirall under his hande and seale (eight yeres sithence or thereabouts)'. According to Harker, it 'dothe warrant the priviledges of the Mannor of Whitstable to go over the Pollard to the yomer edge of the Rode deepe which is the channell, being from Whitstable Northward of the Sande, to the Seaward by estimacon three miles or there abouts'.[42] Harker, however, was the only deponent to have this information, and was the only one to be certain that the Pollard was *not* part of the manor of Faversham. Others admitted they did not know, but used the more practical (and more convincing, in terms of customary law) argument of the continuous use of the Pollard for fishing by more than just the tenants of the manor of Faversham. John Vale of Chatham, for example, a boatswain of the royal ship, the *Elizabeth Jonas*, argued that:

> he him self and divers others by the space of fowrtene yeres
> together, (twentie and six yeres sithence last past or thereabouts
> since which tyme he hathe geven over fishing) have used to fishe
> along by the place called the Pollard downe to Whitstable weares
> (TNA, E 134/42Eliz/East10)

That variations on this testimonial are the primary argument, and that only one attempted to use the decree as evidence, suggests either that the decree was not generally known amongst the people who depended on the use of the Pollard, and was therefore not considered relevant or necessary to them, or that they were aware of it but considered the argument based on years of continual use to be more relevant and convincing in a court of law, whether or not the Pollard technically belonged to the manor of Faversham.

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[41] TNA, E 134/42Eliz/East10.
[42] TNA, E 134/42Eliz/Trin7.

The combination, again, of collective knowledge and history, and of the continued actions of people over a long period of time, evidently seems to have been of the most significance to the fishermen who used the Pollard and the areas around it. One possible reason for the ambiguity over the ownership and use of the Pollard could lie in the amounts taken by fishermen from outside the manor of Faversham. Harker, reporting on the activities of the fishermen, stated that 'he hathe not knowne the fishermen of Barking, Whitstable, Milton and other places to fishe at a place called the Pollard otherwise then sometymes to cast their nette and take a halle or twayne and so go their wayes'. There is the chance, then, that minor amounts of fishing on or near the Pollard were acceptable, as long as the amounts taken were not enough to cause 'so muche hurte' to the tenants of the manor of Faversham; as in the case of the Milton men, whose haul amounted to 'a hundred wasshe of oisters […] worthe viijs a wasshe'.[43]

The practical, everyday political lives of ordinary people cannot be fully understood without including local customs and customary law, given the length and depth of what these covered. Furthermore, customary law cannot be discussed without taking into account the landscape. It was in relation to the local resources and land ownership that local customs showed themselves to be most relevant, particularly in the types of cases that made their way into the Court of the Exchequer. The types of rents or payments in exchange for rights were, as one would expect, specifically tailored to the payment abilities of the individual according to their property and income. Access to resources, whether based on woodland, pasture or arable land, or the sea, was regulated according to rents and agreements with the manor rooted in the history of the community beyond living memory. Tied up as customs were with the landscape and the specific rights of a specific community, they allowed for the proper treatment of resources and the ongoing support of the people using them. This can be seen in the laws forbidding the use of the woodland in Boxley Park any time other than spring, and in the reaction to and punishment of the fishermen of Milton when they took what was perhaps seen as more than their fair share, thereby damaging the livelihoods of the tenants of the manor of Faversham. The fact that seafaring men of various towns around the Pollard had a history of fishing on what seems to have generally been considered to belong to the manor of Faversham, also points to the

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[43] TNA, E 134/42Eliz/Trin7.

flexibility and ongoing development of customs as needed. The questions contained in commissions out of central courts such as the Exchequer, which routinely made use of phrases such as 'time out of mind', encouraged these types of answers. They worked with and around the intricacies of local customary law, suggesting, too, that this flexibility and profound connection to the landscape was accepted and understood, at least to a point.

Customary law, in addition to its far-reaching control, or at least guidance, of how the community could access and defend tenant or common rights, had a crucial impact upon the political motivations and decisions made by the people bound by the local laws, and therefore also had a significant influence over personal and familial alliances. This was particularly evident in the ways in which the inhabitants living around Boxley Park and Penenden Heath interacted with each other to carve out their own conditions; whether they were the poorest cottagers who established an area of Penenden Heath for themselves, those like Robert Smith who had links to Boxley Park and moved further into the Heath land around the park, or the drovers who were made to leave that heath land by the labourer, Richard Christian, who later married into that family. Each of these examples demonstrates a different way in which common land could be used by people in different positions, and how they went about maintaining that lifestyle within the community of inhabitants making use of the same land. Customary law and customs, then, could influence everything from the minutiae to the general rules of property management and access to resources, and as a result, had a significant effect on social interaction, identity and politics; all of which were therefore linked intimately with the landscape of their localities.

<u>Reading the Landscape</u>

Of course, for the customs of a community to be effective, one had to be able to apply them to specific parcels of land (or sea). The ability to read the landscape and understand the signs, to ascertain where one person's property ended and another one's began, or to have the accurate knowledge of which was common land and which was not, was obviously necessary for the day-to-day politics of life, as well as when problems arose between inhabitants regarding rights and rents. The definition of the boundaries of these parcels within a parish or manor was therefore central to customary law and again reflected the vital connection between custom and the landscape. This

intertwining of custom and landscape is evident throughout the local depositions, both in the disputes over property ownership, and particularly common land, and in the descriptions of the efforts made in order to record and retain the knowledge of the local landscape and how it was divided. It is also visible in the easy knowledge portrayed by the deponents of local landmarks, as they often seem to be incorporated into markers or symbols. It is with this information that we can start to form understandings of community identity on the most basic level – what was considered important? What was not? In these choices, just as with the significance of remembering and forgetting, we can discover how communities defined themselves physically, socially, politically and emotionally.

Understanding local life and politics meant understanding the local landscape, the meanings of landmarks, and their significance for the local people. For them, it meant living and working alongside the land in a reciprocal relationship. The land shaped how they divided properties, how they established power relationships, and how they used and maintained resources. The recognition of the significance of the natural landmarks of the locality is evident in the knowledge displayed of local features, which were often incidental to the main point. John Hannyn, a Horton man, could describe 'certeyne elmes and asshes growing neere the churcheyard and uppon the Queenes land', and many others of the community noticed when 'a greate elme standing a litle withoute the rayle of the churcheyard' was cut down.[44] The people of Horton knew the exact species of tree, and the specific tree that had been felled, just as Richard Christian, the labourer from Maidstone, could report that when some trees were cut down in Boxley Park, of which several were willow trees, 'many yet stand and remayne, and are Willow Trees of good bygues'.[45] In the same way, Richard Woodland Junior could confirm that not only had Laurence Rooke, a gentleman of Horton Monks, topped many trees in particular areas, but also that those trees 'were all of above twentie yeares growth and that they were Assh and maple for the most parte'.

A similar knowledge can be found in the descriptions of boundaries. Although boundary markers could consist of a variety of forms, the ones that held the most meaning were the ones which had long since existed as extensions of the natural landscape, in old ditches, trees, banks and hedges.

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[44] TNA, E134/36&37Eliz/Mich25.
[45] TNA, E134/31Eliz/Hil27.

A gentleman of Challock, Richard Thurston, could testify that Longbeech Wood belonged to Christ Church Priory and was separate from the manor of Westwell because of the reports of elder members of the community, but also because he could use the local landscape. He was able to note that in relation to the manor:

> the said wood is severed by an olde cast ditche for the most parte
> evedentlie to be sene and against the highe wayes, but in many
> places the land peres keepe the fences and there it is more severed
> by stand markes and hedges then by ditches, And further saith that
> the said wood is severed from a parcell of the mannor of westwell
> called Margrett reede in some parte by a dike besides the hedge.
> (TNA, E 134/30&31Eliz/Mich32)

The 'olde cast ditche' suggested a legitimacy caused or emphasised by age, while the fact that fences and hedges were maintained suggested an ongoing claim and use of the land. Meanwhile, in Betteshanger, a piece of woodland called Betteshanger Wood was divided into two parts by what was repeatedly referred to as a 'very great dych and a hedge'. The particular emphasis on the notable size of the ditch and the fact that there was an additional hedge, as with the bounds of Margaret Reed, gives the impression of a well-established boundary. It is telling that in the interrogatories put to these deponents, there were no questions requiring these kinds of specifics. It was the examinants themselves who clearly considered the types of trees or bound markers relevant and significant. These were signs that all locals knew how to read.

The broad application of this understanding of the landscape across social boundaries can be seen in the voluntary information provided by local labourers and gentlemen in the depositions above, but also in official records such as a composite volume of information on the Cinque Ports. Probably composed by James Thurbane at the beginning of the seventeenth century and based on a collection of official documents, we can see a similar format in its descriptions of the grounds and limits of the main ports, such as New Romney and Sandwich, and towns within their jurisdiction, such as Appledore, Stonar, and Lydd.[46] The description of the bounds of Sandwich, copied from the town's Custumal, for example, uses perambulation format. Like the deponents for Horton and Betteshangar,

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[46] KHLC, Sa/CPc4. The Thurbane family were notable members of both Sandwich and New Romney.

the writer uses natural landscape features, ancient established landmarks, and locally significant sites to document the boundaries of the town of Sandwich. The reader is directed to follow 'a certaine water running downe into the same Sea which is Called the Gestling', which happened to be 'beside the Cheifdownes where men condemned with in the liberty aforesaid are buried alive' before coming to 'a Certaine ditch' which divided the marshlands of the 'Lord of Polder' and 'the heirs of John Edward'. Also considered to be significant landmarks were stone crosses and specific highways.[47]

Other significant sites which were repeatedly noted in descriptions of the landscape were places of execution. Such spaces and the rituals which accompanied them 'expressed and reinforced spatial cosmology and the social order of societies that enacted capital punishment and thus consolidated group identities'.[48] As a result, references to places where 'men condemned with in the liberty aforesaid are buried alive', 'the place of Execution, or punishment', or to areas with names like 'hangyng hylle' can be found regularly in local directions.[49] Only an individual familiar with not only the specific stone crosses, waterways, and highways, but also with land ownership and local history, would have been entirely comfortable with this description of the town's limits. This focus on features of the landscape in written evidence such as depositions and custumals can also be seen in maps. Although these are rare for this period, a map provided in a chancery case, depicting a large area of marshland covering certain parishes in Sussex and other marshes in Sussex and Kent, provides an example of what was considered important to capture in image form. In this disproportionate map it is not the parishes that are the focus; they are incredibly small in comparison to the representation of features such as waterways, roads, walls, bridges, and a gate in the foreground which is twice the size of the parish of Brenzett.[50] The suggestion that the patterns depicted on the road in the foreground were horse hoof marks also holds implications of repeated use.[51] The close attention paid to the local landscape, bound up in natural, man-made, and social features, shows just how significant this

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[47] KHLC, Sa/CPc4, f. 43. For more on landmarks like stone crosses, please see Walsham, *The Reformation of the Landscape,* esp. pp. 32-3, 60-1, 102-3, 119-21.

[48] Joris Coolen, 'Places of justice and awe: the topography of gibbets and gallows in medieval and early modern north-western and central Europe', *World Archaeology,* 45 (2013), 774.

[49] KHLC, Sa/CPc4, f. 43; Lambarde (1576), 178-80; KHLC, U301/E/1.

[50] TNA, MPA 1/61. See Appendix A.

[51] This suggestion is made in the catalogue description of the National Archives: <http://discovery.nationalarchives.gov.uk/details/r/C3982962> [Accessed 12.03.17].

knowledge was to maintaining the boundaries of towns, parishes and properties, and therefore to defining the limits of customs and resources and the resulting identity of the locality.

The necessity of this knowledge for many towns and villages can be felt in the way that recognition of features of the local landscape was institutionalised in tradition in perambulations. Walking the bounds was a practice which consisted of elderly and young members of the community, often with the lord, lady, or vicar, walking along the boundaries of the manor or parish, with several purposes based in the pre-Reformation ceremonial procession accompanying Rogationtide. By Elizabeth's reign, the religious side of the practice had been minimised, though not eradicated, and walking the bounds remained a highly significant social and pedagogical practice which played a vital part in the expression and reaffirming of the identity of the parish community.[52] Perambulations enabled the people involved to survey the various properties that made up the area, to keep up to date with changes in the boundary markers, and to pass this knowledge from the older participants to the younger ones. By doing this, vital knowledge survived through generations, making sure that years later it would still be available when needed.[53]

An example of this can be seen in the depositions of the inhabitants of the manor of Wye. The descriptions of the boundaries of a particular piece of woodland included in their Perambulation Book were highly detailed:

> tourne from the said fowerth beche Northwarde to a cokered marke
> beeche standinge by a hole leavinge the kyngswood weste to the
> thirde beeche leavinge the kyngs wood southe, At the said third
> beeche tourne northward by A hole a fower Rodds of and from
> thence to a twysted Beeche marked with a payre of spectackles and
> so still northwarde to a greate olde marke beeche leavinge the
> kings wood weste and then torne from the said olde beeche weste
> northweste to olde wye waie that cometh from kelchingham
> [Keltingham] (TNA, E 134/30&31Eliz/Mich11)

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[52] Steve Hindle, 'Beating the Bounds of the Parish: Order, Memory and Identity in the English Local Community, c. 1500-1700' in *Defining Community in Early Modern Europe,* eds. Michael J. Halvorson and Karen E. Spierling (Hampshire, 2008), pp. 205-28.
[53] Wood, *Memory of the People*, p. 204-10.

In this small section of the Perambulation Book, it is clear just how necessary it was to have a working knowledge of the properties of a locality and their boundary markers. References to the 'cokered marke beeche standinge by a hole' or the 'twysted Beeche marked with a payre of spectackles' give an indication of how much attention was paid to features of the local landscape. Directions such as 'to the thirde beeche leavinge the kyngs wood southe' demonstrated the assumed knowledge, not only that the reader could tell a beech tree from any other species of tree, but also that they knew the King's Wood, and that they knew the points of the compass in relation to that location.

As with the description of the bounds of Sandwich, the description of the boundary markers taken from the book was also knowledge that many people either had had for years, or could easily corroborate. Thomas Chapman of East Peckham, a household servant to Roger Twisden, could claim that 'thies twentie yeres laste paste he hath well knowen the markes and bowndes of the said Piece of woodland from the marcks and bowndes of the Lordes woods there.' He had also, however, seen the 'Auncient Booke' before it was shown to him during the examination, and took part in the walking of the bounds of the piece of woodland arranged to verify the accuracy of the written perambulation. Involved in this particular perambulation were a variety of people, including Gilbert Fenys, a labourer; George Dawson, another of Twisden's servants; and Thomas Warde, a yeoman of Wye. Warde, who had known the said bounds since Henry VIII's death, could report that 'he hath in the companie of others walked abowte the said piece of wood in controversie by the direccon of the said Booke and doth fynde the same in that place to be verie true accordinge to his former knowledge.'[54]

The combination of collective memory and personal experience contained within the local landscape was therefore utilised in many ways. If someone was asked about a certain property, through experience with the land and with the people who lived on it, a highly detailed description of the boundaries or the direction of a route or way could be produced. Hugh Pulpard, yeoman of the parish of Barsted, could give a meticulous account of the part of Penenden Heath that was thought to belong to Newnham Court:

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[54] TNA, E 134/30&31Eliz/Mich11.

he knoweth Pyttenden hoth, and saith, that tyme out of mynd as
hath heard of Auncyent men, and for the space of this examinats
aboad in thes parts, which hath been synce the first yeare of Quene
Maryes Reigne, a greate parte therof hath been taken to belong to
the Mannor of Newnham Court, viz. all that lower parte which
lyeth along Boxly parke from the way which leadeth from Detling
to the shere house and so crosse to the new howse late buylded by
Robert Warren, and from the new house lyeth under the hill neere
unto the place of execucon, and from thence reacheth to the high
way leading to Barsted by the grounds and woods lying south*e*rly
toward Maydestone. (TNA, E 134/31Eliz/Hil27)

In this description was a collection of the old and the new of the landscape of Penenden Heath and the properties connected to it, showing in it the use made of the land and the people who used it. The familiarity and the implied experience, not to mention the further comment that this was information verified by 'Auncyent men', all added to the legitimacy of his testimony, and pointed to the collectively accepted piece of Newnham Court's land. By the same token, if a property was *not* included in the perambulation, it had its own significance. It could raise questions over the ownership of the said property, as seems to have been the case with two fields of the former abbey of St Radigund's. John Cadman, the fifty-year-old vicar of the parish of Alkham had heard that the fields were thought to belong to the parish, 'but for this xvij yeres synce he was vicar there they have not fetcht yt in their perambulacon'. John Marshe, also of Alkham, used similar reasoning, stating that 'he doth not knowe that it lyeth in the parisshe of Alkham But he saieth that these xl yeres yt hath not byn fetcht in their perambulacon.'[55] The absence of the property in the walking of the bounds was a significant enough reason to doubt the property's inclusion as part of the parish.

However, through communities living within the landscape and being shaped by it, the landscape itself and the perception of it was, in turn, shaped by those relationships. The references to property, such as 'the new howse late buylded by Robert Warren', show how the perception of certain lands could be influenced by the person most connected with it. In the eyes of the community, however, the person the land was associated with was not necessarily the current owner at the time. This can be seen in the references to a piece of land called 'Johns (alias John ffromondes)' in Hadlow

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[55] TNA, E 134/29Eliz/Hil17.

in 1586-1587.[56] The manor of Fromonds had been in the possession of the Fromond family from the reign of Henry III, and was sold out of the family to the Colepepers, who retained ownership until around the time of Edward IV, when Richard Colepeper sold the land to John Fromond. One of his successors then alienated the manor to the Vane (or Fane) family, who kept it through Elizabeth's reign and into the reign of Charles I.[57] Despite not having been in the possession of the Fromond family for generations, the land still retained the connection with John Fromond for the people of Hadlow.

The naming of a piece of land could also convey a political statement, reflecting the memories and experiences associated with it. A dispute over certain lands in Tenterden and High Halden was brought into question by deponents because of the activities of one John Pett, who occupied two closes of pasture land which had previously been inhabited by one Robert Pope. The situation was summarised by Richard Nethersole, a gentleman of Tenterden:

> Robert Pope did not surrender uppe his lease unto the said John
> Pett, But […] he the said Robert did enjoy and occupye the same
> duringe his life tyme, further he saieth that he hath heard say that
> the said Pope his sonne did lose theire said lease by the synister
> dealings of the said John Pett diceased. (TNA, E 134/23Eliz/East9)

Although Pope's sons reported that Pope himself had only ever referred to his lands as 'the Abbott's Crofts' or 'the King's Crofts', they seem to have been widely known by others in the communities of Halden and Tenterden as 'Pope's Closes'. John Glover, for example, a shoemaker from the nearby village of Bethersden, testified that, 'sithens the said twoe closes weare in thoccupacon of the said Robert Pope, the same were called by the name of Popes close, and by no other name or names that he hath heard.' Yeoman Roger Garrett could support this as he had seen a survey which named the two parcels of pasture land as 'Dawborne Popes close'. Although it is clear that these lands had their own names from a long time before Robert Pope's occupation, his life there made its own impact on the land and the community, which remained part of the landscape even after he had died and his sons had been evicted. By adopting and retaining the name 'Pope's Closes' even after Pope's sons

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[56] TNA, E 134/29Eliz/Hil19.
[57] Edward Hasted, *The History and Topographical Survey of the County of Kent, Vol. 5* (Canterbury, 1798), pp. 183-4.

had left, the land itself was part of a larger discourse of rights and custom, suggesting that the Pope men still had a stronger claim to the land than the current owner in the eyes of the community. In their depositions, it is significant that the deponents who made the point that the two crofts were called Pope's Closes were also highlighting the less-than-honest actions of Pett. By drawing the name of the land together with the 'synister', 'subtill', 'crafty' and 'very fraudulent' behaviour of Pett, they were all at once emphasising the legitimacy of Pope and his sons' rights to the land, and condemning Pett's manipulation of the circumstances to encroach on those rights.

In these examples, we can see how lands, boundaries, and markers were both committed to memory and written down for posterity, but were reinforced by the act of walking the bounds in the event of a dispute. The amalgamation of collective memory, local history, local landscape and the personal experience of inspecting these markers made perambulations one of the most common and reliable methods of maintaining the community's sense of self. It was because of these customs that when a piece of land came under scrutiny or someone encroached onto someone else's land, or indeed, common land, it would soon be noticed. As has already been shown, the use of common grounds was a central aspect of every-day political life. Penenden Heath came with its own political arena based on wealth and property. Change was accepted when it could be collectively agreed upon, often in the form of negotiation: a reflection of the type of agreement between the lord of the manor and their tenants in the creation of the manorial customs. This happened in the case of Robert Fenton when he enclosed a piece of woodland from the Heath for his own use. Robert Byshop, an eighty-five year old labourer of Boxley, could remember when it occurred:

> the parcell of woodland […] hathe not bene in the memorie of this deponent anye parte of the saide Boxley parke but did manye yeares agoe lye open to the saide Pittenden hethe, without anye hedge, diche, or banke betwene them and was then accompted parcell of the saide hethe. And sayeth, that he knowethe not what tyme the same was first severed from the saide hothe; but remembreth that one Robert ffenton (then ffarme of the said Newenham Courte did first inclose and sever the said parcell from the said parcell from the said hothe, by consent of the neighbors and tenants there (whereof he this examinat was then one) to

thende that they might have some woode thereof. (TNA, E 134/30&31Eliz/Mich19)

By obtaining the consent of the rest of the neighbours and tenants, Fenton navigated the political waters of the community and thereby accomplished his goal. When it was not done in the right way, however, there could be consequences. During the lifetime of Sir Thomas Wyatt, Fenton also enclosed another part of Penenden Heath by taking his right of hedgeboot in Boxley Park to close off an area which became known as 'Three Corner'd Croft', or 'Harpe Croft'.[58] This time, however, there was no mention of an agreement with the rest of the tenants or neighbours, and it is significant that in the later rebellions of 1549 the first piece of woodland was left alone, while the 'Three Corner'd Croft' was thrown open. Similarly, in a dispute between Richard Baker of Cranbrook and his tenants, investigated in 1568, it was stated that 'it hathe bene used by all the tyme whereof the memorie of man hathe not runne to the contrarie that the said tenants and owners of the premisses by the comon assent of them of the greater number of them have made bylaws' regarding the felling of trees on their common.[59] When this communication broke down between landlord and tenants with Baker arranging for the trees to be cut down, the locals took steps to prevent him from carrying them away.

Customary law did not just pertain to fields and woodland. It also extended to highways, which seem often to have been considered common land. A highway called Key Street (the section of Watling Street between Canterbury and London) led from Rochester to Dartford, and then on to London, dividing the parishes of Southfleet and Swanscombe. It had 'bene aunciently taken to be' one of the four highways of England for the queen's Posts, and also happened to separate the properties of Ralphe Weldon, esquire, in Swanscombe, and those of Dame Jane Wyatt in Southfleet.[60] According to Robert Hookes, a yeoman of Swanscombe, 'the soile of Key streete is parcell & belonginge to the Mannor of Swanscombe on bothe sides of the high way there from hedge to hedge'. Gates had been put up in the highway in order to keep cattle out, and farm rents to the amount of six shillings and eight pence were collected yearly by Hookes for the rent and herbage of the highway, to be paid to Weldon. The tenants, Thomas Browne, labourer of Swanscombe, and his father and uncle, Peter Browne and John Browne respectively, made use of the hedges there by cutting them

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[58] TNA, E 134/31Eliz/Hil27.
[59] TNA, C 78/38/12.
[60] TNA, E 134/39Eliz/Hil2.

down to mend their own hedges elsewhere. This had been going on under Weldon's father, Anthony Weldon, and yet in the following years seems to have intensified. Richard Thacke, a husbandman of Southfleet, stated in his answers that:

> in the beginninge they did not impownde any Cattell to his knowledge, but of late they have from thence impownded Cattell feedinge upon the said high way, and caryed them to Swanscombe pownd but whether they made any amendes but powndage, he doth not knowe. (TNA, E 134/39Eliz/Hil2)

This, combined with what appears to have been the unintentional felling of a hedge considered the property of Lady Jane Wyatt, seems to have sparked controversy between Wyatt and Weldon. The case made against Weldon was based solely on the argument that by continuous use and local history, the highway was an ancient and *common* highway, with all the understood customary rights that came with it.

The existence of the gates was brought up at a leet at Southfleet Manor, and resulted in them being pulled down in order to avoid a financial penalty. Despite the leet's judgment being available to deponents as a possible legal precedent, only one person brought it up and instead the case made against Weldon was based in the landscape itself. According to Robert Blackman, a yeoman of Southfleet and a tenant of Wyatt, Wyatt's property was on the west side and bounded by a bank which was held to be 'the auntient bound devidinge the saide [Wyatt's] severall landes from the said high way', while on the east side the highway was divided from a Mr Carew's lands by 'graet trees & auntient Brokes, at the least of thage of one hundreth yeeres'.[61] Weldon's land was also separated from the highway by 'an auntient banck & ditche'. The fences adjoining Key Street of Wyatt's property had been known by all 'to have bene kept & maintayned from tyme to tyme' by her tenant farmers. Each type of boundary marker, whether tree, bank or hedge, were all recognisable to any passer-by as an established division separating Key Street from the private properties abutting it. What was emphasised in each description was the age of the marker. The long-standing existence of these boundaries, and the continued maintenance of them, gave them an incontestable legitimacy and

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[61] TNA, E 134/39Eliz/Hil2.

showed how people respected the significance of that maintenance. When Weldon attempted to challenge the authority conveyed by the ancient boundaries, it was therefore noted.

Blackman's remark that Weldon's boundary was ancient bank and ditch upon which 'a hedge hath bene maintayned tyme oute of minde', was contrasted with his follow-up comment that:

> the saide hedge vpon the saide banck is not now maintayned by the defendant & that the saide defendant aboute vj: yeres past & somewhat vnder hath cawsed hedges there to be made incrochinge some rod & a half in bredth vpon the saide high way, by the space of Lx rodds in length or thereabouts and that the saide high way by reason of the saide hedges is so streightned & impayred, that there remayneth no easie passage for travellers that way. (TNA, E 134/39Eliz/Hil2)

In this one answer, Blackman incorporated Weldon's failure to uphold the customary duty of maintaining ancient land boundaries, with the use of language such as 'incrochinge' suggesting that he had committed a form of trespass, and repeated an earlier point that the highway was one of the queen's main roads, implying that Weldon had not only hindered normal travellers, but could potentially impede upon the queen's business, too. His argument that Key Street was a common highway was also based, as customary laws often were, in continuous usage over a long period of time:

> John Leake of Stonewood & one mother Hill of Southfleete, a poore wooman, w*i*th divers other whom he cannot name, have comonly pastured their Cattell upon the said high way, aboute xl yeres sithence and so contynewed untill aboute xxvij or xxviij yeres last past, that they were put from it. (TNA, E 134/39Eliz/Hil2)

Weldon, by this argument, was acting contrary to the customary laws of the land, both by stepping on the common rights of others, and by ignoring the significance of the ancient boundaries and signs imbedded in the landscape.

This was not the only dispute over the private claiming of highways which reached the Court of Exchequer, nor was it the only one which consisted of a clash between common law and customary

law, or the old and the new. Situations like the dispute over the rights to dredge the mussel-beds near Sheerness mentioned above, where a fairly recent claim (such as Cobham's supposed right obtained from Edward VI) came into conflict with an older claim accompanied by repeated activity (the rights of the city of Rochester granted by Henry VI and Edward IV), were quite common.[62] A similar case to that of Key Street arose in 1601 over a highway known as Folkestone Way. It covered an area from Ford, in the parish of Folkeston, to Sandgate Castle and was used by the mayor and jurats of Dover as well as many others.[63] One Mr William Jenkins had already owned the land on one side of the highway, and after he bought the land on the other side, stopped up the way and claimed it as his own private ground. Robert Harte, a carpenter of Horton, was one of many who insisted that the 'waye [had been] used as a comon waye to ride & goe & for packe & sacke on horsbacke', with further emphasis on the argument that they had 'herd it of divers that it was a comon way, [and] never herd it denied to be used as a waye'.[64] Such answers not only reflected the variety of ways the way was used by a variety of people, but also suggested that the use of it was a topic of discussion amongst the nearby inhabitants.

Long-term use had also made its mark on the landscape. Thomas Jumith, a local jurat who knew the way but had not seen it used, could nevertheless confidently state that 'by sight it did appear to be used with tracke of cattell & where it was not quickset ther was a place left unsowen & yet the growne sowen on both sides'. The land had meaning for local inhabitants, and they knew how to read its signs, enabling the land to almost act as a witness in disputes. Again, the combination of long-term usage, landscape and the common acceptance that the way was not to be fenced off created a strong argument according to the understanding of customary law, and contributed to the legitimisation of the highway as a common way. The fact that it had been a point of contention at the local Quarter Sessions and Lawdays more than once was also a point in favour, as a lack of denial or complaint at an event or action could be taken to be a form of implicit acceptance. Official complaints that 'that waye lyeth wholely in the Sheire & now that beinge stoped, men cannot well goe to

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[62] TNA, STAC 4/6/18.
[63] TNA, E 134/42Eliz/East3.
[64] Ibid.

Sandgate thoroughe but the ports unlese they goe about' therefore strengthened the customary case against Jenkins.[65]

Along with the argument of custom and common, there was also the practical argument on behalf of the queen: a strategy which was also used in the dispute over Key Street. Harte made the point in his deposition that 'the waye stopped up is the nerest and rediest waye from divers parts of the Sheir to Sandgate castell, and if it weare a highe waye for carriadge it must needs be a hinderance to caryinge such things to the castell'.[66] Sandgate Castle had been built by Henry VIII in 1539-1540 in response to a potential threat from the Continent, which would have been within living memory; if not in the lifetime of some of the deponents, then certainly their parents.[67] The castle would have been a prominent landmark for the local inhabitants and would have held its own meanings for them: the construction would have had an enormous impact upon the people of Folkestone, as well as representing royal involvement in what had previously been the responsibility of the local authorities, in the form of Henry's Device Programme. This would have stayed in the collective local memory, and as Elizabeth kept it fortified and in use, people would have been aware and possibly involved in the activity surrounding it in addition to the very visible reminder on the coastline. By calling attention to the likelihood that access and supplies to the castle would be hampered by allowing the highway to be stopped up, Harte and other deponents were supplying a practical reason for keeping the highway open as well as using arguments based in custom.

In both highway disputes, there is the sense that deponents were aware that customary arguments by themselves might not be enough to secure the verdict they were after at the governmental level. This was particularly relevant for the dispute over Folkestone Way, as although the case was brought up several times at Lawdays and Quarter Sessions, the first jury's verdict that the piece of highway was 'a waie to croppe & uncroppe' was simply repeated every time.[68] Nevertheless, although it seems to have been necessary to include reasons practical to the crown and demonstrates awareness of events and politics beyond the locality, they are only used to support the

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[65] Ibid.

[66] Ibid.

[67] The vulnerability of Kent and its effect upon the people and the landscape will be explored further in later chapters.

[68] TNA, E 134/42Eliz/East3; TNA, E 134/39Eliz/Hil2.

main bulk of the evidence given, which consisted of custom and history, both of which were grounded in the local landscape.

<center>Collective memory-making</center>

Thus far it has been made clear how local customs were the result of negotiation between the tenants and the lord of the manor, based in an organic mixture of a community's continuous usage and interaction with its landscape and history. Although having a crucial impact on the lives, identity, and politics of a locality, custom existed as a continuous, but mostly passive, guideline running through a community. It existed as a base-line, as something to refer to for clarification or direction. The elements which made it so effective, however, could at times be converted into conscious action. The conscious making of memories, as opposed to the gradual acceptance of an act through its continual use, utilised many of the main aspects of customary law for a specific purpose. The perambulations discussed above were one way in which the backbone of customary law was used in an intentional way to transfer local knowledge from the elder members of the community to the younger members so as to make sure the knowledge was retained for future generations. By walking along the boundaries and being made to experience something at important boundary markers (whether this was a beating, receiving a gift, or being given a task to complete), a memorable event was created with the expectation that it would become relevant in the future; whether in a property or boundary dispute or simply to pass on the knowledge in their turn. In the words of Steve Hindle, 'local knowledge was […] transmitted from the memories of the aged through the physical inscription on the bruised backsides and sore heads of the young.'[69] The use of perambulations was a common and fairly regular one in most localities: something which reflected the collective priorities of the people living there. These tactics, however, were also used for individual concerns, often in the form of transactions or agreements.

The most obvious way in which active memory-making played a part was in the use of witnesses. The act of stepping in to witness a dispute or resolution was considered a 'casual' part of everyday-life as one of the general 'duties of neighbourliness', and ensured that the memories of

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[69] Hindle, 'Beating the Bounds', 219.

these events were 'woven into the fabric of the community'.[70] This form of memory-making was used when an issue regarding the payment of rent came up between Sir Christopher Allen and Charles Pagett over the manor of Mote, near the village of Ightham, about two or three years before Allen's death in 1586.[71] A lease had been made by Sir Christopher Allen and his son, Charles Allen, and Pagett, for Ightham Mote and other properties in return for a payment of fifty pounds per annum to be paid at the feasts of Our Lady and Michaelmas. Presumably due to the lack of the said payments, Sir Christopher sent for witnesses to his meeting with Pagett to demand the rent owed. One of these witnesses, George Hawkes, a forty-year-old yeoman of Ightham, could easily recall the occasion. After arriving at the Mote at around two or three o'clock and meeting other witnesses:

> this Examinat together with the sayd Swan and Milles stayed with the sayde Sr Christopher in the owther Courte of the sayde howse called the Mote untill a little before the settyng of the soon at which time he did see the soon and did thinck it to be aboute a quarter of an hower highe at which time the sayd Sr Christopher made his repaire to the Mote brydge, and there in the presence of this examinate and the sayd Milles and Swan dyd make a demaund of a certaine Rent. (TNA, E 134/41Eliz/East39)

It was only 'after the sunne was downe' that Allen asked Hawkes, Swan and Milles to 'beare witnes' as they and Allen 'entred into the saide house of the mote for the non payment of the said rent.'[72]

Although there is no more information on Milles and Swan, it is significant that Hawkes was only forty at the time of the investigation. He would therefore have been around twenty-five at the time of this event. By picking a relatively young man as one of his witnesses, Sir Christopher was ensuring that the event would be remembered after his death in case it was needed; as, indeed, it was. The visit to the house and the subsequent use of the bridge as a meeting point equally must be seen to have been of a purpose. The combination of the experience of a visit of a significant length of time, and of what was clearly a striking position on the Mote bridge, using the position of the sun as a significant element, provided a number of different factors to aid in recollection of the event in the future. At the very least, the view of the setting sun was evidently significant enough to Hawkes, who

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[70] Muldrew, 'The culture of reconciliation', 926-7.
[71] TNA, E 134/40Eliz/East6; TNA, E 134/40Eliz/East39; TNA, E 134/41Eliz/East39.
[72] TNA, E 134/40Eliz/East39.

around fifteen years later could still state that it was 'aboute a quarter of an hower highe', and that it was when the sun had gone down that the non-payment was registered.

In the case of Sir Christopher Allen, the landscape was used for impact and as a passive part of the memory-making experience. There were other ways, however, in which the landscape could be utilised in a more active manner. One such case can be seen in the way in which a problem with water levels between two mills in Maidstone was dealt with by locals.[73] Around the year 1550, David Barham, occupier of Church Mill, and a Mr Hernden, occupier of Padsoll Mill, had an altercation over the levels at which the water should be penned. Approximately fifty years later, the water levels were the subject of another investigation. The previous controversy was the primary focus of the later inquiry, and it was one which had clearly been contrived to remain in the collective memory of the community. Richard Kempe, a 'gonner' aged sixty-four, was able to recall the event in detail. As a schoolboy at the age of fourteen, Kempe and others from his school were required to assemble at the mills alongside two parties supporting Barham and the queen's surveyor, Hugh Cartwright, and witness:

> that the water at the church myll ought to be penned to the top of a stake that was then driven into the river halfe a foote above the third step of the stayers, & then it was there sayed that yf the myllar did at any tyme penne his water higher he should then annoy the Queenes myllar with the back water. At which tyme this deponent had a dozen of poynts given him by Mr Hornden or his man to remember that the said stake should be the marke for the penning of the said water at the church myll (TNA, E 134/41&42Eliz/Mich11)

The testimony of Kempe showed how local youths could encounter the deliberate changing of the local landscape, even such a minor change as 'a stake driven into the river', as a political action in order for the community to manage local resources.

In the same way that the twenty-five year old Hawkes was a desirable witness for Sir Christopher Allen, Kempe, of the even younger age of fourteen, was the ideal witness for Barham

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[73] TNA, E 134/41&42Eliz/Mich11.

and Hernden. In Kempe's case, however, he was one of several boys from the 'free scoole of Maidstone' who were 'taken in the streete & carried to the church mylls'. In this, we can see how the practice of providing witnesses for local agreements or transactions was institutionalised within the community, with a particular onus upon the local school. The 'dozen of poynts' given to the boys by Hernden came with the explanation that 'you be yonge & may remember when we shalbe dead & gone when perhapps there may be controversie about this matter, therefore remember that the water ought to be penned noe higher then This stake'. This reflects the methods used in perambulations, and shows the conscious linking between experience, landscape, and youth that was the underlying thread holding local communities together. It also signified the prominence of the future as a very relevant factor in local decision-making.[74]

The effectiveness of the method was proven in the depositions given fifty years later. Although there was clearly indecision over *how* the water levels had come to rise over the stake, there does not seem to have been much disagreement over the fact that they had, indeed, risen. Many deponents used the stake as the indicator it was designed to be, supporting Kempe's statement that 'sithence that tyme there is both one stepp more made at the stayers & the baye is also made higher, & [he] doeth thinck that the water may now be penned a foote & an halfe above the top of the aforesaid stake.' Although driving a stake into the ground might seem to be a minor adaptation to the land, it has already been shown how inhabitants knew how to read the signs of their local environment. Not only did other inhabitants know to use the stake as a measuring device for judging the water levels, but they also noticed when other changes had been made to accommodate it, and when they were no longer there. John Arnoll, for example, reported that 'he hath seene a stake & hard saye that there was a powle baye made to the heighthe of the said stake belonging to the church mill but did never see the said bay, nor knoweth who removed it'. Others could compare daily routines to fifty years before; the high levels of water were not only 'a great hinderance' to a Maidstone fuller, but also 'much annoyed' those going to church and the market and prevented the maids from washing their bucking in their accustomed place.

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[74] A discussion on the way time was experienced at the local level can be found in Wood, *Memory of the People*, pp. 333-5

Ideas for how to deal with the situation also seem to have been considered a communal effort. Those who attributed the rising water levels to the pollution of the river were the ones to suggest joint responsibility for cleansing the river. Tapping into the local history, John Sutton, a miller from Chart Sutton, recalled that Barham 'did use to clense the river so far as his land went, & other men did the like against their lands', while Thomas Vidgion, a local husbandman, recommended that 'everie man that ones the land against the ryver ought to clense the streame against his owne land.' This is suggestive of the more common customary practises of maintaining land boundaries and looking after the local resources that supported the inhabitants who depended on them, and shows how perhaps events like this might have started such customs, highlighting the flexibility of local areas to accept the development of customs when it might become necessary.

The variety of people affected by the high penning of the water gives a good idea of why memory-making was a community event. The result that had been agreed upon by the occupiers of both mills required the participation of a lawyer, the queen's surveyor, and a group of schoolboys, just as, to a lesser extent, Sir Christopher Allen made the effort to obtain local young gentlemen and yeomen to witness his rent demand of Pagett. The collaboration of the school shows how local youths were perceived as necessary to the maintenance of customs and therefore the future stability of the community when something might happen to disrupt old agreements, with all the possible consequences for the rest of the local inhabitants. This was not an isolated case, nor was it specific to Kent.[75] The gifting of money to the boys, similar to the experience of visiting with Sir Christopher and then waiting on a bridge for the setting of the sun, made the event they were witnessing stand out for them, which, in both cases, proved to be fruitful. The location on the bridge and the use of the sun for Sir Christopher's witnesses showed how the area could be used to augment the original message, whereas the stake driven into the ground as a way in which to judge water levels stood as a more active way of using the land to reach a wider audience than the immediate witnesses.

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[75] School boys were used as witnesses in the same way, for example, in the event intended to commemorate the transferring of property ownership from husband to wife in Berkshire: TNA, E 134/19Eliz/Trin4.

Political spheres

As has been shown in the example of Penenden Heath, customs and the local landscape could have an enormous influence on local political relationships. This type of influence has been further suggested in the previous section on memory-making and the role required of local youths. When it comes to the political roles played in the reality of community life, however, this is only the tip of the iceberg. Within the community, everyone had their own position to fill depending on their age, gender, sort, or occupation. This is particularly evident in the demographic selected as deponents to commissions from central courts. Andy Wood has shown how 'the evidence […] mostly privileges the voices of older or middle-aged, plebeian men' in his breakdown of Norfolk deponents in the years 1550-1599: a trend which is reflected in similar examinations of deponents in counties such as Somerset and Cambridgeshire.[76] The evidence given in the Kentish depositions submitted to the Exchequer parallels this. It is no coincidence that the majority of deponents in these documents are men, most of whom are over the age of fifty. Yet there are also hints at other networks and roles, along with the sphere within which they worked, and female roles and networks can at times come through, albeit in a limited and peripheral way. These relationships, roles, and political interactions, shaped as they were by the landscape, customs, and the social structures of early modern England, dominated the political lives of the inhabitants of the area and further contributed to the collective identity of the community and the different demographics overlapping within it.

As has been demonstrated in the practice of memory-making, age and experience were necessary to the continued prosperity of the local community. In local society, then, one group which held a significant amount of political power based in memory and custom was the elderly. As 'the repositories of local history and custom, of pedigree and descent', old people played several roles within the community, in activities with traditional and religious connotations, such as perambulations (discussed above) as well as in the legal arena, such as being appointed as jurors and settling disputes.[77] Although attitudes towards memory went through a gradual change over the

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[76] Wood, *Memory of the People,* pp. 36-8, for the exact breakdown of ages of the Norfolk deponents, see Fig. 2; For Somerset deponents, see T. Stretton, *Women Waging Law in Elizabethan England* (Cambridge, 1998), p. 96; For Cambridgeshire deponents, see A. Shepard, *Meanings of Manhood in Early Modern England* (Oxford, 2003), p. 220.

[77] Keith Thomas, 'Age and Authority in Early Modern England', *Proceedings of the British Academy,* 62 (1976), 234; Woolf, *The Social Circulation of the Past; English Historical Culture* (Oxford, 2003), p. 277;

sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, leading to a greater dependence on written evidence and a disdain of oral evidence, in 1600 people in the hundred of Folkestone still placed a very clear value on the knowledge of 'auncient men'.[78] In the dispute over the enclosure of Folkestone Way, it is also clear that they considered themselves to have a particular role within the community based upon their duty to distribute this knowledge when they felt it was necessary. Robert Hartye, a fifty-year-old yeoman from Lydd, had been a member of a jury at one of the lawdays which dealt with the grievances regarding Folkestone Way. According to his statement around twelve years after the event in question, the jury had taken 'one Jacobbe and one other auncient man' with them to the place in question to hear what they had to say. Hartye and the rest of the jurors clearly valued the knowledge that 'olde Jacobbe' and the other man imparted, with another jury member explaining that he was 'content to be ruled by olde Jacobbe & other of the jurye whoe seemed to knowe muche in the matter of their owne knowledge'.

The relevance of old men was not just confined to official roles within the organisation of juries, however. Hartye ended his description by noting that on the jury's return to Folkestone they sat down to dine, when 'diverse other auncient men came to them' and informed them of their opinions. Evidently, these men considered their status as elderly members of the community to contain responsibilities regarding possible local decisions and verdicts at lawdays. Not only did the opinions and memories of men like 'olde Jacobbe' hold sway amongst his fellow jurors, but other 'auncient men' clearly felt that it was their duty to actively hunt down the jury and volunteer their own knowledge on the case. These actions were also clearly accepted by the jury who, 'uppon that information […] fownd yt to be a home waye to croppe & uncroppe the land'.[79] The old men of Folkestone did not merely exist as static 'repositories of local history and custom', they played an active political role and embraced the responsibilities that came as a result of their age and standing, and this was in turn accepted and relied upon by their community. In these men we might see the future of characters such as the young witnesses of the disputes between Sir Christopher Allan and

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Adam Fox, *Oral and Literate Culture in England 1500-1700* (Oxford, 2000), pp. 264-5, 268-71; Fox, 'Remembering the Past in Early Modern England: Oral and Written Tradition', *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*, 9 (1999), 233-56; J.T. Rosenthal, *Old Age in Late Medieval England* (Philadelphia, 1996), p. 10-11.

[78] Woolf, *Social Circulation of the Past,* pp. 279-80; S. Shapin, *A Social History of Truth: Civility and Science in Seventeenth-Century England* (Chicago, 1994), p. 93; TNA, E 134/42Eliz/East3.

[79] TNA, E 134/42Eliz/East3.

Charles Pagett, or the penning of the water between Padsoll Mill and Maidstone Mill. The accumulation of memory events and involvement in community activities would not only maintain customs and memories for future generations, but also convert into a type of political capital for those witnesses who participated throughout their lifetimes.

The importance of the elderly in decision making and legitimisation of information can be seen throughout the Kentish depositions. For the most part, the deponents questioned tended to be older males, which gives the impression that it was this demographic who held the majority of this type of local political power. This was not, however, always the case. Elderly women also seem to have held a prominent position based on their age and experience. As we have seen, one argument against the encroachment into Key Street was that 'one mother Hill of Southfleete, a poore wooman, w*it*h divers other whom he cannot name, have comonly pastured their Cattell vpon the said high way'.[80] The respectful title of 'mother' and the fact that Robert Blackman, the deponent, clearly thought it was relevant to mention her by name, signifies that despite the fact that she was 'a poore wooman', she was clearly accepted within the community and her pasturing of cattle on the high way held some weight in the eyes of customary law. Other references to women such as 'mother Steven' of Sundridge and another 'mother Steevens', this time of Sandwich, can be found as often as specific references to old men like 'olde Jacobbe', suggesting that the gender of notable local figures was perhaps not as relevant as age and experience past a certain point.[81] Because of this, a fifty-five year old tailor from West Malling named John Maye could confidently support his statement in a dispute over the enclosing of a piece of 'supposed wast ground' from a high way near the manor of East Malling with the comment that 'he did heare an auncyent woman of Towne malling named mother Braunche report' it.[82] That the information was from Mother Braunche was something that Maye clearly considered significant enough to include in his testimony, and which evidently made his evidence more legitimate than if it had been passed on by someone else. Despite the fact that women did not generally seem to be considered appropriate deponents, women of advanced age and who

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[80] TNA, E 134/39Eliz/Hil2.
[81] TNA, E 134/35&36Eliz/Mich29; TNA, E 134/29Eliz/East20.
[82] TNA, E 134/24Eliz/Hil2.

therefore held a certain status within the community ultimately could not be excluded from the testimonies recorded.

Other aspects of local politics are also apparent in disputes over property ownership, boundaries, and tithes; a phenomenon which shows just how intertwined the landscape and local politics could be. Tied as they were to the use of local resources, political relationships between people were as dependent upon the landscape as they were on the social and familial connections amongst the community. The roles individuals were expected to play therefore held meaning for others, and by playing their part they were legitimising their position in the eyes of the locality. Conversely, when someone failed to fulfil the role expected of them, it could suggest a sense of inadequacy or illegitimacy; something which could serve a particular purpose when necessary. When a dispute arose in 1600 over the ownership of the Whitstable copperas factory discussed at the beginning of the chapter, a significant element of the investigation rested upon both the defendant and the plaintiff's interactions with people in the community.[83] Cornelius Stephenson, a long-time inhabitant and the original owner of the factory, had worked continuously with his neighbours and the poor ever since his establishment of the factory. He was followed by Thomas Gauntlet, who also married Stephenson's widow. The fifty-year-old John Gillman could remember that he 'did help make the mudd walls whereupon the house was sett', and many of the deponents supported Gillman's statement that while he did not know the exact number of poor people employed by Stephenson and Gauntlett, 'they sett as many a worke as shewed them selves willing to gather them and paid them for theire paines and Gauntlett doth sett them a worke continuallie when serveth'. A further point submitted by William Saver, a local sailor, was that 'Gauntlett dyd contynue to sett them a worke untill he was hindred'. Creating employment opportunities for the deserving poor was something which was expected of someone in the position of owning a local industry. By continuing Stephenson's employment of as many poor as were willing to work when the sulphur stones needed to be collected, Gauntlet also legitimised his position among the people of Whitstable, and could therefore be considered Stephenson's rightful successor. The same case could not be made for the defendant, Arthur Bedolfe, the man who had 'hindred' Gauntlet.

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[83] TNA, E 134/42Eliz/East14.

Bedolfe not only prevented Gauntlet from continuing his duty as a functioning member of the community, he had also obtained his dubious position as stated owner of the copperas factory by what was perceived as an abuse of guesthood and friendship. A local yeoman, Richard Woodsall, reported that Bedolfe had stayed at Gauntlet's house and 'had entertainment there'. Moreover, Gauntlet himself had been heard to say that if he had known Bedolfe's intentions, 'he would not have shewed him such frindshipp as he did', and Gauntlet and his wife mentioned that 'they did thinke he would not goe aboute to shewe them such discurtesie.' By obtaining the lease for the use of the sulphur stones after accepting the hospitality of Gauntlet and his wife, Bedolfe was going against the established rules of courtesy, guesthood, and neighbourliness. In a similar way to the giving of gifts and of formal male friendships, described by Lorna Hutson as 'an economic as well as emotional dependency', as demonstrations of social credit, certain reciprocal behaviours were expected in return for the hospitality provided by Gauntlet and his wife.[84] Bedolfe's actions were a betrayal of the systems of social credit and the bonds which cemented both personal and hierarchical relationships, and undermined the coherency of the community and therefore his efforts to establish himself as the owner of the factory. References to Bedolfe's 'secret pretence' by other deponents on behalf of the plaintiff suggests that although he may have obtained the lease through legal channels, his duplicity and disruption of expected social behaviours meant that it would not be recognised as a true claim by the people of Whitstable.[85]

Gauntlet's case was supported by several factors which added up to give him customary rights. His marriage to Stephenson's widow and the longer amount of time in comparison to Bedolfe that he had dwelled in Whitstable, as was shown earlier in this chapter, strengthened his legitimacy as Stephenson's successor in the factory. But the factory did not exist in a vacuum; it had been built in what seems to have been a group effort, based around a particular feature to be found on the coast of Whitstable, and continued to involve the people around it. It provided employment for the poor of Whitstable and the surrounding parishes, who collected the specific stones required and then placed

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[84] For the economies of friendship, see Lorna Hutson, *The Usurer's Daughter: Male Friendship and Fictions of Women in 16th Century England* (London, 1994), pp. 9, 52-85; For gift-giving see Marcel Mauss, *The Gift: The Form and Reason for Exchange in Archaic Societies,* trans. W.D. Halls (London, 1990); Ilana Krausman Ben-Amos, *The Culture of Giving: Informal Support & Gift-Exchange in Early Modern England* (Cambridge, 2008).
[85] A similar reception can be found in the descriptions of the methods that resulted in the Pope family being evicted from Pope's Closes.

them on the land of Andrew Sinelt, a neighbouring husbandman. The emphasis placed by deponents on Gauntlet's continuity in giving jobs to the poor shows how important this was in solidifying his position as tied to the history of the factory and the locality, and in truly continuing Stephenson's legacy. By contrast, Bedolfe's position was weakened by the significance of collective history, customary actions and the expectations of a member of the political community. Not only did he *not* have the links of history, continuous action and location that Gauntlet had, his own actions undermined the claim he was making. By taking the copperas factory in such a suspect manner, abusing the rules of hospitality and by interfering with the political and social activities expected of its owner, Bedolfe was not only causing harm to Gauntlet and his wife, but was also harming the community itself.

In a similar way, political relationships could have an enormous effect on access to resources such as water or traveling rights. In a 1582 dispute over land ownership in Malling between Dame Jane Fitzjames (the plaintiff) and George Cattline esq. (the defendant), there were several indicators which showed just how interactions and relationships could impact upon the use of certain routes.[86] One of these was in the deposition of the sixty-year-old yeoman, Thomas Harrison, who recalled his master and Fitzjames' late husband, Hugh Cartwright, saying to Cattline's father at a time when they were not on good terms, 'Syra I warne you that you come no more over my grounde you have no way that way my frends shall come over my ground but myne enemyes shall not without my leave.' Cattline's father accordingly stopped walking through Cartwright's land until they had come to an agreement, at which point, 'a planke was laid over for a bridge & a payer of stayers made that the said defendant's father might have recourse that way for his ease'. The defendant himself, upon falling out with Cartwright, was forbidden to cross that way.

Valentine Harrison, a servant of Fitzjames, reported incidents that continued on with Cattline himself, in which 'about fower or fyve yeares now passed the defendant did cause a plank to be leiyed over the watercourse', and yet 'the Complainant hath sondrie times forbidden the defendant to use anie way theare & hath Caused the said Bridge to be removed'. The political power held and wielded by those who controlled admittance to access ways can also be seen in the testimony of shoemaker

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[86] TNA, E 134/24Eliz/Hil2.

John Sotherne, who attended a dinner held during an investigation at a court in West Malling at the house of one Mr Bonham where Dame Fitzjames remarked:

> Neyghbours You have to enquire of Certeine matters betwene Mr
> Catlyn & me and thearfore I praie you that which you fynde to be
> myne geve me & that which you finde to be his geave him and that
> which is doubtfull leave it as you fynde it. Then said one of the
> Company Madam it is said that you gave yor Consent to the
> building of the brick Wall which is one of the matters in
> Controversie whearunto the plaintiff replyed saying then was then
> & now is now then Mr Catlyn & I was frends & now we be not.
> (TNA, E 134/24Eliz/Hil2)

Fitzjames and Cartwright's control of the land which was used by some as a way of crossing over the watercourse running through the manor of West Malling meant that they could, and clearly did, exercise the political power that came with it. The plank used as a bridge was a changeable part of the landscape which could serve as an indicator of acceptance and friendship, while its absence would convey a political statement of discord, one which would have been easily understood by those who used the way and were familiar with the political relationships that accompanied it.

In addition to political power statements and hierarchical interactions, we can see how gendered relationships made their mark in the local landscape. Andy Wood has shown how, although dominated by the patriarchal institutions which engaged with customary law in which women's actions or voices were deliberately forgotten, making 'popular memory – the "memory of the people" – […] quite literally, "the memory of man"', women in fact occupied political space and a strong position regarding customary rights. Spheres such as the domestic, childbirth, marketplaces, and certain dairy industries have been shown to fall under the purview of women, and therefore help support the concept of separate but occasionally overlapping social spheres for men and women.[87] Among these spheres existed a combination of the public and the private, and the social as well as the physical.[88] Locations such as the home, the marketplace, and certain areas of the parish church

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[87] Wood, *Memory of the People,* pp. 307-10; For more regarding how tithes on eggs, cheese and milk fall into the female domain, see Shepard, *Meanings of Manhood,* pp. 222-3.
[88] Diane Willen, 'Women in the Public Sphere in Early Modern England: The Case of the Urban Working Poor', *The Sixteenth Century Journal,* 19 (1988), 559-75; Bernard Capp, 'Separate Domains? Women and Authority in Early Modern England', 117-45.

were the physical bases of the female domains within society. Others were more directly relatable to the landscape. Fields and enclosed commons have been identified as locations particularly relevant to women due to the customary rights of gleaning and access to resources allowed to widows.

Another significant site was that of water. Thomas Harrison, a sixty-year-old yeoman from the town of Malling stated in 1582, regarding a particular way of travelling to access the local river, that he had 'sene Buckings & other Clothes many times that way Carryed to the Ryver.'[89] Here is another example of Wood's point that men told the 'memory of man'. Despite the fact that it was the women who did the washing of clothes and that this was his main piece of evidence to support his answer, Harrison managed to avoid mentioning that women were involved at all. However, due to the nature of the issue under investigation, we also have the testimonies of four local women: Mildred Odyam, a widow from West Malling aged seventy-eight; Dorethe Harrison, the sixty-year-old wife of shoemaker Edmund Harrison; widow Elizabeth Braunch, who at around one hundred and four had lived in Town Malling all her life; and Katherine Stevenson, sixty-year-old wife of Richard Stevenson, also from Town Malling. Each of these women was able to give detailed descriptions of the land in question and its history, but particularly the waterway, where Harrison could use her own experience and that of other 'maidens' to verify her answer; she 'did alwaies use to wash [and] ffetche water at the place in Controversie and so did thother maidens also unles the Water [w]ere foule theare for then they Used to go to the said Water course by the said Waterlane'. Stevenson also felt it relevant to mention that 'all the Water that was fetched by paile or Coule was fetched from the said Watercourse at the place in Varyaunce & that all the washing of Clothes Was theare also'.[90] George Hickmote, a millwright of Maidstone, discussing the water levels between Padsoll Mill and Maidstone Mill in the years 1599-1600, was able to testify that they had risen, because 'mayds were wont to wash their bucking there & stand uppon the lower step without annoyance which now they say they cannot doe'.[91] Although there were no female deponents in this deposition, women still had a voice and a clearly established domain when it came to practical usage of the river which came through in male testimonies.

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[89] TNA, E 134/24Eliz/Hil2.
[90] TNA, E 134/24Eliz/Hil2.
[91] TNA, E 134/41&42Eliz/Mich11.

Political and social relationships were played out across the local environment, built up around the use of and access to geographical features and physically and socially leaving their mark in the process. Local industries like Whitstable's copperas factory and access ways like Fitzjames' waterway were elements which played a part in the political life of the community and in the formation of local identity. Similarly, the roles of the elderly and women's agency as part of extended networks throughout the community, with their domination of certain activities and landmarks, produced another layer of identity based in political spheres partially embedded in the local topography. The variety of overlapping political spheres and relationships which are evident throughout the Kentish depositions therefore show the connection gendered and hierarchical relationships had with the landscape, and, furthermore, how this helped shape the local history and identity of the community as a whole.

Conclusion

In recent years, historians have paid more and more attention to the landscape and the way in which it was an active influence on the lives of early modern people. Alexandra Walsham has shown how particular sites were tied to religion and society, constantly changing and being reinterpreted and reintegrated into communities over the long passage of time.[92] This interpretation is easily extended into the fabric of community memory and political life itself.[93] Wood, in *Memory of the People*, has shown that many of the vital aspects of local political life, identifying trends such as the focus on 'time out of memory of man' and the social conditions that grew out of that, were shared across England. His acknowledgement that this meant that the emphasis was therefore upon the local, that the politics of most towns or villages were unique to their location and community, is what makes his study so intricate and effective, and leaves space for further studies into the local while keeping the larger trends of popular memory and politics in mind.[94] This chapter, with its focus on the most basic, everyday level of memory and politics in Kent, has shown that ordinary political concerns were very much rooted in the local, and particularly the physical landscape. Political

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[92] Walsham, *Reformation of theLandscape.*
[93] For examples of particular locations and the link between history, memory and landscape, see for Norfolk, Whyte, *Inhabiting the Landscape;* For a more modern period but no less relevant, and a study of the borders of Lithuania and Poland within a much wider context, see Schama; For the general use of physical landscape as a tool to aid early modern links with the past see Woolf, *Social Circulation of the Past,* pp. 276, 290, 304.
[94] Wood, *Memory of the people.*

relationships, land use, boundaries and traditions were all centred on and dictated by the natural. To make use of the terms of Henri Lefebvre as described in the introduction, there is a clear combination of 'conceived' space, 'lived' space and 'perceived' space that can be seen in the towns and villages of Kent via local depositions.[95] The construction of communities quite plainly existed as a combination of these three states: 'conceived' spaces (or 'representations of space') such as the mills in Maidstone, buildings such as houses, churches, manors, and the copperas factory in Whitstable, and structures such as bridges, walls, and boundaries were all present as methods of defining space, particularly by the dominant groups within the community. 'Lived' space (or 'representational spaces') and 'perceived' space (or 'spatial practice'), while much more closely linked and more difficult to separate from each other, can be seen in the way locations near water where the women did their washing became part of the female domain and therefore a 'lived' space along with the areas which were connected to specific actions and customs, while the customs themselves, and the political and social relationships which derived from them, made up the 'perceived' space of the community. All three interconnected parts of this spatial triad originated from the natural landscape and continued to develop alongside it, and it is by taking the natural landscapes of individual towns and villages into account alongside the interactions and overlapping physical and social spaces that true understanding can be reached regarding the political lives of the commonalty of Kent.

As individuals lived and died in communities ruled by customary law, a phenomenon which this chapter has shown to be irrevocably intertwined with the local landscape and collective memory, the importance of different types of memory cannot be overstated. On the political level of the everyday, memory was a passive phenomenon which ran through day-to-day actions, traditions and relationships, and was tapped into in the event of a local dispute. Activities which had occurred 'time out of mind' were accepted as legitimate evidence and worked alongside the responsibilities of the older members of the locality to pass down information to younger generations: all of which was incorporated into the political structures of local customary law. Due to the pervasiveness of memory as an integral part of daily political life, it was inevitable that the efficacy of memory would be recognised on a conscious level. For certain occasions, such as notable decisions (i.e. the levels at

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[95] Lefebvre, pp. 38-42.

which water would be penned between Padsoll and Maidstone Mills) or events which had the potential to be relevant to future disputes (i.e. Sir Christopher Allen's intended meeting with Charles Paget), the practice of memory became active. In these cases, memory was consciously used as a tool. The use of witnesses (consisting of locally prominent men and young men or schoolboys), the giving of gifts or money, and embedding the memory of the event in particular landmarks, all worked towards the deliberate creation of a memorable event which would then be usable in a hypothetical future scenario. This combination of passive and active memory ensured that local traditions and events of local concern would remain in the collective memory for their children and grandchildren to use as a political tool when necessary, and contributed to the ongoing development of their local customary laws. It is evident here that although Wood has shown that certain forms of custom and tradition can be identified as trends across the country, the specific nature of Kentish customary laws and the identities of the county's communities must be investigated within their own specifically local contexts. These communities were firmly grounded in the landscapes of Kent and the memories and experiences, both actively lived or intentionally commemorated, of the people who had lived in them for generations.

Looking at the long-term, symbiotic relationship of a landscape and its inhabitants, as well as the ways in which local memory was used to both keep things as they had always been and yet ensure that certain changes were remembered, drives home the prominence of fluidity as a feature of customary law. This then had a direct impact on decision-making as a community, as living within the strictures of local custom consisted of a never-ending negotiation. Some changes (such as the first enclosure made by Robert Fenton in Penenden Heath) were accepted, while others were rejected (such as Fenton's additional enclosing of Three Cornerd Croft, later torn down). Some, such as the eviction of the Pope family from Pope's Closes, were clearly begrudgingly accepted, with the community using language and common fame to make a political point over their disapproval of the change. Whether a change was accepted or rejected was contingent upon certain understood guidelines, including circumstances such as continual usage over a decent amount of time, common acceptance, or as a political statement. Because these conditions could be extremely subjective, however, the very nature of customary law could cause friction within a community, as could be seen in the attitudes towards certain rights in Whitley Forest. It is in the ways that communities as a whole,

or different groups within a community, reacted to changes or fell on sides of a dispute, that indications of social and political groups can be seen, and suggest the existence of multiple strands of memories or identities running alongside each other.

Whether changes did or did not occur, and how these changes were accepted, rejected, or resisted, depended on the rules of the community and contributed to its members' identity as individuals as well as a collective.[96] Although identity is difficult to determine, particularly at the popular level of early modern England, the discussion on place-identity theory in the introduction makes it possible to postulate, to a certain extent, that of the commonalty of Kent: particularly regarding the influence of the local landscape and lived-in environment on self-identity.[97] One of the indicators of this is how members of different communities prioritised certain information, and by extension, how they saw themselves as a part of a local society. As has been demonstrated in the answers given to specific questions, matters of the environment and resources were at the forefront of what deponents felt was relevant, down to minute details like the species of tree. Ownership and access to resources dictated political power and local relationships, both on private as well as common land. The impression given is that individuals were primarily focused on local concerns and identified on several different levels within their community: with their neighbours and family connections, gendered networks, parish members, and working relationships. At the basic political level of the everyday, people like the villagers of Hadlow or the townsfolk of Malling were not thinking on a national, or even a countywide level.

This is something which is evident in the nature of the documents used. Despite the fact that the main sources used were derived from the central government, they are incredibly useful in demonstrating the peculiar dialogue which was inherent in the relationship between the centre and the local. The ways in which the interrogatories were set out and the wording of the questions shows an understanding of the significance of customary law, its dependence upon local collective memory

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[96] The results and processes of resistance to perceived or unwanted change as indicators of identity and memory will be explored later in the thesis.
[97] Harold M. Proshansky, Abbe K. Fabian and Robert Kaminoff, 'Place-identity: Physical World Socialization of the Self', *Journal of Environmental Psychology,* 3 (1983), 57-83; A.L. Schorr, *Slums and Social Insecurity* (Washington, 1966); C. Cooper, 'The House as Symbol of the Self', in *Designing for Human Behaviour: Architecture and the Behavioural Sciences,* eds. J. Lang, C. Burnett, W. Moleski and D. Vachon (Stroudsburg, 1974), pp. 130-46.

and local concerns, and the ways in which local people were able to read their landscape. It tells us a great deal about how the government was able to accommodate local methods of management within its own centralised structure, by utilising the existing political system in specially designed commissions sent out from the equity side of the Court of Exchequer.

There is also insight to be gained in the form of the local treatment of the commissions. There is a clear focus in the answers given in the depositions, and it is very much a local one. Indeed, it seems like the use of the investigations themselves are simply a tool in scoring a political point in the local dispute. External links and influences only seem to be relevant in the way in which they had an effect upon the locality. Even those locations which by nature were open to outside contact, like the port towns of Sandwich and Faversham, only seem to recognise such networks as far as they had a local consequence; there seems to have been very little awareness of the national. This chapter has examined the basic day-to-day level of politics and identity of ordinary people in Kent, how they were irrevocably bound by the natural local landscape and collective memory, and how this seems to have created a particularly insular mind-set based in the local. The next two chapters, then, will build on this, shifting the focus to when national events forced change or impacted on the local communities of Kent. They will examine external influences such as the Armada, the Reformation, and the loss of Calais: how they were experienced, but more importantly for this study, how they were (or were not) remembered, and how they contributed towards the identity of the community.

Chapter 2: External Influences on Local Politics: Politics

The first chapter established the basic nature of political identity in the communities of Kent which consisted of an interrelated mixture of memory, landscape and society, firmly centred on the local. Whilst it is clear that the people of the villages and towns in Kent had a predominantly local focus to their day-to-day political lives, reflecting the 'small world' theory of Chatman, it was not possible for them to ignore events on the national level completely.[1] From abrupt and dramatic changes such as invasion threats, to natural changes such as the accession of a new monarch, to the fundamental transformations in landscape and practice that came with the Reformation, each impacted upon localities in different ways. The next two chapters will investigate external influences on local politics and how events at a national level impacted on the communities of Kent. The ways in which these changes were received can tell us a lot about the relations between the centre and the locality, and how (and when) the community identified as part of a larger whole. By layering these multiple strands of identity over the basic community identities established in the previous chapter, a more complete understanding can be gained of the complexity of popular politics and identity in Kent.

The people of Elizabethan Kent, with their reliance on local history 'time out of mind', had a firm grasp on the events of the previous century, and at times, as shown in rental books and custumals, further back into the medieval past.[2] As a result, Kentish people could look back on a variety of developments that would have had significant effects on the political lives of local communities. Some of the obvious experiences would have been the turbulent events of the Wars of the Roses, or the five different Tudor monarchs (not counting the brief reign of Lady Jane Grey), one

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[1] It is important to note that Chatman's work was based on case studies of communities isolated in locations such as prisons or pension homes. While the insular focus of early modern Kentish communities does display some similarities to Chatman's theory of 'Life in the Round', their positions in networks of mobility, family and trade make it impossible for them to truly conform. Nevertheless it is still extremely valuable as an indicator as to early modern local mentality. Elfreda A. Chatman, 'A Theory of Life in the Round', *Journal of the American Society for Information Science,* 50 (1998), 207-17.

[2] For example, in the manor of Wouldham, Nicholas Bewly, gent, possessed an 'auncient Rentall, (or booke,) written (as he verilie thinkethe) by Jhon Beaulie the great grandfather of this deponent in the tyme of king Henrie the Sixte': TNA, E 134/39Eliz/Hil2. This brings the argument that ordinary people in Tudor England had no real understanding of the recent past, at least in the early part of the century, into question; they remembered what was relevant for them: see C.S.L. Davies, 'Tudor: What's in a name?' *History*, 97 (2012), 24-42.

of whom was a child and a further two were queens regnant: each of whom had their own implications for the stability of the realm and its religion. There were also the more gradual state-building efforts of the monarchy over this period. State-building and centralisation are aspects of Tudor government which have been well studied, particularly following Geoffrey Elton's seminal work on Thomas Cromwell's administration, which stimulated generations of further exploration on the subject by scholars such as Starkey, Loades, and Braddick.[3] The Tudor state's efforts at centralising its power consequently had a significant impact upon local government, and therefore a growing influence on local politics. This has been demonstrated by numerous studies, but in particular Steve Hindle, who concluded that 'the parameters of the relationship between the state and society were redefined' in the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries, driven by the centre, but also by the local.[4]

The growth of litigation, which can be seen as part and parcel of this state growth, has already been touched upon in the first chapter, both in terms of the existence of the equity side of the Exchequer in Elizabeth's reign and the ways in which it and other equity courts were being utilised by locals. This relationship between Tudor government and county and local affairs will be taken a step further in this chapter, which will look at the ways in which royal domestic activities, such as progresses, and national events with international implications, such as the loss of Calais and the Armada, were interpreted and experienced on the local level in different areas in Kent. It will contemplate how these collective experiences in turn strengthened and developed existing social identities as well as bringing forth a variety of other contextual identifications.

As the focus shifts from the solely internal to the reception of the external, so do the sources. While depositions from the equity side of the Exchequer will still be used, they will be combined with other sources, both local and governmental. An understanding of the county's history of involvement with military affairs through the Cinque Ports and the subsequent invasion scares is

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[3] Geoffrey Elton, 'Tudor Government, the Points of Contact' in *Studies in Tudor and Stuart Politics and Government, Vol. III: Papers and Reviews, 1973-1981* (Cambridge, 1983), pp. 3-57. For some of the main responses to Elton and the development of the concept of state-building and centralisation under the Tudors, see: *Revolution Reassessed; Revisions in the History of Tudor Government and Administration,* ed. Christopher Coleman and David Starkey (Oxford, 1986); M. J. Braddick, *State formation in early modern England, c. 1550-1700* (Cambridge, 2000); S. J. Gunn, *Early Tudor Government, 1485-1558* (Basingstoke, 1995); David Loades, *The Mid-Tudor Crisis, 1545-1565* (London, 1992); Steve Hindle, *The State and Social Change in Early Modern England, 1550-1640* (Basingstoke, 2002).
[4] Hindle, *State and Social Change*, p. 231.

crucial to establishing the nature of experiences and political spaces in Kent. As such, texts such as Lambarde's *Perambulation* and local Custumals will be consulted. Additionally, letters from the Privy Council routed through the Lord Lieutenants and their deputies are important to exploring the connections between the centre and the local; while exploration of spaces like the beacons and muster sites alongside the treatment of Catholic Spain in Elizabethan literature can shed light on the ways in which local, county and national identities could be shaped in the context of Elizabethan England.

This chapter, then, will examine the effects of nation-wide events such as the Armada and the impact of the monarch. How communities acted in the face of these external influences can give us a good idea about how they saw themselves as a collective group. As outlined in the introduction, common feelings and demonstrations of group identity are most visible when confronted or challenged by an outside force; as anthropologist Anthony Cohen states, 'the symbolic expression and affirmation of boundary heightens people's awareness of and sensitivity to their community'.[5] As such, Abram de Swaan's statement that survival depended upon family networks and the local community, and that 'what happened at the more encompassing level where rulers operated did not matter all that much', will be challenged in these two chapters.[6] Although, as has been shown in the first chapter, the local community was the prime political concern and the lens through which local people experienced their lives and filtered information, de Swaan's argument for the emergence of the village as a 'survival unit' which 'could only take shape in collective action against external enemies and against nature', creating a 'new 'we-feeling'' out of such collective action (and particularly collective defence) is just as viable when addressing reactions to external movements or events which could be experienced at the local level.[7] By adding this understanding of community identity in response to outside challenges to a base line of identity grounded in custom, memory and landscape, a better grasp can be obtained of local identities as a whole, and a comparison can then be made in the next chapter about what could happen when these fundamental identities were challenged.

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[5] Anthony P. Cohen, *The Symbolic Construction of Community* (London, 1985), p. 50.
[6] de Swaan, 'Widening Circles of Identification: Emotional Concerns in Sociogenetic Perspective', 29.
[7] Ibid., 25-39, esp. p. 28; Naresh Kumar Agarwal, Yunjie (Calvin) Xu and Danny C. C. Poo, 'Delineating the boundary of "context" in information behaviour: Towards a contextual identity framework', *Proceedings of the American Society for Information Science and Technology*, 46 (2009), 1-29.

<u>External events as measures of time and identity</u>

Despite difficulties in communication and the insular nature of local identity, early modern towns and villages did not exist in a vacuum. While much of everyday political life was very much rooted in local concerns, major events on a national level could not fail to impact upon local lives. The ways in which they were remembered and used are very useful in attempting to understand how communities incorporated national political events into their own local lives and histories. As has already been outlined, some events were regular and expected; political cycles following the deaths and accessions of monarchs, for example, while not regular in the way of regnal years, were inevitable at some stage and there were implicit processes in place to respond to them. National events such as these were firmly included in local histories alongside other independent events that had a singular effect upon certain areas. The reigning monarch, who united the individuals in the kingdom arguably more at this point than any sense of nationality, was a universal external influence in all localities.[8] The way in which the monarch was experienced at a local level, however, varied massively depending on location. The monarch could make themselves 'felt' by way of royal progresses, in the role of land owner, and in the centralising efforts of the government, particularly with regards to litigation, as mentioned above. Another element that comes through in the Exchequer depositions at times is discussion over the monarch's presence as land owner. This comes across in a variety of ways: in regards to their rights as landlord, their ownership of many of the highways, and their defensive responsibilities. The way in which the influene of the monarch was experienced at the local level, then, could well have shaped how far the community conceived of themselves as part of a wider nation under the queen.

Royal progresses and visits were a way for monarchs to impose their presence upon their subjects by touring the country. As one of the Home Counties as well as a politically strategic region with its proximity to Westminster and the royal palaces of the Thames Valley, and its unique position of having no major secular land owner, Kent was a common stop on the royal itinerary; Elizabeth

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[8] For a discussion of the nature of the monarch and the state, please see Watts, 'Looking for the State in Later Medieval England', in *Heraldry, Pageantry and Social Display in Medieval England,* ed. Peter Coss and Maurice Keen (Woodbridge, 2002), pp. 243-67.

herself visited Kent on at least seven occasions.[9] Through the sixteenth century, the cities of Canterbury and Rochester, but also towns such as Sandwich, were visited by the Tudor monarchs, leading to pageants, celebrations and expenses on the behalf of the community. Elizabeth's visit to Sandwich in 1573, for example, was met with orations and gifts such as a golden cup which 'weighed 32 oz. and had a cover, at the top of which was a figure of a man holding with one hand a scutcheon and the other a flower'. Buildings were repaired in preparation for her arrival, streets were paved, 'all dung and filth' was to be 'removed or covered with earth', hogs were to be contained in certain places, and houses were to be 'beautified and adorned with black and white'.[10] Her arms and other decorations were placed in notable locations such as Sandown Gate, and over one hundred men were dressed in black and white and required to take part in the display.

This spectacle would have impacted upon the entire town, altering the inhabitants' physical environment as well as daily routines; butchers, for example, were expected to 'carry their offal to the furthest groyne head, till after her highness's departure'. The run-up to Elizabeth's arrival, the experience of participating in or witnessing her entry and the events of her four day stay, and the clean-up and return to normal routines when she had gone, would all have contributed to a communal memory of the physicality of the monarch within the familiar local landscape. The places where the queen had stopped and been entertained, the repaired buildings, and the painted houses 'on the strand street and elsewhere' would have been sites of memory for the people of Sandwich. Roger Manwood's house, in which Elizabeth stayed, was clearly already associated with royalty, being 'a howse wherein kinge Henry the viiith had ben lodged twyes before'.[11] This house, referred to as 'the King's Lodging' in his will dated 1592, clearly retained its royal connection for the majority of the sixteenth century, and with it, the memory of Sandwich's experiences with both Henry and Elizabeth.[12] Canterbury, the cathedral city and religious capital of England was also an important

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[9] In 1559, 1568, 1572, 1573, 1577, 1581, and 1602: see John Nichols, *The progresses, and public processions, of Queen Elizabeth. Among which are interspersed. Other solemnities, public expenditures, and remarkable events, during the reign of that Illustrious Princess. Now first printed from original Mss. of the times; or collected from scarce pamphlets, &c. Illustrated with historical notes, By John Nichols, F. S. A. Edinb. and Perth.*, Vol. 1 (London, 1788), pp. vi-xiii.

[10] William Boys, *Collections for an History of Sandwich in Kent: with notices of the other Cinque Ports and members, and of Richborough* (Canterbury, 1792) pp. 691-5.

[11] Manwood would not be knighted until five years later, in 1578. Thomas Dorman, 'Visits of two queens to Sandwich', *Arch. Cant.*, 16 (1886), 59; Boys, p. 693.

[12] Dorman, 59.

political site. Before the Reformation it was a destination for royal pilgrimages, as well as being the resting place of royals such as Henry IV and the Black Prince, and it was targeted by nearly every Kentish rebellion that arose between 1381 and 1549. It also received monarchs on progress through Kent, with one prominent example being Elizabeth's visit in the same progress of 1573, when she was entertained in Canterbury by Archbishop Parker on Monday, 7 September, her birthday.[13] Naturally, these sorts of events would have left a lasting impression on the people who witnessed them or heard of them second hand.

Yet it was not just the entered city which felt the pressure of the royal progress. While Sandwich had time to prepare for the queen's visit, the unexpected storm after her speech at Tilbury in 1588 forced Elizabeth to alter her plans and to stay the night in Erith on 9 August.[14] The unexpected presence of the queen, especially at such a tense time, would have remained in the memory of the locality. The towns and villages which were located along the main highways also experienced the presence of the monarch, if in a different form. The people of the manor of Wouldham, for example, for whom the high street, known as Key Street (discussed in the previous chapter), was a significant part of their landscape, were obliged to consider the state of the road for reasons other than local politics and boundaries. An interrogatory in 1597 required deponents to recall previous royal progresses through the area based on the fact that it was 'the strayghtest & derectest waye from London to Rochester'.[15] Sixty-year-old Robert Blackman, a yeoman of Southfleet, replied:

> that he well remembreth that the late Queene Mary aboute the
> second yere of her raigne (and the Queenes ma*ies*ty that now is
> aboute the xvth yeere of her reigne) in the tyme of there progresse,
> did passe that way, and that there officers did make choyse of that
> way, becawse the same was nearest, and that at the tyme of her
> majesties saide passinge that way, that was not so roughe, nor so
> set with wood, as now it is. (TNA, E 134/39Eliz/Hil2)

The memory of both Mary and Elizabeth passing along Key Street was, for Blackman, an experience of monarchy tied up in the local landscape, one which formed a strong enough picture for him to

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[13] Nichols, *The progresses, and public processions, of Queen Elizabeth.* p. 31
[14] Marion Colthorpe, 'Queen Elizabeth at Tilbury and in Kent', *Arch. Cant.*, 104 (1987), 83-6.
[15] TNA, E 134/39Eliz/Hil2.

compare the state of the road at the time of questioning to its appearance nineteen years before. Similarly, in Brodie Waddell's study on chronicling and record keeping by those on more modest levels of society, Joseph Bufton's experience of his monarch, William III, was reported as an exciting local event.[16] Although Bufton was writing over a century after Blackman, it is clear in the attention to the locations visited and routes used that the significance of the event is the interaction of the monarch in familiar local features. In both cases we can see the way in which the very occasional presence of the monarch for those who lived outside of London created a sense of the monarch as a 'passing celebrity', only experienced physically within the local landscape, and otherwise in a more abstract fashion.[17]

This, of course, was not something which the majority of people from Kent had the opportunity to experience. Monarchs were, however, also a constant presence in their subjects' lives in a more pervasive sense. The significance of the image of the monarch on seals was one way, conferring legitimacy to documents and bringing the royal presence to the localities, linking it to local officials, actions, and procedures. The existence of the monarch as an image on coins was another way, though Watts has shown how the casual use of such coins could negate the impact of the royal visage for members of the populace.[18] Another way in which monarchs maintained their prominence in the mental worlds of their subjects was as a tool by which time was measured. Regnal years were regular and predictable, and while a change in monarch could not be called regular or predictable, it was still part of the natural cycle of time, and one which contributed to the collection of external events used as measures of time. This use of the monarch as a memory tool was one of the most common ways of showing how monarchs of the past and present were integrated into the daily lives of common subjects who might never experience their physical presence. Regnal years and accessions were a common way to convey when a particular past event had occurred, and are littered amongst the depositions for both the Court of Exchequer and the Star Chamber. One cannot escape phrases such as 'the Monday before the feast of the Natyvitie of our Lady in the xxiijth yere

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[16] Brodie Waddell, 'Life writing; Writing History from Below: Chronicling and Record-Keeping in Early Modern England', *History Workshop Journal,* 85 (2018), 248.
[17] Waddell, 248.
[18] Watts, 'Looking for the state', pp. 264-5; Sydney Anglo, *Images of Tudor Kingship* (London, 1992), pp. 118-119.

of the Raign of the moost prudent prynce king henry the vijth yor noble grandefather', 'in the tyme of the late quene Mary', 'at the tyme of the said graunt of the said late kinge Edward the sixt', or 'by the late prince of famous memorye kinge Henrye the viijth'.[19] Similarly, there are many situations such as that of miller John Sutton from Chart-next-Sutton, who at the age of 'neere ffower score yeares' in the years 1599-1600, could state that he had known the Church Mill and Padsoll Mill at Maidstone 'ever since the 2 or 3 yeares of King Edward the 6 being then apprentice with David Barham at the church mills.'[20]

Even when times could be quite obscure, they were easily handled in the memories of the common people. This can be particularly demonstrated by the intricacy by which some references to regnal years were made, as is evident in the testimony of William Dakyn, the sixty-four-year-old parson of Adisham, who, in 1572, could recall that:

> ther was a chauntery in Kingston & that he did knowe that the
> same was in beinge within fyve yeres next before the first yere of
> the raigne of kinge Edward the sixte. and this he remembreth by
> resen he him selfe had a chauntery at the same tyme which were
> bothe presented for chaunteryes within the same tyme. (TNA, E
> 134/14Eliz/East9)

In much the same way that the conscious memory-making events of chapter 1 were created, the combination of the accession of Edward VI and Dakyn's own personal history with his own chantry, or Sutton's with his mill apprenticeship, meant that they were able to give an accurate time for the events in question: the existence of the Kingston chantry around twenty-five years after the event for Dakyn, and around fifty years for Sutton.

The use of the monarch as memory tool meant that an individual could be sure that whoever they spoke to would also recognise the time being described. As an event which elicited celebrations, music, sermons, and, notably for the sixteenth century, could also indicate a change in religion, a coronation was a national event which formed a personal experience for everyone in the country. It is clear that, whatever public opinion might have been of the monarch themselves, the succession was

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[19] TNA, STAC 3/1/63; TNA, E 134/23Eliz/East9; TNA, E 134/2Eliz/East1.
[20] TNA, E 134/41&42Eliz/Mich11.

of vital importance to towns across the country. Different areas tended to react in a variety of ways to national events such as peace treaties or victorious battles, with some putting on lavish celebrations with bonfires, bells and food, while others did nothing at all; as Steven Gunn states, 'public celebration did not promote unthinking docility'.[21] To the news of the birth of a prince or princess, however, there were far more enthusiastic celebrations across the country: often spontaneously, as well, as in the case of the response to rumours of the queen birthing a son in 1555.[22] The different responses and payments given to messengers over the news for a girl or a boy, further demonstrates the desire for a smooth succession on the part of the public. While Dover paid the same for news of Mary's birth in 1516 as it did for Henry in 1511, Sandwich only paid 5s in 1516 when they paid 13s 4d in 1511, and in Fordwich and New Romney Mary's birth elicited 'only moderate joy'. Edward's birth, on the other hand, became 'the most enthusiastically celebrated event of the entire period from the 1480s to the 1560s'.[23] The successful accession of a new monarch was also met with spontaneous celebration, seemingly regardless of their religion, again suggesting a focus on stability.[24] For Elizabeth's coronation, for example, music was demanded throughout the city of Norwich, and certain metrical songs were circulated by the central government on the anniversaries of the coronation, alongside bonfires, wine and beer.[25] Not far into Elizabeth's reign, her accession day was celebrated across a vast number of parishes. For towns and villages across the country, then, the stability of the succession was clearly considered to be of vital importance to their own continued prosperity, indicating a basic practical acceptance of the role of the monarch in the running of the locality. In this regard, regnal years formed a point of reference accessible for anyone in England, and were therefore used as a type of universal memory language.

This also corresponds with the common use of the deaths of notable local people as time-measuring tools. John Hamon from Dover identified the time he spent living in a particular property as six years 'in the tyme of Mr Thomas Keye', and for Robert Nethersole of Tenterden, it was 'about

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[21] Steven Gunn, 'War, Dynasty and Public Opinion in Early Tudor England', in *Authority and Consent in Tudor England: Essays presented to C.S.L. Davies*, eds. George Bernard and Gunn (Aldershot, 2002), p. 142.
[22] Ibid., pp. 137-40.
[23] Ibid., pp. 138-9.
[24] Ibid., p. 139.
[25] Jonathon Willis, *Church Music and Protestantism in Post-Reformation England; Discourses, Sites and Identities* (Farnham, 2010), p. 219; Gunn, 'War, Dynasty and Public Opinion', p. 139.

twoe or three yeares after the death of Robert Pope' that John Pett claimed Dawborn Wood.[26] The

dates of the deaths of men like Keye and Pope were ones which only locals would be aware of,

making these references far more specific to the community. Although not as useful in the universal

sense as a monarch, the deaths of influential local people were just as significant when discussing an

event with another person within, or with knowledge of, the community. By comparing the ways in

which both monarch and notable local individuals were used, however, it is clear that their

significance as a memory tool came from their direct impact upon the individual speaking and the

assumed knowledge on behalf of the listener. The comparison of the two, on the separate levels of

the national and the local, gives an indication of how events were internalised as a personal, and often

collective, experience, and suggests that although these particular national events registered in the

everyday politics of towns and villages, they were refracted through the lens of the local in order to

be effective.

<div align="center">Traditions of war and invasion</div>

The regnal years, deaths and accessions of monarchs were quantifiable and cyclical events

whose occurrence was relevant across the social spectrum. These were therefore consciously utilised

as devices in order to record and measure time. The impact of unpredictable external events, however,

depended upon the event itself in relation to the identity of the community in question. Of particular

relevance to the inhabitants of Kent were England's wars with other powers on the Continent. By

virtue of Kent's geographical location on the south-east coast, its position as 'the key of Englande'

with its direct link between the coast and the capital, and the subsequent prominence of the Cinque

Ports of Dover, Sandwich, New Romney and Hythe, the county had a long history of military

involvement and an awareness of its vulnerability to invasion.[27] From the Hundred Years War to the

Armada and the invasion scares of Elizabeth's reign, therefore, national events were reflected in the

repeated experiences of the people and in the features of the landscape in Kent. David Grummitt and

Malcolm Mercer have both shown how, over the period of 1399-1509, national politics could be seen

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[26] TNA, E 134/29Eliz/Hil17; TNA, E 134/23Eliz/East9.
[27] Holinshed, p. 293.

to be reflected in the elite politics of the county.[28] By considering how this was experienced and the lasting memories it left for the inhabitants of Kent, we can take a step further to understanding how far they identified with the national in such circumstances and how military experience shaped local identities.

By the sixteenth century, participation in a military capacity was a familiar and ancient duty for the men of Kent, and provided a unique form of experience for the inhabitants of the county; this was mainly due to the Hundred Years War.[29] The Cinque Ports and their members were required to provide the king with fifty-seven ships in times of war, and they were closely connected with the Calais garrison.[30] As a consequence of this, Kent, and particularly the Cinque Ports, was often intimately involved in the supply and organisation of the English war effort on the Continent. Under Henry V the Ports were especially prominent as a result of his years as Warden of the Cinque Ports and Captain of Calais. 'High-level discussions' were held between king and ports before the Harfleur expedition in 1415, boats from the Cinque Ports were sporadically sent to meet French ships attacking English merchants and the coast, trading with enemy merchants was prohibited and coastal defences were strengthened; the cost of the repairs to the defences of Dover Castle, for example, amounted to £67 13s. 4½d between 1414 and 1415.[31] In April 1415 the towns of Sandwich, Faversham, Dover, Deal, and Mongeham were compensating for the deficit in supplies to Calais, while ship service was required in 1415, 1417 and 1421. The strain on resources would therefore have been evident for the inhabitants of Kent, particularly on the coast, in addition to the experience of military action or knowing someone who participated in the wars. This familiarity with military structure, support, and activity, linked with a conspicuous French enemy, contributed to establishing a community who could identify on a certain level and in a certain context against the French and with the martial elements

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[28] Grummitt, 'Kent and National Politics, 1399-1461', in *Later Medieval Kent,* ed. Sheila Sweetinburgh (Woodbridge, 2010), pp. 235-50; Malcolm Mercer, 'Kent and National Politics, 1461-1509', in idem, pp. 251-72.

[29] Grummitt, 'Kent and National Politics', pp. 235-50.

[30] Different numbers of ships were required from different port towns. New Romney and its member, Lydd, for example, were to provide five ships between them (see KHLC, Sa/CPc4 p. 1), while Faversham, as a limb of Dover, produced one ship (see F.F. Giraud, 'The service of shipping of the barons of Faversham', *Arch. Cant.*, 21 (1895), 278-82). All ships had to be manned, and the towns bore the cost of maintaining them for fifteen days, after which time maintenance transferred to the king. For connections with Calais, see Malcolm Mercer, 'The administration of the Cinque Ports in the early Lancastrian period', in *People, Places and Perspectives: Essays on Later Medieval & Early Tudor England in Honour of Ralph Griffiths,* eds. Keith Dockray and Peter Fleming (Gloucestershire, 2005), p. 60.

[31] Mercer, 'Administration of the Cinque Ports', pp. 55, 58-9.

of national conflict. Moreover, connections within the county were also dictated by the war. Humphrey, duke of Gloucester, whose death would contribute to the unrest in the county in 1450, held a prominent position in Kent almost entirely based upon 'ties of military service', something which can be seen in the return of knights of the shire to the 'politically sensitive Parliaments' of 1422, 1426 and 1432.[32]

As Gunn states, then, the war 'consolidated English national and political identity, as ordinary men and women were taught to pray for the king's success, honour St George, and pay taxes for the common good'.[33] This was capitalised upon in the sixteenth century by Henry VIII, who came to the throne with ambitions of reigniting the Hundred Years War and the English claim to the French throne. The language he used and the effectiveness of it in terms of support from the population shows how well the identification against the French was ingrained in the people of England by 1509.[34] This would have been particularly strong for the members of the Cinque Ports: not only because of their history in supporting the war effort, but also due to their nature as ports, with the frequency of their contact with people from outside the county, including enemy nationalities. In 1522, for example, the details of seventeen Scots were recorded in Dover as a security measure: an act that reflects the general attitude of the same town, and other Kentish ports, in times of war, when individuals would flock to provide evidence that they were neither Scottish nor French.[35] This is indicative of both the common presence of foreign nationals in the ports, but also of the conception of particular nationalities as enemies at certain times and the suspicion that dominated such areas in these circumstances. Throughout Henry's reign the Hundred Years War loomed large, shaping the 'fraught constructions of linguistic and national identity'. Indeed, war shaped Tudor England to a degree not often recognised by historians: as Steven Gunn points out, Henry's own wars 'killed more people and built more buildings than his Reformation and filled more space in contemporary historical writing, and they did as much as the Reformation to shape the reigns of his successors.'[36]

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[32] Grummitt, 'Kent and National Politics', p. 240.
[33] Steven Gunn, *The English People at War in the Age of Henry VIII* (Oxford, 2018), p. 2.
[34] Ibid., pp. 2, 117-8, 126.
[35] Ibid., p. 128.
[36] J. Bellis, *The Hundred Years War in Literature, 1337-1600* (Woodbridge, 2016), p. 187; Gunn, *The English People at War,* p. 132

The experience of war was compounded by the inevitable effect of living in a vulnerable coastal county in times of war: raids, piracy and invasion. As already stated, Kent's geographical location meant that it was often a target for invasion. As shall be shown in chapter 5, invasion tales such as that of the Romans (specific to Old Romney) and the Normans (for the county of Kent as a whole), contributed to significant aspects of their respective collective identities and to the *Invicta* trope. Various references to the Danes in Lambarde's *Perambulation* demonstrate an awareness in some places of the county's history with Viking raids and attempted incursions. Throughout the period of the Hundred Years War Kent was a prominent target for the French. Great Stonar was burnt and Sandwich was threatened, in 1404 Dartmouth was the victim of a French attack, while the next year French pirates attempted to kidnap the king on his way from Queenborough Castle to Leigh.[37] Sandwich was attacked by the French in 1457 in a raid that killed its mayor and destroyed the surrounding areas.

The sense of vulnerability that resulted from this in politically tense times would have shaped the ways in which inhabitants experienced their local environment, something that can be seen in the way that many of the myths surrounding certain locations in Kent were invasion scenarios. It certainly had an effect on the politics of the county and on the histories of the towns and villages. The memory of the attack on Sandwich, where 'the ffrench men came […] and there lay one night and a daye' was one of the few additional notations included in the Tenterden chronicle of the corporation's Bailiffs, recorded from the reign of Henry VI; the fact that Tenterden was not particularly close to Sandwich only underlines the significance of this event for other communities alongside those directly affected, and therefore indicates an awareness of political events outside of the local, provoking broader associations as part of the Cinque Ports or the county of Kent.[38] This memory clearly informed the actions of the communities of Kent in Cade's rebellion of 1450, which was primarily concerned with the military failures in France, and was evident when the Yorkist lords appealed to prominent Kentish towns with open letters emphasising their policies on the defence of the coastline.[39] The fact that Cade's rebels also used the commision of array to muster the military resources of the county in

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[37] Mercer, 'Administration of the Cinque Ports', pp. 50-2.
[38] KHLC, Te/C1.
[39] See Michael Hicks, *The Wars of the Roses* (London, 2010), pp. 150-2. The impact of local invasion and vulnerability on Kentish politics and rebellion will be explored in Chapter 4.

their rebellion is an indication of just how far Kent's military history provided both strategies and shared grievances in rebellious action.[40]

The possibility of invasion was not only present in the memories and documents of communities, but in the landscape itself. The physical damage done by such raids would have existed as one such site, provoking memories of a particular event and acting as a reminder of the possibility of a reoccurrence in the future. A more general feature which served to evoke a sense of vulnerability and a reminder of the potential for invasion in politically worrisome times was the beacon system in Kent. Records for the existence of warning beacons in Kent go back to 1326, when it was ordered that men should be assigned 'in all places where it seems necessary to you, on the coast of the County, where such watch has formerly been kept'. The idea was that 'the men of this County, living on the sea coast, as often as there shall be need, shall light such signals, so that others, by their light, shall be prepared, at all times, to do whatever may pertain to the safety of those parts'.[41] This order was sent out several times across the years, getting slightly more specific each time, with beacons along the Thames being included in 1377. This order specified beacons at the Isle of Sheppey, Hoo, Cleve, and Gravesend, while by 1468 the measures taken were considered 'the custom of old'.[42]

With the wars under Henry VIII there was once more a sense of heightened vulnerability, and again this was visible on the landscape and on the coast. Henry's fortification programme, known as 'the King's Device', which aimed at strengthening the defences along the coast of England, and which made enormous renovations to the castles at Sandown, Walmer and Deal in 1539, made it very clear that these were areas that needed defending.[43] This message was emphasised in the increase of musters and in the vastly updated beacon system. Repairs of the beacons were on the minds of the councillors in 1534, had been ordered by Thomas Cromwell in 1539, and by 1546 the system itself was updated to be even more efficient.[44] Three beacons were ordered for every chosen location on

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[40] Montgomery Bohna, 'Armed Force and Civic Legitimacy in Jack Cade's Revolt, 1450', *English Historical Review,* 118 (2003), 563-82.

[41] Thomas Rymer, *Foedera* vol. 2, cited in H.T. White, 'The beacon system in Kent' *Arch. Cant.,* 46 (1934), 79.

[42] White, 'The beacon system in Kent' pp. 80-2.

[43] Martin Biddle, 'The Castles in the Downs: Deal, Sandown and Walmer', in *The History of the King's Works, Vol. IV:1485-1660,* ed. H. M. Colvin (London, 1982), p. 457; W. L. Rutton, 'Henry VIII's Castles at Sandown, Deal, Walmer, Sandgate and Camber', *Arch. Cant.*, 23 (1898), 24-30.

[44] White, 'The beacon system', 82, 83.

the coast, and two beacons for the inland locations. One of the coastal beacons was to be lit if the man stationed there 'discriethe any nombre of shippes upon the see', with further beacons to be lit as the situation changed.[45] In this way, a basic warning system was adapted into a method of communication, based in a common assumption of potential invasion spread across the coastal counties. The inclusion of beacons in a map of the Isle of Sheppey, created in 1572, with each one positioned prominently on a hill, shows just how dominant they were as part of the landscape and indicates their significance as local landmarks. Each one would have been clearly visible to nearby parishes, connecting the inhabitants of Sheppey.[46] Every beacon across the county, then, as well as individually existing as a feature of the local landscape, also served to remind those who lived nearby of the connections with other localities in Kent or along the coast, and of the risks that linked them all together as part of such a vulnerable county.

In the second half of Mary's reign, the hostilities with France had an immediate influence on certain areas in Kent: particularly the towns and limbs of the Cinque Ports. This can be seen in the letters to and from Sir Thomas Cheyney, Lord Warden of the Cinque Ports, which called for 'all the able men Inhabityng w*i*thin the seyd townes lib*er*tyes & memb*e*rs of them' to appear before him with their 'best horsses geldyngs Armor & weapon as shalbe moste mete for the purpose'. Men 'both on horseback & on foote' were required to support the earl of Pembroke at the garrison at Calais. Letters went out to Folkestone, Hythe, New Romney, Lydd and Tenterden with the orders for the required men to appear before Cheyney at specific times across two days, in a week's time.[47] The subsequent loss of Calais in January 1558 was a heavy political blow for Mary I's government. For the people of Kent, historically invested in its defence and geographically vulnerable to invasion as they were, this had the potential to be catastrophic. Trading along the coast and fishing activities, which have been shown to be a fundamental part of life for the Kentish coastal towns, came to a standstill and Sir Thomas Cheyney petitioned to resign his post of Lord Warden, arguing that 'he had never seen the county so weak'.[48] Returning soldiers from Calais swelled the numbers of the poor in towns and cities, putting a strain on resources, and it is clear that the inhabitants of Canterbury were aware of

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[45] Lambeth MS., 709, cited in White, 'The beacon system in Kent', 83-4.
[46] TNA, MPF 1/240. See Appendix B.
[47] KHLC, NR/CPw27.
[48] Clark, *Society*, p. 104.

their vulnerability. On 28 January the city witnessed the hanging of Robert Cockerell, a shoemaker's apprentice, after a report was made that he had drunkenly declared that if the king of France invaded and offered eighteen pence a day, he 'would serve the French king before [he] would serve the queen's majesty'.[49] Even Whitley Forest, further inland, felt the ramifications. The way in which fifty-five-year-old Thomas Smalman of Otford described the actions of Cyriack Petit, Cardinal Pole's surveyor, twenty years after the event was highly significant. Petit was selling 'some wyndfall trees blowen downe in the parte of Whitley wood now in controversey by the great tempest that happened at the losse of Calice'.[50] Other similar references, as well as descriptions of the storm as 'the grete tempest comonly called Dover wynde or Calice wynde', show how the locals surrounding Whitley Forest experienced the loss of Calais. The use of the phrase 'grete tempest' assigns a divine element to the storm, converting it into a punishment or message from God. By the late 1570s, then, it is clear that the inhabitants of the land around Whitley Forest remembered the storm from twenty years before, and that it was 'comonly' accepted to have a direct connection to the military loss across the Channel.

That the people of Kent were aware of England's failures in France was obvious. As has been shown, the political situation between England and France was of personal importance to those in Kent, with their history of involvement in wars and their strong links with Calais. Additionally, the nature of the Cinque Ports, the presence of the stranger communities maintained in Kent, and the existence of men such as 'Sir James Comer a frenche preest' who seems to have been remembered by many even sixty years after his serving as chantry priest in Kingston, are examples of constant reminders to at least certain communities in Kent of their proximity to the Continent.[51] It is no surprise

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[49] Clark, *Society*, p. 104; Michael Zell, 'The Establishment of a Protestant Church', in *Early Modern Kent, 1540-1640,* ed. idem (Woodbridge, 2000), p. 232; Terence Murphy, 'The Maintenance of Order in Early Tudor Kent, 1509-1558', (PhD Thesis, Northwestern University, 1975), p. 360.

[50] TNA, E 134/20&21Eliz/Mich10.

[51] Paul Lee has shown, by examining the lay subsidy assessments of west Kent in Henry VIII's reign, the presence of French and Dutch people living in areas like Dartford and Wilmington. See Paul Lee, 'Monastic and secular religion and devotional reading in late medieval Dartford and west Kent' (Unpublished PhD Thesis, University of Kent, 1998), pp. 12-13. Also, while the main stranger communities were established in Sandwich in 1561, Maidstone in 1567, Dover in 1571 and Canterbury in 1575 (see Marcel Backhouse, *The Flemish and Walloon Communities at Sandwich during the Reign of Elizabeth I, 1561-1603* (Brussels, 1995), p. 11), their settlement in the town may have coloured local memories of connection to the Continent from the perspective of Elizabethan reminiscences. There is evidence for immigrants working in Canterbury for many years before 1558, see Raymond Fagel, 'The Netherlandish presence in England before the coming of the stranger churches, 1480-1560', in *From Strangers to Citizens; The Integration of Immigrant Communities in Britain, Ireland and Colonial America, 1550-1750,* eds. Randolph Vigne and Charles Littleton (Brighton, 2001), pp. 7-16, esp. 12; Andrew Pettegree, *Foreign Protestant Communities in Sixteenth-Century London* (Oxford, 1986). For the French priest of Kingston see TNA, E 134/14Eliz/East9; TNA, E 134/15Eliz/Trin1.

that the celebrations surrounding the capture of Boulogne were mainly held in the south-east, in places like Canterbury and Tenterden.[52] For later Tudor Kentish men and women, the loss of Calais therefore had a direct impact upon their daily political lives, and it is in their reactions to it that we can gain an idea of how they perceived their situation to be as people of Kent. The 'tempest' in Whitley would not have had the significance it held had they not lived in Kent and had this external event not had such meaning for them. For the coastal towns, the loss of Calais had a far more immediate consequence, and the fact that their trade and livelihood was prevented for a period of time suggests just how seriously they took this news. The types of reactions demonstrated in Canterbury, on the coast, and in a woodland village, show that despite the vast differences demonstrated in the first chapter based on their local resources and customs, their situations as part of Kent and its history as a county was not something they were totally unaware of, despite their individual internalisations of the events as individual communities. The threat inherent in the loss of Calais forced a different layer of identity to come to the fore, one which was still based on geographical location and local history, but this time also aligning itself with the vulnerabilities of the county.

<u>The Armada</u>

By the time of the Spanish Armada in 1588, then, Kent had a long history of military involvement and defensive measures. This section will not attempt to provide a chronology of the Armada in Kent as this has already been well established by J.N. McGurk, while Neil Younger's book on war in the counties during Elizabeth's reign has provided us with an understanding of the overall success of Elizabethan policies and support for the regime at this time at the county level.[53] Both make good use of the Leveson Papers and provide a vital overall narrative account with an emphasis on elite county politics. This, of course, is crucial, particularly in a county which was politically dominated by the gentry and a system of royal offices rather than by any peer of the realm, making the interaction between county and government networks of vital importance to the stability of the county and the safety of the kingdom more broadly. The renewal of war under Elizabeth from 1585 and the resulting fear of invasion affected more than just the political elite, however. This

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[52] Gunn, 'War, Dynasty and Public Opinion', p. 141.

[53] J. N. McGurk, 'Armada Preparations in Kent Tund Arrangements Made after the Defeat (1587-1589)', *Arch. Cant.*, 85 (1977), 71-93; Neil Younger, *War and Politics in the Elizabethan Counties* (Manchester, 2012).

section will contribute to the discussion by looking at the way this was experienced on a local level, and considering the way in which this experience informed identities as localities and as a county.

Even before there was any real fear of impending invasion there is growing evidence of military familiarity in certain areas of the county. The Militia Act of 1558 had revised the old obligation on men between the ages of 16 and 60 to have arms and armour according to their station which had been formalised by the 1295 Statute of Winchester.[54] By the1570s the county and town militias were increasingly organised according to the requirements of the new statute. During the queen's visit to Sandwich in 1573, she was met by a hundred men in black and white, 'every one of them having a muryon and a calyver or di. Musket, having thre dromes and thre ensignes and thre capitans […] every of theis discharged their shott'.[55] She was also entertained by a mock battle. The town had built a fort at Stonar and 'the capitanes aforesaid led over their men to assault the said forte'; at the same time two boats were prepared 'in thende of eche boate a borde upon which bords stode a man, and so met together with either of them a staffe and a sheld of woodd, and one of them did over throwe an other'. After which, 'the capitans did put their men into a battayle, and takeng with them some lose shott, gave the scarmerche to the forte, and in the ende, after the dischardge of ii fawkenets and certen chambers, after dyvers assaults the forte was wonne.'[56] This focus upon weaponry and the utilisation of the natural landscape for their military display suggests a community that was familiar with the use of weapons, military organisation and tactics suiting their environment.

A muster at the Dane John in Canterbury in 1577 also suggests that military equipment and men could be called upon when needed.[57] By witnessing a muster, the local inhabitants and visitors to the city would have gained a different experience, but one which could contribute just as much to an individual's understanding of the place they were in and what the muster meant in that context. The prominence of the city of Canterbury would have made itself felt on such an occasion, and the significance of the Dane John as a political space would have played its part in the eyes of the locals.

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[54] Gunn, Grummitt and Hans Cools, *War, State and Society in England and the Netherlands, 1477-1558* (Oxford, 2007), pp. 20-1; A. Hassell-Smith, 'Militia Rates and militia statutes 1558-1663', in *The English Commonwealth 1547-1640: Essays in Politics and Society Presented to Joel Hurstfield,* eds. Peter Clark, A.C.R. Smith and N. Tyacke (Leicester, 1979), pp. 94-100.
[55] Boys, p. 691.
[56] Ibid., pp. 693-4.
[57] CCA, CC-N/39.

When, in 1585, the government started to expect a Spanish invasion, its gradual roll-out of the Lord Lieutenancies across the country, which made use of local networks and power relationships on a county-by-county basis for the defence of the realm, was something that worked particularly well in Kent.[58] While not everything ran smoothly, the continuous presence and efficiency of William Brooke, Lord Cobham, Lord Warden of the Cinque Ports, and Lord Lieutenant for Kent, meant that the levying of the militia and trained bands was generally successful. Cobham's ability, in 1586, to go beyond his quota of 2,500 trained men by 700 'with the good liking of the country' is demonstrative not only of his own competence, but of the effectiveness of the system under him and the support of the county.[59]

As has been shown already in this chapter, the ways in which different areas experienced national events could wildly vary. With the Spanish Armada considered imminent by 1587, numerous plans were made based upon expectations of a potential landing. One such plan identified Sheerness, Romney Marsh, and the Isles of Sheppey and Thanet as probable landing spots, while Canterbury, Sandwich, Rochester, Aylesford and Maidstone were named 'places of retrait'. Numbers of trained and untrained men were allocated to the most likely landing places, with 1,114 under Sir Thomas Sondes appointed to Sheppey and 720 under Edward Wotton appointed to Thanet.[60] It is highly likely that these areas would have been aware, if not of specific plans, at least of the existence of plans and defences for their localities. Watches, for example, were established at Sheppey, Hoo, Dymchurch, Elmes and Sandgate, and would have been something of which the locals were aware; the presence of the watch and the reason they were there would have communicated itself to the people of that town.[61] The constant exchange of information and the surveys that lead to plans and maps such as the one which anticipated the possible arrangement and placement of the Spanish fleet in the Channel off the coast of Kent and the English force there to meet it would have added to a sense of tense expectation.[62] The musters and the training would have provided a very specific military experience for the individuals who took part, but also for those who knew or were related to them, and those who

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[58] Younger, *War and Politics,* pp. 14-28, 34-5.
[59] Cobham to Leveson (1586), cited in Younger, *War and Politics*, p. 110.
[60] McGurk, 'Armada Preparations', pp. 71-2.
[61] Ibid., p. 72.
[62] KHLC, test1/15/2.

witnessed any of these events. Similarly, the need to obtain a sufficient amount of the proper clothes, weapons and armour would have had its own impact upon the relevant industries and their locations; armour could be obtained in Rochester, for example.[63] Men 'of good experience and credit', such as Sir Henry Norris in 1587, were sent to 'viewe and see all the armour within this shire and weapons and to whom the same are fitted', leading to letters advising that 'all defaults' should be 'amended with speed'.[64]

The event of the Armada itself, with reports arriving that the Spanish fleet was on its way to meet with the duke of Parma, pulled all these preparations together. McGurk's assessment of a variety of sources including the State Papers Domestic and the Lieutenancy papers of Leveson, Scott, and Twysden, has determined the number of the forces raised in Kent in July 1588. Divided between the army in defence of the Queen, the army located on the Downs for the defence of the coast, as well as the Reserves of East and West Kent at Canterbury and Maidstone respectively, the Kentish forces consisted of 725 Horse, 1577 Pioneers, and 10,880 Foot.[65] These were also divided into categories depending on their level of training and armament, with the troops comprising of 'armed and trained foot', 'armed un-trained foot' and 'partially armed foot'. The rendezvous points for the Kentish men were based on the locations previously used for musters and training. The forces of the Lathe of St. Augustine's were to assemble at Canterbury, Sandwich, and Dover; the men for the Lathe of Shepway were to meet at Folkestone, Hythe, and New Romney; the Lathe of Scray's assembly point was Ashford; the troops of the Lathe of Aylesford were to assemble at Rochester, Maidstone, and Tonbridge; and the men of the Lathe of Sutton-at-Hone were to congregate at Dartford and Sevenoaks.[66] As politically significant sites and traditional gathering places, the Armada's use of these spaces for musters, training and assembling forces for the defence of the coast, county, and country further imbued them with military and defensive association on both a local and a national scale.

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[63] Younger, *War and Politics*, p. 177.
[64] cited in McGurk, 'Armada Preparations', 75-6.
[65] McGurk, 'Armada Preparations', 88.
[66] Ibid., 84.

This sense of connection with other locations within the county and with the nation as a whole would have been emphasised by the continued use of the beacon system. Cobham had ordered Nicholas Gilbourne of Charing the previous year to:

> oversee and order all the watches that be or shalbe to be kept within the sayde Lath and Hundreds, and to refuse and displace such watchmen as you shall fynde unfitt, and to charge and commande all or any the constables, Boursholders and other offycers within the said Lath and Hundreds to repayre, amend and builde the Beacons and watchhouses, and to pervyde all things necessary for the light to be given by the sayd Beacons at the charge of the sev'rall Hundreds as accustomably hath bin used [...].[67]

A new addition to Lambarde's 1596 edition of his *Perambulation* was 'a carde, of the Beacons, in Kent', which provided a diagram of the location and connections between the beacons in order to raise awareness of the system and how it worked within the county, and had the intended result that 'any man with little labour may be assured when the danger is'.[68] It showed fifty-two beacons and demonstrated the way in which they conveyed warning from the coast to London; as it was clearly not necessary in his 1576 edition, we can see the enhanced sense of vulnerability tied to the Kentish landscape and the clear assumption that this was information that the people of Kent needed to have due to the circumstances of the Armada and the continued fears of invasion. The physical presence of the local beacons, with the heightened consciousness of possible invasion and the efforts to repair and inform towns and villages of the nature of the beacon system, particularly the areas along the coast and the Thames who experienced further cautionary measures such as the stopping of ships and the removal of navigation lights, would have gained a wider awareness of their place within the county and in the defence of the realm.

In a similar fashion, the logistics of raising troops, training them, and supplying them made its mark in the landscape, where these events took place, and in the routines of those directly connected with such issues. Those areas along the coast, the Medway and the Thames might have

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[67] Cobham to Gilbourne (25 Oct, 1587) cited in White, 'The beacon system', 88-9.
[68] Lambarde, *A Perambulation of Kent conteining the description, hystorie, and customes of that shyre. Written in the yeere 1570 by William Lambarde of Lincolnes Inne Gent: first published in the yeere 1576 and now increased and altered after the Authors owne last Copie* (London, 1596) plate II. See Appendix C; White, 'The beacon system', 86.

had a more immediate experience in the run-up to the Armada, and those involved in the musters and trained bands might have had a more directly 'military' experience, but this did not mean that towns and villages further inland or those who were not part of the fighting force did not share in the experience of the Spanish Armada. A major element of this experience was that these towns would also have been the ones paying for the troops, their supplies, and the men on watch. The systems put in place under Elizabeth in which the expense for the defence of each county for the most part came from the county itself would have added another dimension to the experience of the Armada and the preparations for it.[69] The way in which this affected different localities, again, varied. In the Cinque Ports, along with the levying of troops and supplies, a stay of ships was ordered in 1586 preventing any voyages to Spain, Portugal or 'anye longe forreyne voyadges', 'to thintente theye maye be in a redynes to serve heere what occasion soever maye happen'.[70] This order would have directly and indirectly affected the routines and livelihoods of those linked to overseas trade and the industries surrounding supply and maintenance of such ships. The additional costs of training, employing, and supplying troops with clothes and weapons burdened different communities in different ways.[71] For some, local gentry funded supplies, or at least provided their own, while in other areas the town might store its collection of armour and weapons and distribute them among their men. Another situation might be a parish rate to pay for supplies; in 1589, for example, each parish in Chatham and Gillingham was to raise 6s 8d.[72] The Sandwich Year Book mentions that during the meeting of the common council on 30 April 1588, 'Mr Crispe one of the Jurats of this Towne was chosen and appointed Capten of the ship called the Ruben nowe presently to be sett forth by this Towne to the seas in warlick sorte by order from the LL of her Ma*ies*ties most honorable privie counsel for the defence of this Ralme'. His wages, of six pounds per month, were decided and agreed by the mayor, jurats and common council, as well as a statement of the benefits he and his company would receive.[73]

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[69] Younger, *War and Politics*.
[70] KHLC, Fa/CPw49.
[71] Kent's payments, divided into local military taxation, fifteenths and tenths, and lay subsidies which amounted to 5,782 pounds in 1585 and 5,531 pounds in 1588 are visible in a table and graph in Younger, *War and Politics*, p. 209. It should be remembered that, in contrast to some other counties, this did not include the costs of musters, beacons and defence measures.
[72] Leveson and Lambarde to constables (January 1589) cited in Younger, *War and Politics*, p. 212.
[73] KHLC, Sa/AC6 f. 96v.

The payments of such amounts were not raised by a disinterested or uninformed population; Younger has shown how, when money was raised or taxed at these times, communities were aware of what the money was intended for, and where it actually went. This could be seen in the complaints that arose in Kent in 1593 over a troop levy. When the levy was cancelled, the money was not repaid and weapons and armour were stored away for the future, following which a constable was said to have commented that 'the Contrie […] doe much grudg at this and other such paymentes'. This was because the troops 'went not, nor any accompt made unto them of the said charges'. That Younger considers this to be 'Kent's most significant protest of the period' is suggestive of Kentish engagement with the aim of protecting the county and the realm, and of a county very aware of the direct results of their contributions towards this goal.[74] Here, by pushing the burden of defence onto the counties, both financially and in manpower terms, although it is clear that it was taking a further step towards centralised power, it would also have contributed to a sense of local ownership, on a parish, town, or county-wide scale, where they were directly invested in what happened, and were aware of the results. The reluctance to pay towards defence or to actively train men when they did not feel threatened, in contrast to the amounts they were willing to spend and the speed at which large numbers of men could be equipped and on the move when they felt it was necessary, shows just how much local opinion meant to the smooth running of the militia and trained bands when it came to defending the realm.[75]

The Armada remained in the memories of the nation and of the localities for years to come. Argued to be a defining event in establishing an English Protestant identity, it did a similar job to the history of the Hundred Years War in defining what it was to be English in contrast to a specific enemy. This time, of course, it was Spain and Catholicism that provided the 'Other' to Protestant, Tudor England.[76] National propaganda naturally turned it into a large victory, with plenty of poems

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[74] Younger, *War and Politics*, pp. 83-4.
[75] Ibid., pp. 102-103, 111-12.
[76] David Cressy, *Bonfires and Bells: National Memory and the Protestant Calendar in Elizabethan and Stuart England* (Berkeley, 1989), pp. 122-29; idem, 'The Spanish Armada: Celebration, Myth and Memory' in *England and the Spanish Armada: papers arising from the 1988 conference, University College, University of New South Wales, Australian Defence Force Academy, Canberra, Australia,* eds. Jeff Doyle and Bruce Moore (Canberra, 1990), pp. 157-76; For more on English Protestant identity by the end of Elizabeth's reign please see Christopher Haigh's point that it was under Elizabeth that England became 'a Protestant nation, but not a nation of Protestants' in his *English Reformations,* p. 280; Judith Richards, 'The English Accession of James VI: "National" Identity, Gender and the Personal Monarchy of England', *English Historical Review*, 117(2002), 513-35; Collinson, 'This England: Race, Nation, Patriotism', in *This England:*

giving thanks for the royal, national and Protestant triumph, and as a result it tied broader concepts of monarchy and national identity to an event which was experienced primarily at the local and the county level.[77] This would also have been evident in the government's use of religious services and the way in which prayers could be considered support for the defence of the realm against Catholic Spain: a form of political support which also by its nature drew the thoughts of a locality into a wider discussion of the country as a whole.[78] It was therefore also worthy of recording in a myriad of local ways. One of the few notes in the Tenterden chronicle among the list of town bailiffs was the statement that 'This yeare the Spanish fleete came Fore England aboute St James tide 1588'; as part of a minute selection of events such as the loss of Calais, a shooting star, and an earthquake, we can see the inclusion of this military success within the wider understanding of divine communication over the 'collective godliness' or 'collective sin' of the realm as a whole, but experienced through the lens of the local.[79] On another level, the existence of a translated tale of the Armada from an account from the Low Countries, probably translated around 1600, in the possession of a relatively new gentry family in Kent is suggestive of transnational communication and a common sense of identity between Kent and the Low Countries based around the Spanish failure in 1588.[80] The Armada therefore created a situation which called on a county military history, local landscapes, local industries and experiences and placed them within a wider context of nationhood and Protestantism, with the monarch at the centre of it all.

Essays on the English nation and commonwealth in the sixteenth century, ed. Collinson (Manchester, 2011), p. 14; Martina Mittag, 'National Identity and the Sovereign in Anti-Spanish Pamphlets 1558-1625', in *Writing the Early Modern English Nation: The Transformation of National Identity in Sixteenth and Seventeenth-Century England,* ed. Herbert Graves (Amsterdam, 2001), pp. 109-30.

[77] Twenty-seven ballads focused on the Armada were added to the Stationers' Register between 29 June and 27 November 1588. John J. McAleer, 'Ballads on the Spanish Armada', *Texas Studies in Literature and Language*, 4 (1963), 602; Cressy, *Bonfires and Bells*; Arthur F. Marotti and Steven W. May, 'Two Lost Ballads of the Armada Thanksgiving Celebration', *English Literary Renaissance,* 41 (2011), 31-63.

[78] Whether they were for such petitionary services or against them. For more on parish prayers as political action, please see Natalie Mears, 'Public Worship and Political Participation in Elizabethan England', *Journal of British Studies*, 51 (2012), 4-25, esp. pp. 15-16.

[79] KHLC, Te/C1; Mears, 'Public Worship and Political Participation', 21.

[80] KHLC, U1121/Z5; Popular political debate over war and peace in the 1590s seems to have had connections to the Low Countries, indicating a sense of kinship with Spain's enemy and a wider, Protestant identity that went beyond England. Please see Alexandra Gajda, 'Debating War and Peace in Late Elizabethan England', *The Historical Journal*, 52 (2009), 851-78; Robert E. Scully, '"In the Confident Hope of a Miracle": The Spanish Armada and Religious Mentalities in the Late Sixteenth Century', *The Catholic Historical Review*, 89 (2003), 660-1, 663-5.

After the Armada

While the Armada would eventually become a quasi-mythical event proving God's support of Protestant England, in the second half of 1588, recognition of the failure of the Armada was slow to come to the people of England. Although not long after the Spanish fleet faded from view people in Kent started to relax their guard over the imminence of invasion, with Sir Robert Sydney able to write to his wife on 6 August, 'you need not dout that you shall bee taken on the suddin, for the ennimies will not bee heer so soone but that I shall have leasure to take order for you', it was not until November that the government felt secure enough to order a day of national thanksgiving, two days after Elizabeth's Accession day celebrations on 19 November.[81] Even then, the Spanish threat was not nullified until 1604 and the fact that the position of Lord Lieutenant was replaced upon the death of Cobham in 1597, unlike the situation in the majority of counties in England where the Lieutenancies simply died out, once again underlines the strategic importance of Kent, its continued prominence in military matters, and the constant expectation of invasion until the end of Elizabeth's reign.[82] The defensive measures maintained over this period would have contributed to a variety of different experiences which linked a town or village's local spaces and landscapes to a wider concept of county and nation in a military sense. This included the way in which troops were sent abroad to fight in the Netherlands, Ireland, and in the French wars. Younger's example of a northern man in Norwich angrily tearing down a poster maligning the bravery of the troops from his county is highly suggestive of a county identity developed in the county system of militia and trained bands under the threat of invasion. Whether this survived when the uniting military threat was gone, however, is uncertain.

After 1588 the country anticipated several invasion attempts, with heightened expectations in 1589 and the years from 1596 to 1600.[83] In Kent musters continued from immediately after the failed Armada, and during the year 1589, musters were held in March and August, with arrangements still being made for defence against any invasion attempt by, for example, directing the distribution

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[81] Cited in Sybil Jack, 'The Cinque Ports and the Spanish Armada', in *England and the Spanish Armada*, p. 149; Cressy, 'The Spanish Armada: Celebration, Myth and Memory', pp. 162-3.
[82] Younger, *War and Politics*, p. 26.
[83] R.B. Wernham, *The Return of the Armadas: the last years of the Elizabethan war against Spain, 1595-1603* (Oxford, 1994); Edward Tenace, 'A Strategy of Reaction: The Armadas of 1596 and 1597 and the Spanish Struggle for European Hegemony', *English Historical Review*, 118 (2003), 855-82.

of powder in convenient places; stores of powder were to be kept in Canterbury and Sevenoaks, one barrel was to be held at Maidstone, and three barrels each were to be kept in Dartford, Tonbridge, Cranford, and Rochester.[84] A report in 1589 that 'the Kinge of Spayne hath all this yeare made grete preparations in building of newe shippes in all his north coast of Spain' meant that in addition to these preparations more maps were drawn up of the coastline and potential attack and defence formations.[85] While the situation with Spain remained tense in the following years and the government attempted to maintain the level of readiness of 1588, there seems to have been a lull in the expectation of invasion, although troops were still being levied for fighting in the Low Countries, France and Ireland and the subsidies granted over the 1590s consisted of a large part of county wartime expenses spread out across the decade. Younger shows a steady level of county expenses during the years 1588 to 1593 where total payments remained around £5,500, with a significant dip in 1591 to £4,105, although it should be remembered that the figures Younger produces for Kent do not include payments for musters and similar military expenses such as beacons. All of this would have maintained a sense of military preparation and the experiences that went along with such circumstances, sustaining at the very least a low level of awareness of the welfare of English forces, which possibly contained local troops, and therefore a basic understanding of England's place on an international level.

The situation changed dramatically in the mid-90s. County payments rose significantly in response to renewed fears of invasion, while the years 1594 and 1595 were particularly heavy due to subsidies having to be paid in single instalments.[86] 1594 also saw troop levies in England for all three countries, with 1,500 men going to the Netherlands, 2,050 to France, and 188 to Ireland, which would no doubt have added to the burden on the counties.[87] 1596, on the other hand, witnessed a military success, another invasion scare, and further demands on the county of Kent. One event in particular, the response to the Spanish siege of Calais in April that year, demonstrated the system of levying in action even if it ended up being a costly and frustrating exercise:

> The Kent lieutenancy was ordered on 1 April to levy 2,000 men;
> four days later, the total was reduced to 1,000; it was raised again

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[84] CCA, U4/4/12; McGurk, 'Armada Preparations', pp. 91-2.
[85] Lambeth Palace MSS. 1392, f. 44, cited in McGurk, 'Armada Preparations', 92; CCA, U4/5/2; KHLC, test1/15/1372; KHLC, test1/15/1373; KHLC, test1/15/1374.
[86] Younger, *War and Politics,* pp. 207, 209-11.
[87] Ibid., p. 162.

to 2,000 on 9 April, cancelled altogether the following day, in the
belief that Calais had fallen, reinstated the day after, and finally
cancelled on 17 April.[88]

The size of the levy, and the speed at which men were gathered, was enormous, and wasted valuable time and resources; the ultimate cost to the county has been estimated to be in excess of £1,000.[89] In addition to this, the Cinque Ports were required to provide four ships for the Anglo-Dutch expedition to Cadiz under the command of Robert Devereux, earl of Essex, and Charles Howard, earl of Nottingham, something they evidently were resistant to; a letter from the privy council to the mayors, aldermen and chief officers of the Cinque Ports referred to a previous letter and that they had been informed of 'some difficultie in levying the said chardge'.[90] The military side of the expedition does not seem to have imposed on the county of Kent too far: Younger suggests this might be because, due to the unusual method of levying troops by commission (unusual for Elizabethan England, at least), Essex focused his attempts on areas which had not been forced to provide ships.[91] Nevertheless, 300 men were still recruited from Kent under Captains Gares, Wilford, and Wyatt.[92] The success of the Cadiz mission inspired thanksgiving celebrations and would have added to the growing national consciousness based in the Protestant, naval success of England under Elizabeth, shared with the Protestant United Provinces against Catholic Spain.[93]

With the news that Philip II was sending another Armada in retaliation for the 'shame and disgrace done him in his own kingdom' at Cadiz, defence activity peaked once more.[94] Yet again, trade with enemy nations was prohibited and sea voyages were restricted, and watches were set.[95] At this stage we can perhaps see how the pressure of the vulnerability of Kent was felt by some. On 17 July 1596, Alexander Oven, a labourer from Hoath, was reported as saying:

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[88] Ibid., p. 165.
[89] Ibid.
[90] *APC,* 25 (London, 1901), p. 177; KHLC, NR/RTs3; KHLC, NR/CPc61.
[91] Younger, 'The Practice and Politics of Troop-Raising: Robert Devereux, Second Earl of Essex, and the Elizabethan Regime', *The English Historical Review*, 127 (2012), 570-1.
[92] 'Cecil Papers: May 1596, 16-31', in *Calendar of the Cecil Papers in Hatfield House: Volume 6, 1596*, ed. R A Roberts (London, 1895), pp. 205-6, *British History Online* <https://www.british-history.ac.uk/cal-cecil-papers/vol6> [Accessed 13.12.17].
[93] Essex was certainly aware of the importance of the way the capture of Cadiz was portrayed, see Paul E.J. Hammer, 'Myth-making: Politics, Propaganda and the Capture of Cadiz in 1596', *The Historical Journal,* 40 (1997), 621-42.
[94] SHC, 6729/4/102.
[95] KHLC, NR/CPw/179; ESRO, RYE/47/53/6.

> they (meaning the said Spaniards) be long a commynge yt is no
> matter if they (meaning the said Spaniards) were come, and I would
> they (meaning the said Spaniards) were come for the people here
> (meaning the aforesaid Lady the Queen) be all naught a plague of
> God light vpon them all (meaning the aforesaid Lady the Queen).
> (KHLC, Q/SRg/m.2d)

Although there is a hint at the existence of a religious grievance in this statement, there is no definitive explanation for why he was in favour of the Spanish invading. Regardless, the fact that a labourer like Oven's way of expressing discontent was through the context of the vulnerability of England to repeated Spanish invasion attempts shows its presence as a political discourse in Kent, even among the lower sorts. This situation was not likely to change, as another armada was sent the next year, and ships were once again stayed, beacons attended, watches set, and selected and common bands were furnished with armour and weapons.[96] Failures or refusals to maintain a watch over these years could be suggestive of the burden felt by certain localities, of an underestimation of the likelihood of invasion, or of a demonstration of dissatisfaction of a similar kind to Oven's.[97] As such, we can also see how the years of warfare and defensive measures might have led to areas of discontent, or might have provided a way in which to articulate such feelings. The Spanish Armadas of 1596 and 1597 may never have reached England, but the threat of invasion was nevertheless very real. The impact this would have had on people's lives, particularly in the coastal towns and ports, would have contributed to a sustained awareness of vulnerability and of their place in the context of Protestant England and its conflict with Catholic Spain.

Towards the end of the sixteenth century things only got more intense. The burden of county payments rocketed in 1599 to £9,355 and remained high until the end of the reign.[98] Another serious invasion scare galvanised defence efforts. By August, the Government was alerting the counties to the report that the king of Spain was planning to invade Kent.[99] Ten days later letters were sent out by Cobham, one notifying the town of Lydd that 'the king of Spaine her majesties Capitall Enemye hath prepared a great ffleete in readiness, with intention to doe some exployte against her Majesties

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[96] KHLC, NR/ZPr/50; KHLC, Sa/ZB2/43; KHLC, Sa/ZB2/44; KHLC, NR/CPw86.
[97] KHLC, QM/SI/1597/3/9; KHLC, QM/SI/1597/12/3.
[98] There was a dip in the year 1601, where county payments went down to £5,681, but they swiftly went back up in 1602 to £10,868, see Younger, *War and Politics*, p. 209.
[99] Privy council to Sir William More, (6 Aug 1599), SHC, 6729/10/108; CCA, CC-N/7.

Subiects, and very likely against the Inhabitants of the sea Coasts about & adioyninge to Dengmarshe'.[100] The letter addressed issues which had arisen with regards to disputes between the town of Lydd and the Seven Hundreds over responsibility for providing a watch of the coast of Dengemarsh and distributed the burden, ordering the Seven Hundreds to provide five men 'to be well furnished with musketts, Brilletts & powder' and two men 'with Corsletts or Curatts and halberds', while Lydd was required to arrange for two 'able & sufficient men well horsed furnished with Curatts Caskes or Spanishe minrions & two Cases of pistols or two French pistols' to watch the coast at night and another two to keep a similar watch over the church steeple at Lydd. In this we can see the stress placed upon localities and local authorities at such a time, after years of similar pressures, but also a fear that 'the Countrye should remayne in danger for want of the said watche', placing a wider responsibility for the safety of the realm onto local areas.

By the end of Elizabeth's reign, then, the experiences and identities of the people of the county of Kent would have been seriously shaped by several invasion scares and war in the Netherlands, France, and Ireland, alongside expeditions to Spain itself. The geographical position of Kent and the nature of the Cinque Ports meant that long before 1585 Kentish men and women had military experience in some form or another, but this was exacerbated in the second half of Elizabeth's reign by eighteen continuous years of warfare. As a result, many of the spaces historically used for political gatherings were given added relevance by repeated musters and assembling of Kentish forces the over the years. Coastal watches added to the sense of vulnerability in the area, and the beacons throughout the county would have become political sites themselves, reminding locals of the possibility of invasion as well as their connections to other towns and villages, and ultimately London. The government's strategy of placing the burden of raising troops and supplying armour, weapons, and wages upon the counties also had an effect. Younger has shown that, given the speed at which troops were raised, outfitted, and moved into position, there was clearly recognition of such necessity and support for the government's goals.

No matter how supportive the county might have been of the measures needed to defend the realm, however, the cost would have been heavy: financially, emotionally, and physically.

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[100] Lord Cobham to Jurats and bailiff of Lydd (16 Aug, 1599), KHLC, Ly/4/4/8.

Recruitment would have affected many in towns and villages across the county in manpower, as well as personally for those enlisted and their families; similarly, the return of soldiers from war, particularly in the port and coastal towns would have had its own impact. While Peter Clark's comment that areas were 'infested with emaciated soldiers raiding men's houses and terrifying the inhabitants' might be slightly overblown, the presence of former soldiers in these places was undoubtedly a problem for local authorities.[101] Disgruntlement with the pressures of the 'monotonous, relentless regularity of the demands imposed' can be seen in the above examples of failed watches and in the way possible invasion was used by Oven to express his discontent. It could also be seen in Cobham's comment in 1590, 'how unwilling the country seems (I will not say unable) to supply the losses of armour and furniture', that when the pressure of imminent invasion or defensive war was not there, the lord lieutenant found more resistance to these sorts of demands.[102] However, as a result of this burden, a sense of community and county identity would have been strengthened by the awareness maintained of Kentish forces at home or abroad. As could be seen in the grievances aired after the cancelled troop levy of 1593, an added sense of investment, in troops, expeditions, and in the general defensive measures, was developed by a collective vulnerability in the face of invasion and the fact that the funds for all of it were raised by the county itself. These shared experiences were diverted through local networks, power structures and parishes, creating a combined sense of local and county community.

Conclusion

An individual's, or a group's, identity is often tested, tried, and developed when challenged or compared with an external entity. These two chapters have examined some of the ways in which collective identity at the level of the parish and also the county can be discerned when facing an external force. As shown in the first chapter, a community in Elizabethan Kent had its roots in its landscape. Local life, interactions, and politics depended on the ways in which the land was used, how long the land had been used in those ways, and the boundaries and customs that had grown up around these actions. Local identity can therefore be seen to have developed around this relationship

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[101] The two examples Clark provides, although significant, could not really be considered an 'infestation'; KHLC, QM/SB/145; TNA, KB 9/694/7; Clark, *Society*, p. 226.

[102] Cited in Clark, *Society*, p. 223.

with the land, and as a result there is a large sense of insularity in the local mentality: an approach to life and information processing which coincides with Chatman's 'small world' theory, as previously stated.[103] Methods of time keeping using the monarchs' accessions and regnal years might signify an engagement with the monarchy and the country as a whole, but as this is interspersed with local deaths, local events, and personal experiences as measures of time, we must conclude that the national implication of the monarch as a measure of time is less important than the internalisation of their significance on the local level. This is again clear when examining celebrations, which would have been local occasions despite the national significance of the inspiration for them, as well as reactions to the progresses of the monarch; there is less acknowledgement of the monarch as the king or queen of the realm than there is of the state of the road and the local landscape at the time. The monarch was a distant and abstract concept to be applied as and when it was contextually relevant at the local level.

The geographical position of Kent, on the south-east coast between the Continent and London, meant that at times of war or political uncertainty the county was extremely significant politically. Its long martial history with the Hundred Years War, previous invasions and connections with Calais, would have influenced local histories and customs: particularly those of the Cinque Ports. The strategies developed under Elizabeth and the Privy Council, which placed the pressures of financing, arming and levying troops directly onto the counties, could only have strengthened the Kent's association with military and defensive action. The years from 1585 onwards would therefore have contributed to local identities as well as identities on the county and national level. Conflicting jurisdictions throughout areas such as the Cinque Ports hindered some of the government defence efforts, indicating a stronger local influence on the actions of those involved.[104] As has been shown, the continuous threat of invasion and the demand for county troops in the wars abroad was experienced for most part in the local landscape, in the home, musters, troop levies, beacons and watches, not to mention the methods of collecting the money to fund it all raised in differing ways in parishes across the county. On a further level, it is significant that the Archbishop of Canterbury was required to remind his clergy that they 'were of the same commonweal with the rest of the Queen's

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[103] Chatman, 'A Theory of Life in the Round'.
[104] Jack, pp. 139-56.

lay subjects, and embarked on the same common danger'; clearly England was a country divided, their own local circumstances taking precedence in their minds.[105] As Judith Richards argues, 'when [subjects] were required to act, and to give money, for those apparently rather abstract, distant reasons, the old complex of competing interests within England flared up in a variety of ways', and as a consequence, 'getting a proper commitment to the priority of national goals over local rivalry and feuding […] was awesomely difficult.'[106] The government's recognition of this local prominence in motivating subjects can be seen in the way that sermons were designed to appeal to a range of personal landscapes; the thanksgiving prayer at St. Paul's, for example, proclaimed that the Spanish 'came with most cruel intent and purpose to destroy us, our cities, towns, countries, and people; and utterly to root out the memory of our nation from off the earth forever'.[107] Any references to the nation, the realm, and the monarch were still experienced through the local and through the impact these events had on community and local landscape.

However, despite the fractured nature of Elizabethan England that the government was forced to accommodate, there is still reason to suggest that at times there was an awareness of a wider national identity, even if it was only at a nascent level; the sermon may have acknowledged the spaces which would have been more inspiring to English subjects as something to defend, but it also made a point to draw attention to the fact that all of those places were part of the nation. While there is credit to Richards' argument that a true national consciousness did not exist before 1588, there was still enough of a concept of 'Englishness' tied up in coastlines, borders, and anti-Spanish, anti-Scottish and anti-French sentiment that subjects could identify as 'English', at least in certain contexts. The point she makes about the consideration of the realm as belonging to the monarch rather than a geographically bound nation has some merit, but the nature of Elizabeth's queenship should be taken into account here. The discourse surrounding Elizabeth on her accession made much of her 'natural Englishness'; her right to rule was just as bound up in contradiction to Mary's 'Spanish rule' as Englishness was defined against the Spanish and the French.[108] Throughout her rule, Elizabeth

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[105] Judith Richards, 'Before the "Mountaynes Mouse": Propaganda and Public defence Before the Spanish Armada', in *England and the Spanish Armada*, p. 24.
[106] Ibid., pp. 19-20.
[107] Cited in Richards, 'Before the "Mountaynes Mouse"', pp. 24-5.
[108] Mittag, 'National Identity', p. 111.

came to be defined as a representation of the nation of England as much as the country was defined by her, so much so that even after her death and the gradual disassociation of monarchy and national consciousness under the Stuarts, Elizabeth remained the symbol of 'Englishness'.[109]

Events such as the Armada and the attack on Cadiz ignited an association of England, Protestantism and naval success alongside the development of the black legend and anti-Spanish literature which, through the 'binary opposition of Self and Other', explored what it was to be 'un-English' and therefore what it was to be English. While the significance of these events and this identity to English politics reached its zenith in the seventeenth century where Catholic Spain was once again the enemy, it is evident in the attitudes towards men like Francis Drake and the changing portrayals of the Spanish in rumours, plays and literature that there *was* a sense of what it meant to be English in Elizabeth's reign.[110] While this identity, as we have seen, was by no means consistent or dominant in villages and towns in Kent, it would have existed in certain circumstances and would have grown stronger in the aftermath of the Armada.

The ways in which external influences such as the monarch, or national events such as the loss of Calais or the Armada, were experienced and remembered can give us some idea of how otherwise internally focused communities saw themselves. It is quite evident that these reactions were still experienced through a very local viewpoint, yet it is equally clear that people in Kent were not unaware of their position in England as a connection to the Continent, and at the same time extremely vulnerable to invasion. External events provoked a reaction when they impacted upon, or had the potential to impact upon, the local landscape or collective identity. The accession of a new monarch was especially significant from the 1530s onwards due to the religious change it threatened, and therefore indicated a more personal consequence for individuals depending on their religious propensities. By studying these external political pressures on localities in Kent we can recognise the

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[109] Ibid., pp. 122, 129.

[110] The strength of the myth of such expeditions as the attack on Cadiz can be seen in the strategies and persons involved in the second attack on Cadiz in 1625: please see Hammer, 'Myth-making: Politics, Propaganda and the Capture of Cadiz in 1596', 641-2. For Francis Drake as an example of Englishness separate from the monarch, see Richards, 'Before the "Mountaynes Mouse"', pp.26-7. For anti-Spanish literature and national consciousness, see Mittag, 'National Identity'; Meaghan J. Brown, '"The Hearts of All Sorts of People Were Enflamed": Manipulating Readers of Spanish Armada News', *Book History*, 17 (2014), 94-116; Cressy, 'The Spanish Armada: Celebration, Myth and Memory'; Susan Onega, 'The Impact of the Spanish Armada on Elizabethan Literature', in *England and the Spanish Armada*, pp. 177-95.

overlapping identities available to them and the contexts in which they might become prominent, shaping the political behaviour of groups and individuals. Kent, with its unique political position and geographical location, as well as its history of invasion and warfare, therefore encountered national politics in a variety of ways. The inhabitants of the Cinque Ports, for example, had a different experience of warfare to those of Whitley Forest or Canterbury; all these communities, however, were influenced in different ways, their landscapes altered, and their collective identities shaped to differing degrees. Shared fears, victories and grievances were experienced in different ways through the lens of the local, the county and the national, all of which contributed to the political identities of communities in Kent.

Chapter 3: External Influences on Local Politics: Religion

When discussing external influences on the localities of sixteenth-century England, it is not just the purely political that needs to be considered. The Protestant element of English identity that developed in the previous chapter as a result of years of war with Catholic Spain and events such as the Armada was merely one more development in the religious changes that had dominated the sixteenth century. It is therefore impossible to study the lives of the people of England without exploring the effects of the Reformation. The Act of Supremacy in 1534, followed by the First Act of Suppression in 1536 and the Second Act of Suppression in 1539, had far-reaching consequences for ordinary people across the country, and as with any act of long-lasting change, it was felt personally, collectively, and spatially. The Reformation was experienced as two distinct phases. The first of which was the Henrician Reformation and the spectacular transformations which were felt across the country: the Dissolution of the Monasteries and the introduction of the bible in the vernacular. The second was the longer term instability that followed during the reigns of Henry's children: Edward's radical church, followed by Mary's efforts towards Counter-Reformation Catholicism, and finally Elizabeth's pursuit of the Protestant *via media*. Whether communities in Kent welcomed or rejected these different doctrinal developments, the Reformations were something that affected every individual and every community in terms of their religious practices and their socio-political relationships, as well as their landscapes as a whole.[1] This chapter will not be investigating the religious leanings of communities in Kent; the popular reception of the Reformation is something which could take an entire thesis of its own, and has been a major part of the historiography of the English Reformation for years. This thesis will instead consider the Reformation as an experience for different towns and villages, examining the way in which it rewrote the practices and landscape of Kentish communities. Given the fundamental role of landscape and

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[1] For the debate on the Reformation in England see Haigh, *English Reformations;* Eamon Duffy, *The Stripping of the Altars: Traditional Religion in England, 1400-1580* (London, 1992); *Godly People: Essays on English Protestantism and Puritanism,* ed. Collinson (London, 1983); For Kent in particular: Clark, *Society*; Ethan Shagan, *Popular Politics in the English Reformation* (Cambridge, 2003), pp. 61-88, 197-232; Andrew Hope, 'Martyrs of the Marsh: Elizabeth Barton, Joan Bocher and Trajectories of Martyrdom in Reformation Kent', in *Pieties in Transition: Religious Practices and Experiences, c. 1400-1640,* eds. Robert Lutton and Elisabeth Salter (Hampshire, 2007), pp. 41-55. For the effects of the Reformation on the landscape, see Walsham, *The Reformation of the Landscape;* Wood, *Memory of the People,* pp. 43-93.

customs in the formation of local identity, this would have been a severe challenge to the identity of the communities themselves, and would therefore act as a watershed in collective memory, creating further variety in contextual identifications.

While this chapter will continue making use of the equity courts, local sources, and works like Lambarde's *Perambulation*, it will mainly focus on drawing together the rich historiographical accounts of the Reformation in Kent, turning attention to their implications for local experiences and identity. In this way, an exploration of the features of the local landscape and the changes wrought upon them by successive reformations will help to form an idea of the variety of small, local reformations that were experienced in different parishes in different locations, how these events were experienced and remembered, and how they left their marks on the mental and physical spaces of the local area. In doing so, we can add another layer to our understanding of local responses to external pressure and how it shaped local identities. In this context, what or who did these communities identify with? How did imposed religious change build on the local foundations that already existed? How might the process of such changes influence local identity?

Reformation, memory and politics

Across the country, the Henrician Reformation served as a 'historical watershed'; it stood out in popular memory as a time in which everything changed.[2] There seems to have been the sense that the years before the Reformation were fundamentally different from the years that followed it, in terms of the economy, the landscape and manners, as well as in religion.[3] As is often the case in situations brought about by a significant change in circumstances or perspectives, looking back on the past commonly led to a 'negative evaluation of the present situation', leading to a positive perception of the past as a 'coherent, comprehensible era'.[4] In Talja Blokland's study on the community of Hillesluis, as described in the introduction, a sense of loss came across in the conversations amongst the elderly members of the community, with the reflection that 'past times

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[2] Wood, *Memory of the People*, p. 80.
[3] Ibid., pp. 67-80
[4] Blokland, 272; M. Chase and C. Shaw, 'The Dimensions of Nostalgia', in *The Imagined Past: History and Nostalgia,* eds. Shaw and Chase (Manchester, 1989), pp. 1-17. For further theories on nostalgia: for nostalgia as the distortion of personal experiences due to changes in perspectives such as old age, see S. Coontz, *The Way We Never Were: American Families and the Nostalgia Trap* (New York, 1993). For nostalgia as a result of collective remembering in conversation, see Fentress and Wickham, *Social Memory,* p. x.

used to be better times'.[5] Although the subject of this study was a Dutch community in 1994-1995, it is clear that the tendency to look back to the local past as a time which was better was not unique to the people of Hillesluis in the late twentieth century. The people of Elizabethan England also looked back to happier times. However, where the elements which separated the people of Hillesluis from their idyllic past were things like technological advancement, immigration, and depillarisation, as well as general 'economic restructuring', the people of sixteenth-century England had the Reformation as an event which 'threatened nothing less than a profound cultural deracination'.[6] As a result, phrases such as the one which stated that before the Reformation, 'all things were so cheap, that they might have twenty eggs for a penny' were prevalent across the country.[7]

Before the dissolution of the monasteries, there were nearly nine hundred religious houses across England, with an estimate of one in fifty adult men in religious orders.[8] The links forged by villagers and townsfolk to their local saints, religious events, the 'cult of the dead' as described by Duffy, and the parish churches and local religious houses, with the accompanying paraphernalia which stood as the physical embodiment of those connections, formed a vital part of local identity.[9] Abbeys and monasteries could also dominate a landscape and institutions like St Augustine's had a very long reach as the major landowners in Kent. The destruction of these houses therefore had an enormous impact on cities, towns and villages alike, creating 'an enormous and critical cultural void' which has led to the movement being labelled 'one of the most revolutionary events in English history.'[10] As with monarchs and their regnal years and events such as the fall of Calais, then, it was something which could be used as a time reference to universal comprehension, as well as often having a local significance. In 1588-1589, John Thomas, a seventy-year-old labourer from Bersted, described his position of decades before:

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[5] Blokland, 273-4.

[6] Blokland, 274; Robert Tittler, 'Reformation, civic cultural and collective memory in English provincial towns', *Urban History,* 24 (1997), 283. For general economic history and on pillarisation and depillarisation in the Netherlands, see Jan L. van Zanden, *The Economic History of the Netherlands, 1914-1995; A small open economy in the 'long' twentieth century* (London, 1998).

[7] D. Gifford, *A Dialogue between a Papist and a Protestant* (London, 1582); Wood, *Memory of the People,* pp. 67-8.

[8] George Bernard, 'The Dissolution of the Monasteries', *History,* 96 (2011), 390; M. D. Knowles and R. N. Hadcock, *Medieval Religious Houses: England and Wales* (London, 1971), p. 494.

[9] Tittler, 'Reformation, civic culture and collective memory' 286-287; Duffy, *Stripping of the Altars,* pp. 327-37.

[10] Bernard, 'Dissolution of the Monasteries', 390.

> he dwelt with one Grant (farmor of the said Newenham courte)
> before the tyme of the Suppression of the Abbey of Boxley and that
> by his appointment, he this deponent did fetch out of the saide
> Boxley parke certeine hoggs of his said Mr Grant, and did also
> dryve them thither againe. (TNA, E 134/30&31Eliz/Mich19)

Littered with local names, local places, and the specific reference to the suppression of the local abbey, Thomas' use of the phrase 'before the tyme of the Suppression of the Abbey of Boxley' suggests two things. One is that the loss of Boxley Abbey was an event that registered personally for him, and that he was aware that it had had a similar impact on others; he knew it would be understood as a marker of time. Another is that there is a definite sense of change; the implication being that his habits and normal activities which happened *before* the suppression of the abbey were distinctly different *after.* Similarly, David Marsh's statement that 'he well remembreth that a yere before the dissolucon the Abbott [of West Langton] did let oute the Lands tythe free and discharged of all manner of tythes' shows how the Dissolution was entrenched in popular memory as an event significant enough to judge time by how other events related to it.[11]

The Reformation, of course, is a vast topic which has been the focus of numerous studies, many of which focus on the impact that Henry VIII and his children had in changing the shape of official religion and the way this affected their subjects.[12] It is not possible in the space available to cover all the ways in which the Reformation impacted upon the county of Kent, so this section will focus on two main areas: the way it was imposed on the landscape in the form of landownership and buildings, and the way different parishes experienced it in different ways, depending on their own sense of collective religious identity. Alexandra Walsham's *The Reformation of the Landscape* successfully addresses the way in which the Reformation was felt outside of the churches: how the landscape was used in rituals and pilgrimages, how that changed with the advent of Protestantism, and how it continued to change over the next two centuries, culminating in 'Popish survivals', 'Protestant traditions' and 'innocent pastimes' combining to create local landscapes that were specific

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[11] TNA, E 134/31Eliz/Hil13.
[12] Bernard, *The King's Reformation: Henry VIII and the Remaking of the English Church* (New Haven, 2005); Duffy, *Stripping of the Altars;* Haigh, *English Reformations;* Diarmaid MacCullock, *The Later Reformation in England, 1547-1603* (Hampshire, 1990).

to the religious histories of the area.[13] She does focus, however, mainly on religious sites which were used or visited for their sacred value, each which had their own history, associations or meaning. This study will go beyond the specifically religious *loci*, focusing more on the landscape as a whole, and will explore how the events of the Reformation impacted on the local land itself, and thus the experience and identity of local communities in Kent.

The impact of the Reformation on the landscape is something that cannot be overstated. Despite the fact that in the depositions for the Court of Exchequer there understandably seems to be a scrupulous avoidance of any indication of religious inclination, the effects of the dissolution of the monasteries on localities were still unescapable in Elizabethan Kent. Dover Priory was officially suppressed at the end of 1535, followed by the surrender of Boxley Abbey in 1538 alongside the sacking of the Canterbury shrine of St Thomas and the fall of Faversham Abbey, St Augustine's Priory, and the Canterbury friaries. Two years later, the county's largest house Christ Church Priory was dissolved and quickly refounded as a secular, Protestant foundation.[14] As a whole, according to Peter Clark, ten out of the thirty-one religious houses still in operation during the 1530s were gone by 1540, and the chantries had followed suit by the end of that decade.[15] As has been demonstrated in the previous chapter, knowledge of who occupied or owned pieces of land was something which made up a large portion of local understanding of the village or town. It was this knowledge which was passed down in perambulations, or was called to the surface when the ownership or use of a property came under question. If interrogated on the history of a piece of land, locals were very able to refer to generations and alliances of a families, such as Robert Knott of Tilmanstone's longwinded recounting of the people with rights to the profits of Betteshanger wood:

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[13] Walsham, *The Reformation of the Landscape,* pp. 471-554.

[14] *A History of the County of Kent, Vol. 2*, ed. William Page (London, 1926), pp. 126-41, 153-5, 177-80, 199-201.

[15] According to Clark, 'the Kentish houses presented little or no resistance' due to the fact that 'many heads of houses only held their posts because of their loyalty to the regime, while their convents' will to survive had been sapped by growing public antipathy, doctrinal uncertainty and a panicky fear that they might suffer the same fate as the Charterhouse monks or the northern abbots.' Clark, *Society,* pp. 44-6. Whether this was the case or not, the removal of major landholders and the loss of the institutional responsibilities associated with the religious houses would have had significant effects on the locals who knew the land or depended on them for work or aid. For more information on the history and progression of Kentish monastic houses, please see Barrie Dobson and Elizabeth Edwards, 'The Religious Houses of Kent, 1220-1540', in *Later Medieval Kent, 1220-1540,* ed. Sheila Sweetinburgh (Woodbridge, 2010), pp. 79-110.

> ould Mr Thomas Cockes for all the tearme of his lyffe (as farr as this deponent can remember) did quietly enjoye and take the profitts of the seid wood Callid Betteshanger woode on the Sowth side of the seid waye (as his owne woodes) and died thereof seised about the latter end of the raigne of queene Marie (as this deponent remembreth) after whose death Thomas Cockes the brothers sone off the seid ould Thomas Cockes beynge heire to the seid ould Thomas Cockes into the seid Mannor and woode did enter, and toke the profitts thereof and sould the same to this nowe defendant, and this deponent further sayth that he hath heard that longe before the seid ould Mr Cockes eny thinge had in the seid wood, One Lytchfeild owner of the Mannor of Betteshanger was allso owner of the seid parcell of woode callid Betteshanger woode one the Sowth side of the seid waie, and […] the seid ould Mr Cocks had the seid wood by intermariage with the daughter of the seid Lychfeilde. (TNA, E 134/Eliz28/Trin15)

They were also able to recall which lands had belonged to abbeys or monasteries in the area, as well as the tithes that had been required. 'John Bullfynche thelder of Detforde', a yeoman of about sixty-six years of age, was able to describe the local situation:

> He perfectly knoweth the late monastery of Detford and thes parcells of lands and tenaments hereafter written to be parcell of the demeasnes of the sayd late monasterye that is to say all thos lands tenementes & marshe grounde conteynynge by estimate fowre hundred acres late letten by the late prince of famous memorye kinge Henrye the viijth to Richarde longe knight (TNA, E 134/2Eliz/East1)

This was followed by a detailed list of properties, each with estimations of the amount of acres held by each one. To complete his analysis he was also able to report that an amount of 'xiiijl iijs vijd ob. […] tyme out of minde of man hathe bene payed to every xvth & xth of the moveable goodes Cattells & other thinges usuall aswell by thinhabitants of Detford & Wyllmyngton aforesayd as by the said late monasterye.'

The changes in landownership which occurred at the Dissolution served as constant reminders of the changes under Henry VIII well into the reign of Elizabeth in the second half of the

sixteenth century. For the people of Sandwich, the change in landownership at the dissolution of the Carmelite friary in 1538, first into the king's hands and later mostly obtained by Thomas Arden of Faversham in 1540, was something which they would have been very aware of.[16] Similarly, the land at the west end of St Mary's parish (again in Sandwich) which had belonged to Christ Church Priory, then to the Dean and Chapter of Canterbury Cathedral, was granted to Sir Roger Manwood in 1563 for the establishment of a grammar school; the history attached to this land, which would have been directly witnessed by the townspeople, meant that the school would stand as a local site of memory.[17] For Sir Henry Crispe of Birchington on the Isle of Thanet, there was a personal reason to remember local changes. In an inquest in 1573 he was therefore easily able to recall who occupied certain lands and the ways in which they had been used:

> he dothe know the lands and tenementes beinge at Yldinge in the parishe of Adsham in the county aforesaid nowe in the tenure of Richard Allen and that the profitts therof wente to the findinge of a preest to singe masse in kingston churche which was so said and songe at the will of John Crispe of father of this deponent (TNA, E 134/15Eliz/Trin1)

For Crispe, there was a direct connection between the lands of Ileden, in Kingston, and the final requests of his own father. The connection between the landscape and local religious needs, as shown in the case of John Crispe, cannot be overstated; churches formed the focal point of a community, and by beating the bounds locals reaffirmed the borders of the parish generation after generation. Tithes were based on the local resources just as customs were, and sacred spaces, often linked to a local saint unique to the area, were not uncommon.

The Reformation of the 1530s, which rejected devotion to local saints and spelled the end of the monasteries, fundamentally changed both the landscape and the ways in which things had been done 'time out of memory of man', and therefore threatened the bedrock of local popular political power. People in Elizabethan England, as has been shown is common with any group of people who have experienced a sharp break in continuous memory, could not escape the contrasts between what

[16] Helen Clarke, Sarah Pearson, Mavis Mate and Keith Parfitt, *Sandwich, the 'completest medieval town in England'; A study of the town and port from its origins to 1600* (Oxford, 2010), p. 205.
[17] Clarke et al, *Sandwich*, pp. 208, 240; Lambarde (1576), pp. 106-7.

life was like before and what it was like after. Whether the change was remembered positively or negatively, it was nevertheless certain to be remembered. This can be seen in the continued example of Elizabethan Kingston. The past existence of a chantry in the area was common knowledge, even if a person had no direct experience of the building. Robert Julle, for example, was not alone in offering the information that 'he alwaies hath herd that there was a chauntery at Kingston'; the chantry was therefore clearly relevant as a topic of discussion, whether or not people like Julle had even seen it. The house in which the chantry priests had once lived, on the other hand, was still standing, and was put to other use – at the time of the investigation it was in the occupation of a man called Thomas Muggole. Nevertheless, it was still referred to by deponents as 'the chantry house', remaining as a site of memory for the priests and the chantry which had once stood.[18] It is telling that as late as 1800 it was still considered relevant to report that a chantry had existed in the church of St Giles in a survey of Kent.[19] The abrupt changes in the ownership and use of local land as a result of the Henrician Reformation were imprinted in the landscape, and therefore in the collective memories of the people of the towns and villages of Kent.

The change in land ownership at the Dissolution of the Monasteries held significance beyond simply serving as a reminder of past changes and as part of the collective history of the area.[20] In the case of Robert Pope and the property known as 'Popes Closes', an additional layer of illegitimacy could be attributed to Pett's actions because of its association with the Dissolution. Indeed, it was commonly known, with every deponent testifying to the knowledge that the properties in question 'somtymes were parcell of the possessions of the late dissolved monastery of St Austins', and that 'the said Abbott and covent did dymise the said twoe pasture closes unto one Robert Pope'.[21] The fact that Pope obtained his land directly from the abbot of St Augustine's, and that this seems to have been deemed a significant piece of information in the case against Pett, suggests that the people of Elizabethan Tenterden and the areas around it saw the monastery as politically significant in a dispute in 1581, around forty years after it had been dissolved. A sense of legitimacy still seems to have been

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[18] TNA, E 134/14Eliz/East9; TNA, E 134/15Eliz/Trin1.
[19] Hasted, 'Parishes: Kingston', in *The History and Topographical Survey of the County of Kent: Volume 9* (Canterbury, 1800), pp. 338-49.
[20] Zell, 'Landholding and the Land Market in Early Modern Kent', in *Early Modern Kent*, pp. 39-74.
[21] TNA, E 134/23Eliz/East9.

linked with the abbeys and monasteries, if not in the religious sense, at least in them as local powers and major land-holders. The use of land transference from the Dissolution as a legitimising device indicates, to a certain extent, how locals identified the land with its history of its dissolved religious houses and how they were able to consciously use that as a political tool.

The transfer of property from the church to the laity, as significant as it was for the local people who placed so much power into the land and its relationship to the community as a whole, was not the only way in which the Reformation was experienced in the local landscape. Changes in property ownership may have been disruptive, but there was still an element of continuity; people still worked the land and lived in the properties. Even with regards to the payments of tithes, some ways of life did not change. At the dissolution of the Sandwich Carmelite friary, a former mayor named Thomas Pache was appointed to continue to collect rents for the property before it was acquired by Arden.[22] Similar circumstances were reported by Valentine Harrison, a brewer of West Malling, testified that;

> by the space of theise xxvjtie yeares past (at the least) he hath served, first the said Hughe Cartwright esquior, then Sr James ffitz James knight, and after that the Lady Jane ffitz James, & now Mr William Cartwright one of the complainants: and that aswell in the liefe tyme of the said Mr Hughe Cartwright, & of the said Sr James as of the said Lady ffitzJames, he this deponent did sundry tymes, & for the most parte of the said xxvjtie yeares, receave for theim as theire servant, rent, or ferme, for a Portion of Tythes, which sometyme belonged to Malling Abbey, out of sundry landes in Woldham (TNA, E 134/39Eliz/Hil2)

For the people from whom Harrison collected the payments, not much changed in the financial sense – although it was to Cartwright, then to the Fitzjameses, they made the same payments that they or their predecessors had always made.

There was, however, a more destructive side to the Reformation. Memories of demolished or abandoned religious buildings dotted the landscape, or were robbed away to maintain other buildings or used to build new ones. Edmond Matteris, a 72-year-old yeoman from the village of Boughton

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[22] Clarke et al., *Sandwich,* p. 205.

Aluph, when questioned on certain lands in Borden, answered that there were properties called Stumblecrowch and Chantry Croft, 'upon which last Crofte there sometyme stode in the Memorie of this Deponent a howse wherein A Chantrie prest then dwelt'.[23] Although this statement was contradicted to an extent by William Butte, a 76-year-old yeoman of Sittingbourne who had:

> knowne the Crofte articulate ever since his youthe, which is &
> hathe bin Called Chantrie Crofte, & hathe belonged duringe all that
> time to the owners of Bobbinge courte untill suche time as the late
> Mr George Clifford (owner of the said Cowrte) did sell the same
> (Together with other lands there) unto one ffrauncis Holbrocke
> gent (TNA, E 134/31&32Eliz/Mich21)

Instead of recalling a chantry or chantry house which had been occupied by chantry priests, his memory was of 'A howse sometymes standinge uppon the said Crofte Called the Chantrie howse, in which A pore man (Called Welles) beinge A sawyer, did dwell about 60 yeres agooe.' It is likely that both these two memories are correct, and that poor Welles occupied the old chantry house after it had belonged to the old chantry priest and before it was replaced by the house which stood on the Chantrie Croft in 1589-1590, which 'was thereuppon builded by the said Mr Holbrooke synce the said sale made by the said George Clifford unto him'. Whether this was the case or not, the knowledge of an old house named 'the Chantry House' which no longer existed on a piece of land still called 'Chantry Croft' inspired memories in the people who knew the land. Whether these memories were accurate ones or not in some ways matters less than the fact that the land was responsible for a continued local memory of what was likely to be a local experience of the Reformation.

A different kind of Reformation memory site can be found in the depositions of an investigation into the manor of Canon Court in Newington-Next-Hythe in 1587. The people who lived in and around Canon Court, which had belonged to St Radigund's abbey before the Dissolution, were still being confronted by the physical remnants of the Reformation several decades later. William Fysher, describing the property, pointed out the presence of 'an olde Dekayed Chappell uppon the premyses'.[24] For the people who had known the chapel as it had been before, the landscape was notably different. For the people who were familiar with this sight in Elizabeth's reign, it would

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[23] TNA, E 134/31&32Eliz/Mich21.
[24] TNA, E 134/29Eliz/Hil7.

have been a monument to a time when such a building would have been complete and in use, now neglected. In the words of Margaret Aston, the ruins of these buildings were 'architectural fossils which remained as testimonies to the royal guillotining of the monastic past', and which 'fostered a growing nostalgia for what had been swept off in this break.'[25]

These circumstances could often be taken a step further, combining religious restructuring with local priorities. The recycling of a previously sacred space for profane use demonstrated, in no uncertain terms, that the understanding of the connection between religion and a particular feature of the landscape had been transformed. In the chapel of Well, near Ickham, this disruption is evident. Presentments in Mary's reign describe the chapel as being 'putte to a prophane use for wher the parish of Ickham were accustomyed in the rogation weke to have Masse song ther, now ther is nothing wher with all to minister. And ther was such a savor of hogg skynnes that no man colde abide in the Chappell for stinck thereof.' One 'Mr Isaac' was also accused of making 'lofts ther, in the said Chappell for corne and haye, so that divyne service cannot be ther mynystred. And also hath made ther a workhouse for a wever and a kennel for his hounds'.[26] Here there is evidence of a significant reshaping of mentality towards the sacrality of the chapel of Well, at the very least on the part of Isaac, and in a different manner to the approaches that were taken with the larger religious sites, such as that of the Carmelite monastery in Sandwich which was refashioned into a school, but as such continued to act as a space for a Protestant sense of improvement of the community. The use made of the chapel of Well in the years after the Reformation, for hog skins and hounds, seems to have perhaps the same derogatory edge encapsulated in the Protestant attitudes that required ruins to be maintained in order to celebrate the triumph of Protestantism.[27] There is also a natural element to the transformation of the site, making use of the space in a way that reflected the local landscape and resources, and the lives of the people working with them. The site had therefore been absorbed back into local interaction with the natural landscape, and at the same time sent out a very clear message of affiliation with the new religion.

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[25] Margaret Aston, 'English Ruins and English History: The Dissolution and the Sense of the Past' *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes,* 36 (1973), 232.

[26] C. E. Woodruff, 'Extracts from original documents illustrating the progress of the Reformation in Kent', *Arch. Cant.,* 31 (1915), 107.

[27] Walsham, *The Reformation of the Landscape,* p. 150.

The materials of abandoned buildings could also be recycled. John London, after receiving the surrender of the friars of Warwick on 20 October 1538, wrote to Thomas Cromwell that:

> The power people thorowly in every place be so gredy upon thees
> Howsys when they be suppressyd that by night and daye, nott
> oonly of the townys, butt also of the contrye, they do contynually
> resortt aslong as any dore, wyndoo, yren, or glasse, or lowse ledde
> remaynythe in any of them.[28]

This was also, he insisted, not unique to Warwick, stating 'yt ys universally that the people be thus gredy for yren, wyndoes, doors, and ledde.'[29] In Womenswold, the 'leade was a takeng downe' and the chalice and altar ornaments were taken when confusion over whether the church was an 'Auncyent parishe Churche' or 'a chapell of old foundacon' led to it being 'uncoveryd defaced & spoylled' by Hugh Cartwright and William Hyde.[30] Richard Layton, in his visitation to Christ Church in Canterbury, had his own issues with scavenging. A watch had had to be put over the shrine of St Thomas, and yet 'suche beddyng as was caste abrode in the cloister or other places were convayede away and imbeseled by poire fookks wiche came rather to spoile then to helpe.'[31] This was similarly the case with iron, lead, and other construction materials, which were taken and put to use maintaining walls, roofs and other aspects of dwellings in the neighbourhood.[32]

Ethan Shagan and Alexandra Walsham both make the point that those individuals who took part in this practice, whether that was being part of the teams responsible for the destruction of specific features, scavenging or making use of the resulting materials, or even simply stepping on a paving stone that was once part of a local religious house, were active participants in the process of Reformation. 'The spectacles of desacralization in which they were complicit cut them adrift from the religious world of their forebears and convinced them of the errors by which they had formerly been misguided. They helped them to internalize ideas that transformed the texture of individual and

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[28] *Original Letters Illustrative of English History: including numerous royal letters; from Autographs in the British Museum, the State Paper Office, and one or two other collections Third Series, III,* ed. Henry Ellis (London, 1846) p. 139; 'Friaries: Dominican friars of Warwick', in *A History of the County of Warwick: Volume 2*, ed. Page (London, 1908), pp. 101-3.

[29] Ellis, *Original Letters,* p. 139.

[30] TNA, STAC 3/1/73.

[31] Ellis, *Original Letters*, p. 165.

[32] Aston, 'English Ruins and English History', 31-2.

collective piety.'[33] This was particularly evident when materials were officially used in the construction of new buildings, which could often have a far wider range of witnesses. When locals walked past repairs in their villages or looked at the defences added by Henry to Walmer and Deal Castles, they would have also seen the remnants of the Abbey.[34] The transformation of the coastal landscape, and even the way in which local structures were maintained and kept the *same*, were a constant reminder of what had been there before, and what had been destroyed in order for them to exist. The sense of change and the absence or destruction of buildings which had once been a recognised feature of the land was one in which the land encapsulated some of the feelings engendered at the local level by the Reformation.

Communities were therefore required to rearrange their understanding of the former Roman Catholic landscape into a post-Reformation one. This meant that particular sites were viewed with a certain amount of caution by Protestant authorities. One type of such site was the hospital: an establishment which could be responsible for hosting pilgrims, as well as the physical *and* spiritual needs of its inmates. As many hospitals and almshouses in Kent were not affiliated with monastic houses, but rather with town corporations or private lay foundations, the dissolution did not hit the county too hard in that respect. Nevertheless, there were casualties. For example in Canterbury, where at the beginning of the century there were a selection of hospitals of ancient standing, the fate of these was varied and uncertain.[35] Although there was no coherent policy regarding hospitals in the reign of Henry VIII, under his son Canterbury witnessed the beginning of the end for certain hospitals.[36] This

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[33] Walsham, *The Reformation of the Landscape*, pp. 123-4, 566; See also Shagan, *Popular Politics*, pp. 162-96.

[34] Walmer, Sandown and Deal castle were built with stone and lead from the local monastic houses. Biddle, 'The Castles in the Downs: Deal, Sandown and Walmer', p. 457.

[35] St James' hospital, which was founded at some point in the twelfth century before 22 June, 1164, and was intended for leprous women; St Laurence's hospital, which was founded in 1137, and intended for sixteen brothers and sisters; the hospital of St Thomas the Martyr, which was intended to aid poor pilgrims; and the hospitals of St John the Baptist (intended for the poor and infirm, both male and female) and St Nicholas (intended for lepers), which were both founded by Lanfranc, the archbishop of Canterbury from 1070-1089, and were considered to be twin foundations. 'Hospitals: Hospitals in and around Canterbury' in *A History of the County of Kent,* pp. 209-16.

[36] Nicholas Orme and Margaret Webster have shown how there was no official or coherent policy in the treatment of hospitals throughout the Henrician Reformation or Edward's reign. The disparities between different establishments, their practices, their worth, and their size, dictated how they were treated by the government. Large and wealthy hospitals were targeted for suppression or were encouraged to surrender in the 1540s. Many smaller hospitals or almshouses, on the other hand, did not experience much change whatsoever, and indeed hospitals continued to be created in the following years. The most prominent and ambitious example of post-Reformation hospital was that of Christ's Hospital in London. Nicholas Orme and Margaret Webster, *The English Hospital, 1070-1570* (London, 1995), p. 155.

was particularly true of those houses which fell under the purview of the dissolved St Augustine's abbey; St James' was surrendered in 1551, and while St Laurence's survived a few years longer, ultimately it was dissolved in 1557.[37] The hospitals which nominally survived went through phases of falling into decay before being subsequently 'rescued'.[38] St Thomas' hospital, for example, had deteriorated before Archbishop Parker attempted to renew it in 1569, after which it was not long before it was again decayed and let out as tenements. By 1572 it was used as a house of correction, before it was again renewed by Archbishop Whitgift, who returned its status back to almshouse in 1586. This uncertain cycle was also reflected in the fate of the Poor Priests' hospital.[39] In this we can see a similar pattern to the treatments of sites of other religious institutions, for although hospitals were not always connected to Catholic establishments, they still had a duty to care for their inmates' physical as well as spiritual needs. This could have the consequence of making them an object of suspicion in the eyes of stronger Protestants and officials. An Exchequer investigation of St Bartholomew's hospital (Sandwich) in 1587 asked local deponents about 'suspitious cerimonies' in that 'supersticious hospitall'.[40] Although St Bartholomew's had been under the purview of the mayor and jurats of the town rather than a monastic house, there is the chance that, as an ancient establishment with religious traditions, it may have been carefully monitored by central government.[41]

A similarly cautious approach can be seen in the treatment given to formerly sanctified sites outside the church. While on the one hand the landscape was the creation of God, and as such was a demonstration of his love, it could also be seen as a 'reservoir of soul destroying error', and as 'a source of temptation to backslide to the superstition of a benighted Catholic past'.[42] As such, they were often targets of iconoclasm or ridicule. The Protestant rejection of the belief that certain places were more holy than others, and that in fact a holy place was any area in which the devout congregated due to the personal bond with God, meant that there was a shift in the relationship with the

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[37] Sheila Sweetinburgh, 'The Poor, Hospitals and Charity in Sixteenth-century Canterbury', in *Pieties in Transition*, pp. 67-8.
[38] Ibid., p. 68.
[39] Ibid.
[40] TNA, E 134/29Eliz/East20.
[41] 'Hospitals: Hospitals in Sandwich and Sevenoaks', in *A History of the County of Kent*, pp. 226-7.
[42] Walsham, *The Reformation of the Landscape,* p. 2.

landscape.[43] As a result, the godly were known to gather in areas other than the church to listen to preaching and scripture. This was something that went back to Lollard practices of worship, where Lollards would meet at fairs and market squares to discuss scripture in places like Canterbury and Tenterden, and was still embraced in 1581, where a group of villagers gathered in a woodland clearing in Ramsgate to hear a man named William Collett read a section of St John's Gospel on Midsummer Day. Walsham suggests that where they described the clearing 'trodden bare with much treading', it is possible for it to have been a regular assembly point.[44] Lastly, a Protestant reading of the landscape obviously takes into account the ruins of monasteries and shrines as a physical manifestation of their triumph over popery and ignorance. It is for this reason that, while one result of the dissolution was the eradication of Catholic sites by reusing them or replacing them with an alternative identity (whether domestic, educational, or something else), another was the effort taken to maintain ruins in their dilapidated state, thereby using the new landscape as a warning against falling into the evil of popery, and as a shared celebration. Lambarde's response to seeing Canterbury in a run-down state of affairs was therefore to thank God for having 'thus mercifully in our age delivered us, disclosed Satan, unmasked there Idoles, dissolved the synagogues, and raced to the ground all Monuments of building, erected to Superstition and ungodlynesse'.[45]

This post-Reformation landscape, however, was not always necessarily a Protestant one. Those of a Catholic or conservative persuasion would have experienced the new topography across England in a very different way. For them, the scarred remains of their sacred spaces could often be interpreted as a form of 'architectural martyrdom'; a consequence of this meant that despite Protestant intentions to destroy the sites and undermine their claims to holiness, Catholics were, in fact, more likely to visit these places. As Walsham puts it, 'the same ruined structures which zealous Protestants regarded as emblems of the triumph of the Reformation became to Catholics symbols of the capacity of the embattled Roman faith to rise from the fire of persecution like a phoenix.'[46] Therefore, just as Lambarde visited the religious capital and saw the remarkable work of God in

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[43] Ibid., pp. 233-5.
[44] Ibid., pp. 234-6, 238.
[45] Lambarde (1576), p. 236; Walsham, *The Reformation of the Landscape,* pp. 147-8; Aston 'English ruins and English History', 313.
[46] Walsham, *The Reformation of the Landscape,* pp. 173-4.

liberating godly Englishmen from 'Superstition and ungodlynesse', one Thomas Colwell arrived in Canterbury in 1580 in order to take his son to the remnants of the shrine of Thomas Becket at Christchurch and to do penance in the ruins of the monastery for residing in a hermitage devoted to the worship of St Augustine.[47] In spite of the destruction wrought upon the sanctified spaces of Catholicism, or perhaps *because* of it, these sites remained desirable destinations for covert pilgrimages, and were utilised by missionaries and Jesuit priests in the late 1500s and early 1600s.[48] As such, they became centres of minor resistance. Those of the Catholic faith, then, saw and understood an entirely different landscape to Protestant observers, and had over the sixteenth century had their entire identity transformed from English orthodoxy to heterodoxy in the eyes of the state: a hidden identity which reflected the crumbled ruins and smothered sites of worship.

For local communities, it was not simply a fundamental change of religious ideology brought about by the Reformation. It was also the landscape itself which was rewritten, and which in turn contributed to changing understandings of the early modern world. Land passed from the institutions which had held them for centuries into the hands of the laity. Buildings which had previously had a particular place in the community were gone, were being reused for another purpose, or had been replaced with something else. Other buildings were simply left to decay or to be robbed of their materials. Even in those buildings that remained, the topography of the church itself was different, with whitewashed walls, the royal coat of arms, and the change in the nature of funeral monuments. As Claire Bartram has shown, narratives were endorsed in monuments 'through the use of inscription, heraldry, classical motif and effigy', and were 'part of broader processes of forming identity'.[49] Those deceased members of the community who played their part in contributing to the sense of history and identity of the parish even after death were, then, visibly divided from the more recent dead by the shift away from notions of purgatory towards secular ideas of commemoration. Each of these changes had their own impact on the people living or working near them. The people who placed such value on the meanings implicit in ancient boundary ditches and hedges, who could recite the generations of families who had occupied any given parcel of land, and who could describe the exact species and

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[47] Walsham, *The Reformation of the Landscape,* p. 167; HMC, *Twelfth*, pp. 311-12; Clark, *Society,* p. 179.
[48] Walsham, *The Reformation of the Landscape,* p. 231.
[49] Bartram, ''Some Tomb for a Remembraunce'; Representations of Piety in Post-Reformation Gentry Funeral Monuments', in *Pieties in Transition,* pp. 129-43, esp. 134.

markings of specific trees, would certainly be affected by such drastic transformations on their local landscape and within the parish churches. Community identities, strongly tied to local landscapes and practices 'time out of mind', were forced to adapt to the conscious break with the Catholic past. It is, however, important to remember that when discussing the implications of Reformation in individual parishes in Kent (particularly in places like Cranbrook or Canterbury, which had residents with beliefs that presumably covered the spectrum from Catholic to Puritan living in the same community over the course of the sixteenth century, which will be covered below), their parishioners would not necessarily all experience the *same* Reformation, and therefore the same landscape, as others in their locality.

<u>Reformation, piety, and identity</u>

As has been stated above, religious links to the landscape were rewritten in the sixteenth century, leading to a shift in how the features in the land were understood. It does not follow, however, that each parish in Kent shared the same experience of the Reformation, nor that they read the changed landscape in the same way. This segment will add to the discussion of the Reformation in Kent by drawing together a selection of studies of particular areas in Kent in order to draw conclusions as to the nature of piety in Kent, its changes in response to the Reformation, and the way in which collective identities could emerge in reaction. The county of Kent has long been considered by historians to have been an area which was particularly supportive of the early Reformation. While it was not included in A. G. Dickens' '"great crescent" of Protestant heartlands', Dickens did highlight the county as another exceptional case where doctrinal innovations met with a relatively enthusiastic audience. This idea of Kent has been further engrained into the historiography since Dickens, with Diarmaid MacCulloch noting that it was 'always in the vanguard of religious change'.[50] Similarly, Peter Clark saw Kent as a county which received particular attention from Cromwell and Cranmer, resulting in reformist elements in the leading local gentry and evangelical preachers among the clergy.

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[50] A.G. Dickens, 'The Early Expansion of Protestantism in England, 1520-1558', *Archiv fur Reformationsgeschichte,* 78 (1987) 187-90, 197-213; Dickens, *The English Reformation,* revised edition, (Glasgow, 1967); MacCullock, *The Later Reformation in England*, p. 131.

Ultimately, Clark argued, the success of these approaches prompted a 'Reformation from below' which influenced Henry VIII to 'commit to the Protestant cause' in the last two years of his reign.[51]

Historiography of the Reformation in Kent, then, centres on the idea of the county as being 'a far from typical area' that experienced the events of the Reformation differently than most of England.[52] While this is true to a certain extent, considering its geographical location, its position as a maritime county, and the significance of men like Cromwell and Cranmer focusing on preaching and government, these arguments all take Kent as a whole and imply a certain amount of unanimity across the county. Michael Zell has discussed how, in spite of the faster and earlier spread of the Reformation in Kent, the rejection of the traditional church 'did not occur without a good deal of heart-searching and conflict'.[53] It cannot be assumed that Kent's relatively swift Reformation in comparison to other counties in England meant that it was embraced equally by all. Indeed, research into religious change in urban centres and rural areas has developed into a more nuanced understanding of networks, location, and context, showing the individuality of Reformation in each locality. Closer local studies have supported this interpretation by showing the variety of ways in which towns and villages encountered the Reformation, adding to our understanding of religious change in England.[54]

The existence of these studies is particularly helpful in exploring the experience of the Reformation in Kent. One example is Lutton's investigation of the neighbouring parishes of Cranbrook and Tenterden. He has shown how, even in the Weald of Kent, an area notorious for its heretical traditions, two towns just ten miles apart could have very different types of orthodox piety before the Reformation, and therefore very different experiences of the Reformation itself.[55] This is supported by Alexandra Walsham in her *Reformation of the Landscape*, in which she makes the

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[51] Clark, *Society,* pp. 34-68.

[52] Christopher Haigh, 'The Recent Historiography of the English Reformation', *The Historical Journal,* 25 (1982), 996-7.

[53] Zell, 'The Coming of Religious Reform', in *Early Modern Kent, 1540-1640* (Woodbridge, 2000), p. 178.

[54] Robert Whiting, *The Blind Devotion of the People: Popular Religion and the English Reformation* (Camridge, 1989); idem, *Local Responses to the English Reformation* (Basingstoke, 1998); idem, *The Reformation of the English Parish Church* (Cambridge, 2010); Haigh, *Reformation and Resistance in Tudor Lancashire* (Cambridge, 1975); MacCulloch, *Suffolk and the Tudors: Politics and Religions in an English County, 1500-1600* (Oxford, 1986); Stuart Palmer, 'Politics, Corporation and Commonwealth: The Early Reformation in Canterbury, c. 1450-1559 (Unpublished PhD Thesis, University of Kent, 2016).

[55] Robert Lutton, 'Geographies and Materialities of Piety: Reconciling Competing Narratives of Religious Change in Pre-Reformation and Reformation England', in *Pieties in Transition,* pp. 11-39.

argument for a continuous 'negotiation between the wishes of particular communities and the priorities of the ecclesiastical hierarchy, between the objects of popular veneration and the models of sacrality promoted by Rome and its regional representatives': this was especially notable when it came to the veneration of local shrines based in the landscape in the form of springs, trees and rocks.[56] These landmarks, linked as they were to particular saints and to ritual and customary practices within the parish, played an important part in the identity of the community. It was this collective and locally-based identity which the central Church was forced to contend with when it came to agreeing or refusing to officially accept and sanctify a given site, and it was this identity which the Reformation challenged throughout the sixteenth century. It is therefore necessary to explore the variety of orthodox pieties in existence in Kent on the eve of the Reformation in order to understand the religious identities of Kentish parishes, but also to grasp how they can contribute to the religious identity of the county as a whole.

In the case of Tenterden and Cranbrook, Lutton has demonstrated that even close proximity does not necessarily imply similarity in approach to religion. There were significant differences between the two towns in the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries. Tenterden stands out in Kent for its dramatic decline in the provision for chantries. Lutton has shown how, by the 1520s, the number of testators founding chantries had gone from a third down to ten per cent, while provision for funerary services and commemorations rose from around twenty-five to seventy-five per cent.[57] By comparison, in Cranbrook, whilst testamentary giving to church fabric and founding chantries declined in the same fashion as in Tenterden, these demonstrations of devotion rose again in the years 1520-1535, and the town has been referred to as a 'bastion of traditional religion', and 'one of the major conservative strongholds' in Kent even in the 1540s.[58] Yet both had a history of Lollard activity, and Cranbrook has been reported by Clark to be a radical centre by 1552. It has been pointed out that the differences in testamentary giving towards chantries and church fabric could be a consequence of different financial circumstances; the foundation of chantries was more expensive than obits, and the increase in provision for funerals and commemorations in Tenterden, the poorer

[56] Walsham, *The Reformation of the Landscape,* p. 61.
[57] Lutton, 'Geographies and Materialities of Piety', pp. 24-5.
[58] Duffy, *The Stripping of the Altars,* p. 479; Clark, *Society*, pp. 59, 62.

town, suggests that belief in Purgatory was just as strong there.[59] This could also explain the difference in the giving of religious books and bibles and the provisions for sermons which were more evident in Cranbrook than in Tenterden.[60] While these differences have less to do with confessional differences than the financial circumstances of each town, there would certainly have been a different material culture and experience of religion as a result.

A more fundamental and devotional difference between the towns can be found in their attitudes towards the cult of saints, and, more specifically, the Jesus Mass. The Mass of the Holy Name of Jesus was a cult which arrived in England at the end of the fourteenth century, and which appeared in Kent in the 1460s. It was a cult which focused on the sacrificial mass, but also on preaching and scripture, which, as Lutton notes, 'lent it a powerful polyvalency'.[61] Cranbrook seems to have upheld the traditional approach to the cult of saints, and continued to maintain a variety of orthodox practices. The Jesus Mass, which first arrived in that town at the very end of the fifteenth century, received fifty per cent of bequests between the years 1500-1509 and fell to around fifteen per cent in the period 1520-1535. As is clear, it was instantly successful among the parish, but was one of several other cults.[62] In Tenterden the situation was very different. Along with the decline in provision for chantries, there was also a decline in the devotion to saints and to the nearby monasteries and religious orders.[63] Here, the Jesus Mass received sixty-five per cent of bequests in the period 1513-1519, and while, with the other methods of devotion, there was a decline in bequests from 1520, it still accounted for thirty-five per cent up until 1535, with some continuing until 1547: 'an outstandingly high level of support compared to Cranbrook and other centres'.[64] This overall development in the testamentary evidence for Tenterden suggests to Lutton 'a significant shift in orthodox piety at least a decade before the years of official reform', and that Tenterden, within this

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[59] Lutton, 'Geographies and Materialities of Piety', pp. 24-5.
[60] Collinson, 'Cranbrook and the Fletchers: Popular and Unpopular religion in the Kentish Weald', in *Godly People,* p. 414.
[61] Lutton, 'Geographies and Materialities of Piety', pp. 28-9. For more information on the Mass of the Holy Name of Jesus, please see Judith Aveling, '*In Nomine Iesu Omne Genu Flectatur;* The Late Medieval Mass and Office of the Holy Name of Jesus: Sources, Development and Practice' (Unpublished PhD Thesis, Bangor University, 2015); Richard W. Pfaff, *New Liturgical Feasts in Later Medieval England* (Oxford, 1970).
[62] Lutton, 'Geographies and Materialities of Piety', pp. 28-9.
[63] Ibid., p. 29.
[64] Ibid., p. 28.

orthodoxy, 'was drifting towards a particularly English evangelicalism – a moderate Christocentric reformism – in ways that were not experienced ten miles away in Cranbrook'.[65]

An understanding of the differing pieties of Cranbrook and Tenterden can therefore help us in our efforts to obtain a better grasp on the impact of the Reformation and how the identity of the community developed through the process. Clark's designation of Cranbrook as a staunchly puritan community has been challenged by Patrick Collinson, who has shown that while there was most certainly an influential puritan minority residing in or around the town, 'not everything "godly" was Puritan at Cranbrook'.[66] This is perhaps easier to reconcile with Lutton's interpretation of Cranbrook as a place which maintained a wide range of orthodox practices, than with Clark's summation of the town transforming from extremely conservative even in the 1540s to a hotbed of puritanism by 1552. Equally, Tenterden's shift towards 'a particularly English evangelicalism' makes its faster adoption of the reformist church a logical progression. The difference between the two towns can be seen, again, with Mary's reign, in which Cranbrook appears to have started returning to traditional devotions in wills, whilst Tenterden had shown no such inclination.[67]

Popular devotion to the Jesus Mass in the north of England was low in comparison to that of the Midlands and the south, with evidence from Kent showing that twenty-eight parishes had a Jesus Mass or altar, as well as the existence of Holy Name fraternities such as the one in Maidstone.[68] This cult encouraged personal meditation on the name and actions of Jesus Christ with focus on scripture and the mass, and was often expressed with a sacred trigram (*ihs, ihc,* or occasionally *jhu, Ihu*) painted on walls and glass, stamped into objects and written on documentation.[69] Though devotion to the Mass of the Holy Name should not be thought to suggest evangelical sympathies in the pre-Reformation period, it may be indicative of the level of receptiveness to and range of new ideas and influences. Evidence can be found for the worship of the Jesus Mass in Romney Marsh, described by Clark as one of the most traditional towns in Kent, mostly centred around the hospital of the

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[65] Ibid., p. 29.
[66] Collinson, 'Cranbrook and the Fletchers', p. 22.
[67] Lutton, 'Geographies and Materialities of Piety', p. 36.
[68] Hugo Blake, Geoff Egan, John Hurst and Elizabeth New, 'From Popular Devotion to Resistance and Revival in England: The Cult of the Holy Name of Jesus and the Reformation', in *The Archaeology of Reformation, 1480-1580,* eds. David Gaimster and Roberta Gilchrist (Leeds, 2003), p. 177; *Testamenta Cantiana: East Kent* ed. Charles Hussey et al. (London, 1907)
[69] Blake et al., 'From Popular Devotion to Resistance and Revival', pp. 175-94.

Blessed Stephen and Thomas; clearly a longstanding influence, the sacred trigram can be found on a 1378 lease for the hospital, and on other documentation up until the last local record for the establishment in 1508.[70] Therefore, while embracing the Mass of the Holy Name of Jesus cannot be considered a definitive guide to determining a community's swift acceptance of the reforming efforts of Cromwell and Cranmer, a comparison of the progress of the Jesus Mass and its place amongst other orthodox practices in a variety of locations could provide a useful image of the variety of orthodox pieties in Kent. A sense of identity could then be construed when also taking into account a community's topography, economy and networks. These factors all contributed to shape the collective experience of the Reformation, an event which forced the locality to engage with external and internal pressures, and in turn developed that identity into one that could reflect the reality of Reformation and post-Reformation England. It provided a new context within which to classify themselves and others.

The examples of Tenterden and Cranbrook, as different as they are from each other, contrast again with areas such as the town of Dartford, which seems to have been unaffected by the cult of Holy Name, with only one testator, John Hamond, requesting Jesus Masses on his behalf in 1472. It is interesting that Dartford has also been shown to have a thriving Catholic community, one which seems to have been slow to change, when one considers the support and treatment of the nuns of Dartford Priory after it was dissolved in April 1539.[71] It has been suggested by Paul Lee that Hamond's personal links with Tonbridge (he owned properties nearby) were the reason for his bequest, considering that areas around Tonbridge, the Medway valley, and the hundred of Hoo were the main locations in which the cult of the Holy Name of Jesus established a following in the diocese of Rochester.[72] It was in Tonbridge that the only fraternity in the diocese can be found, and mentions of the cult can be found in wills from the nearby areas of Halling, Yalding, West Malling and Snodland (Medway valley) between the years 1499 and 1541.[73] Similarly, after appearing in St.

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[70] G. M. Draper, ''There hath not bene any gramar scole kepte, preacher maytened or pore people releved, other then…by the same chauntreye': Educational Provision and Piety in Kent, c. 1400-1640', in *Pieties in Transition,* pp. 80-1.

[71] Lee, 'Monastic and Secular Religion and Devotional Reading'.

[72] Ibid., pp. 188-9.

[73] The fraternity seems to have been a short-lived one, only receiving bequests between 1470 and 1472. Nevertheless, as involvement in the cult was maintained until 1541, Lee makes the case for a relatively strong establishment of the cult of Holy Name in Tonbridge. Lee, 'Monastic and Secular Religion and Devotional Reading', p. 189.

Werburgh in the hundred of Hoo in 1507, there seems to have been a regular Jesus Mass maintained by provisions in wills from local parishioners and from neighbouring parishes, as well as bequests to a Jesus altar. Although it was not mentioned after 1535, a last bequest went to the altar in 1547, suggesting a continued engagement with the cult until Edward's reign.[74] There seems to have been only one more parish in which a regular Jesus existed, and that was East Greenwich. The only will referencing it was in 1529, but a yeoman of the parish, Thomas Furneys alias Halle, made a will in 1467 indicating a strong devotion to Christ, neglecting to provide for lights, or engage with other local cults. Lee compares Furneys to the parishioners of Tenterden, whose worship of Jesus also came at the expense of other saints.[75] Read as a Christo-centric form of orthodox piety in the same manner as that found in Tenterden, an argument could be made for pre-Reformation evangelical tendencies linked to the cult of the Holy Name of Jesus when combined with a lack of enthusiasm for the rest of the cult of saints and monastic institutions: a type of piety which might welcome the shift in devotional focus, to scripture and to a personal relationship with God, that came with the Reformation. It was certainly a very different experience to that of the parishioners of Dartford, who do not seem to have taken to the cult of the Holy Name, and could not be said to have any reformist inclinations.

Drawing together research on pieties in the county in the form of engagement with the cult of the Holy Name of Jesus is merely one arbitrary method of gauging local religious identity in Kent. While there are some possible links between devotion to the Jesus Mass and communities who adapted to the reformed church with ease, it must be remembered that the cult of the Holy Name was still part of the orthodox Catholic cult of saints. This is important when considering the area around Tonbridge and the Medway valley was one of the only regions to embrace the cult in the Rochester diocese as well as having a history of Lollardy: something that can also be seen in the case of Tenterden.[76] This might be seen to strengthen the connection between the cult and evangelicalism, if not heresy; however, we must also take into account that this region was also one of the strongest supporters of the local monastic institution, Aylesford Priory, in the diocese.[77] Despite this, methods

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[74] Lee, 'Monastic and Secular Religion and Devotional Reading', p. 189.
[75] Ibid., pp. 189-90.
[76] J.F. Davis, *Heresy and Reformation in the south-east of England, 1520-1559* (London, 1983), p. 3
[77] Lee, 'Monastic and Secular Religion and Devotional Reading', p. 234.

like this can provide a wealth of information on the way in which communities could take very different paths and express different foci within the orthodox pre-Reformation church. This has to be taken into account if we want to gain a comprehensive understanding of the Reformation on the local, county-wide, and national levels. We can then attempt to understand how the ways in which localities reacted to a change as potentially disruptive as the Reformation could contribute to their identity as a parish.

Of course, involvement with cults is one small factor in the religious identity of a community. As demonstrated by Tenterden and Cranbrook, economic differences could have a significant effect on the materiality of local piety. In his examination and comparison of the wills of Canterbury, Sandwich and Faversham, Clark has shown how these three prominent areas in Kent reacted in different ways to the Reformation. Canterbury and Sandwich were in a tense situation in the decades preceding the Reformation. Both were dealing with political and financial instability, as well as social problems and gradual polarisation. Both were suffering the consequences of an Europe-wide economic downturn, Sandwich's port was slowly silting up, and Canterbury had been suffering a decline in pilgrim visitors to Thomas Becket's shrine even before it was dismantled in 1538.[78] Faversham, in contrast, was steadily ameliorating its financial position as a market town exporting grain, and had settled any major disputes with St. Saviour's Abbey in 1525. These economic differences would make their presence felt in local materiality, in regards to both piety and town life, and can therefore provide us with further evidence of local experiences of the Reformation.

As with the other parishes we have looked at, these towns witnessed a discernible reduction in the provisions for chantries in the decade before the Reformation. There is the indication that the Jesus Mass continued to have an influence in late Henrician Canterbury, with possible implications for the 'polyvalency' of the cult of the Holy name occupying an ideological space of overlap in the Reformation. In 1544 one Robert Browne bequeathed money with reformist, community-minded expectations of the recipients (that they be 'honest and good-living poor people and householders'), but at the same time requested his wife to donate that money for his soul in honour of Jesus Christ.[79]

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[78] Peter Clark, 'Reformation and Radicalism in Kentish towns c. 1500-1553', in *The Urban Classes, the Nobility and the Reformation: Studies on the Social History of the Reformation in England and Germany,* eds. W. Mommsen et al, Publications of the German Historical Institute, 5 (London, 1979), 108-10.
[79] Sweetinburgh, 'The Poor, Hospitals and Charity', p. 65.

This 'hybrid position' of reformist attitude towards community mixed with a traditional understanding of death could well have been common in Henry VIII's post-Reformation Canterbury, and probably in Sandwich, too.[80] Clark's point that the lack of interest in reformist ideologies before 1529 in all three towns before fairly swift enforcement and adoption of the new religion in Canterbury and Sandwich means that there was likely to be a certain amount of confusion and overlap between the two in the minds of ordinary citizens.[81] Much of the success of the Reformation in Canterbury can be seen to be a result of the influence of prominent reformist elements in the town: often what Clark refers to as 'new men', John Twyne, attorney John Toftes, town clerk Christopher Levins, and other affluent merchants who were relatively recent inhabitants of Canterbury. They were actively encouraged by Cromwell and Archbishop Cranmer, who arranged for educated, reformist preachers such as Humphrey Jordan and Nicholas Ridley, and who spent three months in east Kent and preached twice in the Cathedral in 1535.[82] In the case of Sandwich, Reformation came on the back of a confrontation between the clergy of St Peter's church and the magistrates of the town in 1532. The result was that the curate and the chantry priests were sent to prison, and replaced with Edmund Greene, a reformer who had graduated from Oxford, as chantry priest. This was compounded by Cranmer, who sent the Canterbury schoolmaster John Twyne to Sandwich to lecture on two occasions.[83] Again, as a contrast, Faversham experienced the Reformation in an entirely different manner. While Canterbury and Sandwich maintained a reformist component in their local governing bodies and in influential members of the laity and clergy, Faversham had a staunchly conservative vicar, Clement Norton, who was backed by the majority of the town's magnates. He censured any who read scripture, and those who read religious texts written in English, continued pre-Reformation liturgy, and refused to preach against the pope.[84] As a result, the preambles in Faversham wills did not indicate any reformist inclinations until the 1540s. Clark notes that it was only when Protestants arrived in the town council in the 1540s that religious change began to be felt, and that by 1553 'most townspeople probably proscribed to the new religious beliefs'.[85]

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[80] Ibid.

[81] Clark, 'Reformation and Radicalism', 114-115.

[82] Ibid., 118-22; B. M. Hogben, 'Preaching and Reformation in Henrician Kent', *Arch. Cant.,* 101 (1984), 172.

[83] Hogben, 'Preaching and Reformation in Henrician Kent', 172.

[84] Clark, 'Reformation and Radicalism', 111, 116.

[85] Ibid., 116.

Similar tensions can be seen in many areas of Kent, to have continued throughout the sixteenth century and beyond, reflecting the variety of responses to the Reformation and the forms in which it took within a particular parish. Patrick Collinson has shown in detail the kinds of issues that could arise in a parish considered to be a strong puritan community in the second half of the century. Richard Fletcher, vicar of Cranbrook for the majority of Elizabeth's reign, had a significant amount of trouble from a group of his parishioners who were part of a puritan minority, despite being credited with playing an influential role in the conversion of a number of them.[86] While he did employ three notable puritan curate-preachers who received support from parishioners (Between 1575 and 1585 John Strowd, Thomas Ely and Dudley Fenner: all active puritans. Strowd seems to have provoked feelings within the parish against Fletcher, while Fenner, though not as disruptive as Strowd, became a prominent member of the 'ministers of Kent'[87]), there is reason to believe that Fletcher was pressured into taking them. This is suggestive of an influential godly element who had outpaced their vicar's Protestantism. Even in Tenterden complaints were made against the actions of a religiously conservative vicar, name, who continued to use books which referred to the pope, but also against a more radical preacher who denied the sanctity of holy water, amongst other things. Equally, although Clark states that the people of Faversham did not start turning towards reformist ideas until the 1540s, the report that Norton reprimanded those parishioners who read scripture and made use of texts in the vernacular, tells us that there clearly were those in the town of evangelical persuasion at the very least.

Faversham was also one of the main chosen locations for meetings held by a number of conventiclers, one member of which was Henry Hart, who would later be notorious for his prominent position within the Freewillers: a sect which denied the Edwardian Protestant position on predestination and caused much anxiety amongst orthodox Protestants in both Edward's and Mary's reign, before disappearing by the beginning of Elizabeth's.[88] Although by the late 1550s the group

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[86] Collinson, 'Cranbrook and the Fletchers', pp. 399-428.

[87] Ibid.; Collinson, 'What's in a name? Dudley Fenner and the Peculiarities of Puritan Nomenclature', in *Religious Politics in Post-Reformation England: Essays in Honour of Nicholas Tyacke,* eds. Kenneth Fincham and Peter Lake (Woodbridge, 2006), pp. 113-27.

[88] Dickens, *The English Reformation*, p. 327. The next chapter will deal with the Freewiller movement in more detail, but for more information see Thomas Freeman, 'Dissenters from a dissenting Church: the challenge of the Freewillers, 1550-1558', in *The Beginnings of English Protestantism,* eds. Peter Marshall and Alec Ryrie (Cambridge, 2002), pp. 129-56; J.W. Martin, 'English Protestant Separatism at its Beginning: Henry Hart and the Free-Will Men', *Sixteenth Century Journal,* 7 (1976), 55-74.

had moved their meetings to Bocking in Essex, the fact that a group of people who had the potential to dissent from the established Protestant church chose to assemble in Faversham tells us that there were probably sympathisers, or even radicals residing there by 1549. Conflict between opposing religious groups through the appointing and support of clergy and visiting preachers was also an additional element in the impact of the Reformation on parishes, with communities such as Faversham, Lenham, Canterbury (whose reformist progress was challenged by religious conservatives in the Prebendaries Plot in the 1540s), and Cranbrook divided by faith.[89] This tension was just as important to the identity of a collective group as the (relatively) more cohesive religious approach of a town such as Tenterden. The actions taken within a parish to deal with competing groups of different religious ideologies, like Richard Fletcher in his dealings with puritan members of his flock as well as the activities of those men and women in encouraging preachers such as one Thompson and a blind man named Dawes, who entered Headcorn by travelling 'through the streat with dyvers honest men with hym', can tell us, for example, about the strong and persevering nature of that community.[90] The wide range of confessional identities within Cranbrook meant that parishioners would have been forced to accommodate those of differing beliefs to themselves (as Fletcher did by employing puritan curates), but also to justify and uphold their own position (as Fletcher did by providing John Foxe with the account for the Cranbrook martyrs, which will be discussed further in chapter 5).

The collective historiography of parishes in pre- and post-Reformation Kent has demonstrated just how individual each community's experience was. Exploration of local religion, using one example of the cult of the Holy Name of Jesus in the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries shows how even before the Reformation orthodox pieties were overwhelmingly dependent upon the attitudes of the community. There were notable differences even between parishes just ten miles apart. It is clear that some areas may have been more inclined towards the evangelical understanding of the English Reformation (like Tenterden), or been the recipient of concerted reformist efforts (like Canterbury and Sandwich). However, others had a much fuller and more

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[89] Hogben, 'Preaching and Reformation in Henrician Kent', 169-85; Clark, 'Reformation and Radicalism', 122-3.
[90] Collinson, 'Cranbrook and the Fletchers', p. 415.

traditional orthodox piety and took to the Reformation much slower (like Cranbrook and maybe Faversham), or even subtly undermined it (like Dartford, the members of which supported the nuns of the suppressed Dartford Priory: an institution which was eventually one of the six monastic houses re-established in Mary's reign).[91] Broad statements categorising the county of Kent as 'precociously Protestant' therefore fail to appreciate the variance within the region, very much based on local identities prior to the Reformation, along with their economic and social situation, the influence of local government, clergy, and prominent figures in the community, and a series of other factors.[92]

Yet despite this, the generalisation often assigned to Kent by historians can be seen to reflect the existence of a common feeling visible in contemporary perception of the county. Whether it was factually accurate or not, for some there was clearly a sense of reformist community across Kent. The parson of Wychling in 1543, while disparaging a neighbouring priest, threatened, 'I shall make forty in the parish of Doddington to bark at thee, and I shall make ten thousand of my set against thee in Kent'.[93] As well as on the immediate, local level, then, we can see the growth of a collective identity clearly felt to exist on a county-wide scale and based on the symbolism of evangelical religion as argued by anthropologist Anthony Cohen and outlined in the introduction to this thesis.[94] A feeling of a community united against 'false heretic[s]' and 'popish knave[s]' existed, at least for the parson of Wychling, and probably in the parish of Doddington.[95] For Thomas Stoughton, a minister in Essex, but originally from Sandwich, Kent's Protestant identity did not appear until Elizabeth's reign and the advent of a functioning preaching ministry.[96] Nevertheless it *did* appear:

> My selfe as young as I am, did know the time long sithence the
> happie Reigne of her Maiestie, when we in Kent was most
> accounted & also was indeede the most popish place of all that

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[91] Lee, 'Monastic and Secular Religion and Devotional Reading', pp. 63-5.

[92] Lutton, 'Geography and Materialities of piety', p. 14; Haigh, 'Review of Margaret Bowker, *The Henrician Reformation. The Diocese of Lincoln under John Longland, 1521-1547* (Cambridge, 1981)', *English Historical Review,* 48 (1983), 371; Haigh, 'The Recent Historiography of the English Reformation', 995-1007; Dickens, 'The Early Expansion of Protestantism' 187-190, 197-213; Dickens, *The English Reformation*; MacCullock, *The Later Reformation in England,* p. 131.

[93] Ryrie, 'Counting sheep, counting shepherds: the problem of allegiance in the English Reformation', in *The Beginnings of English Protestantism,* pp. 94-5.

[94] De Swaan; Cohen.

[95] Ryrie, 'Counting sheep, counting shepherds', pp. 94-5.

[96] Collinson, 'The Persecution in Kent' p. 316; *Conferences and Combination Lectures in the Elizabethan Church: Dedham and Bury St Edmunds, 1582-1590,* eds. Collinson, John Craig and Brett Usher, Church of England Record Society, 10 (Woodbridge, 2003).

countrie. But sithence it hath pleased God to send vnto them the
ministerie of his word, poperie hath there vanished as the mist
before the Sunne: and now I thinke it is lesse noted for popery, then
any other place […].[97]

As Collinson points out, Stoughton is clearly working to demonstrate the effectiveness and success of the preaching ministry, and so this claim must be read with caution. Nevertheless, he is judging the effectiveness of preaching by its success amongst 'we in Kent', conceptualising the county as a religious community, both as a member of it, as well as how it 'was most accounted' and perceived by others. For men like Stoughton and the parson of Wychling, they were, or had been, part of a community that encompassed like-minded people across all of Kent. The parson of Wychling, in his fight against the threat of 'popish knave[s]' was therefore able to reach out both to his sense of locality and to his identity as a Protestant Kentishman. Stoughton, although stating that a thoroughly Protestant Kent did not appear until Elizabeth's reign, could still look back to before then and experience religious identity on a county-wide level. Before it became 'lesse noted for popery, then any other place', Kent was 'most accounted & also was indeede the most popish place of all that countrie'. There was still a sense of individuality separating Kent from the rest of the country.

Despite the fact that the Reformation experience differed, sometimes drastically, from parish to parish, there is some evidence to suggest that some religious traits *were* county-wide. Lee has highlighted a common thread across the county, pointing out a noticeably muted engagement with establishments such as monasteries and hospitals across both east and west Kent in comparison to other counties in England.[98] In addition to this, Kent was well-known for being a centre of Lollardy in the century preceding the Reformation, the significance of which to the Reformation has long been a topic of debate for historians.[99] It was also affiliated with Protestantism in rebellion rhetoric in 1549

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[97] Thomas Stoughton, *A generall treatise against poperie and in defence of the religion by publike authoritie professed in England and other churches reformed* (Cambridge, 1598), p. 5.
[98] Lee, 'Monastic and Secular Religion and Devotional Reading', pp. 110-23.
[99] For debate over the tradition of Lollardy and its influence on the Reformation, please see Davis, *Heresy and Reformation in the south-east of England;* idem, 'Joan of Kent, Lollardy and the English Reformation', *Journal of Ecclesiastical History*, 33 (1982), 225-33; *Lollards and Reformers; Images and Literacy in Late Medieval Religion,* ed. Margaret Aston (London, 1984); Christopher Hill, 'From Lollards to Levellers', in *The Collected Essays of Christopher Hill,* vol. II, ed. idem (Brighton, 1986), pp. 89-116; *The World of Rural Dissenters, 1520-1725,* ed. Margaret Spufford (Cambridge, 1995); Lutton, 'Geography and Materialities of piety'; idem, *Lollardy and Orthodox Religion in Pre-Reformation England* (Woodbridge, 2006); Richard Rex, *The Lollards* (Basingstoke, 2000), pp. 115-42.

and 1554: an identity which was further strengthened by the remarkable number of Protestant martyrs burned in Mary's reign.[100] Kent's traditions of heresy and its more extreme responses to the long Reformations across the sixteenth century will be covered in more detail in the next chapter.

Conclusion

Unlike the examples so far, the Reformation was something that was encountered directly by every parish in Kent, and which transformed one of the main foundations of community identity: the landscape, both inside and outside the parish church. The changes inflicted on the topography of England were such that no person could escape reminders of the Reformation; monasteries and other religious institutions were demolished and replaced, an attempt to extinguish the Catholic past and rewrite the landscape from a Protestant perspective, or alternatively they were systematically destroyed, but the ruins left as they were in order to stand as a warning against the old religion and a celebration of the triumph of the new. It would have been impossible to avoid seeing the destroyed or recycled buildings and their materials in everyday activities in the village or town, especially in areas like Canterbury, or at Henry's fortified coastal defences. In a world where community and custom was very much based on the land, the act of rewriting the landscape, whether taking part in iconoclasm, using recycled buildings or materials, or simply witnessing these events, meant that collective identity across the country was also reframed as a result.

However, this does not mean that they developed in the same direction. It is clear that the experience of this event very much depended upon a number of factors such as economy, geographical location, and the local government and clergy. These informed the nature of local piety in the pre-Reformation period, which then played a significant role in the form the Reformation took within the community. For those conservative individuals or groups who were against the changes sweeping the country, a reading of the local landscape produced something entirely different: a collection of suppressed and martyred spaces which inspired an almost furtive sense of worship – one which had never existed for them before.[101] It is clear that the religious changes that took place

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[100] For Protestant identity tied to rebellion, see Bartram, 'The reading and writing practices of the Kentish gentry'. For more on the numbers and locations of Kentish Marian burnings, see Collinson, 'Persecution in Kent', pp. 310-11.

[101] Thomas Colwell's penance at Christchurch was done in 'a secret place among the walls'. Walsham, *The Reformation of the Landscape,* p. 167; HMC, *Twelfth,* 311-12; Clark, *Society,* p. 179.

over the sixteenth century had a very different nature in places like Dartford to areas like Tenterden, both of which had extremely different types of orthodox piety (and in cases like Tenterden, some prominent examples of heterodox piety). Areas with more mixed religious inclinations such as Cranbrook were required to accommodate different perspectives and actions in their everyday lives. As a consequence, each would have found their collective identity as a town or parish advance in a variety of ways. In each parish, the experience of the Reformation was an internalised one, depending on a combination of local factors; the collective memory of the event and, subsequently, the way in which they identified themselves in response still came, therefore, from an insular and peculiarly local mentality.

This insular interpretation is supported, but also expanded, when considering other outside influences. Again, we can see elements of a way of life which was 'taken for granted', where community existences could be predictable and functional enough that there was no need to look for information on a larger scale unless a problem or situation arose that prompted such action.[102] However, due to the nature of life in Kent, external information could often be forced into local consciousness, potentially triggering different layers of contextual identity.[103] Kent's geographical position between London and the Continent, making it both politically aware and potentially vulnerable, meant that to a certain extent Kentish parishes, particularly along the coast and in the Cinque Ports, the borders of London, and the road from Dover to London, had to consider their position in relation to the borders of the county and the kingdom, and therefore conceive their identity not only on the parish level, but on the county-wide and national level, too: particularly in binary opposition to the Catholic Spaniard, who had the power to unite an individual parish in Kent with the national Protestant identity as well as Protestant communities such as those of the Netherlands and of the French Huguenots, as shown in the previous chapter. Stranger communities brought Continental skills, news, and reading material with them, along with their connections abroad. Exposure to these, even if on the whole they did not make much progress in spreading their ideas,

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[102] Chatman, 'A Theory of Life in the Round', 214.
[103] Michael A. Hogg and Graham M. Vaughan, *Social Psychology,* 4th Edn. (Harlow, 2005), p. 126.

would have forced parishioners to engage with events and discourses on the Continent, and to become more aware of their place from an international perspective.[104]

More of a catalyst to defensive identity was Kent's vulnerability to invasion. The castles Henry VIII built and fortified on the coast, the musters, troop levies and watches at times of international uncertainty, would have been a constant reminder of this, particularly at times when there was talk of hostilities with France under Henry and Spain under Elizabeth. The reactions to the loss of Calais under Mary I show how even a remote woodland area like the parishes around Whitley Forest experienced the military loss as a tempest strong enough to blow down trees as divine punishment on the locality: a warning from God conveyed through the local topography. Again, here is an internalisation of an event which was significant because of the parish's awareness of its vulnerability as part of the county of Kent. Its identification as part of the geographically-bound community of Kent temporarily came to the forefront of the local identity of Whitley Forest and was therefore cemented in the landscape and collective memory. These reactions were far stronger in the coastal towns, for obvious reasons.

What is also clear is that despite the tendency to refract national events through the lens of the local, internalising and fitting them into a narrative of the parish, there are times and contexts in which the local sense of identity becomes a part of a broader, county-wide community. This is visible to a certain extent when the county was particularly vulnerable; the halted activity on the coast and the divine punishment in Whitley Forest at the fall of Calais provide us with two different examples of local awareness of an external threat due to the position of Kent as the 'gateway to England'.[105] As it was, the coastal towns were likely to have a more immediate understanding of their position on a national and international level, considering their vulnerability during the Armada and the following invasion scares, their interactions with travellers and foreigners (particularly in the Cinque Ports), their acquaintance with the inevitable routine of soldiers going to and from Calais in times of war, and the fact that the port of Sandwich had been invaded before. In the surrounding areas of

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[104] Lee's work on Dartford shows that, despite an established Dutch community residing nearby, the people of the town were not majorly affected by them. Only a very few were caught with texts closer to Lutheranism than Lollardy, suggesting that their sources were the Dutch and not native heretics. Even then, all this shows is that a minority were reading these ideas – not agreeing with them. Lee, 'Monastic and Secular Religion and Devotional Reading'.

[105] Murphy.

Whitley Forest, this recognition was of a more distant nature. Nevertheless, there was still evidently a sense of connection on a wider level than just the local for the general acceptance of the interpretation of a large storm and windfall trees as a direct punishment from God for the loss of Calais. The local association with the larger county can therefore be seen on these occasions of vulnerability, but on the whole are likely to have subsided again when the danger was over.

In contrast, the Reformation, by fundamentally changing both the relationship with the land and the landscape itself, created a deeper sense of division, but also of community on the parish level as well as that of the county. The challenge to personal or local beliefs was something that could reinforce a group's identity, but also prompted them to reach out beyond the borders of the parish to a wider community of shared ideals.[106] It is for this reason that we witness the parson of Wychling's confidence in his support, not just from the parish of Doddington, but also the people of Kent as a whole. Similarly, the example of Thomas Stoughton shows that although there may have been differences in opinion over when Kent gained its sense of Protestant community, one was felt to exist by the late Elizabethan period. Not only this, but there was a sense of religious solidarity even before the Reformation as the 'most popish' in England. A feeling of uniqueness, that Kent was separate from the rest of the country in some way, seems to have been present at certain times in the discussion of either religion.

In these chapters we can see the insularity and internal focus outlined in the first chapter compelled to engage with external forces of a variety of natures. In these circumstances, depending on the context, a dual sense of identity comes to the forefront. There is an immediate internalisation of events, which dictates the way in which the event in question is experienced and perceived within the parish community. An additional layer is revealed when there is a potential threat or challenge to the traditions upheld by generations, tied up in the landscape, customs, and practices that shaped the actions of the locality. This was caused by the awareness of the community's place in the wider landscape, both geographically and ideologically, and a further search for support from that extended community when it was relevant and necessary to do so. The implications of this broader outlook

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[106] Kevin R. Cox, 'Spaces of Dependence, Spaces of Engagement and the Politics of Scale or, Looking for Local Politics', *Political Geography*, 17 (1998), pp. 1-23.

depended upon the nature of the challenge. A short term threat, such as the threat of invasion that soon blows over, made its mark on the landscape and the collective memory of a region, and thereby contributed to the sense of communal identity, while the wider awareness faded with the threat: submerged beneath the more prominent focus on the local until it was triggered again. A long term, fundamental shift, such as the Reformation, remained alive in the landscape, informing local actions, and forcing religious connections to be forged on a broader scale based on symbols and ideology rather than physical proximity. As the parchment upon which the Reformation was written and history was rewritten, the landscape acted as an agent of change and inspiration, connecting these religious communities in the way that it was interpreted, and in the new relationships developed from the 1530s onwards.

Chapter 4: Resistance and Rebellion

Over the previous chapters this thesis has outlined how local identity was based on a bedrock of spatial and temporal developments. Multiple contextual identities were formed from continuous interaction with the landscape, both in the material resources and boundaries of local life and custom as well as in the impact on natural and built features by particular events or movements. They were also influenced by trade, networks, and further defined by events such as invasion scares and the Reformations, all of which had the potential to rewrite local practice and tradition and the ways in which people experienced the world. In dealing with external forces impinging on the local, either as threats or in reality, it is clear that although there was an instinctive tendency to refract them through the lens of local experience, there was also some awareness and identification at the county level, and to some extent the national. These identities could be strengthened both temporarily and permanently through 'the dialectics of inclusion and exclusion' within such events.[1] For example, the loss of Calais in 1558 brought with it immediate feelings of vulnerability which calmed when there was no attempted invasion, whereas the Reformation continued to contribute to religious and spatial tensions far beyond the sixteenth century. Most of these sorts of conflicts could be resolved or factored into ongoing day-to-day routines. At times, however, challenges, threats, or conflicts were not resolved, and in these cases the multiple and overlapping layers of identity acknowledged in this thesis so far, with their roots in collective identity, local traditions and the landscape, were capable of motivating and guiding rebellious behaviour.

In chapter 1 the idea of reciprocity and obligation between different social degrees was discussed as part of the analysis of local interactions and politics. This was a small example of the way in which the concept of order was understood in Tudor England, enshrined in the all-encompassing Elizabethan idea of the Great Chain of Being. It was universally accepted that every being had its place in the hierarchy of heaven and earth – each one had a superior and inferior, from the angels 'down to the meanest worm'.[2] By remaining in one's place, maintaining the bonds of order and obligation, the individual contributed to the prosperity of the commonweal. Under the Tudors,

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[1] de Swaan; Cohen.
[2] Sir John Fortescue, cited in E.M.W. Tillyard, *The Elizabethan World Picture* (London, 1948), pp. 24-5.

presumably due to the emergence of the dynasty's rule out of the chaos of the Wars of the Roses and the resulting dynastic insecurity, notions of law, order, hierarchy and obedience reached further into subjects' lives than ever before.

The equity side of the Court of Exchequer, as extensively used in the first chapter, is one example of the way in which the centre could be utilised in the localities and in turn extend its influence at the local level. Another, far more encompassing, change was the Henrician Reformation and the acts passed in the Reformation Parliament, from 1529 to 1536, which 'implied the identification of Church and civil commonwealth'.[3] This meant that not only were heretics and religious nonconformists now committing crimes against the monarch, but also that the church and the clergy were agents of the state. As a result, sermons such as the Homily of Obedience preached the importance of hierarchical relationships, based on the framework of the Great Chain of Being. The rhetoric of commonwealth and obligation was brought into the parish church, emphasising the role that each must play:

> Some are in high degree, some in low, some kings and princes,
> some inferiors and subjects, priests and laymen, masters and
> servants, fathers and children, husbands and wives, rich and poor,
> and everyone have need of other; so that in all things is to be lauded
> and praised the goodly order of God, without the which no house,
> no city, no commonwealth can continue and endure.[4]

When a person stepped outside their proscribed position, committed a crime or was involved in rebellion, this upset the natural order and undermined the nature of God's creation, '[f]or where there is no right order, there reigneth all abuse, carnal liberty, enormity, sin, and Babylonical confusion.' This chaos and anarchy would directly affect every man in the parish in their own homes:

> no man shall ride or go by the highway unrobbed, no man shall
> sleep in his own house or bed unkilled, no man shall keep his wife,
> children, and possessions in quietness; all things shall be common,

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[3] Fletcher and MacCulloch, p. 10.
[4] 'The Book of Homilies: Extracts from *An Exhortation Concerning Good Order and Obedience to Rulers and Magistrates* (1547)' in *Certain Sermons or Homilies (1547) and a Homily against Disobedience and Wilful Rebellion (1570): a Critical Edition,* ed. R. Bond (Toronto, 1970), pp. 161-70.

and there must needs follow all mischief and utter destruction, both

of souls, bodies, goods, and commonwealths.[5]

This appeal to the continued welfare of the commonwealth has several implications, and its context is suggestive of the way in which the elite viewed the political discourse of commonweal. They viewed the commonwealth as a form of state in which hierarchy was vital, and one in which the commons had no legitimate voice in politics. It is also clear that this homily was intended as a way of imposing that interpretation on the commons of the realm, pairing it with the known quantities of the Great Chain of Being and theory of obligation, and defining the threat of what the 'utter destruction' of the commonwealth would mean for them.

The attempt to define what constituted a healthy commonwealth in 1547 as part of a sermon designed to keep subjects in their place reflects the ongoing friction between the government's centralising efforts and fear of the many-headed monster, and the traditions and rhetoric of popular protest which had built upon the foundations of the Peasant's Revolt of 1381. Sir Thomas Elyot's worry about the confusion caused by the two conflicting meanings in the 1530s perfectly sums up the issue of elite appropriation of commonweal rhetoric as a means of regaining control over a powerful and highly politicised commons.[6] For this group, the concept of commonweal meant that they were part of the political community of the realm, and on the occasions that the common good of that community was subverted by corruption or the failure to live up to the reciprocal actions that came with the bonds of obligation, they were duty-bound to right that wrong through accepted methods of protest.[7] As stated in the introduction, the historiography on popular politics has shown the development of rebellious traditions in rhetoric and land usage, with David Rollison viewing the period from 1066 to 1649 as one 'long social revolution' tied up with concepts of commonwealth, and Andy Wood pointing out the parallels in discourse and strategy which formed a 'shared tradition of popular protest' connecting the uprising of 1549 to those of 1381, 1450, 1469, 1489, 1497, 1525 and 1536.[8] These *long duree* arguments are supported by others such as Wendy Scase, whose work

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[5] Ibid., pp. 161-70.
[6] Rollison, p. 281. For discussion of the appropriation of commonweal rhetoric in elite politics, see Starkey, 'Which Age of Reform?', esp. 25-27.
[7] For discussion of popular politics and the concept of commonweal, see: Harvey, 'Was there popular politics in fifteenth-century England?'; Rollison.
[8] Wood, *The 1549 Rebellions,* p. 1.

on the literature of complaint identifies the use of similar methods and rhetoric in bills and petitions by rebels from 1272 until 1553, and Jane Whittle, whose focus upon the actions taken by rebels in Norfolk in the rebellions of 1381 and 1549 provides further support for Wood's argument for the existence of a 'red thread' binding rebellions together in a shared 'ideology of popular protest.'[9]

The prominent involvement of Kent in rebellious activity – frequent enough that Terence R. Murphy notes that 'there was one Kentish insurrection at least in every generation from the last quarter of the fourteenth century until the mid-sixteenth century' – suggests a certain level of engagement between this 'ideology of popular protest' and the people bound to the geography and identity of the county.[10] It is here that P.G. Klandermans's work on the dynamics of protest can be used to obtain a greater understanding of the links between the people of Kent and a rebellious Kentish identity. The previous chapters have already shown how, given the right circumstances, inhabitants of a locality could and did identify with the county. In times of resistance, widespread awareness of threats to the customary environment would be a significant factor in local identification with the county at large, and created or reinforced the 'us versus them' dynamic. By taking into consideration the importance of shared grievances as 'fuel of the motivational engine' and as instrumental to a politicised collective identity, we can understand the reasoning behind political participation in Kent.[11] However, what is equally important is the way in which people relate to different identities with different strengths in different contexts. It is the combination of these two elements in a particular set of circumstances that informs the actions of an individual or group, as well as the nature of the protest in which they are participating.[12] In the case of Kent, particularly by the sixteenth century, the strength of identification with its rebellious nature could well be established among many of its population, particularly when accounting for Drury and Reicher's argument that participation goes on to reinforce collective identity.[13] The frequency of rebellious action in Kent alongside the repeated strategies and discourses that accompanied them would have formed a narrative held within collective

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[9] Scase, *Literature and Complaint in England,* pp. 157-69; Whittle, 'Peasant Politics and Class Consciousness', 233-47; Wood, *The 1549 Rebellions*, p. 1.

[10] Murphy, p. 121.

[11] J.D. McCarthy and M.N. Zald, 'Resource mobilization and social movements: A partial theory', *American Journal of Sociology*, 82 (1976), 1212-41; Klandermans, 'Identity Politics and Politicized Identities', 5, 20.

[12] Huddy, 'From social to political identity: A crucial examination of social identity theory', 127-56; Klandermans, 'Identity Politics and Politicized Identities', 8.

[13] Drury and Reicher, 'Collective Psychological Empowerment as a Model of Social Change: Researching Crowds and Power', 707-25.

memory, which made county participation in protest activity normative.[14] As a result, it is likely that collective identity and protest participation in Kent reinforced one another, creating an association between the county and rebellion, and motivating people to act.

This chapter will look at the various ways in which resistance was expressed, from legitimate protest accommodated by structures of law and order, to those instances where these relationships and strategies broke down, leading to more radical activity such as rebellion or religious dissent. It will look at the ways in which collective identity, bound as it was to the landscape, memory, and notions of commonweal, played a major role in defiance of political or religious change.

<u>Minor resistance and reaction</u>

Understandings of space, place, and custom were embedded in daily routines and relationships. In the event of conflict, a certain form of spatial disruption was enough to signal to others the nature and expected course of the dispute. One example of this was the symbolic traversing of space which held a variety of implications in the process of tithe disputes. Another was the collective action taken in protest of taxation collection, making use of customary knowledge and the legitimacy that came with actions 'time out of mind'. In both examples there were processes in place to deal with dispute or disturbance according to understandings of customary law and conceptions of time and space. The use of this framework can also be seen from the other direction, in the way space was used to convey a message in the punishment of crime. Each of these examples adds to our understanding of the different layers of meanings the landscape and language could hold, transforming, in response to circumstances, from a place of common or routine practice to a space of potential conflict, and bringing the associated memories and discourses into action.

In her examination of resistance to tithes between 1400 and 1600, Paula Simpson has noted a general upwards trend in the use of litigation in the sixteenth century. This fits with the increasingly litigious nature of Tudor England, and is evident in the sources used in the first chapter. The information that deponents gave, particularly regarding the beginnings of the disputes, emphasise the importance of time, space and the roles expected of different members of the community. Simpson

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[14] Francesca Polletta, '"It Was Like A Fever…": Narrative and Identity in Social Protest', *Social Problems,* 45 (1998), 154.

points out that 'deponents were typically sensitive to matters such as where the exchanges had occurred, the language employed, those who participated and those who observed'.[15] While these interactions could happen in fields, streets, or homes, they were more likely to take place in or near churches after a service. This guaranteed that the requirement of witnesses would be fulfilled. Often, the individual with the grievance would step into the chancel to engage the priest: an action which held a variety of symbolic meanings.[16] Before the Reformation, a lay person standing in this area of the church would be aware of crossing several lines. They would have had to pass over both a physical and spiritual boundary, stepping beyond the rood loft and into a space which was solely the responsibility of the clergy, where mass was celebrated.[17] This action therefore was a conscious statement of intent which 'represented resistance in the symbolic transgression it constituted'.[18] It held significance for the priest, whose sacred space was being infringed upon, and who, as Simpson puts it, received 'a subtle reminder of the cleric's own material responsibilities towards the church'.[19] The action of stepping across those boundaries into a different space at that time also held meaning for the parishioners present, whose roles changed from church-goers to political witnesses, and potential mediators if called upon.

The fact that this process continued after the Reformation, when the religious significance of the chancel had changed, is highly suggestive of the importance of collective memory and symbolic forms of political action, as well as its attachment to landscape - in this case, the landscape within the church building. The changing meaning of the space as part of the church can be seen in the way church furniture was referred to in a pair of disputes, one from 1550 and another from 1597, both of which mentioned a 'communion table' rather than an 'altar'.[20] Despite the changes brought about by the Reformation, there was still a sense of boundary within the chancel; while now open to the laity, it was restricted to those of higher social status. Nevertheless, there was clearly recognition of the changed circumstances. The topics of dispute which took place there became more varied than they

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[15] Paula Simpson, 'The Continuum of Resistance to Tithe, c. 1400-1600', in *Pieties in Transition,* p. 101.
[16] Ibid., pp. 101-2.
[17] Ibid.
[18] Ibid.
[19] Ibid.
[20] Badcocke v. Gunnyll (1550), CCA, DCb-J/X/10/4 f. 105v , and Partrich v. Bray (1597), CCA, DCb-PRC 39/19 f. 120r, cited in Simpson, 'The Continuum of Resistance to Tithe', p. 108.

were before, with an additional focus on seating.[21] Nevertheless, the act of stepping into the chancel would not have the same physical and spiritual impact after the Reformation as it had had before; the fact that this particular action continued in this particular space with little change in interpretation by the actors involved suggests that memories of symbolically charged political actions remained in the collective consciousness even when their original symbolic meaning no longer had the same resonance. The chancel therefore had the potential to transform from the religious space where communion was held to a site of dispute; a certain action in that specific location was a signal that the parishioners and clergy would understand, informing them of their shift in role from communicants to political witnesses. This was a phenomenon which might be more common in some places than others. High numbers of such disputes were located around Romney Marsh, the Weald, and in parishes to the west of the Isle of Thanet.[22] While a high incidence of such tithe disputes could imply a local identification with protest behaviour, as might be the case in areas such as the Weald (an area which will be explored further below), this is not necessarily the case. Nevertheless, this is something which could alternatively suggest a peculiarly confrontational culture between laity and clergy, or a confidence in local grievance processes. Either way, an element of identity and communal memory can be seen to influence local events and practices.

A different element of collective understanding and participation can be seen in the disputes over local rights and the ways in which locals and tenants interacted with the manorial authorities. One such example can be seen in the response of the tenants of the manor of Morehouse in Hawkurst when Richard Baker of Cranbrook, owner of the said manor, decided to fell oaks on waste grounds and common land in the parishes of both Hawkhurst and Cranbrook.[23] Concluded and recorded in January 1568, this case followed the activity of one Edmond Roberts, his fellow tenants, and others from Hawkhurst and Cranbrook who, having 'gotten into their hands dyvers and sondrie dedes chartres escripts and writings concerning the premisses and of rightes belonging to the said Richarde

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[21] Simpson, 'The Continuum of Resistance to Tithe', p. 102.
[22] On Romney Marsh: Ivychurch, Ruckinge, New Romney, Newchurch, Bilsington and Appledore. On the Weald: Bethersden, Marden, Staplehurst, Frittenden, Headcorn and Cranbrook . West of the Isle of Thanet: Sturry, Herne, Whitstable, Chislet, and to an extent, Ash. See Simpson, 'The Continuum of Resistance to Tithe', p. 98.
[23] TNA, C 78/38/12.

Baker', argued that 'the same okes growing vpon the said commons and waste grounds and the soyle thereof did belonge to them'. In addition to this:

> at sondrie tymes & places of common assembles and metings and at sondrie other tymes and places also common and talke of the felling of the said Okes intended by the said Complaynaunte Sayenge and concluding amonges themselues that if the said Complaynaunte did fell any of the said Okes that he the said Complaynaunte shulde not carie the same but shulde be forceablie disturbed (TNA, C 78/38/12)

Baker turned to the Court of Chancery when he could not get remedy at Common Law, and their response to his bill of complaint was that the lands in question:

> hathe bene vsed by all the tyme whereof the memorie of man hathe not runne to the contrarie that the said tenants and owners of the premisses by the comon assent of them of the greater number of the have made bylaws for the manner of the taking of the proffetts occupacon & order of the premisses and fellinge or sale of any trees or woods growing there whiche by lawes have always bene observed and kepte accordinglie and suche evidences as they have concerninge the premisses they kepe and deteyne for the presentacion of their laufull title and interest aforesaid as laufull is for them to doe (TNA, C 78/38/12)

The actions and replies of the tenants and other parishioners of Hawkhurst and Cranbrook indicate a collective identity among the people who used these particular lands and whose rights would be impinged upon if Baker was able to go ahead with his intentions. Their speedy mobilisation in producing written evidence against Baker as well as in their 'common assembles and metings', demonstrated organisation and a strong understanding of their land rights and the ways in which they could defend them. Their emphasis on the 'evidences' they possessed, and that they 'kepe and deteyne [them] for the presentacion of their laufull title and interest aforesaid as laufull is for them to doe', demonstrates a litigious understanding of the power of documentation and the way it could be used in courts of law. In the parishes of Hawkhurst and Cranbrook, then, it is evident that there were strong communication networks between the parishes as part of a community of people united by their use

of common land and waste grounds. This community was clearly aware of its rights and able to act in their defence when threatened.

Another example of collective action can be seen in the protest taken against the collection of taxation in Bonnington. Bonnington was one of a group of townships known as the six vills, which also consisted of Sellinge, Lympne, Westenhanger, Aldington and Hurst. Discontent over the way in which the towns were assessed for taxation (whether jointly and in common, or severally) reared its head around the year 1551 led by a man named Valentine Nott, a 'verye contentious person' moving from Lympne to Bonnington, who stirred up trouble with the constables, 'which then were in some disposicion meete for yt'.[24] According to Ralfe Heyman, esquire, deposing in an investigation in 1578, Nott:

> procured the poore parysioners of Lympne & others to severe them selves by partyculer taxyons of the severall villes by occasione wherof great trowbles & discorde were like to have growne had not certeyne men of the cheife inhabitants of the hundreth as well of lympne as of Sellinge made sute to Sr Rycharde Sackvile then lorde of Ostinghanger and of the syxe vylles (TNA, E 134/21&22Eliz/Mich32).

After being brought to the notice of Sackville, a meeting involving Sackville, Nott, the constables and Heyman (possibly because he possessed 'a booke of the whole and particuler fyvetens within the shyer of kent' inherited from his father), Sir Thomas Kempe (owner of the manor of Bonnington), Sergeant William Lovelace (to whom the deponents gave their testifimonies), was arranged to settle the matter before Sergeant Roger Manwood, later Lord Chief Baron of the Exchequer. In this 'good happye meetynge' it was decided that the outcome would be determined according to custom. The following meeting, attended again by Kempe, the constables of all six vills, Heyman, and Lovelace, was based around concepts of community and memory: 'for proofe of the custome' Kempe listened to 'the testification of sundry aged and honeste persons', and as a result 'did condisende and agre to the olde comon ioynt taxation'. This is an example of the way in which the relationship between lord

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[24] TNA, E 134/21&22Eliz/Mich32.

and tenants negotiated practices, working within the shared framework of locality and community, and based on the importance of individual and collective memory. The authority of these memories was that they came from people commonly known to be 'aged and honeste', thereby taking into account the collective values and assessment of character and history held by locals.

In the case of Bonnington, in the same way that Cranbrook and Hawkhurst were united in their common use and defence of land rights, there is also evidence of a wider level of identification felt by its inhabitants and with the other five towns within the hundred of Street. Valentine Nott was dwelling in Lympne and was planning on moving to Bonnington, suggesting a level of mobility between towns. The form of protest used by Nott was one in which he reached out to particular group identities he knew would be receptive ('poore parysioners of Lympne', and 'constables which then were in some disposicion meete for yt') and would be motivated by his grievance, which was very much based in the collective activities of the six vills. The agreement on how to tackle the issue was made by an assemblage of inhabitants from each of the towns under Sackville, lord of the six vills, before falling back on collectively witnessed testimonies from elderly members of the community, and acceding to the authority of those memories. The way in which this local protest was made and dealt with therefore suggests a sense of community, or at least regular interaction and secure networks, across the six towns, with custom and memory playing a significant role in events. The strength of these elements in the face of a threat to the customary method of taxation for their area therefore enabled them to act collectively in a political way, and restore things to the way they were.

The method by which crimes were punished made use of memory and the landscape in a similar way. The act of punishment was less of a lesson for the criminal and more a message and warning sent out to those who observed it; variations of the phrase 'to devise such other punishment as may serve to the terrible example of other like offenders' on legal documents show the intent of Tudor authorities on this point.[25] In the implementation of this design, however, we can see the way in which common understanding of practice and place was used. The locations chosen to send this message were visible or significant places like commons, central town locations, crossroads, or city gates. The bounds and limits of Sandwich, for example, include the mention of the 'Cheifdownes

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[25] Murphy, p. 372.

where men condemned w*i*th in the liberty aforesaid are buried alive'.[26] Similarly, a particular section of Penenden Heath was known to have long been the site of a gallows, and the common itself was regularly used as the location for county courts to be held, and was where they would often choose the knights to send to Parliament.[27]

These sites were often old and established as areas of judgement and punishment, and, as a result, were often political. The execution for high treason of one Friar Stone of Canterbury, for denying the royal supremacy in March 1540, was designed to send a specific message about resisting Henry VIII's religious changes: both to those who witnessed his grisly death in the Dane John and to any in the years following who passed the gates of Canterbury, where his head and quarters were displayed.[28] The execution of the apprentice Robert Cockerell (mentioned in the previous chapter) took place in the market of Canterbury, where he was hanged on a constructed gallows. His rather elaborate fate and charge of treasonable and seditious words for something he had said when he was drunk and could not remember the next day, along with the marketplace execution, suggests that this was a response designed to address the worry sparked by rumours of imminent invasion due to the loss of Calais more than his particular action. As Murphy, somewhat emotionally, puts it, '[i]t was done in the panic following the loss of Calais by a sick and neurotic queen, an over-worked and aged lord lieutenant, and by a city anxious by any means to demonstrate its loyalty'.[29] Whether this is entirely the case or not, the timing, location and method of Cockerell's execution served a purpose. When compared with another execution at the Buttermarket, that of Nicholas Faunt, Mayor of Canterbury, in 1471, the prominence of this location as a place of execution is even clearer. After his involvement in the failed Fauconberg's rising, he was hanged, drawn and quartered in front of the Cathedral gate: a strong message and statement of power by Edward IV to the people of Kent, many of whom had supported the actions of Thomas Neville, Bastard of Fauconberg. This message was compounded by the fine placed upon the city of Canterbury for their participation, as well as the fact

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[26] KHLC, Sa/CPc4, f. 43. This was a punishment peculiar to Sandwich, which, even during the fifteenth century, claimed the right to execute murders by burying them alive: Helen Carrel, 'The ideology of punishment in late medieval English towns', *Social History*, 34 (2009), 303.

[27] Penenden Heath was referred to by Lambarde as 'the place of Execution, or punishment', and had been the location of the trial involving the brother of William the Conqueror: see Lambarde*,* (1576), pp. 178-80. The site of the gallows on Penenden Heath can still be seen in a map of Newnham Court Farm in 1804, in *Kentish Sources, VI: Crime and Punishment,* ed. Elizabeth Melling (Maidstone, 1969), p. 162, Plate IV.

[28] Murphy, pp. 368-72.

[29] Ibid., pp. 361-8.

that when Fauconberg was executed purportedly for a different offence in September, his head was placed on London Bridge, facing Kent.[30] Between Cockerell and Faunt, it is clear that marketplace executions in Canterbury were used by authorities to make powerful statements in or after politically uncertain times, evoking fear and demonstrating the futility of acting against the crown.

The murder of Thomas Arden in Faversham in 1551 is another example of a crime which was punished in a particularly contrived way in order to make a point. Each person involved in the plot was executed in a different location. For a start, Alice Arden was burned in Canterbury, and given that she was the step-daughter of Privy Council member, Sir Edward North, this was especially shocking. In Faversham, Arden's servant, Michael, was hanged in chains while Alice Arden's maid was burned; Alice Arden's lover, Richard Mosby, and his sister were both hanged in Smithfield (London); John Green was hanged in chains 'in the hygh way betwixt Ospring and Boughton agaynste Feversham'; Black Will fled, but was found and burned in Flushing (in Zealand in the Low Countries); and the unlucky, probably innocent, George Bradshaw, was hanged in chains at Canterbury.[31] The use of these spaces to display the consequences of this crime and the further capture of Black Will in Flushing served the purpose of hammering home the message that crime would not be tolerated. Contrasting with the conventional display of punishment, as, for instance, was the case with Cockerell, only two of the executions took place in the area in which the crime occurred, or in Canterbury. The unusual nature of the murder, in involving so many people, probably accounts for the fact that the executions were scattered in strategic places across Kent. However, there is also a possibility that there was a simultaneous message aimed at the county at large, considering the politically uncertain circumstances in England in the aftermath of the 1549 Rebellions, in which Kent played a prominent role.

While the previous two examples of protest imply the crossing of some form of boundary, either a physical and spiritual one, like with tithing disputes, or a local community one, as in the way in which Valentine Nott drew together people across the six vills in protest of tax collection, often the demonstration of punishment was placed *on* boundaries such as at cross roads, the edges of

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[30] Meriel Connor, 'The Political Allegiances of Christ Church Priory 1400-1472: the Evidence of John Stone's Chronicle', *Arch. Cant.,* 127 (2007), 400-1.
[31] Holinshed, p. 1708.

commons, or where a variety of levels of society crossed paths. This made the results of crime particularly visible to passers-by, and arguably sent a symbolic message of the consequences of crossing such lines in their actions.

When considering these examples it is clear that acts of minor resistance were incorporated into local practices and that people and groups acted and reacted within a context of layered identities, spatial meaning, and collective memory. Communication and political engagement were conceptualised through local understanding of landscape and practice; certain actions in certain locations had the power to transform the nature of the space, conveying a message which was understood by the people who witnessed it. Paralleling the way in which awareness and engagement with local frameworks of understanding was demonstrated and used in central interrogatories to local deponents in the sources used in chapter 1, local and central government used this same method of communication in their response to crime. Locations picked for executions were carefully chosen and were capable of conveying multiple meanings at once. Depending on the location, method and context of a punishment, witnesses could comprehend the consequences of one specific and discrete crime such as murder or seditious words, a broader message of warning to the county in respect to recent collective action as in the case of Arden's murder or involvement in Fauconberg's rebellion, or a message of intent or security as in the execution of Cockerell. Meanings would then be associated with these sites in collective consciousness long afterwards, influencing and guiding activity and interpretation of the land for those who were part of that community.

<u>Rebellion</u>

A notable feature of politics in Tudor England, at least before 1550, was popular rebellion, when the practices and structures discussed above failed in some way. Instead, a different set of structures were put in place: structures shaped by collective memory, landscape, and identity. Several historians have studied the structures, strategies, and discourses of the many popular rebellions over this period, and have identified parallels linking them together in a tradition of rebellion.[32] The nature of popular politics, to look back to repeated actions over time in order to legitimise current or future

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[32] Rollinson; Wood, *The 1549 Rebellions*; Whittle 'Peasant Politics and Class Consciousness'; Martyn Ellis, 'Was Sir Thomas Wyatt Able to Draw on a Culture of Rebellion in Kent in 1554?', *Arch. Cant.*, 129 (2009), 77-102.

movement, means that in studying resistance in Tudor Kent, the rebellions of the previous century and going back to the Peasant's Revolt of 1381 need to be studied. Jane Whittle's study comparing the Norwich rebellions of 1381 and 1549 supports Wood's argument for an ideology of protest, and provides an excellent analysis of the strategies and linguistics which were remembered and practiced in a protest movement over one hundred and fifty years later.[33] She identified the fact that locations such as Mousehold Heath were used in the same way, that commonweal (or common profit) rhetoric was used repeatedly to frame and legitimise both rebellions, and that the strategies of authority and of assembling in 1381 were influential in 1549. It is very clear that Kett's Rebellion was tapping into a local history and using the associations with these discourses and locations to advance and legitimise its own resistance. However, alongside the similarities, Whittle also showed the differences between the two.[34] This provides an excellent way of seeing which elements of popular rebellion were collectively remembered, but also which were collectively forgotten. This is a distinction just as important to our understanding of popular protest; as explained in the introduction, what a society chooses to forget is just as much a way of fine tuning a group identity as what is actively maintained. This enabled her to produce a convincing analysis of local rebellious traditions in Norwich. Kent's prominent role in rebellions in 1381, 1450, 1460-61, 1470-71, 1525, 1536, 1549 and 1554 means there are several opportunities for comparison, and, although sources are often scarce, a deeper understanding of landscape, memory, and identity in Kentish popular rebellions will be possible.[35] Equally, the lack of involvement in rebellions in 1497 or the 1590s can also help us to understand how the influence of local identities and the growing distance between social groups might have contributed to nonparticipation and the decline of popular rebellion. An examination of these rebellions, taking into account the ways in which some aspects were remembered and repeated while others were forgotten or adapted, will further the understanding of rebellious tradition in Kent and how it developed as part of the landscape and identity of the Kentish people.

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[33] Whittle, 'Peasant Politics and Class Consciousness'.

[34] For example, in the treatment of manorial rolls: in 1381 manorial documents were targeted and burned in at least fifty-six locations by the rebels, but in 1549 they were left alone. Whittle, 'Peasant Politics and Class Consciousness', 238-9, 243-4.

[35] Although, as will be discussed, Wyatt's Rebellion of 1554 cannot truly be considered to be a purely 'popular rebellion'. It did, however, tap into popular rhetoric and traditions in order to raise support, and therefore must be included.

An examination of the Revolt of 1381, the popular rebellion which set the tone for popular protest over the next two centuries, makes it clear that there is some form of collective identity on several different levels. On the purely local level, we can look to the experience of the men of Gravesend, who were shocked and angered by the treatment of one Robert Belling by Simon Burley, one of the king's knights, who charged him with being his serf, rejected the settlement offered by 'the good men of the town', and had Belling held at Rochester castle.[36] Their participation in the 1381 rebellion seems to have been to accompany the rebels besieging Rochester (or even to inspire the rebels to take this action) break their man free of the prison, and go back home to participate no more. Whether this was a case of the rebellious commons of Kent taking up the grievance of the town of Gravesend, or the men of Gravesend jumping in on the activities of the rebels for their own specific ends, there is a perceptible element of communication and identification evident in their alignment of motives. The fact that the pardons reported in the aftermath of the event were divided into counties and then into specific towns suggests that people participated in local groups, thereby keeping their local identity with them even as they became part of a wider collective.[37]

The focus on keeping the coast of Kent defended in a meeting in Dartford provides a wider layer of identity, this time on the county level.[38] The decision that 'no one who lived at any place within twelve leagues of the sea should come with them but should keep the sea-coasts free from enemies' shows that there must have been people from coastal towns of Kent involved in the rebellion, and that the defence of the county was a serious consideration taken by those who were attempting to coordinate the movements of the revolt.[39] Here we can see the influence of the history of the vulnerability of Kent explored in chapter 2, and further support for the idea of a county-wide conception of Kent based on its geographical position between the Continent and London: one that might lay dormant until provoked. It also reveals the ambitions of the members of that meeting in Dartford, who were clearly conceptualising the revolt as one which consisted of the county as a whole.

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[36] *Anonimalle Chronicle*, cited in R. B. Dobson, *The Peasants' Revolt of 1381* (London, 1970), p. 126.

[37] For more discussion on the pardons given out by Richard II, including a graph comparing rebel pardons to general pardons by county (Kent holding the second highest number of rebel pardons, beaten only by Essex), see Helen Lacey, ''Grace for the rebels': the role of the royal pardon in the Peasants' Revolt of 1381', *Journal of Medieval History,* 34 (2008), 36-63, esp. 56-7.

[38] It is likely that the Dartford meeting took place on 5 June: Alastair Dunn, *The Great Rising of 1381: The Peasants' Failed Revolt and England's Failed Revolution* (Stroud, 2002), p. 75.

[39] *Anonimalle Chronicle*, cited in Dobson, *Peasants' Revolt,* pp. 126-7; Dunn, *The Great Rising,* pp. 75-6.

This focus on defence was only one way in which the events of 1381 were reflective of the military aspect of Kentish history, however. We can also see the way in which musters and local military structures under the constables of Kentish towns and villages played a significant part in raising so many armed men and the organisation of the rebellion as a whole. Montgomery Bohna has shown how the county musters ordered by the government prior to the revolt contributed to the development of such action, creating an identity as a county and as an armed force, as well as how commissions of arrays were used by the rebels to show the legal and social legitimacy of their actions through their right to bear arms.[40] By gathering at Canterbury and Maidstone the rebels also made use of the political significance of such spaces, broadcasting a message to the county. The focus on the county is evident in the way in which the rebels are talked about in the chronicles; although this is something which will be discussed further in the next chapter, it is important to mention here the way in which they were referred to as the 'commons of Kent'. This continued even when the Kentish rebels had joined with the rebels from Essex and London. From the way in which the author of the *Anonimalle Chronicle* describes the events in London, there seems to have been a strong distinction between the rebellious groups. It was the 'commons of Kent [who] broke down a brothel' on the morning of Corpus Christi, but with regards to the burning of the Savoy: 'the commons of Kent received the blame for this arson, but some said that the Londoners were really guilty of the deed, because of their hatred for the said duke'.[41]

It is possible that the way in which they were perceived by witnesses (particularly if the author of the *Anonimalle Chronicle* was an eyewitness of events) was due to some difference with their grievances, keeping the county groups separate from each other. Nevertheless, despite any differences and the distinction in their perception, there was also a sense of identification between the different counties. The letters written from the commons of Essex to the commons of Kent, Suffolk, Sussex and others, already tells us that there was communication between the counties.[42] Dobson's argument that the rebels of Kent and Essex would not have gone far without the involvement of the commons of London is a convincing one, but shows that there must have been common ground

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[40] Bohna, 572-3, 581.
[41] *Anonimalle Chronicle,* cited in Dobson, *Peasants' Revolt,* pp. 156, 157.
[42] Stephen Justice, *Writing and Rebellion: England in 1381* (London, 1994), pp. 36-7

between the participants from different areas. That they were all referred to as 'the commons of…', that the prevailing grievances seem to have been based on a response to the Poll Tax, and that their arguments seem to have largely been termed in notions of the common profit, loyalty to the king and against traitors to the kingdom, suggests common experiences, priorities, and the use of a similar framework within which politics was understood. The fact that this manifested in collective political action demonstrates that a collective identity between them all did exist, but also, by applying the theories of Klandermans, Drury and Reicher on the strengthening effects of collective action upon group identity, it can be further surmised that by acting politically as a county, the rebels would have strengthened this identity, linking them within the contexts of experience and rebellious discourse.[43]

Winding through all of these layers of identity was a certain amount of political awareness. The Peasants' revolt was framed within an understanding of common profit, corruption, traitors, and loyalty to the monarch. Justification for the actions of the rebels was couched in terms of common profit and corruption; the *Anonimalle Chronicle*'s statement, that the people rose because of subsidies that 'did nothing for the profit of the kingdom but were spent badly and deceitfully to the great impoverishment of the commons', demonstrates the political understanding of the realm as a whole, in which the rebels had a particular political role to play in representing the 'commons'.[44] This line of thought was continued in their dialogue with the king, in which the rebels stated that 'they had risen to save him and to destroy traitors to him and the kingdom'.[45] Here there is an engagement with the established rhetoric of the 'evil counsellor', and the idea that one could be a traitor to the kingdom by betraying the commonweal and acting with selfish motives rather than for the benefit of the country; and in the commonweal, the commons of the realm were active members.[46]

Alongside the discourse on common profit ran one based on the direct relationship between the commons and the king. This 'idealised judicial relationship' consisted of a model of complaint

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[43] Klandermans, 'Identity Politics and Politicized Identities'; Drury and Reicher, 'Collective Psychological Empowerment as a Model of Social Change'.
[44] *Anonimalle Chronicle,* cited in Dobson, *Peasants' Revolt,* p. 123. John Watts, 'The Pressure of the Public on Later Medieval Politics', in *The Fifteenth Century, IV: Political Culture in Late Medieval Britain,* eds. L. Clark and C. Carpenter (Woodbridge, 2004) pp. 159-80; Rollison, pp. 236-66.
[45] *Anonimalle Chronicle,* cited in Dobson, *Peasants' Revolt,* p. 129.
[46] Although slightly before Harvey's timeframe, for an examination of popular perception and involvement in politics, see Harvey, 'Was there popular politics in fifteenth-century England?'

and petition from the commons to be met with the king's royal mercy and judgement.[47] The consistent avowal of loyalty to Richard II from the beginning of the revolt , with oaths that 'that they would neither suffer nor have any king except King Richard', identified the rebels as the true subjects appealing to the king's grace in the face of corrupt officials and traitorous advisors.[48] This was bolstered by the rebels' clear comprehension of the importance of legal documentation; the targeting and burning of specific documents, the demands for new ones to be written, and the emphasis on pardons from the king signified common engagement with written documents and an understanding of the significance they held in legal procedures.[49] Helen Lacey argues that 'the rebels were certainly alluding to established notions of petitioning for pardon by the time they came before the king in person', and points out that if 'the insurgents were attempting to portray their cause as legitimate protest against injustice, then references to procedures and legal documents familiar from the royal courts would lend authority to their actions.'[50] A mixture of discourses were thus engaged by the rebels to justify and legitimise their actions, actions which were overwhelmingly perceived by commentators of the day as a 'violation of divinely inspired social hierarchy', and to identify the commons as true subjects of the king and the realm: as politically engaged petitioners.

While an understanding of the identifications and discourses of the commons in 1381 is useful, it is also vital to remember that these were transmuted into actions which were played out across the landscape. The main areas targeted and occupied (Canterbury, Maidstone and Rochester) tell us that they were perceived to be politically and practically significant, whereas the sites focused upon for destruction highlight particular grievances (such as perceived attacks on rights by landlords or the Treasury) and the way in which the land of an adversary (such as John of Gaunt's London residence, the Savoy) was seen as a substitute for an attack on the person themselves; 'the attack on the Savoy was all the more intense precisely because the rebels knew that he was beyond their reach, and that its destruction represented an expiation of the anger that could otherwise have been spent in the butchering of its owner'.[51] The places which were chosen for assembling were also significant. In

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[47] Lacey, 36-63, esp. 62.
[48] *Anonimalle Chronicle*, cited in Dobson, *Peasants' Revolt,* p. 127.
[49] An understanding which the tenants of the manor of Morehouse would not be afraid to use in their defence of their common rights over a century later. Whittle, 'Peasant Consciousness', 243-4.
[50] Lacey, 41.
[51] Dunn, *The Great Rising*, pp. 85-7.

the first place, commons were the only practical choice for large groups of people to gather. In addition, the locations of these commons would have influenced the strategies and movements of the rebels. Their use in this manner, in turn, set out precedents for the future and provided an alternative contextual reading of the landscape. Sites such as Penenden Heath, which had long been used for groups to gather for trials, judgements and executions, as well as common agricultural use, were given another layer of political meaning in 1381; all the rumours circulating would have added political significance to the large groups assembling at these notable locations, and would have inspired discussion of grievances and participation. The group identity which had been inspired and reinforced by this collective action and participation was tied in with the locations which enabled this action. The march from east Kent, invading the city of Canterbury, gathering at Penenden Heath, and gathering at Blackheath before moving onto London, was therefore to imprint this event into the collective consciousness of Kent as they understood the land and their own identification with it. Blackheath, in particular, would gain additional political significance after 1381 which would play a large part in future rebellions. Much like the symbiotic relationship with the land emphasised in the local life explored in chapter 1, the land both shaped and was shaped in return by the events of 1381, becoming tied to the notions of common profit (or commonweal) and resistance in the right context.

The next two centuries would see the commons of Kent reinforce and build upon these foundations. The Lollard Rising (or Oldcastle's Rebellion) of 1414, Cade's Rebellion of 1450, Fauconberg's Rebellion in 1471, the Kentish Rising (as part of Buckingham's Rebellion) in 1483, participation in the Cornish Rebellion of 1497, resistance to the Amicable Grant in the years 1525 to 1528, the Rebellions of 1549, and Wyatt's Rebellion of 1554, were all bolstered and structured by the discourses and associations established by the rebels of 1381. In turn, they strengthened those associations embedded in language and the landscape, feeding into a collective layer of identification of the commons of Kent with notions of protest and commonweal. This fed back into motivation for participation in protest activity, creating a circle which placed identity at the centre of a continuous loop of motivation and action which could lay dormant until circumstances caused it to re-emerge. Particularly significant events, which remained strong in collective memory and which therefore contributed more to this identity, were the rebellions of 1450, 1549, and (for slightly different reasons) 1554.

The circumstances of Cade's Rebellion in 1450 and the Rebellions of 1549 differed significantly from those of 1381. In 1450 the body of the unpopular duke of Suffolk had been found washed up on Dover Sands, and there were rumours spreading that in revenge king Henry VI was going to turn the whole of the county into royal parkland. In addition to this, while there had been no written outline of grievances in 1381, a bill of complaint was drawn up by Cade's rebels, detailing their demands. Many of their written grievances, however, were very similar to the problems outlined by their predecessors. Taxation was an issue, as was the absence of the proper, royal, advisors who should have been at the side of the king. David Grummitt's work on Cade's Rebellion has shown how these complaints should not be accepted at face value, however.[52] Instead, he argues that these should be understood within the context of complaint literature; one which both served to legitimise and justify the actions taken by the rebels, but also which shaped the interpretation of events. The complaints about taxation, for example, do not correlate with the assessment of taxes at that time.[53]

The trope of the 'evil counsellor' provided the necessary means of complaining about the government of the country without criticising the king directly, and promoting the idea of the commons as the king's true subjects. This was an identity which could be seen through the comments made by the chroniclers on the events of 1381, but was far more evident in the words of the rebels themselves in 1450 in their use of political poetry, bills and pamphlets.[54] Such poems exemplified the identification of Kentish rebels as true subjects forced to step onto the political stage in the face of corruption and 'false men', calling on the special relationship between the commons and the king. *Advice to the Court I* urged and warned, 'For fear or for favour of any false man |Lose not the love of all the commonalty!'[55] Along with its follow-up poem, *Advice to the Court II*, this complaint literature addressed the problems of the realm: namely, the corrupt officials who were responsible for the loss of Normandy, the king's poverty, and local extortion.[56] The blame was laid squarely at the feet of the duke of Suffolk for holding too much power and loosing Normandy for his own profit:

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[52] Grummitt, 'Deconstructing Cade's Rebellion', pp. 109-11.
[53] Ibid., p. 115; Grummitt, *A Short History,* p. 169.
[54] Scase, 'Strange and Wonderful Bills', p. 247
[55] 'Advice to the court I', in *Historical Poems of the XIVth and XVth Centuries,* ed. Rossell Hope Robbins, (New York, 1959), p. 203, ll. 1-2.
[56] 'Advice to the court II', in idem, pp. 203-5.

> Suffolk Normandy has swold.
> To get it again he is bold.
> How accordeth these to in on?
> And he went without dread
> To make the king to avow his deed,
> And call it no treason. (*AttCII,* ll. 31-6)

That blame was shared with those who were associated with him. One 'daniel' (probably Thomas Daniel, member of the king's household and Squire of the Body from 1449) was mentioned alongside 'Tom of say' (thought to be James Fiennes, Lord Say and Sele, who was notoriously unpopular in Kent), whose crimes were expanded on in a separate stanza:[57]

> So poor a king was never seen,
> Nor richer lords all by-dene;
> The commons may no more.
> The lord say bids hold them down
> That worthy dastard of renown;
> He teaches a false law. (*AttCII*, ll. 25-30)

Again, as with the situation of 1381 with the attacks focused upon John of Gaunt, the theme of the evil counsellor interfering with and corrupting the honest relationship between the king and his true subjects ('Truth and poor men been oppressed |And mischief is nothing redressed') can be seen.[58]

The role of the commons in this situation is made clear towards the end of the poem: to warn the king, advise him, and to make a stand for the good of the realm:

> But if the commons of England
> Help the king in his fond,
> Suffolk will bear the crown!
>
> Beware, king Henry, how you do;
> Let no longer your traitors go loose –
> They will never be true. (*AttCII*, ll. 40-5)

This sense of duty is also evident in popular poetry written at the beginning of the Wars of the Roses, where the commons of Kent showed an inclination towards the Yorkist agenda. Kent's allegiance

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[57] 'Advice to the court II', in idem, l. 7.
[58] Ibid., ll. 13-14.

here can be understood on a peculiarly Kentish level; as in 1381 and 1450, there was a sense of vulnerability on the coast tapped into by Richard Neville, the 16th earl of Warwick, who was also Warden of the Cinque Ports and who had recognised the power inherent in the commons of Kent if mobilised (and Bohna has shown how capable the men of Kent were at arming themselves and fighting; this was particularly visible at Blackheath in 1450 when their camp showed signs of the newest military techniques being used on the Continent).[59] His courting of the commons of Kent by gift-giving and making sure his household was notable in its hospitality, capitalising on the recent experience of invasion in Sandwich in open letters, setting himself up as the 'champion of the commonweal' and directly linking himself with the rising in 1450 by distributing one of Cade's petitions when he landed with his accomplices in 1460, supposedly at the behest of the commons of Kent, prompted local reactions and support for his cause.[60] This appeal to the commons of Kent was tied in with what now seems to have been an established identity based around the political relevance of the commons in times of uncertainty.

In 1460 political poetry called to the commons of Kent to once more rise up in defence of the commonweal; 'Exalted is falsehood, truth is laid down |Every realm cries out of England's treason.'[61] The perceived prominence of Kent in these proceedings could be seen in the poems strategically placed at the gates of Canterbury, or in the recounting of particular events such as the Battle of Northampton.[62] In all of these poems the same language of truth, falsehood, treachery, and evil counsel can be found, with the obvious aim to inspire a particular response from a particular group of people:

> They lapped away the fat from me,
> Me to mischief was their intent.
>
> And never to me they would consent,
> they which called you ever traitors untrue;
> Till now the true commons of kent
> Be coming with you, falsehood to destroy,
> And truth long exiled now to renew. (*BoN*, ll. 95-101)

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[59] Bohna, 577, 579-80.
[60] Grummitt, *A Short History,* pp. 76-7.
[61] 'Ballade set on the gates of Canterbury', in *Historical Poems*, pp. 207-10, ll. 20-21.
[62] Ibid., pp. 207-10; 'The Battle of Northampton' in *Historical Poems*, pp. 210-15.

In these poems there is a sense of people appealing to an identity among the Kentish people which already existed. In 1381 the rhetoric of common profit and royal mercy were used to justify and legitimise rebellious activity on an unprecedented scale as well as being used by the king and his government to bring the country back into line, thereby reframing the rebels as petitioners to re-establish recognised modes of response. By the second half of the fifteenth century, however, there appears to have been a direct link made between these types of rhetoric and the commons of Kent. The geographical significance of the county of Kent as the route between Calais and London meant that the county was a valuable political asset, and the actions taken in response to the duke of Suffolk and the loss of Normandy, as well as the later calls for support by the Yorkists, had the consequence of politicising what it meant to be Kentish.

While it is true that the poems written and circulated were presumably written by educated men (and those of 1460 were very obviously written on behalf of men like Warwick to gain Kentish support), and therefore cannot be representative of the thoughts and opinions of the rebels themselves, the fact that both times the Kentish commons rose up tells us that they identified enough with these notions to act upon them. Here, we can therefore see how the commons who were participating in this sort of action had their perception of themselves influenced by the rhetoric used to justify that action. Grummitt's argument that this discourse shaped an individual's experience and interpretation of a particular event can be extended to that individual's interpretation of their own identity and that of the movement that they were participating in. The use of commonweal discourse channelled rebellious identification into the position of defender of common rights, honest and true subject to the monarch, and enemy of traitors to the king and commonweal: regardless of the original reason for the uprising. As in 1381, the use of commissions of array under local constables also lent itself to the legal legitimacy of these actions, giving the commons of Kent a civic voice tied in with their strength in mobilisation and the sense of responsibility for the land which came with it as a result of years of military experience as a county.[63]

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[63] Bohna, 572-4, 581.

The Rebellions of 1549 add to this picture.[64] Kent's reasons for taking part in this series of rebellions across England are not entirely clear.[65] It is known that a petition was drawn up on behalf of the Kentish rebels, but it does not survive.[66] Its links with the rebels of Norfolk and the counties of Essex and Suffolk means that the bulk of its articles were probably to do with agrarian issues such as enclosure and it is likely that one of the demands was 'to have one man to have but one ferme lands at theyr owne parych'.[67] Indeed, the people who made use of Boxley park (described in chapter 1) were responsible for tearing down the 'busshes and stakes' put up by Robert Fenton to 'fence and enclose' a four acre area of land on Penenden Heath which became named 'three cornerd croft'. The enclosing of common ground does not seem to have been a problem for other inhabitants when it was discussed and agreed upon 'by consent of the neighbours and tenantes there'; another twelve acre area, before 'three cornerd croft', had been enclosed by Fenton in just that manner, allowing the other tenants to use the wood for fuel.[68] At the time of the Commotions, the first area enclosed by consensus was left alone: 'three cornerd croft' was not.[69] Other anti-enclosure activity is implied in depositions focused on Boxley Park and Penenden Heath, and particularly the land of Sir Thomas Wyatt, possibly because he was seen to encroach on tenant rights. These events were not insignificant, and Amanda Jones points out that they should not be discounted as 'lesser stirs' as the

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[64] For some general information on the rebellions of 1549, see Wood, *The 1549 Rebellions*; Fletcher and MacCulloch, *Tudor Rebellions,* pp. 54-91; Mark Stoyle, ''Fullye Bente to Fighte Oute the Matter': Reconsidering Cornwall's Role in the Western Rebellion of 1549', *The English Historical Review,* 129 (2014), 549-77; Beer, *Rebellion and Riot.*

[65] Kent has been largely overlooked in the historiography of 1549 due to the focus on Kett's Rebellion and the South Western Rebellion. This is probably mainly due to the lack of extant evidence. Nevertheless, for more information on Kent in 1549, Peter Clark's work is useful, although he fails to recognise the significance of the commons and popular politics in the events, Clark, *Society,* pp. 69-86. Also see Beer, *Rebellion and Riot,* pp. 152-3; Amanda Jones, ''Commotion Time': The English Risings of 1549' pp. 167-82. For debate on the communication between Kent and the government and the treatment of the rebels, see Ethan Shagan, 'Protector Somerset and the 1549 Rebellions: New Sources and New Perceptions', *English Historical Review,* 114 (1999), 34-63; M. L. Bush, 'Protector Somerset and the 1549 Rebellions: A Post-Revision Questioned', and Bernard, 'New Perspectives or Old Complexities?', *English Historical Review,* 115 (2000), 103-20.

[66] This was probably drawn up in the camp outside the gates of Canterbury in July 1549. A member of the privy council, Sir Edward Wotton, and enclosure commissioners for Kent, Sir James Hales, Sir George Harper and Sir John Norton, were at Canterbury from 17 July, in communication with Protector Somerset. A letter sent on 25 July had with it the articles of the commons of Kent. See Jones, 'Commotion Time', pp. 69-170.

[67] Aubrey Greenwood, 'A Study of the Rebel Petitions of 1549' (Unpublished PhD Thesis, University of Manchester, 1990); 'Kett's demands being in rebellion' (1549), in Fletcher and MacCulloch, *Tudor Rebellions,* pp. 156-9; Council to Lord Russell, 22 July 1549 cited in Jones, 'Commotion Time', p. 172.

[68] TNA, E 134/30&31Eliz/Mich19. This reasoning is also used by the defendants in the dispute over common land rights against Robert Baker of the manor of Morehouse; enclosure of land was acceptable when agreed 'by common consent', C 78/38/12.

[69] TNA, E 134/31Eliz/Hil27; TNA, E 134/30&31Eliz/Mich19; TNA, E 133/6/815.

rebels around Maidstone were given their own pardon on 15 August that year.[70] However, Joan Thirsk's comment that 'there were never any obstacles to enclosure' in Kent due to the way the custom of gavelkind had left very little common land in the county by this time, could mean that unlike its neighbouring counties, enclosure was not the primary motivation for the Kentish rebels.[71] It could also mean, however, that the common land that was left held far more significance for the people who depended on it; and as this thesis has shown thus far, this very much depended upon the local relationship with the land and the customs bound up in it.

The other activity across Kent during the Rebellions of 1549 suggests that access to resources and customary rights were an important factor in the decision to participate, often with a particularly local grievance or part of an ongoing local struggle. This could be seen in the actions of the townsfolk of Canterbury, who in July of that year destroyed a 'a shelfe of ostres' in Newington Creek, an action which Jones suggests could have been a 'symbolic social protest' against the restriction of access to oysters before the feast of Mary Magdalene, and the need for a license afterwards.[72] The incidences reported demonstrate the local nature of grievances leading people to act in the Rebellions of 1549 and the years surrounding them. The specific examples available to us suggest a resistance to the oppression of local rights and customs played out on the local landscape.

These outbursts were part of a larger dynamic, however, perhaps inspired by the events taking place at the same time, taking advantage of the atmosphere of protest. The commons of Kent were also involved in rebellion on a larger scale, in relation to the country as well as to the now established tradition of protest which existed as a layer of identity for the people of Kent. The prominence of its existence in the collective memory of Kent can be seen by the name chosen by the organisers of the disorder: the Commonwealth Men. The people of the parish of Boxley casually referred to the events of 1549 as 'the rysing of Common wealth', and it was made clear by the letters written by Anthony Aucher referring to 'these men called Comonwelthes and there adherentes' that the term 'commonwealth' was not simply a justification for rebellious action, but the name under which the

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[70] Jones, 'Commotion Time', p. 169.
[71] Joan Thirsk, *The Agrarian History of England and Wales, Volume IV: 1500-1640* (London, 1967), pp. 62-3.
[72] CCA DCb-J/X/10/5, f. 78r; Jones, 'Commotion Time', p. 171.

rebellion itself took place as a whole.[73] Letters by Sir Anthony Aucher to Sir John Thynne and William Cecil describe 'the Comonwelthe of Kent called Lattymer' who did 'runne uppe and downe the countreye' stirring up trouble. He visited 'every towne and tipplyng houses', 'receyvyng bylles of complaynte of dyuers of hys sourte'.[74] The fact that Latimer was capable of interacting with 'every towne and vyllage' to collect bills of complaint but was also recognised by the council and the Protector as 'Latymer otherwise called comen welthe of kente' suggests his role as an intermediary and spokesman for the commons of Kent.[75] The use of 'commonwealth' by the Kentish commons as a role rather than as simple political rhetoric adds a new element to the term, suggesting an association with the actions of the commons when acting in defence of the rights and customs of the commonalty. By 1549 it is clear that not only had the rhetoric of commonwealth become part and parcel of popular protest and had been associated with the politicised Kentish commons, but that it had been consciously adopted as an identifier; conclusively transforming from a justification for action to a motivation all of its own, defining the role of the commons of Kent in the context of rebellion.

As was the case in 1381, however, identification with these discourses of commonwealth, truth and loyalty against corruption, falseness and treason was founded upon a purely local understanding of the landscape and politics. By 1549, as has been argued, there was an identity lying dormant in Kentish towns and villages which consisted of notions of commonwealth and of rebellion in defence of common rights. The context needed for this layer of identity to rise to the surface would depend on political and economic circumstances and a feeling of the commons being oppressed, as was specified in the political poetry of the fifteenth century and the resistance to agrarian practices, such as enclosure, enumerated in the petitions of 1549. This discontent would be expressed in discussion and ephemera focused in particular places; political poetry would be placed on gates, windows, and noticeable locations which saw frequent footfall (such as the *Ballade Placed on the Gates of Canterbury*), while Latimer's reported activities demonstrate the prominence of the

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[73] For references to the rebellion as the 'the rysing of Common wealth', see TNA, E 134/31Eliz/Hil27; For Aucher, see TNA, SP 10/8/56.
[74] Aucher to Thynne: Longleat House, Thynne MSS., vol. 2 fol. 145r-v, cited in Beer and R. J. Nash, 'Hugh Latimer and the lusty knave of Kent: the commonwealth movement of 1549', 176-7. For more discussion on Latimer and his relation to Protector Somerset's strategies regarding the rebellion, please see J. D. Alsop, 'Latimer, 'the commonwealth of Kent' and the 1549 rebellions', 379-83.
[75] TNA, E 101/76/35, f. 27, cited in Alsop, 'Latimer, 'the commonwealth of Kent'', 380; Beer and Nash, 'Hugh Latimer and the lusty knave of Kent'.

'typplyng houses' as local sites of political discourse, and potential points of circulation for the bills of complaint he collected.[76]

Once protest action was underway, a reading of the landscape produced something very different from the usual. The repeated use of common grounds such as Penenden Heath, the strategy of appealing to the county town of Maidstone and the cities of Canterbury and Rochester, before camping and gathering at Blackheath and onward to London, created a tradition of rebellion that was attached to these specific locations. In a culture in which collective identity and custom was shaped by interaction with the local landscape and the memory of repeated activity, these spaces became sites of protest in the consciousness of the people of Kent. As the action of stepping into the chancel, as discussed above, indicated to witnesses a transformation of that space into a site of dispute, camping on Penenden Heath and around Maidstone and Canterbury accompanied by the dissemination of bills of complaint and popular political poetry signalled to the people of Kent a change in the nature of the landscape. In this instance, the local people knew what to expect. This was particularly relevant at Blackheath. Rollison describes Blackheath as the place 'where the spectre of the commonalty was realized and all the discontentments acquired a single explanation – misrule, evil government by evil governors – and a cause, the commonweal.'[77] This reading will have been slowly spreading in Kent as traditional rebellious tactics were enacted and talked about. The significance of Blackheath, however, was that this common, more than any of the other locations, served as a declaration of intent to the surrounding counties. This seems to have been known across the country; the Cornish rebels attempted to use it in 1497 to rally the commons of Kent to their side, and Blackheath figured prominently in the literature around rebellion in the late sixteenth century.[78] By 1549, then, in the context of rebellion in Kent, the use of these sites projected a message to the inhabitants nearby, leading them to expect a certain set of proscribed behaviours and linguistic frameworks. This message could only be understood through local identifications and the awareness

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[76] This fits into the debate on situated and unsituated political spheres developed from the work of Habermas, *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere,* Please see Calhoun, *Habermas and the Public Sphere;* Halasz, *The Marketplace of Print; pamphlets and the public sphere in early modern England;* and particularly Mears, 'The Elizabethan Public Sphere', setting her argument of the public sphere of Elizabethan England back into Edwardian England and further.

[77] Rollison, p. 232.

[78] The Cornish rebellion of 1497 will be addressed further on in this section. The demonstration of Kent as rebellious in sixteenth-century literature, with all the associated names and places, will be explored in chapter 5.

of the history and customs of the landscape around them. In July 1549, the Imperial ambassador in London reported that the anti-enclosure activity at one of the king's parks in Eltham and he included that rumours were going around that the rebels would continue onto London and release the prisoners from the Tower of London.[79] This, along with the comment that the city of London was 'over full of people who asked for nothing better than an opportunity of sacking it', gives us a good idea about the nature of public discourse at this time.[80] As one might expect, it is centred on the collective memories of the people of London, and particular identifications of the inhabitants as Londoners, brought forth by the particular circumstances of rebels gathering at Blackheath and targeting Eltham. The events of 1381 and the proliferation of prison break-ins that took place as part of the Peasants' Revolt were clearly being remembered by the people of London. This was doubtlessly supported by the rich chronicling traditions of the city, which carefully maintained a particular version of London history as a lesson as well as for posterity, but which also therefore contributed to a London-based identity which helped the inhabitants of the city to interpret events in much the same way as was argued by Grummitt in his work on Cade's manifestos. Significantly, Londoners knew to read the atmosphere and activity occurring and the locations there were occurring in, particularly in Kent and Essex, in such a way that they could anticipate rebel entry into London in a way that reached the ears of the Imperial ambassador.

It is clear that the use of significant locations, the dissemination of political complaint literature and the rise of certain rhetoric is what was remembered in later years. The actual reasons for rebellion, whether expressed in petitions or merely circulated rumours, fade into the background behind the more dominant complaint traditions. These were then taken and applied to the new circumstances. The significance of written documents was remembered, while the actual way in which they were treated by the rebels changed.[81] The same places were targeted each time, although the reactions of those places were not reliable; the support of the people of Canterbury in 1381 was not replicated in 1450 when the local authorities resisted Thomas Cheyne, or 'Bluebeard's' rebellion,

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[79] Beer, *Riot and Rebellion,* p. 152.
[80] *Calendar of State Papers, Spanish, Volume 9, 1547-1549,* eds. M. Hume and Royall Tyler (London, 1912), 405-6.
[81] Whittle, 'Peasant political consciousness', 238-9, 243-4.

nor in 1549, when they took steps to repel a rebel invasion.[82] Rumours that 'the Rebelles wold come in at the breche in the town walles by nyght' prompted the mayor and officers to cause 'a trenche to be caste and made at the same breche', to keep a watch at night, and to write to the Privy Council calling for artillery.[83] Despite official opposition, there was still a main rebel camp based outside Canterbury which received the commissioners sent by Protector Somerset, and there also seems to have been a certain amount of disorder within the city walls. Certain individuals were remembered for their involvement several years later in Elizabeth's reign, and gates were pulled down from a way near Blackfriars which had been argued to be a common way, in defence of 'sondrie libertyes and Customes of oulde tyme'.[84] The strength of the associations embedded in the city of Canterbury and its surroundings meant that even when steps were taken by the authorities, they could not prevent it from standing as a site of protest for those who identified with the rebellious rhetoric of commonweal. These are only a couple of examples of the differences between these rebellions, but they serve to demonstrate the way in which certain elements were remembered and had more power than others. What was remembered and what was forgotten tells us ultimately what registered in the collective memory as the identifiers, motivators, and legitimising agents which formed the backbone of popular protest in Kent.

It was these specific collective memories, readings of the landscape, and strategies which were taken and put to use in 1554. Wyatt's Rebellion cannot be termed a popular rebellion as it was instigated and coordinated by a small group of noble conspirators, for their own political reasons: to prevent the marriage of Mary I and Prince Philip of Spain and to replace Mary with Elizabeth.[85] The success of Sir Thomas Wyatt, in rousing the support and participation of the commons of Kent, lay in his appropriation of the trappings of Kentish popular rebellion.[86] He echoed the actions of Jack Cade and Wat Tyler before him by raising his standard in Maidstone and issuing proclamations there

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[82] For Bluebeard's rebellion, see I.M.W. Harvey, *Jack Cade's Rebellion of 1450* (Oxford, 1991), pp. 64-6.

[83] CCA, Woodruff List 12/3: depositions of Edward Carpenter, William Hart, John Hopper and Thomas Wryght (1572-73); CCA CC/A/C/2 f. 60.

[84] Jones, 'Commotion Time', pp. 169-74; TNA, C 78/62/12.

[85] The conspirators were Sir Thomas Wyatt, Sir James Croft, Sir Peter Carew, William Thomas (clerk of the council under Edward VI). The uprisings in other counties were quickly suppressed; Wyatt, in Kent, was the only one to lead a force to London before he too was defeated by opposition under Mary. See Fletcher and MacCulloch, *Tudor Rebellions*, pp. 92-8.

[86] Ironically, Wyatt had been prominent in suppressing the rebels of 1549 around the parish of Boxley, see Jones, 'Commotion time', p. 172.

and in other towns, and set up a headquarters at Rochester, another location targeted by the rebels of 1381. Aware that the commons would not rise for the real purpose of the revolt, he made use of the rhetoric which had traditionally accompanied popular rebellion, and adjusted the cause of the uprising in his proclamations to the commons. He appealed to their identity as English men and women against the Spanish, who were about to flood into the country; Kent's history of vulnerability to invasion and the awareness of its position on the coast of England would have strengthened this message in the eyes of the Kentish commons, and Wyatt used this in his propaganda:

> Lo, now even at hand Spaniards be now already arrived at Dover,
> at one passage to the number of a hundred, passing upward to
> London, in companies of ten, four and six, with harness,
> harquebuses, and morions, with matchlight, the foremost company
> whereof be already at Rochester.[87]

He also made use of the evil counsellor trope, insisting that 'we seek no harm to the Queen, but better counsel and councillors'. The accompaniment to this rhetoric, the belief in a judicial relationship between the monarch and the commons may not have been used by Wyatt, considering his plan to depose Mary, but was clearly also in use by his supporters. While walking through the streets of London, there were shouts that 'Quene Mary hath graunted our request, and geven us pardon', and 'the queen hathe pardoned us'.[88] In this way he was able to appropriate the language and stratagems of popular rebellion in order to gain the support of the commons, and to march on London.

Further similarities to previous rebellions are evident in the response of the Londoners under the duke of Norfolk, who deserted their royalist commander to join Wyatt's forces, crying 'We are all Englishmen'.[89] Wyatt's tactics of using networks and identification tied to a cause and based in a legitimate tradition of complaint which was embedded enough in the local landscape and memory that it produced support from the commons. In Dartford, the Weald, Maidstone and surrounding villages like Boxley and Aylesford, and West Kent villages like Brasted and Sundridge, large numbers of inhabitants rose for Cade in 1450, just as they rose for Wyatt in 1554: certain names also

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[87] John Proctor, *The Historie of Wyate's Rebellion*, cited in Fletcher and MacCulloch, *Tudor Rebellions*, p. 95.
[88] *The Chronicle of Queen Jane, and of two years of Queen Mary*, pp. 49-50 cited in Fletcher and MacCulloch, *Tudor Rebellions*, p. 162.
[89] Fletcher and MacCulloch, *Tudor Rebellions,* p. 95.

seem to be repeated, indicating the influence of local affinities.[90] One prominent example of this was the Wealden village of Smarden; recurring family names show that thirty percent of Smarden inhabitants recorded as participating in 1554 came from families who took part in Cade's revolt, suggesting a lack of mobility from the area and subsequently a strong rebellious identity maintained within the families of the village.[91] Many of the inhabitants of these locations also rose in 1381, in the minor risings of Hasilden in 1451 and Wylkins in 1452, and again in 1549.

There were, however, some major differences. East Kent, with places like Canterbury and the Cinque Ports, which were active in 1381 and under Warwick and Fauconberg in the 1460s and 1471, failed to provide much support for Wyatt, and on the whole the numbers involved in 1554 were much smaller than in 1450. Out of the forty-one parishes examined by Martyn Ellis, only ten had a higher number of pardons in 1554 than in 1450. The lower numbers in 1554 could indicate the beginning of the decline in popular rebellion; indeed, Ellis argues that this could be the result of 'an increased willingness of [yeomen] to adopt a political role rather than resorting to rebellion.'[92] There is also the chance however, that this comparison does not fully appreciate the difference in nature of each rebellion; rather than being a genuine popular revolt like Cade's rebellion, which sprung up from widely held concerns across the county, was expressed through concepts of commonweal, and appropriated existing organisational structures, Wyatt's rising was imposed from above by a nobleman. Although he outwardly adapted his aim to exploit what was probably a common worry and articulated it through the same tried-and-tested rhetoric, the impetus still came from above and therefore might not have been able to reach the same numbers of people with the same power as occurred in 1450. It would be interesting to see a similar comparison for the rebellions of 1381, 1450 and 1549, for a better understanding of the nature of popular rebellions in Kent.

The memory, rhetoric, and use of space which were so necessary to understanding and participation in protest activity did not guarantee universal participation. It cannot be said that every person in Kent rebelled or participated in rebellion. As seems to have been the case in 1381, some people who would have been involved in rebellious action stayed back to defend the coastline. It is

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[90] Martyn Ellis, 'Culture of Rebellion'.
[91] Ibid., 88-9, 99.
[92] Ibid., 100.

also likely that people were required to remain at home to continue domestic and economic arrangements. Many, however, possibly supported the cause but were not inclined to act themselves, while others were not interested in events at all. Some, like the people of 1381 Gravesend, were involved in action that affected them personally before returning home to life as normal, and some saw popular rebellions as opportunities to settle personal grudges. As Klandermans and others have pointed out, identity motivated protest action depends on the strength of group identity.[93] It is entirely possible that the strength of a local, 'small world' identity might be stronger than that of the call for action as the commons of Kent. Equally, the shared grievances which Klandermans argued are 'at the root of political protest and thus of the politicization of collective identity' perhaps were not significant enough to penetrate the 'small world' mentality and failed to politicise certain people.[94]

For this new reading of the landscape to inspire action, an individual (or more likely a group of individuals) would need to identify strongly enough with the history of the land, the rhetoric connected with it, and the grievances vocalised by the instigators. It has been shown in the introduction that in order for protest action to be seen to be worth taking, a group must have both a strong subgroup identity *and* a strong superordinate identity.[95] In the case of non-participants, there is the possibility that they had a very strong subgroup identity at the expense of the superordinate identity; perhaps they were not motivated by notions of commonweal or the idea that the king's judicial mercy would make a difference, or perhaps in their locality they had no shared grievances and therefore there was no reason to call on the rhetoric of commonweal. Others might perhaps have had a more national edge to their superordinate identity, might have accepted the messages in sermons such as the homily of obedience, and 'accept disadvantages done to their subgroup in the interest of the larger community'.[96]

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[93] Klandermans, 'Identity Politics and Politicized Identities', 8; Stürmer and Simon, 'Pathways to collective protest'.

[94] Klandermans, 'Identity Politics and Politicized Identities', 20.

[95] In many of these arguments 'superordinate identity' is referred to as 'national identity'. While I believe that at times early modern and medieval people had some form of contextual national identity (as shown in chapters 2 and 3), it would be anachronistic to apply this term universally. I am more comfortable with considering this 'superordinate identity' to be one of commonwealth. In this way we can see the faith the commons had in the idea of commonweal and their relationship with the monarch in the linguistic frameworks applied throughout these rebellions in Kent. See Klandermans, 'Identity Politics and Politicized Identities', 13-7; R. González and R. Brown. 'Generalization of positive attitude as a function of subgroup and superordinate group identification in intergroup contact', 195-214.

[96] Klandermans, 'Identity Politics and Politicized Identities', 14.

One case which is worth examining in the consideration of *nonparticipation* in protest activity is the Cornish Rebellion of 1497. The actions of the Cornish rebels, who chose to travel a long distance in order to camp at Blackheath show just how significant the space was as a site of protest for the commons of England. Their subsequent appeal to the commons of Kent for support and the disintegration of the majority of the rebellion after Kent's opposition to their proposal also shows the significance of the perception of the commons of Kent as participants of true popular rebellion even in locations as distant as Cornwall. Kent's failure to participate in the Cornish Rebellion does not make sense if one only looks at ideas of the Kentish people as 'impacient in wronges disdayning of to much oppression' and of 'Kentish fire'.[97] Although Hasted reports that Sir George Neville, Lord Bergavenny, a Kentish landowner, 'with divers other lords, by their great credit and power, prevented this county from joining with them', which suggests that gathering on Blackheath did draw out at least some Kentish support, the lack of any real mention of this and the ultimate absence of Kentish rebels indicates that simply doing the right actions at the right places was not enough to call the full rebellious identity of the commons of Kent into action.[98]

Polydore Vergil's explanation for Kent's lack of support for the Cornish rebels was that the 'Kentishmen, partly mindful how their uprisings had previously harmed them, and partly restrained by the watchful eyes of their nobles, were so far from being willing to join the mob that they had already avoided having any contact or conversation with them, so that they would fall under no suspicion with the king'.[99] This might have had an element of truth, although it had not stopped some Kentishmen getting involved in the plots of Perkin Warbeck four years before, and clearly did not stop the people of Kent from rising in protest several times over the next sixty years.[100] There may, therefore, have been other factors which inclined them against popular rebellion on this occasion. In this situation it might be useful to examine other layers of identity in Kent which superseded the implicit call to arms that was camping out at Blackheath. Kent's military history of musters for defence of the realm as well as their proximity to Calais and their involvement in the Hundred Years

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[97] Hall, *Chronicle,* p. 219; Murphy, 'Maintenance of Order', pp. 120-121.
[98] Hasted, *The History and Topographical Survey of the County of Kent,* 2nd Edn., Vol. 4 (Canterbury, 1798), p. 480.
[99] Polydore Vergil, '*Anglica Historia*, 1555 version: A hypertext critical edition', trans. Dana Sutton (2010), p. 35. <http://www.philological.bham.ac.uk/polverg/> [Accessed 17.06.17]
[100] Fifty-three were indicted in 1495 for complicity in the treason of Perkin Warbeck: TNA, KB 9/51; KB 9/52.

War meant that the Kentish people were no strangers to the necessities of warfare and the feeling of vulnerability that came with their location (as has been demonstrated in chapter 2). The taxes being collected on behalf of the war with Scotland and the defence of the Northern border would therefore be something they could comprehend and identify with, and would be a layer of identity existing in competition with their 'Kentish fire'. In the circumstances of 1497, then, the Kentish commons potentially identified more with royal policy and officials than they did with the commons of another county who rejected those taxes.

Another example of nonparticipation was the lack of popular rebellion in Kent in the 1590s. Given the high financial and emotional burden placed on the county in the last eighteen years of Elizabeth's reign, and the discontent which was clearly visible at times across the country in episodes such as Alexander Oven's reported speech from chapter 2 or the Oxfordshire Rebellion of 1596, one might expect some sort of collective political action of a similar kind to 1450 or 1549. Indeed, the Kent Quarter Sessions records identify riots and riotous behaviour in Herne in 1591; Lenham in 1593; Pembury, Old Romney and Midley in 1594; Hernhill and Canterbury in 1595; Chiddingstone in 1596; Ham in 1597; Hawkhurst and Dartford in 1598; Mongeham, Swanley, Aylesford, Hucking, Boxley, Sundridge, Charing and Sevenoaks in 1599; and Ash in 1600.[101] Despite this, there was no sign of any real popular demonstration. The Hernhill and Canterbury riots in particular are interesting cases to consider, and can possibly provide an indication as to why there was a notable lack of rebellion at this time.[102] Both places were astride the main route to London used to transport grain to the capital, and both riots were, not surprisingly, centred on the movement and availability of corn. They occurred around the same time, in the months of February and March of 1595, and were in close proximity to one another; the Canterbury riot took place outside the West Gate, where a group of men stopped

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[101] The term 'riot' or 'riotous' was used to describe events or behaviour far more regularly in this period of the sixteenth century. Whether this is because authorities were more alert to threats to the social order and used it as a buzzword or because such behaviour became more prevalent at this time and in these circumstances is not something that can be determined absolutely, but it was probably a combination of the two. Peter Clark considers a 'riot' to be the 'collective action or demonstration of at least five people, joining to voice a communal grievance or remedy a communal wrong': Clark, 'Popular Protest and Disturbance in Kent, 1558-1640', *The Economic History Review*, 29 (1976), 366. For sources on 1590s riots KHLC, QM/SB/8/1,2; KHLC, QM/SIq/1; KHLC, QM/SB/41/1,2; KHLC, QM/SIq/3/1; KHLC, QM/SIq/3/2; KHLC, QM/SB/85; KHLC, QM/SB/82; KHLC, QM/SB/102; KHLC, QM/SB/122; KHLC, QM/SB/124; KHLC, QM/SB/204/1; KHLC, QM/SB/267; KHLC, QM/SIq/10; KHLC, QM/SB/298; KHLC, QM/SB/303; KHLC, QM/SB/308; KHLC, QM/SIq/11; KHLC, QM/SIq/11A; KHLC, QM/SRc/1599/56; KHLC, QM/SB/330; KHLC, QM/SB/331; KHLC, QM/SB/332/1,2; KHLC, QM/SB/336.
[102] KHLC, QM/SB/85; KHLC, QM/SB/82.

wagons loaded with corn from leaving the city, while around six miles away in Hernhill a riot was stopped in its planning stages by Peter Manwood, JP, who discovered it during his investigation of the Canterbury incident. Despite their similarities in location, grievance and timing, neither riot showed awareness of the existence of the other and took very different approaches, indicating different local influences and identifications guiding their actions.

The Canterbury rioters made an effort to act within certain rules as they understood them when they decided to stop the wagons of corn from leaving the city. One of the leaders, one Raffe Leonarde, a whitesmith, called upon a man named Roger Fenoldes, presumably a man considered to have legal knowledge or influence. After being informed that Fenoldes himself could not stop the wagons, he asked, 'what yf the poore men shoulde staye it', and was told that 'they mighte yf they woulde, but he woulde give them not counsel soe to doe'.[103] This was followed by the advice that 'they might staye it, but not touch the corne, but might keep them that they shoulde not passe with it'. This information was taken and acted upon, and all the men examined regarding this activity made a point of the fact that they had no weapons, they did not touch the corn, that this was done on the counsel of Fenoldes, and that 'yf Fenolde had not tolde them they mighte doe soe they woulde not have gone aboute it'. Moreover, the involvement of Fenolde himself is justified by comments he had made to certain men. As a result they believed that their actions were lawful and made on behalf of the queen, as Fenoldes was reported to have said that 'he did knowe that there weare certaine men which had made promise to serve the ffrenchmen or ennemie with Corne halfe seas over. And he saide that they weare men of this towne or aboute the towne. And spake of bondes therfore'. The event outside Canterbury, then, was perpetrated by men who identified as poor, and who believed that because of this, if they followed certain guidelines, their actions fell within the law. This was also possibly influenced by fears of an international nature linked to treason, the nation's enemies, and the movement of valuable corn out of the area.

The activity in Hernhill was very different. The town seems to have been hit particularly hard by the events of the 1590s, and towards the end of the decade ended up petitioning for aid to

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[103] KHLC, QM/SB/82.

support the poor of the parish, who numbered over eighty.[104] In 1595 the response to such circumstances by the inhabitants seems to have been far more volatile than the Canterbury rioters, and the methods and language used was much more reminiscent of the rebellious traditions of the county in previous years. A group of around thirty men from Hernhill and Harbledown under the leadership of Nicholas Bratt and his brother-in-law, William Adams, had originally intended to rise for corn, 'to pull the farmers owte of theire howses by the ears'.[105] This plan soon changed to first taking their complaint to the justices – specifically William Cromer. They intended to seek redress for corne, to 'have Corne better cheape', and if they could not, they would 'fetche a fatt bullock owte of the marshes att noone daye and to bringe him thether and to eate him amongst poore men'. It was also reported that 'they ment to be even with Mr Hawkins. Philpott & a great manye other Corne keepers aboute fevarshame, and in ffevarshame towne, and all other Corne buyers whome soever'. The language used in this case shows that this riot originated in a very different mind-set to the one evidenced at Westgate. The desire to 'pull the farmers owte of theire howses by the ears' and to 'be even with' 'Corne keepers aboute fevarshame' and 'all other Corne buyers whome soever' is suggestive of some of the class-based, antagonistic statements that Andy Wood has identified as typical of unrest at this time, even if it was solely related to corn.[106] This is compounded by the language used by these men when talking about the group. Bratt was referred to as their 'Captain', and the group themselves were referred to as 'Bratt's Campe', 'Bratt's Companye', or 'Bratt's soldiars'. Clearly then, the rhetoric of rebellion and pseudo-military organisation and language common among popular uprisings of the sixteenth century played a significant part in the way the Hernhill group saw their activities and chose their actions. The focus on taking a bullock from the marshes to share together as 'poore men' suggests that egalitarian notions of commonweal were important to the rioters, and the use of terms such as 'Captain' and 'Campe' are further reminiscent of 'Captain Commonwealth' during the camping time of 1549.

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[104] KHLC, QM/SB/1346.
[105] KHLC, QM/SB/85.
[106] Wood, 'Brave Minds and Hard Hands: Work, Drama and Social Relations in the Hungry 1590s', in *Shakespeare and the Politics of Commoners: Digesting the New Social History,* ed. Chris Fitter (Oxford, 2017), p. 90.

We can see in these two examples how two areas, quite close together, with very similar grievances, approached the business of airing those grievances and used quite different strategies. The Hernhill group incorporated both traditional rebellious rhetoric within a far more local framework, but changed their plans, aware of the potentially serious consequences of this type of action, and first approached the local JP. While they were clearly guided by the language of rebellion and concepts of commonweal, there does not seem to be any indication of expanding their venture beyond a couple of Harbledown men who happened to be in regular contact due to their occupations as 'grubbers'. Certainly, there seems to be no contact with those in Canterbury or any acknowledgement of the disturbance taking place at the same time. The Canterbury group were even more contained, following a very specific plan after obtaining counsel from a man they trusted as to how far they could take their act of protest but anxious to portray their venture as within the law. Again, there was no intention of expanding their riot beyond stopping the wagons from leaving and no acknowledgement of the events in nearby Hernhill.

In these two case studies it is evident that despite several elements that might have united these two areas in protest of the price of grain and its removal to the capital, they were operating on a purely local scale. The differences between their chosen methods therefore have serious implications for the importance of the strength of identification when influencing political action. Richard Hoyle's argument that the legal efforts of the crown after 1549 removed the opportunity for groups to gather to air their grievances legally, with a greater emphasis on the rhetoric of social order, can again be felt in the efforts of both groups to stay within the law.[107] Of course, the Hernhill group soon diverged from that plan with their behaviour with the bullock, falling back on behaviour legitimised by the rebellious traditions and pseudo-military structures so prominent in their county's history, but the Canterbury group sought advice from a man higher up on the social scale, stuck to their plan by not bringing any weapons and not touching the corn, and planned to go quietly when told. Again, the local circumstances could be partially responsible for these differences: the Hernhill men were likely to be in a more desperate position than those in Canterbury, while the urban context of the Canterbury incident might well have meant that those involved were more familiar with

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[107] Richard Hoyle, ''Wrightsonian Incorporation' and the Public Rhetoric of Mid-Tudor England', *History*, 101 (2016), 28-32.

contemporary rhetoric on the social order and were also more aware of legal developments. We can also see the effects of 'Wrightsonian Incorporation' in the interactions between Fenoldes and the Canterbury men, and in both places the subgroup identity seems to have been reduced to the poorer members of the communities, with the superordinate identity being the local authorities, indicating a division in the collective identity of the localities. There was a clear separation, for example, between the position of Fenoldes and the self-acknowledged 'poore men' in what actions they could take. Moreover, Fenoldes's involvement as a whole seems to have been contingent on the suspected involvement of local townsmen with 'frenchmen and the ennemie', something which would also have been a real potential worry for people in Kent, and particularly in places like Canterbury, which had witnessed years of levies and musters on the Dane John meadow in preparation for invasion from around 1585 onwards. The factors that were felt to legitimise the participation of each individual therefore seem to have been dependent on the influences of their local area.

When studying the series of rebellions that occurred in Kent between 1381 and 1549, it is clear that while the precise reasons for rebelling were local, often very specific, and therefore effective in motivating people to participate in protest action. However, the specific causes were not what was remembered, or what held the most power. This power was contained in the uniting conceptual framework of commonweal, which channelled common grievances in a way which gave the commons political agency, was tied up in notions of evil counsel and a direct relationship between commons and monarch, and which was played out on a local landscape which served to support and reinforce a rebellious identity in the collective consciousness. This identity was able to lie dormant until such time that it was called forth by further local and specific circumstances which could further contextualise the rebellious identity of Kent. How far individuals and groups identified with that identity in relation to the grievances portrayed, and whether those grievances were identified with on a broad scale, determined participation in protest action. Consequently, as has been shown in the riots of the 1590s, local grievances seem to have been perceived as purely local; there was no indication of a wider awareness of grievances on a county-wide scale, or even six miles away, which would have prevented any large-scale protest action from taking place. It is possible to see how the different theories put forward to explain the decline of popular rebellion are evident in these examples

of popular political action.[108] We can see the movement of the middling sorts away from the poorer ones, as well as the way in which legal changes and elite attitudes towards rebellion changed the possibility of what one could or could not do, leading to a more localised, legal-minded attitude towards protest. However, the differences in circumstance between the Canterbury and the Hernhill men remind us that we should be careful when applying these theories on a broad scale. Local influences, identity, and circumstances dictated the extent to which various factors interacted to influence local behaviour, and these should therefore be taken into account when considering the riots of the 1590s and the more general movement away from popular rebellion.

<p align="center">Religion and resistance</p>

Thus far, discussion of behaviours of resistance has focused on the political side of things. However, particularly during and after the Reformation, religion featured prominently in acts of protest. The Act of Supremacy in 1534 made the monarch the head of the church and therefore effectively made the church one of the arms of the state; the highly religiously charged circumstances of Tudor England politicised religion in a way in which it had not really been before. It is important, therefore, to look at the ways in which religious identity was used and felt in political action, whether that was popular rebellion, lesser or passive resistance to religious change (such as concealed lands or nonconformist groups), or active resistance to the official religion of the country (such as martyrdom). The part played by the land in the identification of religion, as shown in the previous chapter, was significant. The locations at which action was carried out, or the way the land formed a part of the resistance itself, can add to our understanding of local interaction and identity tied to religion, politics, and the land, and the way that these were socially and topographically remembered can tell us what contemporaries thought was worth remembering, and perhaps why.

The religious context to rebellion following the Reformation is of vital importance when studying Tudor England. Each Tudor monarch from Henry VIII had to deal with a primarily religious rebellion (although of course there were factors other than religion in each of them): the Pilgrimage of Grace (1536), the Western Rebellion (1549), Wyatt's Rebellion (1554), and The Revolt of the

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[108] Wood, *The 1549 Rebellions*, pp. 187-207; Hoyle 'Wrightsonian Incorporation'; Fletcher and MacCulloch, *Tudor Rebellions*, pp. 136-8; Clark, 'Popular Protest and Disturbance', 379-81.

Northern Earls (1569-70).[109] In these cases, religion itself, whether Catholic or Protestant was one of the main causes of the rebellion. However, this period also saw the politicisation of religion which incorporated it into the established rhetoric of national politics, as well as in popular rebellion. The way in which religion was used as a political tool in popular rebellions is very clearly evident in the events of 1549. The differences between the uprisings on each side of the country were firmly based in their opposing confessional stances, and were treated in respect to this by the government. The Western Rebellion, with its objections to the religious changes of the Edwardian regime, was considered treasonous and was treated emphatically and harshly by the government under Protector Somerset. The rebellions in the south east of England, however, were vocally Protestant and supportive of the government's religious reforms, which put them in a more powerful position and opened up an additional avenue of rhetoric in their dealings with the Protector. Manifesto articles such as 'We pray that [any prest] or vicars that be nat able to preche and sett forth the woorde of god to his parisheners may be clerely putt from hys benyfice, and the parissheners there to chose an other or ells the pateron or lord of the towne' made clear their religious allegiance and set them apart from the heretical traitors of the south west.[110] As a result, Somerset's response was to negotiate and attempt to pacify the rebels of the south east.[111] A similar tactic was used by Wyatt in his efforts to raise the commons of Kent. While, A.G. Dickens argues, Wyatt 'could not pose convincingly as a Protestant zealot', 'for the benefit of the pious he talked about the restoration of God's Word'. Conveniently, he was joined in his rebellion by the more credible Bishop Ponet, a Marian exile. Although, as Dickens points out, the rebellion could not be viewed as a 'Protestant Crusade', with the majority of support derived from xenophobia and anti-Spanish sentiment, it is important to recognise the use of religion as a political tool in rebellion, both in terms of dialogue and legitimacy, and as a motivational device.[112]

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[109] For a broad overview on these rebellions, see Fletcher and MacCulloch, *Tudor Rebellions*; R.W. Hoyle, *The Pilgrimage of Grace and the Politics of the 1530s* (Oxford, 2001); Beer, *Rebellion and Riot*, pp. 38-81; D. Loades, *Two Tudor Conspiracies* (Cambridge, 1965); K.J. Kesselring, *The Northern Rebellion of 1569: Faith, Politics and Protest in Elizabethan England* (Basingstoke, 2007).
[110] Article 8 of *Kett's Demands Being in Rebellion*, B.L. Harleian MS 304, f. 75, cited in Fletcher and MacCulloch, *Tudor Rebellions,* pp. 156-9.
[111] Jones, 'Commotion Time', pp. 173-4.
[112] Dickens, *The English Reformation,* p. 358.

The promotion of religion as attached to protest action with the objective of projecting loyalty to a particular monarch can be seen in Claire Bartram's study on the gentry in Elizabethan Kent. The desire to have been known to have (or been related to someone who had) partaken in Wyatt's Rebellion against Mary and the Spanish match seems to have been used by the gentry to demonstrate their loyalty to Protestantism and to Elizabeth.[113] The conflicting elements of this situation can be clearly seen, however. The political statement of Protestant loyalty throughout Mary's reign could be viewed as loyalty to Elizabeth and to England from the point of view of Elizabethans, for whom Protestantism had become established as part of the English identity.[114] However, for a regime which republished the Edwardian Homily of Obedience, any link to rebellion was not something to be celebrated. In the claims of these members of the Kentish gentry, we can perhaps conclude that in their eyes the power of the rhetoric of Protestantism and resistance to Mary was stronger than the potentially troublesome implications of rebellion against a God appointed monarch. As such, it was a potent force which perhaps enhanced identification on the national level, which, in the rejection of the out-group of Catholicism, created a more unified in-group. This would have been experienced in the way described in the previous chapter, in readings of the landscape and local experience of Reformations under different monarchs, all drawn together in the powerful Elizabethan propaganda machine which linked this to the strength and vulnerability of an island besieged by Catholicism: something which would have resonated intensely for the people of Kent.

While Protestantism may have become a type of unifying rhetoric for the majority of the people of England by the end of Elizabeth's reign, there was still a variety of ways in which resistance could be played out with less fanfare than full rebellion, and which reached back to local actions over the period of the whole sixteenth century. One of these was the concealing of lands. Concealed lands have not yet been studied in any great depth. C.J. Kitching's work on this phenomenon shed some light on the situation, but from the perspective of the government and those in whose interest it was to discover them.[115] Concealed lands, pieces of property whose profits were often bequeathed to the

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[113] Bartram, 'The reading and writing practices of the Kentish gentry: The emergence of a Protestant identity in Elizabethan Kent', p. 21.

[114] For discussion of Protestantism as part of Elizabethan national identity please see chapter 2.

[115] C. J. Kitching, 'The Quest for Concealed Lands in the Reign of Elizabeth I: The Alexander Prize Essay', *Transactions of the Royal History Society*, 24 (1974), 63-78.

maintenance of certain elements of religious houses or the local parish church such as bells, repairs, and clothing, and were not reported upon the dissolution of an institution, were not new in the sixteenth century. With the Dissolution of the monasteries under Henry VIII, however, the numbers of concealed lands increased significantly. In the reigns of Mary and Elizabeth, effort was taken to track down these lands through purchased licenses which would then allow the licensee to collect the profits from lands which had been overlooked or wilfully concealed in the confusion of the dissolution. As Kitching has shown, study of concealed lands provides insight into the government of Elizabeth and the ways in which patronage could be used by both the crown and courtiers to make significant profits. What has not been mentioned is that in a world where the use and history of local land was collectively remembered for generations, as shown in the first chapter, the fact that they did not offer up this information suggests a somewhat passive form of resistance. While the purpose of these lands was to raise profits for the maintenance of religious worship, such as the lands discovered concealed in Maidstone between 1556 and 1558 which were 'appointed to the finding of a light forever within the Church of Saint Christopher's', the fact that this resistance seems to be through the land and a collective 'forgetting' of its use means that it does not necessarily follow that this resistance is of religious change itself; it could well be a resistance to the imposed change to the local landscape which occurred as a result of this religious change.[116]

If the concealing of land, or even simply not alerting the correct authorities to the existence of concealed lands, *was* a form of resistance, the evidence suggests that it was probably related more to the use of land than any theological protest. The distribution of the places which were the subject of inquiries into concealed lands seems to have mainly covered north and east Kent, although there were also several inquiries into areas in west Kent, and as far as Wittersham and Leigh.[117] Certain expected locations appear several times, with Canterbury certified as holding concealed lands four times, and Maidstone and its surrounding areas like Boxley mentioned at least three times.[118] As these two places were significant areas with a notable amount of religious institutions established in and

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[116] TNA, C 1/1436/40.

[117] TNA, E 178/7348, for the inquiry into lands in Leigh; TNA, E 178/1082, for the inquiry into lands in Wittersham, alongside Saint Peters, Thanet, Stone, Aldington, Nonington, Brabourne, and Wareham.

[118] For Canterbury: TNA, E 178/1104; TNA, E 178/2913; TNA, E 178/1115. For Maidstone and Boxley: TNA, E 178/1089; TNA, E 178/1115.

around them, this was more likely to happen. Slightly more interesting was the appearance of Warehorne three times among the papers of the commissioners for concealed lands, in addition to further related mentions in other Exchequer documents.[119] This suggests a targeted approach of a perhaps more personal nature, rather than a general resistance to royal policy. There was no significant congregation of inquiries or certifications around any areas that were known for being either religiously conservative or religiously forward. This rules out any broad religious motive, and suggests instead a general lack of local interest in inviting further intervention or change in the community and landscape.[120] In this way, the insular nature of local life which was embedded in the landscape was demonstrated through communal silence, perhaps an effort to collectively forget a piece of local history which would encourage further change from outside of the locality. In this instance it is possible to apply Paul Ricoeur's analysis of forgetting as a significant part of forging identity to the local landscape, and therefore the identity of the community itself.[121] Here again, is a possible example of the 'small world' identity consciously favoured over the other, broader, identities available to them such as part of the national church or royal subjects.

In contrast, one example of minor resistance to central government definitely motivated by religion was that of religious heterodoxy. This existed before the Reformation, for example in the form of Lollardy, but dramatically increased with the religious changes of Henry VIII and his children. The most notable of these were the groups which were formed in contrast to the doctrines of the Church of England at the time. One prominent example in Kent was that of the Free Willers. As mentioned in the previous chapter, this group, seemingly led by a man named Henry Hart, rejected the doctrine of predestination that was a fundamental part of the Edwardian Church of England, although it should be remembered that this focus on the power of free will was something which became more developed and publicised in Mary's reign in the debates in prison; predestination does not seem to have been mentioned more than a few times in Edward's reign.[122] They existed as a group

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[119] TNA, E 178/1094; TNA, E 178/1089; TNA, E 178/1082; TNA, E 134/32Eliz/East15; TNA, E 134/32Eliz/Hil10.

[120] More information regarding concealed lands from the perspective of their localities should emerge from a more in-depth examination of the records in the National Archives, category E 178. Time and space constraints meant I was not able to study them in the detail I would have preferred.

[121] Ricoeur, pp. 80-2.

[122] See J.W. Martin, *Religious Radicals in Tudor England* (London, 1989), esp. p. 10; Martin, 'English Protestant Separatism at its Beginning: Henry Hart and the Free-Will Men', 55-74; Freeman, 'Dissenters from a dissenting Church', pp. 129-56.

which caused trouble for Archbishop Cranmer and other orthodox Protestants throughout the reigns of Edward and Mary, but which had disappeared by the beginning of Elizabeth's and had 'curiously little effect in the future'.[123] Nevertheless, they demonstrate another form of resistance in a time where the church functioned as an agent of the government: where conformity was required by law. The Freewillers were not fully separated from the national Protestant Church, but they certainly did not conform to several of its doctrines, and Freeman argues that 'they came dangerously close in their insistence on the need for separation in order to maintain doctrinal purity'.[124] Some members even refused communion for over two years in their drive to not be connected with sinners.[125]

The Free Will Men were not a small isolated group; they came from across the counties of Kent and Essex. As already mentioned, individuals who would go on to be associated with the group were known to assemble to discuss the Bible in Faversham, and by 1551 it seems that the group was strong enough to have congregations in various places. Henry Hart had published two religious treatises on his beliefs between 1548 and 1549, and was the leader of a congregation himself in Edward's reign.[126] In addition to the investigation of the Bocking conventicle, which has been examined by Thomas Freeman and J.W. Martin, contained the deposition of a man whose congregation had raised money in order to afford to travel to Essex for the meeting.[127] This perhaps suggests a combination of locally based congregations with those individual members and small groups willing to travel to meet with like-minded people; of the eighteen men named in the register of the Privy Council, seven were from Kent, specifically Maidstone, Lenham, Ashford and Pluckley.[128] The choice of Bocking was an interesting one, and could well have been picked due to its status as a peculiar of the Archbishop of Canterbury.[129] How far the conventiclers understood the significance of this is hard to tell, yet it should be noted that separatists in Elizabethan London also took advantage of the fact that the parish of Minories was a peculiar and did not fall under the jurisdiction of the Bishop of London.[130] Awareness of the jurisdictional nature of Bocking might have

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[123] MacCulloch, *The Later Reformation in England,* p. 156.
[124] Freeman, 'Dissenters from a dissenting Church', p. 132.
[125] Ibid.
[126] Dickens, *The English Reformation,* p. 327.
[127] Freeman, 'Dissenters from a dissenting Church', pp. 131-132.
[128] Martin, *Religious Radicals,* p. 49.
[129] Ibid.
[130] Ibid.; H. G. Owen, 'A Nursery of Elizabethan Nonconformity, 1567-72', *Journal of Ecclesiastical History*, 17 (1966), 65-7.

made the place more desirable to host such a meeting but, given the participants seem to have mainly been a mixture from Kent and Essex, it might also have stood as a suitable location for people from both counties to congregate and to slip under the ecclesiastical radar.

The assembly of around sixty people in this particular space suggests excellent communication networks, and organisation which seems to have been based around smaller 'Meatinges at divers places'.[131] As with Bocking, these smaller meetings would have needed safe locations in which to gather, and here we can perhaps see a different layer of identity which coloured the reading of the landscape for the Freewillers. The situation in Faversham was noted in the previous chapter, but the fact that the Kentishmen recorded by the Privy Council after Bocking were from Pluckley (where Hart himself was probably from, and where unlawful assemblies were reported in 1538, leading Cranmer to convince Cromwell to drop the charges against them), from Lenham (where the vicar and the curate had a history of preaching against each other in the pulpit) and from Maidstone (which was known to be inclined towards Protestantism before Mary's reign), suggests that these individuals may have been from locations which tolerated their meetings.[132] Considering the kind of organisation required to accomplish large assemblies like the one in Bocking, it is likely that the locations picked for these 'Meatinges at divers places' were carefully chosen for their purpose.

As has been well documented, several areas in Kent had associations with other heterodox traditions and heresies: primarily, Lollardy. The link between Lollardy and the Reformation in Kent has been explored by many historians such as Margaret Aston, Christopher Hill, Patrick Collinson, J.F Davis, and Robert Lutton, among others.[133] Tudor Lollards, who supported the Bible in the vernacular, a focus on scripture and preaching, opposed transubstantiation, and practiced sacramentarianism, have been linked with many places in Kent after the visitation of Archbishop

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[131] Cited in Martin, 'English Protestant Separatism at its Beginning', 67.

[132] Collinson, 'Persecution in Kent', pp. 313-6.

[133] Aston, 'Lollardy and the Reformation: Survival or Revival?', pp. 219-42; Hill, 'From Lollards to Levellers', pp. 89-116; Collinson, 'Cranbrook and the Fletchers', pp. 399-428; Davis, *Heresy and Reformation in the South-East of* England; Davis, 'Lollard survival and the Textile Industry in the South-East of England', in *Studies in Church History 3,* ed. G. J. Cuming (Leiden, 1966), pp. 191-201. See also idem, 'Joan of Kent, Lollardy and the English Reformation', 225-233; Alec Ryrie, *The Gospel and Henry VIII: Evangelicals in the Early English Reformation* (Cambridge, 2003); Zell, 'The Establishment of a Protestant Church', pp. 214-18; Everitt, 'Nonconformity in Country Parishes', *The Agricultural History Review: Land, Church and People: Essays presented to Professor H.P.R. Finberg,* ed. J. Thirsk, 18 (1970 Supplement), 178-99; Margaret Spufford, 'The social and economic spectrum of religious belief', in *The World of Rural Dissenters*, pp. 1-40.

Warham in 1511-12 brought to light its existence, especially in places like the Weald. Three particular towns in the Weald (an area which had been 'a breeding-ground' for Lollardy since at least 1420[134]) which figured prominently in Warham's investigations were Tenterden, Cranbrook and Benenden: all notable clothing towns. In places like Tenterden identities could be formed from a combination of locality, trade, and religion. The large size of the parishes of Tenterden or Cranbrook has been noted by Collinson to encourage disassociation with the space of the parish church and a stronger reliance upon local gatherings, which supports Margaret Spufford's point that Lollardy was very much 'a family affair'.[135] While it has been shown that Lollards could come from all levels of society and across a variety of trades, there still seems to be significant evidence of its existence among weavers and others in the cloth industry.[136] The focus on the cloth trade in this area, a natural course to take given the topography of the area and the economies that grew up around it, have been argued to uniquely support biblical discussion of the sort that could encourage heretical ideas.[137] The argument made by Plumb, that Lollards were integrated within their communities as well as their 'gathered church' supports the idea of community identity based on locality and the local history and memory of the community.[138] Established family members held posts and offices within the local parish and even local government. As a result, the Wealden parishes were closely regarded by central government at religiously uncertain times, in the heresy trials of 1511-12, and particularly in Mary's reign.

Religious protest could be far more overt than nonconformism in the localities: particularly in the case of the Marian martyrs. In addition to being known to be a county which sheltered heterodox groups (such as the Freewillers), or even heretical communities (such as the Lollards), Kent also stands out as the county with the largest number of martyrs. Although London did have the highest

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[134] Collinson, 'Cranbrook and the Fletchers', p. 402.
[135] Ibid., p. 400; Spufford, 'The social and economic spectrum of religious belief', p. 11.
[136] Spufford, 'The distribution of dissent, by-employment, and communications', in *The World of Rural Dissenters*, pp. 40-64.
[137] Thirsk, 'Industries in the countryside', in *Essays in the Economic and Social History of Tudor & Stuart England in Honour of Professor R. H. Tawney,* ed. F. J. Fisher (London, 1961), pp. 70-88; Davis, 'Lollard survival and the Textile Industry in the South-East of England', pp. 191-201.
[138] Derek Plumb, 'A gathered church? Lollards and their society', in *The World of Rural Dissenters*, pp. 132-63.

number of burnings overall, several of those burnings were for members from outside of the capital. Collinson provides a useful comparison in his essay on the persecutions in Kent:

> In London the largest number burned in any one year of the Marian persecution appears to have been 16, and many of those executed in the capital had been brought there from Colchester and other places in Essex. But in 1555 18 heretics were burned in Canterbury and within the six months from July 1555 to January 1556 the tally was 23, half the total burned at Smithfield in the entire reign. [139]

In all, fifty-two were burned in Canterbury (Collinson notes that forty-one of these were at Wincheap, comprising one seventh of all Marian burnings), and further nine were burned in the diocese of Rochester, bringing the total number of Kentish martyrs to sixty-one.[140] Indeed, Collinson terms it a 'Kentish holocaust', 'almost unique in England for the scale of the persecution'.[141] A significant number of those Kentish martyrs were from the Weald, with five from Tenterden, three from Biddenden, and two each from Cranbrook and Staplehurst. There were also martyrs from Headcorn and Frittenden, while six more were from Maidstone.[142] The martyrs from the Wealden parishes can add to the picture already painted of the influence of locality, collective memory, and landscape (in as far as it was conducive to the long term maintenance of local heresies). Many of them, understandably brushed over by John Foxe in his *Acts and Monuments*, were burned, not for orthodox Protestant heresies, but for denying the trinity and other heretical beliefs which would not have been tolerated under Elizabeth.[143] It is this which encouraged Hill's argument for inherited radical dissent from the Lollards through to the Levellers in the seventeenth century.[144]

The extremely high number of Kentish martyrdoms is suggestive of a strong Protestant identity living among the common people of Kent (only one Kentish gentleman was burned for heresy

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[139] Collinson, 'Persecution in Kent', p. 310.

[140] Collinson points out that this could be increased to sixty-seven if we consider those who died in prison and were denied Christian burial to count as martyrs. Collinson, 'Persecution in Kent', pp. 310-11; Eamon Duffy, *Fires of Faith: Catholic England under Mary Tudor* (London, 2009), pp. 128-129.

[141] Collinson, 'Persecution in Kent', p. 321.

[142] Ibid.

[143] The next chapter will expand on Foxe's *Acts and Monuments*, and the way a variety of different identities can be seen to develop in the text, for a unified Protestant history, for England, for Kent, and for those informants who supplied him with material for their own ends. See Freeman, 'Notes on a Source for John Foxe's Account of the Marian Persecution in Kent and Sussex', *Historical Research,* 67 (1994), 203-11; Hill, 'From Lollards to Levellers', p. 91.

[144] Hill, 'From Lollards to Levellers'; Collinson, 'Persecution in Kent', pp. 311-12.

under Mary; the rest had the option of removing themselves to Calais to escape the persecution[145]).

In martyrdom, as with participation in protest action, identification plays a large part in the motivation to act. As Paul Middleton states, '[m]artyrology […] is bound up with questions of identity. It reinforces a group's particular view of the world'.[146] Edward Orehek et al. have shown that a person is more likely to be willing to become a martyr, mitigating the fear of death, if they construe themselves as part of a group: if they think 'of the self *interdependently,* […] as opposed to conceiving of the self *independently*, as an unattached agent'.[147] Corresponding with theories of protest participation, the strength of one's identity influences the likelihood that one will act; 'The more important group membership becomes, the more important the group's *existence* should be come relative to the individual's existence'.[148] In the case of Marian martyrdom, then, instead of identifying with the rhetoric of commonweal, relationship with the monarch, defence of common rights, and common grievances, an individual identified with their religious community, which may or may not also be their geographical community, and with their personal relationship with God.

Martyrdom, although depending on an interdependent sense of self, also was more of an individual action, in comparison to participation in popular protest action, in which the focus was on activity as a collective group. This might be explained by the argument that in this case the individual's superordinate identity was their relationship with God and their place in their particular religious community: one which would last beyond death. The interdependent concepts of the self in this situation 'afford individuals a sense of continual existence via attachment to an enduring group'.[149] The existence of this enduring group can be seen in reports of the martyrdoms by Foxe, particularly in the example of Christopher Wade, who was burned as a heretic in July 1555 in Dartford. He was supported by his wife, who had made him a new shirt for the occasion, as well as his fellow martyr, Margaret Polley, who was to be burned the next day at Pembury, cried to him, '[y]ou may reioice, Waide, to see suche a companie gathered to celebrate youre marriage this daye'.[150]

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[145] Collinson, 'Persecution in Kent', p. 312.

[146] Paul Middleton, 'What is Martyrdom?', *Mortality*, 19 (2014), 118.

[147] Edward Orehek, Jo A. Sasota, Arie Kruglanski, Mark Dechesne and Leianna Ridgeway, 'Interdependent Self-Construals Mitigate the Fear of Death and Augment the Willingness to Become a Martyr', *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 107 (2014), 265.

[148] Ibid.

[149] Ibid., 271.

[150] Collinson, 'Persecution in Kent', pp. 318-19.

The celebration of the manner of his death, spent defending Edwardian doctrine and 'holding hys handes up over his head towards heaven, even when he was dead and altogether rosted', was evident on the day of the burning, and then later when the story was printed in Foxe's Book of Martyrs.[151] It acknowledged the enduring group he was a member of, the identity that he helped to reinforce with his action, and the 'continual existence' of Wade in heaven and on earth, as well as that of the other members who identified with him.[152]

The numerous examples of Kentish martyrs in comparison to other counties implies the existence of a peculiarly strong feeling of Protestant community in Kent, specifically in areas such as the Weald, Maidstone or Canterbury, which produced significant numbers of them. Another factor in this could be the zealous persecution enacted by Nicholas Harpsfield, archdeacon of Canterbury from 1554, although as a consequence of such persecution a sense of religious community may well have emerged or been reinforced.[153] While it is clear that this Protestant identity was not the *same* Protestant identity for all the martyrs, nor could it be said that there was a particularly Kentish edge to these identities (although some of the Wealden martyrs did have beliefs which echoed traditional Kentish Lollard ideologies such as sacramentarianism and anti-trinitarian views), the same argument could hold as in the previous chapter; that the unique geographical and political situation that was the county of Kent meant that it had spaces in which heterodox or orthodox Protestant ideologies could flourish. The prominence of Canterbury, Maidstone and the Kentish Weald in the distribution of martyrs reflects the locations which have been shown in this thesis to be centres of religious and political resistance. The martyrdoms of people like John Philpot (Tenterden), Edmund Allin (Frittenden), Joan Bradbridge and Elizabeth Lewes (Maidstone) and John Bland (Canterbury), can provide us with examples of the Protestant group that they were embedded in: a sphere that was at once both situated and unsituated.

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[151] Ibid.

[152] Middleton, 'What is Martyrdom?', 118; Orehek et al., 'Interdependent Self-Construals', 271.

[153] The impression given by Foxe, that Harpsfield was 'on the same point on the Richter Scale of evilly motivated repression as Bloody Bishop Bonner', has been challenged by historians like Loades and Duffy, however, he was part of the royal commission which dealt with heresy cases in Canterbury and he was certainly involved in referring suspected heretics to it. His zealousness in the years 1557 and 1558, even when he was aware that Mary was dying, suggests that he was driven to eradicate heresy in Kent and was extremely active in pursuing that goal. Please see Collinson, 'Persecution in Kent', pp. 310-31, 321-2, 331; David Loades, *The Reign of Mary Tudor,* (London, 1991), pp. 343-4; Eamon Duffy, *The Stripping of the Altars*, p. 560.

John Bland, vicar of Adisham, was famously vocal around Kent, and was part of a particular circle of likeminded people in Canterbury such as John Toftes and Richard Turner (another martyr), who had supported Joan Boacher (or Joan of Kent) in her interactions with the church before her execution. His identification with a Protestant community was with learned men and was of a Protestantism influenced by Lollardy – he was a supporter of sacramentarianism.[154] Collinson's point that he was burnt at the same time as two men who were prominent Freewillers shows how, although these men were united in their rejection of the Catholic identity that came with Mary Tudor's England to the point of martyrdom, their own religious identities were contentious and different.[155] Edmund Allin's Protestant identity seems to have been of a more local and community-based nature. Allin was a miller from Frittenden, was burned in Maidstone on 18 June 1557, and in Collinson's words, was 'one of the most idealized and misty-eyed of Foxe's stories'.[156] He halved the price of corn for his poor neighbours in hard times, and also read and preached the scripture to them, arguing when interrogated that 'we are al […] lively stones, to geve light to other. For as out of flint stones commeth foorthe that, that is able to set al the world on fire, so out of Christians shoulde springe the beames of the Gospell, whiche should inflame al the world'. He and his wife, Katharine, were arrested, escaped and made their way to Calais, before Allin was 'troubled in conscience', for 'God (saide he) hadde some thing to do for him in England'.[157] Allin's identity seems to be of an orthodox Edwardian Protestantism, but also one of heavy responsibility to the community under God, perhaps guided by his role as a miller within a community which often suffered through hard times.

It is clear, then, that the martyrs studied above each belonged to differing ideological, geographical, familial, and intellectual groups which shaped their identification with the Protestant community. Nevertheless, they were united in their embeddedness within those groups and, with a strong superordinate identity of a particular Protestant community and a direct relationship with God, they were able to complete the martyrdom act, simultaneously reinforcing that identification for those left behind. The nature of Kent, with its easy access to Continental ideas, traditions of familial heresy,

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[154] Davis, 'Joan of Kent, Lollardy and the English Reformation', 230.
[155] The Freewillers Bland was burned with were Nicholas Sheterden and Humfry Middleton. The other man burned at the same time was John Frankesh, vicar of Rolvenden. Collinson, 'Persecution in Kent', pp. 323-4.
[156] Collinson, 'Persecution in Kent', p. 325.
[157] John Foxe, *The Unabridged Acts and Monuments Online* or *TAMO* (1583 edition) (HRI Online Publications, Sheffield, 2011) Book 12, 2003 (original pagination 1979) <http//www.johnfoxe.org> [Accessed: 22.06.17]

and the resulting pockets of strong Protestant areas, meant that this embeddedness and strong sense of religious community was perhaps more frequent than in other counties in England. Certainly, the Marian Church authorities seem to have perceived the county of Kent to be more sympathetic to such ideas, as seen in the actions of men like Harpsfield and the sheer number of burnings in Kent. The experience of four group burnings in Canterbury in the space of five months was vastly different to the singular, scattered burnings taking place across the rest of the country in 1555, leading Eamon Duffy to comment that 'no citizen of Canterbury could have avoided witnessing at least one of these grisly spectacles', and as a result, the 'public impact […] must have been quite different' from those of the rest of England.[158] Ironically, the level of persecution which derived from these suspicions may well have strengthened the Protestant community in Kent.

Conclusion

The two previous chapters have shown the importance of the local landscape and community history in the way they develop and continue to shape multiple layers of identity, the interpretation of events, and political action. This chapter has taken this idea further, showing the different ways in which individuals and groups might act when certain aspects of their identity or locality were under threat. Forms of resistance, which this chapter has broadly divided into two categories, political rebellion and religious dissent (although, of course, these cannot ever be completely separate), could be expressed in a variety of different ways. They could take place within the set structures of customary and common law, actively circumventing the law, or passively *not* taking action. Each of these acts of protest has been shown to have been guided by collective identity, collective history, and the use of space and language, and then those actions in turn have served to reinforce characteristics, identities, and strategies.

Preliminary acts of dispute and protest which were incorporated into the structures of parochial, manorial and local government can be seen in tithing disputes, protest of collection of taxation, and in defence of land rights and customs, as was evident in the way commissions of array were used to raise men in Cade's Rebellion, for example. Collective understandings of space and required group action are evident throughout, delineating the boundaries of local identity. Actions

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[158] Duffy, *Fires of Faith*, p. 129.

such as stepping into the chancel signalled to the parishioners present and the cleric that a certain situation was imminent, and that their roles had changed to that of witnesses and defendant.[159] The instigation of riotous activity was at once a declaration of group identity and a way of setting in motion customary procedures which required witnesses and the legitimising element of memory. This again was something which locals would have been aware of and would start to prepare for as the action continued.[160] Similarly, the production of documents and the gathering of tenants to prevent their opponent from oppressing their land rights were a sign for anyone likely to need to act as a witness, and a strong statement of the tenantry of the manor of Morehouse as a group with rights and customs that they expected to be upheld and which would act in order to protect them.[161]

Another method of spelling out resistance to aspects of central government was the lack of reporting of concealed lands. While the enquiries were mainly a result of royal religious policy, the resistance does not seem to have been religiously motivated. Of course, the fact that they were *concealed* lands means we can only use what was discovered to be concealed after concerted investigation or through the offices of local informers, and more work needs to be done on the subject from the perspective of the local. Yet it cannot be ignored, and therefore must be considered in a chapter on resistance and the landscape. It was not an active method of protest and often must have merely been the result of confusion and ignorance, yet having shown the depth of local knowledge of land and its history, it must be assumed that many had the knowledge and made the choice not to inform the authorities, perhaps as a way to avoid further outside involvement in the local landscape. In this case, the land itself both inspired and was used as the means of protest, in what must have been local responses to external interference. Similarly, some with heterodox views often expressed their resistance to parochial, but also central, government by not taking part in the activities they were expected to. Both of these types of resistance used the *lack* of action to define their identity and allegiance in the face of a particular 'out-group'. For the most part, these examples were settled within the structures of parochial, customary, equity, or common law. Nevertheless, they set the scene for when the system failed.

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[159] Simpson, 'The Continuum of Resistance to Tithe', pp. 93-108.
[160] TNA, E 134/21&22Eliz/Mich32.
[161] TNA, C 78/38/12.

These same strategies were utilised in the event of county-wide rebellions such as the ones of 1381, 1450 and 1549, but instead of being focused on the local, they were writ large on the landscape of the county itself, shaped by and shaping in turn the collective memory of the Kentish landscape. In these instances, as was shown in the second chapter, an identity on the county level was invoked, except this one was associated with rhetoric of commonweal, corruption, truth, justice, and a relationship between the monarch and the commons. By examining contemporary theories of sociology and political psychology, we can take a step further in understanding the way in which multiple layers and strengths of identity played their part in participation in protest action. Locals knew to read the signs as statements of intent, based on their own local history and the way in which they identified with the county as a whole. A strong sense of identity with the grievances aired, guided by the superordinate identity of commonweal, aided in the sense of collective identity amongst the people involved, and guided their actions and interpretations as they acted. This, in turn, reinforced their identity as the rebellious commons of Kent and their association with specific spaces within Kent, thereby consolidating the 'traditions of rebellion' described by Wood.[162] While popular rebellion seems to have declined in the second half of the century, and this is visible in the small-scale riots so prevalent in the 1590s in Kent, the language and actions which formed a significant part of the rebellious Kent identity remained, ready to be appropriated when necessary. Although some riots, like the one at the West Gate, used a legalistic framework to justify their actions, the men of Hernhill clearly identified their actions with those of the rebellious commons of Kent, using them to guide their political actions and the way in which they expressed their grievances to the local authorities.

Such traditions and a different reading of the Kentish landscape can be seen in the case of active religious resistance in the form of heterodox groups and the Marian martyrs. In the case of the Freewillers, it is very evident that a good amount of organisation was involved, both for the large assemblies of around sixty at Bocking, and the smaller meetings around the county of Kent.[163]

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[162] Wood, *The 1549 Rebellions*.

[163] One aspect not mentioned thus far, but which is fairly prominent in both the current and the previous chapter, is the prevalence of connections between Kent and Essex. The networks between these two counties, considering the rebellious and religious natures of the connections, are an area which deserves more attention on the popular level.

Locations would have been carefully chosen, and the involvement of men from places like Lenham, Maidstone and the Weald, all of which were religiously unsettled or were centres of a heretical tradition, contribute to our understanding of both situated and unsituated religious ideologies. The strength of an individual's identification with their Protestant community, whether orthodox or heterodox, could further lead to martyrdom when under threat from a Catholic government. The prominence of Kent in the spread of Protestantism meant that under Mary its landscape developed another layer of meaning. Collinson noted that in Elizabeth's reign, when asked about any local martyrs, people in Cranbrook could only remember 'one Hopper' had been executed, forgetting about the other Cranbrook man burned for heresy, William Lowick.[164] In Canterbury, however, John Bland was given five shillings 'to help him withal' after the burning of his father. Collinson determines that 'by and large, I think that we have to conclude that the Kentish martyrs would not have existed, in a manner of speaking, but for Foxe and those who read "themselves both into and out of his book."'[165] This is a valid point and something which will be explored further in the next chapter. Undoubtedly, the popular work of John Foxe had an enormous impact on the way these martyrs were remembered, and as Middleton states, the 'central character is not the most important element in the creation of martyrdom; it is the narrator'.[166] Nevertheless, Collinson perhaps underestimates the significance of the burnings as memory events associated with certain spaces.[167] The Cranbrook martyrs were not burned in Cranbrook, whereas, as he states at the beginning of his essay, Canterbury was the site of twenty-three burnings in the space of six months. Although Cranbrook was the home of the 'actively zealous' Sir John Baker, it could not have experienced the Marian persecutions in the same way that Canterbury did.

Whether or not Foxe can be considered solely responsible for the perception of the Marian martyrs and the co-opting of Lollards into his unifying Protestant narrative, in the second half of the sixteenth century there was a noticeable layer of identity associating the county of Kent with Protestantism. Short-lived groups such as the Freewillers, although having less impact on early modern England than the far more entrenched heresy of Lollardy, nevertheless contribute to our

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[164] 'one Hopper' was William Hopper. Collinson, 'Cranbrook and the Fletchers', pp. 403, 405.
[165] Collinson, 'Persecution in Kent', pp. 332-333.
[166] Middleton, *Martyrdom: A Guide for the Perplexed* (London, 2011), p. 30.
[167] As examined in chapter 1.

understanding of religious resistance and nonconformity as part of the identity of Kent. As the previous chapter has shown, there were also many religiously conservative and conformist areas in the county; indeed, Collinson's assessment was that 'Protestants were a minority sect until well into Elizabeth's reign, with the 1570s forming a watershed'. However, these were often quiet: their true leanings demonstrated in the ongoing support for the nuns of Dartford, for instance. They did not provide the spectacle of heretical burnings, or the controversy of the written debates between Henry Hart and other imprisoned orthodox Protestants. There was also a clear association of the county of Kent with rebellion which developed through the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. The frequency of Kentish involvement with rebellion over this period in addition to the events of the Wars of the Roses, where there seems to have been a response to calls for the commons of Kent in the 1460s, established a tradition which would be repeatedly reinforced in later rebellions. Despite the fact that Elizabethan Kent only experienced very small, very local riots and protests, and that nothing even close to the events of 1549 or 1554 occurred, the perception of Kent as rebellious was still obviously at times in the minds of the government, especially in the 1590s.

This chapter, then, has looked at examples of times where the local, insular identity defined in chapter 1 was forced to broaden into a county-wide identity which could inspire some to act as part of the 'commons of Kent': a community which had a legitimate voice in the politics of the realm. It has also explored the ways in which common people, as part of a Protestant community, often influenced by their local and familial identities, could become martyrs. Although this study does not subscribe to the deterministic idea that geographical location governs the identities and choices made by individuals, it does demonstrate the ways in which the unique geographical and political situation of Kent could influence the spread and accumulation of certain identities. Tied as it was to memory, custom and traditions, the landscape itself was refigured, providing different meanings for different people in different situations.

Chapter 5: Perceptions and Representations

This thesis thus far has examined the ways in which layers of identity were formed, how they responded to different contexts, and how they could influence certain behaviours. All of these situations should be considered to be largely subconscious, and, in a way, passive. They were part and parcel of an early modern local culture based on landscape and custom. The other side to this is the conscious shaping of identity; the ways in which individuals, groups, and communities chose to see themselves and the image they preferred to project to others. Another important factor to consider is how they were actually seen and reported by outsiders. This in turn could influence the way in which a group saw themselves, and might have brought about change or an element of self-awareness when they acted or represented themselves. This chapter, then, will look at the ways in which towns and communities portrayed themselves, the ways in which Kent was perceived by others, and the impact this might have had on the people of Kent.

As seen earlier, there was clearly an association between the county of Kent and ideologies of Protestantism and rebellion. The Cornish rebels of 1497 based a significant part of their strategy on the reputation of the commons of Kent and when their expectations of 'Kentish fire' were disappointed, much of the confidence of the participants was destroyed and the rebellion largely undermined. This is suggestive of the power that could be held by a particular identity, and gives a strong indication as to the nature of the perception of the people of Kent. This perception was supported by the way in which chronicles, poetry, pamphlets and plays described Kent, and it is these kinds of sources that this chapter will be exploring. It will be looking at the ways in which such literature was used to create and sustain a characterisation of Kent, but also how it was used by the writers in the 1590s to appropriate Kent's rebellious identity and rhetoric in order to convey its own message.

In studying outside perceptions of identity, theories of labelling must be taken into account. As stated in the introduction, labelling theory argues that people, when labelled in a certain way, ultimately relate to the label and act accordingly.[1] Thompson's contention that this can also be used

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[1] Becker, *Outsiders.*

in a positive manner, and his point that the success of the label 'sticking' depends on the situation and mediating interaction, could therefore easily be applied to the relationship between the actions of the commons of Kent and those who considered them to be 'impacient in wronges disdayning of to much oppression'.[2] As already stated, although Thompson's argument is mainly based on language and speech, it is still possible to explore the implications of labelling on the people of Kent with a variety of interacting written sources. This chapter will therefore explore a variety of sixteenth-century texts, taking into consideration the way they were written, how they evolved, and how they were used by certain people in Kent to demonstrate civic, rebellious, or Protestant identities for their own local reasons.[3] The rebellious identity perceived by those from outside Kent, for example, was also supported by ancient local histories and customs alongside other layers of identity, which can be found in Elizabethan printed sources such as Lambarde's *Perambulation of Kent*, but also in local manuscript sources such as perambulation books and custumals.[4] From these it is possible to discover the information that the composers of the document considered necessary to record for posterity: what they thought the identity and character of their community should be. Themes of *Invicta*, of invasion, of corporation, of tradition, and of landscape can all be found in these local accounts, providing a rich description of conscious identity refining. Here, it is necessary to consider arguments such as Stephen Greenblatt's notion of 'self-fashioning'.[5] Although the contribution to local custumals was not the same as individuals portraying a certain identity in order to fit into their desired Renaissance society, an element of self-fashioning can be seen in the conscious choice to remember certain items and to forget others. Instead of court society, the defined identity of towns and villages might instead be influenced with respect to other towns, connected through networks and communications and within the ideology of community, commonweal, and local Kentish history.

Considering the focus of this chapter on the use of and interaction with literature and written sources with regards to their influence on identity, an area of particular interest is the 1590s, what John Guy has termed Elizabeth's 'second reign'.[6] As shown in chapter 2, these years saw a

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[2] Thompson, 'Labeling in Interactional Practice', 458-82; Hall, *Chronicle,* p. 219.
[3] Used here are the different editions provided in: John Foxe, *The Unabridged Acts and Monuments Online* or *TAMO* (Sheffield, 2011) <http//www.johnfoxe.org>
[4] Lambarde, (1576).
[5] Stephen Greenblatt, *Renaissance Self-Fashioning: From More to Shakespeare* (London, 1980).
[6] Really, the last eighteen years of her reign, first proposed in Guy, 'The 1590s: The Second Reign of Elizabeth I', pp. 1–19. It has since been the topic of several studies on 'monarchical republic' and political

strengthening of a Protestant national identity, largely due to the victory over the Spanish Armada and the Elizabethan regime's skill at propaganda. There was also a defining of identities relating to the past, which can be seen in the history plays of Shakespeare and the work of antiquaries like Lambarde.[7] It is also of particular interest for Kent because, despite the economic and social uncertainties of the period, there was no real popular rebellion either locally or at a national level.[8] Several explanations for this have been put forward by historians: increased preventative measures taken by the state, a larger gap between the middling sorts and the poor commons, and a more developed state apparatus at both a national and local level. Together these factors contributed to a set of circumstances which prevented the reoccurrence of true popular protest.[9] This chapter will add to this, building on the previous chapter's study of the 1595 riots in Hernhill and Canterbury to argue that notions of identity were changed by these circumstances, undermining the uniting superordinate identity of commonweal in the way it had previously been understood and used to motivate and justify political protest. It will argue that the way in which the Kentish commons in particular were treated in published plays and pamphlets in the 1590s also worked as a shift in their label, with a resulting impact on their behaviour.

In order to appreciate the sources fully, it is important to understand ideas of literacy and dissemination of written texts in early modern England. The gradual development of literate culture had, by this point, been in action for centuries; urban and manorial authorities had been keeping written records since the Conquest.[10] While history and understanding of customary law in localities was very much based within oral culture and memory, it is worth reiterating Daniel Woolf's point:

culture. Please see: Collinson, 'The Monarchical Republic of Elizabeth I', pp. 110-34; idem, 'The Elizabethan exclusion crisis and the Elizabethan polity', *Proceedings of the British Academy*, 84 (1994), 51–92; *The Monarchical Republic of Elizabeth I. Essays in Response to Patrick Collinson,* ed. John F. McDiarmaid (Manchester, 2007); Ian W. Archer, 'The 1590s: Apotheosis or Nemesis of the Elizabethan Regime?', in *Fins de Siecle: How Centuries End,* eds. A. Briggs and D. Snowman (New Haven, 1996), pp. 65-98; Simon Adams, 'Favourites, and Factions at the Elizabethan Court' in *Leicester and the Court: Essays on Elizabethan Politics,* ed. idem (Manchester, 2002), pp. 46-67; Hammer, *The Polarisation of Elizabethan Politics: The Political Career of Robert Devereux, 2nd Earl of Essex* (Cambridge, 1999); Alexandra Gajda, 'Political Culture in the 1590s: The 'Second Reign of Elizabeth', *History Compass,* 8 (2010), 88-100.

[7] Woolf, *The Social Circulation of the Past,* p. 12.

[8] The Oxfordshire Rebellion of 1596 does not really count, given its 'tragi-comic' failure, Fletcher and MacCulloch, p. 117.

[9] Fletcher and MacCulloch, *Tudor Rebellions,* pp.136-8; Wood, *The 1549 Rebellions,* pp. 187-207.

[10] Andrew Butcher has challenged the simplistic arguments of Clanchy and Britnell with regards to the description of lay writing as either 'literary' or 'pragmatic': Butcher, 'The functions of script in the speech community of a late medieval town, c.1300-1550', in *The Uses of Script and Print, 1300-1700,* eds. Julia Crick and Alexandra Walsham (Cambridge, 2004), pp. 159-62; M. T. Clanchy, *From Memory to Written*

> The relationship between memory and writing was fluid and dynamic. Most commentators perceived writing and memory as ranked extensions of each other – with writing very much the servant not the master – rather than as mutually exclusive or contradictory techniques of preserving knowledge.[11]

During the sixteenth century and in the years following, the friction within this relationship became more noticeable, with a growing distrust of memory and oral evidence and a greater reliance on the accuracy of written documentation. It could, and towards the end of the sixteenth century, often did challenge the way things had been done 'time out of mind'. This shift undermined the popular power and agency based in oral history and custom, something that was particularly felt in the relations between tenants and landlords in the seventeenth, eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.[12] In the sixteenth century, however, the links between written evidence and memory were more flexible. In the first chapter we have already come across instances of the use of written evidence in the example of the perambulation book of Wye, in which a written record of a previous perambulation was used in conjunction with oral report and a corroborative walking of the area in question as evidence in a court case.[13] However, as Hindle states regarding this tendency in local organisation, 'underlying the desire to inscribe perambulations in the written record rather than in memory was a more fundamental metanarrative about the changing relationship between the oral, the literate, and the social circulation of local knowledge.'[14] This friction should therefore be taken into account when considering any written sources, but particularly local ones, as the nature of writing and written evidence served as reflections of local 'social and cultural processes'.[15]

Efforts to estimate literacy rates in the sixteenth century arrive at different numbers, depending on the way in which literacy is measured.[16] Adam Fox has challenged the oft-used method of assuming that the numbers of those capable of signing their names was representative of those

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Record: England 1066-1307, 2nd Edn. (Oxford, 1993); R. Britnell, *Pragmatic Literacy, East and West 1200-1330* (Woodbridge, 1997); Woolf, *Social Circulation of the Past*, p. 281.

[11] Woolf, *Social Circulation of the Past*, p. 263.

[12] Wood, *The Memory of the People,* pp. 330-52.

[13] TNA, E 134/30&31Eliz/Mich11.

[14] Hindle, 'Beating the Bounds of the Parish', p. 221.

[15] N. Besnier, *Literacy, Emotion, and Authority: Reading and Writing on a Polynesian Atoll* (Cambridge, 1995), p. 169; Butcher, pp. 160-1.

[16] Fox, *Oral and Literate Culture*. For a discussion of the different meanings of 'literacy' and the complications that derive from them, see John S. Pendergast, *Religion, Allegory and Literacy in Early Modern England, 1560-1640: The Control of the Word* (Aldershot, 2006), pp. 17-20.

capable of reading. While R. S. Schofield made the judgement that this type of evidence is 'universal, standard and direct' and David Cressy has noted that 'when properly analysed [it] is remarkably sensitive to changes in the distribution and progress of literacy', Fox has pointed out that the disciplines of reading and writing were entirely different, and should not be confused with the modern conception of literacy.[17] The fluid understandings of what constituted a 'literate' or 'illiterate' person depended very much on context. The use of 'illiterate' as a descriptor might mean that an individual could read and write but had no Latin, that they could read but not write, that they could read the printed word but not manuscript handwriting, or that they could not read at all. These variations were embedded in notions of status and occupation, as well as whether one lived in an urban or rural setting.

Regardless, even those who could not read print were extremely likely to know someone who could, and were still influenced by literate culture. Printed ballads were often hung in houses, sung and discussed around the fire on winter nights or in alehouses, bible passages were read out loud in company, and proclamations were discussed and relayed among groups of locals.[18] Individuals therefore did not have to be able to read in order to interact with and understand the entertainment value, along with the significance and usefulness of writing. As it was, the centuries leading up to the early modern period had established a rich and intricate local culture: 'manuscript transmission, sermon exempla, minstrelsy, and drama had seen to it that the folklore of the village contained elements which came down from learned and literate culture'.[19] The influence of print in the sixteenth century changed the nature of this culture with a high influx of texts made easily accessible to the general population, to be bought, shared, and pinned up in public places. However, as Fox states:

> The contents of this print did not destroy circulation by word of
> mouth. Sometimes it enshrined material picked up from the oral
> realm; certainly it fed back into it. The written word helped to
> instruct people in what to sing, what to retell, and how to express

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[17] R.S. Schofield, 'The measurement of literacy in pre-industrial England', in *Literacy in Traditional Societies,* ed. Jack Goody (Cambridge, 1968), p. 319; David Cressy, *Literacy and the Social Order: Reading and Writing in Tudor and Stuart England* (Cambridge, 1980), p. 42; Fox, *Oral and Literate Culture*, pp. 11-19, 44-50, 407-9.
[18] Ibid., pp. 36-50.
[19] Ibid., p. 9.

themselves in ways which greatly enhanced and enriched their
cultural world.[20]

It is in this way that the printed accounts and characterisations of Kent and its people could enter into the collective consciousness of the commons of Kent, merging with local customs, tales, and histories, and by extension, influencing the ways in which individuals conceived of their Kentish identity.

This chapter will look at how individuals and groups chose to identify their communities in formal documents and how these texts interacted with daily life. It will also examine how the county of Kent was treated in plays, pamphlets and other literary texts, particularly in the 1590s as a reflection of the perceived identity of the commons of Kent in times of trouble, and as a way of changing the label in an attempt to provoke changed behaviours.

<u>Locality and writing</u>

The pieces of information which were found pertinent to write down in Perambulation books, Rentals, and Custumals are extremely significant to an understanding of how the community chose to identify itself and how it wanted to be seen by others, playing 'a special role in the self-consciousness and self-determination of community'.[21] The way in which these books were then used is indicative of the continued relevance of the information to community life, and therefore a sustained identification with the image portrayed in the text. As Butcher argues, the 'purpose' of such texts went 'far beyond simply recording details of immediate or short-term administrative use, providing a record of relationships and persons and families, and moral and political justifications, but also recording detail which express[ed] the nature of the community in perpetuity'. They also served to encompass 'the ways in which that community chang[ed] in relation to its customs and traditions, and, in turn, in relation to the perception of those customs and traditions by the outside world, a world of other authorities and powers'.[22] By recording specific local customs, names, and spaces in a functional manner, community texts such as custumals expressed the identity of the

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[20] Ibid., p. 9.
[21] Butcher, p. 161.
[22] Ibid., p. 162.

community showing what information was valued on a contemporary basis and the way in which contemporary practice was connected with the local past, families, and topography.

The value placed on community texts was made clear in an investigation into the customs of the manor of Hadlow. The people of Hadlow, a village in the Medway valley, had a strong system of rents and customs that were supported by the regular use of the Customary Book of the Manor of Hadlow.[23] In 1587 Walter Trice, a local mercer aged seventy-two, stated that he had kept a duplicate of the Customary Book for around thirty years, having had it copied 'out of an ould booke' by one Stephen Austen of Maidstone. The 'ould booke' was kept by George Bishop, a one-time resident of Hadlow who had relocated to Tonbridge, although Trice did not know for certain whether Bishop's book was itself a copy or the original, which had been 'presented by the tenaunts under theire Oathes in the ffourth yere of king Edward the fourth'. Nevertheless, he could say:

> that there hath byne heretofore no doubte (to his knowledge) made of the creditt of the same. And by reason that the Tenaunts of the said Manor of Hadloe were bound by theire Tenures to gather the Lordes rents & Customes, he this deponent thinketh that the said Custumary booke was made to that ende, that every of the said Tenants might have assured knowledge of that which he ought to paye. (TNA, E 134/29Eliz/Hil19)

This statement of intent, that the text was for the 'assured knowledge' of 'every of the said Tenants', demonstrates a common identity among the people of the manor of Hadlow in which they were aware of their rights. It suggests that this collective identity was strong enough for them to act by protecting the rights of themselves and their descendants. By arranging for the creation of this customary book, the tenants of the manor of Hadlow saw their customs and rents as information that was important enough to be recorded for perpetuity, or were perhaps anticipating a situation similar to that of the tenants of the manor of Morehouse, where written evidence was available for the tenants to use to defend their customary rights.[24] The existence of this book, then, and the 'creditt' in which it was

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[23] The Domesday book reported it as an area with arable land which was held under Edward the Confessor. Hasted, 'The lowy of Tunbridge: Hadlow', in *The History and Topographical Survey of the County of Kent, Vol. 5* (Canterbury, 1798), pp. 177-93.

[24] Discussed in the previous chapter: TNA, C 78/38/12.

held, stood as evidence of a united identity of a community with rights to be protected, but also served to reinforce that identity each time it was used or referred to.

The common acceptance that the Customary Book originated from the efforts of the tenants of the manor of Hadlow in the reign of Edward IV indicates how oral history and traditions could be combined with written documents to strengthen the political power of the tenants in their relationship with the lord of the manor. The efforts taken to uphold the Customary Book by preserving the existing one and having it copied demonstrates the importance the community of Hadlow placed in maintaining the rents and customs that generations of tenants before them had established. It also indicates that the information in the book was still relevant over a century later, and continued use of the book strengthened the temporal sense of community described in the first chapter, where people and events in the present were entwined with the past and the future. This community encompassed a variety of sorts of people in Hadlow, as seen by the ongoing use of the book by the tenants, whether they were literate or not. Yeoman Thomas Boorne, on being questioned on the details of a particular piece of land contained in the Customary Book, and of the credit in which it was held, stated that:

> he cannot answere what mencion the custumary booke hath, for he
> cannot write, nor reade: but he saith that the Custumary booke of
> the Manor of Hadloe ys of graet credite amongest the Tenaunts of
> the said Manor wherof this deponent ys one: So that they have
> recourse to yt in all theire questions & doubtes touching theire
> Tancancies of the said Manor. (TNA, E 134/29Eliz/Hil19)

This was a sentiment that was voiced repeatedly across the social orders; whether from the gentleman, Henry Reignolds, from another illiterate member of the community Thomas Sommer, from other yeomen, or from the mercer Walter Trice. In the village of Hadlow, then, the tenants knew their places within the community attached to the manor, along with their rights, rents, and customs.[25] Supported by a book which was collectively agreed to have been created by the tenants over a century before, they knew precisely who to go to when a question arose regarding rents or the details of their

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[25] In conjunction with Adam Fox's analysis of the spread of literacy in early modern England, it seems that the people of Hadlow formed part of that rural section of society with greater levels of illiteracy than perhaps might be found in urban settings. Whether individuals such as Boorne, who 'cannot write, nor reade', were able to read printed text is unclear. However, we can gain an understanding of the level of literacy considered necessary for life in Hadlow, as well as the way in which written texts were incorporated into the customary life of the locality, despite the fact that many locals could not read it.

tenancies. The general faith in the credit of this book, in its origins and its accuracy, also suggests that the owners of the manor had accepted that the contents were sound and abided by them. In this example, we see a facet of the relationship between landlord and tenants in Hadlow, based on the collectively accepted history of the manor, reaching at least back to the early 1460s when the Customary Book is said to have been collated.

The customary book of the manor of Hadlow was a text which played an active role in the lives of the tenants of the manor, known to and accessible to anyone who needed it, whether they could read or not. Much like in the example of the perambulation book of Wye discussed in the first chapter that incorporated writing, memory, and action in the determination of land boundaries, this shows a flexible use of written documents within a primarily oral culture. It demonstrates the existence of a community of past tenants secure in their collective identity, which reinforced that identity in their tenant descendants in both their present customary issues and in their relationships and identifications with their forbears.

Other texts, from towns, operated on a similar level, but contained different elements, and displayed them with a more self-conscious air. These custumals had more of an external awareness to their contents than the practical customary book of the manor of Hadlow, which was used by tenants, for tenants.[26] This is evident in the information considered pertinent throughout the custumals. The Custumal of Tenterden, for example, clearly sets out its urban nature through constant mentions of the offices of the town:[27]

> Itt is att this assembly decreed and ordered that all the Records and
> muniments of the Towne hundred of Tenterden shalbe presently
> removed and Laid in the presse provided for that purpose, Except
> the Charters and customall which shall remayne in the Custody of
> the Maior for the time being, And except all suche Books and
> Reccords which the Towne Clerke use of. And the fowre Keyes of
> the said presse shalbe kept in manner and forme following (viz) the
> first key by the Maior for the timebeing, the second key by such

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[26] Although, as the customary book of the manor of Hadlow does not seem to have survived, we cannot know how it defined itself – only how it was used by the tenants of the manor.
[27] The Custumal of Tenterden, KHLC, Te/C1, is a collection of copies of records going back to a charter of Henry VI from 1449, presumably compiled around 1558, with additional entries continuing until 1688.

> Jurate as shalbe the succeeding Maior, the thirde key by the Towne
>
> Clerke, And the 4ᵗʰ key by the Chamberlayne for the time being.
>
> (KHLC, Te/C1, ff. 113v-114)

The bureaucratic nature of the government of the town is very evident, with references to the Mayor, Jurats, Chamberlain and town clerk and their responsibilities and rituals. The value held by such documents was demonstrated by the efforts made to protect and secure them, and this excerpt makes a point to associate control over written documents with authority within the community. It continues on to state:

> And that it shall and may be Laufull for every ffreeman of this
>
> Towne and hundred every Court day holde in the after no one of
>
> the same day the Court being ended to goe and see every Reccord
>
> decree or other matter whatsoever which shall concerne himselfe
>
> freely. And everie straunger therefore to pay his ordinary ffee to
>
> the Towne Clerke. (f. 114)

Again, access to records and the control of access to them are clearly emphasised in the custumal and are a reflection of power structures and status within the town.

The group responsible for arranging this document (the local authorities) therefore portray Tenterden as a well-organised and hierarchical town with a responsible urban elite. This is enhanced by the timeline towards the end of the custumal, which provides the names and dates of the bailiffs of the town and hundred of Tenterden 'from the beginning of the liberty begun in the twenty & seaventh yeares of the reigne of Kinge Henry the sixte'.[28] The focus on the importance of officials and their duties, tied up in documentation and legal proceedings shows us how the local government of Tenterden saw themselves, or how they wanted to be seen. Nor were the officials of Tenterden the only group with an image to project. By looking at these sources together it is possible to determine the way in which these town custumals fit within a particular style, and how they might have fashioned their portrayal in order to project the desired image. The Custumal of Faversham begins with a charter of incorporation from Henry VIII, assigning the necessities such as a mayor, jurats, and

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[28] Although this custumal seems to have been put together at the end of Elizabeth and the beginning of James' reign, it is obviously based on a collection of older records; this timeline is copied from a version written in an older hand in the following pages., KHLC, Te/C1, f. 136v.

a common seal for 'universall proffytt & Commone utilitie'.[29] A composite book which contains custumal records from some of the Cinque Port towns shows the dominant theme of official government positions, their duties, and their reliance upon written documentation as evidence and validation.[30]

The Cinque Ports composite book also provides an interesting look into the official networks between certain towns, and the ways in which they wanted to remember them. One example is the appearance of 'one auncient Booke in parchment called the Customall of the said Towne of ffordwich' in the description of a Chancery dispute over rights to fishing on the river adjacent to the manors of Stourmouth, Hopland and Hersing, and others in the parish of Westbere.[31] In conjunction with support from witnesses, it provided proof that:

> ffordwich is an auntient Towne And tyme out of minde hath bene
> a member of the Cinque ports videlicit of Sandwich & incorporate
> by the name of Maior jurats & Cominalty And that the said River
> and the lands one bothe sides thereof so farre as a man standing in
> a bote in the said river at full sea can throwe an axe of Seaven pound
> weight called a Taper axe uppon the lande from ffordwich Towne
> to Stowermouth are and tyme out of minde have bene within the
> liberties of the Cinque ports & of ffordwich (KHLC, Sa/CPc4,
> p. 90)

Here there is a very clear statement of identity coming through from the community of Fordwich, primarily derived from its position as a limb of the Cinque Port of Sandwich and as an incorporated town. However the custumal, as well as 'many other ancient rolls and records of the said Towne', worked within an oral, traditional culture; it was considered alongside 'the full and deliberate hereinge thereof and of all the witnesses deposed'. The measurement used, of a man standing in a boat at high tide throwing a specific axe of a particular weight, was very much understood in the physical sense

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[29] The custumal itself seems to have been made in the late seventeenth century, but the date for the charter of incorporation is 27 January, 1546. KHLC, U3847/Z1, ff. 1-4.

[30] KHLC, Sa/CPc4. This book seems to have been composed towards the end of the sixteenth century or the beginning of the seventeenth century, but includes extracts of reports from 1378 and the last entry was in 1617. It was possibly put together by James Thurbarne, whose name is recorded several times at the beginning and who stood in Parliament for New Romney in 1597, with further connections in Sandwich.

[31] KHLC, Sa/CPc4, p. 91.

and use of the landscape, in a similar way to the recording of boundaries as if they were being actually walked.

Another example in the composite book is the arrangements made between New Romney and its limb, Lydd. The first words, 'A composicion was made betweene the jurats and Barons of the towne of Romeney of thone party And there Combarons & inhabitants of the Towne of Lidd on the other party', leaves no confusion as to the nature and status of the individuals involved.[32] Not only were they significant local officials of corporate towns, but as with the community of Fordwich, they were linked by their positions as Cinque Ports and 'Combarons'. This is supported by one of the subsequent agreements:

> where the jurats and Barons of the said Towne of Romeney afore
> this tyme have bene charged with the finding of five shipps to and
> and in the Kings voyage royall whensoever that it happened to bee
> or fall That when & as oft as it shall happen the said charge to
> happen or fall in tyme cominge That then the said Barons and
> inhabitants of the said Towne of Lidd for the tyme beinge and there
> successors shall finde one of the said v shippes at there proper costs
> and charges (KHLC, Sa/CPc4, p. 57)

Their unique responsibilities are encapsulated in the duties to provide five ships whenever they were needed by the crown. This is a reminder of their position on the coast of Kent and the combination of vulnerability to invasion as well as the privileges that came with the status of being a Cinque Port, which created a peculiar identity for these communities.

Despite this overt focus on projecting an urban community identity of official duty and legal structures, it is important to remember the significance of the inclusion of other types of information. The incorporation of records of personal statements, histories, court depositions and perambulations of boundaries, custumals were 'self-consciously intertextual', produced by 'writers who recognise the importance of the personal and the oral in their compositions' and the 'social force' of such reports.[33] The choice to combine these different types of source within a town's custumal can therefore be placed within broader contexts of political, social, historical and literate conventions.

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[32] Ibid., p. 57.
[33] Butcher, p. 157.

The community can therefore be seen to engage with certain levels of identity and by conforming to certain types of such conventions, the self-fashioning of the town can be seen to take place.

One political and historical element, which has come up several time in this thesis and which might therefore be expected in some Kentish custumals, is the one of invasion. The local history of invasion and the very real vulnerability of Kent to seaborne attack can also be seen in the moments chosen to be recorded. In its chronicle of town bailiffs, the custumal of Tenterden contains occasional additional marginal notes. One of these reads: 'This yeare the ffrench men came to Sandwiche and there lay one night and a daye.' Other comments consist of 'This yeare Callis was loste' and 'This yeare the Spanish fleete came Fore England aboute St James tide 1588'. Here, mixed in with the official identity that it was so important to maintain, was a story of invasion and defence too significant to be forgotten. The fact that the rather distant French descent on Sandwich (1457) and the more recent loss of Calais (1558) were recorded in the local chronicle of the town of Tenterden suggests that, in addition to the local corporate identity depicted by the emphasis on bailiffs, a wider identity was felt. Whether this was as part of a general Kentish feeling of vulnerability similar to that expressed by the community of Whitley Forest, or simply the result of their position as a limb of the Cinque Port of Rye, it signifies an identification felt beyond the limits of the town articulated in a document whose primary purpose was local.

This wider consciousness is also evident in the nature and form of the writing itself. New Romney's section of the composite custumal, for example, can be placed not only within the context of what corporate towns and Cinque Ports should be and represent, but also within the wider Renaissance traditions of literature and antiquarianism. Its first pages are devoted to providing an educated history of the port of New Romney. There are the obvious references to the port's status as part of 'the brother hood […] of the whole ports', in addition to its identity as a corporation, mentioning records from the reign of Richard II:

> in ould Romney some tyme there was a maior which old Romeny
> and newe Romeny (it saith) is but one franshese and corporacon
> and that is well knowne for when old Romney was removed unto
> Newe Romney there was a Mayre and in the day of the election of

the comons there was variaunce betwene two men whoe should be

Mayre (KHLC, Sa/CPc4, p. 2)

This is immersed, however, in a history of Romney in the style of antiquarian literature, showing a conscious engagement with the relevant works of the time. In the very first sentence, the writer's awareness of and interaction with the contemporary written discourse is apparent; 'The towne and Port of Newe Romeney or Romeny is called in Saxon Rumenea – that is the large watry place as appearethe by Mr Lambard in his perambulacon of kent: but in the auncient Records of the said towne it is called Romenall or Romene'.[34] References to 'auncient Records' alongside comments such as 'the accompt whereof remaineth in the records of the accompts of that towne', make a point of its legitimacy as a piece of scholarly work.[35] The continued references to William Lambarde, not to mention the numerous passages lifted from the *Perambulation of Kent* going back to Roman Britain, as well as to Romney under William the Conqueror and Edward the Confessor, indicate an interplay with wider writing conventions and an assertion that Romney's custumal warranted a place within Renaissance antiquarian writing.

While New Romney's account took part in literary discourse on a national level, history and geography on a very local level, and concepts of brotherhood, duty and status as a corporate town and a Cinque Port, it also laid claim to an identity of a peculiarly Kentish kind. The custumal states at the beginning that 'by some auntient Chronichles it is affirmed that Julius Cesar did arive there from ffraunce and was by the inhabitants of the Contry driven from thence and yet after that hee was received into the Country'.[36] This seems to fit into a recurring trope linked to the Kentish motto of *Invicta*. The concept of the Kentish people taking on what could be termed an invasion, whether a literal or religious, and twisting it into a story of Kentish agency and empowerment, created a general feeling of the 'free' Kentish folk as being 'unconquered'.

The original tale, and the most famous, is rooted in the Norman invasion. Lambarde, who based his information on the writings of Thomas Spot, a monk and chronicler of St Augustine's, and the particular privileges and customs of Kent in his own time, reported the story towards the

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[34] KHLC, Sa/CPc4, p. 1.
[35] Ibid., p. 2.
[36] Ibid., p. 1.

beginning of his *Perambulation of Kent*.[37] In response to the defeat of King Harold at Battle the previous year and the Conqueror's march to subdue Kent and take Dover Castle in 1067, Stigande, the Archbishop of Canterbury, and Egelsine, the Abbot of St Augustine's, gathered the commons of Kent together to defend their land and rights. They made their stand at Swanscombe:

> Eache man gotte him a greene boughe in his hand, and bare it over
> his head, in suche sort, as when the Duke approched, he was muche
> amased therewith, thinking at the first, that it had ben some
> miraculous wood, that moved towards him: But they as soone as
> hee came within hearing, caste away their boughs from them, and
> at the sounde of a trumpet bewraied their weapons (p. 23)

A messenger was sent to the Conqueror with the following message: 'The commons of Kent (most noble Duke) are readie to offer thee, eyther peace, or warre, at thine own choyse, and election: peace with their faithfull obedience, if thou wilt permit them to enjoy their ancient liberties: warre, and that moste deadly, if thou deny it them.'[38] The duke conceded, and as a result the Kentish retained certain rights and customs in contrast to the rest of the country: the most famous of which was the custom of gavelkind.

Along with the success against the Conqueror and New Romney's tale about their clash with the Romans, there are others which emphasise the agency of Kentish people in situations which could be considered to be invasions. One example is at the dale between Kent and Surrey, named Holmesdale, where the people of Kent, inspired by their king, Edward (otherwise known as Edward the Elder), 'assembled themselves, and gave to the Danes, that had many yeares before afflicted them, a moste sharpe and fierce encounter, in the which, after long fight, they prevailed, and the Danes were overthrowne and vanquished.'[39] A similar battle in Otford, in the same valley, was a source of pride:

> This victorie […] begate, as I gesse, the common by word, used
> amongst the inhabitants of this vale, even till this present day, in
> which they vaunt after this manner.

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[37] Lambarde (1576), p. 22.
[38] Ibid., p. 23.
[39] Ibid., p. 382.

> The vale of Holmesdale,
>
> Never wonne nor never shal. (p. 382)

A repeated trope of Kentish success and agency over oppression or 'invasion' can therefore be found in local histories and myths of the county. The conscious commemoration of these local histories in poems and custumals, and discussion which was then recorded by scholars like Lambarde, indicates a sense of pride and a certain awareness of an identification with the notion of *Invicta* and of being active in the face of a threat.

Kent's legal peculiarities as a supposed result of its negotiations with the duke of Normandy and concepts of *Invicta* were reinforced by ongoing interactions throughout the thirteenth century, in which Kentish customs were continuously refined, but with the recognition that the 'laws and customs of Kent differed from the customs and laws of other counties'.[40] Established by the royal justices in Eyre who visited the county in 1293 and 1300, at least two copies of a written declaration of rights and customs existed as the *Custumal of Kent*.[41] It contained specifics on the nature of gavelkind in Kent, particularly with regards to the generous inheritance of widows and the conditions for it, the inheritance for widowers, partible inheritance for sons, and 'freedome of birth'.[42] Some work has been done on the different versions of the *Custumal of Kent*, attempting to identify when and where they were from, how they were used, how they survived, and whether they were 'corrupt'; however, for this study these points are less important than how they were remembered and used in the sixteenth century.[43]

In Terence Murphy's words, 'If Swanscombe was the Runnymede of Kent, then the Kentish Customal was the county's Magna Carta.'[44] The theme of Invicta and freedom for the people of Kent were encapsulated by the last line of the *Custumal of Kent*: 'These be the usages of Gavelkind, & of

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[40] This particular example comes from the 1259 visitation of Hugh Bigod, baronial justiciar, at Canterbury, over questions regarding gavelkind: '*quia leges et consuetudines Kancie diversificantur a consuetudinibus aliorum comitatuum*' cited in Paul Brand, 'Local custom in the early common law', in *Law, Laity and Solidarities: Essays in honour of Susan Reynolds,* eds. Pauline Stafford, Janet L. Nelson and Jane Martindale (Manchester, 2001), p. 157.

[41] Felix Hull, 'The Custumal of Kent', *Arch. Cant.,* 71 (1958), 148.

[42] Lambarde, (1576) p. 22.

[43] For discussion of the versions of the Custumal of Kent please see: Hull, 'The Custumal of Kent', 148-59; Hull, 'John de Berwycke and the consuetudines Kancie', *Arch. Cant.,* 96 (1980), 1-15; Brand, 'Local custom in the early common law'; F.R.H. de Boulay, *The Lordship of Canterbury* (London, 1966), pp. 144-5; Murphy, pp. 75-86.

[44] Murphy, p. 75.

Gavelkind men in Kent, whiche were before the conquest, and at the Conquest, and ever since till now'.[45] This Custumal, as both 'a cause and a manifestation of Kentish individuality and localism', occupied a significant place in the history and identity of Kent. The county's special customs were still in use in the sixteenth century, and the *Custumal of Kent* was evidently considered relevant by contemporaries. One copy of the custumal can be found as part of a 'statute book' of Queenborough which continued to be used for memoranda, by-laws, and other official notes into the reign of Mary I.[46] Richard Tottel, a printer and book-seller with a particular focus on legal texts, published a copy of the *Custumal of Kent* in 1536 and as part of his publication of *Magna Carta* in 1556.[47] William Lambarde followed this by including a copy of the custumal in his *Perambulation of Kent* in 1576, stating that he used an 'ancient and faire written Roll' from his father-in-law which had once belonged to 'Baron Hales', and claimed it was from the reign of Edward I. Felix Hull has analysed the contents of the versions of the *Custumal of Kent*, pointing out that the copies by Tottel and Lambarde were very different and probably based on two main original versions: one with a legal focus and one with an ecclesiastical focus.[48] Again, the accuracy and attention to the original does not matter quite so much as the way in which it was interpreted in Tudor England. The necessity of publishing this document in the 1500s, and the fact that these customs were still in action at this time tells us that the *Custumal of Kent* was still relevant in a practical, legal, and scholarly sense. Tottel's publication of a copy alongside other legal documents such as the Magna Carta suggests that he considered it to be of particular relevance within a legal context, that understanding the peculiar customs and rights of Kent separately from the rest of English common law was still necessary at the time of publication.

Although Lambarde also came from a legal background, his version of the *Custumal of Kent* existed as part of a more intricate mixture of influences. Living and often working in Kent himself,

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[45] As translated by Lambarde and included in his version of the Custumal of Kent: '*Ces sont les usages de Gavilekend,e de Gavylekendeys en Ke*nt*, que furent devaunt le conquest,e en le Conquest, e totes houres ieskes en ca',* in Lambarde (1576), p. 427.

[46] The naming of the source as a 'statute book' can be attributed to C. E. Woodruff. 'Consuetudines Kancie' can be found amongst other statutes, including the Magna Carta itself: KHLC, Qb/AZ/1, ff. 105v-108. For more discussion on the Queenborough text in Hull 'The Custumal of Kent', 149-150, which criticises Woodruff's report on the source: Woodruff, 'Notes on the Municipal Records of Queenborough', *Arch. Cant.,* 22 (1897), 169-88.

[47] Hull, 'The Custumal of Kent', 148; Murphy, p. 76.

[48] Hull, 'The Custumal of Kent', 159.

Lambarde had a personal investment and knowledge of the county. Influenced by Renaissance concepts of history and scholarly research, the *Perambulation of Kent* fits in contemporary literary traditions of antiquarian practices and origin myths, in addition to engaging with the relevant legal peculiarities of the county. His histories and descriptions of localities in Kent provide a rich understanding of how the physical and the historical existed together. Contrary to Alsop's comment that Lambarde 'exhibited no appreciation of landscape', it can be argued that, while he did not expend much effort on imagery of fields and trees, his entire work was based on the use and interaction with the landscape in the way that it was entwined with the historical, social and political acts which were so important to recount.[49] Comments on places like the Weald as a 'Desert, and waste Wildernesse', the details of Reculvers and 'the water Wantsume, that ranne two sundrie ways', and the 'inclosed Horne parke' in Eltham, 'one of the three, that be here', were made with regards to the ways in which they influenced life in each location.[50]

This practical understanding of land and practices is also evident in the way in which Lambarde approached the legal aspects of the issue. In his preamble to his version of the *Custumal of Kent,* printed at the end of the *Perambulation,* he states:

> These customes, therefore, being (for the most part)
> discrepant from the common lawes of our Realme, and
> annexed to suche landes within this Shyre, as beare the name
> of Gavelkinde, are commonly called Gavelkinde Customes,
> for that they prevaile and have place, in landes of Gavelkinde
> nature. In which respect, it shall not be amisse to shewe, for
> what reason these landes were at the first so termed, and why
> they do yet hitherto continue the name. (p. 388)

The distinction of Kent from the rest of the realm is evident throughout much of Lambarde's discussion of Kent as a county. It is visible at the very beginning of his history in his claim that Kent was the very first place to be inhabited in England.[51] For Lambarde, it was clear that the history of the county was still evident in the way it was experienced in his own time, in terms of custom as well

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[49] J.D. Alsop, 'Lambarde, William (1536–1601)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, eds. H. C. G. Matthew and Brian Harrison. (Oxford, 2004) <http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/15921> [Accessed 09.07.17].
[50] Lambarde (1576), pp. 176, 207, 386.
[51] Ibid., p. 14.

as attitude. Kent's particular circumstances meant that Kentish common people were 'most commonly civil, just, & bountiful'.[52] The fact that a version of the *Custumal of Kent* was published again in 1741 in Thomas Robinson's *The Common Law of Kent or the Customs of Gavelkind* suggests that this interest did not end in the sixteenth century.[53]

Lambarde's methods of research for the *Perambulation of Kent* consisted of a combination of documentary scholarship and interaction with local people, providing a way for them to share their stories, shaped, of course, by Lambarde himself. This was not especially dissimilar from the ways in which individuals engaged with John Foxe during the compilation of his *Acts and Monuments*. As touched upon in the previous chapter, the power of martyrdom was not so much in the death itself as in the narrative created around it. As Paul Middleton concludes, 'what is martyrdom? In the end, martyrdom cannot be defined; martyrdom is what martyrdom does; a narrative that creates or maintains group identity, by holding up an ideal representative of the community, who chose to or is made to die for its values.'[54] Foxe's dominant narrative of the Marian martyrs in the first edition of 1563 established for Elizabethan England the official Protestant line that was so necessary for the regime: perhaps more resonant among the populace due to their personal experiences of witnessing local martyrdoms. This is particularly evident in its reception and in the developments of the progressive editions throughout Elizabeth's reign, although it would become more complicated with Foxe's disillusionment with the Elizabethan Church Settlement in the editions of the 1570s; the inclusion of the admonitory oration by John Hales to Elizabeth in the 1576 edition is especially telling.[55] Nevertheless, regardless of Foxe's intention towards Elizabeth's religious policies, the efforts made by Cecil and the Privy Council to make sure that the 1570 edition of *Acts and Monuments* was made available to the public in parish churches, cathedrals, and the houses of senior clergy had the effect of giving the book a 'quasi-Biblical authority' and served to reinforce the text as the face of English Protestant identity.[56] Thomas Freeman has examined the ways in which individuals contacted Foxe with information about martyrs they knew or martyrdoms they witnessed. One such

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[52] Ibid., p. 11.
[53] Hull, 'The Custumal of Kent', 149.
[54] Middleton, 'What is Martyrdom?', 130.
[55] Freeman, 'Notes on a Source'; idem, 'John Foxe: A Biography', in *The Unabridged Acts and Monuments Online* (Sheffield, 2011). Available from: <http//www.johnfoxe.org> [Accessed: 05.08.17].
[56] Elizabeth Evenden and Freeman, 'Print, Profit and Propaganda: The Elizabethan Privy Council and the 1570 Edition of Foxe's "Book of Martyrs"', *English Historical Review,* 119 (2004), 1302-3.

example was the letters sent by Roger Hall on behalf of his sister, the martyr Alice Benden.[57] The motive for this was clearly personal, with Hall interested in clearing the name of his sister and immortalising her 'tribulations and heroism' in print, although he also provided information on others such as the miller Edmund Allin and his wife, presumably in response to a request from Foxe for more information.[58] The decision by Foxe, to not print other information given to him on martyrs whose beliefs did not conform to the image he wanted to project, demonstrates his role as the director of the history of English Protestantism.

A similar intent can be seen in Lambarde's *Perambulation of Kent*, in which his scholarly account of the geography and history of the county reframed the landscape from a position of orthodox English Protestantism. A 'Free Schoole' in Sandwich built in the space of an old monastery, for example, inspired 'hope, that the common wealth shall reape more profite after a fewe yeares: then it receaved commoditie by the Carmelites, since the time of their first foundation'.[59] Equally, the ruins and decay in Canterbury were celebrated, 'considering the maine Seas of sinne and iniquitie, wherein the worlde (at those dayes) was almost whole drenched, I must needs take cause, highly to prayse God, that has thus mercifully in our age delivered us'.[60] Both Foxe and Lambarde rewrote history and space in a way that promoted a particular Protestant English identity.

This identity, and the power that Foxe's *Acts and Monuments* held through its popularity in England, was recognised and engaged with by individuals who were able to use the overall message for their own political reasons. The information provided by John Hall on the curate John Day, ultimately not included by Foxe due to the implications of the anti-Trinitarian beliefs of the martyrs involved, was probably partly due to a desire by Hall, an established Protestant who supported Wyatt in 1554, to discredit his rival.[61] Patrick Collinson's work on the Fletchers of Cranbrook also demonstrates how the *Acts and Monuments* could be used to cultivate a certain identity for political

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[57] Alice Benden was one of seven martyrs burned at Canterbury in June 1557. Freeman, 'Notes on a Source' 205-6.
[58] Ibid., 206, 211
[59] Lambarde (1576), pp. 106-7; Bartram, ''Some Tomb for a Remembraunce'', p. 136.
[60] Lambarde (1576), pp. 235-6; Aston, 'English Ruins and English History', p. 329; Walsham, *The Reformation of the Landscape,* p. 147.
[61] Freeman, 'Notes on a Source', 208; For more on John Hall, see Rivkah Zim, 'Hall, John (1529/30-1568/9), surgeon and author', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford, 2004), <http:www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/11967> [Accessed: 10.08.17]; J.W. Bride, 'John Hall of Maidstone: a famous surgeon of the 16th century', *Arch. Cant.,* 63 (1950), 119-21.

purposes. By 1579, Richard Fletcher, the orthodox vicar of Cranbrook, was in conflict with certain members of his congregation.[62] Several members of the community, some of whom acknowledged Fletcher's role in their conversion, had progressed to a more puritanical inclination and were supported by some of the more radical curate-preachers, namely John Strowd, Thomas Ely and Dudley Fenner.[63] By volunteering information on the martyrdom of Christopher Wade, emphasising his defence of Edwardian doctrine and the details of his burning, or 'marriage', Fletcher and his son were able to situate their Protestantism as part of Foxe's great narrative.[64] Collinson asks the question: '[w]as the vicar of Cranbrook concerned to hold his place in "the English Protestant tradition", or to remind Foxe's readers in Kent that Wade's dying words were an endorsement of prayer-book religion?'[65] The answer is probably both, with the inclusion in *Acts and Monuments* of Fletcher's presence at Wade's martyrdom identifying Fletcher and his practices with the celebrated patriotic religion espoused in Foxe's popular martyrology. This identification was intended as a reminder of his Protestant credentials to reinforce his position within his parish.

It is clear that local custumals, county custumals, antiquarian literature and martyrologies existed as part of an interrelated network of literary traditions which were created as a result of ongoing interactions with each other as well as with written documents and local oral culture. As a result, these sources captured a combination of local, regional, and national identities incorporating the landscape, local politics, religion, and customs. The types of information which were chosen to be included in these texts counted as a way of picking what to remember and what to forget, creating a self-conscious image of the locality and its people, whether dominated by the perspective of a strong tenant community, such as in the manor of Hadlow, or a proudly incorporated town, such as one of the Cinque Ports. It also encapsulated other vital elements of identity, such as the orthodox religion of the Fletchers of Cranbrook, or the proud histories of military success and *Invicta* in places such as New Romney or Holmesdale. In these texts, communities were taking the information discussed in the previous three chapters, engaging with contemporary writing traditions and the ideals of

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[62] Fletcher was presented for implying that some of his parishioners were schismatics by churchwardens in 1579. Collinson, 'Cranbrook and the Fletchers', pp. 399-428.
[63] Employed in Cranbrook between 1575 and 1585. Ibid., pp. 414, 416.
[64] For more on Wade's martyrdom please see previous chapter.
[65] Collinson, 'Cranbrook and the Fletchers', p. 422.

townships and communities, and defining themselves in relation to that information; these texts were a way in which groups fashioned their image in the way they thought it should be.

<div align="center">External perspectives</div>

Literary portrayals of Kent conceived outside the county typically engage with two main tropes: the richness of the land, and the rebelliousness of its people. This duality is summarised in *2 Henry VI*, when Lord Saye says of Kent that "'tis *bona terra, mala gens*', or 'a good land, a bad people'.[66] The previous section has shown that on some level communities were aware of external influences such as literary traditions and ideals. Consequently, external perceptions of Kent as a county and the people in it must be considered. Labelling Theory, as mentioned in the introduction, suggests that the way an individual is identified as a member of a certain group with certain behaviours can influence that individual to eventually behave according to the way they have been labelled.[67] This is particularly relevant with regards to the perception of the people of Kent as rebellious. The actions of the Cornish rebels in 1497 were extremely suggestive regarding the way in which the Kentish people were perceived from outside of the county. The march to Blackheath, a space which could be considered to embody the commons of Kent in rebellion and all the ideological implications that accompanied them, followed by the swift collapse of the Cornish rebellion at the opposition of the Kentish people, signified the power that came with Kent's rebellious identity. The fact that the county's history with rebellion was included in histories, chronicles, and plays even at the end of the sixteenth century means that, despite not having actually risen in rebellion since the mid-Tudor era, Kent's association with rebellion was still considered relevant. As a result, the nature of the national discussion of this topic may well have had a significant effect on the identities and behaviour of the people of Kent.

One way in which a rebellious identification of Kent was circulated among the people of England was in chronicles and plays.[68] Kent's prominence in English chronicles owes, once again, to

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[66] 2 Henry VI, IV.7.58.

[67] Becker, *Outsiders,* pp. 31, 34-6.

[68] The use made of chronicles by playwrights such as Shakespeare has been well-researched. Please see: John Kerrigan, *Shakespeare's Originality* (Oxford, 2018); Dominique Goy-Blanquet, 'Elizabethan Historiography and Shakespeare's Sources', in *The Cambridge Companion to Shakespeare's History Play,* ed. M. Hattaway (Cambridge, 2002), pp. 62-9; Kenneth Muir, *The Sources of Shakespeare's Plays* (London, 1977).

its position as 'the Key of Englande' in the country's history of invasion and interaction with the Continent.[69] Its additional history of involvement in popular rebellion, described in depth in several chronicles, added to the general perception of Kent as full of rebellious people and often coloured the way in which they were treated in contemporary literature. Edward Hall's description of the Kentish people as 'impacient in wronges disdayning of to much oppression, and ever desirous of new chaung and new fangelnes' has already been brought up in the previous chapter and is a good example of the way in which they were portrayed.[70] This phrase was taken directly from Polydore Vergil's *Anglica Historia* (1534), and suggests a long-held perception of the people of Kent.[71] This trope can also be seen in Holinshed's *Chronicle*, where similar perceptions of Kent to that of the Cornish rebels come through in his depiction of the Norfolk rebellion of 1549. The Norfolk rebels, he states, would not stand down after they heard rumours that the commons of Kent were committing anti-enclosure activity, leading 'diverse sedicious persons and busie fellowes […] to complayne that the like had not bene done in Norffolke'.[72] This spurred them on to continue their own rising.[73] The messages and interpretations about the histories and behaviours of the commons of Kent as 'fiery' and rebellious would have been absorbed and internalised by Kentish people, tapping into local collective experiences of political protest.[74] A susceptibility to written texts calling upon the commons and their identity as rebellious defenders of the commonweal had already been displayed in their responses to the open letters and popular poetry in the Wars of the Roses. The label of being 'impacient in wronges disdayning of to much oppression' would not have contradicted that identity, and would probably have reinforced it.

In the popular history plays of Elizabethan England, particularly in the 'hungry 1590s' which will be explored further below, a depiction of the character of the county of Kent was once again relevant.[75] In stage plays it was possible to engage with politically contentious discourses that were dangerous to discuss on a day-to-day basis. This meant that plays such as *2 Henry VI, The First and*

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[69] Holinshed, p. 293.
[70] Hall, *Chronicle,* p. 219.
[71] Murphy, p. 121.
[72] Holinshed, p. 1656.
[73] Ibid.
[74] For discussion of 'Kentish fire', see Murphy, pp. 120-33; Everitt, *The Community of Kent and the Great Rebellion,* pp. 16, 68-69.
[75] Collinson, 'Cranbrook and the Fletchers', p. 426; Wood, 'Brave Minds and Hard Hands', pp. 84-101.

Second Parts of King Edward IV, and *The Life and Death of Jack Straw,* all of which dealt with popular rebellion, made the stage itself 'a site for the public disclosure of popular politics', and due to Kent's role in these rebellions, also made itself a site for the public characterisation of Kentish identity.[76] In the history plays of the 1590s we can see the way in which the chronicle accounts of Hall and Holinshed were used and embellished, although the interactions between chronicle and play are still being debated. Stuart Hampton-Reeves has recently challenged the traditional argument that Shakespeare changed the chronicled accounts by adding in scenes from the Peasants' Revolt, turning Cade from a 'young man of goodly stature and pregnant wit' into a 'cruel and stupid' rebel.[77] Instead, Hampton-Reeves argues that Shakespeare's account of Cade's rebellion actually softens the somewhat bloodthirsty version produced in Hall's *Chronicle,* pointing out Hall's characterisation of Cade as 'a pompous, tyrannical butcher' and noting that Shakespeare removed the worst of the violence that was included in the chronicles.[78] What Shakespeare manages to do, however, with *2 Henry VI*, is to bring forward the unique combination of rebellious rhetoric and traditions alongside Kentish history and peculiarities that made up a specific type of Kentish identity and reputation.[79]

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[76] Wood, 'Brave Minds and Hard Hands', p. 87.

[77] Stuart Hampton-Reeves, 'Kent's Best Man: Radical Chorographic Consciousness and the Identity Politics of Local History in Shakespeare's 2 Henry VI', *Journal for Early Modern Cultural Studies,* 14, (2014), 71-5; The main arguments he contradicts are in Geraldo de Sousa, 'The Peasants' Revolt and the Writing of History in *2 Henry VI*', in *Reading and Writing in Shakespeare,* ed. David M. Bergeron (Newark, 1996), pp. 178-93; Alan Sinfield, *Faultlines: Cultural Materialism and the Politics of Dissident Reading* (Oxford, 1992), p. 21; Richard Wilson, *Will Power: Essays on Shakespearean Authority* (Hemel Hempstead, 1993), p. 27; Brents Stirling, *The Populace in Shakespeare* (New York, 1949).

[78] Hampton-Reeves, 'Kent's Best Man', 70-6.

[79] The ongoing debate over whether *2 Henry VI* was a result of collaboration between Shakespeare and Christopher Marlowe should be mentioned here. If true, it would add to the themes of Kentishness throughout the play, given that Marlowe was from Canterbury and would therefore have had more intimate knowledge of Kentish customs and feelings than someone from outside the county. Certainly, *The New Oxford Shakespeare* accepts that Marlowe was 'almost certainly responsible for part or all of the scenes depicting the Cade Rebellion', see Rory Loughnane, '*2 Henry VI;* Introduction', in *The New Oxford Shakespeare: Critical Reference Edition, Vol.* 2, eds. Gary Taylor, John Jowett, Terri Bourus and Gabriel Egan (Oxford, 2017), p. 2471. It has also, however, been argued that the claim that Marlowe contributed to *2 Henry VI* is unlikely, and that the second and third parts of *Henry VI* were written solely by Shakespeare. This then resituates the play as a true external perspective of Kentish identity and history, to be viewed by those from both inside and outside of the county. For some of the debate on the authorship of *2 Henry VI*, please see Hugh Craig, 'The Three Parts of Henry VI' in *Shakespeare, Computers, and the Mystery of Authorship,* eds. Craig and Arthur F. Kinney (Cambridge, 2009), pp. 40-77; Brian Vickers, 'Shakespeare and Authorship Studies in the Twenty-First Century', *Shakespeare Quarterly,* 62 (2011), 106-142; Ants Oras, *Pause Patterns in Elizabethan and Jacobean Drama: An Experiment in Prosody* (Gainesville, 1960); Philip Timberlake, *The Feminine Ending in English Blank Verse: A Study of its Use by Early Writers in the Measure and its Development in the Drama up to the Year 1595* (Menasha, 1931); Douglas Bruster, 'Shakespeare's Pauses, Authorship, and Early Chronology', *Studia Metrica et Poetica*, 2 (2015), 25-47; John V. Nance, '"We, John Cade": Shakespeare, Marlowe, and the authorship of 4.2.33-189, 2 Henry VI', *Shakespeare*, 13 (2017), 30-51; Gary Taylor and John V. Nance, 'Imitation or Collaboration? Marlowe and the Early Shakespeare Canon' *Shakespeare Survey,* 68 (2015), 32-47; Darren Freebury-Jones 'Did

Work by Wood, Hampton-Reeves and Fitter on *2 Henry VI* has shown just how useful history plays can be to our understanding of contemporary political discourse. *2 Henry VI*, as well as the other plays mentioned above, are extraordinarily valuable when examining the perception of Kent from outside the county. Wood has shown the way in which popular political discourse was taken by Shakespeare and included in his plays. He identifies class conflict in the notions of honour and worth espoused by characters such as Bevis when he cries: 'O miserable age! Virtue is not regarded in handicrafts-men.| The nobility think scorn to go in leather aprons'.[80] This statement, which combined contrasting attitudes towards the virtue and honour of artisanal skills and political dialogue, was a constant theme throughout the play. Also included were fictional rebels such as 'Best's son, the tanner of Wingham', 'Dick the Butcher', and 'Smith the Weaver', all of whom make their trades characteristic of their political protest; 'Different skills provide metaphors for violent social conflict, the rendition of one trade after another presenting a growing sense of menace'.[81] Artisanal language, significantly, that of the textile industry, is also utilised in discussion of political rhetoric:

> *Bevis:*   I tell thee, Jack Cade the clothier means to dress the
>
>   commonwealth, and turn it, and set a new nap upon it.

> *Holland*: So he had need, for 'tis threadbare. Well, I say it was
>
>   never merry world in England since gentlemen came up.
>
>   (*2 Henry VI*, IV.2.4-9.)

Again, there is the generic notion of hostility between those of the lower orders, such as labourers and tradesmen, and the better sort. But there is also the allusion to the commonwealth as cloth, using language specific to the cloth trade such as 'turning' and 'napping'. This continues the theme of artisanal skill and political action, and makes use of the association that the textile industry had with rebellion.[82]

Shakespeare Really Co-Write 2 Henry VI with Marlowe?', *Quarterly Journal of Short Articles, Notes and Reviews,* 30 (2017), 137-41.

[80] *2 Henry VI*, IV. 2. 10-12; Wood, 'Brave Minds and Hard Hands', pp. 90-1.

[81] Wood, 'Brave Minds and Hard Hands', pp. 90-3.

[82] Ibid., pp. 89-90.

It also adds a specifically Kentish note to the dialogue. While suspicion was cast on textile workers across England, even ignoring the obvious fact that Cade's rebellion was centred in Kent, the connotations of rebellion, commonwealth, and cloth-working with the Weald of Kent resulted in a picture of a particularly Kentish nature. The incorporation of the Kentish Weald in Heywood's *First Part of King Edward IV* (1599), in which Falconbridge states that 'We do not rise like Tyler, Cade and Straw,| […] Or for some common in the weald of Kent| That's by some greedy cormorant enclosed…', suggests that this connection was a common one.[83] The combination of 'Kentishness', artisanal skill and rebellion is further strengthened in *Edward IV* by the proliferation of references to Kent in the introduction to the rebel camp. Two prominent rebels were 'Smoke, the smith of Chepstead' (Chipstead) and 'Chub, the chandler of Sandwich', and further knowledge about Kent is assumed when Spicing states that 'chains of gold and plate shall be as plenty| As wooden dishes in the weald of Kent!'[84] These references served to tap into the public's general understanding of Kent as a centre of rebellion and all the associations that went with that perception. This then set the scene and tone of the discourse to be explored in the play, much like the phenomenon looked at in chapter 4, where certain actions at certain locations served as messages to those who understood them, informing them of what to expect. This time, however, the pertinent location was the entire county of Kent, complete with themes of rebellion and trade, specifically that of the textile industry.

The notion of the plays projecting a peculiarly Kentish style of rebellion is strengthened when further elements of *2 Henry VI* are considered. Continuous references to the Peasants' Revolt are made in the play, such as Cade's echoing of John Ball's sermon in 1381 ('And Adam was a gardener'), lines such as Dick's 'let's kill all the lawyers', the hatred of literacy and documents, and the attack of the Savoy and Inns of Court.[85] Wood shows how Cade's use of Ball's speech was a conscious reference to the rebellion of 1381, and an engagement with the rebellious rhetoric of inversion and 'the straightforward obliteration of social inequality', something which also recurred in the other plays mentioned in this chapter.[86] While this is true, it should also be understood as a

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[83] Thomas Heywood, *The First Part of King Edward IV,* ed. Richard Rowland (Manchester, 2005), 2.27, 31-2.
[84] *1 Edward IV,* 2.62-3, 71-2.
[85] Wood, 'Brave Minds and Hard Hands', p. 97; Hampton-Reeves, 'Kent's Best Man', 73-74; Ronald Knowles, 'The Farce of History: Miracle, Combat, and Rebellion in *2 Henry VI*', *Yearbook of English Studies,* 21 (1991), 176.
[86] Particularly in *The Life and Death of Jack Straw;* Wood, 'Brave Minds and Hard Hands', p. 97.

commentary on a specifically Kentish history. Shakespeare was reaching back from the end of the sixteenth century to the events of 1450, and through them to 1381. The previous chapter demonstrated the ways in which the strategies, discourses, and spaces were used and reused, forming a contextual identity of rebellion which shaped the interpretations and actions of the commons of Kent as well as people from outside Kent, such as the Londoners who were able to predict what was coming and the Cornish rebels who sought to appeal to this identity in their own protest action. That Falconbridge felt it necessary to state that 'We do not rise like Tyler, Cade and Straw' in *King Edward IV* shows how these rebellions were linked in the public consciousness.[87] By bringing in references to 1381 in his portrayal of a rebellion in 1450, Shakespeare was demonstrating the way in which the past continued to play a role in the present and the future in the nature of customary law and the practices in Kent. As Hampton-Reeves argues, 'Shakespeare does not rob the rebellion of its regional character by this maneuver: he reinforces a notion of Kent as an independent region prone to demonstrating itself forcefully.'[88] This tactic would only work, however, if he could count on the general awareness of his audience that such a notion existed in the first place, tied up in ideas of commonweal and traditions of rebellion. The printing of this play in 1594 tells us that these ideas and associations were still very much alive in the public consciousness two centuries after the Peasants' Revolt.

Further evidence of Kentish identity as a dominant theme in *2 Henry VI* can be found in its engagement with the *Invicta* discourse. Hampton-Reeves makes the argument that the custom of gavelkind, which can be directly linked to Kent's *Invicta* myth, can be found running through the play in comments such as Cade's 'all the realm shall be in common', and his statement that 'I will apparel them all in one livery [...] so that they may agree like brothers'.[89] Although he allows that this phrasing reflects the established traditions of popular political discourse, he ultimately concludes that 'the language in which it is expressed echoes the assertion of Kent's ancient rights. Not only does he invoke the spirit of partible inheritance common in Kent, Cade directly challenges the authoritarian structure of the Lancastrian monarchy.'[90] It is possible that discussion of property in common and brotherhood were allusions to the custom of gavelkind; Shakespeare has been shown to enter into the

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[87] *1 Edward IV,* 2.27.
[88] Hampton-Reeves, 'Kent's Best Man', 76.
[89] Ibid., 80; For the respective quotes, see *2 Henry VI*, IV. 2. 67-8, 72-4.
[90] Hampton-Reeves, 'Kent's Best Man', 80.

debate on primogeniture versus partible inheritance in his *King Lear* via a character named Kent, 'at once the epitome and the antithesis of the stereotypical "man of Kent"', as a device to defend the practise of primogeniture both as a persuasive rhetorical feature and as a reflection of historical context.[91] Yet there is nothing particularly suggestive in the comments made by Cade that they are anything more than the usual attribution to rebels of their desire to invert the structures of society, something that Wood explores further in his comparison of political plays.[92] The quotations that Hampton-Reeves picks out fit in better with other similar comments such as Bevis' 'we must all be Lords or squires', Holland's 'we should be magistrates', Cade's 'And Adam was a gardener' and in other plays such as Wat Tyler's 'Wele be Lords my Maisters every one' in *The life and death of Jack Straw*.[93]

A more convincing argument for a portrayal of Kentish identity and *Invicta* discourse is in Cade's death scene. The choice to have Cade killed in an enclosed garden in Kent, rather than the borders of Kent and Sussex where it actually happened, and by making Cade a clothier from Ashford when there is no certainty as to who Cade actually was or where he was from, emphasises the local nature of the rebellion.[94] This new, categorically Kentish Cade, as a clothier himself and supported as he was by other labourers and artisans in an attempt to repair the 'threadbare' cloth of commonwealth, has been argued to be representative of local identity based in land and custom. This was compared to Alexander Iden's character, which is argued to represent the other kind of Kentishman: the propertied gentleman who encloses his land, rejects Kentish customs, and identifies more on the national politically ambitious level than on the local.[95] This reading of the death scene therefore signifies the way in which social order and the interaction with the land defined the different identities of the characters and the broader attitudes they each represent, bringing to mind the way in which the character 'Kent' in *King Lear* represented the dichotomy of the Kentish identity as active

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[91] Ronald W. Cooley, 'Kent and Primogeniture in *King Lear*', *Studies in English Literature, 1500-1900,* 48 (2008), 327-48, esp. 328, 331.

[92] Wood, 'Brave Minds and Hard Hands', p. 96-7.

[93] Quotes used in Wood, 'Brave Minds and Hard Hands', pp. 96-7.

[94] Hampton-Reeves, 'Kent's Best Man', 76.

[95] The historical figure of Iden was the Sheriff of Kent, who had a warrant to capture Cade. For the argument on identification see Hampton-Reeves, 'Kent's Best Man', 81. For detailed argument on the 'class' aspect of this scene, see Thomas Cartelli, 'Jack Cade in the Garden: Class Consciousness and Class Conflict in *2 Henry VI*', in *Enclosure Acts: Sexuality, Property, and Culture in Early Modern England,* eds. Richard Burt and John Michael Archer (London, 1994), pp. 48-67.

defender of commonwealth, while at the same time contradicting this characteristic by defending primogeniture thereby rejecting the inheritance customs which played such a large part in the county's unique position.[96] This summary of the competing natures of land relationships in Kent is further immersed in the peculiar Kentish identity by Cade's last words. After being struck down by Iden, Cade cries:

> O, I am slain! Famine and no other hath slain me: let ten thousand
> devils come against me, and give me but the ten meals I have lost,
> and I'd defy them all. Wither, garden, and be henceforth a burying-
> place to all that do dwell in this house, because the unconquered
> soul of Cade is fled. (*2 Henry VI*, IV.10.62-7.)

He soon follows this with:

> Iden, farewell, and be proud of thy victory. Tell Kent from me, she
> hath lost her best man, and exhort all the world to be cowards: for
> I, that never feared any, am vanquished by famine, not by valor.
> (IV.10.74-8.)

Cade's repeated insistence that 'Famine and no other hath slain me' demonstrate the extent to which Cade identifies with the county of Kent and its histories, customs and traditions. His cry that 'the unconquered soul of Cade is fled', 'vanquished by famine, not by valor', carries a palpable connection to the idea of Kent as unconquered and his position as the county's 'best man' and as the physical embodiment of Kentish identity.

The fact that ultimately Cade dies and his rebellion fails makes a mockery of these words, and therefore of Kent's traditions and identity. This can also be seen in the portrayal of Cade during the play by his own men, Dick the Butcher and Smith the Weaver, who in asides mocked the claims he made in his speech:

> *Cade:* My father was a Mortimer –
>
> *Dick: [Aside]* He was an honest man, and a good bricklayer.
>
> *Cade:* My mother a Plantagenet –

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[96] Cooley, 'Kent and Primogeniture in *King Lear*', 328-31.

> *Dick: [Aside]* I knew her well; she was a midwife.
>
> *Cade:* My wife descended of the Lacies –
>
> *Dick: [Aside]* She was indeed a pedlar's daughter, and sold many
> laces.
>
> *Smith: [Aside]* But now of late, not able to travel with her furred
> pack, she washes bucks here at home. (IV.2.39-48.)

If Cade was indeed meant to represent the county of Kent, the scornful words of his own supporters could serve as an interesting piece of commentary on the outside perspectives of Kent's particular circumstances and resulting identity. Cade's own character also reflected this ambiguous and sometimes contradictory attitude towards Kentish popular politics and identity, being 'in one moment a ludicrous buffoon; in the next, a dangerous psychopath; and in yet another moment a knowing critic of the social order'.[97]

Further contradiction can be seen in the way Kent was treated in examples of crime. After Wyatt's rebellion in 1554, a proclamation recorded in Henry Machyn's diary went to great lengths to send a message to the people of England:

> The viij day of Feybruary was commondyd by the queen and
> byshope of London that powlls and evere parryche that they shuld
> syng te deum laudamus and ryngyng ffor the good victory that the
> quen grace had a ganst Wyatt and the rebellious of Kent the Wyche
> wher over come thankes be unto god with lytyll blud shed and the
> reseduw taken and had to presun and after wher dyvers of them putt
> to deth in dyvers places in londun and Kent and prossessyon ever
> wher that day for joy.[98]

Not only would the defeat of the rebellion have been witnessed by the populace, it would have been directly experienced by them all by singing church hymns, hearing the bells, and seeing or partaking in processions. The people of London and Kent would have the additional experience of conspicuously placed executions. While the very purpose of local gallows was as a warning to

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[97] Wood, 'Brave Minds and Hard Hands', p. 98.

[98] BL, Vit. F.v., f. 28r and *The Diary of Henry Machyn, citizen and Merchant-Taylor of London,* ed. John Gough Nichols, p. 55, cited in Gary G. Gibbs, 'Marking the Days: Henry Machyn's manuscript and the Mid-Tudor Era', in *The Church of Mary Tudor,* p. 304.

bystanders to avoid such a fate, the deliberate distribution of executions across the county in addition to the very public proclamation served very specifically as a warning to the people of Kent as a collective. This echoed the treatment of Kent three years earlier, following the case of the murder of Thomas Arden. Reported in *Holinshed's Chronicle* in 1551, similarly to the histories of rebellions, it was taken and turned into a domestic tragedy play in 1592.[99] The deaths of Alice Arden, her maid, Mosby, and the others might usually have been seen as an overreaction considering the status of Alice Arden's step-father. The fact that they were executed in prominent locations across Kent shows how the government perceived this domestic murder not in terms of the local, but of the county.

Given Kent's identity and its history of rebellion as recently as 1549, unlawful activity in that county was clearly considered far more threatening, with ramifications of disorder on a far larger scale. These deliberately spread out executions, coupled with the dramatic publication of the story in *Holinshed's Chronicle*, made sure that 'Kentish fire' and its consequences remained active in the public's consciousness. The similar treatment of Kent in times of rebellion linked the county's identity as rebellious with sordid, petty, crime: directly contradicting the legitimising strategies and rhetoric that held up the claim of the commons of Kent to be active defenders of the commonweal. A perspective from 1595 summed up this mixed state of affairs when it considered those such as Tyler, Cade and Straw, and proclaimed 'All these at the beginning would be Reformers, & wrongs forsooth they went about to right: but when they had got head, what wrong did they not count right? sought they not to roote out Learning? drew they not honest Citizens to death?'[100] Certain parallels between the stage play of Arden's murder and *2 Henry VI* are also suggestive of similar viewpoints of rebellious behaviour and criminal behaviour. [101] Cade's ambitions are remarkably similar to those stated by Black Will, the villain of *The Tragedy of Master Arden of Faversham*:[102]

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[99] Holinshed, pp. 1703-8; *The Lamentable and True Tragedy of M. Arden of Feversham* (London, 1592), STC (2nd ed.) / 733

[100] *A student's lamentation that hath sometime been in London an apprentice* (1595), f. B3, STC (2nd ed.) / 23401.5

[101] While the authorship of *The Tragedy of Master Arden of Faversham* is still in question and is undoubtedly important, here it is the repeated phrasing that is significant. For discussion of authorship, see MacDonald P. Jackson, *Determining the Shakespeare Canon: Arden of Faversham and A Lover's Complaint* (Oxford, 2014); Jackson, 'Parallels and poetry: Shakespeare, Kyd, and "Arden of Faversham"', *Medieval & Renaissance Drama in England*, 23 (2010), 17-33; Vickers, 'Thomas Kyd, secret sharer', *Times Literary Supplement* (2008), 13-15.

[102] This was noted in *Arden of Feversham,* ed. Ronald Bayne (London, 1897).

> *Cade:* The proudest peer in the realm shall not wear a head on his
> shoulders, unless he pay me tribute; there shall not a maid
> be married, but she shall pay to me her maidenhead ere they
> have it; (*2 Henry VI*, IV.7.122-125)

> *B. Will:* The bawdy-houses have paid me tribute; there durst not
> a whore set up unless she have agreed with me first for
> op'ning her shop windows (*Arden*, 14.11-13)

Black Will was more than just the epitome of the Tudor criminal, he was the ultimate *Kentish* criminal. One of the characters in the play, referring to Black Will and his companion, Shakebag, announced that 'Two rougher ruffians never lived in Kent'.[103] He had been a soldier in Boulogne, had returned to a life of crime and vagabondage, habitually haunted the highways of Kent, and was known by name to Sir Thomas Cheney, Lord Warden of the Cinque Ports. The reflection of Cade, definitive Kentish rebel, in Black Will, stereotypical Kentish criminal, is suggestive of the ways in which the identity of popular protest could be interpreted, and the fact that both of these plays came out in the 1590s indicates the significance of Kent, crime, and rebellion as a relevant discourse in this decade.

In the words of Adam Fox, England at this time was 'a society in which the three media of speech, script, and print infused and interacted with each other in a myriad ways'.[104] In the specific case of Kent, it is clear that this had the effect of producing a general perception of Kent for those from outside the county. Chronicles recorded the role played by Kent in history, and passed their conclusions about the commons of Kent on, both by being incorporated into newer chronicles and by being used as historical sources for playwrights like Shakespeare and Heywood. By engaging in analysis of the nature of the people of Kent, these sources both reinforced external perceptions and capitalised upon external perceptions that already existed. That the county of Kent was perceived to be different due to its unique inheritance system and gavelkind customs, and seen to have an identity of rebelliousness due to its history and its pride in the idea of *Invicta*, is clear in the way that plays such as *Part one of King Edward IV* and *2 Henry VI* assumed audience knowledge in order for their dialogues to be understood to the fullest. Falconbridge's comment that 'We do not rise like Tyler, Cade and Straw,| […] Or for some common in the weald of Kent| That's by some greedy cormorant

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[103] *Arden of Feversham*, scene iv, l. 69.
[104] Fox, *Oral and Literate Culture*, p. 3.

enclosed…' assumed that the audience knew about Tyler, Cade and Straw as examples of a tradition of rebellion and the nature of such rebellions in areas like the Weald, while Cade's death scene would not be as amusing a mockery without knowledge of the *Invicta* myth.

For the people of Kent reading or hearing their histories and reputations from chronicles and people through networks outside of the county may well have had a significant effect on the way they conceived of themselves. While it is not possible to analyse spoken dialogue, emphasised as an important contextual influence by Gregory Thompson in his work on labelling theory, interaction with textual sources might be able to indicate similar effects.[105] As has been stated above, previous actions by the commons of Kent have shown how written appeals to them to fulfil their role as defenders of the commonweal were able to provoke a response. Political poetry, bills and libels proliferated in times of trouble, engaging in the discourse of commonweal and Kent's responsibility to it, and was largely validated by protest action by Kentish rebels.[106] Chronicle descriptions of the commons of Kent as 'impacient in wronges disdayning of to much oppression' would therefore have resonated with their own sense of their rights and customs, their identification with the rhetoric of commonweal, and the resulting history of rebellious action. This was particularly evident in the rebellions of 1549, where they claimed the name 'commonwealths', and where it has been argued that anti-enclosure action in a county which on the whole had been enclosed for decades was 'an exceptional case reflecting the general English situation rather than particular Kentish grievances'.[107] A long-term cycle of written texts, of the self-conscious nature of town custumals, the more legally significant outlines of local customs of the Custumal of Kent, and external interpretations of Kentish identity, oral poems such as that of Holmesdale which denoted pride in the *Invicta* history, and repeated protest activity, all worked together to create and continually reinforce a culture in which it was understood that 'rebellion in Kent had traditional legitimacy as the customary manner to serving notice on the government that it had exceeded its limits'.[108]

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[105] Thompson, 'Labeling in Interactional Practice'.

[106] Please see poems discussed in the previous chapter, such as 'Advice to the court I', p. 203; 'Advice to the court II', pp. 203-205; 'Ballade set on the gates of Canterbury', pp. 207-10; 'The Battle of Northampton', pp. 210-215; For discussion on the relationship of text with rebellion, see Scase, ''Strange and Wonderful Bills'', pp. 225-47; Scase, *Literature and Complaint in England 1272-1553;* Scattergood, *Politics and Poetry in the Fifteenth Century;* Justice, *Writing and Rebellion.*

[107] Murphy, pp. 126-7.

[108] Ibid., p. 132.

The 1590s

In the 1590s, recently referred to as the 'hungry nineties', there was no popular rebellion in Kent, or indeed anywhere in England.[109] This was despite the fact that all the circumstances that normally heralded popular rebellion were in place: wages were low, prices and taxes were high, disease was rife, and worries about dynastic security and ongoing wars and invasion scares contributed to an overriding sense of uncertainty and fear. The authorities clearly expected popular protest activity, and murmurings and riots among the populace and events such as the failed Oxfordshire rebellion of 1596 suggest that they were right to be worried. Pamphlets published over this decade repeatedly referenced Tyler, Straw, and Cade, and men were heard to refer to the 'commotion time' or 'camping time' of 1549.[110] Yet no real popular revolt occurred. It was in this set of circumstances that the plays studied above were produced, and it was these circumstances which made plays such as *2 Henry VI*, *The First Part of Edward IV* and *The Life and Death of Jack Straw* relevant.

Wood has shown how all three plays engaged with popular rebellious rhetoric, popular grievances, and phrases. What is significant about these plays, centred on the rebellions of 1450, 1471, and 1381 respectively, is that the grievances were not accurate to the individual rebellion other than the specific political events and figures, but were reflective of those current in the 1590s.[111] The earl of Suffolk, whose death kick-started the events of 1450, was linked in *2 Henry VI* to enclosure when a petition was presented 'Against the Duke of Suffolk, for enclosing the commons of Melford' on behalf of the 'whole township'.[112] Cade's death scene also outlined social and economic issues based in enclosure, as well as the above argument that it represented landowners rejecting Kentish customs such as gavelkind for a more national identification. Enclosure was a topic which was not relevant to Kentish rebellion until 1549, and the issues hinted at in Cade's death scene were more

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[109] One could count the Oxfordshire rebellion of 1596, but seeing as it really ended up consisting of a very small number of men who were arrested immediately, it should not be considered a popular rebellion of the likes of 1381, 1450, or 1549. John Walter, 'A "rising of the people"? The Oxfordshire rising of 1596', *Past and Present,* 107 (1985), 90-143. For 'hungry nineties' see Collinson, 'Cranbrook and the Fletchers', p. 426; Wood, 'Brave Minds and Hard Hands'.

[110] Wood, *The 1549 Rebellions*, p. 236.

[111] Fitter, 'Emergent Shakespeare and the politics of protest: *2 Henry VI* in historical contexts', *English Literary History*, 72 (2005), 129-58.

[112] *2 Henry VI,* I.3.21-3, 25.

likely to be a commentary on the social and economic changes of the latter end of the sixteenth century. Cade himself has been argued by Fitter to be based on the much more recent rebel leader, William Hacket. Hacket's London rising in July 1591, reflecting the religious tensions which were a major destabilising force in the last decade of Elizabeth's reign, was retained in the collective memory of Londoners for several years after, and would have been prominent in the minds of the audience when the play was performed.[113] The proliferation of pamphlets and plays in the 1590s with an emphasis on rebellions and popular politics shows the extent to which the general discourse of the time was centred on rebellious and political rhetoric, and it is no coincidence that phrases such as Holland's 'it was never merry world in England since gentlemen came up' could be found in reported speech in depositions from the Oxfordshire rebellion, and existed as a term long before that.[114]

It is clear that in their works playwrights like Shakespeare and Heywood were actively engaging with general attitudes, and, particularly in Shakespeare's case, in the specific political murmurings of the commons in order to produce plays immersed in popular political theory and culture. Indeed, some argue that *2 Henry VI* showcased Shakespeare's sympathies with these ideas and grievances.[115] Furthermore, the in-depth details included about Kent in *2 Henry VI*, and the emphasis on the Kentish element of Falconbridge's rebellion, tell us that the county of Kent was clearly still a concern in the 1590s. In the event of riotous behaviour, associations were immediately drawn to other examples of rebellions, and therefore to Kent. Towards the end of the century, then, given the political and economic uncertainties of the period, it is not particularly surprising that mentions of the county of Kent in printed pamphlets were often linked with its history of rebellion and the names of Straw, Tyler, and Cade. For example, the anonymous author of *A student's lamentation*, a pamphlet in response to the riots of the apprentices in London in the mid-1590s, questioned the actions of the apprentices, commenting, 'Of Iacke Straw, Will Waw, Wat Tiler, Tom

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[113] Fitter, '"Your Captain is Brave and Vows Reformation": Jack Cade, the Haclet Rising, and Shakespeare's Vision of Popular Rebellion in *2 Henry VI*', *Shakespeare Studies*, 32 (2004), 173-219.

[114] The miller, Richard Bradshaw, was reported by Buchanan Sharp to have said 'that he hoped that before yt wold never be merye till some of the gentlemen were knocked downe', cited in Cartelli, 'Jack Cade in the Garden', p. 54.

[115] Fitter, 'Your Captain is Brave and Vows Reformation'; idem, 'Emergent Shakespeare and the politics of protest'.

Miller, Hob Carter and a number more such seditious inferiour ringleaders to seditions and conspiracies most notable, what hath been the end? Misery, destruction, and shame.'[116]

It is in light of this dominant theme of the inevitable result of rebellious action that we can also read plays like *2 Henry VI, The Life and Death of Jack Straw,* and *King Edward IV*. By engaging with the prevalent discourses and grievances among society, they gave a public voice to the hungry commons of England. By incorporating issues of starvation, enclosure, social hierarchy and commonwealth in *2 Henry VI*, Shakespeare acknowledged the grievances of the unhappy public, showed understanding of the reasons and rhetoric involved in the decision to rebel, and demonstrated a certain amount of sympathy with them. It would have resonated strongly with his common audiences. However, the mockery of the rebel leader, the ultimate failure of the rebellion, and the death of Cade (insisting as he died that he was still unconquered), channelled the same line as the *student's lamentation*: that they might have started as 'would be Reformers', with 'wrongs forsooth they went about to right', but that in due course the act of rebellion brought about 'misery, destruction, and shame'. The undignified treatment of Cade's body by Iden, the sheriff of Kent, shows the end result of such action:

> And as I thrust thy body in with my sword,
> So wish I I might thrust thy soul to hell.
> Hence will I drag thee headlong by the heels
> Unto a dunghill which shall be thy grave,
> And there cut off thy most ungracious head,
> Which I will bear in triumph to the King,
> Leaving thy trunk for crows to feed upon.
> (*2 Henry VI,* IV.10.81-7)

There is no question that Cade and his rebellion had come to an ignominious end. Similarly, Jack Straw was stabbed by the mayor of London, who then ordered the executions of Wat Tyler and John Ball.[117] Falconbridge was eventually executed by the captain of the Isle of Wight, while his accomplice, Spicing, was betrayed to the Mayor of London and hanged by one of his own men:[118]

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[116] *A student's lamentation*, ff. B2v-B3.
[117] *The Life and Death of Jacke Strawe* (London, 1594), STC (2nd ed.) / 23356, Act 3, f. E2, Act 4, f. F2.
[118] *1 Edward IV*, 15.1-133.

> O Captain Spicing, thy vain enticing
>
> Brought me from my trade;
>
> From good candles-making, to this pains-taking,
>
> A rebel to be made.
>
> Therefore, Ned Spicing, to quit thy enticing,
>
> This must be thy hope:
>
> By one of thy fellows, to be led to the gallows,
>
> To end in a rope. (*1 Edward IV,* 10.166-73)

Here, as in *2 Henry VI*, there is the suggestion of honour in honest trade in conjunction with the 'misery, destruction, and shame' brought about by participation in rebellion.

The emphatic use of Kentish locations, customs, history and identity in these plays, and the proliferation of references to rebellious Kentish names and events throughout the period of 'Elizabeth's second reign' indicate a rather specific edge to the message against rebellion. As stated above, the mockery of Cade, apparent throughout *2 Henry VI* in his own inconsistent behaviours, in the words of his own followers, as well as in his death scene, undermines the rebels and their cause. If, following Hampton-Reeves' argument, we take the character of Cade to represent the rebellious identity of Kent and its pride in its customs and histories of *Invicta*, this mockery goes one step further in demonising this identity and its inevitable results.[119] In this context, too, the parallels between Cade and Black Will discussed above are perhaps indicative of a concerted reshaping of the Kentish identity. This is a clear sign that the commons of Kent were identified as probable instigators of the expected uprising, and we can therefore see the treatment of Kent in pamphlets and plays in the 1590s as recognition of the murmurings of the populace and the fears of the government. The author of *A student's lamentation* certainly believed it was necessary to point out 'Is there anie in England, that hath not heard of […] Blacke Heath field, and manie other? how manie widowes made they? how manie fatherlesse children?'[120]

There is a chance, given the interaction between the commons of Kent and the opinions vocalised in chronicles and poetry and the effect that could be seen in the actions taken by Kentishmen in successive rebellions, that the texts circulating in the late sixteenth century served to reframe the

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[119] Hampton-Reeves, 'Kent's Best Man', 81.
[120] *A student's lamentation,* f. B3.

rebellious label of Kent from defenders of the commonweal to one of mockery and failure. These plays sympathetically engaged with common grievances and discourses, giving them a public voice and causing them to identify with the characters and their motives, but then also appropriated popular political rhetoric and undermined those identifications which justified participation in protest action. Of course, how an audience interpreted plays and other sources could be very different; different people from different cultures could take different things from it, often depending on the understood framework of the spectacle.[121] The failure of Scottish heretical burnings as a succinct performance with a message to the audience was largely due to the lack of any framework by which to engage with them in the country.[122] The power of the play to shape the audience's mental world, and therefore their identity, is uncertain. However, these were placed in a world of sermons, executions and other interactions, which could play some part in influencing the way such plays were interpreted.[123]

Of course, even if the external perceptions and literary labelling of the people of Kent in the late sixteenth century was having an impact on the ways in which they identified with the rhetoric of rebellion, it was unlikely to affect a sufficient portion of the populace in enough depth to discourage them from rebellion. Wood has shown how changing social and cultural norms contributed to the decline of popular rebellion, with agrarian transformation and social mobility in Elizabeth's reign leading to a widening gap between the poorer members of society and their richer neighbours.[124] In this way, the language of social enmity shifted from being between the commons and the gentry, to the poorer, 'vulgar', sorts, and the richer, 'better', sorts. It is these notions that saturate the plays of the 1590s.[125] In the language of sorts, first defined by Keith Wrightson, we can see the way in which this developing hostility was vocalised, and how it combined with the growing state development of official networks to sew social division through villages and towns as richer individuals looked to

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[121] *Imagining the Audience in Early Modern Drama, 1558-1642,* eds. Jennifer A. Low and Myhill (Basingstoke, 2011).

[122] Jane E.A. Dawson, 'The Scottish Reformation and the Theatre of Martyrdom' in *Martyrs and Martyrologies, 30*, ed. Diana Wood (Oxford, 1993), pp. 259-70.

[123] Richard Hoyle's recent argument on the influence of sermons and homilies in the second half of the sixteenth century over the movement away from popular rebellion adds to the picture of a commons influenced by spectacles in the form of church, plays, print and government performance. Hoyle, ''Wrightsonian Incorporation' and the Public Rhetoric of Mid-Tudor England', 20-41.

[124] Wood, *The 1549 Rebellions,* pp. 187-207.

[125] Wood, 'Brave Minds and Hard Hands', pp. 95-7.

distance themselves from their 'meaner' neighbours.[126] As a result, those officers and notable members of the community who would previously have been the leaders and organisers of popular insurrections were co-opted by, or more ideologically aligned with, Tudor state institutions, and therefore were less inclined to become involved in rebellion.[127] While there were several local riots in the 1590s, then, the potential for a united, popular rebellion was significantly diminished.

Underpinning these changes was the fracturing of a united sense of identity among the commons of England over the period. The necessity of a strong collective identity and the equal combination of a local and superordinate identity to encourage participation in protest action, as shown in the third chapter, meant that divisions in the concept of society could have a significant impact. Due to the fact that Kent already had a strong system of royal offices, the ongoing development of state formation might not have had quite the same effect that it did in other counties, however the rising confidence in official institutions perhaps meant that they were more invested in putting down potential rebellions than participating in them.[128] This certainly seems to have been visible in the examples of the riots in Canterbury and Hernhill in 1595 explored in the previous chapter, where the act of identifying as the poor of the community seemed to shape the actions the rioters could take and the people they interacted with.[129] It was also evident in other riots in Kent throughout the 1590s, as identified and examined by Peter Clark. In one such case, large amounts of the poor and members of the cloth industry in Cranbrook protested against local iron-makers and rich farmers through petitions to Parliament and a plan for the poor to sack John Baker's new hammer mill.[130] As with the rioters in Hernhill and Canterbury, this was done on a local level and they presumably perceived it to be a local issue, not a county-wide or nation-wide one. They identified by

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[126] Wrightson, 'Estates, degrees and sorts: changing perceptions of society in Tudor and Stuart England', in *Language, History and class,* ed. P. Corfield (Oxford, 1991), pp. 30-52; idem, 'Sorts of people in Tudor and Stuart England', in *The middling sort of people: culture, society and politics in England, 1550-1800,* ed. J. Barry (Basingstoke, 1994), pp. 28-51; idem, *English Society, 1580-1680* (London, 1982), p. 181; Wood, 'Fear, hatred and the hidden injuries of class in early modern England', *Journal of Social History*, 39 (2006), 803-26.

[127] For more on the local impact of state formation, please see: Hindle, *The state and social change;* Braddick, *State formation in early modern England*; Wood, *The 1549 Rebellions,* pp. 195-202.

[128] Clark, 'Popular Protest', 379-80.

[129] KHLC, QM/SB/85; KHLC, QM/SB/82.

[130] The poor here were presumably motivated by issues of corn availability and wages, but organised or directed by others of the cloth industry. John Baker was the owner of the local furnaces, his father, John Baker, was known for 'Baker's gaol' in the persecution of heretics in Mary's reign, and his brother, Richard Baker, was the complainant in the manor of Morehouse case discussed in the previous chapter: Clark, 'Popular Protest', 371-3.

their trade, by their grievance, and by the perception of the rightful use of the local land and its produce.

In each of these affairs, protest action was provoked by primarily local concerns and relationships that were exacerbated by large numbers of poor and the scarcity and resulting high prices of corn. While there was clearly organisation among like-minded people with shared grievances, they were based along trade identities and against rich farmers profiting from the bad harvests at the expense of the local poor or economically disadvantaged: a division between members of the same locality, rather than against outside oppression of commons rights. As seen in the examples of Canterbury and Hernhill, these movements involved small amounts of people, began with attempts to go through legal channels, and when they did act, they acted conservatively and did not seem to look beyond the locality to gather support even when similar activities were happening close by. Furthermore, the identities by which these activities were legitimised in the minds of the rioters was clearly strongly shaped by the dominant discourses available in the locality, as shown by the very different language and approach taken by the two towns who were otherwise very similar in location and grievance. Consequently, the identity patterns explored in chapter 3 in the section on participation in protest action were arguably diminished towards the end of the sixteenth century. The growing social and economic divisions brought about by state formation, agrarian development, and the social mobility and ambitions of the middling sorts, not only impacted on the activity of popular protest in a practical way by removing potential leaders and diverting the interests of possible sympathisers towards advancement and the state. It also undermined the collective identity that was necessary to unite individuals to act together on the scale of 1450 or 1549. Without collective confidence in and identification with the rebellious rhetoric used to justify political action, and without common grievances, the belief in the corruption of the commonweal and the necessity to act, motivation for popular political action could not take hold. Instead, collective identification was active on a much smaller scale.

The circumstances of the 1590s, then, served to fracture the uniting collective identities of the commons of Kent against an oppressive gentry or government, distorting this relatively binary perception into one in which the middling sorts distanced themselves from the meaner sorts, the poor

channelled their enmity towards the rich neighbouring farmers, and officials were ideologically more aligned with the institutions of the state. Such challenges to collective identity may well have contributed to the lack of any real popular rebellion in the 1590s. The proliferation of texts and plays which appropriated the rebellious rhetoric that was alive in common discourse at the time, and had been so powerful in moving the commons of Kent in previous insurrections, in a narrative of clownish, criminal, failure, could have further undermined the type of collective identity which was necessary for such action.

<u>Conclusion</u>

This chapter has examined the ways in which written texts were used self-consciously to project a particular community identity, and also how they could convey outside perceptions of the people of Kent. It also looked at the particular style of history plays in the 1590s and how they reflected a sympathetic understanding of the causes of discontent at the time, but also discouraged popular rebellion. By building upon the previous chapters which focused on the layers and foundations of identity and political action in Kent, this chapter shows how those layers and traditions were consciously channelled, how they inspired and interacted with external perceptions of Kentish people and their actions, and how those perceptions in turn had the potential to influence Kentish identity and behaviours.

Custumals, Customary Books, Perambulation Books, and published works such as Lambarde's *Perambulation of Kent*, served to highlight the elements of local structures and customs which were considered important to document. The result was often a practical text meant for use by the community, but also a selection of information that shaped the identity of the locality (or the identity chosen by the creator) within a wider community of villages, towns and counties. The content and use of the Customary book of Hadlow was therefore very different to the Custumals of Cinque Port towns like Sandwich and New Romney. The latter's Custumal both took part in the self-fashioning of port towns but also engaged with literary trends, consorting directly with Lambarde's *Perambulation* and Kent's *Invicta* history. The *Perambulation* itself explored both local oral traditions and Renaissance interests into Roman history as well as including a translated version of the Custumal of Kent, which in turn acted as a legal document shaping Kent's relationship with the

rest of the country. Complex intertextual relationships are therefore evident in the way groups interpreted their own collective identities, fashioning them within literary and external contexts as part of a 'manipulable, artful process'.[131]

In these sources and their relationships with literary and external contexts, we can see the development of a contextual national identity and a sense of a national past. Lambarde's *Perambulation of Kent*, for all that it was a study of localities and their histories and traditions, was written from a specifically Protestant English perspective. His interpretations of religiously significant landscapes such as ruined or reused monastic sites were from a very staunch Protestant standpoint, as demonstrated above. Equally, references to 'the credite of of our Englishe Hysterie' and, for example, his description of Gillingham, which is dominated by the fact that it was the 'Harborowe of the Navie Royall' and therefore contained assessments such as 'No towne, nor Citie, is there (I dare say) in this whole Shyre, comparable in value with this our fleete: Nor shipping any where els in the whole world to be found, either more artificially moulded under the water, or more gorgeously decked above', demonstrate a particularly national focus.[132] The implications of works like *Perambulation of Kent* can be more fully examined in Daniel Woolf's analysis of the circulation of the past. In it, he identified a development of a 'hierarchy of knowledge' of the past, in which the authority of written evidence overshadowed that of the oral, and recognised the way in which the collective memories of a community were 'both assaulted and scavenged from' in order to create the specific histories seen in official custumals such as the ones in this chapter. As a result, 'the local past was often submerged into a "national" past contained in history-writing and the civilized discourse that arose therefrom, whence it eventually fed back, principally via print media, into the local.'[133] The perception of the national as articulated in *Perambulation of Kent*, and the influence that such books could have on the local level can be seen in the New Romney Custumal, which referenced Lambarde several times, and which referred to its significance to England and English history.[134] The intricate detail on Kent included by Shakespeare in *2 Henry VI* has a similar effect, very much placing Kentish

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[131] Greenblatt, p. 2.
[132] Lambarde (1576), pp. 293, 274.
[133] Woolf, *The Social Circulation of the Past*, p. 273.
[134] For example, Thomas Becket fleeing through Romney and Richard II's queen travelling to France are described, KHLC, Sa/CPc4.

history within the context of the history of England. While other plays focus less, as in *The First Part of Edward IV*, or more, with *The Life and Death of Jack Strawe*, on the Kentish element of the story, their function as history plays did the same job in placing Kent's historic events within the larger, national story. A natural consequence of witnessing these plays, reading Lambarde's book, or interacting with someone who had done either, would be a wider concept of an individual's social identity within the context of a broader, national past.

The 'manipulable, artful process' of fashioning a community identity within the context of other towns as well as the widening consciousness of the national past had the potential to have an internal effect as well as directing choices of what to display within the texts. Awareness of external opinions and pressures, as well as of the ways in which the government responded to crime and protest action in Kent with widely distributed executions as warnings, clearly wary of further action by the county as a whole, would influence the way in which the people of Kent saw themselves. The continuous treatment of the people of Kent as having the potential to rebel when they saw fit, as 'impacient in wronges disdayning of to much oppression', may have mixed with their own experiences of rebellion and their history of *Invicta* to cause this label to 'stick' and to therefore influence them to behave in such a way when the time came in 1549.[135] The pamphlets and plays produced towards the end of the sixteenth century took this dialogue and adapted it slightly, introducing what could be called a sympathetic yet defeatist quality. Here it is possible to perhaps see the way in which the 'stickiness' of labels was relational, and the way in which certain labels could 'fall off', thereby shifting certain behaviours; in the words of Erving Goffman, 'a language of relationships, not attributes, is really needed'.[136] Here, that relationship and the interaction which is so necessary to Thompson's argument, can be seen in textual interaction and changing behaviours.[137]

Whether or not writers like Shakespeare supported popular politics and collective action matters rather less than the way in which they were viewed and understood by the audience, and the fact that scholarly opinion is still divided over Shakespeare's works as some form of state propaganda

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[135] For discussion on 'sticking' see Mordechai Rotenberg, 'Self-Labeling: A Missing Link in the "Societal Reaction" Theory of Deviance', *The Sociological Review,* 22 (1974), 335-54; Thompson, 'Labeling in Interactional Practice', 460-1
[136] Goffman, p. 3.
[137] Thompson, 'Labeling in Interactional Practice', 458-82.

or a sympathiser of rebels shows just how much his work might have appealed to a rebelliously inclined audience while simultaneously conveying a strong, anti-rebellion message. Changes in agrarian practices, state formation, social mobility, and local economies in the late eighties and nineties, all of which served to undermine the collective identities that were so necessary to popular protest, would have created a situation in which an audience may have been more receptive to such a message.[138] The disruption of the motivating collective identity as 'the commons of Kent' into local divisions such as poor versus rich farmer, or clothier versus iron-maker, would have built upon the argument put forward by Andy Wood, who outlined the above as reasons for the 'decline in insurrection' in the late 1500s, creating a multi-layered situation in which the building blocks for popular rebellion could not be accessed.[139]

In this chapter, an attempt has been made to understand the ways in which intertextual relationships reflected and influenced Kentish community identities, and the way in which external perceptions of Kent could shape county identity through government reaction and the production of pamphlets and plays. The reasons for the absence of any real Kentish popular rebellion in the 1590s, when the government and other writers were clearly concerned that one would occur, have been argued to follow along the arguments in Wood's study of 1549, but with further exploration of the ways in which collective identity was fractured and undermined by such circumstances.[140] This weakened identity and motivation to rebel was further discouraged by a sympathetic perception from outside the county that they could identify with, coupled with a mocking emphasis on the criminal, clownish failure of rebellion, and by extension, the Kentish identity as rebellious defenders of the commonweal.

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[138] This argument unfortunately has the same problems as those who study audiences; its nature means that evidence would be difficult, if not impossible to come by outside of modern sociological and anthropological theory: see *Imagining the Audience in Early Modern Drama*. Richard Hoyle has taken a step in this direction with his work on sermons, with the same problem: Hoyle, 'Wrightsonian Incorporation'.

[139] Wood, *1549 Rebellions*, pp. 187-207

[140] Ibid.

__Conclusion__

In the introduction, I used a quote by Norman Jones and Daniel Woolf, stating that 'individuals have multiple and evolving identities because they belong to overlapping and interlocking communities defined by age, gender, social status, profession, habitation and other things.'[1] Its similarity to Nicola Whyte's comment that 'landscape was shaped by a number of overlapping and interconnected histories relating to a complex spectrum of religious, social, cultural and economic perspectives' is not a coincidence.[2] The importance of the landscape to the lives of the common people in early modern England, and therefore to their identities, cannot be overstated, and underwriting both of these crucial elements was the practice of memory. The link between identity and 'a meaningful and shared past' has been shown to be fundamental to late medieval and early modern communities, and to shape political interactions and participation from the local to the national.[3] The combination of place names, execution sites, beacons, boundaries, rituals, Perambulation books and Custumals, plays, pamphlets, sermons, buildings and ruins that have dominated this study are examples of the flexible and fluid relationships between landscape, text and performance, and the variety of ways that knowledge and memories were shared and developed. Their political significance and the way in which they were used as tools and communal statements, as well as the way that memories continued to be maintained, negotiated and contested, meant that they were at the centre of local political life and were the lens through which information and events were refracted.

The prominent position that memory, and the connected elements of landscape and identity, have held in this thesis challenges the argument that the 'mediality' of memory, 'memory politics' and 'memory wars' were part of a new approach to the past, brought on by mass media, nationalism, literacy, and other 'modern' developments.[4] In doing so, it supports work by Judith Pollmann, Erika

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[1] Jones and Woolf, p. 4.

[2] Whyte, *Inhabiting the Landscape*, p. 165.

[3] Judith Pollmann and Erika Kuijpers, 'Introduction: on the early modernity of modern memory', in *Memory before Modernity: Practices of Memory in Early Modern Europe,* eds. Pollmann and Kuijpers (Leiden, 2013), p. 17; Wood, *Memory of the People*; Rollison.

[4] Pollmann and Kuijpers, pp. 5-14; For those who see nationalism as a primary instigator of changes in memory practices, see Eric Hobsbawm, *Nations and Nationalism since 1780: Programme, Myth, Reality,* 2nd

Kuijpers and others, who have shown the existence of such practices long before 1800.[5] By making use of work from other disciplines such as sociology, anthropology, political psychology and philosophy, this thesis has engaged further with the concepts of memory and identity and their implications for early modern political life. It has addressed the ways in which this was applicable to the inhabitants of the county of Kent, particularly in relation to the contexts in which identity could be provoked into political action. It builds on Andy Wood's emphasis on the trends and differences in the politics and customs of parishes across the country and the centrality of memory in shaping them, and in its examination of the county of Kent, this thesis offers a narrower window through which to view this approach.[6] By taking into account Kent's politically significant location and its varied landscapes, shown by Whyte and Alexandra Walsham to be 'invested with meaning, […] provid[ing] a mnemonic framework for the organisation of social and economic relations', and fundamental in the interpretation and memory of politics and religion, this study adds to our understanding of how county identity interacts with national and local identities in order to contribute to broader discussions on local custom and popular politics in England.[7]

It has also emphasised the prominence of a *collection* of identities in political participation. Above all, what has become clear is the nested system of differently grouped identities of different levels and strengths present in sixteenth-century Kent. On an everyday level, the primary identity was that of the local community, and was based on the overlapping associations of interaction with the landscape, locality, trade, family, and networks between communities, such as that of the Six Vills or the Cinque Ports. Depending on the context of the situation, this identity might reach out to a wider one, such as religion, county or nationality, although this wider association would still be experienced through the lens of the local. The county identity enveloped the local and was based in its unique history of custom and rebellion, the notion of *Invicta,* its geographical position, and in its religious and political significance. Acting as a sort of umbrella, national identity overlay these other group identities through the subject-monarch relationship, the central law courts, and in awareness of other

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Edn (Cambridge, 1992); Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origins and Spread of Nationalism* (London, 1983).

[5] *Memory before Modernity,* eds. Pollmann and Kuijpers.

[6] Wood, *Memory of the People.*

[7] Whyte, *Inhabiting the Landscape,* 168; Walsham, *Reformation of the Landscape.*

counties and other countries; this latter context was particularly relevant to Kent as the 'key to the country'. The willingness to act on any one of these associations depended upon the strength of an individual's identification with each group, something which was likely to depend on personal experience, memory, and the way this was internalised. By understanding the influences and the way in which these identities worked and related to political action, we can gain a better understanding of popular politics in early modern England.

Gradual merging can be seen at times between superordinate identity and national identity, particularly towards the end of the sixteenth century through literature, rhetoric, war, and events such as the Armada, and the resulting binary opposition. Here, along with the ways in which localities interacted with central government, outlined above, we can see how people related to the monarch, to their country, and to notions of 'Englishness'. This fits in with the orthodox argument of state formation put forward by historians such as Steve Hindle and Michael Braddick, which suggests that by the end of the sixteenth century there was a homogenous national identity and experience.[8] While these do examine the importance of negotiations at the parish level in driving this development, particularly so with Hindle, this thesis takes this further by demonstrating that although this concept of state and national identity did exist, it was one of many simultaneous identities held by the people of Elizabethan England, and was only felt to be relevant to their lives in particular contexts.

Indeed, other superordinate identities, such as commonwealth or the Protestant religion, could be as strong as, or even stronger than, national identity. Again, dependent on the context, they could also account for county or local government, producing political activity on a smaller, more local scale. This also has implications for the ongoing discussion on the Reformation. Alexandra Walsham's *Reformation of the Landscape*, which was so important to chapter 3 of this thesis, despite focusing on the meaning of the landscape and its features in experiencing the Reformation, still examines the religious changes of the sixteenth century on a national scale.[9] This examination of Kent and the many smaller reformations taking place across the county contributes to this discussion by showing the extent to which local landscapes and circumstances dictated the parish experiences of

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[8] Hindle, *The State and Social Change;* Braddick, *State Formation in Early Modern England.*
[9] Walsham, *Reformation of the Landscape*.

the Reformation, as well as how a religious county element was perceived to exist by some, as seen, for example, in the number of persecutions under Mary or Stoughton's comment that 'we in Kent' had become 'lesse noted for popery, then any other place'.[10] By exploring the experiences of the Reformation on a series of levels for parishes whose identities were informed by both their local landscapes and by their interactions with neighbouring parishes, continental influences, heretical traditions such as Lollardy, in combination with their identifications on a county and national level, we can get a clearer picture of the Reformation in sixteenth-century England.

This approach is also pertinent to the study of protest and rebellion, as shown in chapters 4 and 5. This thesis has demonstrated how the combination of local or county traditions such as *Invicta*, the meanings embedded in the landscape, commonwealth discourse, shared grievances and shared dual identities, could inspire mass political action. A weakened shared identity, probably the result of the gradual social divisions identified by Wrightson and developed by Wood, or an unequal dual identity, such as a strengthened attachment to central government, could therefore be a factor in the absence of political action.[11] The way in which rebellious identity and the Kentish concept of *Invicta* were treated in literature and plays in the 1590s could also have played a part in undermining the shared identities necessary to gather and act politically. The motivational power of identity in political participation explored in this thesis can therefore contribute to the discussion on popular rebellion and its decline in the second half of the sixteenth century, building on the work of Wood, Hoyle, Fletcher and MacCulloch.[12] This study has looked principally at the impact of outside perspectives as they pertained to Kent's rebellious history, however this could be taken in several directions. The way in which communities saw themselves and how they conceptualised those from outside, and the corresponding way that outside perspectives could affect them, whether in print, play, or interaction, could therefore be explored in greater depth.

A significant contribution to political engagement and shared grievances was put forward in chapter 2, which built on the work of Neil Younger and his examination of the involvement and burden on the counties in times of war.[13] By placing his arguments within the context of Kentish

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[10] Thomas Stoughton, *A generall treatise against poperie and in defence of the religion*, 5.
[11] Wrightson, *English Society*; Wood, *1549 Rebellions*, pp. 187-207.
[12] Wood, *1549 Rebellions*; Hoyle, 'Wrightsonian Incorporation'; Fletcher and MacCulloch.
[13] Younger, *War and Politics*.

landscape and identity, this thesis has added a further dimension to the topic of military experience in Elizabethan England. A different layer of identity which would also be profitable to follow would be that of vulnerability and 'Englishness' in binary opposition. The experiences of Kent and the south east of England as shown in chapter 2 were defined against the French and then Catholic Spain. A comparison with places like Cumbria and Northumberland in their positions on the Scottish border would add another element of opposition for the regions who were closer to the first Catholic, then Presbyterian, Scotland. It is likely that their notions of what it was to be 'English' were different to those of the south-east. Steven Ellis, in his work on Tudor frontiers, and others who have focused on the peripheries of the Tudor state, have exposed Tudor policy and the elite perspective of such areas.[14] Of particular interest is Ellis' argument that borderland communities identified more with others on the borders, whether they were Scottish or English, than with their countrymen further south.[15] This poses interesting questions for the concept of the Tudor state and national identity, and a comparative study of 'English' identity in these areas in contrast to the 'English' identity of the south east would be beneficial.

This investigation of Kent has shown the significance of defining the memories and identities on the different levels of the local, the county and the national. Further investigations of other counties or regions, in the same way that Norfolk has been studied by Wood, Whittle and Whyte, could therefore broaden our understanding of politics, identity and memory throughout sixteenth-century England. Another county which has drawn much attention is Cornwall. This has been most notably studied by A. L. Rowse, John Chynoweth, Mark Stoyle and John Cooper, with each coming to different conclusions regarding the political identities of the Cornish people and their relationship with the monarchy. While Rowse and Stoyle emphasise a self-conscious Cornish identity based in their language, history and customs, Chynoweth found that Cornish society was more anglicised and connected to the Tudor monarchs, and Cooper argued that the people of Cornwall and Devon were not as different as was previously stated, nor were they as rebellious.[16] However, Chynoweth's focus

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[14] Steven Ellis, *Tudor Frontiers and Noble Power: The Making of the British State* (Oxford, 1995).
[15] Ellis, *Tudor Frontiers and Noble Power*.
[16] A. L. Rowse, *Tudor Cornwall: Portrait of a Society* (London, 1941); Stoyle, 'The Dissidence of Despair: Rebellion and Identity in Early Modern Cornwall', *Journal of British Studies*, 38 (1999), 423-44; Stoyle, 'Cornish Rebellions, 1497-1648', *History Today* , 47 (1997), 22-8; John Chynoweth, *Tudor Cornwall* (Stroud, 2002); John Cooper, *Propaganda and the Tudor State: Political Culture in the Westcountry* (Oxford, 2003).

on the Cornish gentry and Cooper's amalgamation of Cornwall and Devon into a 'western peninsula' meant that they were only ever looking for one level of identity when it came to Cornish politics. By studying the gentry, who were, as Stoyle states, 'the most "anglicised" group of Tudor Cornish society', Chynoweth was therefore 'bound to underplay the extent of Cornish cultural distinctiveness'.[17] Similarly, Cooper's determination to merge Cornwall with Devon meant that he ignored the cultural elements that separated Cornwall from Devon, as well as the significance of the fact that the majority of the large rebellions that occurred took place in Cornwall and not Devon, with the exception of the rebellions of 1549. While all of them have made valid points regarding political identities in Cornwall, there seems to be an assumption that the identity they are highlighting comes at the exclusion of others: that by identifying as part of the 'western peninsula' or 'anglicised' gentry, or by demonstrating loyalty to the monarch, there could not also be a peculiarly Cornish culture at the same time. This study of Kent has shown that a plurality of political identities could coexist, based in landscape, memory, religion, and society, and reaching from locality to county to nation, or even beyond, depending on the context. An exploration of the elements of Cornish identity already discovered by Rowse, Chynoweth, Stoyle and Cooper as they interacted with one another according to their strengths and circumstances, would add further nuance to an already complex and interesting debate.

Although there are some issues with Cooper's fusion of Cornwall and Devon into one unit of analysis, the connections he makes between the two, such as the Duchy of Cornwall and the Stannaries, stand as points of contact for levels of identity that exist beyond the local and county but under the national. Further studies in this vein would be valuable. Places like Cornwall or Essex, each with their own rebellious histories and unique sense of identity would be especially interesting in combination with places like Kent and Norfolk. The actions of the 1497 Cornish rebels in targeting Blackheath and expecting Kentish support, for example, suggests interesting things for the perception of Kent in Cornwall and the way in which it was felt that they shared an identity based in rebellious

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[17] Stoyle, 'Review: *Tudor Cornwall/ Propaganda and the Tudor State: Political Culture in the Westcountry*', *English Historical Review*, 119 (2004), 505-8.

traditions. A comparative study of Essex, Kent, and perhaps Norfolk, so often linked together in times of rebellion and under the banner of 'commonwealth', would be another valuable area of exploration.

By exploring the ways in which memories were used and identities were formed, acknowledging the different strengths attached to each dependent on circumstance, as well as the ways in which they interacted as a result, we can come closer to understanding popular politics and the influence of the landscape and social memory on the common people of early modern England.
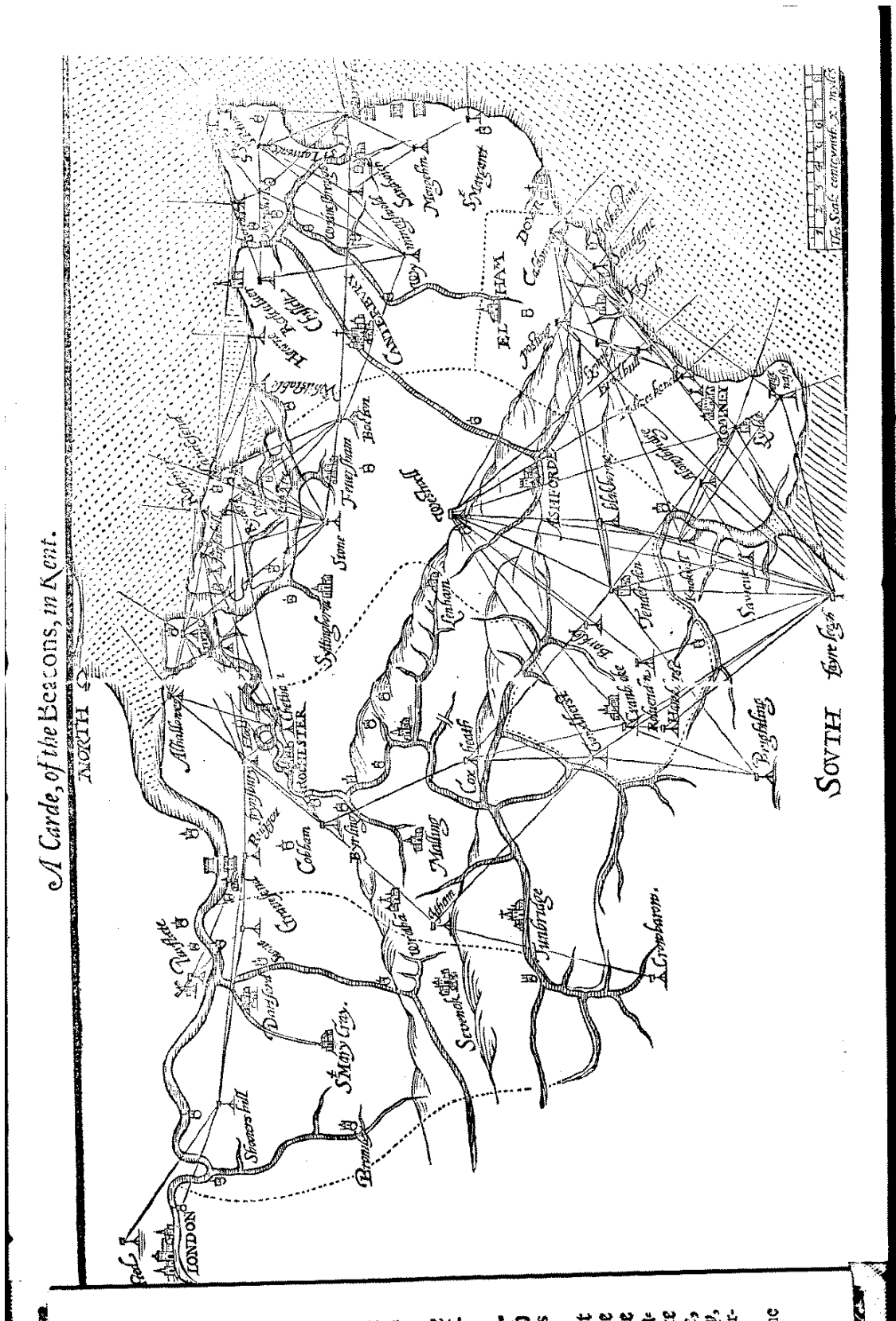
Appendix A

TNA, MPA 1/61.
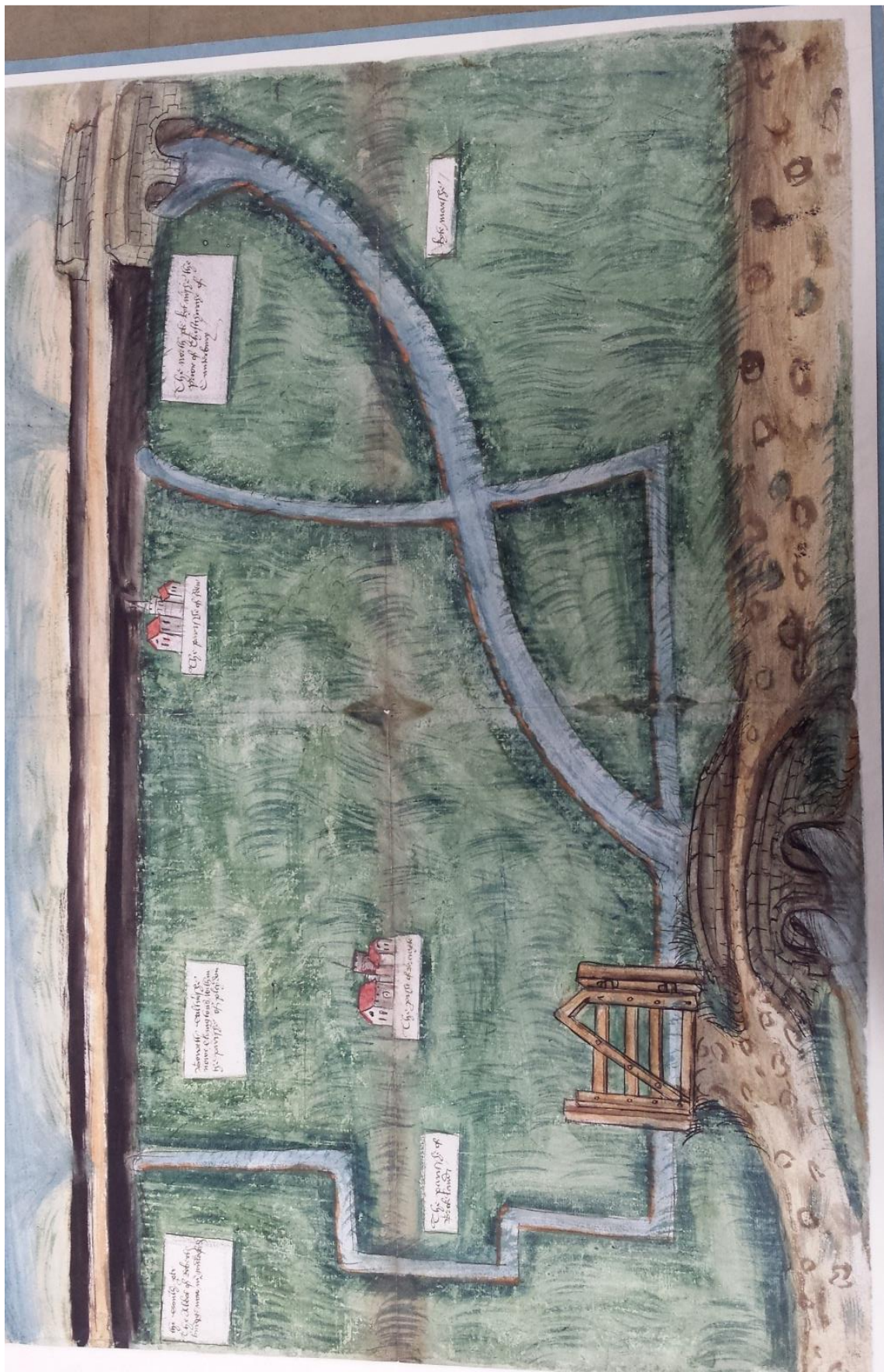
Appendix B

TNA, MPF 1/240.

Appendix C

Lambarde, William, *A perambulation of Kent conteining the description, hystorie, and customes of that shyre. Written in the yeere 1570 by William Lambarde of Lincolnes Inne Gent: first published in the yeere 1576 and now increased and altered after the Authors owne last Copie* (London, 1596), Plate II.

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CC-N/7	Military: Northgate Muster Book, (1599)
CC-N/39	Military: Draft Letter September (1597)
CC-Woodruff List 12/3	Depositions October (1572)

Diocese of Canterbury (DCb)

DCb-J/X	Consistory and Archdeacon's Court Books, (1364-1735)
DCb-PRC 39	Probate/Court Deposition Registers (1555-1694)

Fordwich Borough (U4)

U4/4	Bundle 4: Section I (1315-1729)
U4/5	Bundle 5: Conveyances etc.

Kent History and Library Centre (KHLC)

Faversham Borough Records (Fa)

Fa/CPw49	Lord Warden Records (1562-1966)

Lydd Borough and Town Council (Ly)

Ly/4/4	Cinque Port Correspondence (1570-1838)

New Romney Borough (NR)

NR/CPc	Clerk of the Brotherhood Records (1300-1931)
NR/CPw	Lord Warden Records (1500-1722)
NR/RTs	Ship Money (1573-1640)
NR/ZPr	Printed Proclamations (1518-1760)

Queenborough Borough (Qb)

Qb/AZ	Statute and Precedent Books (1325-1823)

Kent Quarter Sessions (Q)

Q/SRg	Gaol Delivery Roll (1596-1605)

West Kent Quarter Sessions Records (QM)

QM/SB	Sessions Papers (1500-1699)
QM/SI	Indictments (1592-1617)
QM/SIq	Inquisitions (1500-1699)
QM/SRc	Recognizances (late 16th century – early 17th century)

Sandwich Borough (Sa)

Sa/AC	Year Books (1431-1837)
Sa/CPc	Custumals (1574-1689)
Sa/ZB2	Papers, originally endorsed 'Sandwich Manuscripts' (1295-1753)

Tenderden Borough (Te)

Te/C1	Custumals (1558-1656)

Maps

test1/15/2	(1588)
test1/15/1372	(1590)
test1/15/1373	(1590)
test1/15/1374	(1590)

Miscellaneous Deeds of Various Parishes (1639-1734) (U301)

U301/E	Estate Papers

Marsham Manuscripts(1550-1774) (U1121)

U1121/Z   Miscellaneous Records

Kirkwood Manuscripts (1394-1859) (U3847)

U3847/Z   Miscellaneous Records

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Court of Chancery (C)

C 1   Early Proceedings: Richard II to Philip and Mary

C 78   Decree Rolls

Court of Exchequer (E)

E 133   King's Remambrancer: Barons' Depositions

E 134   King's Remembrancer: Depositions taken by Commission

E 178   King's Remembrancer: Special Commissions of Inquiry

Court of King's Bench (KB)

KB 9   Crown Side: Indictment Files, Oyer and Terminer Files

Court of Star Chamber (STAC)

STAC 3   Star Chamber Proceedings, Edward VI

STAC 4   Star Chamber Proceedings, Philip and Mary

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MPA 1   Maps and Plans Extracted from records of the Chancery

MPF 1   Maps and Plans Extracted from records of the State Paper Office

State Papers (SP)

SP 10/8   State Papers Domestic, Edward VI

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