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ABSTRACT

This study examines the relationship between economy and society in Dover between 1509-1640. Dover's harbour, threatened by choking shingle, was twice improved by royal intervention, and in the first half of the seventeenth century, during periods of English neutrality, was used as an entrepot for the transshipment of international goods. Through the use of detail, the study attempts to demonstrate the process of urban life and government, and considers the economic, social and cultural consequences of the changes at the harbour. It examines the civic accounts closely, not only for fiscal and social, but also for cultural information, showing how successive corporations, while responding to economic fluctuations and instructions from central government, operated a moral economy. Other evidence is used to show how, in the new conditions of the seventeenth century, wealth accrued to individuals, some of them alien merchants and factors, increasingly from the distribution rather than the production of goods and also from the manipulation of capital. The population possibly tripled over the whole period, and it is suggested that the gap between rich and poor widened in the early seventeenth century. Social structures throughout the period are shown to have been based on occupational networks, extended kinship, status and mutual obligation, and often to have involved the extension and receipt of credit. Protestantism was readily embraced by the ruling group, who are shown to have become both more exclusive and more efficient over the period. From the beginning of the seventeenth century they began to finance civic rule with loans at interest. In spite of greater profits from the harbour, they were under pressure then from forced billeting, recurrent disease, and increasing numbers of transient poor, whom they treated punitively. At that time, too, the Crown made more demands upon them without offering any compensating concessions, so that by 1640 change seems to have been inevitable.

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ABBREVIATIONS AND NOTES ON THE USE OF MANUSCRIPTS

Arch. Cant.	Archaeologia Cantiana
BL	The British Library
CCA	Canterbury Cathedral Archives
CKS	Centre for Kentish Studies, Maidstone
CSP	Calendar of State Papers
DCAM	Dover Common Assembly Minute Book
DTA	Dover Town Accounts
EHR	Economic History Review
HLRO	House of Lords Records Office
LPD Henry VIII	Letters and Papers Foreign and Domestic of Henry VIII
PRO	Public Record Office

Dates have been adjusted to new style throughout, so that years begin on January 1st, not March 25th.

The spelling of names has been standardized, usually to the most recent or the most common usage.

The spelling in passages transcribed from original documents has been modernized except in a very few cases where it was judged more appropriate to retain the original form.

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INTRODUCTION

The words "economy and society" are deliberately yoked together in the title of this study because it considers the relationship between the two rather than presenting a comprehensively quantitative analysis of either. If it therefore treads in what T.S. Willan has called "the no-man's land that lies between economic and social history",¹ then that seems appropriate in a period when social and credit relationships were often functions of one another, and in an urban context where it was the duty of civic rulers, themselves part of the credit network, to take responsibility both for the political economy and financial management of the town, and also for the welfare and social order of its inhabitants.

The character of the study inevitably results partly from the sources available for analysis. As a Cinque Port, Dover was immune from subsidies and most other crown taxes.² Very few lists of local taxes, or sesses, survive, and there is no freemen's admission register until 1601. The structural socio-economic profile of a town's population presented in much urban history of the 1960s and 70s depends on such evidence,³ and thus cannot be constructed for Dover, although inferences have been drawn from other material about the relative status of different trades there.⁴ More recently, doubts have been expressed both about the reliability of taxation material, and the validity of using single-source listings to suggest the dynamics of any group over a number of years or to represent the multi-occupational functions of many men at that period.⁵ Instead of stratifying Dover's society, therefore, an attempt has been made here to discover the process of urban life and government. To this end one of Dover's best surviving sources, the chamberlains' accounts, has been used to underpin the whole study.

The chamberlains' accounts have been read not only as a source for quantifiable fiscal information, but more importantly as a text that represents the culture from which it arose. McCaffrey says that a town's accounts "demand serious attention, for nowhere else are the purposes of civic oligarchy more succinctly summed up than in the dry columns of pounds, shillings and pence of the receiver's rolls".⁶ He himself analyses Exeter's civic accounts in some detail and shows how, by financial juggling, the corporation was able to finance extravagant schemes for the public benefit.⁷ For the most part, civic accounts have been used only to discover how corporations balanced their fixed incomes against their rising expenditure or to cast light upon their involvement in specific projects.⁸ Here, they have been subjected to a closer reading than seems to have been attempted to date with any civic accounts of the period, and used not simply to examine fiscal balances and the economic resources of the town, for which purposes they have been shown to be at times misleading⁹, but to reveal the underlying moral economy that they implicitly record.¹⁰ That has necessitated searching for the motives, values, priorities and methods of the men who managed the political economy of the town. Thus, the process of civic rule has been considered, and an attempt made to understand the changing mentality of those responsible for the financial management of the town as they employed limited resources to deal with a growing population, rising prices, periods of serious infectious disease, and an increasingly complex economic and political situation.

Because some of this work seems not to have been attempted before on an English town of the period, its methodology is perhaps unconventional. Detail seems vital to the demonstration of process, therefore Chapter 1 examines the chamberlains' accounts in unusual detail, examining each main source of income and each main group of expenditures for significant changes over time. An attempt has been made to draw conclusions from each of these examinations. The conclusions indicate the problems that presented

themselves to the town's rulers and suggest changes in the cultural and moral imperatives that informed their management of the town's resources and the achievement of social control.¹¹ Conclusions based on an analysis of certain areas of corporate expenditure also point to a cultural change in the oligarchy's relationship with the town's inhabitants¹², and a political change in their relationship with central government.¹³

Later chapters use other sources both to flesh out and to try to explain the conclusions arising from work on the accounts, enlarging on the economic, social, religious and cultural conditions in the town that both initiated and modified responses from the oligarchy. Within the discussion of the accounts, material from other sources has also been brought to bear where it can provide illumination - material such as the proceedings of the town's common council, depositions before the magistrates, evidence from the ecclesiastical courts, testamentary material and evidence from state papers. Some repetition has therefore been inevitable as layers of sources have been searched for explication of the details of urban life.

Detailed work on the civic accounts has been prefaced by some consideration of their role in both the ceremony and practice of urban government. There is also discussion of the crucial role played by the chamberlains in the network of credit within the town and of the social as well as fiscal choices they sometimes had to make.¹⁴ The system of deficit finance is then addressed, and it is clear that the corporate town reflected the experience of all its inhabitants by operating within the normal credit culture, borrowing against the future and paying after the event.

The history of towns in this period has, in the past, been much concerned with the persistence in them of decay, or even crisis. Peter Clark and Paul Slack suggested that the whole period from 1500-1700 was one of "economic difficulty for many English towns, only excepting London", and Peter Clark has since commented on the particular difficulties of the 1620s.¹⁵ Charles Phythian-Adams has placed the demographic and economic crisis in Coventry

early in the sixteenth century.¹⁶ Palliser summarised work on a number of cities, arguing that many of them, including York, decayed and their populations declined from the late fifteenth to the early sixteenth centuries, but that, having reached a nadir between about 1520-70, they gradually recovered.¹⁷ He illustrated, for example, the beneficial effect on York of the presence of the Council of the North, and of the revival of its long-distance trade after 1560.¹⁸ Colchester's trade and population appear to have contracted in the late fifteenth century, and Penelope Corfield has cited mid-sixteenth to mid-seventeenth century expansion there, as well as in Worcester, York and Ipswich.¹⁹

Since then, Nigel Goose has suggested that "if the thesis of continued urban weakness is to be accepted...it has to be shown that for some reason towns stood apart from the rest of the economy, experiencing problems that prevented them from sharing in the long-term economic growth that was characteristic of the nation as a whole."²⁰ His work on Cambridge, Colchester and Reading persuaded him that there was no such urban variable. Towns were not uniformly affected by problems; following a period of general readjustment, many provincial towns grew in size and, for the most part, short-term problems of trade, depression, disease and poverty could not "stem the tide of long-term economic and demographic advance".²¹

This study, based on Dover's experience, suggests that the urban economy was generally hand to mouth and therefore vulnerable to pressures, but that the corporate life of the town, the market and social order, normally survived these because corporations were in the hands of intrinsically opportunistic men, dedicated to the interests of their town, who were accustomed to financing their own projects with credit rather than large capital resources. The prosperity and populations of towns nevertheless fluctuated according to local circumstances. This is perhaps particularly true of ports, and can be seen clearly in the case of Poole, which, unusually, remained prosperous through the early Elizabethan period,

largely because it retained a viable harbour and because it developed a strong and important trade with the Channel Islands.²²

The experiences of three of the Cinque Ports can be shown to have been very different from each other because of circumstances beyond their control.

The population of Rye started to decline in the late sixteenth century, a decline that continued into the seventeenth century as the fishing industry collapsed and immigration failed to compensate for a low birth-rate, so that even an import-led revival of trade in the 1630s did not revive the town's fortunes.²³ Nevertheless, Rye survived in its diminished state, and its ruling group succeeded in preserving its social order, even though it never recovered its "fragile" prosperity of the early and mid-sixteenth century.²⁴ Sandwich, Dover's head port, showed only a slight, although steady, increase in population from the mid-1570s to about 1620, after which it began to fall again.²⁵

Dover's population, however, is likely to have at least tripled over the period under review. It may have had fewer than 1,000 inhabitants in 1500, perhaps between 1,200-1,900 in 1562, but probably between 4,000-6,000 for a brief period at the end of the 1630s.²⁶ This is not to deny that it experienced some of the problems described by Peter Clark in Gloucester in the mid-1620s: foreign war, food shortage, poverty, and the growth of social polarization as the range of wealth widened.²⁷ Yet, presumably because of relatively unskilled work being available at the harbour, and the requirements of those merchants and shipowners whose wealth was increasing, immigrants clearly continued to arrive in Dover. It is, of course, dangerous to equate rising population with growing prosperity, but an increase in immigrants to one town rather than another clearly suggests that opportunities were seen to exist there.²⁸ Dover's population was to decline after the end of the period under review, before reviving yet again.

It seems therefore sensible, except in extreme cases, to regard such

periods of decline and expansion as unique but normal fluctuations in the long-term history of towns. What is more interesting is to examine what caused the fluctuations and how the civic authorities dealt with them. Dover's experience seems to follow most closely that suggested by Palliser, already quoted, of decline in the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries, with a gradual recovery after the 1570s. In the early sixteenth century, as well as a low population and decayed buildings, certain problems frustrated its development that could be solved only by a larger capital investment than the civic authorities could find, and by a more developed technology than was available to it. This problem was common to a number of coastal towns and ports: even by the fifteenth century, the obstruction of the haven of Grimsby had become almost a permanent problem and it has been shown that the population there fell from a possible early maximum of about 2,000 to probably well under 1,000 by about 1591.²⁹ At York between the 1530s and the 1570s the authorities struggled to clear the Ouse, whose silting, Palliser suggests, might have been worsened at this period by the use of larger vessels.³⁰ The wealthy ruling group of Exeter, with their sophisticated mercantile experience, took loans and risked a large investment to build the much-needed Topsham Canal, which only became profitable 30 years later.³¹ It would have been impossible for the south-eastern ports to finance the clearance from their harbours of choking sand and pebble. Among them all, Dover was, however, considered most important as a port of passage and a strategic defence, therefore the crown injected capital into improving its harbour, thus saving it from the total ruin suffered finally by the harbours of Sandwich and Rye.

The development of Dover's harbour is described in the Foreword to this study. The town accounts show that income from harbour dues rose from forming 14% of the town's income in the decade 1519-28 to over 30% in the following decade after the first improvements had been made.³² Thereafter, they formed a major part of the civic income, even when the harbour fell

into decay again in the 1560s and early 1570s. The harbour was completely renewed in the 1580s, after which there are signs that increasing numbers of people were drawn to the town.³³

The 1590s might appropriately be described as a period of crisis in Dover, as it was almost universally.³⁴ In spite of continuing difficulties in the early seventeenth century, the town continued to expand. The marked rise in the number of baptisms in Dover in the 1630s coincides with the period between the 1620s and 1650s when Dover's port was briefly an international entrepot for the transshipment of foreign goods in English ships.³⁵ As an illustration of the degree of fluctuation possible in the fortunes of a town it is perhaps worth making what would normally seem an unlikely comparison between Dover's civic income and that of Exeter in this period. In the decade 1630-1640 Exeter's civic income averaged £1,126; figures do not exist for every year in that decade in Dover but, because of increased harbour dues, its civic income reached £1,101 in the year 1639-40.³⁶ The fragility of this opportunistic rise in income is suggested, however, by the fact that in the years 1629-35, for which complete figures are available, the harbour dues that were temporarily inflating the civic income formed 70% of it.³⁷

It is perhaps ironic that flexible adjustment to such change can be seen to have been characteristic of gerontocratic urban oligarchic rule during this period. Studies of towns of various size and importance have shown how ruling groups not only persistently defended the interests of their members and "reasserted the particularist nature of the city", as MacCaffrey says of Exeter, but maintained "a continuance of traditional ethics...concepts of justice, charity and good governance", as Palliser says of York. Dyer finds the Worcester oligarchy "too fluid to harden into a caste, too bound up with the everyday life of the city to become remote, and too deeply imbued with paternalistic sense of obligation or responsibility to the community as a whole to drift into petty self-interest."³⁸ Paul Slack has

shown how Salisbury's ruling group dealt practically and imaginatively with the problem of poverty at the turn of the century.³⁹ In spite of differences of wealth, occupation and religious outlook between various urban oligarchies, it seems clear that they each shared a notion of the unique nature of their own town or city, a determination to defend its liberties, and a practical interest in its good governance that superseded their occasional internal disputes, such as those at Chester and Newcastle.⁴⁰

Much has been written about the development of an increasingly oligarchic form of rule in towns between the fifteenth and early seventeenth centuries that was stimulated by the desire of central government to maintain order during difficult times. This development implies the gradual elimination of general participation in the government of towns by those freemen who did not become part of the most prosperous social elite from whom the inner circle of government was drawn.⁴¹ In Norwich, however, all citizens were part of the body politic by this period.⁴² The Cinque Ports, although lacking that degree of democracy, were somewhat more open and autonomous than many large cities that have been studied. In Sandwich, the oligarchy did not operate to the exclusion of all freemen until the end of the sixteenth century.⁴³ In Rye, where freemen formed only 10% of adult males by the early seventeenth century, it has been suggested that a man's exclusion was from the commonalty rather than from the common council.⁴⁴ In Dover, increasing development towards exclusive oligarchic power was formalised by the common assembly's acceptance in 1556 of an order from the Privy Council that the common council of 37 should in future represent the whole commonalty, or freeman body, and details in the town accounts signal more assertive government by the ruling group between 1545-1560.⁴⁵ Before the dissolution of the Priory of St. Martin's and the Maison Dieu, the Prior and the Master had played more than a ceremonial role in the administration of the town.⁴⁶ More energetic administration by the civic rulers after the

dissolution, followed by the Privy Council's urging towards increasingly oligarchic rule, suggest there was a perceived local need for more effective rule then, as well as supporting the view of those who see the government's hand behind the strengthening of urban oligarchies as a replacement for religious authority.⁴⁷ The process continued in 1561, when jurats began to be appointed for life.⁴⁸

The changing composition and ideas of Dover's ruling group are examined in Chapter 4.⁴⁹ It was not wealthy compared with similar groups in larger towns, and because Dover's market chiefly supplied its local region and its port functioned mainly as a port of passage for most of the period, its wealthiest men, those normally most likely to enter its ruling group, were drawn from a variety of trades and from service industries such as inn-keeping and hackneying, rather than from one sector, as Exeter's and Bristol's and, to a lesser extent, Chester's were from their merchants, or Worcester's from its mercers.⁵⁰ Neither did religious guilds or craft fellowships play any significant part in the government of the town at this period, a feature common to the Cinque Ports.

As early as the 1520s rulers from local minor gentry and yeomen families, whose occupational interests lay chiefly in the land, began to give way to those from the food and drink trades, including inn-keepers.⁵¹ The character of the ruling group changed most markedly after the death of Mary, however. A group of active, reformist, retail merchants had established their presence in Dover by 1551;⁵² they, or in some cases, their sons, moved into the jurat body at the beginning of Elizabeth's reign, replacing some of the often-absent mariners who, perhaps advisedly, had been elected under Mary.⁵³ Some of the new merchants were active in the land market, seeking leases of land and disputing rights to tithes that had been granted at the dissolution to local gentry families. They were therefore not the primary beneficiaries of the disposal of land at the dissolution, but leased it from those who were. In at least two cases, they

had formerly been employed to administer the very land they now leased.⁵⁴ Using their legal ability to displace customary practice, this radical group gradually established a protestant oligarchic network, linked by marriage, that came to full power in the 1570s and the buoyant 80s. At that period, some retail merchants can be seen to have been at odds with men from more conservative and essentially locally-based occupations; they used the law to obtain their ends, but charges of corruption led to further intervention by the Privy Council.⁵⁵ There was also friction between merchants and certain customs officers.⁵⁶

The nepotistic and paternalistic late-Elizabethan ruling group was more active in its regulation of the town's market, its hygiene and its poor.⁵⁷ In the early seventeenth century more jurats held offices from the Crown, sometimes a cause for dissension.⁵⁸ Retail merchants, such as mercers and drapers, began to be replaced on the bench by grain dealers, who were growing in wealth and unpopularity during the bad harvests of the early seventeenth century.⁵⁹ From about 1605 the godly ruling group began to separate themselves from the other inhabitants of the town, most obviously because of an exclusive but shared religious culture, but also perhaps in response to population growth and increased disorder.⁶⁰ They also centralized measures for social control and paid more officers to see that they were carried out.⁶¹ For the first time, the system of suing for, and purchasing, office spread from the Lord Warden of the Cinque Ports down to minor civic officers.⁶² For the first time, also, some of the town's wealthiest inhabitants no longer climbed the oligarchic ladder.⁶³ These wealthy men were "mere merchants" and factors, in many cases of Flemish or Dutch origin.⁶⁴ The few wealthy merchants who did join the bench became part of a group of jurats diminishing in size and composed chiefly of men who had more in common with the minor gentry who had assumed political responsibility in the early sixteenth century than with the radical retail merchants who had dominated the town in the second half of the sixteenth

century.

The fundamentally undemocratic and paternalistic nature of oligarchic government and the opportunism of oligarchs has often been commented upon.⁶⁵ The "double standards" of the oligarchy noted by Palliser have been demonstrated in Dover also, as has their involvement in the private marketing their decrees forbade.⁶⁶ It is clear that the oligarchy used the majority of the corporation's resources to maintain their own administrative machinery and thus the privileges of the freeman body, that their position on taxation was open to question, that their role as magistrates could cause friction, and that certain individuals among them were resented.⁶⁷ Practically, however, substantial men were needed in this situation. The town accounts suggest that the ruling group could afford to pay fines for the offences they committed, and that these were regarded as among the normal taxes on trading that were used to benefit the poor.⁶⁸ The most unpopular mayor was not the wealthiest but a tailor who was jeered at for his humble origins.⁶⁹

Without the dedicated management of the oligarchy it is difficult to see how the town would have survived through certain periods or gained the advantages it did. In Dover, the first important office, as chamberlain, usually came at a point in a man's life-cycle when he was still actively involved in his own occupation, and might be innovative in his methods.⁷⁰ Yet the very language of the chamberlains' accounts suggests a continual re-establishment and redefinition of the town's liberties and identity, a deliberate construction of a sense of continuity and order.⁷¹ The accounts also show how adjustment to the circumstances and needs of the town's inhabitants was balanced against duty to central government, so that statutes were frequently treated as permission to act rather than as an obligation to do so. Magistrates were capable of ignoring requests from the Privy Council but also of anticipating them with decrees of their own when it seemed appropriate.⁷² Successive ruling groups' reassertion of the

town's identity and liberties, and their time-consuming governance of those they considered its deserving inhabitants perhaps help to explain their rejection from the town in the early seventeenth century of the indigent or near-indigent poor from other towns and villages.⁷³

The position of the magistrates, balancing their duties to the Crown and to the variety of inhabitants of the town, became increasingly difficult in the Stuart period. The case made for the loyalty of Dover's magistrates to their town might suggest the "intense" localism described by Alan Everitt as being peculiar to the society of the county of Kent, although by the seventeenth century a substantial minority of them would not have led the social and political life "almost wholly within their county", he describes; contacts with London and the northern continent have been shown to be quite frequent.⁷⁴

The debate about localism has since extended to a more general consideration of the interpenetration of local and national issues, in which the inherently ambivalent loyalties of men of the period have been addressed.⁷⁵ With particular reference to towns, Peter Clark has suggested, on the evidence of growing hostility to the Crown in Gloucester from the mid-1630s, that "the major contribution to the Revolution of declining or economically unstable towns" should not be ignored; while David Harris Sacks has attacked the localist approach that describes what he sees as an anachronistic clash between the state and the local community in the seventeenth century, and has instead suggested, by means of an examination of Bristol's "little businesses" with the Crown, that Bristol's magistrates were "a politically integrated part of the realm."⁷⁶ In his illuminating analysis of the relationship between the English monarchy and the land-owning "parliamentary classes" at this period, Robert Brenner shows how the monarchy, with limited independent sources of income, had few directly dependent officers, but relied for the administration of local government, justice and the military upon unpaid officials drawn from the

landed class. Unlike the merchants, these men would not have been materially affected by unparliamentary taxes on trade, yet when James I proposed such impositions, they opposed them on principle, claiming that arbitrary taxation was a violation of the fundamental right of property and a threat to the authority of Parliament.⁷⁷ At a local level, evidence from Dover suggests that, while its magistrates were imbued with allegiance to the Crown and conscious of both their and the town's legal dependence upon it, they were troubled by a new kind of interference in their affairs from the beginning of James's reign. Civic officers provided voluntary administrative service to the town, and the sense that the Crown was demanding supply of various kinds, and actually threatening the liberties of the town, while giving nothing in return, as it usually had done, seems to have been keenly felt.⁷⁸

Dover's relationship with the Crown was unusual for such a small town: because of its strategic position frequent demands were made upon it to billet soldiers, the Lieutenant of Dover Castle maintained a presence there, together with his secretariat and a garrison, and frequent communication between civic representatives and the Crown took place through the Lord Warden of the Cinque Ports. It has been shown that, even when balanced against pressure to increase oligarchic rule, this relationship had led to positive results for the town in the sixteenth century, adding to its privileges and improving its economic position.⁷⁹

The relationship clearly deteriorated suddenly in the early seventeenth century. The corporation ceded the harbour to the Crown in 1606 in return for promised help with its upkeep in the future. It has been shown that, rather than fulfilling its side of the bargain, the Crown sought to use the harbour to extend perquisites to its friends.⁸⁰ Such economic blows seem not to have been felt so keenly, however, as the appointment by the Crown of incompetent outsiders as successive bailiffs to the town, who imposed new, deterrent duties at the harbour and effectively brought an end to

certain normal judicial processes in the town.⁸¹ In 1625 the Crown failed either to pay for the billeting or to compensate for the disorder caused by the soldiers waiting to set out on the Mansfeldt expedition.⁸² In the 1620s the Cinque Ports petitioned the Duke of Buckingham, the then Lord Warden, unsuccessfully for ships to guard their very dangerous coast.⁸³ Demands from the Crown for money to suppress the Algiers pirates and, of course, for ship money, drew the Cinque Ports together and reinforced the resentment they felt over the free trade issue.⁸⁴

Peter Clark and Derek Hirst have both written about the Parliamentary elections in Dover in 1624 and discussed the significance of a freeman faction seeking franchise from the oligarchy.⁸⁵ What is interesting about the group of freemen who wisely disputed the election because they had not been allowed to vote in it is not that they represented a position inferior to the oligarchy, but that they included one of the most important merchants in Dover, who was also both the Customer and a salvager of wrecked goods, a local knight, who was also the Searcher of Suspicious persons, and the more protestant of the town's two clerics. Thus, although they disputed the election by the oligarchy of appointees of the Lord Warden, at least two of them depended upon the Crown rather than the corporation for their position.

The interpenetration of local and national responsibilities and loyalties was clearly very complex. This study suggests that, as the oligarchy grew further away from the community in the late sixteenth and early seventeenth century, it drew closer to the county's lawyers and military leaders and to its counterparts in the other Cinque Ports, with whom it shared a religious and possibly increasingly political outlook.⁸⁶ Thus, ironically, the Marian government had initiated conditions that nourished the growth of an efficient, exclusive protestant ruling group that was capable of perceiving its own interests as balanced against the demands of the Crown.

As it can be seen, it is not the purpose of this study to record the

details of Dover's trade, but rather to examine the effect of its general fluctuations as one of the influences on the community living in the town. Nevertheless, in view of the need for further analysis of the trade of the outports, it seems necessary to defend what may seem a perverse decision not to make a detailed examination of the volume of trade through the port based on customs material. Unlike some other ports, Dover provides no useful, systematic evidence of trade to add to that given by the port books, which do not themselves cover the period adequately.⁸⁷ The town's records do, however, give evidence for fluctuations in trade and their effect on its economy and society, and these have been discussed in some detail.

This evidence lies in the corporation accounts, which give totals of the income derived by the corporation from dues paid to them at the port: on shipping, on commodities being handled, and on the use of facilities provided at the harbour; the corporation's income from these dues has been summarized, and their fluctuations are shown as a changing percentage of the corporation's total income in a discussion of their effect on civic fiscal policy.⁸⁸ Trends in trading throughout the period are discussed in Chapter 2, particularly in the context of their effect on the relationship between economy and society in the town, and some evidence is supplied for the consumption of goods in the town.⁸⁹ The growth in the number of facilities provided at the harbour in the early seventeenth century, together with the development of building and the increase of population in that area provide additional evidence for the growth in trade then.⁹⁰ The unusual presence in the town of a number of mere merchants and an increasing number of English and alien factors in the early seventeenth century, together with Sir Cavalier Maycott, a member of the Spanish Company and a Director of the Virginia Company, also indicate unusual trade at that time.⁹¹ Chapter 2 examines the opportunities for the accumulation of wealth by such men.⁹²

Careful work on the customs records of the English outports has been undertaken by Stephens and by Willan.⁹³ Stephens says that between 1600 and 1640 "the cloth trade of Dover follows a *more erratic course than any of the other provincial ports*", and he sees it as "in a sense little more than an outport of London", pointing out that because of its frequently choked and damaged harbour and its vulnerability in war time there were "considerable fluctuations in its trade."⁹⁴ The Foreword to this study sets out the difficulties encountered in keeping the harbour open, the various stages of its improvement and their consequences for trade. Writing about inland trade, Willan points out that "Kentish ports had a complex pattern of trade that centred on, but was not monopolised by London. They retained connections with other east coast ports through their trade in coal, butter and cheese".⁹⁵ This point is taken up here in Chapter 2 in the discussion of the importance of the east-coast coal trade to the prosperity of Dover ship-owners.⁹⁶ His finding that Dover's exports at that period were chiefly cloth and beer to France, and that its imports were cloth, yarn, hops and wine from Calais and Dunkirk, the most expensive of which probably went to London, are confirmed by references to those commodities in the corporation accounts, which show, additionally, that lime, like beer, was one of the town's indigenous exports, and that in the first two decades of the sixteenth century Dover still shared in the export of livestock to Boulogne.⁹⁷ Dover did not have a rich hinterland, served by river traffic, like Hull or Exeter, for example. Nevertheless, the export of grain from the region became important to Sandwich, Dover's head port, and to a lesser extent to Dover itself in the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries.⁹⁸

In considering the importance of overseas trade to Dover, it seems fair to say that by the early seventeenth century attention needs to be directed to imports and re-exports rather than to native exports. Stephens acknowledges that in dealing only with the volume of the overseas export of cloth, he

was not necessarily arriving at a complete assessment of the relative importance of different ports. This caveat is perhaps particularly important in the case of Dover. He shows that exports of cloth from Dover were highest in 1626, that they suffered during the war and were "significant" again in 1633-34, but that throughout the period Hull and Exeter were the most successful outports. For the period from 1622 until 1651, during much of which Dover acted as a neutral entrepot for the transshipment of foreign goods, it is necessary to turn to J.S. Kepler's careful analysis of the re-export trade at Dover, based on customs material, to which this study is greatly indebted.⁹⁹ He estimates that in the years 1636 and 1638 "the Dover entrepot gave some degree of employment to about half the English merchant marine".¹⁰⁰ Additionally, Harland Taylor estimates that the traffic between Dover, the ports of the Low Countries, Spain and the Western Mediterranean in 1638 was nearly equal in value to total London exports in 1640.¹⁰¹ In view of Kepler's detailed analysis of trade through Dover at this important period, it has seemed appropriate to use customs material here very selectively, simply to illuminate the general trends in trading suggested by the corporation records, particularly since this study is primarily concerned with the process of socio-economic development within the community of the town.

Plate 1: DOVER TOWN AND HARBOUR IN 1581 (BL Add. Ms.11,815a)

- | | |
|-----------------------|------------------------------------|
| 1. The Castle | 8. Penniless Bench |
| 2. St. James's Church | 9. St. Martin-le-Grand (dissolved) |
| 3. St. James's Street | 10. The Priory (dissolved) |
| 4. The River Dour | 11. Snargate Street |
| 5. The Maison Dieu | 12. Proposed cross wall for sluice |
| 6. St. Mary's Church | 13. North pier |
| 7. Market Cross | 14. Paradise Pent |

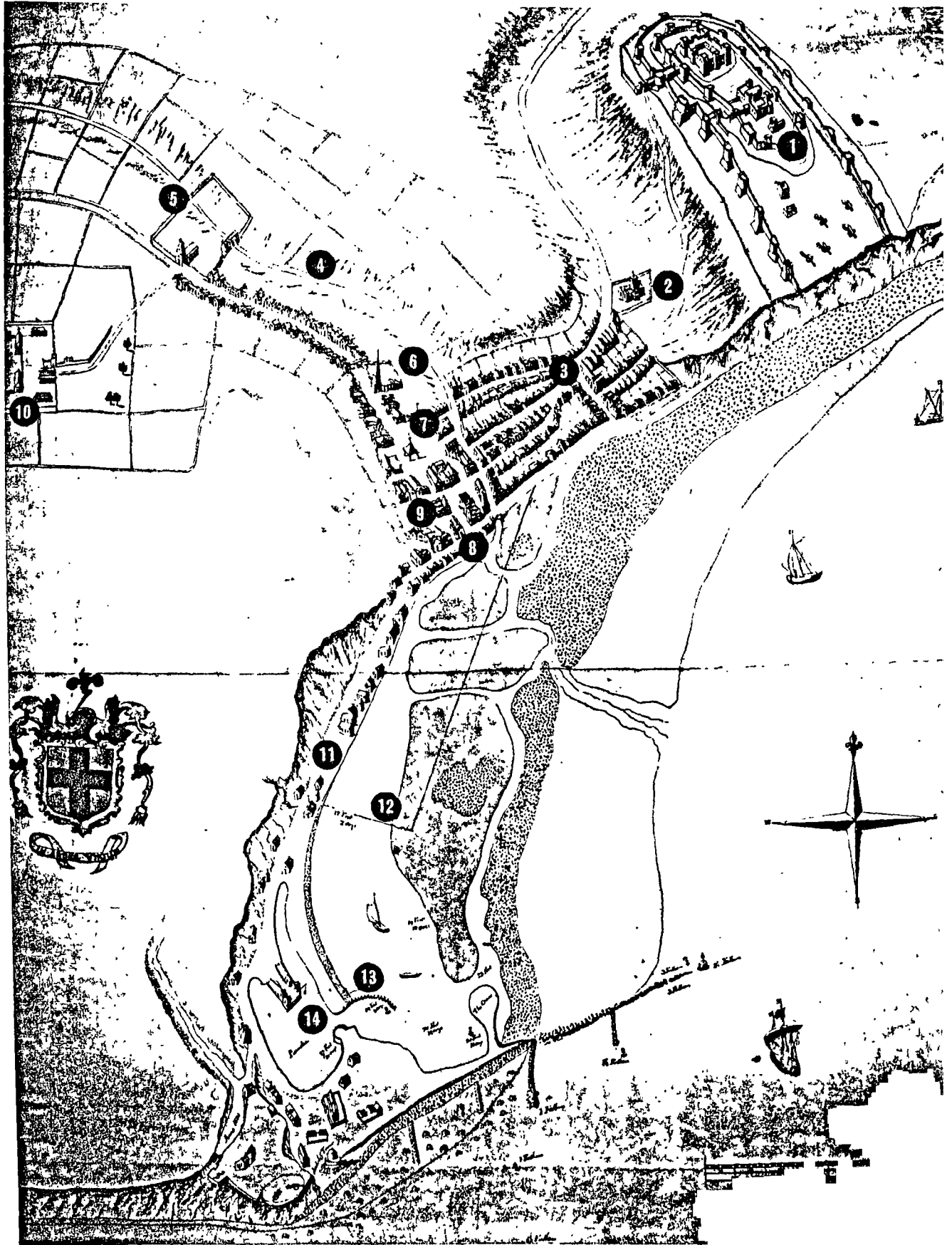
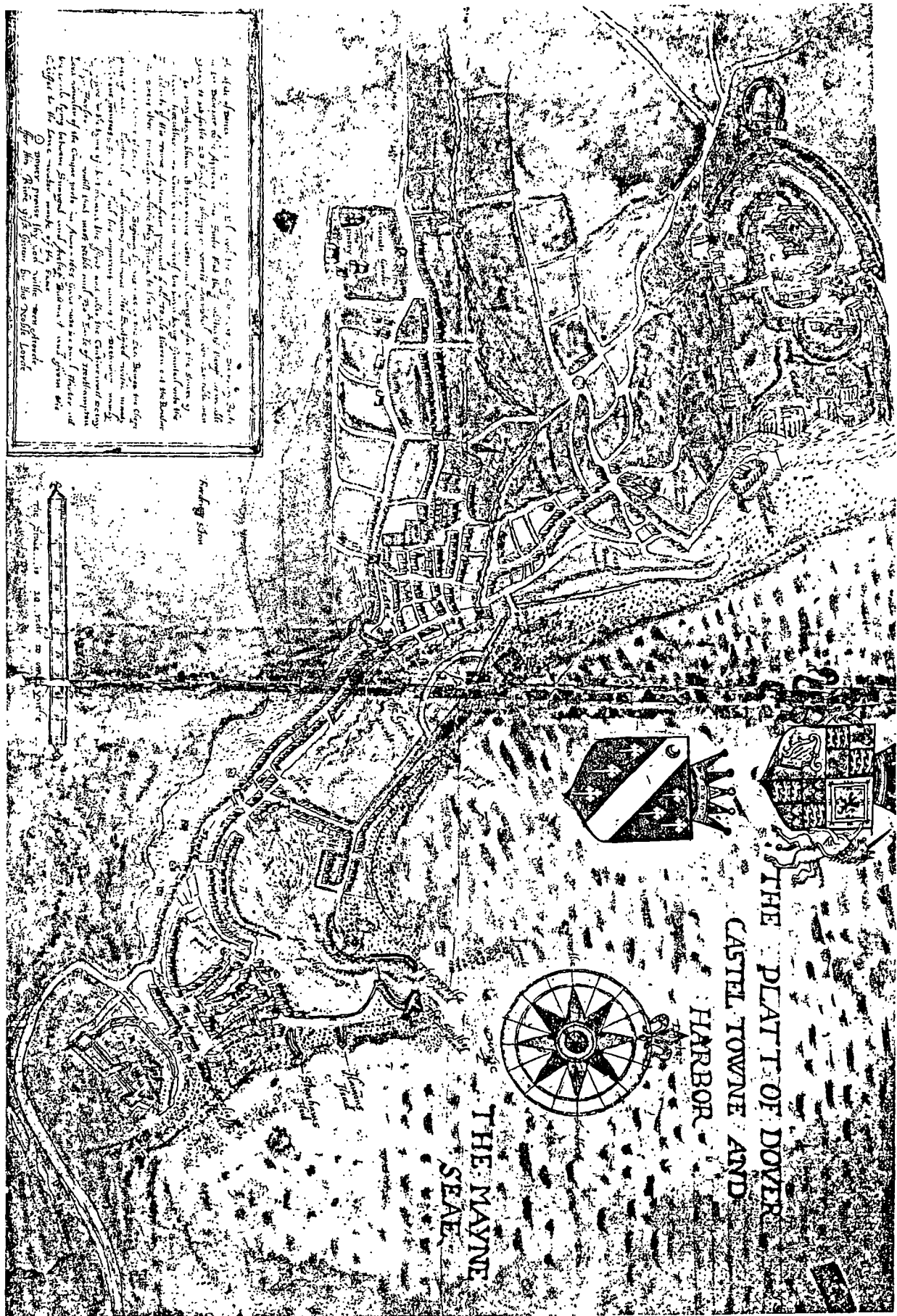


PLATE 2: DOVER TOWN AND HARBOUR IN 1641 (Dover Harbour Board Manuscript no.7478)



FOREWORD: The Development of Dover Harbour, 1509-1640

The maps on the preceding pages show the topographical relationship of the harbour to the town during the late Tudor and early Stuart periods.¹ The town, which lies in a narrow, steep-sided valley, is divided by the River Dour, a division which gave rise to the early administrative areas of "Eastbrook" and "Southbrook". The apparently heavier development of the Eastbrook area on the first map is due to the fact that the earliest harbour lay at the foot of what later became the Castle Cliff. This simple harbour was gradually choked by the eastward drift of shingle, but continued to be used until Henry VII financed the provision of shelter for boats on the western side of the bay.² At the beginning of the period under review "Eastbrook", with its parish church of St. James, was the poorer part of the town where most sailors still lived and Southbrook was the wealthier, market area.³

The road leading to the market place from the sea had at its junction with the road running along the shore an open space called "the Bench". This was the place, near the custom-house, where merchants had met and transacted business before the development of the market, and which had become simply a meeting place known as "Penniless Bench" by this period. The remains of the church of St. Martin-le-Grand, under whose walls the market took place, can be seen to be more complete in 1581 than they were by 1641. After the reformation, St. Mary's church, just beyond the market square, became the civic church. The road leads past it, and the Maison Dieu, towards Canterbury and London, passing through the suburb of Charlton, which lies just off the map.

The most striking difference between the two maps is the development in the harbour area by 1641 that followed the improvements planned in the 1581 map. The destructive pebble bank to the south of the earlier

"Paradise Pent" has been built over to take advantage of the new harbour. Even the new cross-wall and shore-wall are inhabited. These areas formed the new North Pier and South Pier wards, and were inhabited chiefly by sailors and merchants. Certain events at the harbour thus supply a vital chronology for the history of the town.

A fully detailed account of the maintenance and renewal of the harbour during the period under review would form a study in itself. Such a study has already been meticulously undertaken, and is therefore inappropriate here.⁴ A summary is needed, however, in order to clarify certain issues that will arise later in the study. Dover harbour, like others along the eastern end of the south coast, was constantly threatened by the accumulation of shingle and sand. Since it was topographically the most convenient of the harbours on that stretch of the coast it was deliberately rescued, unlike Rye, Winchelsea and Sandwich which no longer exist as ports. The silting up occurs because the flood tide surges eastward along the Channel from the Atlantic, its force increased both by the prevailing south-west winds and by the funnel-like narrowing of the Channel towards its eastern end. The tide therefore scours sand and shingle from the whole of the south coast as it moves eastward. The sand and shingle is then deposited at the narrow, eastern end of the Channel by the ebb tide, which moves more slowly westwards against the wind and along the ever-widening Channel so that the slack water of sheltered harbours is particularly subject to such deposits. Successive attempts to keep the harbour at Dover open and to provide a greater depth of water were episodes in a constant battle to clear it of the pebble beach that threatened to choke its entrance, an unremitting task for which completely successful technology proved not to be available until the nineteenth century.

In effect, in the period under review, two harbours were created, the second, made in the 1580s, lying further from the original shore-line

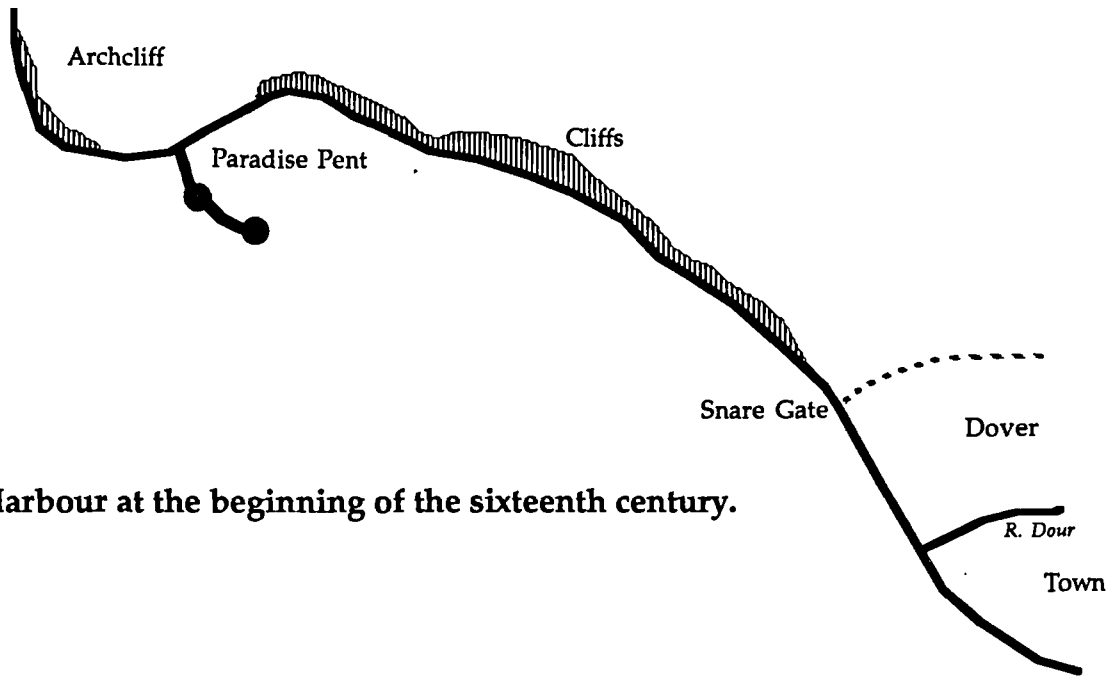


Fig i: Dover Harbour at the beginning of the sixteenth century.

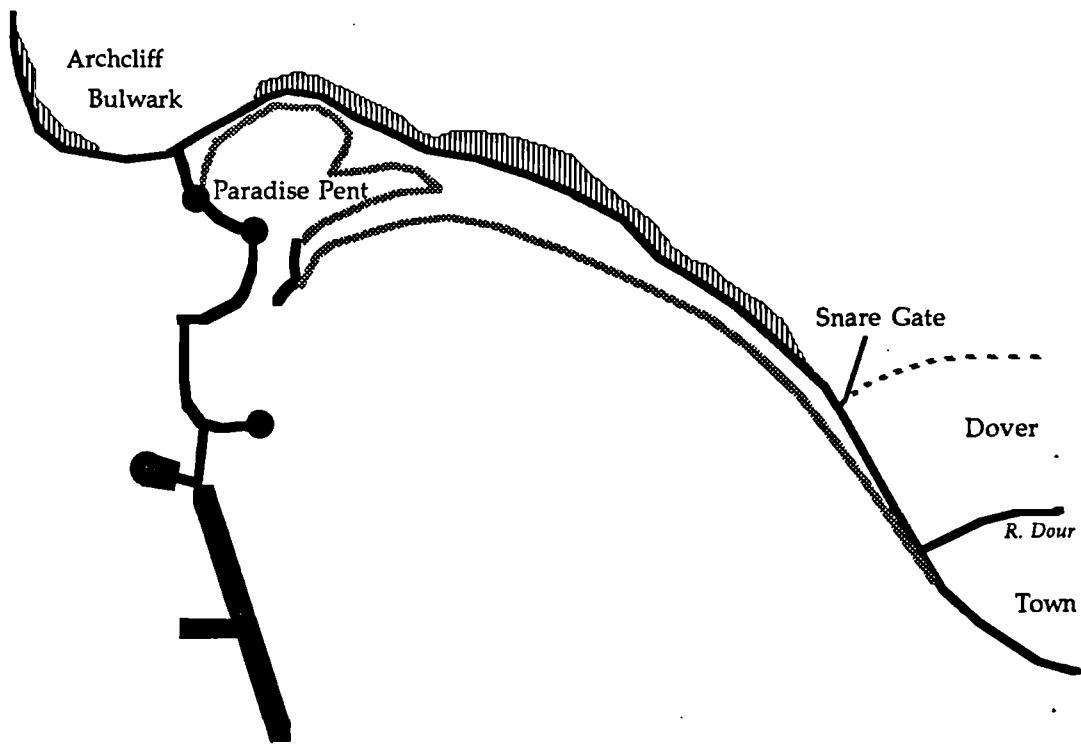


Fig ii: Dover Harbour after Henry VIII's improvements (based on BL Cotton Augustus I.i.22,23).

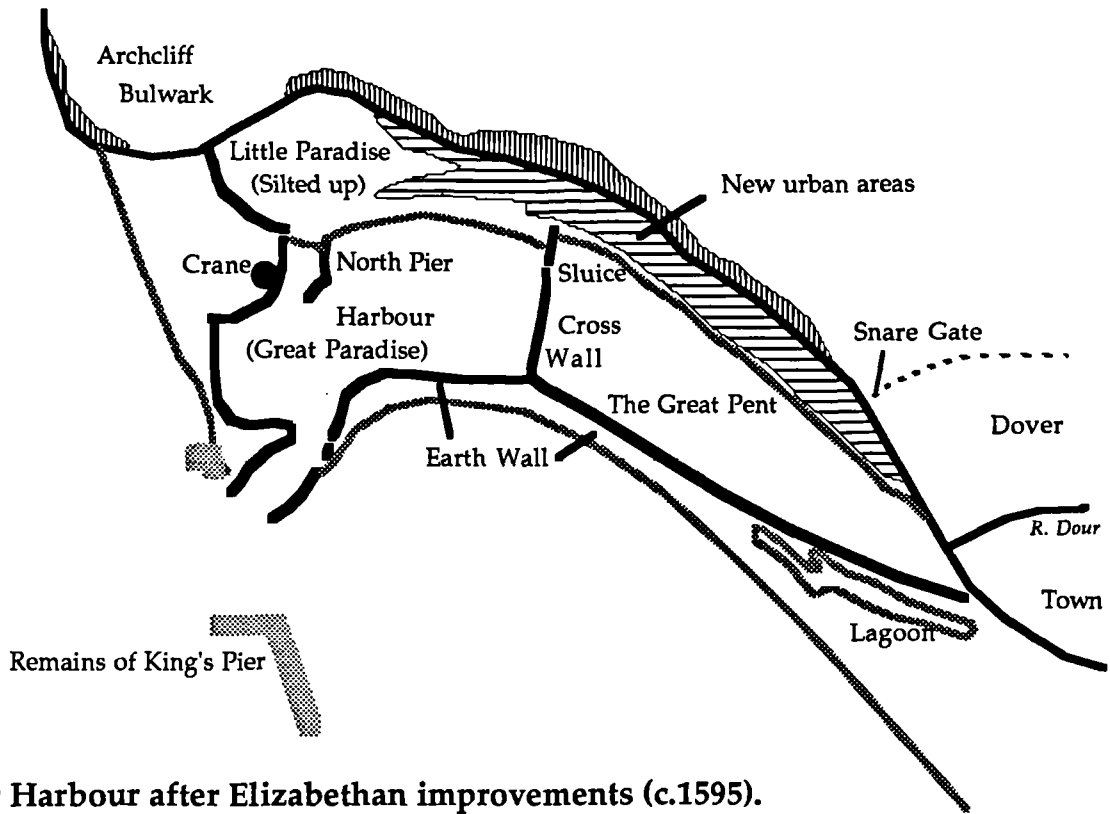


Fig iii: Dover Harbour after Elizabethan improvements (c.1595).

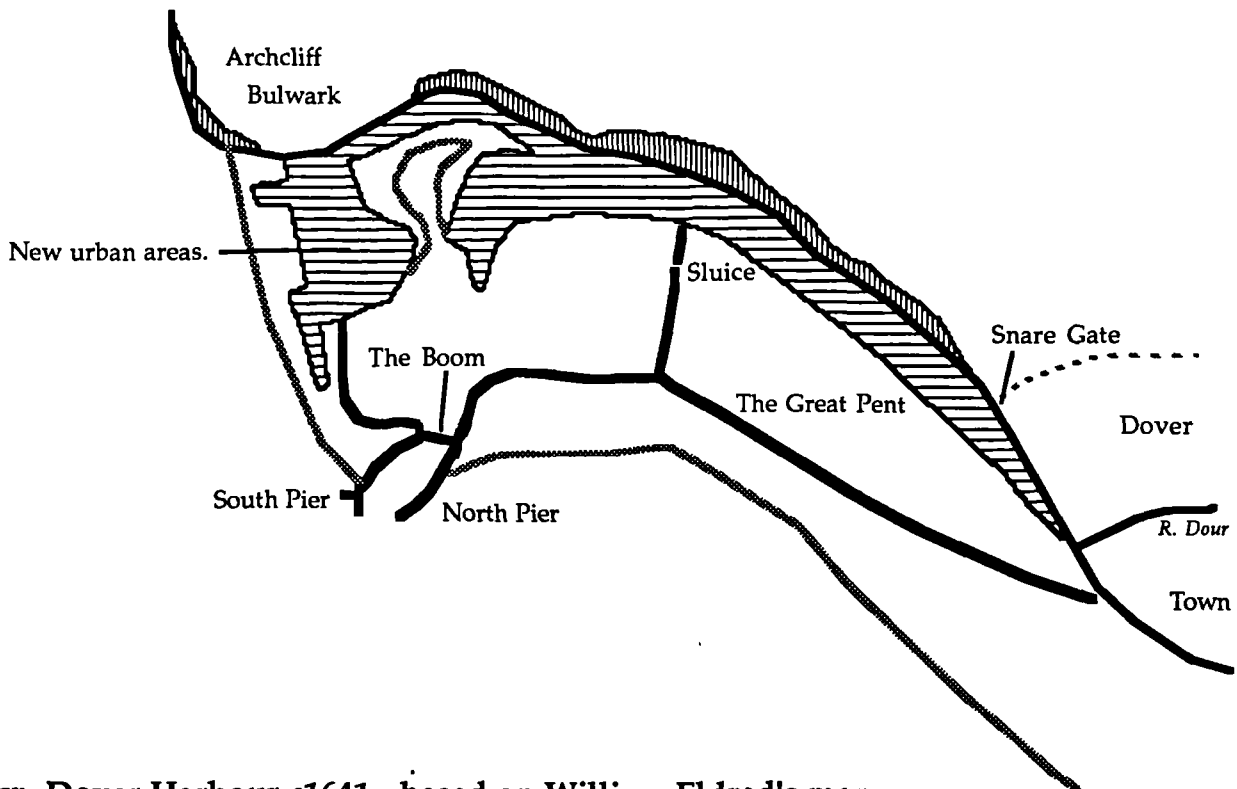


Fig iv: Dover Harbour c1641 - based on William Eldred's map.

than the first, as can be seen in Figures i, ii and iii. Boats had originally been drawn up on the eastern shore of the bay, below the Castle cliff, but by the beginning of Henry VIII's reign a rudimentary harbour, called Paradise Pent, had recently been created at the western end of the bay. Traditionally, John Clerk, Master of the Maison Dieu, is thought to have been responsible for Paradise Pent.⁵ This western site provided the basis from which grew the subsequent harbours constructed in the period under review. The accounts of this "wyke", or harbour, from 1510-1529 survive, with John Clerk named as one of the two annually elected Wardens of the Wyke in 1518.⁶ These show that the wall of the harbour was already being patched up in 1510.⁷ Serious repairs began to be undertaken in 1517-18, when an original tower at the end of the pier was deliberately demolished.⁸ At some time during this period the broken tower must have been rebuilt, as a painting, thought to be contemporary, illustrating Henry VIII's departure for the Field of the Cloth of Gold in summer 1520, shows the wyke with two towers, of slightly differing dates.⁹

1522-1523 must have been a crisis year for the harbour: entries in the accounts suggest emergency repairs rather than new construction. Spring high tides and shingle threatened to engulf the wyke; rocks were moved towards the pier to strengthen it and a hole stopped up with "thorns" - the normal emergency measure for the rest of the period.¹⁰ Pebble rounded the end of the pier so that the mouth of the harbour was blocked, and the work of dragging away the shingle, or "beach", in order to get boats in and out of the harbour began in earnest - the task most consistently mentioned in these accounts thereafter, as it continued to be in the Chamberlains' accounts even in the seventeenth century.¹¹ In 1523, the corporation persuaded the merchant adventurers in London to give money for the harbour in exchange for their relief from the payment of an unpopular murage tax, which up to this time had theoretically been

used to finance repairs to the harbour.¹²

This marked the point at which the corporation realised it could no longer maintain a viable harbour from its traditional financial resources. In 1531-32 Robert Nethersole, one of the town's Burgesses to Parliament, went to London to sue the king for money for work on the harbour and in 1533 the mayor and jurats sent a petition to the king describing its decay, pleading the poverty of the town, and pointing out the strategic advantages of Dover for the control of Channel shipping and the defence of the coast.¹³ The petition was taken to London by John Thompson, parson of St. James's church in Dover, who had prepared a plan of his own for the improvement of the harbour, which was actually approved.¹⁴ Henry VIII began the work in July, 1535.¹⁵ The reason for his sudden decision was much more likely to have been concerned with the defence of the realm than with facilitating trade or increasing the town's prosperity, and is probably best explained by a letter of that year in which Ambassador Chapuys reported to the Emperor Charles V that:

"The king spoke also of the unrivalled fortification which he has constructed at Calais, and of that which he has begun at Dover, with the most triumphant air imaginable; which words only caused me to give the greater faith...that the king was reckoning that if he were left in peace this summer, winter would secure him, and that next summer he hoped to be provided in such fashion that he need fear no one."¹⁶

In the year the work began, John Thompson succeeded John Clerk as Master of the Maison Dieu and was made Surveyor of the works, and John Whalley, a member of the London Company of Mercers, was appointed Paymaster.¹⁷

The relationship between the two men proved difficult, with Thompson enthusiastic to the point of obsession for the completion of his ideas, and Whalley concerned to be prudent in the management of the king's money. It appears that the king was almost as enthusiastic as Thompson, since he visited the site on a number of occasions, and seems to have approved extra expenditure when Thompson asked for it.¹⁸ Between July 1535 and June 1551, at least £51,045 was spent on the harbour works.¹⁹

The owners of crayers in Dover could say by October 1535 "now thanked be God and good King Henry VIII there is a harbour for ships and crayers at the wyke".²⁰

In spite of the money spent, the harbour proved to be a failure, its design carrying the seeds of its destruction. Once the Paradise Pent had been cleared of beach, Thompson had planned to construct two piers into the sea eastwards from it in the expectation that by pushing the harbour mouth out into deeper water, they would keep it free from shingle.²¹ As soon as he had constructed his south pier, however, the sea deposited beach against and beyond it. Once the harbour was cleared and the north jetty begun, things looked more hopeful.²² In 1536 John Whalley died, thinking that the work was almost finished.²³ The harbour was still tidal, however, and work was continued to extend it into deeper water so that it might be used at all times. It was closed again by the action of storms in the early months of 1541, and it seems that the king himself played some part in devising the next part of the work, which involved constructing two long moles - one to the south, an extension of an existing jetty, the other to the north, which extended south from the town.²⁴ The first of these was begun and by the summer of 1544 the harbour was in use as a transport victualling station.²⁵ The part of the harbour now being used was a new, sheltered bight, that had been created by the extension of the south mole, and was actually further out to sea than the original Paradise Pent. Less money was spent after that date, and although the south mole was extended, no further work seems to have been done on the north mole. A bank of shingle therefore grew in the area sheltered by the mole, and soon blocked the mouth of the harbour.²⁶ Henry VIII had clearly lost interest in the project after 1544, but the Crown continued to finance some work on the harbour, at a lower rate, until June, 1551. Some maintenance was undertaken by the Crown in the 1550s²⁷, but after 1558 the responsibility rested once

again with the corporation, who had already sent solicitors to London to describe the decayed state of the harbour in 1552 and offered to contribute to the charges of renewing it.²⁸

By 1566 the accumulated shingle had formed a dry bank right across the bay from the Crane Head on the mole to the foot of the Castle cliff.²⁹ Between the bank and the town lay a shallow lagoon into which the River Dour emptied itself, finding its way out through the bank in an apparently random fashion. Thus the situation appeared to be worse than ever. The town accounts and proceedings of the common council in the 1560s and 70s record a number of occasions on which advice was taken or suits made at London for a "new haven."³⁰ At the same time ambassadors such as Sir Thomas Hoby and Sir Amias Paulet, in 1566, complained about the difficulties they had encountered when using the harbour.³¹

It was possibly such complaints, together with a more expansionist attitude, that caused Walsingham to appoint the Comptroller of the Navy, William Borough, to report on the state of the harbour.³² A Commission, headed by Lord Cobham, the Lord Warden of the Cinque Ports, was sitting by 1579 when they called in a sluice-maker from Dunkirk to give advice.³³ In that year, the Queen granted Dover a licence for the export of grain, giving the town a monopoly among the South Coast ports. This was expected to bring in £3000, about one-seventh of the expected cost.³⁴ Just over £100 was to be raised from the sale of the fabric and lands of the decayed church of St. Peter.³⁵ The necessary money was finally raised by an Act of 1581 that levied a tonnage tax on all ships of above 20 tons entering English ports for seven years, an act that was renewed in 1589 and 1593 and modified in 1601.³⁶

Once it had been decided to go ahead, the first plan accepted by the Commissioners was a comparatively cheap one by John Trew to build a masonry wall along the shingle bank. He had spent over £1200 on the preparation of stone at Folkestone before he was stopped in 1580.³⁷ The

second plan was that of Fernando Poyntz and involved a speculative proposition, whereby as well as a fee, he wanted all the Crown lands adjoining the harbour in fee farm, any land he reclaimed and all harbour dues except for customs and subsidies.³⁸ The Harbour Commissioners were reformed in March 1582, and by April advised the Council that they had resolved on a new plan.³⁹ This was that the shingle bank across the bay should be reinforced, and then a cross-wall should be built from a point midway along it to the land. This would damn up the water of the river Dour into a "pent", or pool of water. The pent, fed by the river, would be controlled by a sluice in the cross-wall and would provide a head of water which, on release by the sluice, would flush the channel and clear the entry to the harbour.⁴⁰ Thus the very disadvantages created by earlier work would be used to create a new and more successful harbour. This more subtle solution proved to be both cheaper and more successful than the earlier attempts to drive further and further out to sea. Disputes arose about the best way to proceed, with Poyntz believing that piling up shingle and mud would provide sufficient reinforcement for the bank of the Pent, and others wanting to build timber walls. The plan of Sir Thomas Scott was finally accepted, which was to call in men from Romney Marsh to use their traditional restraining method of ramming earth and chalk together, covering it with mud - taken from the unused Paradise Pent - and then clothing it with a wall of faggots anchored with withies.⁴¹ Such methods had been used in the 1520s and the Chamberlains' accounts show that a method of anchoring faggots with timber "needles" remained the preferred method of repairing sea walls well into the seventeenth century.⁴² Poyntz was allowed to take part in the work, but seems to have departed from it in 1583, after a settlement was made with him.⁴³ In that year the mayor of Dover, Thomas Andrews, and some of his closely-associated jurats were found guilty of corruption; it is perhaps significant that they had supported Poyntz.⁴⁴

The building of the long-wall and the cross-wall in the summer of 1583 are vividly described by Holinshed, whose account Colvin accepts as reliable. He describes how at first 200 carts arrived to help in the work, then 542, rising to 600, coming from as far afield as Sevenoaks and Maidstone.⁴⁵ The two walls of the Pent were completed in just over two months. A permanent sluice was then built in the cross-wall.⁴⁶ The subsequent Chamberlains' accounts indicate that this was never very successful, as repairs to the sluice and turn-water were almost annual events for the rest of the period.⁴⁷ It was decided to make an entry on the east side of the harbour, and the main part of the work was completed by 1585, although in 1592-93 the remaining sea-wall was built between the Pent and the harbour mouth, work that had been assigned to Poyntz in 1582, and the sluice had to be renewed in 1599.⁴⁸ Thus, from 1584-85 Dover at last had a viable harbour with a good depth of water. As foreseen by Poyntz, the town had also acquired more land with the accumulation of beach and the silting up of the original Paradise Pent, and the new harbour clearly provided a stimulus for a movement of population to the district of the town known as the Pier, as will be indicated in the study that follows.⁴⁹ Maps of the Henrician and Elizabethan periods show a scattering of houses in Snargate street and a few round Paradise Pent.⁵⁰ Plans made by William Eldred in 1641 show continuous housing on the shoreward side of Snargate street, on both sides of the Pent wall, called Cross Pent Wall street, and even some on the outer wall of the Pent. The area between Paradise Pent and the new harbour was completely built up by then and streets had been made between Paradise and Archcliff.⁵¹ Much of this building must have begun after 1607 because a minute in the common council proceedings in that year records a discussion about the inconvenience of an inhabitant's intention to build a cottage on waste ground near the Bridge at the Little Pent, concluding that no one should be permitted to build there

until the council had considered the matter further.⁵² By that date, this waste ground was the property of a new body called the Warden and Commissioners of the Harbour.

By the beginning of the seventeenth century, the corporation's difficulties in financing the maintenance of the harbour, in spite of their getting the Statute of Tonnage renewed in 1604,⁵³ coincided with the Crown's awareness of the value of the new land surrounding the harbour. In July, 1605, the question was raised with the corporation by the Lord Warden of their right to certain droits they had traditionally taken at the harbour. It was suggested that they might surrender these to the Crown in order that the King might make a new grant by which the income from those lands would be put towards the maintenance of the harbour. The corporation responded by showing the charter of Henry VI which had granted them their rights, yet at the same time they authorized their representatives to take what decisions they thought best "considering the intent is to employ those things towards the maintenance of the haven, which is the life of the town."⁵⁴ In August they agreed to surrender the duties of half passage and other harbour droits because they had received assurances that a perpetual grant of the duty of half passage would be given to them on condition they expelled beach from the harbour's mouth at convenient times. The surrender was read out to the common council in January.⁵⁵ In October, 1606, a royal Charter was made granting the "oversight and government" of the Port and Harbour of Dover to a body of 11 men called the Warden and Assistants of the Harbour. The Warden was always to be the Lord Warden of the Cinque Ports, chief of the Assistants would always be the Lieutenant of the Castle, and among the other members would be the current mayor of Dover.⁵⁶

Because the harbour had been made viable in the 1580s and 90s, it was well placed to take advantage of a unique trading situation that arose

in the second decade of the seventeenth century. A massive, but temporary, expansion in trade started to develop then because of the fortuitous conjunction of England's period of neutrality during the European wars and the town's strategic position in relation to the trade routes between Spanish and northern European ports. The period of increased trade began about 1622, was interrupted by the Anglo-Spanish war, then increased in volume to its peak in 1638, after which it decreased fairly rapidly until its demise in 1651. It was a unique event in both national and local history.

The creation and development of a short-lived international entrepot at Dover has been examined in great detail by J.S. Kepler, and the following summary owes much to his work.⁵⁷ He has argued that the entrepot at Dover was chiefly an aspect of government fiscal policy, taking advantage of England's neutrality to get Customs revenue from the transshipping of goods from foreign ships into English ones. Because English ships were both neutral and well-armed, they temporarily superseded the cheaper and more efficient Dutch ships in the European carrying trade during most of the Thirty Years' War. Re-export of foreign commodities from Dover in English ships was arranged at reduced customs rates by "Composition" between the Farmers of the Customs and foreign merchants during this period.

Harland Taylor has pointed out that the wars of the seventeenth century did not stop trade, but altered the flow of goods and services, and that Dover's strategic position was crucial to the Dutch attempt to maintain its commercial links with Spain and the Mediterranean during the war years. He shows that English shipowners were already carrying contraband cargo on false certificates to Spanish ports by 1605. He also points out that when the re-export trade increased after 1625, the boom was marked by "considerable investments in commerce unaccompanied by investments in industries other than shipbuilding" and that such prosperity was bound

to be temporary.⁵⁸

From 1632 the commercial links between England and Spain increased, probably partly as a result of the need for Spain to pay its armies in Flanders at a time when the normal overland route between the two countries had become impossible. Kepler has shown that an agreement was reached by the English government with the Asentistas at Madrid in 1632 that the latter would ship the Spanish government's silver bullion and coin to Flanders in English ships. The ships were to call first at Dover where two-thirds of the silver was to be unladen and sent to the Mint in London to be coined. The agents of the Asentistas were to pay seignorage and then use the coined silver to buy bills of exchange from English merchants that were redeemable in Flanders. The other third of the silver could be exported immediately to Dunkirk.⁵⁹ The journey to Dunkirk was made possible by a Channel fleet that provided convoy protection. As Kepler suggests, it seems likely that Spanish merchants chose to take advantage of such protection to re-export other commodities also, and that the ships returning from Flanders brought the Flemish goods that were then re-exported from Dover to Spain, and beyond. It appears that the English government promised the Asentistas that it would persuade the Farmers of the Customs to lower the re-export rates on commodities transhipped at Dover. As Kepler shows, major reductions in the rates of re-export duties were not made for about another three years, but the combination of these reductions, and thus the establishment of a modified free-port or staple system, together with the satisfactory development of the Channel convoys were presumably together responsible for the great expansion in traffic at Dover after the beginning of the Franco-Spanish war in 1635.

The effects on the economy of the town of all the developments described above will be taken up in more detail in the two chapters that follow. The obvious effects on the income derived by the corporation from the

harbour are shown in the decennial averages of income in Table 1:1. The corporation's income came from three main sources: the trading fines, taxes and rents of the inhabitants, harbour dues, and contributions of money connected with Dover's membership of the Cinque Ports' federation. Income from the Cinque Ports depended on a number of external circumstances, including episodes of royal taxation,⁶⁰ but the balance between the income derived from fines, taxes and rents and that derived from the harbour seems to have been significant to the economy of the town. Clearly, more fines and rents suggest more economic activity and wealth in the town, but these were in turn influenced by the activity at the harbour, represented by the dues paid there.

Income from harbour dues, expressed as a proportion of the corporation's total income, was just over 12% in the decade 1509-1518, and 14% in 1519-28, but it rose to 30.5% in 1529-38, the decade in which some improvements were made to the harbour. It only fell below 30% of the whole once again in the period under review, in the decade 1549-58, when it was still just above 20%, and when, it will be argued, the corporation was concerned to regulate trade in the town more carefully, and therefore to increase fines on its inhabitants.⁶¹ As a result of this policy, the inhabitants of the town provided 60% of its income in that decade.

The corporation became dependent upon income from the harbour, and even when it fell into decay in the 1560s and early 70s, the town accounts show that they struggled to keep it in operation, for example by "mending a breach of the pier" and using a ferry boat "for having out of the horses" in 1564-65.⁶² The harbour provided 44% of the corporation's income in the decade 1559-1568, and more than 50% in 1569-78. It will, however, be suggested below that the economy of the town was stagnant during the 1560s, and that many of the fines introduced in the 1550s were unpaid in the 1560s, thus altering the

balance of income in favour of harbour dues.⁶³

The town accounts show that the most profitable harbour dues in the 1560s and 70s were those paid on cross-Channel passages by ships, on passengers, and on ferriage, together with the due on the export of beer in the 70s, but not the 60s. The freedom to export beer in the 1570s might be explained by the Lord Warden's recommendation to Cecil in 1570 that small boats should be licensed to export beer from Dover to Flushing as a means of gaining intelligence.⁶⁴ Income from the tax on "bridges", that is for loading goods and cattle from shore to ship, fell.⁶⁵ In the absence of other records for this period, it is difficult to say what was happening in the town. It seems possible that privateering in the Channel and the presence of the Dunkirk Sea Beggars in Dover may have increased harbour dues without bringing much economic benefit to the town.⁶⁶

In the decade 1579-88, the percentage of income from the harbour fell very slightly, to 49%, while the percentage of income from trading taxes and rents in the town remained at just over 26%, as it had been in the decade before. This was the period when the new harbour was created, and it seems to have been both a period of expansion in the town, and one when the corporation itself was not in serious debt.⁶⁷ It is possible that the Queen's grant of a licence for the export of grain encouraged the movement of maltsters to the region, since the monopoly was extended in the early 1580s to cover some wheat, barley, malt and beer and the town sold the licences to merchants, paying the sums raised to the Farmer of Customs, who then paid them to the harbour commissioners.⁶⁸ The common assembly minute books record some of the compositions made for the export of grain between 1581 and 1584 with merchants from Sandwich for the most part, but also from London.⁶⁹

In that decade, the corporation received about half its income from the harbour and about a quarter from taxes on its inhabitants, and that

balance seems to have represented good conditions for growth in the town, but it was not repeated until the decade 1619-28. In the decade 1589-98 taxes on the inhabitants, forced partly by the need to maintain the harbour, provided almost a third, and harbour receipts just over a third of income.

In the eight years from 1629-35, the balance of the corporation's income swung to 70% from the harbour and only just over 12% from fines, taxes and rents. This perhaps indicates the unsustainable nature of the economy of the town at that time, since the income from the harbour largely represented dues paid on the movement and storage of goods by merchants and factors in order to obtain fiscal advantage, and had little to do with the production of goods, or their supply to the native population. It helps to explain the growth of wealth among merchants and factors operating the trade, and the apparent increase of poverty among other inhabitants of the town that will be examined later.

Investment by the Crown in works at Dover harbour on the occasions that have been summarized above clearly singled the town out among the south-eastern ports. It also created certain unusual, even artificial, conditions. During the period 1535-1544 and again in the 1580s considerable numbers of workers flooded in from outside the town. In the Henrician period there were at times over 500 workers employed on the harbour, most of them from outside the town. The situation was very different from the years between 1510 and 1520 when the corporation paid for board and lodging for its workers on the harbour, gave rewards to groups of masons who had come from a distance, and bade them a ceremonial farewell.⁷⁰ In 1536 John Thompson asked Cromwell to supply a couple of the king's old halls or tents so that he could keep the workers out of the town, and he also wrote of keeping them from "idleness and the doing of robbing."⁷¹ John Whalley had to confront a group of labourers who demanded 6d. a day, naming one of their number

their lord, and saying that "he who touched one of them should touch them all".⁷² It is impossible that the population of the town was unaffected by these men in their midst. The Elizabethan effort was different, in that the great numbers of men with their carts were present only during two summer months of 1583, when they appear to have been under the firm but popular control of Sir Thomas Scott, a Kentish man.⁷³ Much of the skilled work that followed was undertaken by comparatively local men from Romney Marsh.

On each occasion when major works were undertaken, the resources of the region must have been stretched to supply not only labour but food and materials. John Whalley certainly found the provision of food one of his greatest problems.⁷⁴ The accounts of the work done by the corporation on the harbour between 1523-28 show that even for that comparatively minor operation they were bringing in loads of wattles and piles from surrounding woodland in Alkham, Lydden and Ewell, sometimes buying them by the acre or half-acre.⁷⁵ In 1536 Whalley noted that he had caused the mayor of Dover to make proclamations "for all manner of persons in the country thereabouts" who were owed money by the king to come in and claim it.⁷⁶

Many inhabitants of the town were employed during the episodes of work on the harbour, particularly as tun men - using barrels to float large stones into place - and as ship men, carpenters and labourers.⁷⁷ Some of the town's leading citizens held office in the administrative body appointed through the Crown: Thomas Foxley, jurat, was clerk of the check in 1537, Sir William Hanington was a paymaster and Thomas Cockerell and Alexander Mynge surveyors, for both the harbour and the work on the defensive coastal bulwarks at that period.⁷⁸ In the early seventeenth century, John Williams was clerk of check and William Warde clerk of the store at the harbour works.⁷⁹ The work also increased opportunities for criminal activity, from the petty theft of faggots and

other materials⁸⁰ to corruption by senior officers such as the mayor, Jeremy Garrett, who was convicted of falsifying accounts for work on the harbour in 1603, and William Leonard, a jurat, who stole timber on a large scale during repairs in 1622.⁸¹

It seems certain that the successful completion of the harbour in the 1580s in itself created conditions in which an increasing number of people were drawn to the town, and this tendency will be discussed in various connections in the study. Dover offers a model of the way in which unusual urban expansion drew unskilled migrants to a town, in this case to act as porters and carriers of goods, and craftsmen to service new enterprises. More will also be said about the numbers of alien merchants and factors who took up residence in Dover during the entrepot period. While it is true that work on maintaining the harbour continued to offer secondary employment to some labourers and craftsmen,⁸² many others fell victim to the stern regulations made against foreigners working and living in the town and helped to swell the numbers of the transient poor.

The efficiency of the harbour was itself short-lived, since by 1660 it had again been badly affected by beach.⁸³ The composition trade, or entrepot period, lasted only until 1651, dwindling rapidly from its high point in the mid 1630s, so that by the year 1648-49 the corporation's total income was £183, whereas in 1635 income from harbour dues alone had been £1,251 17s.5d.⁸⁴

The development of the harbour brought Dover into a special relationship with the Crown and, together with the garrisons at the Castle and the defensive Bulwarks, created more opportunities than usual in so small a town for Crown office for its leading men. Injections of money from the Crown fuelled expansion, but perhaps lead to unrealistic expectations by the ruling group about the importance to the town of overseas trading, encouraging them to concentrate their resources at the harbour, at the

expense of introducing other projects or developing the town's own market. Because of activity at the harbour, the population of Dover seems to have increased rapidly after the period of generally greatest growth, and just at the time when the harbour facilitated increased exports of the grain needed to feed it. Thus the harbour can be seen to have played a vital, but ambiguous, role in the development of the town at that period.

CHAPTER 1 THE CIVIC ECONOMY

Some insight into the priorities of Dover's ruling group in managing civic finances is given by the town's surviving customal, which dates from the early sixteenth century.¹ While it contains many relics of ancient custom it presumably also sets out the notions of civic government held by the ruling group of the period when it was written. It is inspired with concern for the maintenance of the traditions by which the town sought to define itself, the continuity of liberties that had been hard won. This helps to explain why the largest proportion of the corporation's expenditure for most years throughout the period was spent on the administration of the town, that is essentially on safeguarding and maintaining the privileges of the freeman body and the status of their "masters", the mayor and jurats.

Care for the administration of the town went further than this, however, and in many ways its costs, even in the seventeenth century, still reflected the principles set out in the customal. These were: the proper ordering of elections, the maintenance of order, the regulation of the market, the care of the common stock of property of the town, the links between property and kin, the care of orphans, the regulation of behaviour and punishment of wrongdoers, and the defence of the liberties of the town. These were among the "laudable customs of the town".² It will be seen that economic change made these principles increasingly difficult to uphold, however.

As a first step towards analyzing civic financial management, crude figures for the town's annual income and expenditure have been derived from the chamberlains' accounts. They have been totalled and, in order to give some notion of the amounts involved, they are set out below as decennial averages in Tables 1:1 and 1:2. The averages have then been revised in the light of an ^{price} inflationary index and are given in this form

in Table 1:3. Totals of income and expenditure from those immediately subsequent years for which records survive are also given, in Table 1:4. The figures are followed by a discussion of the accounting system itself, arguing that a simple comparison of income and expenditure cannot be used to determine whether or not the town was in profit. A close examination is then made of the town's sources of income and choice of expenditure in order to determine its priorities in response to economic, political and social change.

i) Income and Expenditure

Tables 1:1 and 1:2 show decennial averages of income and expenditure derived from the chamberlains' accounts, that is to say the Dover town accounts.³ There are some gaps in the run of the accounts between 1509 and 1640. The missing years are: 1524, 1530, 1532, 1535, 1554, 1571, 1572, 1575, 1576, 1579, 1589, 1591, 1592, 1593, 1595, 1600, 1622 and 1636-1639. The averages for the 1570s and 1590s in particular need to be treated with caution as the figures for individual missing years have had to be derived from averages of preceding and succeeding years. Because the accounts for the years from September 1636 until September 1639 have not survived, the tables have been concluded with the year 1635. The available totals of income and expenditure for immediately subsequent years given in Table 1:4 indicate the fairly rapid collapse of the temporary expansion of the 1630s. The administrative year began in Dover on September 8, so that "1509", for example, means September 1509-September 1510. Decades are therefore roughly equivalent to decades based on harvest years.

Table 1:1 Decennial averages of income 1509-1628

years	Taxes				Total £
	Fines Rents £	Harbour Dues £	Cinque Ports £		
	1509-1518	23.23	11.60	50.31	
1519-1528	28.23	8.73	22.24	62.05	
1529-1538	17.08	16.71	16.81	54.76	
1539-1548	28.58	19.65	9.39	62.73	
1549-1558	55.74	18.83	12.09	91.91	
1559-1568	28.77	53.90	28.41	122.50	
1569-1578	46.50	87.08	12.37	173.73	
1579-1588	53.17	99.30	32.05	201.97	
1589-1598	69.74	89.09	58.89	229.47	
1599-1608	48.83	203.45	95.36	433.09	
1609-1618	60.39	260.13	19.39	418.49	
1619-1628	131.53	269.27	30.34	503.54	

The average of the following seven years, 1629-1635, is as follows:

1629-1635	87.36	487.36	10.48	693.00
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Sources: The Dover Chamberlains' accounts BL Additional Ms 29618 (1509-1546), CKS Dover Town Accounts 1546-1558, 1558-1581, 1581-1603, 1603-1626 and 1626-1649, Receipts.

Notes: shillings and pence have been expressed throughout these four tables as decimal places of a pound. Discrepancies will be noticed between the totals, averaged from totals given by the chamberlains, and the individual items that have been derived from the accounts and totalled. The chamberlains included the receipt of old debt in their total, which cannot be assigned to any of the categories given here; they also included loans as income, and sometimes made allowances for poor coins.

Table 1:2 Decennial averages of expenditure 1518-1628

	Fabric £	Admin. £	Cinque Ports £	Gifts/ Feasts £	War/ Defence £	Poor £	Debts paid £	Chamberlains' Total £
1518	12.41	23.66	16.03	10.66	31.52	.00	.00	97.87
1528	3.90	21.95	15.80	9.55	9.78	.00	.00	62.76
1538	1.95	23.11	12.79	9.51	2.72	.00	.00	53.22
1548	11.25	33.17	13.35	11.11	2.89	.02	.02	74.02
1558	7.29	60.87	15.02	10.59	4.70	.74	2.43	105.51
1568	8.84	60.45	16.87	17.02	4.40	.75	.75	108.92
1578	10.20	80.04	26.23	23.04	5.38	2.13	2.13	151.46
1588	18.70	85.71	27.61	26.74	11.64	8.84	16.09	188.30
1598	26.70	94.67	36.20	20.15	7.57	14.78	17.13	227.50
1608	93.94	144.82	32.64	30.71	4.95	20.70	22.96	339.76
1618	76.54	174.04	45.87	24.97	18.46	16.43	16.43	393.86
1628	71.97	217.51	106.30	29.69	31.37	2.01	7.41	511.29

The average of the following six years, 1629-1635 is as follows:

	79.12	273.44	87.80	42.72	30.28	10.57	136.10	678.85
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Source: as Table 1:1 Expenses

Table 1:3 Totals of income and expenditure deflated by application of Bowden's price index for the prices of all agricultural products based on the decade 1450-59

Years	index	income £	expenditure £
1510-1519	118	79.55	82.94
1520-1529	132	47.01	47.55
1530-1539	139	39.40	38.29
1540-1549	169	37.12	43.80
1550-1559	270	34.04	39.08
1560-1569	282	43.44	38.62
1570-1579	313	55.50	48.39
1580-1589	357	56.57	52.75
1590-1599	451	50.88	50.44
1600-1609	463	93.54	73.38
1610-1619	540	77.50	72.94
1620-1629	535	94.12	95.57

Sources: CKS Dover Town Accounts as Tables 1:1 and 1:2 above.

P. Bowden: "Statistical Appendix" in J.Thirsk, ed. Agrarian History of England and Wales, vol.iv (1967), index based on all agricultural produce.

Table 1:4 Totals of income and expenditure in the surviving accounts of immediately subsequent years

Years	Income £	Expenditure £
1639-1640	1101.97	844.98
1640-1641	1049.60	952.13
1641-1642	848.20	783.39
1642-1643	875.65	722.45
1643-1644	697.12	708.51
1645-1646	436.87	429.65
1648-1649	183.85	209.47
1651-1652	219.73	219.38

Source: CKS Dover Town Accounts, 1626-1649 and 1649-1660

Table 1:3 is intended to give some indication of the real values represented by the average figures by deflating them against one of Bowden's price indices.⁴ The decades are roughly equivalent to his harvest decades.

Sources of income to the town have been to some extent categorized by the writers of the accounts, since they commonly entered them under certain established headings, and in their summaries tended to group them in a certain way; they began with any existing surplus, then listed all the income associated with the harbour, followed by fines, taxes,

rents and sesses and finally income derived from their connection with the federation of the Cinque Ports. These categories have been followed in drawing up the tables. The heading "Taxes" thus indicates all taxes, fines and rents paid by inhabitants of the town, "Harbour" indicates all dues and taxes exacted for the use of the harbour and its facilities, and "Cinque Ports" indicates income to Dover derived from its membership of the federation. Amounts recorded in the accounts as "old debts paid" or "loans made to the town" have been excluded from this table, which helps to explain the discrepancies between the categories of receipts and the totals. This matter is taken up in the next section of this chapter.

Expenditure, or "payments," presents greater problems. It seems likely that payments were entered into the accounts as they were made, in date order, without any attempt at categorization, except that wages and fees to officers, and their livery money, were increasingly often entered together under the heading "ordinary payments of the town", which in itself suggests that this was regarded as the most essential expenditure. They were entered either every quarter (hence their normal description as "quarterage") or once a year.

In order to handle and evaluate expenditure, it has been necessary to categorize it, a difficult task since payments were not always clearly and specifically allocated in the accounts. As far as possible the categories have been drawn up to reflect the rationale of those of the receipts. The heading "fabric" thus indicates all expenditure on the physical fabric of the town and port, both the original construction and the renovation and maintenance of buildings owned by the town, including the harbour facilities. "Administration" indicates the wages and expenses of office-holders and lawyers working on behalf of the town, payments made for property or services leased by the town, and payments made in the course of maintaining law, order and hygiene within the

town. "Cinque Ports" includes the expenses involved in Ship Service to the Crown as well as all expenditure made by the town on maintaining its links with the federation and with their Lord Warden. "Gifts and Feasts" indicates expenditure on gifts, rewards and meals to influential people and also the customary feasts and celebrations of the town. "War and Defence" includes payments made for the defence of the town, for ordnance, gunpowder and musters. "Poor" indicates expenditure specifically for the poor. "Debts paid" usually indicates payments made in arrears for work already done, money that could belong in any of these categories.

Once again there is some discrepancy between the categorized sums and the totals. The decennial averages of totals are based on the totals given by the chamberlains. In separating out the amounts spent in different ways it has not always been possible to arrive at exactly similar totals, partly because certain figures have sometimes been omitted by the chamberlains themselves, and others are on damaged folios or are concealed in the gutter of these tightly bound volumes.

Analysis of the accounts reveals that a reliance on advances of credit when money was urgently needed, and a tendency to pay in instalments, in arrears, at all times were at the root of financial management throughout the period, and that these processes were taken for granted to such an extent that they were seldom commented upon by the chamberlains and are therefore difficult to detect systematically. The implications of the credit system for a true understanding of the figures given in the tables will be discussed in some detail in the section on the Chamberlains' town accounts.

Detailed surveys of the town's sources of income and its choice of expenditure follow the discussion of the chamberlains' accounts. These suggest that two factors in particular seem to have shaped civic financial management through the whole period. One was the occasional

injection of resources by the Crown into the development of the harbour, which affected both the town's economy and its physical development. The other was the way in which successive oligarchies applied their particular standards both to the fines they demanded and to their choice of expenditure, thus creating a moral economy based on their own values. This moral economy was based on perceptions and judgements that were not solely economic. They concerned the best way to order urban resources for the good of the inhabitants of the town, that is the freeman body, taxable foreigners and the indigenous impotent poor. At times this could lead to what appear to the modern observer to be double standards in the ruling group, a disjunction between their perceptions of the economy when they were acting as civic rulers and when they were acting as entrepreneurs. They could, for example, in their role as magistrates, forbid the selling of ale to unlicensed victuallers, while in their economic role as brewers actually do it.⁵

An examination of the sources of income to the town suggests that in the early sixteenth century Dover was essentially a small market and fishing town, whose significance to the outside world was solely geographical, in providing the most useful port of passage to the continent. From the early 1560s, however, income from the harbour and shipping dues rose and, in most years, except in the 1590s, was greater than all other sources of income. The evidence of the accounts suggests that in years when war, piracy or natural hazards threatened Channel traffic or closed the harbour, the corporation put pressure on its inhabitants to pay fines for infringements of trading ordinances or for misdemeanours that it might have overlooked at other times. The differential between harbour dues and other sources of income increased slightly in the 1580s, after improvements had been made to the harbour, and dramatically during the early seventeenth century, particularly in the 1630s when, by agreement with the Crown, factors in Dover transhipped international

goods "by composition" at reduced customs rates.⁶

Detailed work on the income from and expenditure on the harbour will show that this concentration on one particular source of income brought several dangers in the seventeenth century. One was that the town, lacking sufficient support from the Commissioners of the Harbour, had to spend increasing amounts on keeping the harbour open to the shipping that was its main source of income. The resources of the town were strained by a growing transient population. Influential men from outside the town saw the financial advantages of the harbour traffic and attempted to capitalize on them without any sensitive understanding of the situation, failing to realize, for example, that traffic came to the port because dues were low and wanting to cream off extra dues wherever they could in a manner that was likely to drive traffic away. The corporation had to resort to law and to direct petitions to the Privy Council on a number of occasions to restrain such men. The situation could not last, and Table 1:4 indicates that in the later 1640s the accounts showed a reversion to absolute income levels similar to those of the 1570s and 80s.

ii) The Chamberlains' Town Accounts

The financial resources of the town on which the ruling group could draw, and their priorities in their expenditure will be examined in some detail later. First, some attention is given to the town accounts themselves, which have their own interest in demonstrating the methods of financial management employed by the ruling group through the four chamberlains they elected each year. The role of the chamberlains themselves will be discussed. Some attempt will also be made to describe the nature of the accounting system. It will be argued that a simple comparison of the receipts and expenditure in any financial year cannot be used to show the financial condition of the town, and this will be

illustrated by a brief survey of debt and credit arrangements over the whole period, leading to the conclusion that, for the most part, the corporation operated a deficit economy dependent upon credit.

The annual presentation of the accounts formed part of the town's civic ritual. The outgoing mayor and chamberlains presented them to the common assembly, usually on the second Sunday after the election of the town's new officers, although, from the 1590s onwards, the outgoing officers often asked for more time to prepare the accounts.⁷ These public accounts thus represented a justification of the financial actions of the outgoing mayor and chamberlains and their formal claim for payment to them of any outstanding expenses. In spite of this, they are, for the most part, disordered and ill-written.

It is quite clear that detailed reconstruction of the financial management of the town could be achieved only from the numerous small books and rolls that have not survived, although they are often referred to: the sess lists, rent rolls, market book and small books of accounts of work done.⁸ The foreigner's sess, for example, was normally paid in by the town serjeant and the mayor's serjeant, who collected them, presumably as part of their task as law-enforcers.⁹ One booklet of payments has survived.¹⁰ It covers the period July 1, 1619 to the autumn of 1621 and records the amounts of money spent by one jurat, Richard Dawkes, and the mayor for 1620-21, John Benger, on wages and materials for "the building annexed to the court hall." The town accounts refer to this as "a little pay book of weekly payments".¹¹ It is precise and detailed in a way the town accounts seldom are. Such an account must have been settled before the chamberlains drew up the town accounts at the end of the year since all the detailed information recorded in the booklet appears in the chamberlains' accounts in the form of a few totals.¹²

Similarly, although the town accounts for the year 1622-23 are

incomplete and cannot be used to provide information about income and expenditure, they do provide information about the accounting procedure. All that survives for that year is the account that one of the four chamberlains, John Waller, made to the mayor, John Waad.¹³ The receipts include only a few amounts taken in sesses and fines, and an account of money received for corn sold between May and August, 1623, which sale was obviously the responsibility of the chamberlain concerned. The expenditure includes "The account for the new erected custom house", and shows the amounts spent by this single chamberlain on wages and materials from April to September of 1623.¹⁴ Like the booklet mentioned above, the account is precise, detailed and well-written. This suggests that each chamberlain took responsibility for certain aspects of expenditure, and that they were very careful in recording their own receipts and expenditure, for which they had to account and to claim. It seems to have been the general recording of entries into the overall accounts for the town, done on Saturday evenings,¹⁵ and presumably finalized in the week between the election and the presentation of the accounts, that was rushed.

As it can be seen, the chamberlains were crucial to the accounting system since they were, in a sense, operating as bankers. They made payments on behalf of the corporation, in the expectation of being repaid. Sometimes they had to take out loans to make payments.¹⁶ When they entered into a bond for money at the request of the corporation they were normally protected from loss; the usual formula was that the corporation of Dover should at all times after that date save them harmless and indemnified for the bond.¹⁷ Sometimes, if there was not enough money in the town box, they were instructed simply "to disburse it out of their own stock for a certain time."¹⁸ Occasionally, they made loans to inhabitants of the town.¹⁹ At times they did not receive enough money to cover their expenditure, and had to wait until the next

year, or longer, to recover it.²⁰ The financial soundness of the chamberlains themselves was thus of some importance to the financing of the corporation's projects.

Probably for that reason, the office of chamberlain seems to have been held by men who had reached a point in their life-cycle when they were at the height of their occupational activity but were not yet considered sufficiently mature for political office. In the early sixteenth century, they were frequently drawn from the junior group of commoners known at that time as the "Noviores".²¹ It was common for the election of a chamberlain to the "thirty-seven", or the common council, to take place in the year he took office,²² although some chamberlains had already been common councillors for a few years²³ and others had to wait another year or two.²⁴

Some men never proceeded further in the hierarchy than the office of chamberlain, but generally it appears to have been the first step for anyone contemplating entry to the ruling group, one that might confirm or deny a man's financial standing and expertise. Very few mayors had not acted as chamberlain earlier in their career. It has been possible to estimate the age at which fifty men first held the office of chamberlain.²⁵ The two youngest of these were 25 and the oldest 57, but the median age was 36. This was presumably the age at which a man was settled in his occupation and likely to be commercially active. For a total of 47 chamberlains it has also been possible to estimate the period between their first taking office as chamberlain and being elected as a jurat. In four cases the two events were simultaneous, and in one case it took 24 years, but the median period was 8 years between being elected chamberlain and then jurat. Financial office therefore came at the point when men were probably expanding commercially and attempting to acquire money, and magisterial and political office at the point when they could leave some of their occupational responsibilities

to others and invest some of the capital they had acquired.

There seem to have been some changes in the manner of appointing chamberlains. In the first half of the sixteenth century a number of men were re-elected, and some held the office as many as three times, yet between 1550 and 1580 the majority of chamberlains held the office for one year only, with two exceptions in the 1550s, one in the 1560s and three in the 1580s.²⁶ There was a noticeable change in the 1590s when of the 24 chamberlains who are recorded, nine held office more than once.²⁷ In 1602 a recent custom was regularized when it was decided that from thenceforth two of the chamberlains of the previous year should remain in office with the two newly elected ones "in respect they shall be better acquainted with those things which shall be the more good and profitable for the common weal of the town."²⁸ In 1600, following accusations that the mayor had handled the town revenues fraudulently, it was decreed that in future no head officer of the town might receive or pay out any corporation revenues, but it must be done only through the chamberlains, whose books might nevertheless be examined by the mayor as they sat in the town hall on "their usual days."²⁹ This must have laid a greater financial burden on them, since the accounts show that the mayor had customarily spent large, recoverable, sums of his own money on the town's behalf.³⁰ The decree also made it lawful for the mayor and jurats to punish any chamberlains who refused to make authorised payments.³¹

The office of chamberlain seems to have had most continuity in its personnel in the first halves of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries and perhaps to have been more difficult to fill in the second half of the sixteenth century. The clarification and strengthening of their obligations in 1600, and the use of two experienced men each year from 1602 also suggest that greater competence was then seen to be necessary. It also seems likely that there were opportunities for making money as a

chamberlain in the increasingly mercantile situation of the seventeenth century. It is possibly significant that an active and wealthy merchant, Charles Brames, was chamberlain in 1608-10 but seems to have taken the office for its own sake, making no effort thereafter to use it as an entry into the ruling group.³² The only official perquisite recorded in connection with the office was when the town bore the charge of the chamberlains' ship sess in 1635, together with that of the mayor and the town clerk.³³

Chamberlains were elected by the ruling group and were therefore likely to have had views that were sympathetic to those of the group in power. At the same time, they needed to be financially capable. It is possible that their occupations therefore reflect the current state of the general economy of the town more precisely than do those of the jurat body. For example, it will be shown that men from the food and drink trades were elected as jurats in the 1520s, replacing a dominating majority of minor gentry and yeomen farmers.³⁴ This tendency can be seen earlier among the chamberlains, with men like Robert Dyer, a baker, and William Colley, a brewer, being elected in 1509, William Adam, another baker and Thomas Lybeas, a brewer, in 1510, and Robert Fluce and Thomas Fleming, both innkeepers, in 1511.³⁵ This would perhaps suggest that men from those occupations were already proving themselves commercially successful at that time. It is possible that because they were younger than the current ruling group, with whom they would have been identified, chamberlains in each period reflected new economic interests and might have had some innovative influence.

The form of the accounts they presented showed little change over the whole period. They were drawn up in two parts, showing income, "receipts", followed by expenditure, "payments". In certain years, only categorized totals of receipts were given, with no detail; for example only the totals were given for wine excise, rents, maltotes and so

on.³⁶ In many, but by no means all, years, after the listed payments, the totals of receipts and expenditure were given and compared. If this comparison showed a surplus, it was usually recorded with the formula that the surplus sum "remaineth in the town box" to be delivered to the new chamberlains.³⁷ This surplus sum normally appeared as the first item in the receipts of the following year. If the comparison resulted in a deficit, the relevant sums were said to be owing to the chamberlains, or, when possible, were recovered by them by being "taken out of the box".³⁸ Until the end of the sixteenth century, however, such closing summaries were rare; the accounts usually consisted simply of a list of receipts followed by a list of payments, often even lacking sum totals, but sometimes with a list of debts owing to the town appended to them.

Amounts of money received were usually recorded by being gathered together in categories and listed under headings, although sometimes a heading appears without any entries, particularly in the case of wine excise.³⁹ Categories of receipts would, of course, have become established over time and would follow expected lines. The payments were obviously more difficult to order, and little attempt was made to do it. There were only two categories of expenditure where payments made at different times were regularly brought together in the accounts, both being predictable from year to year: the wages and fees of the town's officers, and the expenses of going to the Cinque Ports' Brotherhood meetings at Romney.

Very little can be learned about the state of the town's financial condition by a straightforward examination of the chamberlains' surpluses or deficits, which are simply a public justification of their financial responsibility for the year. A clearer idea of financial trends can be gained by a careful gleaning of mentions of debts owing to, and payments made in arrears by, the corporation to its inhabitants

and vice versa.

The town's receipt of the debts owing to it from previous years is accounted for in an annual item near the beginning of the accounts headed "Receipt of old debt", although the amount of debt paid cannot always be determined precisely, as the item sometimes includes some other category of money received, such as "Money left in the box with old debts, inventories and opening of shops".⁴⁰ When the entry does become more consistent it almost always ends with a phrase such as "and diverse other small debts upon the foreigners' sess and rents of this year as may appear by the same rentals or rolls."⁴¹ This suggests that deferred payment, or debt, to the town by individuals was probably almost always under-recorded in the town accounts, and certain moneys were expected to be paid in arrears, and even to be written off at certain times.

Payment currently owing to the town is more difficult to discover than debts that have been paid. Such payments still owing at the end of the year are occasionally noted at the end of the accounts, usually very roughly, apparently as a mere aide-memoire.⁴² From 1583 to 1623, however, there is often an item whose heading indicates a list of moneys still owing to the town at the end of the year.⁴³ It is also possible, throughout the accounts, occasionally to pick up some details of bills that represented credit given to inhabitants of the town.⁴⁴

The corporation itself sometimes took out loans. These are frequently only to be discovered at the point when they were repaid.⁴⁵ At the beginning of the seventeenth century they can be identified more readily because the town had begun to pay interest on them at that date, for example in 1620-21, £5 was "paid to Thomas Tiddeman for the interest of £50...borrowed for the town's use."⁴⁶ It will be shown that later the capital amounts of loans were simply added to the receipts, thus artificially inflating the town's income. An examination, where it has

been possible, of loans taken out by the corporation and of payments they delayed making for long periods indicates times of financial difficulty when the chamberlains had to search for money, and also indicates who was in a position to supply capital to the town. It also shows longer term trends, and the periods at which serious deficits can be seen to be accumulating.

In 1512-13, for example, the chamberlains show receipts of £145.6s.9d and expenses of £143.16s.9d, and were thus able to leave 30s. in the box for the new chamberlains. In that year, the town had paid off a debt of £1.3s.4d. and received £4.19s.6d. of the debts owing to it. Yet £53.4s.8d. was left owing to it for ship sess and the town itself owed £4.4s.0d. for commodities it had not been able to pay for in full.⁴⁷

Thus what looks like a surplus was in fact quite a serious deficit. Some of the sums owed to the town in that year for ship sess appeared in later years under "old debt paid", but others were carried for several years in the category of unspecified "debts owing to the town".⁴⁸ It is, incidentally, characteristic of this hand-to-mouth economy that an outside demand, such as that of the Crown for ship service, should have thrown the town's finances out of balance for several years.

Henry VIII's demands for ship service fell heavily on the Cinque Ports in the early part of his reign and by 1514 the accounts have an entry "Loan money lent to the town".⁴⁹ This consists of £16.15s.8d. lent between them by four leading citizens. £5.6s.8d. was repaid in the same year. In 1521-22 the town managed to pay off many of its debts to inhabitants for their wages by selling off the two town ships.⁵⁰ In 1523-24 the town owed £5.18s.8d, most of it to the Master of the Maison Dieu, which was paid very slowly over the years in small instalments. In the same year £3.8s.0d was owed to the town in maltotes, sess money and rents. Yet the chamberlains claimed to be "clear".⁵¹

The period between 1527 and 1532, in spite of two missing years, shows

how problems built up. In 1527-28 the four chamberlains took 11s. each that was owing to them from the "surplus" of 57s., leaving 13s. residue of which "they nothing claim for it is of the town money received and not entered in the receipts" - a fairly frequent formula.⁵² £2.10s.0d. was, however, still owing to the town. In 1528-29, in order to cover the payments, 36s.6d. was "borrowed of the Half-passage Box of the wyke money,"⁵³ and 18s.10d. paid in by the chamberlains as money they had received and not entered. Debts owing to the town "as appeareth in the pamphlet" are not itemised, but are clearly in excess of £1.0s.0d. In 1531 the Burgess to Parliament's wages had to be borrowed from the half-passage box and by 1532 the town owed at least £13.19s.4d. to its officers for wages and wine, together with £9.0s.0d. to the chamberlains. It was itself owed £34.1s.10d. £30.0s.0d of this was "by estimation" for the latest ship sess.⁵⁴ Between 1533 and 1536 the town was still paying the chamberlains back in small instalments.⁵⁵ Throughout the Henrician period the corporation just succeeded in managing such finances as were available to it, by paying its richer inhabitants, such as the Burgesses to Parliament, in arrears, and selling off assets when it needed money urgently.⁵⁶ Basically, it was operating a deficit economy.

The late 1540s were rather worse. 1546-7 shows a backlog of debts of at least £16.15s.7d. owing to the town, some of which were paid in the next year.⁵⁷ In 1549-50 it was agreed that "the pyx and bell of silver and gilt" should be sold "to pay the debts that the town doth owe".⁵⁸ These debts were again owed, without interest, to two of the town's wealthier inhabitants, Thomas Allen and Thomas Bredgate.

In 1550 the town lost £3 on the money remaining in its box through the debasement of coinage.⁵⁹ In 1555-56 it had to impose a general sess on its inhabitants to furnish 12 men to serve the Queen.⁶⁰ This sess was still being paid the next year, when £41.19s.6d. had to be taken from

the passage money to pay for those soldiers.⁶¹ It is not surprising that the farmers of the passage money, in their turn, did not pay their dues to the town in the following year. The corporation continued to owe money and to be owed until the end of the 1550s, in spite of the fact that the chamberlains were able to leave small amounts in the town box.⁶²

The accounts of the 1560s present a somewhat different picture. The chamberlains were able to leave some money in the box in every year but 1566. Old debts were paid to the town each year, often coming in as much as four years late.⁶³ The town's own deferred payment seems much less than usual, and the whole period looks stagnant. It is very difficult to find any evidence of the debts that were owed to the town. References to the poor box appear for the first time, and some payments were made for keeping poor children.⁶⁴ The most noticeable difference between the accounts of the 1560s and those of any other period is that a number of small loans were made then to individual inhabitants, for example "£3 to Dunkin Clarke to help him forward on fishing", in 1564.⁶⁵ These loans were for quite small sums. In some cases a loan was made to a chamberlain, who then loaned it to an individual to buy, for example, a mast or some wheat.⁶⁶ The chamberlain thus acted as surety for the loan. In most cases, particularly between 1568-1569 the loans were actually payments made in advance on work that was to be done for the town, or goods to be delivered. This suggests that there was a continuing shortage of coin after the revaluation of 1560. In fact in 1566, £10 was "lent out of the town box on old coins."⁶⁷ The possibility that individuals might have been having difficulties at this period is also suggested by the fact that the Bailiff was given an advance towards his going to Yarmouth in 1566 and 1567, and the mayor had £4.0s.0d. in advance to go to London in 1567.⁶⁸

For the first time in the period it seems that the corporation was in a

position to pay some sums in advance rather than in arrears. This may have been because they undertook no major projects or improvements in those years, and their expenditure was thus more predictable. The mayors and chamberlains of the 1560s included mariners, but were otherwise drawn chiefly from the brewing and food trades, with only three chamberlains identifiable as merchants.⁶⁹ They were, therefore, men whose capital was likely to have been locked into their means of occupation, rather than being risk-taking entrepreneurs. It seems possible that they were behaving in a manner that was perhaps characteristic of their occupations. At the same time, they were conducting a holding operation following revaluation and in the absence of any spur to growth. Since the proceedings of the Common Council have not survived for most of those years, it is difficult to determine events in the town, but the accounts suggest that it was a period when there was little stimulus to expansion.

There are no accounts for 1572-3, 1573-4, 1575-6 and 1576-7, and those years unfortunately coincide with a thirteen-year gap in the minutes of the common assembly. Some small loans were made against future work or services once more in 1573-74. In 1577, for the first time, the receipts show that the greater part of the sum left in the box was "in bills" rather than in ready money.⁷⁰ That additional credit system, with promissory notes taking the place of ready money, seems to have continued thereafter.

In 1578 the corporation tried the experiment of having only two chamberlains.⁷¹ They were John Spritwell, a prominent innkeeper and hackneyman, and Jeremy Garrett, a merchant, grocer, mercer and ship owner.⁷² Neither man seems to have been entirely popular with the rest of the ruling group. In November 1578, shortly after he had been elected chamberlain, the common council passed an act of "perpetual order hereafter to be used" between John Spritwell, "post to our sovereign

Lady the Queen and the hackneyemen of Dover", the need for which had arisen from disorder between them.⁷³ He was never elected mayor, although he was nominated many times between 1586 and 1594.⁷⁴ Jeremy Garrett's financial ability seems to have been valued, as he was frequently chosen as a sessor for special sesses, and he entered into a bond on behalf of the town for a ship it hired in 1596.⁷⁵ He became Mayor in 1598-99, but in 1600 was accused of having been fraudulently deceptive with the town's revenues.⁷⁶ The accounts produced by these two apparently ambitious men were more coherent than most preceding ones and they set out detailed information about amounts of money owed to individuals by the town, which may have resulted from their personal experience of having to wait for delayed payment. Their accounts are also interesting for the way in which they illustrate clearly certain procedures that seem to have been characteristic of contemporary financial management, and which are therefore worth describing in some detail.

They claimed the total of their receipts to be £219.4s.0d. and their expenses to be £235.3.9d. Among their receipts was £7.7s.11d. in bills, some of which might have come from the previous year, "which we leave in the box again".⁷⁷ Also received were various itemised amounts for "old debt". These look like the sale of assets, but are not quite what they seem. One amount is £20 "for lead...of St. Peter's church...which is to be paid back again when it shall be demanded". This was functionally a loan from Thomas Allen, one of the oligarchy, who had sold the lead, along with the rest of the materials of St. Peter's church.⁷⁸ Among the other assets sold were some goods seized from felons. The rest were clearly the result of distraints, and thus were definable as "old debt" in that the town had already been put to some expense by the people whose goods it was selling. £2.14s.0d. was "received of the goods of Rowlande towards the keeping of a bastard child which he begat upon his

kinswoman", and £2.13s.4d. "received of the goods sold of John Bennett the butcher for whom the town was charged upon a withernam from Hythe."⁷⁹

The corporation paid off £42.9s.0d of its own old debts this year, including £32 it had borrowed from John Packer to pay Mr. Love of Winchelsea on a withernam against Roger Ramsden of Dover. Only a small proportion of this had been recoverable from Mr. Ramsden's goods. Payments exceeded the receipts by £15.19.9d. this year, which amount the chamberlains pointed out was owing to them: £14.19s.9d. disbursed by John Spritwell and £1 by Jeremy Garrett. They then listed other amounts that they had left unpaid, amounting to £34.14s.7d.⁸⁰ If the returnable £20 for lead is included, the town was now £70.14s.4d. in debt to some of its inhabitants. Of the £34.14s.7d. the chamberlains listed as unpaid, £2.1s.4d. was for gunpowder, the rest was all owed to the town's innkeepers and hackneymen for their services. Among the innkeepers was John Spritwell, the current chamberlain. The receipts show that at the beginning of his year in office he had paid an amount for the wine assize he had owed the town for the last three years. Now the town owed him a considerably greater sum. At the end of the accounts for 1578-79 is this memorandum:

"And we have granted for an income of 53s.4d. to be paid by Mr. Spritwell a lease of the lands called Swingfield Court containing 5 acres for 21 years rendering 14s.4d. per annum which in respect of our late going out of the office and he assembled we thought it not necessary to be passed by us and therefore desire that it may according to our grant and composition be made to him in writing under the seal as usually hath been accustomed."⁸¹

This is an example of the town's normal system of offering a guid pro quo to any inhabitant able to shoulder some of its financial burden - the lease of Swingfield Lands that was granted to John Spritwell appears to have been greatly sought after.⁸²

Thus, as well as indicating concealed deficits, the accounts for 1578-9 demonstrate certain aspects of the corporation's combination of social

and financial responsibility for its inhabitants. They also show its growing indebtedness to its innkeepers for providing hospitality to its guests on credit, vital at this time of entertaining those who it hoped would improve its harbour.⁸³ They show too a consequent willingness to tolerate late payment of excise by these innkeepers.

The liquidity of the corporation seems to have improved in the early 1580s. In 1580-81, the town was able to pay its debts to the year's previous chamberlains, and all but 25s.7d. of what it still owed to Mr. Allen for the "*£20 borrowed of the goods of St. Peter's church.*"⁸⁴ At the same time a number of debts owed to the town were paid, including a loan that Dover had made to Hythe at the last Brotherhood meeting.⁸⁵

Debts owing to the town consisted only of excise and "small debts...as may appear by rentals and rolls". From the 1580s late payment of wine excise seems to have been accepted. At the same time it became habitual for the town to pay part of what it owed to leading innkeepers in arrears, these sums being greater than their excise payments. In 1587-88, the phrase "paid upon his bill due last year" was used of each of five innkeepers who were paid at the beginning of the financial year for their previous year's bills.⁸⁶ A similar formula was used thereafter, suggesting that the system became customary.

In October 1582, the previous year's accounts were audited for the first time - a practice that was then continued.⁸⁷ The auditors were the incoming mayor and three other jurats. All four represented the new protestant ruling group, of whom there is more discussion below.⁸⁸ They disallowed several expenses, judging the mayor - John Garrett - to be personally responsible for the carriage of letters to Sir Francis Walsingham, and finding the 20s. allowed Jeremy Garrett when he went to London with letters "too much and is excessive for that he is a townsman sworn to the Liberty and was for his own private affairs bound up thither afore wherefore we adjudge that he shall repay thereof 13s.4d."

Mr. Warren and Mr. Andrews were also to repay their Parliament wages as there had been no Parliament. Mr. Warren did so in 1583-4⁸⁹ but there is no record of Mr. Andrews' repayment. It is interesting to note that the town had been able to pay these wages in advance. Unusually at this period, one of the chamberlains that year, William Tiddeman, a mariner, was performing the office for the second time; the first occasion had been in 1560-61, when prompt payment was more common than it had become by the 1580s. The tone of the 1582 audit is very different from anything in the earlier accounts and its continuance annually seems to have initiated better presentation of the accounts from that time.

In the early 1580s the amount owing to the town at the end of the year seems to have been consistently less than the amount left in the box. Neither is there any indication that the town had had to seek a loan. From 1585, however, very little money appears under the heading "old debts paid", and it is impossible to tell whether the corporation was demanding immediate payment or failing to get them in.

The 1590s were difficult years in Dover as they were elsewhere, and it is frustrating that the accounts are missing for the years September 1591 to September 1593 and for 1595-96. Dover began the decade with its particular problem of having to pay in arrears many costs incurred during the time of the Armada, or "when the Spanish were here."⁹⁰ In 1590 people were still paying their ship sess and dike sess dating from that occasion.⁹¹ Of the £18.13s.8d. the chamberlains were left with at the end of the year, £18 was given towards a new mount for guns. This left £5.5s.0d in the box in bills and slightly more than that still owing in sesses and rents.⁹²

By 1594-95 the corporation had to call for a general sess, described as a loan.⁹³ By this means the receipts just exceeded the payments, but the surplus money at the end of the financial year was either "in the chamberlains' hands or else lost by forgetfulness".⁹⁴ At least

£28.9s.1d. was still owing to the town then, as well as money due from the sess that had been taken to sue to the Crown for the continuation of taxation exemption.⁹⁵

Possibly the largest sess was raised in 1596 "because the town stands in many ways indebted."⁹⁶ This was followed in 1597 by a new sess for £160 that was imposed "to pay for the old debts of the town...to let the town out of debt".⁹⁷ A succession of sesses was raised swiftly in the 1590s and men were expected to pay up within two weeks in some cases, upon pain of distraint of goods or imprisonment. Mr. Moore, a brewer and ex-Burgess to Parliament, was one of those imprisoned in 1592 for refusing to pay the sess imposed on him for the making of a new mount.⁹⁸

It seems that not only the corporation but individual chamberlains were unable to find money at that period. The corporation's normal reliance upon the chamberlains to fund its expenditure in advance broke down completely in 1594-95 and resulted in the imprisonment of three of the chamberlains. In May, 1595, two of them, Richard Dawkes, "linen draper", and Thomas Olvill, "shoemaker", were imprisoned until they agreed to lay out £5 a piece for the town to pay for certain wheat. When brought before the mayor and jurats and asked a second time to pay they refused, saying they did not have it and therefore could not lay it out.⁹⁹ In August, the mayor and jurats were asked by the Lieutenant of the Castle to provide gunpower for the musters. Seeing that the town had no money to defray that and other charges, the mayor commanded three of the chamberlains, the two who had been imprisoned, together with John Woodgreene, a sailor, to provide two barrels of power. They refused because they had no money of the town's to use. While imprisoned for this refusal, they called the town sergeant to them and took £5.8s.0d. from him, which was part of what he had collected on the recent sess. They were then imprisoned until they repaid that money, since the common usage of the town was that the chamberlains "shall disburse and lay out

money before hand if the town do want the same."¹⁰⁰ There is no mention of the actions of the fourth chamberlain, William Bennett, who was a baker.¹⁰¹

The choice of chamberlains in that year suggests that there might have been some reluctance to serve in the office, and that men who could be subjected to pressure were elected. Thomas Olvill had already served ten years earlier, Richard Dawkes had become a freeman only the year before, and John Woodgreene was serving for the first time at 49 years' old.¹⁰² Their refusal of financial responsibility might have been based on genuine financial hardship but it might also have been a gesture signalling their reluctance to take the office. Credit relationships normally helped to bond the town's hierarchy, and the chamberlains' flat refusal to take their normal responsibility for advancing money when it was needed points towards social as well as financial problems. Of them all, only Richard Dawkes ever entered the oligarchy, and he refused to take the oath of jurat for a month when he first took office in 1618.¹⁰³

Some measure of the corporation's problems in finding money in the 1590s emerges from an examination of the amounts it paid to the town's inhabitants in arrears at this time. They extended much further through society than they had done before - not just to wealthy innkeepers and office holders. In 1594 the accounts set out the town's debts: it owed money not only to the innkeepers, but wages to its gunners, its drummer, the clerk of St. Mary's church, a smith and even 8d. to Mother Rowland for cleaning the common privy - a job she had been given some years earlier "for her poverty".¹⁰⁴ In 1596-97, the town paid £40.14s.4d. in old debts, in 1597-98, £89.7s.5d. - including money to labourers for clearing the beach from the harbour; in 1598-99, the debts of £81.6s.8d. reached down to bakers, and to a woman who had supplied faggots two years earlier.¹⁰⁵ War and the pressure to supply a new ship took the

problem beyond the confines of the town. In 1597 a sailor, Cobham Doves, was given £10.0s.0d. in part payment for the muster wages, "being arrested for the same at London."¹⁰⁶ Another sailor, Thomas Jacob, was paid £1.1s.6d. in 1599, "his charges sustained in London for being arrested for gunners' wages and other charges."¹⁰⁷

By 1599-60 uncollected debts owing to the town amounted to £53.7s.1d., yet the accounts of 1601-1602 show that the town had made small loans to two freemen.¹⁰⁸ These loans remained unpaid for several years. From 1602 until 1623 debts owing to the town seem to have been taken more seriously; they were presented more systematically at the end of the accounts each year under the heading of the mayoralty in which they had been incurred. Although they still did not include any details of the smaller sess, rent and excise amounts, it is possible during those years to see exactly when some debts to the town began and ended.

From about 1604 certain features of the accounts show a marked change. The most obvious difference is the introduction of the payment of interest on loans.¹⁰⁹ Both the town and individual inhabitants also began to risk money in new ventures.¹¹⁰ Each year an individual put in a bid to farm the revenues from the harbour, which were then paid in by the "pounder" for that year in previously agreed monthly instalments. The first farmer, in 1604, took a risk in farming the revenues for £200, since the accounts show that they had only twice risen above £180 before that date - to £204.19s.6d. in 1598-99 and £183.8s.11d. in 1603-04.¹¹¹ The farming of revenues became more normal, particularly of those that proved difficult for the town's officers to collect. For example, in 1620 when the brewers had failed to deliver the required three-weekly note of their deliveries to victuallers, the common council agreed that the duties on these should be farmed to Robert Poulter, who was a brewer and innholder himself, for the sum of £12.5s.0d. for the rest of that financial year - four months.¹¹²

The function of the chamberlains as a form of credit exchange, borrowing and lending money in order to keep the corporation, that is the freeman body, viable and, occasionally, to help individuals, has already been noted. That function became more marked in the early seventeenth century, with chamberlains fulfilling some of the functions we should now associate with banking. It clearly became fairly normal practice to ask them for loans, for example.¹¹³ More frequently they themselves had to take up loans in order to pursue some project, or simply for the day to day administration and upkeep of the town.¹¹⁴ In 1631 the chamberlains had to borrow to pay for the next meetings of the Cinque Ports and then had to borrow £50 in order to pay back £50 they had borrowed from Tristram Stephens, which he then needed.¹¹⁵ The corporation's choice of expenditure must have been made in the knowledge of possible financial risk to the chamberlains and ultimately to the corporation as a whole. The use of loans allowed some planning for the future, however, as in 1607-08 when there was a dearth of grain, and the debts paid by the corporation included 2s.9d. interest on one loan of £20 to buy corn, and £1 on a loan of £40 taken up for three months to buy wheat.¹¹⁶

The taking out of loans became a regular event. Since they were usually recorded in the accounts among the receipts, because the chamberlains charged themselves with the money, they inflate what appears to be the town's income, while the principle amount of the loan actually represents a debt the town owed.¹¹⁷ The effect of this can best be seen by presenting certain amounts for this period in tabular form.

In Table 1:5, against each year are set first the receipts and payments recorded by the chamberlains. The third column shows the amount of old debt that had been paid by inhabitants to the town that year. The next column shows the debts to the town that were still outstanding at the end of the year. This amount was always under-recorded, as has been

noted above. The final column shows what the town owed in terms of the loans it had taken out. The interest on these loans was included in the payments, and the capital sums themselves have been deduced sometimes from those figures, and sometimes from the inclusion of the whole capital sum of a new loan in the receipts. Consistent figures for consecutive years do not always imply the same loan. Loans were sometimes paid back and new ones for a similar amount taken out.

Table 1:5 Civic financial management in Dover - a deficit system

Date	Receipts			Payments			Debts paid to town			Debts owing to town			Owed by town in loans		
1607	467	9	0	367	5	5	4	1	2	31	3	2	100	0	0
1608	781	0	1	408	1	8	54	5	0	24	18	8	200+	0	0
1609	700	10	1	677	8	1	12	4	4	37	10	0	200	0	0
1610	469	11	3	433	14	10	31	15	4	52	9	11	?		
1611	399	18	2	353	6	2	23	12	1	26	5	5			
1612	370	1	0	369	9	2	6	16	2	41	5	9			
1613	339	11	9	305	11	0	14	17	6	100	9	5			
1614	413	1	11	390	19	4	52	16	6	66	13	7			
1615	388	11	1	384	7	6	21	11	11	59	4	7			
1616	342	4	10	320	15	5	20	3	9	30	3	8			
1617	369	12	8	366	0	3	33	13	9	18	1	11			
1618	391	13	2	365	13	10	7	3	4	23	4	10	50	0	0
1619	481	19	1	475	18	10	110	15	8	21	1	2	130	0	0
1620	358	3	2	351	10	4	17	0	2	15	0	4	150	0	0
1621	334	13	8	332	0	3	6	3	1	43	2	10	150	0	0
1622	No accounts														
1623	651	2	2	607	7	3	61	17	8	33	0	0	?		
1624	815	12	7	773	11	8	55	5	5				50+	0	0
1625	414	5	8	467	6	0	61	19	3						
1626	390	0	0	467	14	3	18	14	0	20	16	9			
1627	784	0	0	781	9	0	38	10	6	no figures			40	0	0
1628	350	8	3	376	7	9	35	5	8	given after			100	0	0
1629	442	1	1	471	17	2	24	3	4	this date			135	0	0
1630	353	8	0	348	17	2	18	4	0				185	0	0
1631	494	5	0	512	15	4	15	3	3				185	0	0
1632	579	2	4	575	17	3	50	6	4				290	0	0
1633	666	18	4	653	16	9	7	8	5				140	0	0
1634	728	9	6	771	14	9	64	14	9				140	0	0
1635	1586	17	2	1370	0	8	1	5	0				244	0	0

Source: CKS Dover Town Accounts 1603-1626, 1626-1649.

Note: Years run from September to September.

This table gives a very different picture from that presented by the summary at the end of each year's accounts, which simply compares the figures in the first two columns. In 1607, for example, the apparent

surplus of £100.3s.7d. vanishes when it is set against the outstanding debts to the corporation and the £100 loan it has taken out. In 1608 the receipts are so large because they include £200 "borrowed at interest" of Mr. Reade. The table shows that the corporation was actually in deficit in every one of these years, in spite of the apparent occasional surplus that results from comparing the first two columns.

Figures for the debt still owing to the town at the end of the year are given only once after 1622. Nevertheless, for the years when they are given, a comparison of the debts repaid to the town with those still outstanding at the end of the year proves interesting. Figures for 1607-08 demonstrate the obvious inability of people to pay. In 1608-09 the situation has been reversed, but this is largely because the town passed a decree that year to cancel the desperate debts owing to it because so many of its debtors were now dead and were not leaving enough money to pay their debts.¹¹⁸ It can be seen that the gap between the two amounts tends to widen, as it does again between 1609 and 1611 and is then pulled back into balance, as in 1611-12. The gap widens again in 1618 and 1621, but it is corrected again in the following year on each occasion. A careful check of the debts owing to the town in 1619-20 shows that some very old debts, although not yet paid, simply stopped being recorded in this year.¹¹⁹ This suggests that certain desperate debts had once again been written off. In 1620-21 many foreigners were remitted their sess because the mayor and jurats recognised that they could not pay it.¹²⁰ In every year in which debts owing to the town were recorded, no detailed figures were given for the rents and fines that were owed; they were just grouped together as "debts owing to the town" unless they happened to be owed by prominent men. It seems likely then that the town had realistic expectations about who would be able to pay their debts, and exhibited some leniency towards those poorer inhabitants who could not.

Some of the features of the town's credit system that have already been noted can be examined in more detail in the accounts of the early seventeenth century. Linked credit arrangements are illustrated by a note in the accounts for 1609-10, when the corporation paid the Master of the Almshouse £5 for rent that had been long owed to him by Captain Windebank, to whom the corporation happened to owe an identical sum for some food and drink he had supplied for the Commissioners.¹²¹ Windebank had once kept an inn in Dover,¹²² and, on not receiving payment of a bill owing to him by the corporation, about which he had already been in negotiation in 1606,¹²³ he had clearly refused to pay rent on land he held of the almshouse. A similar circular arrangement can be seen in 1613 when another innkeeper, Peter Dibbs, paid his longstanding debt for wine excise once he had been paid by the corporation for his outstanding fee as "Boder" of the Castle,¹²⁴ or messenger between the officers of the Castle and the mayor and jurats in the town. These items suggest that other such arrangements might lie concealed in the accounts. Large loans to the town were made, in this time of increasing foreign trade,¹²⁵ most often by merchants, and clearly as an investment. A normal rate of interest seems to have been 10 per cent. for one year, although it was sometimes less. In 1619 the town borrowed £80 from Matthew Gibbon, who seems to have been a landowner from the nearby rural area.¹²⁶ This loan was repaid in full in 1624.¹²⁷ In 1620 it borrowed £50 for one year at £5 interest from Thomas Tiddeman, a sailor prominent in the oligarchy,¹²⁸ and £20 from the Master and Wardens of the Almshouse, who appear to have asked for no interest.¹²⁹ The town borrowed £50 from Mr. Wentworth, a Dover merchant, in 1624 and paid it back with interest, £52.1s.8d. in total, the following year.¹³⁰ It had a long-standing loan of £40 from Mr. Jones of London, which seems to have been negotiated by his friend, Francis Raworth, the town clerk. This loan was taken out in 1627-28, first for the use of the harbour and

then "continued for the town's use".¹³¹ Three jurats, including Francis Raworth, stood bound for the £40. The interest of £3.4s.0d. was paid in two instalments annually from 1627-1633 to Francis Raworth.¹³² The debt was closed in November 1633, with a payment to Jones of £40.16s.0d. "upon his obligation for principal debt and interest".¹³³ Francis Raworth himself lent the town £50 in 1629, and seems to have persuaded his brother Robert, who did not live in Dover, to lend £80 for a number of years.¹³⁴ When Tristram Stephens, a ship master, died, his widow lent the town £50 from his estate in 1629. This amount was repaid to his widow, now Rose Walton, in 1633 and 1634 in two instalments, presumably at her husband's request after her remarriage.¹³⁵ Another loan of £50 came from a London man in 1629.¹³⁶ The biggest single loan was £150, which had originally been given to the town for charitable purposes by James Hughessen senior, one of Dover's merchants, then living outside the town.¹³⁷ The corporation used only the interest on the gift for its intended purpose and took the capital as a loan.¹³⁸ It seems, then, that large sums of money by that time were most likely to be obtained from London or from the town's merchants and ship masters, men most accustomed to speculative investments.

The control of the town's finances thus became more complex in the seventeenth century and, as has already been noted, from 1601 two experienced chamberlains continued in office each year. They were, however, still capable of making mistakes, as when they "forgot" to note that a £200 loan had been repaid to Mr. Reade in 1609, and were rebuked for a "negligent account" in 1622-23.¹³⁹ On that occasion they were fined £3.6s.8d. each, and claimed that they could not present their accounts in the usual form because of "their many disbursements for providing rye and wheat for the poor and others in the town and about erecting the custom house." In 1624-25 they were told to pay for wheat and to borrow money at interest if necessary.¹⁴⁰ In 1627, the auditors

noted at the end of the account that "the chamberlains of the last and present year have received upon one other book of the soldiers coats, bandoliers and belts £28.0s.10d."¹⁴¹ This amount was then deducted from what the town owed to them - another example of the day-to-day accounting that was actually conducted in separate account books, and that had to be regulated at the end of the year. In an effort to avoid this sort of miscalculation, which presumably became more likely as more transactions were made, in 1632 officers were told to hand in money received and not keep it beyond receiving days.¹⁴²

One solution to financial difficulties throughout the period was for the corporation to sell off its assets, but the early seventeenth century saw an unprecedented sale of property by the town. It sold the old court hall to a Londoner for £47 in 1628, and the "Lion Stable" with its loft to a yeoman from the village of Elham for £60 in 1631.¹⁴³ This had once brought in a good rent and had more recently been used as a storehouse for goods from the harbour.¹⁴⁴ In 1632 it sold off its old ferry boat.¹⁴⁵ More customary were the sale of surplus corn that had been bought with a loan taken out when a bad harvest was expected but did not materialize, the sale of soldiers' coats, bands and belts that had been used once, and the sale of a prize ship for £100.¹⁴⁶

For most of the period under review it seems that the chamberlains were presiding over a hand to mouth economy when they met on Saturday nights to take in and pay out money and to co-ordinate the true instruments of financial management - the numerous small books of accounts that would have been recognized by all but the very poor. The 'foreigners' sess lists, for example, were arranged in an apparently topographical way that suggests the sess collector doing a round with his book.¹⁴⁷ Small debts were sometimes paid in by one man for another,¹⁴⁸ and credit transactions initiated by civic duties must therefore have spread far further than these accounts suggest, with obligations for loans being

exchanged at a very low economic level.

An examination of payment made in arrears both by the corporation to individuals and vice versa has cast a little light on the necessary network of credit arrangements made between individuals and the corporation in a period before the institutionalization of credit and banking. It was in the interests of the oligarchy, by means of the chamberlains, to free the flow of money to its freemen when they could, yet they had to call in credit and defer payment when the demands of war, service to the Crown, the deteriorating harbour, or dearth became urgent. This system came close to breaking down in 1594 when the chamberlains indicated that they were unwilling or unable to support it with their own money. There are few signs in this period that the oligarchy ever had access to sufficient resources from the various dues it collected from the town's inhabitants and the users of the harbour to invest heavily in planned expansion. They had to rely on the Crown to provide the money needed for the reconstruction of the harbour, for example.¹⁴⁹

The financial role of the mayor and chamberlains themselves could be precarious, as has been demonstrated. There is no conclusive evidence that they always received what was owing to them at the end of their year in office.¹⁵⁰ The fact that men were frequently elected to the common council in the same year as they became chamberlains suggests that this apparently unenviable office might have been used as a make-or-break step towards the office-holding structure. For those men who were to find satisfaction in office-holding, the regulating of the town's finances might have been a first experience of a more general social control.

While in office, chamberlains were at the centre of a credit network. This involved making social and moral as well as financial choices. It has been suggested that at times of necessity in the sixteenth century

loans were granted to the town by its richer inhabitants free from interest. This might have sprung from a sense of obligation, but there might also have been rewards in the form of enhanced status and social power, as well as opportunities for asset stripping. In the seventeenth century, loans were made as financial investments, and therefore were sometimes arranged by the town's inhabitants with their acquaintances from outside the town. The need to repay those loans with interest thus put pressures on the corporation to find more money from its inhabitants. This naturally happened at the period when the chamberlains were no longer drawn so often from the fishermen, brewers, victuallers and small traders within the town, but increasingly from mariners, merchants and maltsters who were trading beyond the confines of the town and who clearly brought their mercantile experience to bear on civic finances.

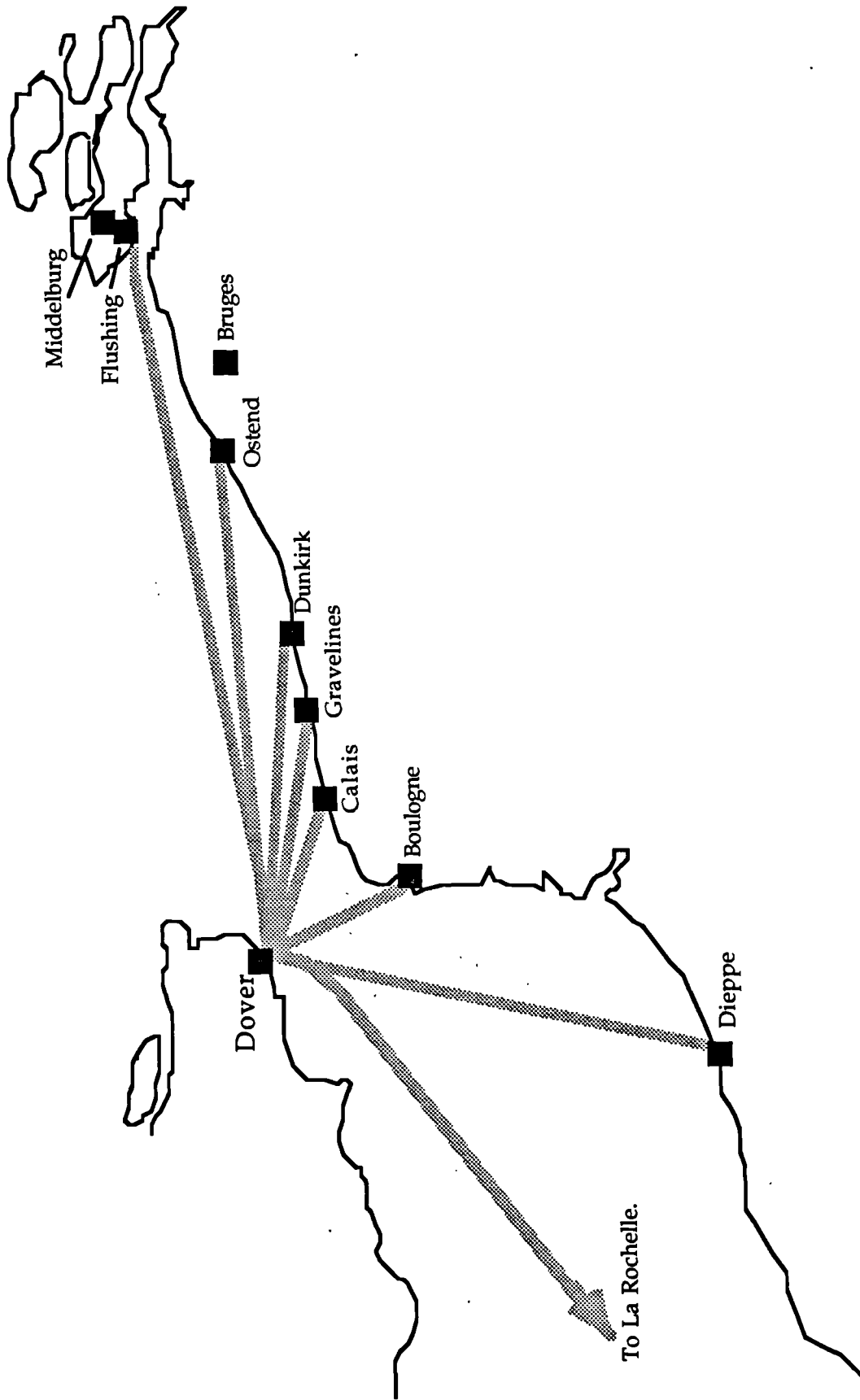
At the same time, in obedience to the wishes of the mayor, jurats and common council, it must have been the chamberlains taking decisions on the details of town finance who determined the identity of the deserving poor and made judgements on whose goods should be distrained for debt, who decided when it was politic to demand arrears of rent or sess, or when a blind eye might be turned, and who determined who was worthy of credit. It is important to stress the interrelationship of financial, social and moral control in a system that depended so heavily on the availability of credit to and from individuals.

iii) Sources of income to the corporation

a) Income derived from shipping and port dues

"Droits", or dues, exacted at the harbour provided Dover's chief source of income for most - although not all - years from the early 1560s until 1640, and for some years beyond that. Obviously this revenue fell during years when England was at war with continental neighbours, particularly

Dover's continental shipping routes in the sixteenth century.



between 1625 and 1628. The description of the haven as "the life of the town" by the common assembly in 1605 was not simply rhetorical but an expression of economic fact.¹⁵¹ On the other hand, for most of the period the maintenance of the harbour drained the resources of the town since drifting shingle and winter storms constantly threatened to close it, and occasionally succeeded in doing so.¹⁵²

The unusual growth in activity in, and income from, the harbour from 1604 was not the result of Dover's initiative but of England's neutrality in the wars between 1604 and 1610, which led to her ships being used as neutral carriers.¹⁵³ It has been shown that in the early 1620s and then again from 1630 until about 1651 Dover became an international entrepot, re-exporting many European products.¹⁵⁴ Its experience at that time thus ran contrary to that of London.¹⁵⁵ Clearly this trade had great implications for the handling and storing of goods in Dover, for the accommodation of large numbers of ships in the harbour, and merchants, factors and sailors in the town, for the provisioning of ships, and for the acquisition of wealth by individuals in the first half of the seventeenth century.

Throughout the whole period, 1509-1640, money was derived from the harbour by the corporation in three ways: by direct taxes and fines on shipping, by dues levied on the importing and exporting of certain commodities, and by dues levied for the use of certain harbour facilities. These will be examined in turn below. It should be remembered that shippers had also to pay customs duties, that the water-bailiff, appointed by the Crown, in some cases collected dues similar in amount to those taken by the town, and that after 1606, farmers appointed by the Crown also took some dues, such as cranage and wharfage.¹⁵⁶ Proceedings before the bench of magistrates show that there was some avoidance of payment of the dues to the corporation, as there was of customs duties.¹⁵⁷

The sums paid for individual dues cannot, unfortunately, be successfully quantified for the whole period because they were not always separated in the accounts. In those years when the corporation appointed its own "pounder" whose duty it was to collect all the harbour dues, the chamberlains' accounts list the dues under separate headings. But from 1604-05 until 1622-23 the harbour "droits" were farmed to a series of individual freemen of the town, who simply paid one agreed fee for the year to the town, usually in monthly instalments.¹⁵⁸ The situation was reversed in 1622 when a pounder was once more appointed to gather and collect harbour dues, "and to retain the whole benefit to the use of this township."¹⁵⁹ Thus the accounts once more show separate payments from 1623-24 until 1630-31, when a series of farmers again collected the dues until 1634-35.¹⁶⁰ Men wanting to venture their money as farmers seem to have put in bids until an hour glass ran out, when the best bid was selected.¹⁶¹ It is possible that farming the harbour revenues was sometimes, at least, a joint enterprise, since one of the farmers, William Ward, referred to "his partners" of 1612.¹⁶²

Fines on shipping

These taxes were, to some extent, flexible and subject to negotiation, since the corporation set them itself, occasionally in response to actions taken by other outports, although it sometimes had to act in accord with orders from the Privy Council. In 1618, for example, the corporation petitioned the Privy Council to be allowed to reimpose certain duties on French ships, which they had been commanded to stop taking; the petition was prompted by the fact that the port of Newcastle had begun to take a new imposition of 2d. per chaldron of coals from Dover mariners.¹⁶³

At the beginning of the period, in 1509, one of the chief duties taken on shipping was "murage", more commonly called the "head penny", which

seems to have been a tax on merchants other than Doverians entering the harbour, taken to pay for the upkeep of the sea wall.¹⁶⁴ Between 1509-10 and 1518-19 it brought in an average of £4.18s.0d. a year and between 1519-20 and 1528-29 an average of £2.16s.0d. The harbour had deteriorated badly by the 1520s and in February 1523 the Merchants Adventurers in London agreed to give £100 to its rebuilding in exchange for being released from the head penny or murage.¹⁶⁵ This took effect in 1528. There are no figures for 1529-32, but in subsequent years, until 1541, when the murage payment stopped completely, receipts averaged only 10s.11d. This fall in revenue following the exemption of London merchants from payment makes it likely that they formed the majority of traders through the port at that time.

The tax of "half passage" began to be paid in 1527-28, following Henry VIII's truce with France, and his proclamation that merchants could again trade freely and fishermen go after herring.¹⁶⁶ It might also have been an attempt, in those favourable circumstances, to obtain a new source of revenue now that murage was to diminish. This tax was paid until 1544, then not again until 1557, perhaps because of the condition of the harbour. It was paid both by English and foreign ships, and was a tax on passengers carried. The accounts for 1557 show that it was paid in that year by masters of ships from Dover, Calais, Nieuwport, Ostend, Dunkirk and London.¹⁶⁷ It brought in a substantial amount of money, usually between £30 and £50 per year. The amounts collected suggest the influence of external events on the number of passengers carried. The privateering campaign in the Channel conducted by protestants based at La Rochelle began in 1567 and, possibly in an initial reaction to that danger, receipts of half-passage dropped to £1.16s.3d. in the year 1566-67, and £2.2s.2d. in 1567-68, although they rose again thereafter. The receipts for the 1570s possibly reflect the steady migration of protestants from the continent to England, as in 1570-71 they rose to

their highest point so far - £62.11s.0d. There are no figures for 1571-72, but over £61 was taken again in 1572-73, which suggests an influx of French protestants following the massacre of St. Bartholomew in August, 1572.¹⁶⁸ The effects of war with France and Spain are probably demonstrated by the drop from over £66 in 1625-26 to just over £20 in 1626-27 and £4 in 1627-28.¹⁶⁹

The tax called "faring pence", and later "feriage", or "ferry boat" was paid each year from 1512 to 1517, when it averaged 5s.3d. per year; in 1521-21 when it brought in 5s.3d. and then not until 1526-27, presumably following the war. It was collected again in the early 1540s,¹⁷⁰ then no more until 1553 and 1556. It brought in £12.10s.4d. in 1553,¹⁷¹ and later proceedings of the common council note that decrees concerning the tax were made in Queen Mary's time, which possibly explains the high payment for that year.¹⁷² It became a regular payment from 1562 until the end of the period under review. The amount it brought in rose steadily, except in the 1590s, reaching well over £40 per annum in the early 1620s, dropping to £4.0s.11d. in 1627, then rising steadily again after the war to reach £49.15s.11d. in 1635.¹⁷³

It was never included in those duties that were farmed, although in 1605 most people in the common assembly thought it should be let out with the other droits.¹⁷⁴ The evolution of this tax illustrates the complex knot in which the corporation's need for money and sense of responsibility for its individual inhabitants were tied to the protection of the interests of a selected group, whose behaviour in this case was often avaricious and sometimes violent. It also illustrates the way in which an arrangement made originally by a group of independent sailors was first regulated by the corporation, then taken over by them, finally becoming part of a system run by patronage, which sailors had to pay to enter.

This tax was paid on one of the most characteristic occupations of Dover

sailors - that is the carriage in small boats of goods and passengers to and from the shore when ships were too large to come into the harbour. The men and women who owned these small boats in the sixteenth century were from families who persisted in the town over a long period.¹⁷⁵

Fishermen who turned from fishing to become faring men were condemned by Henry VIII in 1540: he complained that they exacted exorbitant rates for carrying men to ships, failed to present passengers and goods to the customs, took "bag, cloak, fardell or any other thing that they may lay their hands on" and transported people in rough weather, "to their great danger."¹⁷⁶

A common council decree of 1585 makes it clear that at some stage certain people purchased a "faring week" granted from the king to the town so that they had the right and duty to provide a boat at a certain time in the year.¹⁷⁷ The decree, which concerns the order in which the faring boats were to operate, makes the proviso that people still living who had contributed towards the purchase of a faring week from the king to the town, but who now neither owned a boat nor were able to buy a quarter of one, should nevertheless "continue in the faring week." In 1605, the common assembly decided to dismiss the "persons of good ability in the town", who had been receiving the profits of the ferry boats weekly.¹⁷⁸ It was agreed that these profits should be disposed of by the mayor and jurats for the benefit of the corporation. To that end, they would cause to be provided a suitably equipped boat, whose master and crew they would appoint. The master would receive the money, divide it into several shares and pay what was due to the corporation to the mayor and chamberlains weekly or as was thought fit. The note of this decision continues:

"yet because diverse poor men and women have received their weekly profit by the said boat when their turns did happen, which was not fully once in a year, it is therefore thought fit that such poor people during their lives in every year shall have out of the town chamber such yearly

sums as shall be thought fit...having respect to the profit by them formerly received."¹⁷⁹

It is clear that this became in essence a pension paid on their original investment to certain men and women, including some widows.¹⁸⁰ Widow Staynes petitioned the bench in 1619, that

"because David Staynes, mariner, deceased, in his life had 6s. per annum. for his allowance in respect he and others were dismissed of their week's profit by the ferry boat, which he formerly so had by his wife named Jone, who was sometime the wife of Robert Cullick, the said Jone now made her humble petition not only to enjoy the said 6s. per annum during her life, but also that she might be paid 12s. for two years' past since the death of David Staynes."¹⁸¹

This petition was granted "in respect of her poverty."

Once the town owned the ferry boat, the place of master of the boat became an object of patronage and the other places were also eagerly sought, so that a queue of eligible mariners was always awaiting the next available place.¹⁸² Younger men who entered the company of the ferry boat compensated the older men whose places they took. A decision of the bench made in 1606 is typical of a number of others: that Richard Pickering, "now in the ferry boat in place of Father Stephens" is to pay Father Stephens 12d. every 14 days during Stephens's life.¹⁸³ Thus, in the seventeenth century, the town ensured that in future retired ferry boat men would receive a pension at no cost to itself.

Once in the ferry boat, some of the sailors used the position to their personal advantage and there are many examples of complaints made against them of theft and extortion.¹⁸⁴ Only the ferry boat was allowed to transport passengers, although there are many examples of other sailors being fined in the courts for usurping this right.¹⁸⁵ New conditions in the harbour also threatened this ancient service. In 1614 the master and company of the ferry boat complained that merchants or factors were refusing to pay their 4d. per pack to the maintenance of the ferry boat because they had not used it "since the erecting of quays". The mayor and jurats insisted that this due should still be paid

because the ferry boat still had to be in continual attendance in case it was needed.¹⁸⁶ A compromise seems to have been reached in 1632 when it was agreed that the ferry boat was to be paid 2d. for its attendance, whether it worked or not, and 4d. for the carriage of a pack.¹⁸⁷

"Head money" was a fairly insignificant tax on shipping, which began to be paid in the 1560s, apparently as a revival of the old "head penny", as an agreement of 1560 describes it as "a penny of every stranger coming into the realm and going out of the realm and the town..."¹⁸⁸ It was abolished by the Privy Council in 1627-28, in spite of the town's petition to have it restored.¹⁸⁹ Its removal followed complaints from the French, and is an example of the Council's power to intervene directly in urban financial affairs.

Dues taken on commodities

Analysis of these dues unfortunately gives no significant information on the volume of trade through the port; items were often lumped together in the accounts, there is no way of telling what was in the packs on which duties were paid, and it is seldom clear what exactly was being paid for. Slightly more information can be gleaned from Port Books, but detailed analysis of these is beyond the scope of this study. The fact that at the beginning of the period the only commodities going through the harbour on which dues for measuring were occasionally paid were sea coal, salt and (rarely) corn, suggests that coal and salt were the most common imports at the time, except for wine, which was taxed on delivery to individuals. The payment of an amount for measuring coal and salt was made regularly from 1538.¹⁹⁰

As the due on the two commodities was always given as one figure, it is not possible to make any calculations about the volume of each item. The accounts show no payments under the head "coal and salt" from 1563 until 1584, or from 1591 until 1635, when the payment was £18.9s.3d;¹⁹¹ this

was as much as eight times what it had ever previously been, since it normally brought in between 25s. and £3.18s.0d. in a year. Volume had probably increased accordingly that year since the dues paid on it can be seen to have remained constant when the droits were farmed to James Hughessen in 1611, and he received 5d. for each measure, the amount originally set down in 1538. He was told in 1611 that 80 ways of salt were to be reserved to be landed without anything paid for landing it, but it "shall be free to the fishermen of the town."¹⁹² This suggests that far more salt may have been imported at times than could be deduced from the payment of dues.

The demand for sea coal is illustrated by a series of depositions in 1638, which reveal how when a servant was sent to buy some from the house of a merchant at the pier, he pressed his master's case by reminding the merchant that his master bought coals from him all the year.¹⁹³ In another of the depositions the master of a ship from King's Lynn describes how his ship load of coals had been bought in Harwich to come to Dover and some of them were sold straight off the ship at 32s. a chaldron, with nothing paid to the town. This can be compared with a case in 1552 in which a man from Grimsby, owner of some Newcastle coal, sold all his lading of coals to two Dover men for 11s. the chaldron.¹⁹⁴ As well as illustrating the avoidance of dues and market regulation, the two cases serve to underline the inflation of prices, from 11s. the chaldron in 1552 to 32s. in 1638, and also the persistence of the trade in coals from Newcastle to the East Anglian ports, whence they were sent on down the east coast.¹⁹⁵

Corn was taxed on handling in certain years between 1520 and 1539.¹⁹⁶ The dues taken on the corn are sometimes given as one sum together with the dues for measuring coal and/or salt. Since, in other years, the amount is given under such headings as "wheat laden in Dover", or "for measure of corn that hath been sold and carried out of the town", it

seems likely that imported wheat was being redistributed at the harbour. The greatest amount, £2.12s.2d., was paid in 1520, a year of dearth.¹⁹⁷ The account for 1531-32 is given in detail and shows that of the 205 seams of wheat, barley and malt that were taxed 114 seams went by boat to two different men in Rye, and that 36 seams went to John Anthony in Canterbury.¹⁹⁸ From 1574 sums were paid for "waggons" and "carting out", among which was occasionally included "corn carting out".¹⁹⁹ These amounts are, however, impossible to separate into their constituent elements.

Dues were more often taken on exported goods: on beer, lime, "hops and packs" and corn.²⁰⁰ Of these, the export of beer was far the most profitable to the corporation. *Dover beer seems to have been popular* throughout the period, and in 1626 Sir Henry Palmer, at anchor with his fleet in the Downs, lamented the fact that the weather prevented him from sending into Dover for beer, so that he had to get it in Deal instead.²⁰¹ Payment for the export of beer began in 1553 according to the accounts, under the heading "Receipts for beer carriage away and bread and other things as well," when it went mainly to Dunkirk and Ostend,²⁰² although in 1546 the mayor, jurats and commonalty had enacted that Flemings or other strangers should pay 12d. for every tun of beer that they bought in the town and shipped to a port beyond the seas; strangers buying beer had to pay this money to the brewers concerned, who then had to account for it and pay it into the town chamber at intervals.²⁰³ The receipt of this due stopped completely between 1563 and 1567, yet it continued to be paid every year between 1623 and 1629 when England was at war.²⁰⁴ Because of years missing from the accounts, and years when all the dues were farmed, it is not possible to give decennial averages for dues on the export of beer, but the following table gives annual averages derived from tranches of years when it was paid consecutively.

Table 1:6 Averages of dues paid annually on the export of beer from Dover

	£	s.	d.
1532-1562	6	7	7
1567-1578	17	14	9
1580-1590	19	19	0
1594-1603	23	12	2
1623-1629	11	3	10

Sources: BL Additional Ms 29618, CKS Dover Town Accounts, 1546-58, 1558-81, 1581-1603, 1603-26, 1626-49.

By far the highest payment, of £73.19s.4d., was made in 1598-99, which suggests that almost 1500 tuns of beer were exported to Northern Europe that year. Yet the amount fell to 8s.0d. in 1603-04. Since the various droits were not differentiated in the accounts for the following years, it is not possible to tell whether the coming of peace affected this export.

Merchants exporting lime from Dover to ports overseas had to pay 4d. for each rasure exported following a decree of 1584.²⁰⁵ The due was usually paid by only one or two people and only once or twice a year, which suggests that the merchants kept their own accounts and paid in a lump sum. The due was paid by a few of the wealthier merchants, who shared lime-kilns under quite complicated partnership agreements.²⁰⁶ It brought in a small amount to the town, normally between 16s. and £3.10s.0d. This trade was threatened in 1616 when a Mrs. Darcy revived her suit to the king to have licence for the sole transportation of lime and chalk out of Kent and Sussex. In response, the mayor, jurats and common council pointed out that lime was one of Dover's few indigenous products, and one that gave employment to a number of people; boats that came from foreign ports to load lime brought with them valued commodities to sell in Dover.²⁰⁷ The payments to the town for lime continued, so their arguments were presumably persuasive.

The payment of a droit on "hops and packs" exported began in 1574-75 and seems to have continued until 1626.²⁰⁸ Since hops, packs and

driffats²⁰⁹ are listed together, it is not possible to assess the volume of any one commodity leaving the country. The droit seems to have been a handling charge, as in 1614 a suit was commenced in Chancery against certain factors in Dover, arising from complaints from the master and company of the ferry boat that the factors were refusing to pay duties for packs they were shipping.²¹⁰ Concern was expressed in Dover in 1605 over a restraint on shipping cloth, not for the cloth-makers, but for the mariners for whom "it will make great decay."²¹¹ Payments on the export of grain are not shown separately in the accounts, but it is clear that they were made because the records of the common council show that in 1616 Richard Doves, a sailor and merchant, together with other freemen, refused to pay the usual "droits and sums of money due for shipping and embarking of malt and other grain at the port, viz: for a score of wheat 2s.6d., for a score of malt, barley or peas 12d., for a score of oats 6d."²¹² The mayor and jurats regarded this refusal as a breach of the oath of a freeman and determined to disenfranchise the men, first giving them time to reconsider their refusal. The problem clearly continued. In 1630 freemen were to be fined for helping foreigners to evade this payment by "joining" with them.²¹³

Dues paid for harbour facilities

These dues demonstrate most clearly periods of improvement to the harbour, and the dramatically increased use of the port in the early seventeenth century. A due already well established at the beginning of the period, was "pontage", supplemented in some years by a "subsidy of bridges." This seems to have been an amount paid for the use of bridges or ramps erected between the shore and ships to allow the carriage of goods.²¹⁴ The "subsidy of bridges" was paid only in respect of the transport of livestock, and declined from £3.7s.1d. in 1509 to 4s.8d. in 1532, after which it ceased, presumably because the trade came to an

end, or perhaps because the jetty from which animals were transported had become unusable. A new jetty was made in 1541-2.²¹⁵ Table 1:7 below lists all the surviving figures recorded for the export of animals. These, together with the mention on one occasion of Boulogne as their destination, suggest a lively but diminishing trade in livestock to northern France at this date, in which horses were most consistently in demand.²¹⁶

Table 1:7 Livestock shipped from Dover 1509-1532

Year	sheep	oxen	bullocks	horses	lambs
1509-10	60	191	241	43	0
1510-11	785	166	0	116	11
1512-13	105	0	292	99	0
1513-14	224	0	351	0	0
1514-15	220	0	564	32	0
1515-16	0	375	0	79	0
1521-22	0	0	38	22	0
1522-23	0	0	0	16	0
1524-25	0	0	79	0	0
1525-26	0	0	26	22	0
1526-27	0	0	0	7	0
1527-28	0	0	0	31	0
1531-32	0	0	0	11	0
1532-33	0	0	0	20	0

Source: BL Additional Ms 29618 annual receipts headed "subsidy of bridges."

Ironically, once the harbour had been improved, after the 1580s, and trade had increased, it became increasingly difficult to collect droits from merchants and their factors for two reasons: firstly, in the 1620s and 30s in particular, many goods never came to land at all, but were transhipped for re-export in the harbour or at sea;²¹⁷ secondly, the growth of trade produced wealth that enabled merchants to build their own quays and storehouses and ignore the corporation's facilities, for which they had to pay.²¹⁸ Inventories and wills of the period indicate the growth in number of privately owned quays and storehouses after 1606 when land could be leased from the Crown for building.²¹⁹

The dates when new droits were introduced indicate the growth of the port's facilities: 1563-64 beaconage, 1586-87 a new measure and beam,

1590-91 cranage, housage and sluisage, 1628-29 kayage.²²⁰ The beacons seem to have been mounted on two old masts at the entrance to the harbour, but beaconage brought in a modest income each year, reflecting the fluctuations in traffic and showing the same steep rise in 1598-99 as the duty on the export of beer did, and an even steeper rise in 1635, from a normal figure of between £3 and £5 to over £30.²²¹ Although the payments for the measure started in 1586 they did not begin to bring in a consistent income until 1594.²²² The beam, however, was obviously in use straight away. In 1621, apparently in an attempt to curtail evasion of payment, the corporation provided a beam to be used only on ship board and at or near the quays and wharfs at the pier or harbour, "for weighing hops and Scottish coals and such other merchandizes that shall be brought by sea to Dover haven."²²³ Yet shortly afterwards, John Spook, a factor, refused to pay droits for weighing pepper and other goods on shipboard "the same being not landed, but in the harbour put aboard other ships or barques."²²⁴

The crane, sluice and storehouse, for which dues were paid from 1590, were part of the new harbour built in the 1580s. The levies for the use of the crane were set out in March 1591, and give some idea of the kind of goods passing through the harbour. These dues were paid by aliens and Englishmen who were not inhabitants of Dover, to the pounder, who kept the key to the crane:

For every tun of wine Brassell oil iron or whatever is vendible by the town except beer.....	8d.
for every great drifatt with goods.....	4d.
for every barrell of dry wares fish or herring.....	1d.
for every firkin soap or other dry wares.....	half penny
for every great pack with goods.....	6d.
for every small pack with goods.....	3d.
for every sack of hops.....	4d.
for every packet of hops.....	2d.
for every bale or great case with goods.....	2d.
for every small case with goods.....	2d.
for every bale of madder.....	2d.
for every sack of wool or combing.....	4d.
for every maunde or great basket with goods.....	4d.
for every smaller basket with goods.....	2d. ²²⁵

"Sluisage" was meant to help towards the expensive task of maintaining the two sluices, without which the harbour could not have functioned. For this, every ship, not belonging to a Dover man, had to pay a halfpenny per ton of burden whenever it came into the harbour, for whatever reason.²²⁶ In 1597 it was decreed that every merchant or his factor must pay 2d. "housage" for every sack of hops, driffats or great packs for every week "above 15 days" that they were "housed", or stored, and 1d. for small packets.²²⁷ In 1622, when some merchants refused to pay housage because they had their own storehouses, they were told they had to pay the due whether they used the common storehouse or not; if the storehouse was not sufficient, the chamberlains were to hire another near the pier.²²⁸

The increase in trade is perhaps best indicated by the raw figures taken in droits and recorded in the surviving accounts after the missing figures for the early 1590s. They are presented in Table 1:8.

Table 1:8 Dues taken by the corporation on goods handled at the port of Dover 1596-1640

Year	Crane			Housage			Sluice		
	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.
1596-97	1	18	8	1	10	0	5	15	6
1597-98	1	9	2	1	5	0	5	9	7
1598-99	5	17	8	7	3	6			
1599-1600	2	12	11	7	3	4	12	12	0
1600-01	no accounts								
1601-02	4	10	6	10	11	3	9	15	6
1602-03	8	7	2	15	7	6	5	11	0
1603-04	31	13	2	24	13	6	10	1	3
1604-23	individual amounts not shown - dues farmed								
1623-24	43	7	2	55	11	3	68	8	6
1624-25	73	16	5	89	7	3	61	12	7
1625-26	46	15	7	44	5	0	60	2	7
1626-27	57	13	5	7	10	1	42	1	10
1627-28	29	14	7	16	9	5	14	7	7
1628-29	28	17	10	28	10	1	30	12	1
1629-30	45	12	6	22	13	3	36	1	0
1630-35	individual amounts not shown - dues farmed								
1635-36	571	8	2	340	13	6	180	6	0
1636-39	no accounts								
1639-40	215	18	10	373	12	6	49	5	6

Source: CKS Dover Town Accounts, 1581-1603, 1603-1626, 1626-1649, Receipts.

The increase in kinds of goods carried is indicated by the new rates given in 1622 for the use of the crane on merchandize "not previously rated". These rates were on copper, barrels of shot, wool bags, hides, and corn going outwards. In the next year rates were set for pot and sheet lead and dry Indian hides²²⁹ and in 1633 the pounder was given rates to take for barrels of tobacco, cochineal and indigo, and bags of St. Lucar wool and "wool out of Biskey".²³⁰

Over the whole period, it can be seen that the corporation's income from the harbour was affected at times by forces beyond its control. Growth in revenue could not be substantial until money was provided by the Crown for substantial improvements to the harbour in the 1580s. The extraordinary growth in trade in the seventeenth century was a purely temporary phenomenon, and a fortuitous one. At times war or privateering could make the Channel too dangerous for shipping and bring about a fall in revenue, as it seems to have done between 1624 and 1629, when harbour revenue fell from over £400 in both 1620-21 and 1621-22, to £256 in 1624-25, £190 in 1625-26 and, its lowest level in those years, £115 in 1626-27, rising in subsequent years to £193, £217 and £201. It recovered to almost £400 again in 1630-31, and rose steeply thereafter to £1251 in 1635.²³¹

The system of letting the droits to farm at two periods in the seventeenth century for an amount of money agreed in advance indicates certain changes in civic administration. It obviously gave the corporation greater opportunity to plan its finances in a difficult, post-war period. On both occasions, the country had just embarked on a period of peace with its neighbours, when income from the harbour might have been expected to rise. It seems possible that the corporation realised the task had become too complex or presented too many opportunities for corruption to entrust it to a virtually unpaid officer of the town, and that one of its freemen who had invested his money in

the venture might do better. On the first occasion, from 1604-5 until 1622-23, the total revenue from the harbour compared very favourably with what it had been in previous years, averaging £256 a year, compared with £103 in the comparable number of preceding years whose accounts have survived. Assuming that the farmer made some profit from the office, this perhaps suggests that the town's pounder had not always been successful in getting in dues, or at least in passing them on to the chamberlains. On the second, much briefer, occasion from 1630-31 until 1634-35, the "composition" trade makes meaningful comparisons impossible. The dramatic increase in trade seems to have stimulated the corporation into taking the dues back into their own hands, however, but in a more professional manner. They appointed two men to be Collector and Deputy Collector, and paid them a salary of £50 a year to be divided between them; the same two men continued in office until at least 1640. It has been shown that the corporation was opportunistic in imposing new dues when it could. At the same time, it became increasingly difficult to justify a traditional exaction such as that for the ferry boat, when so few merchants and factors used it, and it is perhaps not surprising that the company of the ferry boat had then to pay for their places and themselves compensate those whose places they had taken. In the new circumstances, the corporation seems to have found it more difficult to extract dues from its own freemen, especially as they formed associations with foreign merchants and shipowners. In 1627 it was decreed that because some owners and part-owners of ships lived abroad, they should all be examined to ensure that they paid strangers' rates for such dues as tonnage and sluisage.²³² That the resources of the corporation were strained by trying to tax new traffic can be seen in 1637-38 when they paid £10 to the waiters belonging to the King's farmers of the Customs for their help in getting in the town's dues.²³³

b) Fines and taxes on the inhabitants

In common with other towns, the corporation of Dover drew a varying proportion of its income from its own inhabitants. This income was derived in five main ways: from fines that regulated both mercantile and social behaviour, from direct taxes on trading, from special assessments or sesses, from payments for legal functions, and from rents. Fines and taxes were the source of income over which the corporation had most control and to some extent the introduction of new fines or the calling of a sess could be used to respond to changing economic and social circumstances in a way that harbour droits or Cinque Ports' tax advantages could not.

This was also the area of civic finance in which the town's oligarchy can be seen to have been in the most ambiguous position. In taxing trade they were taxing themselves. At the same time the fines they imposed through their regulation of trade and the market protected the interests of their own group.²³⁴ It seems, however, that this did not pose the problems then that it might today. Venture for the greatest profit and the pursuit of commercial enterprise seem to have sat comfortably with a man's civic responsibility for the regulation of commercial and social behaviour, possibly because only the acquisition of wealth through his commercial efforts gave him the status, power and time needed to maintain responsible office in the town. The ruling group made decrees regulating trades, and from time to time they themselves broke the regulations. Since they paid their fines in these circumstances, as other people did, it seems to have been perceived as acceptable behaviour. For the most part, the behaviour of the oligarchy suggests that fines on trading were treated as an additional tax on the successful trader, and a deterrent to the less successful, who were perceived as being, in any case, of less value to the commonalty of the town.

The double standards applied by the ruling group can be illustrated by two examples drawn from the relationship between brewers and victuallers. First, George Binge, whose status was sufficiently high for him to be mayor in 1596 and who survived in the ruling group to become the "most ancient jurat", or chief magistrate, in 1613 was, in his capacity as a brewer, fined several times in the early seventeenth century for selling beer to unlicensed victuallers, and had been committed to prison in 1595 for selling beer at the wrong price.²³⁵ Second, in 1603, the mayor and jurats considered the case of Edmund Powell, a blacksmith, who wished to be admitted to keep a victualling house. They would not consent because he was a "man of painful trade and the keeping of a victualling house might withdraw him from such labour to be an idle person."²³⁶ Some jurats objected to this decision, however. When it was put to the vote, the mayor, who was a sailor, and four jurats, three of whom were innkeepers and one a merchant, were against his being allowed to victual, but five jurats, all of whom were brewers and who might therefore be interested in another outlet for their beer, were in favour.

There is also some evidence to suggest that certain occupations were perceived as having inherently greater status than others and that these were the occupations from which the oligarchy were most likely to be drawn. The regulations they made tended to reinforce those distinctions. For example, chandlers had the advantage of butchers, who were obliged to sell their tallow only to specified chandlers of the town and at specified prices.²³⁷ Butchers who were not freemen had to pay 6d. per week to trade in the town at all.²³⁸ Similarly, victuallers were dealt with on the whole less favourably than brewers or bakers; for example by being obliged to buy their bread from bakers rather than baking it themselves, or by the rule that victuallers who brewed ale should sell no beer and vice versa.²³⁹

The treatment of victuallers also demonstrates how the collection of fines and taxes was one of a number of ways in which the ruling group exercised social as well as commercial control over traders in the town. The mere fact of licensing victuallers gave the magistrates a measure of control over them, which they were able to use when they felt they needed to: it will be shown below, for example, that from about 1607 the number of prosecutions and fines for tippling without a licence increased greatly.²⁴⁰ The mere act of assessment of individuals at times when special sesses were called must have given the sissors, appointed by the ruling group, access to or at least some means of calculating the financial resources and social circumstances of individual inhabitants.

The setting of fines, sometimes in line with royal proclamations, was also used as a quick way of getting in money in response to emergencies such as poor harvests, as when maltmakers were fined £20 for converting grain into malt between May and September in 1593, a decision rescinded, however, in 1597, because "it was prejudicial to the maltmakers and other traders of this town."²⁴¹ Thus responsibility for the poor in a time of dearth gave way as soon as possible to the resumption of normal practice - the protection of profitable enterprise for the wealthier inhabitants of the town. It is against this normative behaviour by the ruling group that any analysis of fines and taxes must be placed, since their collection cannot be seen as a simple economic indicator.

Fines for offences against the town's statutes

These fines are examined first because they show changes over time in the corporation's attempts to regulate both the mercantile and social behaviour of the town's inhabitants. The numbers and kinds of offences are dealt with in more detail below.²⁴² Yet the manner in which the fines were recorded in the accounts in itself perhaps illustrates

changing perceptions of the need for civic regulation. From the beginning of the period until 1545 fines for offences against the corporation's statutes and decrees are recorded in the receipts under a number of separate headings. The most consistent of these, appearing in almost every year, concerned violence against the person, usually called "frays" or "frays and effusions of blood" until 1538 when it became "bloodwipes".²⁴³ In some years fines were also recorded under other specific headings: "scolding,"²⁴⁴ "offences against the assize of bread,"²⁴⁵ "bad beer brewed,"²⁴⁶ "hackneyemen hiring horses against the statute,"²⁴⁷ "forestalling,"²⁴⁸ and the general heading of "offences against the statutes" or "disobeying the mayor's orders."²⁴⁹ Occasionally, some of these offences were recorded all together under the single heading of "frays". Nevertheless, the majority of such fines before 1545 were paid for violent behaviour rather than for trading offences.

A marked change in civic regulation seems to have been set in motion in about 1545, and presumably indicates a response to increasing numbers of orders concerning economic and social control coming from the government. In that year fines against the statutes were recorded under six separate heads.²⁵⁰ Two of these, which had not been mentioned before, became commonplace offences thereafter: "evil rule", which included playing dice and cards at table, and "casting filth in the brook", which became one of a number of offences against public hygiene that were frequently fined. From the following year all the offences against the town's statutes were gathered together under one head in the accounts.²⁵¹ This suggests that, in their attempt to strengthen their control over the town and bring improvements to it, the ruling group now perceived both social and trading offences to fall into the area of disobedience to their rule. A marked rise in the number and nature of offences susceptible to fines began in the Edwardian and continued into

the Marian period, peaking in 1551 when a total of 131 fines were paid: for trading offences such as forestalling and breaking the assize, for newly-enforced social offences such as card-playing and dicing, and for the normal offences of disobedience and violent affrays. Table 1:9 below sets out decennial averages of the amounts of money received by the corporation in fines against its statutes, and shows the sudden rise in the mid-sixteenth century.

Table 1:9 Fines for offences against the town's statutes 1509-1635
Decennial averages

	£	s.	d.		£	s.	d.
1509-18	2	2	3	1579-88	9	7	1
1519-28	1	17	7	1589-98 ?	17	0	11
1539-48	2	12	6	99-1608	14	8	10
1549-58	17	18	8	1609-18	23	3	6
1559-68	10	15	9	1619-28	29	9	0
1569-78	6	1	8	1629-35	17	18	2 (seven years)

Source: Annual Receipts in BL Additional Ms 29618, CKS Dover Town Accounts, 1546-1558, 1558-1581, 1581-1603, 1603-1626, 1626-1649

Note: The figures for the decade 1589-98 are speculative, as there are no accounts for five years out of the ten. Years run from September to September.

The table also indicates a drop in the number of fines collected in the 1560s and 1570s. This will be shown to be only one of several sources of revenue taken from the inhabitants of the town that declined during those years. The majority of the fines collected in the early 1560s were once again for violent behaviour, and in a number of cases the violent incidents involved Frenchmen or Flemings, which may have been a result of an influx of strangers to the town during and following the civil war in France in 1562, and the consequent outbreak of privateering in the Channel.²⁵²

Fines in the 1580s suggest that there was a preoccupation with the regulation of the market, and this is in line with the setting up of corporations in 1582,²⁵³ and with an order of the common council of August 1584 that because of the number of "poor occupiers" resorting to the town, no foreigner coming to live there should either set up shop or

take up any trade without becoming a freeman.²⁵⁴ The impression that increasing numbers of poor were coming to live in the town and that the ruling group were increasingly concerned to exercise firm control over its inhabitants is reinforced by a series of decrees at this period, which ensured, for example, that butchers sold their tallow to the town, that grain merchants supplied the market first, that hackney-men always provided townsmen with a horse if they had one in a field and that waggoners did not defraud the town of duty by selling to outsiders.²⁵⁵ In 1586 the town instituted Sandwich's brokerage system, to ensure an even tighter control over the market.²⁵⁶ A Canterbury cooper was not allowed to work for himself but only as a journeyman under a Dover cooper and in 1583 Thomas Whiting, the town sergeant, who was himself a victualler, had to warn six victuallers "of the poorer sort" not to take in or sell beer, and one of them to close up his back gate.²⁵⁷ At the same time the usual fines paid by those who traded on Sunday, which had first appeared in 1558, were now joined by fines on those who absented themselves from divine service, particularly on those who spent that time in victualling houses or idle amusements. These fines began to be collected in 1586.²⁵⁸ Thus the ruling group in the 1580s seems to have been determined to protect its freemen in the market, provide food for the poor and to establish Sabbatarianism in the town.

It is unfortunate that the evidence from the 1590s is too scanty to be susceptible to analysis. The steep rise in fines in the seventeenth century can, however, be related to cases brought before the bench, as there is good evidence for these for all years except 1625-1630.²⁵⁹ The rise in the number and amount of fines was partly a function of a more complex society with a greater spread of economic activity. As the seventeenth century progressed and trading activity increased, Dover made more decrees to regulate the safety of shipping in the harbour, offences against which were penalized.²⁶⁰ The corporation took fines

from shipmasters for supplying them with certain certificates that were demanded by central authority, for example to swear to the ownership of their ships in an attempt to demonstrate to the customs authorities that at least one owner was English or, at times of infection, to certify that their crews were in good health after a foreign voyage.²⁶¹ The corporation also took fines for granting its own certificates of inhabitation in the town to shipmasters and merchants from other countries.²⁶² At times of infection there were increasing numbers of regulations to prevent its spread, and consequent fines for breaking them.²⁶³ There were many more fines on people living unlawfully in the town and on those who harboured them, although the numbers of vagrants who came before the bench did not, of course, pay fines.²⁶⁴ Of all occupational groups subject to fines, illegal victuallers were those most often before the courts.

Nevertheless, in the early seventeenth century, for all the possibilities of offending against decrees and statutes relating to trading, occupation and hygiene, by far the greatest number of fines were related to deviant social behaviour, including violence. The evidence is dealt with in more detail below, but it is clear that much of the violent behaviour was connected with drinking and that, as has already been shown, oligarchic brewers continued to supply unlicensed victuallers.²⁶⁵

Taxes on trading - wine excise

One of the most consistently collected taxes on trading was the excise of wine, called "maltot vini" in the earlier sixteenth century.²⁶⁶

This seems to have been a tax paid on the wine delivered to the houses of vintners and innkeepers for resale. The accounts of 1541-42 call it "cyse of wine cellared into Mr. Bowles, Mr. Elam..."etc.²⁶⁷ and the common council instructed a town porter in 1602 "to take especial notice

and make certificate every fifteen days what wine and what sort of wine is cellared in the town to the intent to be sold again."²⁶⁸

Unfortunately it is difficult to derive much information from the figures in the accounts; the amounts of money entered are often deleted, or sometimes names are listed and no amounts entered against them. It is clear from lists of "old debts" that wine excise was often paid in arrears,²⁶⁹ and it seems possible that certain innkeepers were sometimes excused it in return for other services, such as providing civic meals.²⁷⁰ The only clue to the sale of this wine outside Dover comes in a complaint that the porters of Dover overcharged for "taking wines out of cellars and lading them in waggons for vintners of Canterbury and other places" in 1614.²⁷¹

The town accounts of four separate and widely-spaced years give figures both for the amount of wine cellared by innkeepers and the amount of excise paid and this enables a calculation to be made about the amount paid in excise for specific volumes of wine in those years. The information is set out in Table 1:10. Table 1:11 then gives the decennial averages of amounts of money paid in wine excise through the whole period.

Table 1:10 Wine excise - information for four years

Date	amount paid per hogshead	total volume of wine cellared (in gallons)
1511-12	Gascon 6d.	8,831
	Malmsey 8d.	
1547-48	small wine 6d.	1,109
	Malmsey 8d.	
	Rhenish 12d.	
1609-10	small wine 6d.	12,915
	great wine 8d.	
1639-40	small wine 6d.	46,746
	great wine 8d.	

Sources: Dover Chamberlains' accounts BL AM 29618; CKS Dover Town Accounts 1546-1558, 1603-1626, 1626-1649, Receipts.

Note: This table has been derived from the source by applying the measure: 2 barrels=1 hogshead or 63 old gallons; 2 hogsheads=1 pipe or butt; 2 butts=1 tun.

Table 1:11 Decennial averages of wine excise paid

Date	Average excise		
	£.	s.	d.
1509-1518	2	0	11
1519-1528	1	6	2
1529-1538	0	16	8
1539-1548	5	1	3
1549-1558	4	16	1
1559-1568	2	3	3
1569-1578	1	19	9
1579-1588	1	19	5
1589-1598	?	1	13
1599-1608	3	1	3
1609-1618	1	5	11
1619-1628	2	12	3
six year average:			
1629-1634	6	10	0

Source: BL Additional Ms 29618; CKS Dover Town Accounts 1546-58, 1558-1581, 1581-1603, 1603-1626, 1626-1649, Receipts.

Notes: No amounts are given for the years 1622-24, 1627-28 or 1635-36
Years begin in September.

The amount promptly paid represents the minimum of wine actually delivered. Much wine excise is concealed in the accounts under the heading "old debts paid."

Table 1:10 suggests that the amount of excise paid per hogshead remained stable throughout the period, therefore the figures given in Table 1:11 should at least reflect the comparative volume of wine cellared in the town in decades. The fall in the amount paid after the fall of Calais in 1558 is not surprising, but it is difficult to account for the rise between 1539 and 1558, which was particularly marked in 1549-50 (over £9) and 1556-7 (£8). A case that came before the town court in 1544 indicates that two London merchants were buying wines in the port of Dover rather than in London in that year.²⁷² That may have been indicative of a general trend, but it seems more likely that the rise resulted simply from more trading in the town and more zealous collection at that period, since a similar trend can be seen in the collection of dues on brewers and butchers.²⁷³ Since the excise was frequently paid a year or two in arrears, recovery from periods of war, when imports of French and Spanish wine ceased, appears more sluggish in

the accounts than it probably was.

Taxes on trading - foreign victuallers drawing beer

The amounts paid by "foreign victuallers drawing beer" suggest that there was a substantial increase in the consumption of beer over the period. But the demand by the corporation for the payment of this tax illustrates the possibility of using certain taxes as a flexible response to financial difficulties. In the period under review this tax was first paid in 1551,²⁷⁴ and after that usually resulted in a modest amount, rising above £2 only four times before 1580.²⁷⁵ It was not paid at all between 1561 and 1566. From 1580 until 1607 the amount was more substantial, fluctuating between £3 and just over £5; there was no payment between 1608 and 1612, and then payments of between 8s. and £2.10s. until 1617. In 1618 the amount suddenly leapt to £18.4s 0d.²⁷⁶ The reason for this increase can be found in a statement by the common council in 1618:

"Forasmuch as trade in this town is at this present very much decreased, and this corporation indebted, and having little means to rear the same, and being desirous to revive some ancient decrees of this town, having caused search to be made among the records ... it appears that in the time of Henry VI all victuallers of the town should pay 2d. of every barrel of beer that they send utter or put to sale in their houses, and afterward the same was omitted to be taken of freemen victuallers, and only collected of the foreigners until now. Therefore the decree is revived...from henceforth all victuallers of this town, being freemen, shall pay for every barrel of beer that they shall utter and put to sale 2d., and every foreigner 4d..."²⁷⁷

To avoid concealment all brewers were to deliver in writing every third Saturday the names of all the victuallers to whom they had sold beer, and the number of barrels sold. This was to be written into the conditions of recognizance for victuallers and innkeepers in the future.²⁷⁸

The corporation were thus able to find a new source of income while appealing to ancient authority and the traditions of the town. The collection of the tax at this point also illustrates another persistent

feature of civic finance: the collection of a tax was often most successful when it had just been introduced. From £18.4s.0d. in 1618, the amount fell to £15.19s.1d. in the following year. There are no figures at all for this tax from 1623 until 1630, when it was again between £15 and £16.²⁷⁹ From 1630 until 1635 the average amount paid was £16.14s.4d. At an average payment of 3d. per barrel this represents 1337.3 barrels delivered in a year, or 48,143 gallons. This presumably excluded beer delivered illegally to unlicensed victuallers. As with the wine excise, the tax on beer was often paid late, so the figure given actually leads to an underestimate of volume delivered. The beer thus taxed was not all consumed on licensed premises. In 1590, following complaints that innholders or their tapsters and drawers were refusing to sell beer out of their houses by the five-hooped pot, they were ordered to do so on pain of being fined.²⁸⁰

Taxes on trading - short-lived fines

Another fine received sporadically was that on foreign butchers. In 1542-43, £1.18s.0d was received "for butchers for occupying", presumably for occupying a place in the market.²⁸¹ In 1545, £4.0s.0d. - at 2s. 8d. per week - was collected from "foreign butchers,"²⁸² after which it averaged £2.15s.1d. a year until it stopped in 1553-54. It was not paid again until 1581, when £1.12s.0d. was collected, rising to £3.10s.4d. in the following year.²⁸³ Then in April 1583 the common council decreed that butchers who were not freemen must pay 6d. a week to the chamber of Dover; this was associated with a decree that all butchers must sell all their tallow to the town, which suggests that as well as increasing their income, the corporation wanted a greater measure of control over butchers, and that the payment was in effect a licence to foreign butchers to operate in the town.²⁸⁴

Once again, the payment of the fine rose following the decree, from

£3.10s.4d. in 1582 to £6.9s.9d in 1583-84, only to fall again to £5.17s.3d. in the following year, and then to £2.13s.7d in 1585-86.²⁸⁵ It never rose above a maximum of £4.10s.6d. (paid in 1604-05) thereafter, falling as low as 13s.0d. in 1602-03, 10s.0d. in 1614-15 and 2s.0d. in 1618-19, after which it ceased.²⁸⁶ Since the payments for the fair and market, which had been in abeyance since 1545 (apart from some trivial amounts included in the rents in the mid-sixteenth century), began to be listed again in the early seventeenth century, and increased slightly at the time when the foreign butchers' fine ceased, it is just possible that they began to pay for their standing in the market again as they had done earlier in the sixteenth century.²⁸⁷

The setting up of "corporations" or "fellowships" seems to have created another opportunity for civic fiscal experiment. In March, 1553, four "fellowships" were set up and expected to pay varying amounts to the town annually: the hackneymen, 40s., the tailors and drapers, 40s., the shoemakers, 26s.8d., and the merchants and grocers 20s; although an immediately subsequent memorandum altered the mercers' and grocers' payment to 10s. and added the fellowship of tilers and bricklayers - to pay 10s. - to the list.²⁸⁸ In the fiscal year 1552-53 half the required amounts were entered into the receipts as having been paid, properly, for half a year, and the full amount was paid in 1553-54.²⁸⁹ Then no further payments of this kind were made until the 1580s. It is possible that there was resistance to the imposition of these payments yet, as has already been noted, this was by no means the only payment to have fallen into abeyance in the 1560s and 70s.

In January, 1582, grants of corporation were made to three "fellowships" and set out in detail in the records of the common council.²⁹⁰ They were the shoemakers, including other leather workers, the tailors and drapers, and the mercers and grocers. In that year they paid a total of £2.13s.4d. to the corporation - 20s. each from the shoemakers and

tailors and 13s.4d. from the mercers/grocers.²⁹¹ This payment was made consistently, with occasional payments in arrears, until 1594-95. In that year only the shoemakers paid their 20s.²⁹² The two other fellowships paid only once again in the whole period - in 1598-99. The mayor that year was Jeremy Garrett, who was accused by his fellow jurats of fraudulent accounting.²⁹³ It is therefore possible that the resurrection of this payment was one symptom of friction between him and others in the ruling group. Since the other fellowships must have existed until that date at least, it seems possible that certain members of the oligarchy, such as John Skeith "linen draper" who was a jurat from 1583-1603, and mayor in 1594-95,²⁹⁴ and William Nethersole, a grocer, who became mayor in 1603-04²⁹⁵ might have been able to persuade their fellow jurats to exempt their fellowships from payment. The inferior position of shoemakers, none of whom was ever included among the oligarchy at this date, was thus reinforced. If this is true, it suggests that there were divisions among the ruling group that ran counter to the notion of a mutually supportive freeman body.

Some time after 1598-99 the two fellowships of the tailors and mercers must have faded away because, in 1610, men from a larger agglomeration of occupations, including woollen-drapers, tailors, mercers and tallow-chandlers, made suit to be admitted to a "fellowship or corporation".²⁹⁶ This was seen as likely to be "of some prejudice to the town", but they were allowed to make a formal petition in 1617, as long as it was "at their own charge."²⁹⁷ The shoemakers, with their duty to control the quality of leather by appointing searchers and sealers annually, seem to have flourished as a company, and leased a room over Biggin Gate for 21 years in 1636.²⁹⁸

A final example of a short-lived, opportunist tax on trading, is the tax on "strangers' cloths" that lasted for only one year. In 1562, owing to its "great decay and poverty", Dover sought a licence from the Queen for

30 households of Dutchmen to inhabit and "somewhat amend the state of the town."²⁹⁹ In the accounts of 1569 there is a figure of 7s.10d "received of strangers dwelling in this town for making of sailcloths and other mokades and cloths", including sackletts and grograyne.³⁰⁰ In the following year there is a blank against the entry "receipts of strangers dwelling in the town for the stalling of sack cloths and mokades". It seems likely that the strangers had moved on to Sandwich or Canterbury.

The assessment of foreigners

The most comprehensive tax on individuals imposed by the corporation must have been the "foreigners' assessment." This tax appears to have changed its character over the years. At the beginning of the Henrician period it seems to have been a simple tax on trading, which may have been paid by freemen traders as well as foreigners, since it is simply headed "maltot de Southbroke" and "maltot de Eastbroke" in 1509 and includes some identifiable freemen.³⁰¹ Until 1526-27 there was also a maltote on ships and seamen, which may have been a complementary trading tax on masters of ships. Certainly none of them appears in the maltote of 1509 just mentioned.³⁰²

In 1510-11 the tax was called a maltote on internal and foreign workmen,³⁰³ and in 1515-16 was entered under two headings: "maltot of artificers and foreigners" and "maltot of aliens".³⁰⁴ The description "maltot of aliens and foreigners" persisted until 1538 when the tax was simply described as "the foreign maltot".³⁰⁵ In 1542 there was a special sess on foreigners to help pay for sending some soldiers to France, and there were separate maltotes that year on butchers, brewers and bakers. From 1544 the amount once again became the "foreigners' maltot."³⁰⁶ The collection of the tax in two halves, returning more from Southbrook - the market area - and less from Eastbrook -

predominantly a seafaring area at that time - persisted until 1559-60, when its payment was recorded in wards.³⁰⁷ It was simply presented as one already collected sum thereafter.

The receipts of 1555 show the item "Received of the foreigners of their sess this present year, late called a malted (sic) of so many of them as be crossed..."³⁰⁸ In that year most were crossed. There is no doubt that after this the tax was simply a sess on foreigners, that is non-freemen. There is evidence to suggest that it was a somewhat flexible and selective sess, frequently paid in arrears, and sometimes not paid at all.³⁰⁹ It could also be used punitively: for example, in 1607, the common council considered what course might be taken to avoid the great number of maltsters and corn buyers in Dover "whereof some are unmarried..and, if by advice of Counsel there may not be Reformation had, then to consider such foreigners' assessment as may be laid upon such of them as be not freemen of this town."³¹⁰

From 1607 lists of foreigners and, sometimes, the amount they were assessed at begin to appear in the accounts.³¹¹ If the crosses against the names really did represent payment, then it can be seen that as few as 20% of foreigners were paying this tax on time by the late 1620s. Checks of the people who paid regularly suggest that many of them came to the town intending to stay and become freemen, and that their regular payment of the foreigners' sess was a step towards this.³¹² In the early seventeenth century, the Register of Freemen shows that an amount was sometimes deducted from a man's payment for freedom in recognition of the fact that he had already contributed much to the town as a foreigner,³¹³ although it was decreed in 1625 that from that time no one might pay less than £5.³¹⁴ An earlier example of such compensation made to a new freeman occurred when William Chaundler, a butcher, paid his 9s. arrears of maltote in 1596, then in August 1597 became free by the payment of £5 and had 50s. remitted "for the great charge he has

paid to the town since he has lived there as a foreigner".³¹⁵

Among those foreigners who paid their assessment regularly was the merchant James Hughessen senior, who chose to live outside the town while trading from it, and who could clearly well afford to pay his assessment of 20s. - the highest in most years.³¹⁶ Certain wealthy merchants who were strangers also paid foreigners' cess regularly, as though such payment gave them the normal privileges of freedom.³¹⁷ In fact at least one of them, Daniel Porten, became a freeman of the town, 40s. of his £5 redemption being returned because it was thought "he would bring benefit to the town by trade."³¹⁸

The corporation pursued those refusers it thought able to pay. William Hannington, gentleman, was in dispute with the town for a number of years and consequently refused to pay any sess.³¹⁹ By 1616, when he at last agreed to submit himself to a yearly assessment, he owed 50s. foreigners' sess and 6s. for a sess to repair the Pent Wall. In return for a speedy payment of 40s. the other 16s. was remitted; his willingness to pay apparently resulted from a distraint taken of his goods.³²⁰

The apparent complexities of collecting the foreigners' assessment from a more diverse population is suggested by a decision taken by the common council in 1608 that "in future when the foreigners' assessment is made, the mayor and four chamberlains shall not present the same as they formerly have done, but ... the mayor shall send for two jurats and four commoners to join with them to effect it."³²¹ The assessment was not to be finished without the full number of at least seven present. In 1620 it was agreed that

"some inhabitants having been in this year and several years past taxed and assessed in sundry small sums as foreigners, and the sergeant finding many of them very poor and unable to pay ... they shall be called before the mayor and jurats and if found unable to pay such arrears as remain, then either to remit or mitigate the same."³²²

It can be seen from the lists of the 1620s that although many

assessments rose over those years, others were cut by as much as half from one year to the next, after which payment usually stopped completely.³²³

Thus this tax seems to have begun as a trading maltote, become a tax on foreigners and aliens, and then gradually to have become a tax on trading for those who could afford to pay it - that is those who came to the town to trade with the intention of becoming freemen, and also strangers who intended to trade in the town, with or without the advantages of freedom. In the latter cases, then, it retained its earlier function of being a tax on individual aliens.

Table 1:12 Foreigners' maltote: distribution of assessments 1509-1627

Amount	1509	1550	1555	1607	1627
2d.	6	3	2	1	2
3d.	0	0	0	7	7
4d.	44	40	39	1	6
6d.	13	7	11	32	56
8d.	27	17	40	7	0
1s.0d.	19	15	30	22	29
1s.4d.	3	5	4	2	0
1s.6d.	0	1	0	4	7
1s.8d.	5	5	2	1	0
2s.0d.	2	7	6	11	11
2s.4d.	0	1	0	0	0
2s.6d.	0	1	1	8	7
2s.8d.	2	0	1	0	0
3s.0d.	0	1	1	6	2
3s.4d.	1	3	0	7	0
3s.6d.	0	0	0	1	1
4s.0d.	1	3	1	5	5
4s.6d.	0	0	0	1	0
5s.0d.	1	1	4	5	0
6s.0d.	0	0	0	1	3
6s.6d.	0	0	0	0	1
6s.8d.	0	0	0	3	1
7s.9d.	1	0	0	0	0
8s.0d.	0	0	0	0	3
9s.8d.	0	0	0	1	0
10s.0d.	1	1	0	1	3
11s.0d.	1	0	0	0	0
13s.4d.	0	0	0	3	0
20s.0d.	0	0	0	0	2
Total nos. assessed	127	111	141	130	146

Sources: BL Additional Ms 29618, 1509-10; CKS Dover Town Accounts 1546-58, 1603-26, 1626-49, Receipts of foreigners' maltote.

Certain years in the accounts give details of the assessments made on individuals; Table 1:12 has been drawn up from that information in an attempt to discover changes in the distribution of assessments over the period. It seems to show remarkably little change in a time of high inflation. The average assessment - expressed in decimals of a penny - was 11.4d. in 1509, 12.8d. in 1550, 10.6d. in 1555, 25.5d. in 1607 and 21.7d. in 1627, but the amount most often paid moved only from 4d. in the earlier years to 6d. in the seventeenth century, while the range of payments widened considerably. Over 6% of foreigners were assessed at below 4d. in 1607 and 1627, compared with only 4.6%, 2.7% and 1.4% in the earlier years. The figures seem to suggest that there was a greater range of wealth and an increasing disparity between rich and poor as the period progressed, rather than a general rise in wealth in line with inflation.

Special sesses

Special sesses were the corporation's response to emergencies. It was agreed in 1551 that the ordinary freeman's cess should cease "until such time required and needful."³²⁴ Those sesses that were taken for ship service and other royal demands are dealt with elsewhere.³²⁵ Freeman's sesses proved to be "needful" on a number of occasions, and the sum normally raised was £20. The proceedings of the common council note that in 1537 a half-sess, and the foreigners' sess, were needed to pay the Burgess to Parliament.³²⁶ In 1542 there was a sess of freemen "to the full sum of £20" to pay a debt owed by the town.³²⁷ In 1551 there was a common freeman sess "to pay Mr. Burley his debt."³²⁸ Apart from these sesses, raised to pay individuals for services performed for the town, a freeman's sess was also raised in 1553-4 and 1557-8.³²⁹

By the 1580s, when improvements to the harbour made increasing demands on the physical fabric of the town, and threats of invasion called for

defensive measures, special sesses were needed more frequently. In 1587 there was a general sess of all inhabitants "to the sum of £40 towards making a new dike under the Castle Reere".³³⁰ There is a list of assessments, which amounts only to £23.4s.8d., so the foreigners were presumably assessed separately. In June, 1590, a "benevolence" was taken of "persons well disposed" towards the repairing and enlarging of Penniless Bench.³³¹ This had originally been a pavement called "the Bench" near the sea; it was at the junction of Bench Street, which lead inland to the town from the sea, and the two streets running east and west along the shore.³³² It was now said to be "ruinous and in great decay", and was to be reinforced and supplied with a gun platform for defensive purposes.³³³ The benevolence proved not to raise sufficient money, so a sess of £80 was imposed on all inhabitants.³³⁴

The town's major problem, the constant silting up of the harbour by drifting shingle, brought the need for a number of sesses from the 1590s onwards. In 1593 the chamberlains were instructed to pay people to expel the beach, and then to take a sess immediately after the work had been done, in order to repay themselves. Two of them refused to do it.³³⁵ The goods of those who refused to pay were to be distrained, and sold within three days.

In order to fortify the town, in 1596 there was a sess of the "number of persons every inhabitant in this town shall find one day in every week towards the cutting out of the walls at the long walls end and towards making a trench or dike above it." In the same year, it was ordered that all outstanding sesses should be gathered; if they proved insufficient to pay the charges for fortifying the town, then a new sess should be made to defray those charges and "to discharge all other the town's debts."³³⁶

Once again in 1602, a £20 sess was called for from all inhabitants to expel the beach, and warrant was given to the town sergeant to levy the

sum from the goods and chattels of everyone refusing to pay. This time, the constables were ordered to help collect the sess, and in January, 1603, the town sergeant was told to levy the remainder of the assessment by "distress and sale of goods."³³⁷ Amounts of money paid by inhabitants towards expelling the beach must have gone through a separate account, as the full sums never seem to appear in the town accounts.

In 1605 the common council cancelled a decree made earlier that year that the corporation should pay for the expelling of the beach, provided the mayor could summon people to help in an emergency, and called instead for a sess of £20 from "all inhabitants of ability". Refusers were to go to prison until they paid.³³⁸ Yet another sess, of £15, was called for in February 1607 for the same purpose; on this occasion the town sergeant died while still in possession of £3.13s.1d. of the money. His widow, because of her poverty, was to have half the sum back but only after she had handed it over to the corporation.³³⁹ In 1610 the corporation decided, until further notice, to pay for expelling the beach out of the money remaining in the town box rather than by raising yet another sess on the inhabitants.³⁴⁰ Nevertheless when the Pent wall³⁴¹ was damaged by storms in 1612 they were forced to take a general sess, for 100 marks, of all inhabitants. During this sess the town sergeant lost the sess book, and the assessors had to recreate it to discover who had already paid.³⁴²

When it is remembered that during this period greater sums were being demanded to pay for ship money,³⁴³ and that the town was suffering, with others, from dearth and illness, it becomes easier to understand why the corporation handed over their rights in the harbour to the Crown in 1606, in exchange for what they hoped would be its continued maintenance. The situation cannot have been uncommon in this period of expansion that a town, having had a project financed by the Crown, could

not thereafter afford to maintain it from its own resources, and was forced to lose some of its liberties in exchange for continued help.

Fines for opening shops

In spite of its relative unimportance to the corporation in fiscal terms, this fine has some interest for the urban historian because it gives some information about a largely unrecorded group of people: it seems to have been a fine paid by foreigners, that is non-freemen, when they opened shops in the town. This is not explicitly stated in the records, but the very small numbers of people paying the fine indicates that it cannot have been a fine on the normal trading of freemen. The freeman register for the years 1601-1623 and 1627-1721, which incorporates a list of existing freemen in 1601,³⁴⁴ has enabled a comparison to be made of the names of those paying the fines for opening shops, where they are given, with the names of freeman entrants in the seventeenth century. This has established that those paying the fine were not freemen at the time when they paid it. Some men became free within months of paying the fine,³⁴⁵ others took some years to become freemen,³⁴⁶ but the majority of those paying the fine in the period when they can be checked against the freeman's list never became free at all.

This fine brought in very little money to the corporation - under £1 and, frequently, under 10s. a year until 1540, and seldom much more than £1 until the seventeenth century, except in 1549 when it rose to just over £3 and in 1559 and 1564 when it was almost £2. Even in the early seventeenth century it rose to over £3 only once - in 1626 - usually ranging between £1 and £2, falling to below 10s. in 1604 and 1624.

It is difficult to draw any useful economic conclusions from the amounts paid for this fine, partly because the information given is inconsistent - sometimes consisting simply of a total amount of money, sometimes

including names, sometimes occupations, and sometimes both, with no one year recording all the possible information. A further problem is that during the sixteenth century the individual payments seem not to have been standard amounts, even when allowance is made for payment in instalments; neither were they paid for precisely the same thing. For example, in 1511 one smith paid 4d. and another 4s., and in 1549 three butchers paid 2s., 6s.8d., and 8s. respectively,³⁴⁷ In 1556 amounts paid ranged from 1s.8d. to 5s.³⁴⁸ These were all the total amounts demanded, although they were frequently actually paid in small instalments. In the sixteenth century the payment of the fine seems not necessarily to have implied the ownership of a shop, since in 1588 "the carpenter that works in Dowells shop" paid 4s.6d. "for opening of his windows".³⁴⁹ On two occasions brewers paid the fine; one paid 6s.8d. in 1514 "to set up in brewing beer", and another paid 13s.4d. in 1565 as "a brewer at the beginning."³⁵⁰ Also in 1565 a baker paid 13s.4d. "for opening a shop and setting up" and in 1586 William Chaundler, a butcher, paid 10s. "for opening his shop and his admittance thereto."³⁵¹ These four fines - the only ones of the kind specifically recorded - seem to have been paid for entering an occupation rather than opening a shop, and since they are larger than average they naturally inflate the receipts for those years.

There is other evidence to suggest that the fine might have been used as a catch-all fine on legitimate traders who nevertheless did not fit into the normal categories. It was paid, for example, by some women who entered into trade on their own account. Katherine Springer, the widow of a stranger, in 1581 paid a fine of £1, together with 30s. to the fellowship of mercers and linen drapers, both of which sums were entered under the head of "Fines for opening shops".³⁵² In 1617 a "Dutchman" paid for his wife to sell butter and small wares.³⁵³ Also in the early seventeenth century, widows Colley and Daniels paid the fine.³⁵⁴ Both

these women had been victuallers during their husbands' life-times,³⁵⁵ so the assumption might be that women had to pay to start up in trade, even as victuallers, although no male victuallers paid this particular fine. It seems also to have been used at times as a fine on outsiders trading in the town. In 1559 the three shoemakers who paid 3s.4d. each were from Folkestone and Elham, and the two weavers, who paid the small fines of 4d. and 12d. each in 1565 might well have been Protestant refugees from the near Continent.³⁵⁶ A Flemish tanner paid in 1584, during the period when the corporation seems otherwise to have enforced its decree of 1584 that no foreigner was to set up shop without becoming a freeman.³⁵⁷

No record exists of the rescinding of the 1584 decree, but the fact that payments were made again under the heading of "opening shops" from 1586 suggests that it probably fell into abeyance, and that the oligarchy's fear that too many foreigners were entering the town - the reason given for making the decree - had given way to a more realistic assessment of the need for trade. Only two payments were recorded between 1596 and 1599, however, which suggests that the corporation's difficulties in raising money at that period might have reflected a more general lack of trading and mercantile initiative during that period. Regular payments of just over £1 a year began again in 1599.

From 1605 the fine seems to have become a consistent one of 6s.8d. per shop, and from that date it was paid as one sum, rather than in instalments. During the first few years of this new regime, some adjustments were made, however, for certain individuals according to their ability to pay. In two cases, Roger White in 1603, and Henry Atkins in 1605, an amount was abated "in respect of his poverty".³⁵⁸ Both these men were clearly felt to be deserving cases, well known to the corporation. In the year following the payment of the fine each man became free, the former by marriage and the latter by birth.³⁵⁹ Thomas

Poper had the whole 6s.8d. remitted in 1607-08 because he took a bastard child, an expense on the town, as his apprentice. There were no further abatements after 1607 and the initial fine of 6s.8d. seems to have become an accepted formality for foreigners who opened shops in Dover.

Table 1:13 Numbers of foreigners setting up shop in Dover 1601-1635

1601	5	1613	5	1625	3
1602	3	1614	5	1626	10
1603	5	1615	3	1627	3
1604	1	1616	3	1628	3
1605	8	1617	9	1629	4
1606	4	1618	3	1630	4
1607	7	1619	4	1631	8
1608	6	1620	7	1632	3
1609	3	1621	8	1633	7
1610	5	1622	no record	1634	5
1611	8	1623	1	1635	5
1612	6	1624	7	Total	171

Source: CKS Dover Town Accounts 1581-1603, 1603-1626, 1626-1649, Receipts for opening shops.

Note: Years run from September to September

Table 1:14 Occupations of foreigners setting up shops 1601-35

FOOD		CLOTHING		DISTRIBUTIVE	
butchers	12	shoemakers	20	merciers	10
bakers	6	tailors	17	grocers	6
female victs.	2	collar-makers	4	chandlers	2
cook	1	haberdashers	4	small-wares	3
		glovers	3	butter/cheese/fish	3
		drapers	2	maltsters	1
	Total 21		Total 50		Total 24

WOODWORKERS		METALWORKERS		OTHER CRAFTS	
coopers	8	smiths	6	apothecaries	4
wheelwrights	2	pewterers/		barber/surgeons	2
turners	2	braziers	6	surgeons	1
shipcarpenters	2	cutlers	1	glaziers	2
joiners	1	armourers	1	sailmakers	2
	Total 15		Total 14	basketmakers	2
				dialmakers	1
				blockmakers	1
				saddlers	1
				weavers	1
				hemp-dressers	3
				Total	20

Total number of known occupations	144
Total number of unknown occupations	27
Total number of foreigners opening shops	171

Sources: see Table 1:13; CKS Register of Dover Freemen 1601-1671

The nature of the evidence does not allow a table to be made setting out the occupations of foreigners who chose to set up shops through the whole period as, in the sixteenth century, often no occupation was recorded for as many as half or more of the people paying the fine. On the basis of the occupations that were named, it seems reasonable to suggest that shops were opened most frequently, as would be expected, by butchers and bakers, tailors and leather workers, followed by mercers, grocers and chandlers. The seventeenth century accounts give more information, however, and the flat rate of 6s.8d. makes calculation straightforward. Tables 1:13 and 1:14 show the number of payments made in each year and the distribution of foreign shopkeepers among various occupations.

As it can be seen, an average of about five men a year were prepared to spend 6s.8d. on the chance of trading in the town without the advantages of being freemen, although some clearly did it in the knowledge that they had it in their power shortly to become free. The corporation, for its part, tolerated this, in spite of the reservations it had expressed in 1584. It would be interesting to know whether the fluctuations in numbers were in greater part the result of decisions made by the corporation or by the foreigners concerned. There is some evidence that numbers of such traders rose in years following years of high mortality, which might suggest that the corporation was willing to allow a greater number of unfree traders to set up in the town then.

Table 1:15 Burials in the parish of St. Mary's Dover in selected years

1602	70	1614	62	1623	86	1628	129
1603	102	1615	64	1624	128	1629	90
1604	64	1616	104	1625	264	1630	81
1605	57	1617	61	1626	99	1631	54

Source: CCA St. Mary's Parish Register

The number of burials in the parish of St. Mary's seldom rose above a maximum of 70 in "normal" years. The rise in the number of foreigners

setting up shops seem to have been unusually steep in 1605, 1617, 1624, 1626 and 1631. It can be seen from Table 1:15 that the numbers of burials in the parish of St. Mary's in the years just preceding those in which more foreigners than usual paid fines for setting up shops also rose above average. These are the only episodes of high mortality in that period, apart from the long and particularly savage one between 1634 and 1640, which happened to coincide with a time of exceptional trade in the town. It seems at least possible, therefore, that the corporation was more receptive to the establishment of non-free shopkeepers at times when normal trading had been affected by high mortality.

The table of occupations used by these men reinforces the impression that towns at this period must have had a surplus of poor shoemakers and tailors. Although most foreigners' occupations were not recorded in the sixteenth century, those that were fell chiefly into the broad categories of the food, clothing and distributive trades. Before 1600 the only exceptions to these categories were two smiths and a bit-maker, a cooper, a carpenter, a joiner, 4 barbers, 2 weavers, a painter and 2 glaziers, the first of the latter appearing in 1582. Foreigners set up in a slightly wider range of occupations in the seventeenth century, therefore, and the fact that some of them pursued comparatively heavily capitalized occupations - such as the pewterers and the ship's carpenter - perhaps suggests that the qualifications for freedom were more difficult to attain by that period, or felt to be less necessary.

Increased numbers of butchers, bakers, mercers and sellers of butter and cheese could be accounted for by the need to provision the large number of ships in the harbour and the Downs at that period, a trade that must have collapsed rapidly with the ending of international trading at Dover in the 1650s. The slightly wider spread of occupations might also suggest some demand for a greater variety of goods. In the seventeenth century also, certain sellers of small wares, who might normally have

been expected to be itinerant, seem to have had their presence in the town legitimized by the payment of this fine.³⁶⁰

In order to discover what became of foreigners who opened shops in the town, those who paid the fine in the twenty years between 1601 and 1621 were taken as a sample because the evidence is at its best then and it was also possible to make a comparison with the freeman's entry register. This has a break between December 1623 and February 1627, which means that the comparison cannot be completely reliable, however. Of a total of 100 men who paid the fine for opening shops in those years, only 33 became free, the majority of whom, 21, had set up their business in the first decade of those twenty years. 17 of the 32 who became free did so in the year in which they paid the fine for opening their shops. It may well have been that they had already been promised their freedom, but had to wait until the town's new year when freedoms were usually recorded.³⁶¹ Those who did not become free in the same year did so between 1 and 22 years later - although mostly within 6 years. 19 of the 33 became free by birth, marriage or apprenticeship, 6 by purchasing a freehold in the town and 5 by redemption or decree. It seems likely that freedom was considered as a possibility chiefly by those whose existing connections with the town made it both an inexpensive option and one likely to be acceptable to the authorities. The choice of marriage partner was clearly of great importance to an intending freeman.

It has been possible to trace the subsequent career of a few of those foreign shop-openers who never became free. Presumably the majority of them, who remain unrecorded, failed in business, moved on, died, or became part of the mass of unrecorded poor. A number of those who can be traced seem to have lived marginal lives both economically and socially. Two butchers, Robert Kennett - 1602 - and George Martin - 1603 - both became searchers of flesh a few years after paying to open their

shops.³⁶² This suggests that they might have achieved freedom by joining their corporation, without the fact having been recorded in the Register of Freeman. But by 1607 Robert Kennett had moved his shop to the new Pier area, and was therefore disbarred from trading, although he was given a few months' grace because of his great poverty.³⁶³ In 1609 he was imprisoned for killing flesh in Lent, and by 1610 he had become a unlicensed victualler, which he continued to be until at least 1617.³⁶⁴ George Martin continued as a butcher until his death in about 1621, but was in court six times before that, involved in minor offences, debt and defamation.³⁶⁵ A mercer, Edward Graunt -1607 - fell foul of the church courts by keeping a school without licence in 1611.³⁶⁶ John Pickering - 1620 - a tailor was in court four times within two years after opening his shop, which he seems to have shared with another tailor.³⁶⁷ A pewterer, Richard Harrison, who opened his shop in 1610, was still hanging on, probably in reduced circumstances in 1641, when he was described as "goodman Harrison, tinker" by a man who owed him money for lead.³⁶⁸

Two of these foreigners clearly found favour with the corporation and were able to supplement their income by achieving small offices. James Hilles -1610 - a hemp-dresser, became Keeper of the House of Correction in 1618, where he remained until 1622.³⁶⁹ William Lucas, a weaver who arrived in 1617, was still a weaver in 1622, but worked at the harbour sometimes, and in 1630 he was a sluice-keeper at the harbour.³⁷⁰ The evidence of inventories and testamentary accounts shows that at least seven others remained in their occupations and still had a shop and modest means at their time of death.³⁷¹

The evidence therefore suggests that it was possible to pursue a trade independently without becoming a freeman, but that the odds against doing so were very high. The corporation seems to have used this fine in some sense as a licensing fee to establish the right of certain non-

freemen to trade in the town, while registering their status. The fine was used at times to clarify the position of those, such as women or strangers, who might otherwise have been seen as irregular traders. Something like one third of these traders eventually became freemen; the majority of those had an acceptable status within the town through birth, or through marriage to the daughter of a freeman. It is possible that the corporation used this licensing system as a way of encouraging potentially successful independent traders and craftsmen into the town at times when it suited them to do so, allowing them to be on the margins of the economic establishment until they could prove themselves sufficiently substantial to become freemen, and interested in doing so.

Freemen's redemptions

Entry to freeman status was an important step for the individual inhabitant, and the acquisition of substantial freemen was vital to the economy of the town. Receipts of redemptions of freemen are not recorded in the accounts until 1550, and seem at first sight to be both small and sporadic. Evidence from other sources will be used, however, to show that this was because a very small proportion of freemen entered Dover through the route of redemption, or payment, and of that proportion even fewer paid the full amount. It will be suggested that an aspiring freeman's connections with the town through birth, marriage, apprenticeship or ownership of a freehold, or the particular services he could offer the town, were considered better recommendations for freeman status than a one-time payment. At the same time, the evidence suggests that the wealthiest traders, especially those whose origins were not English, were expected to pay a redemption, however strong their connections with the community. The receipts for redemptions are so sporadic, particularly in the sixteenth century, that they are presented complete in the following table.

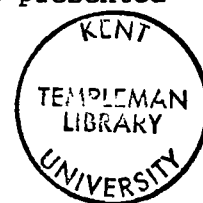


Table 1:16 Totals of redemptions paid by Dover freemen
1550-1600

	£	s	d		£	s	d		£	s	d
1550	3	3	0	1573	7	10	0	1588	9	0	0
1551	3	3	0	1574	12	9	6	1589	no accounts		
1552		15	0	1575	no accounts			1590	2	0	0
1553	6	0	0	1576	no accounts			1591-3	no accounts		
1554	no accounts			1577	0	0	0	1594	0	0	0
1555	4	4	0	1578	1	10	0	1595	no accounts		
1556	0	0	0	1579	no accounts			1596	5	16	0
1557	4	15	0	1580	0	0	0	1597	0	10	0
1558	2	0	0	1581	10	0	0	1598	3	15	0
1559	0	0	0	1582	10	0	0	1599	2	10	0
1560	3	5	0	1583	5	0	0	1600	no accounts		
1561	1	0	0								
1562-72	no entry			1584-87	no entry						
1601-1635											
1601	9	0	0	1612	0	0	0	1623	0	0	0
1602	2	14	0	1613	1	0	0	1624		13	4
1603	2	13	0	1614	0	0	0	1625	0	0	0
1604	23	14	0	1615	1	13	4	1626	5	0	0
1605	4	0	0	1616	1	3	4	1627		6	8
1606		10	0	1617	5	13	4	1628		6	8
1607	1	2	6	1618	5	3	4	1629	4	0	6
1608	11	13	4	1619	2	0	0	1630-32	no entry		
1609	1	3	4	1620	3	3	4	1633	0	3	4
1610	4	10	0	1621	6	16	8	1634	1	13	4
1611	0	0	0	1622	no accounts			1635	6	0	0

Source: CKS Dover Town Accounts 1546-1558, 1558-1581, 1581-1603, 1603-1626, 1626-1649, Receipts of freedoms.

Note: years run from September to September.

In trying to assess the significance of these figures it is first necessary to determine the amount of an individual payment. In 1550, the mayor, jurats and common council agreed that the mayor and chamberlains should have full power and authority "to agree with any foreigner or other intending to inhabit this town to make him or them free for paying of 25s. and not under..."³⁷² Such redemptions therefore began to be recorded at that date, and the most common individual payment was 30s., slightly over the minimum amount. The introduction of this payment in 1550 seems to have been in line with other deliberate attempts by the corporation in the mid-Tudor period to strengthen the freeman body and their control and supervision of it. 30s. remained the most common payment until the 1580s, although it was seldom paid in one amount, but

usually in up to four annual instalments.³⁷³ This habit makes the account entries difficult to use, because men were sometimes recorded under the heading "freemen made this year" on each occasion when they paid an instalment.³⁷⁴ When they are recorded anonymously, this becomes impossible to check. Like other fines, redemptions of freemen seem to have lapsed in the 1560s. The table shows that they resumed in 1573 at a higher level. It happens that five substantial men each paid his 30s. redemption in full that year.³⁷⁵

The apparent rise in 1581 reflects, however, a rise in the amount paid rather than the numbers paying. Two men paid £5 each in 1581.³⁷⁶ From that date, perhaps in an attempt to encourage freemen into the town, amounts paid by individuals varied, with £5 being the maximum.³⁷⁷ The figures paid suggest that in about 1599 there must have been a decree (apparently not recorded) allowing men to become freemen by decree of the common council for a composition payment of as little as 3s.4d.³⁷⁸ The figures given in the table are often therefore made up of more numerous but comparatively small amounts at that period.

By 1625 this situation was clearly felt to be anomalous and the common council decreed that no man except Burgesses to Parliament or "other gentlemen who may well deserve of the town" might be free for less than £5.³⁷⁹ The accounts for 1627 and 1628 show that this could not be put into practice.³⁸⁰ The decree was accordingly revoked in 1629.³⁸¹ In 1630 a former decree that freedom could be had on purchase of any land or tenement in the town of the value of 40s. was declared void.³⁸² Now no one was to be sworn free unless such lands or tenements were bona fide worth £5 per annum. That £5 was perceived to be the standard sum for entry in the seventeenth century is confirmed by the testamentary accounts of John Moore, a brewer, who in 1640 left £7 to William Tiddeman, a seafaring man, to take William Moore (the deceased's son) to be his apprentice in part 40s. "and £5 besides deposited to make William

Tiddeman a freeman of Dover in further consideration of that contract as his freedom cannot be obtained for less."³⁸³

It can be seen that the receipts of redemption payments give some indication of the periods at which the corporation might have been particularly anxious to recruit freemen. When the evidence presented in the table is set against memoranda in the Common Assembly Minute Books recording the entry of freemen in the sixteenth century and against the Register of Freemen in the seventeenth century it can, however, be seen, that the payment of a redemption actually represented a far from common form of entry, and that the figures in the accounts therefore give no indication at all of the true number of freemen entering the town. The sixteenth century evidence from the common council memoranda does not form a complete record of freeman entry, but the seventeenth century entry list comes nearer to doing so. In an attempt to determine the reliability of the redemptions recorded in the accounts, those recorded between 1603 and 1624 were compared with the entries in the freeman's register for the same period. This showed that the accounts give a reasonably reliable guide to the amount of money actually paid by incoming freemen - if allowance is made for deferred payment. The amount that should have been paid between 1603 and 1624, according to the register, is £79.19s.5d. while the corresponding amount recorded in the accounts is £74.9s.6d.

The register was then examined to determine the frequency of different methods of entry. The information is presented in Table 1:17, which shows that fewer than 8 per cent. of freemen paid redemption in the early seventeenth century. Of these, a very small proportion paid the full amount of £5.

Table 1:17 Methods of freeman entry to Dover 1603-24 and 1627-35

Method	numbers	% of total
marriage	151	31.46
birth	141	29.38
possession of a freehold	49	10.21
purchasing a property	43	8.96
redemption	38	7.92
former apprenticeship	23	4.79
decree	19	3.96
readmission	5	1.04
taking an apprentice	3	0.63
a service to the town	3	0.63
not given	5	1.04
TOTAL	480	

Source: CKS Register of Dover Freemen 1601-1721

Some other payments were made. Some of those who entered by decree, for example, paid a small amount of composition - usually 3s.4d.- often the equivalent of paying off their outstanding foreigners' sess.³⁸⁴

Nevertheless, the amounts recorded in the accounts give no guide at all to the numbers of men actually admitted. This is even more true after 1626, for only three men out of a total of 239 - or 1.26 % - were admitted by redemption between 1627 and the end of 1640.³⁸⁵

It was only possible to test whether redemption had always been a less-favoured route in the period before the 1603 list by picking up sparse information from the accounts and the common council proceedings. This showed that, even in 1550 when redemption payments were introduced, one man became free by building a house and another, a gunner, by the free gift of the corporation.³⁸⁶ It also suggested that the payment of redemption had been slightly more common before about 1575, and that there was at least one redemption in all but five of the years for which there is information up till 1595. Freeman entries, which are probably not complete, were sometimes recorded in memoranda of the common council in 13 of the years between 1575 and 1595.³⁸⁷ Analysis of these entries gives the following results.

Table 1:18 Methods of freemen entry in 13 years between 1575-95

Method	Number	% of total
marriage	23	30.26
birth	21	27.63
purchase of a freehold	18	23.68
redemption	8	10.53
performing a service	4	5.26
unknown	2	2.63
Total	76	

Sources: BL Egerton 2094, 2095; CKS Dover Town Accounts 1558-81, 1581-1603

Although these figures cannot be considered complete, they suggest that redemption was a far less common method of entry than marriage, birth or property ownership in the sixteenth as well as the seventeenth century, and therefore that figures for the payment of redemption do not correctly reflect the numbers of freemen entering the town.

In fiscal terms, the corporation clearly operated a selective system of freeman entry, basing its demands for payment on criteria of its own, in which being born to a freeman or marrying a freeman's daughter ranked high and therefore carried no demand for payment. The social implications of the importance of birth and marriage as popular methods of entry are discussed below.³⁸⁸ Other methods of entry reveal other criteria. The deeds of the incorporation of the three companies set up in 1582, for example, make it clear that membership of a corporation brought freedom.³⁸⁹ The performance of various services to the town brought freedom with them at different dates. In 1587 an earlier custom was restored by which whoever performed the ceremonial riding of the liberties of the town should be admitted freeman.³⁹⁰ In the seventeenth century a number of men admitted by "decree" had taken orphans or poor children as apprentices, thus relieving the corporation of their expense.³⁹¹ Pressure was sometimes put on the corporation by the Lord Warden or the Lieutenant of the Castle to admit distinguished men to freedom, and to return their proffered £5.³⁹²

Re-entry to freedom was possible, and yielded some payment to the

corporation. Conditions for re-entry after a year's absence were set down in relation to such a case.³⁹³ The records had to show that the freeman had originally paid £5, and that he had paid any outstanding foreigners' sess. He must then put down £5, of which £4 would be returned to him, thus conforming with the normal criterion of a smaller payment being demanded from those who had already established a connection with the town.

The Register of Freemen shows that between 1603 and 1640, 38 men gained their freedom through redemption, but details recorded in the list and in the acts and decrees of the common council show that only five of them actually paid the full redemption of £5.³⁹⁴ These were all men whose connection with the town appears to have been tenuous in some way and they all appear to have been wealthy men. At least two of them were merchants who had their origins in Dunkirk - Nicholas Eaton in 1604, Peter Hughessen in 1608 - although their fathers had lived in Dover for at least part of their lives, and Nicholas Eaton had actually been apprenticed in Dover, and became mayor for the first of three times in 1617.³⁹⁵ Another was a merchant who moved to London two years later.³⁹⁶ The others were a maltster and a goldsmith.³⁹⁷ In the other 33 cases of redemption, some or all of the £5 was returned for the reasons given below.³⁹⁸

Having been an apprentice in Dover	6
Taking an apprentice	5
Being thought likely to be "a good member"	5
Bureaucratic error in registering birth or marriage	5
Taking in a poor child	2
Minister preaching at election day	1
Becoming a freeholder on mother's death	1
Readmission after the death of the wife through whom freedom was originally claimed	1
No reason given	7
Total	33

The payment of the full sum of a freeman's redemption was therefore rare in Dover, and it can be seen that the ruling group perceived freedom as both springing from and bestowing a peculiar connection with the town

that was far from being simply an economic one. The freeman body seems likely to have been perceived as a cohesive group with many mutual interconnections. Ownership of wealth at the time of entry into freedom seems to have carried with it the obligation of payment, especially for those whose connections lay for the most part outside the town.

Fines on quasi-legal functions

Fines for the appraisements of inventories do not occur in the accounts as a distinct category until the year 1559.³⁹⁹ The rules for the payment of this fine are set out in a decree of 1591 that was prompted by the refusal of the executors of a wealthy man to pay it. After a testament had been proved before the Commissary of the Archbishop, and its administration committed to the Executor

"the Archbishop in the Commissary shall have no more to do of them: but the mayor shall do them before him and his jurats when him seemeth time best and he shall charge them to make a lawful inventory and lawful account. And after the account made, the mayor may grant them by an acquittance under the seal of office, which usage and custom hath been used...from the first foundation of Dover...According to which custom the common sworn appraisers of this town (two persons time out of mind chosen and sworn for that purpose) ...use to take the inventory of the goods of all persons that have goods in Dover and make testaments and die, or die intestate within the town and do appraise the same, for the appraisal whereof there is and always hath been paid 5 pence of the pound of the goods of such deceased person, half whereof is due and payable...to the town of Dover to the common profit of the said town, and the other half to the common appraisers, to their own use..."⁴⁰⁰

This fine brought in fairly small amounts, often less than £1, rising above £3 in only six years over the whole period.⁴⁰¹ It seems likely that payment was avoided in many cases. Amounts paid were greatest in two years when the corporation made decrees to prevent avoidance of the fine, decrees that provide a valuable reminder of the unreliability of inventories as a source of information about personal wealth. In 1603 a decree was made following complaints from certain inhabitants that because goods and chattels had been appraised much under their value, creditors had "been barred of good and honest debts"; all defaulters

were thereafter to pay 10s. to the corporation and, even if inhabitants employed appraisers other than the official ones, they were to pay the usual charge to the town.⁴⁰² Since executors of wills neither brought the inventories nor paid the relevant fees, in 1613 it was decreed that in future the mayor would compound with them for such sums as they thought meet.⁴⁰³

It seems likely that compounding was, in fact, the usual method of arriving at a fine on appraisements. If the amounts shown as paid in the town accounts are checked against inventories, it is impossible to find an example of the exact payment of the town's half share of 5d. in the pound. It seems likely that the corporation called for this payment most stringently in years when particularly wealthy men died. In 1604-05, one such year, the high payment reflects not more deaths, since there are only five payments, but the death of one wealthy man, Mr. Elwood, for the appraisement of whose goods the corporation took £5.0s.0d. "by composition".⁴⁰⁴ The accounts of 1613-14 give details of the fines for appraisements of inventories that year, which can thus be set beside the amounts shown in the surviving inventories themselves:⁴⁰⁵

Name	Fine			Value of goods in inventory		
	£	s	d	£	s	d
George West			7	3	13	7
Richard Colley			10	4	9	6
Salamon Lovell		5	0	10	13	6
Jane Tracham		3	0	103	0	0
Charles Brames	2	10	0	838	19	2
William Sacrey		1	6	23	19	4
Thomas Challice	1	0	0	147	3	2
Edward Kempe	4	0	0	2008	3	9
Aaron Windebank		8	0	no inventory survives		
Alexander Kent	1	5	0	no inventory survives		

It can be seen that there was no attempt to impose a fine of a standard rate, since Salamon Lovell's executor paid more on his inventory of just over £10 than Jane Tracham's did on her inventory of over £100, and the fine on Charles Brames's inventory of £838 was over half that on Edward Kempe's of over £2000. Once again it seems likely that the corporation

based its selective rates on criteria other than purely fiscal ones. It was clearly a fine that proved very difficult to collect since in many years it was not paid at all. Yet surviving inventories show that most people did use the officially appointed town appraisers.⁴⁰⁶ It seems possible that the corporation insisted on payment of the fine when it needed money urgently and when it felt justified by the wealth of some of those who had died in a particular year.

The last, and fiscally least significant, fine on inhabitants of the town was the 3s.4d. they had to pay for the use of the common seal from 1549 onwards. This never brought in more than £1.6s.8d. in a year.

Payments are recorded under this head in the years between 1549 and

1554.⁴⁰⁷ In 1549 a Dovorian used the seal when he sent warning of a

withernam to Calais. In the 1550s it was used for such domestic legal requirements as sealing leases or letters testimonial for the granting

of freedom.⁴⁰⁸ Once again, no demands for payment seem to have been made in the 1560s; in fact no payments were made between 1555 and 1573.

An expansion of trade and credit from 1573 onwards is suggested by the fact that the town's common seal was thereafter used for the remainder of the sixteenth century in drawing up various legal processes taken out by Dovorians against men in Canterbury, Hythe, Rye, Sandwich, London, Boulogne, Ostend, Holland and Ireland, as well as for leases and for seals of the new corporations set up in 1582.⁴⁰⁹ In the seventeenth

century it seems to have been used at times by men taking out certificates of their freedom,⁴¹⁰ but chiefly by merchants taking out letters of process.⁴¹¹ Evidence from debt pleas suggests that these were suits concerning the recovery or repayment of debt.⁴¹²

From this examination of fines and sesses received from the inhabitants of the town it can be seen that the corporation's fiscal policy was based on a combination of custom and flexible realism. Once a fine had been introduced it tended to become customary, and the individual

amounts demanded changed remarkably little over the whole period. Yet the town government was capable of overlooking non-payment of certain fines for long periods if they were impossible to collect or not urgently needed and then to insist on reviving the fines at times of need. Such revivals of fines by decree seem to have brought temporary increases in payment.

The rise in the number of fines received between about 1545 and 1560 is in line with Tittler's view of the government's "new assertiveness in support of traditional mechanisms for control" as they were carried out by urban authorities.⁴¹³ His view of the government's identification of urban oligarchies as a replacement for the void left by the departure of religious authority is very persuasive. The frequent time-lag between the passing of royal statutes and the subsequent issuing of proclamations, followed by the passing of decrees by the town's ruling group suggests that the ruling group used government directives as a sanction or encouragement for making such regulations when it suited them rather than as a compulsion to do so.⁴¹⁴ They may well have looked over their books of statutes for precedents for imposing fines when they needed to, just as it has been noted they combed through their own earlier decrees. Dover's economic difficulties in the late 1540s and 1550s arose from the decayed state of its harbour, war with France, and the consequently reduced dues it was receiving from its port. The totals in Table 1:1 Decennial Averages of Income, 1509-1640, show how fines and taxes on the town's inhabitants rose as harbour receipts fell.

Government statutes possibly provided a useful incentive to finding more money by regulating the inhabitants of the town more closely between about 1545 and 1560.

In the 1560s and 1570s harbour dues rose somewhat, and there was a simultaneous marked decline in the number of fines taken during that period. It has been noted that no fines were paid by foreign victuallers

drawing beer between 1561 and 1566; no redemptions of freemen were recorded between 1562 and 1570 - and possibly until 1573 since no accounts survive for that period. Only one special sess was recorded between 1558 and 1578; fines for opening shops fell in the 1560s and ceased between 1569 and 1574. Foreigners' sess seems to have been paid in only two years between 1558 and 1564 and then it was very low; and the general category of "fines and bloodwipes" fell to 12s.6d., the lowest amount recorded in the whole period, in 1569-70. It must be noticed that the accounts for that period were by no means meticulously kept, but that does not seem by itself a sufficient explanation for this fall. It is unfortunate that the records of the common council for precisely that period - May 1562 until July 1575 - have failed to survive, so that it is difficult to determine the reasons for this apparent change in civic fiscal policy.

Some simple demographic calculations based on the surviving parish register of St. Mary's suggest that the population may have fallen between 1562 and 1572.⁴¹⁵ 1563 was a year of high mortality, and an usually low figure for rents was received in the year 1562-63, but the most marked demographic features were the overall fall in the number of christenings and marriages between 1560 and 1570. This might suggest that there was a shortage of men entering the town to set up in business at that period. When the mayor and jurats petitioned the Queen for 30 households of Dutchmen to inhabit the town in 1562 they spoke of "the great poverty and decay of this town."⁴¹⁶ It seems possible that they were not exaggerating on this occasion and that a combination of demographic and physical decline, together with problems of liquidity caused by the debasement of coinage, had made it inappropriate to press for certain fines from the inhabitants of the town. It was noted above that the chamberlains managed to maintain a small surplus through this period, and that some loans were made to individuals, so that the period

appears to have been one of civic stagnation and individual hardship. From the 1580s onwards fines and sesses on inhabitants were collected regularly and seem to have reflected the ruling group's own priorities, which appear to have become more systematic by that period. Fines for offences against the assize of bread and just weights and measures by bakers, butchers and brewers seem to have been taken routinely, and must have been regarded as an extra tax on trading. Some selectivity can be seen in the corporation's imposition of the actual amounts of some other fines, which was likely to have arisen from judgments based on the intimate connections formed between the freeman body by ties of kinship, marriage, occupation and credit. These connections may also have embraced some well-regarded foreigners. Thus certain men were allowed to make deferred or reduced payment at times of temporary poverty, while very wealthy men were expected to pay fines from which others might have been excused. Selective criteria also seem to have operated in the corporation's choice of foreigners who were allowed to open shops, and in the setting of redemptions for freemen, so that the redemption of freemen was, in Dover, by no means an inflexible method of entry. Most men became free without payment, but through having some other connection with the town. It seems that the corporation was able to operate a fairly flexible system of entry into trading when it needed new blood, but only for those it considered suitable. It also appears that the range of wealth between foreigners trading in the town began to widen noticeably in the seventeenth century. It can be seen that fiscal penalties set by the town were modified to some extent by government intervention, but also by response to economic change and by the value system of its ruling body.

c) Rents

Rents from its property did not form a significant source of Dover's income. In this it differed from other comparable towns, such as Rye, at

the same period.⁴¹⁷ In the sixteenth century, the corporation of Dover seems to have had a surprisingly small amount of property to let and most of its rent income before about 1570 came from rents on land while in the late sixteenth century an increasing number of small annual rents, known as annuities, were paid for "encroachments" made by whole or parts of buildings on to the highway. Such rent income as there was came, therefore, from ground rents, with the later addition of small fines for building on public roads and spaces. It will be shown that it was not until the seventeenth century when some land, which had been ceded to the Commissioners for the Harbour, was returned to the corporation, that new leases were made and economic rents charged. The situation is also unusual in that there is no mention in the records of an entry fine until the later period. The following table sets out the decennial averages of rent receipts for the period, expressing them also as a percentage of the average total income.

Table 1:19 Decennial averages of rent receipts 1509-1635 in Dover

Date	£	s	d	percentage of total income
1509-1518	1	19	11	2
1519-1528	1	8	0	2
1529-1538	1	10	6	2.7
1539-1548	1	12	11	2.5
1549-1558	6	5	2	6.7
1559-1568	7	2	4	5.8
1569-1578	10	15	6	6.1
1579-1588	13	8	11	6.6
1589-1598	11	11	4	5
1599-1608	8	17	8	2
1609-1618	11	0	4	2
1619-1628	10	9	3	2
1626-1635	8	13	7	1.2
1639-1640	42	0	0	3.8

Sources: BL Egerton 29618; CKS Dover Town Accounts 1546-58, 1558-81, 1581-1603, 1603-26, 1626-49. Annual receipts of rents.

Note: years run from September to September

An average for the seven years 1626-1635 has been given, in the absence of records for the years from 1636-1639, and the receipts for the single year 1639-40 have been added, as the rent list for that year is

comparatively undamaged, and is the only figure available for the late 1630s to show how the situation had changed by that time.

It can be seen that rents formed a particularly low proportion of the town's income at the beginning of the period, 1509-1549, and again towards the end, from 1600-1635; in fact they fell as low as 0.7% in 1545 and 0.6% in 1635. Some of the reasons for these fluctuations were largely outside the corporation's control. The rise in the second half of the sixteenth century can be partly accounted for by the acquisition by the corporation in the 1540s of some land formerly held by the town's religious foundations, and in the 1550s and 60s of waste ground that was probably new land resulting from the silting action of the sea. In the period between 1560 and 1590 it seems that inhabitants of the town began to encroach on public land as they improved their existing dwellings and built new ones. The sudden drop in rents in the decade 1599-1608 is likely to have been largely due to the surrender by the corporation to the Crown in 1606 of its extensive lands in the harbour area;⁴¹⁸ this was exacerbated by a gradual reorientation of the town towards the harbour in the late sixteenth and early seventeenth century. As it will be shown, the Commissioners of the Harbour leased back some of their lands to the corporation in the 1630s, which led to the opportunity to revise leases and set economic rents, thus explaining the rise in rents to £42 by 1640. Nevertheless, rents remained at under 4% of the corporation's total income even then, because income from harbour dues was by then so much higher than it had been.

It will be argued, however, that while the market value of property, in terms of supply and demand, was probably the chief cause of the low rent levels received by the corporation, it was probably not, for most of the period, the only measure used by the corporation in setting its rents. The level of rents was also susceptible to other variables, such as the custom of granting leases without a fixed term until about 1550, and a

reliance on custom that could be interpreted as inertia in the sixteenth century. It was, more importantly, dependent upon the corporation's intention that the common stock of urban property should be increased and improved at the least possible cost to itself, so that building on its land was encouraged, rather than being penalized by increases in rent. As in other areas, some adjustment also appears to have been made in accordance with the needs and status of the tenants concerned.

The income from rents presented annually in the chamberlains' accounts is difficult to interpret, as the given totals of money rarely represent the total of the individual amounts set out. This will be discussed further below. Income obviously depended upon two factors: what properties were available for rent and what payment was actually received for them. Changes in the kind of property leased by the corporation will be discussed first as these are in some ways easier to determine than the payments that were made for it. Very little information recorded in this period explains how the corporation came to acquire the property it farmed, most of it presumably having been acquired as waste in the mediaeval period. One indenture of 1543, granting a vacant plot of land to the bailiff, explains that the land had recently fallen to the town and port by the non-performance of ship service to the king, that is the payment of the tax due on the land on such an occasion.⁴¹⁹ Of the 32 indentures collected by Statham that were made between the mayor and chamberlains and individual tenants in the years 1375-1569, only three concern property that was free of the burden of king's service,⁴²⁰ and these were all lands that were demised after the dissolution of St. Martin's Priory and that had probably been acquired by the town after 1535.⁴²¹ A small proportion of the indentures between private individuals, however, show that some land did not carry the burden of ship service, even in the thirteenth century.⁴²² It seems possible therefore that there might originally

have been some connection between the corporation's ownership of land and the requirement for the payment of ship service on it, and that most of the corporation's property carried that tax.

Early indentures made between the corporation and individual tenants normally demised the land to the latter "for ever", and, with the exception of one made for twenty years in 1472,⁴²³ the first to stipulate a time limit was the grant of a messuage in 1551 for 70 years,⁴²⁴ after which a 99-year lease, to be reviewed every 21 years, became the norm.⁴²⁵ From 1562 the 99 year lease was occasionally made conditional on being reviewed from year to year.⁴²⁶ The records of the common council show that in the seventeenth century a lease of only 21 years was the norm.⁴²⁷ It can be seen, therefore, that the later the lease was made, the more likely it was that the rent could be reviewed. The change to fixed-term leases in the 1550s is in line with the tighter management of resources that has been noticed above in connection with fines.

In order to discover what property the corporation let for rent at different periods, an attempt has been made to construct a corporation rental from the descriptions of property recorded from time to time in the annual receipts for rent. Between 1509 and 1546 very little information is given other than the names of tenants and the amounts they paid.⁴²⁸ The list of properties has therefore been derived from more detailed lists, beginning with the list of 1546-7.⁴²⁹ Additions were made to this list over a number of years. In 1598 two additional lists were added to the normal, somewhat disordered, list: "Rents found due by the Great Inquest in the year of Queen Elizabeth 30" and "Rents heretofore presented by the Great Inquest in the year of Edward VI ... for encroachment and other things heretofore concealed and now lately presented by the Great Inquest in the year of Queen Elizabeth 36 anno 1594"⁴³⁰ This extended list became in essence the normal rental list

for the rest of the period. It has therefore been used as a basis from which to work backwards to 1546 and forwards to 1635 in formulating a rental of town properties and the people who rented them.

Table 1:20 has been derived from some good lists in an attempt to indicate the change in the number and kind of properties leased out by the corporation over the period.

Table 1:20 Kinds of property occurring on rent lists 1546-1606

Date	land	house	shop	encroachment	cellar	barn
1546	18	4	3	0	0	0
1553	22	4	9	1	0	0
1573	32	8	13	8	1	0
1588	31	36	12	24	1	0
1598	39	34	8	40	3	0
1606	24	32	7	34	1	1

Sources: CKS Dover Town Accounts 1546-1558, 1558-1581, 1581-1603, 1603-1626, Receipts of rents and annuities.

Note: Land includes fields, gardens, orchards, closes, lanes and backsides. House includes messuages, tenements, inns, brewhouses, cottages and houses with gardens. Encroachments include windows, chimneys, pales, porches, privies, steps to the river, stairs, bridges, and one oven.

It has not been worth going beyond 1606 since the listed properties remained virtually the same after that date, while many of the rents actually appear to have decayed by the second and third decade of the seventeenth century. Some new leases were made in the seventeenth century, some of which appear to be of properties leased back to the corporation from the Warden and Assistants of the harbour; they are noted in the proceedings of the common council.⁴³¹ These came on to the rent lists during the period for which the accounts have not survived, from 1636-1639, but are shown in the list of 1639-40.

As will be shown below, the fact that a property was listed did not mean that the rent had been paid that year; nevertheless the table has some value in suggesting new tendencies in property-leasing in the town. At the beginning of the period it seems that most rents were simple ground rents, paid to the corporation for land. The list of 1546 includes

certain rents for land that were paid consistently through the whole period: for the great close under the Castle, and the 5 acres of Swinfield Lands in Hougham, and for parcels of St. Martin's churchyard, which had been acquired and entered on to the rent lists by then.⁴³²

In the 1550s and 60s some void land at the edge of the sea seems to have become available to the corporation for leasing, and was let mainly as "garden plots".⁴³³ This may have been a late example of the corporation being allowed to acquire land as waste, and it is very likely that this land had come gradually into existence as a result of the constant build up of shingle on the shore. The possibility that inhabitants were beginning to want to build, or at least extend their existing houses, at that time is suggested by the fact that a decree was made about encroachment in 1551, by which the mayor and chamberlains had to give permission for inhabitants to encroach on the king's highways and come to an agreement about leasing any such encroachment to the benefit of the town.⁴³⁴ Only one such encroachment - a porch - seems to have been leased in the 1550s.⁴³⁵ In the 1560s, however, people seem to have been improving their houses; eight encroachments by steps, bay windows, porches and chimneys are listed by 1573.⁴³⁶ More houses, some with land, were added, together with more gardens and backsides.

Harbour dues were very low in the period 1549-1558 and, as rents therefore rose as a proportion of the town's total income, it seems likely that the corporation exploited such possibilities as were open to it to create properties to rent. They built at least four new shops in and near the market place in the year 1553-4, for each of which they received the high rental of 13s.4d. per annum, and in 1569 they renewed and improved the shops in the fish market.⁴³⁷ Since shop rents might give some indication of fluctuations in the economy it is unfortunate that they are very difficult to distinguish from one other with any certainty. It is usually impossible to trace the rent of a particular

shop through from one year to another. Variations in the rent of a shop often mean that it was let for only part of a year. The shop under the court hall, which seems to be reliably identifiable, was the one most consistently let throughout the period, and for that reason its changes of tenant and rents are set out below.

Table 1:21 Rent paid for the shop under the Court Hall in Dover

Tenant	date of payment	notes about payment	amount paid		
			£	s	d
Mr. Minge	1546-63				
	1566	in arrears	6	8	
The glover	1567	for three-quarters of year	6	0	
	1568		8	0	
	1569		4	0	
	1570		5	0	?
	1573-75		7	0	
John Whetstone	1577		10	0	
	1578		7	6	
	1580		12	6	
	1581		10	0	
Mr. Aspinall	1582-84		7	6	
	1585		7	0	
Roger Giles	1586		10	0	
	1587-88		7	0	
	1590		8	0	
Jos. Wakefield	1607-08		6	0	
	1609		10	0	
Thomas Day	1611	taken on a ten-year lease, 4s. payable each quarter	16	0	
several	1612-20	various parts of years paid for, the whole amount paid only in 1613 and 1620			

Source: CKS Dover Town Accounts 1546-1558, 1558-1581, 1581-1603, 1603-1626, Receipts of rents and annuities.

This perhaps suggests that the corporation had sometimes to tolerate payments of rent for parts of years only for its shops, and sometimes no payment at all. Since this particular shop was in the market place, it seems possible that the rent was most often paid at busy times of the year, possibly particularly the Michaelmas quarter when St. Martin's fair took place there. The higher payments made at the change of tenant in 1567, 1573, 1577 and 1586 might suggest the payment of an entry fine, but they seem inconsistent. The rents of the shops the corporation built in the fish market in the 1560s, referred to above, also suggest that the corporation found it difficult to make a good return on its

investment in shops. There seem to have been three shops, all let for the first time in 1570 for a total rent of £1.8s.2d.⁴³⁸ This may also suggest an entry fine of 8s.2d. since after that date they seem to have been let for 6s.8d. each, and often only one of them was let.⁴³⁹ In 1603 Henry Harwood got one of these shops for 3s.4d. a year because he had repaired it.⁴⁴⁰ The other shops must have survived untenanted, or been replaced, because in 1607 £1 was paid for all three of them once more, but between then and 1613, the rent income reverted to 6s.8d. each year for one shop, after which payments stopped altogether.

Although Table 1:20 shows that the number of shops leased from the town increased in the late sixteenth century, evidence from inventories of that period suggests that more men were setting up shops in their own houses than were leasing shops from the corporation. Of the 41 men who left an inventory between 1568 and 1600 in which a shop is mentioned, only 7 appear on the corporation rent list, and of those only three rented a shop: William Lovell, who had a shop in the market in the 1590s, John Whetstone who had the shop under the court hall from 1577-1581 and Robert Bonyard, who paid rent for a shop for one year from 1588-9.⁴⁴¹ Although this is negative evidence, in that it does not deal with those men who rented shops from the corporation and whose inventories do not survive, the proportionate difference seems to indicate a strong tendency towards the private ownership or leasing of shops, rather than towards leasing from the corporation. It seems fair to speculate that mercantile activity in the town was probably greater than would be deduced from the number of shops included in the rent list of the town accounts.

Table 1:20 shows that a large proportion of rent income in the last quarter of the sixteenth century was drawn from encroachments, which usually involved sums of as little as 2d. or 4d. Nevertheless the encroachments made in the 1570s and 1580s suggest that individual

inhabitants were taking greater interest in status, comfort and hygiene. Porches, bay windows and chimneys were paid for, together with an encroachment on the river that was probably a privy. There is also the first of several mentions of rent being paid for a pale erected round a house.⁴⁴² Some of the encroachments were for parts of houses, or even whole houses.⁴⁴³ There were more than ten new encroachments in the 1580s, one of them simply described as an encroachment "by tenements built by the heirs of Adrian White before his house in the market", an unknown number of buildings for which the town received 10d. per annum.⁴⁴⁴ If the evidence of corporation rents can be taken as typical of the development of property in general, it seems likely that the 1580s saw the optimum development in the central area of the town near the market for the whole period. There seems to have been much less activity in the late 1590s. Of the new properties and encroachments listed after 1588, none came on to the list between 1596 and 1602. After 1606 the Eldred maps suggest that development occurred on land that no longer belonged to the corporation.⁴⁴⁵

The accurate assessment of individual payment of rents presents a problem throughout the period. In the accounts of 1546-47 there is a list of tenants, the properties for which they paid rent, and the amount to be paid. The total given by the chamberlains is 23s., while the sum of the individual amounts is actually 37s.⁴⁴⁶ In other years the total given sometimes exceeds the sum of the amounts recorded against the properties.⁴⁴⁷ It seems likely that the totals represent money actually paid in for rent, sometimes including rent paid in arrears for previous years. The list itself might be expected to have been copied each year in this case, but items often appear in a different order, as though written down when money was paid in. From 1602 - and very occasionally earlier - there are often crosses against names, which presumably signify payment, or at least current responsibility for payment, since

the addition of these amounts still does not always equal the sum given by the chamberlains as the total amount of rent paid.⁴⁴⁸ The familiar note at the end of the accounts that amounts are still owing "as appears by the rent roll" suggests that the rent roll was the real instrument of financial management and that payment to the corporation often overlapped financial years.⁴⁴⁹

The total number of identifiable individual properties and encroachments found to have been leased by the town between 1546 and 1635 is 145, although allowance should be made for some extra shops, whose numbers are difficult to identify. There are 25 properties and encroachments on the list of 1546 and 124 on the list of 1598, which became the basic list for the years to come, and which included some of the original properties. By 1635 amounts were entered against only 49 of these properties and encroachments, of which only 25 seem to have been paid that year.⁴⁵⁰

Decayed rents cannot be identified with certainty, particularly from the sixteenth century rent lists. Some information can be gleaned, however, from an analysis of the last dates on which rents seem to have been paid, based on the list from 1602.⁴⁵¹ Of the 124 rents on the 1602 list, 28 were last paid in that year or earlier. Of these, 16 ceased to be paid between 1596 and 1602. Some amounts, such as those for a pump at the Maison Dieu, a "cove", or shelter, in the market place, and a stopped lane, seem only to have been paid once, in the 1580s.⁴⁵² Two encroachments entered in 1596 seem never to have been paid. The final date of payment, which would suggest the decay of a rent, cannot be given with any certainty, even from the better lists following 1602, partly because there are no lists at all for a number of years. When grouped into decades, the later lists suggest that final payments were made as follows: some time before 1602 - 28, 1602-1609 - 19, 1610-1619 - 30, 1620-1629 - 21. This reinforces the assumption that the demand for

property owned by the corporation fell in the late sixteenth and early seventeenth century as many of the inhabitants of the town moved into the Pier district.

For the greater part of the sixteenth century the principle of inertia seems to have characterized the corporation's management of its rents, some of which, it has been seen, had originally been demised "for ever". In the absence of evidence from court material for the sixteenth century, it is difficult to know what happened at the renewing of leases. The evidence of rent receipts suggests that the tendency was for rents to remain the same, even at the point of a change in tenancy. Between 1555 and 1604 there were only 12 identifiable changes in rent, of which 10 were slight increases.⁴⁵³ It is true that all these changes occurred at a change of tenancy, and therefore presumably at the making of a new lease, but only when this coincided with the fact that the rent had been unpaid for a few years, or when the heirs of a former tenant took over the lease. It seems as though such rises substituted for the payment of arrears or an entry fine. In one of the 12 cases the rent fell from 20s. to 13s.4d. when a new tenant took a 7 year lease on the cellar under the court hall in 1566 for which only sporadic payments had previously been received.

This apparent inertia possibly suggests that the sixteenth century commonalty's perception of its property was not primarily of its short-term financial value, but of its value as part of the common stock of the town, one of the means through which the town expressed its identity. In 1523, a period when the town was in decay, John Maye and his heirs were freed from rent when he set up a "fair new house" and was consequently perceived to have made the town "stronger and better inhabited."⁴⁵⁴ This attitude may help to explain why rents did not normally rise when tenants built on their land, changed the use of their land or buildings, or took several properties together into their hands.

Since the corporation could ill afford to improve its property it allowed tenants who did so to continue to pay their original ground rents.

The vacant pieces of land near the sea at Seagate that have already been mentioned were first leased by the town in the 1550s and 60s as "a garden spot" and "void ground". It was the tenants who built houses there - "two fair houses" in one case⁴⁵⁵ - but the rents remained static. "Three parcels of ground at the North Pier" in 1563 had become a house and garden by 1577. Thomas Dawkes took a piece of void ground near Snargate in 1561 at a rent of 1s. This was described as his "house" in 1570 and as "the house called the Queen's Head" in 1580. His son, Richard, was still living there, at a rent of 1s. per annum in 1633.⁴⁵⁶ Another inn, the "Blue Anchor", appears to have been built on land at Seagate first leased in 1551, and the heirs of John Fineas were paying 1s.8d. for their house and garden there in 1635, just as Anthony Reade had done for his house and garden ground in 1552.⁴⁵⁷ Another piece of wasteland under St. Martin's church wall was dignified by the building of three tenements towards the end of the sixteenth century, and the rent remained at 1s.8d.⁴⁵⁸

The records of the town court proceedings in the seventeenth century give some evidence of leases being made. Thus it is possible to see a few examples of practical rewards being made by the corporation to those tenants who were prepared to add to the corporate value of the town. A cottage and shop under the walls of the decayed church of St Martin's had been let for many years by the town at 34s. but was clearly decayed by 1618 when Richard Judge took it over. In 1624 his rent was decreased by 10s. by a decree of the common council that he "having at his great charge erected a tenement in the market place instead of a decayed cottage and shop there, which beautifieth the town, it is agreed he shall have lease thereof for 21 years at 24s. per annum."⁴⁵⁹ As in all

its leases, the corporation specified that the tenant must repair the property. In another case, when a tenant made a lease with the town for a fourpenny tenement and a garden at Black Ditch in 1608, a condition of his twenty-one year lease was that he must build a house there within one and a half years; no entry fine was charged.⁴⁶⁰ This is, albeit a negative one, the first use of the term entry fine in these records, and it suggests that there was, over all, a move to economic rents at this period.

The new circumstances after 1606 seem, in fact, to have led to a new readiness to raise rents. The acts and decrees of the common council reflect their more active management of leases. For example, in 1606 they noted that the rent for part of the church yard of St. Martin's had not been paid "for certain years past".⁴⁶¹ The lease was surrendered and a new one made for £1.10s.0d. instead of the former £1.0s.0d. In 1613 a brewhouse and decayed barn were entered for non-payment of rents, but later demised again to the heirs of the defaulter, one of the ruling group, at the former rent.⁴⁶² The corporation was particularly active in 1627, a year which provides some good examples of their attempt to rationalize and move towards economic rents. They reviewed the rent of the Almshouse lands, letting them again for 7 years for the former rent to one of the oligarchy.⁴⁶³ They took counsel's advice about the recovery of a tenement in the butchery for which no rent seems to have been paid by the occupying butcher, a man who happened to be constantly in trouble with the authorities.⁴⁶⁴ This property appears to have been originally leased for 5s. as a piece of void ground in the butchery in 1561, and a butcher had built a tenement there by 1574, for which 5s. per annum continued to be paid until 1598.⁴⁶⁵ After that the rent was apparently not paid, but clearly the tenement was being used in 1627. In 1627 they also took advice about the recovery of the five acres called Swinfield Lands whose rent, which had stood at 13s.4d. since 1555, was

currently unpaid. This resulted in much litigation; the lease was surrendered in 1635 and the land was let on a new lease at £5 per annum in 1636.⁴⁶⁶ Finally, they ordered a lease to be made of land, formerly used as a hogpound, which had recently been entered and converted into a garden by a gentleman of the town.⁴⁶⁷

The corporation seems to have exercised restraint in raising the rents of poorer inhabitants, however. In 1628, when John Joanes, a husbandman, and his wife petitioned for a lease, they got it for the same rent as had been paid before - 4d. per annum, with no entry fine.⁴⁶⁸ In the same year, when a sailor unlawfully left his wife and children, his wife was able to hold a stable and its backside at its former rent, "to the benefit of her children."⁴⁶⁹ In 1610 the rent of a cottage and shop, newly leased for 10 years at 40s., was remitted to 10s. "in respect of Father German living there."⁴⁷⁰ On the other hand William Monins, a wealthy man, had to pay 3s.4d. per annum when granted a 21-year lease for a piece of ground in area seven feet by five and a half feet, for which he had petitioned in 1629.⁴⁷¹

The corporation clearly decided to cut its losses in the early 1630s when it was deeply in debt. In 1628 it had already sold the old Court Hall, which it had been leasing since 1606 for £4.10s.0d. per annum, to a Mr. Tompson of London. In June 1630 it sold two pieces of land and a house formerly occupied by an ex-mayor, William Ward, to his heirs on condition they gave up their claim to certain harbour dues. In 1630 it sold the "Lion Stable" and its loft, so-called because of their earlier connection with an inn, which had together brought in £4.10s.0d. per annum in recent years. It was said to have been sold "to pay the town's debts", and went to the town clerk's brother-in-law for £60. In the same year it sold the fee-simple of a tenement and ground to its tenant, the footpost, "on consideration of many years yet due and small rent received". The rent had been 4d. per annum. In 1638 it paid £15 for the

lease of a brewhouse and barn from the daughter of its dead tenant, who was in arrears, and sold it in 1639 for £133 to a mariner, who was to have the fee farm at a yearly rent of 4s. In the same year it sold a great house and its ground at the Pier to Thomas Tiddeman, one of the jurats, for £174.⁴⁷²

The intervention of King James into the affairs of the harbour, with the resultant setting up of the body known as the Commissioners, or Warden and Assistants of Dover Harbour, resulted in certain disputes about leases. Possible ambiguity about ownership clearly encouraged powerful individuals to challenge the corporation for ownership of certain profitable land. In 1637 the Warden and Assistants demised certain leases to the mayor, jurats and commonalty of Dover.⁴⁷³ This was the fruition of a long action conducted by the town clerk and John Pringle, a former mayor, against the suit of Richard Dawkes, a Dover merchant. He held a certain tenement from the town at 12d. per annum, and had claimed that this and other waste ground on either side of the Mount were concealed from the Crown, and had "endeavoured to entitle them to His Majesty, thereby to gain Letters Patent thereof to himself."⁴⁷⁴ It was finally ordered that all the houses except the one he occupied should be granted to the mayor, jurats and commonalty, they paying a fine of 100 marks and 9s.8d. rent per annum. It seems that in doing this the Crown nodded towards the ancient right of a town to claim waste land, although now by lease rather than by freehold. Richard Dawkes was to pay a £10 fine and 12d. per annum, the tenement being conveyed to him by the mayor, jurats and commonalty. The five other new leases that resulted from the dispute were granted for 21 years, 3 at 20s. one at 40s., and one (to a carrier) at 12d. and a £10 entry fine.⁴⁷⁵ These are far higher than earlier rents for similar property - one of those set at 20s can possibly be identified with a property whose rent had been 8d. per annum from 1567 to 1606 - a tenement built by Thomas Challice in

1565.⁴⁷⁶

Another lengthy dispute about leases arose in 1633 when James Hughessen of Linsted "by virtue of a grant to him lately made of the Almshouse and lands and also of the decayed church of St. Martin and the church yard now claims and challenges the same as in his own right, all which the mayor and jurats ... have time out of mind enjoyed, and received the rents and profits...without contradiction." ⁴⁷⁷ Both parties were on shaky ground here, as the Crown probably had the right to the St. Martin's land, but the corporation seems to have won this case since rent continued to be paid on the land.⁴⁷⁸

The seventeenth century attempt to rationalize the recording of the town's rented property and bring some rents up to date seems to have been a novel one. This impression is reinforced by the length of time during which some properties continued on the list. A few survived for the whole period, from 1546 - and earlier - to 1635. Such lists as give any indication of whether or not payment was made suggest that the corporation received no rent at all for certain properties for long periods, although in some cases the rents were revived after a number of years. It seems likely, therefore, that some of the corporation's property must have fallen into physical decay during those periods. A discussion below of the corporation's expenditure on its buildings⁴⁷⁹ notes the physical decay of the town in the 1520s and 30s, some expenditure on the construction and repair of shops and houses in the 1550s and 60s, and then a long period of neglect as the corporation was forced to put its efforts into keeping the harbour clear. There is evidence of the renovation of at least one house in the early seventeenth century, but it will be shown that most expenditure in that period went on public buildings and amenities.

From 1615 until 1624 the lists for the receipt of rent payments in the accounts indicate whether the rents were in arrears (although not by how

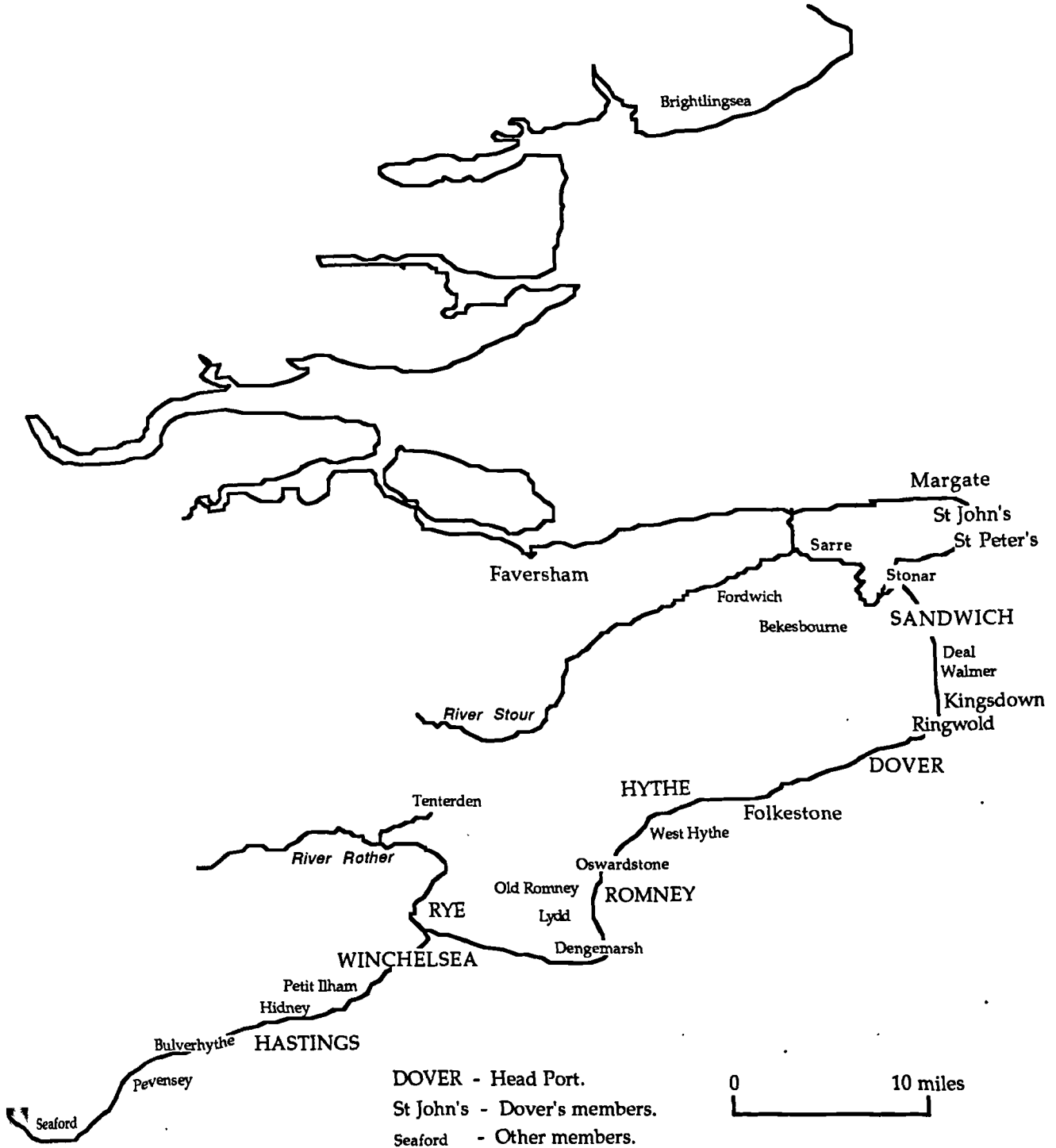
much). A core of just over 40, that is almost one third of the total, usually were. An attempt seems to have been made in those years, 1615-1624, to bring some realism to the list, and there is some indication that the town was being tidied up. In 1615, for example, against a 6d. rent for a "bridge and putt galley" that had encroached on the king's stream since 1561, is a note "this putt galley is removed and is now a garden."⁴⁸⁰ The rent appeared for the last time in the following year. In 1617, against the 10d. rent for the encroachment with a tenement before a house in the market, is a note "this tenement was taken down by John Golder about three years past, and the ground was this year paved and lieth open to the street."⁴⁸¹ A 2d. rent that had first appeared in the 1580s for an encroachment by Robert Marsh "with the back of his oven" remained on the list, in arrears, until 1618 when there is a note "none such."⁴⁸²

Twenty three of these long-standing properties remained on the list after this period of clarification and, perhaps surprisingly, were paid for at least once again during the 1630s. In 1635, at a time of increasing trade, it is perhaps significant that of 25 rents apparently being paid, nine were for properties near the sea - 6 at Seagate, 2 at Snargate and one near the Great Pent. Six rents were paid for properties in the market place - 4 of them shops. Nine of the remaining rents were paid for houses or encroachments scattered round the central area of the town, one of them for a house the corporation had asked the tenant to leave because it was liable to fall down.⁴⁸³ The remaining rent was that for Swinfield Lands. As it has been said, town accounts have not survived for the period 1636-1639, but the list of 1639-40 contains six new leases of property held since 1606 by the Warden and Assistants of the Harbour, and now leased again by the corporation at economic rents. They are: a dwelling-house, brewhouse and malthouses leased together for £30, some tenements in the harbour area, leased in groups of from two to

four at inclusive rents of £1 and £2 per group, and a hayloft over the storehouse at £1. Swinfield Lands is also entered on that list at its new rent. The rest of the list, containing 43 properties and encroachments, remains much as it had been in 1635.⁴⁸⁴

Throughout the period the corporation could expect to raise less than 7%, and usually only about 2% of its income through renting property. Its rents consisted basically of ground rents and additional fines for encroachments. The accounts show that it had to expect late payment of rents in most years, and that possibly almost one third of its rents remained actually unpaid in the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries. It seems likely, therefore, that town property would have been liable to dilapidation and decay. There is some evidence to suggest, however, that there was a more successful take-up of property in the area near the sea and the harbour. It seems possible that the corporation sometimes used social criteria in assessing ability to pay, and that its inertia in the sixteenth century might have owed something to the nature of its earlier leases and also to its common principle of caring both for its deserving poor and for favoured members of the ruling group. It was also prepared to encourage those who were willing and able to improve its common stock of property, something it seems to have been unable to do itself for most of the period. Events beyond the control of the corporation caused it to lose some of its rental income from its most popular property near the harbour in the early seventeenth century, and it was threatened also by the desire for land of some of its merchants. When, in the 1630s, it succeeded in recovering some of the harbour property, it made new moves towards setting economic rents for it, although by then the period of prosperity that had made harbour land so attractive was almost at an end.⁴⁸⁵

The Confederation of the Cinque Ports.



d) Income derived from membership of the Confederation of the Cinque Ports

Dover derived money from its membership of the confederation of the Cinque Ports in two ways, first in the form of yearly contributions from its Members or Limbs, and secondly in the form of tax concessions from the Crown, some of which it was able to convert into actual income. The privileges enjoyed by the Cinque Ports, particularly their exemption from normal taxation, had already become anomalous by 1509 in view of their choked harbours and the decreasing importance of the south-eastern ports to the country as a whole. There was a further anomaly in the way the corporation of Dover treated the income that accrued to it through its membership of the confederation. This should theoretically have been balanced against its outgoings on ship service to the Crown, since the provision of such service had been the original reason for the granting of financial privileges to the ports. In effect, however, by the sixteenth century, the corporation seems to have treated these financial privileges as a regular source of income, and the decreasing number of demands made upon it for ship service as occasional crises, for which special provision had to be made.

The annual contributions of money from its Members came to Dover because it was a Head Port. As such, it had three Members by the end of the thirteenth century - Faversham, Margate and Folkestone. In 1373 they were joined by Kingsdown and Goresend, and in 1424 a group of parishes in Thanet - St John's, St. Peter's, All Saints of Birchington and the vill of Wood, a small settlement about two miles from Margate later known as Woodchurch, were recognized by charter as "members and advocants of the port of Dover."⁴⁸⁶ This meant that these small communities enjoyed the general liberties, including the judicial privileges, of the confederation as a whole in return for a contribution to the provision of ship service. Their inhabitants thus enjoyed

privileges of a sort usually only to be had in large and important towns.

From the late fourteenth century, each Head Port exacted a contribution from its Members, in proportion to their size, towards its general expenses, including the wages of its members of Parliament, who were presumed to serve the interests of the Members together with those of the Head Port.⁴⁸⁷ These contributions from its members totalled £7.15s.0d. annually in the case of Dover. By the period under review the amount was made up thus:

Folkestone	£2. 6s. 8d.
Faversham	£2. 0s. 0d.
Margate	£1. 6s. 8d.
Birchington	16s. 8d.
St. Peters	16s. 8d.
Kingsdown and Ringwold	8s. 4d. ⁴⁸⁸

In some years Kingsdown and Ringwold seemed to pay only 8s.0d. instead of the 8s.4d. they should have paid.

During the sixteenth century, these contributions came in fairly regularly, with the occasional need for a messenger to be sent to prompt them.⁴⁸⁹ The deputy bringing the money was often welcomed with wine.⁴⁹⁰ Shortfalls in the contributions in one year usually seem to have been made up within the two or three years following, although a shortfall in four consecutive years in the late 1530s seems never to have been completely recovered.⁴⁹¹

The accounts suggest, however, that the contributions became increasingly difficult to collect from about 1587 onwards, and various amounts were spent in an effort to call them in.⁴⁹² The situation was particularly difficult in 1596-97 as Dover attempted to get contributions from its Members and Limbs towards their extra shared expenditure on ship service for "the voyage to Calais". After 1600 the contributions seem never to have been paid in full in the year when they were due, or indeed even in the form of deferred payment. An amount in

excess of £7 was received in only four years between 1600 and 1635. One of these was 1634 when, for example, Birchington and the vill of Wood paid for two years, and Faversham for three years, St. Peter's and Folkestone paid for one year (not the current one) and Margate paid nothing.⁴⁹³ The total of £14 fell far short of the debts of the past few years. In several years only one Member, usually Folkestone, paid its contribution.⁴⁹⁴ The contribution was clearly resented. Yet payments recorded in the accounts show that Dover was spending more at that time in conducting "special sessions" in Thanet and Ringwold than it had done earlier.⁴⁹⁵

The income to the corporation that resulted from its tax privileges as a member of the Cinque Ports was derived in a rather complex manner.

Because Dover had traditionally supplied twenty one, then twenty, ships for service to the king for 15 days at the town's own cost, the town, in common with the other Cinque Ports, was exempt from most taxation.⁴⁹⁶

This included exemption from the fifteenths and tenths, or subsidies, voted by Parliament. Because each Head Port had Members, so it had a number of freemen and foreigners, called "advocants", who lived outside its liberties, but shared its privileges. Naturally the number of men desiring to be advocants increased during periods of high taxation.

Recognising this, Henry VII had accepted the situation and, attempting to keep it within bounds, in 1491 granted the Cinque Ports £500 at the collecting of every fifteenth and tenth to distribute as tax exemptions to their advocants.⁴⁹⁷ The ports divided this amount between them on the basis of the number of ships each provided for ship service. On this basis, advocants were then given "billets", which they gave to the tax collector in order to obtain an excuse from the Exchequer for certain sums for which they would ordinarily have been taxed. They then paid their head port half that sum in exchange for the billet. These amounts were entered in the town accounts first as "allowances of advocants",

then later as "billet money".⁴⁹⁸

This system was economically misleading and socially divisive.

Economically, it meant that the corporation simply absorbed the billet money into its current receipts. This had obvious advantages for civic finance, in that subsidies were often levied in times that were hard for the town as well as the Crown, and in the 1590s it is difficult to see how the corporation finances would have survived without this extra income. At the same time, it meant that the corporation was totally unprepared for the demands for ship service when they arose.

The response of the mayor and jurats to a sudden demand for ship service, as in 1596, was to call for a huge general sess, since the "land sess" on those responsible for the money did not bring in enough. This seems likely to have been perceived as unfair, since many wealthier inhabitants of the town had been exempted from tax and possibly granted their "lands" at a special rate from the town precisely so that they could meet these charges.⁴⁹⁹ The ambiguity of the position was not lost on at least one of the poorer inhabitants of the town, John Browne, a cobbler, who was imprisoned with bolts on his heels in 1596 because he said of the sess: "that it was a shame for the mayor, jurats and common council to charge poor men withal and not to pay it themselves," and of a sessor: "you go jetting up and down in your cloak and looking for reverence and the poor commons must be in subjection."⁵⁰⁰

A note in the town accounts for 1546-47 indicates how Dover's share of the Cinque Ports' £500 exemption was distributed at this period, and also shows that nothing was set aside for the provision of ship service:

"The whole allowance at every fifteenth and tenth to be allowed to our members as hereafter ensueth and they to have it free payment nothing but for writing and sealing and...if they will have a more sum to compound with the town for the same:

St Peter's	£7 10s. 0d
St John's	£20 0s. 0d
Birchington	£10 0s. 0d.
Kingsdown and Ringswold	£8 0s. 10d.
Folkestone	£13 6s. 8d.
Faversham	£14 0s. 0d.

The residue to ourselves and our friends at the discretion of the mayor and the town clerk to the sum of £160 and not above upon pain of 1000 marks to be bound immediately to the use of the King."⁵⁰¹

In 1606 the mayor and jurats of Dover agreed that if the inhabitants of the vill of Wood would give £10 "in the name of a fine and 10s per annum by composition", they too should have a free billet yearly for the sum discharged at every fifteenth and tenth on the same vill.⁵⁰² St. Johns also paid fairly regularly to have a greater sum than they had been allowed, although in 1606 it was decreed that St. John's and St. Peter's should not have their allowance of billets "upon the half allowance" because they had refused to contribute towards the expenses of renewing the Cinque Ports Charter.⁵⁰³

Occasionally, until the end of the Elizabethan period, the accounts give the names of those receiving billets, and the places where they would have paid tax; the man most frequently mentioned in the early Elizabethan period was Sir Henry Crispe of Birchington who, in 1564 for example, paid on billets for property in Woodchurch, Chislet and Whitstable. Other prominent Thanet families like the Norwoods and the Spracklings also profited from this tax concession.⁵⁰⁴ Later, the billet money was recorded in one lump sum paid in by the collector. It seems likely that the term "our friends" used in the memorandum setting out the amounts was at times a precise term, and that billets might have been given in return for favours received and money loaned to the town, or in the hope of favours to come.⁵⁰⁵

Some inhabitants of Dover received billets on lands at some distance from the town. The accounts for 1564-65 lists them and shows that billets were paid for lands in the surrounding area - Alkham, Swingfield, Ewell, Oxney, Lydden, Beausborough, and Ringeloe - but also

in Challock, Faversham, Boughton and Woodchurch.⁵⁰⁶ The increased receipts of billet money throughout the period suggest that there was an increase in taxable income, and it is interesting that this increase seems most obvious among those men living outside the town - although this would be difficult to prove since they do not figure in the evidence that has been studied in detail.

There was usually a time lag between the granting of a subsidy and the payment of billet money, sometimes as much as two years; for example in 1603-4 billet money was received for the 6th and 7th fifteenth and tenth; the former had been granted in 1600-01. Yet in 1607-08 two subsidies seem to have been paid in one year.⁵⁰⁷ The town accounts show that billet money was received nine times between 1546 and 1570, and averaged £26.3s.6d; six times in the 1580s, when it averaged £37.4s.4d; every year between 1596 and 1610 - although no figures survive for 1600-1601- when it averaged £78.5s.4d. It was then received only twice more - £71.9s.0d. in 1623-24 and £142.18s.0d. in 1624-25. In the years between 1596 and 1603 when the corporation had to impose sesses to pay for its debts and the fiscal system seemed to be close to breaking down, income from the Cinque Ports' connection commonly formed about 30% of Dover's total income, so that the corporation was surviving on a source of income for which there was by then no reasonable justification, but on which it had clearly come to depend. The ending of subsidies in the years of personal rule by Charles I was clearly one factor in forcing the corporation to seek larger loans outside the town.

iv) The Corporation's expenditure

Choices have had to be made in grouping expenditure into categories since the chamberlains did not do so in their accounts, with the exception of the quarterly payments, or "quarterage", made to the town's officers and servants. For the purpose of analysis, payments made by the corporation have therefore been grouped into five broad categories: a) the administration of the town, b) the maintenance of the town and port's physical fabric, c) preparations for war and defence, d) the provision of gifts, feasts and hospitality both to outsiders and townsmen, e) the provision of emergency poor relief and f) the provision of ship service and maintenance of membership of the confederation of Cinque Ports. Each of these will be discussed in turn in order to examine the priorities of the ruling group in determining the use of their resources, and to note signs of change over the period.

a) The expenses of administering the town

The term "administration" has been chosen to name the category that includes all payments made to office-holders, both their fees and their expenses. It also includes all payments made to lawyers, both inhabitants and outsiders, who conducted legal business on behalf of the corporation, all payments made for property or services leased by the corporation, and all payments made to maintain law, order and hygiene in the town. For the purposes of this study, administrative expenditure therefore means those expenses that the oligarchy incurred in maintaining their own office-holding structure, in regulating the market, the health and the social order of the town, and in attempting to preserve the town's liberties, integrity and interests in its relations with the Crown and with other towns.

It can be seen from table 1:2 that these payments, as might be expected, consistently formed the corporation's highest single category of

expenditure. It is also clear that the cost of maintaining the office-holding structure and the town's liberties and order rose steadily through the period. The corporation's administrative payments are dealt with below in four sections: wages and fees paid to officials, the costs of suits and petitions on behalf of the town, the cost of maintaining order, and rents paid by the town.

The wages and fees of officials

These, apart from the fee to the mayor, remained remarkably constant throughout the period, and increased expenditure is to be explained less by rises in individual payments than by an increase in the number of officials being paid, and also by increases in their expenses when they travelled outside the town. Table 1:22 sets out the wages paid to principal officers in those years when there was a change in payment to one or more of them. It also gives the total of wages paid, showing that the difference between the total of wages paid to the principal officers and of those paid to all officers increased. It will be suggested that this happened as more minor duties, for which payment was often very low, became in a sense professionalized as their regular and competent performance began to be regarded as essential in the interests of order and safety. The payment of liveries will be discussed below. Their totals are given for the same years, in the interests of clarity, although they actually varied much more frequently than wages until the early seventeenth century.

Table 1:22 Wages and liveries of principal officers in Dover

	1509	1546	1556	1564	1588	1605	1619	1629
	£ s d	£ s d	£ s d	£ s d	£ s d	£ s d	£ s d	£ s d
Mayor	4	4	8	8	12	20	30	30
Town clerk	3 6 8	4	4	4	4	4	4	4
Town sergeant	1 5 0	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
Mayor's sgt.	1	1 6 8	1 6 8	2	2	2	2	2
Parish clerk	1	1	1	2 13 4	2 13 4	1	1	4
Pounder				1 6 8	1 6 8			10

	Total wages of principal officers			Total wages of all officers			Total expenditure on liveries		
	£	s	d	£	s	d	£	s	d
1509	10	11	8	11	11	8	2	0	0
1546	12	6	8	12	6	8	2	10	0
1556	16	6	8	16	6	8	3	5	6
1564	20	0	0	20	7	6	7	18	6
1588	24	0	0	34	8	6	15	6	8
1605	29	0	0	43	19	4	15	0	0
1619	39	0	0	54	8	8	18	0	0
1629	52	0	0	58	9	4	18	0	0

Sources: BL Egerton 29618, CKS DTA 1546-1558, 1558-1581, 1581-1603, 1603-1626, 1626-1649, Expenses - wages of officers and liveries for the relevant years.

Notes: The mayor was paid £12 extra in 1586 for his "exceptional expenses".

The pounder, also called the collector of droits, was responsible for collecting harbour dues. This office appears to have been unpaid until 1564, and was not necessary in later years when the harbour droits were farmed.

The terms "parish clerk" and "bell-ringer" seem to have been used interchangeably in the accounts for much of the sixteenth century. Until the 1530s this payment was received by the sexton of St. Martin's Priory, who kept the town clock there.

The table shows that the difference between the total wages of principal officers and of all officers began to increase noticeably between 1564 and 1588. The corporation's growing concern with the town's cleanliness and security seems to have resulted in their giving certain tasks to named people and paying them a wage to do them, rather than relying on the town's porters, or making single payments to poor inhabitants to clean the market place, for example.⁵⁰⁸ The accounts show that this custom of paying quarterage to people outside the normal hierarchy, and thus of encouraging an elementary specialization, seems to have begun in 1574 when Father Smith began to receive 13s.4d. per annum for cleaning the market.⁵⁰⁹ It seems likely that this kind of annual payment was

also one means of pensioning certain poor people, since Father Smith was succeeded by Father Edwards in 1581 and by Mother Edwards in 1582.⁵¹⁰ She was entitled "town scavenger", and seems to have continued in the job until Widow Gill succeeded her in 1605, followed by Jane Wilford, or "Crookback Jane", in 1613.⁵¹¹ It is perhaps noteworthy that such essentially unclean tasks fell entirely to women from the late sixteenth century. From 1588 the task of cleaning the town privy was paid for at 2s.8d. per year, and it always fell to a woman - first Mother Rowland then Jerine Jackson, a prostitute who was troublesome to the town over a long period.⁵¹² The wage perhaps helped to relieve the town of the burden of supporting Jerine Jackson's illegitimate children.⁵¹³

The corporation's care for some of its long-term inhabitants is thus illustrated by its principle of providing work for them when possible, and of ensuring that they were pensioned when they could no longer work. When the new sluice was finished in 1594, the post of sluice-keeper was added to the quarterage. This task was given to Thomas Jelley at £2 per annum plus 6s.3d. - later £1 - for the soap and tallow needed to keep the sluice turning freely.⁵¹⁴ In 1619 and several subsequent years, because of his great age, he received a gratuity of £1 so that he could pay a man to help him.⁵¹⁵ Thus the town simultaneously preserved his status, gave him a pension, and ensured that the sluice was properly kept. After his death, in 1623, the post passed to his son-in-law, John Sweeting, who by then received £4 per annum.⁵¹⁶ John Sweeting, in turn, received £1 in compensation from the town in 1633 for having received a hurt while about the town's business.⁵¹⁷ At a higher social level, Thomas Whiting, who was the son of a former influential town sergeant, was paid for being pounder in 1603-4.⁵¹⁸ The collection of the harbour dues was farmed out by the corporation in the following year, rendering him redundant, and it is interesting to note that in that year, 1605, he appeared on the quarterage list for one year as "ballast master" at £4

per annum.⁵¹⁹

From the mid-1570s the corporation was clearly also more concerned about the provision of reliable defence and security for the town, and from 1574 a gunner was added to the quarterage list, joined by another in 1578, at £2 per annum each. Then in 1588, when the Spanish invasion threatened, a drummer was paid 16s.3d. per annum to call men in the town together at time of need.⁵²⁰ He was retained on the quarterage list thereafter and was found to be useful to drum whenever men needed to be called together for peaceful purposes, such as dredging shingle from the harbour, for example, although he was paid additionally for that service.⁵²¹ From 1594 the beadle was paid 4s. to "cry lantern light", thus also adding to the security of the town.

Seventeenth century royal statutes concerning the poor were reflected in the addition of two new names to the quarterage list in 1618 - James Hilles, the Overseer of the House of Correction, and Arthur Justice, now known as the Beadle of the Bridewell.⁵²² Therefore by 1619 eight officials were included in the quarterage list in addition to the original five principal officers shown in the above table. The eight new officials were:

	£	s	d
Thomas Jelley, for keeping the sluice	4	0	0
Richard Oldfield, gunner	2	0	0
Jane Wilford, for cleaning the market place		16	0
Henry Barnacle, smith, for keeping the clock		10	0
Jerine Jackson, looking to the house of office		2	8
Henry Barnes, drummer		1	0
James Hilles, for the House of Correction		3	6
Arthur Justice, Beadle of the Bridewell		2	0
Total, including principal officers' wages	54	8	8

⁵²³

This suggests that the corporation had become increasingly resolved, or found it increasingly needful, to ensure a safer, more orderly town from the mid-sixteenth century onwards, and that this was more likely to be achieved by the regular payment of fees and the increase in status that this presumably brought than by ad hoc payments.

The granting of livery might also be supposed to have given status to the recipient, and for much of the period the payments for livery seem to have had the irregular character of a reward for special service, rather than that of a fixed payment. The town's chamberlains and porters, for example, received a livery but not a wage. The porters also received small payments when they undertook labouring tasks for the town.⁵²⁴ Although the porters seem to have performed comparatively menial tasks such as carrying and clearing, they were elected each year and took an oath⁵²⁵ and their livery suggests that they had some importance in the social structure and possibly in the processions of the town's officers. In the seventeenth century, when much profit was to be gained from the carriage of goods in the port and the town, it can be seen that for the first time some younger members of the ruling group put themselves forward for the office.⁵²⁶

All the principal office-holders other than the mayor received liveries as well as wages, which may help to explain why their fees remained comparatively constant while the mayor's rose. In 1510 the "clothing of officers" cost 43s.4d., with an additional 6s.8d. for the sexton of Saint Martin's Priory.⁵²⁷ Livery continued to cost the corporation just over £2 throughout the Henrician period and it seems normally to have been presented to the office-holder as livery or cloth until the early 1570s.⁵²⁸ There were occasions even then when a monetary payment was made, as in 1536 when the officers were paid 46s.4d. "because they had no liveries but money...this year".⁵²⁹ From 1573 the payments for livery became standardized in such a way as to suggest that they were money payments rather than actual livery, although the accounts of 1581 say "given to the porters to buy their livery...40s."⁵³⁰ The livery costs of just over £2 in 1509 had risen only to £18 by 1619 and beyond. The notion that livery money became merely another sort of payment is reinforced by the fact that in 1585, when there was a good deal of

dissension among the ruling group, the pounder's duties seem to have been split between two contenders for the post and it was decreed that one should receive the fee of £1 6s.8d. and the other the livery of 30s.⁵³¹

The change in the nature of livery payments, from a fluctuating amount, which might hold an element of reward, to a fixed and regular payment is also reflected in the casual rewards given from time to time to officers for their diligence or especial pains - particularly to the two sergeants, whose task must have been very onerous at times, particularly when they were collecting unpopular sasses or attempting to control public disorder. Such extra payments were made far more frequently in the earlier period.⁵³² Fixed wages and payments seem, for the most part, to have replaced such spontaneous corporate gestures.

Some customary payments served chiefly to reinforce and celebrate the status of the town's officers. Throughout the period the mayor received £1 every year for torches and wine money. Of this, 10s. was specifically for torches, and had its origin in the custom of giving him torches at Christmas time.⁵³³ The chamberlains received 8s.8d. a year between them, that is a halfpenny a week each, for "their drinking on Saturdays", on market day when they met to receive and disburse money and make up their accounts. This amount never changed, and was the only formal payment received by the chamberlains, apart from their livery. The jurats, or "masters" as they are described in the accounts, also received a quarterly sum for their wine, which varied from year to year, but usually amounted to between 7s. and 9s. per quarter. This was paid for wine to be drunk at the four principal feasts of the year - Christmas, Easter, Whitsun and Corpus Christi Day. The system on which this was paid was linked to status, as the accounts for the year 1612-13 reveal. The amount paid was "according to usage: to the mayor and every jurat having been mayor 8d. quarterly, and to every jurat not having

been mayor 4d. quarterly."⁵³⁴ The town clerk, sergeants and chamberlains also received their wine money, at 4d. quarterly. It is likely that there were opportunities for officers to make money in the performance of their duties. This was probably particularly true of the pounder, which is perhaps why the office was originally unpaid, and why it was removed from the mayor's gift in 1604.⁵³⁵ Most offices had their perquisites; for example in 1538 it was agreed that the town sergeant, the town clerk and the pounder should thereafter have one measure each of all coal or salt from any ship that sold those commodities within the town.⁵³⁶ The town clerk's fee remained at £4 throughout the period, but his tasks increased, as did his influence and opportunities. He was always given a small payment for paper and ink, which rose from 3s.4d. to 4s. in 1563, 4s.4d. the following year and 6s.8d. in the year after that, where it remained until its rise to 13s.4d. in 1596 and thereafter. From the 1560s the amount included money for "wax and other necessaries", which suggests that his legal duties increased at that time.⁵³⁷ From 1586 the town clerk received 4s. for helping to make up the Great Inquest Book and for engrossing fines at Sessions, tasks that seem to have been done formerly by counsel. From 1585 he shared 4s. with the clerk of Dover Castle for making indentures for the flesh jury.⁵³⁸ In 1601 he began to be paid for making billets, and from 1602 this became a regular payment of £7 in every year in which billets were made.⁵³⁹ On those occasions the mayoress also received £1.6.8d for sealing the billets, perhaps with wax from her bees. From the beginning of the seventeenth century, the town clerk also received regular payments of 3s.4d. when he assisted the mayor in his function as coroner.⁵⁴⁰

The corporation employed attorneys from time to time to act for them in legal cases, usually in London, but from 1557, a regular fee of £1 per annum was paid to at least one learned counsel, apparently as a

retainer, as well as other fees, usually of £1 a day to "assist at Sessions", or at trials, and smaller sums when they gave advice.⁵⁴¹ The accounts show that through the early 1560s the town employed Mr. Lovelace and Mr Alcock, joined in 1565 by Mr. Manwood. Towards the end of the 1570s John Boys and Thomas Denne were receiving £1 each a year and they continued to be used by the town for many years, being joined in the seventeenth century by Mr.Hadd in 1603, Mr.Thurbarne in 1607 and Mr.Lancelot Lovelace in 1612.⁵⁴² Their annual £1 fee remained constant, although it was not always paid in the year it was due, but their expenses for board and lodging increased during the seventeenth century, as will be shown below in the discussion of the corporation's expenditure on hospitality.

The payment the corporation often had to defer or pay in instalments was that to the Burgesses - later the Barons - to Parliament.⁵⁴³

Clearly these were usually men who could afford to wait for their money, but the cost of sending them to London when Parliament met for long periods was very difficult for a small town to meet. Although the corporation resented the interference in their affairs in the seventeenth century when the Lord Warden sometimes asked to choose both Barons, they were at least then spared the cost of sending his nominees to London.⁵⁴⁴ The rate of payment was 2s. per day for each man until 1553-54 when it rose to 4s.⁵⁴⁵ In 1597 the mayor, having been elected as Burgess to Parliament, received 6s. per day, which seems to have continued as the standard payment.⁵⁴⁶

While Dover's representatives were at Parliament they were expected to look after the town's other business in London, and this became increasingly expensive. In 1601, for example, Mr. Ward was paid for his expenses at Parliament and for "using his best means for the continuance of the Statute of Tonnage", £6 in all.⁵⁴⁷ The accounts also record examples of amounts of money being paid in London to smooth a path to

those who could act on behalf of the town's interests.⁵⁴⁸ In the early seventeenth century, on those occasions when a townsman was elected to Parliament, he presented a bill of his total expenses to the chamberlains; it was then audited and paid in full. In 1603 such a bill amounted to £42.16s.7d. and, in 1605, to £48.7s.2d.⁵⁴⁹ Part of the increased expenditure arose from the fact that travel to London had become more expensive, as will be shown below. Finally, at the beginning of each new reign, the corporation had to pay the fees of those who bore the canopy at the coronation of a new monarch.⁵⁵⁰ These fees are, however, difficult to isolate from the other sums recorded as having been collected at meetings of the Cinque Ports. They were pre-eminently status-reinforcing payments, for both the town and the individuals concerned.

Other payments for services indicate certain cultural changes in the town; for example, the payment in 1631 of £5 to the Calvinist minister of St. Mary's, John Reading, for a lecture. This subsequently became a quarterly payment, so that he earned £20 annually.⁵⁵¹ A schoolmaster had been paid a small amount between 1616 and 1619, but from that date, having been supplied with a room, the schoolmaster seems to have had to fund himself.⁵⁵² From 1631, however, the corporation paid the schoolmaster occasional amounts for teaching certain orphans.⁵⁵³ In 1635-36 a physician and another man were paid for searching the corpses of those who had died in the plague infection.⁵⁵⁴ This is the first example recorded in the accounts of such a payment being made to men; until that time they had always been made to a recognizable group of women in the town.⁵⁵⁵ These women were usually widowed or married to poor men, and their replacement by professional physicians would have denied them a small but valuable extra income.

Expenditure on proclamations, suits and petitions

This has been treated as one category because most of it was incurred by the corporation in the maintenance of its relationship - good or bad - with the Crown. Normal expenditure in this category consisted simply of small payments made to those officers who carried to the mayor and jurats instructions originating from the Crown that had been received by the Lord Warden of the Cinque Ports for transmission to them, or who carried requests and petitions from the mayor, jurats and commonalty to the Crown through the good offices of the Lord Warden. The travel expenses of the town's officers when they conducted affairs that related to the Crown also formed part of normal expenditure.

In certain years the corporation was forced into extraordinary expenditure: when it sought to increase its liberties and privileges or defend its existing ones; when it appealed directly to the Crown for financial aid; or when it pursued an expensive suit against one of its own inhabitants, or was forced to defend itself, in Star Chamber or the Chancery Court in London. It will be noted that legal suits against individuals were pursued in the London courts from time to time throughout the period, and that members of the ruling group were sometimes called there to defend their corrupt or inefficient behaviour. It will be argued, however, that expenditure by the corporation reflects a clearly changing pattern in its relationship with the Crown. In the sixteenth century the corporation was primarily concerned with establishing or confirming certain of its privileges and liberties, and with suing for financial resources with which to improve its harbour. Although the Crown was often slow to respond, and sometimes critical of the corporation's behaviour, these negotiations had a positive outcome. After the accession of James I, however, the situation changed: in the first half of the seventeenth century the corporation surrendered most of its rights in the harbour to the Crown; partly as a result of this

it was thereafter chiefly concerned with defending its liberties and privileges from persons appointed by, or at least approved by the Crown, who sought to usurp them in their own interest.

Normal expenditure on maintaining the relationship between the town and the Crown ranged between about £2 and £15 per year and was largely concerned with communication between the town and the Castle - whose Constable, the Lord Warden of the Cinque Ports, was appointed by the Crown and answerable to it - and between Dover and other towns within the region that might be similarly affected by Crown decisions. Normal expenditure, therefore, included payments made to the "boder" of Dover Castle - the Lord Warden's servant, who acted as a messenger between the Castle and the town - for bringing proclamations to the town, at 8d. a time, and to the town clerk and town sergeant for reading or publishing proclamations in the town - at 2d. a time until 1546, then at 4d.⁵⁵⁶ Proclamations from the Castle usually consisted of statutes or instructions received from the Crown and thus advertized to the people in the market place. The mayor and jurats announced their orders in the same way. The boder was also paid for bringing and discharging Exchequer writs, and for bringing precepts and letters from the Castle.⁵⁵⁷

In order to keep abreast with the administrative demands of the Crown, the corporation had occasionally also to buy books. Books of statutes were bought throughout the period, usually after a Parliament.⁵⁵⁸ In 1550, as well as the current statutes, the corporation also bought "a testament of the large volume."⁵⁵⁹ In 1610 they had to pay Mr. Poulter, a brewer, 9s.6d. for his copy of the book de Pace Regis et Regni. A marginal note in the accounts points out that the mayor, Mr. Leonard, had had a copy "and said his wife burnt it".⁵⁶⁰ An increasing need for provincial rulers to understand the administration of the law is suggested by the fact that in 1612 they paid 15s.6d. for Mr. Rastell his abridgement of statutes, in 1620, 7s.6d. for Dalton's Country Justice of

the Peace and, in 1624, 3s.0d for "a book of the late Acts of Parliament".⁵⁶¹ It is clear that the stream of statutes from the Crown and the increasingly complex demands made on those who administered justice in the town called for literate officers from the mid-sixteenth century. Literacy seems to have been taken for granted among the ruling group by the seventeenth century, because in 1614 the corporation, at a cost of 4s.6d., bought 12 books "of the office of constables" for the 12 constables of the town, to be delivered to their successors when they left office.⁵⁶² The degree of change over time in this respect is perhaps marked by the fact that Edward Maye, who was mayor in 1533-34, appears to have been unable to sign his name.⁵⁶³

Expenses in this category were also incurred by the town's officers in journeys to Canterbury, other towns in the region, and London, "about the town's business". The cost of a horse hire to London was 2s.8d. in 1509, but 14s.4d. in 1570.⁵⁶⁴ After that, however, horses were not hired all the way to London; instead the route seems always to have included a boat between London and Gravesend. The accounts of 1623 give a break down of the cost of a journey to London. Horse hire to Gravesend was in three stages: from Dover to Canterbury, Canterbury to Sittingbourne, and Sittingbourne to Gravesend, each stage costing 3s. Thence the return boat hire to London was only 1s.⁵⁶⁵ Horse hire to Canterbury had risen steadily from 1s. in 1514.⁵⁶⁶ The costs of diet and lodging in London also rose. They are difficult to assess exactly because they were usually recorded for groups of people and for unspecified times, but 2s. per day was paid to the Burgesses to Parliament while they were in London in 1548, while the mayor received 6s. per day to share with his town sergeant in 1613, and the town clerk almost 5s. per day for himself in 1633.⁵⁶⁷

Before 1535, officers went to London chiefly to petition for help in improving the harbour in quite modest ways, or to pursue individual

actions in the courts, such as the long-running suit involving John Playne, formerly a priest at St. Martin's Priory who claimed the right to property formerly owned by the priory that had been taken by the corporation for the use of the town.⁵⁶⁸ Such individual controversies continued throughout the period; for example over £8 was spent in 1558 to defend the town's liberties in the case of "Harwood and his daughter", and over £5 between 1565 and 1567 in a "matter between Mr Mynge and the town" concerning a French ship.⁵⁶⁹ But from 1535 until 1561 most of the cases and suits concerned the privileges, liberties and charters of the town and port.⁵⁷⁰ Proceedings were taken in London against Hythe in a controversy over the right to the passage across the Channel, which was settled in 1553 when the corporation paid "for the confirmation of our charter of the passage under the broad seal".⁵⁷¹ The position of the faring trade in Dover was established, after the town clerk had been paid £6.10s. to pursue a suit about it in London in 1553.⁵⁷² By 1560 the corporation had succeeded in confirming Dover's position as a port of passage and its privileges in exercising the right of ferriage between ship and shore in return for giving free ferriage to the Crown's letters and papers.

From 1560 until 1580 the majority of expenditure in this area was laid out on petitioning the Crown for the financial help needed to renew the harbour, in order to exploit Dover's fortunate position fully. The mayor and various commissions went to London on a number of occasions and, when the Queen was in Canterbury in 1573-74, they pursued her there to "sue for the haven." In 1577 it cost £16.12s. to send the mayor to London to try again.⁵⁷³ These efforts came to fruition in 1582 when the Queen granted to the renewing of Dover harbour the dues raised by the export of certain wheat, barley and beer, together with tonnage on ships over a certain size entering British ports.⁵⁷⁴

Once work had started on the harbour, a number of difficulties arose in

relations between the corporation and the Crown, partly as a result of ambitious interference by some members of Dover's ruling group in the granting of office and the manipulation of money involved in the harbour construction.⁵⁷⁵ The period between 1577 and 1588 saw an associated series of disputes between members of the ruling group, which culminated in enquiries by the Privy Council into the town's affairs and the imprisonment of a mayor.⁵⁷⁶ The disputes caused much expenditure, particularly on journeys to London, between 1583 and 1587.⁵⁷⁷ During the 1580s the mayor and jurats also had to defend themselves against a writ from the Crown for having allowed some wheat and beer to be transported without the payment of customs dues.⁵⁷⁸ Controversy between the town and the Lord Warden over the choice of the Burgess to Parliament had to be settled in London in 1584. Finally, in 1588 the town had to send an officer to London to sue for the repayment of money they had spent upon two companies of soldiers.⁵⁷⁹

In the last decade of the sixteenth century, most of Dover's suits and petitions to the Crown concerned its attempt to cling to the privileges granted by its membership of the confederation of the Cinque Ports, and as such the expenditure involved is discussed in more detail below. In the first four decades of the seventeenth century, however, the freedoms of the town were under threat, and the corporation spent large sums on defending the liberties it had established in the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries. It was also forced to defend the commercial benefits it had gained from its improved harbour, which now attracted the attention of some acquisitive outsiders.

After the accession of James I, the Crown listened less sympathetically to the petitions of the corporation. Evidence from the town accounts shows that in the early seventeenth century the corporation spent money and time on petitioning the Crown about a number of issues that it perceived as a threat to its liberties. These were: a contentious choice

of bailiff, the granting of port dues as perquisites to friends of the Crown, the failure of the Warden and Assistants of the Harbour to fulfil their obligation to keep it in good repair, interference by successive Lords Warden in the selection of the Burgesses to Parliament, failure by the Crown to pay soldiers it billeted in the town, and demands by the Crown for contributions to the King's household. The further contentious issue of Ship Money is dealt with under Cinque Ports' expenditure below. The relationship between the corporation and the Lord Warden of the Cinque Ports together with his deputy, the Lieutenant of Dover Castle, who actually lived there, was, of course, crucial in smoothing communication between the town and the Crown. State papers make it clear that this relationship underwent a change at the accession of James I. After 1603, whenever there was a change of influential officers at the Castle a deluge of petitions went to the Lord Warden from townspeople 'seeking places as, for example, gunners, carpenters, and smiths.'⁵⁸⁰ Overt ambition for profitable place extended to the Lord Warden himself at this period, and the corporation's relations with the Crown need to be set against that background, noting that the Lord Warden was also Admiral of the Cinque Ports and therefore entitled to certain advantages from the sale of wrecked boats.

In 1624 an agreement was drawn up between George Villiers, the Lord Admiral Buckingham, and Lord Zouch, the then Lord Warden of the Cinque Ports, by which Buckingham agreed to pay £1000 ready money and £500 a year for life to Lord Zouch in exchange for the surrender of his patent as Lord Warden.⁵⁸¹ After the coronation of Charles I, when the Duke of Buckingham had become Lord Warden, Sir John Hippiesley won the office of Lieutenant of Dover Castle, and was thus deputy to Buckingham. He clearly acted zealously on his master's behalf in claiming salvage and goods from ships captured in the Channel. Hippiesley wrote to Buckingham in 1625, saying that he had been at the Admiralty Court in

Dover all the week and had made £30,000 for the Duke's use, and in the following year he pointed out to him that it had not been a bad bargain that he and Secretary Nicholas had made for the Duke, since the goods that fell to the king in the Cinque Ports now belonged to the Duke.⁵⁸² Certain Dover ship-owners were involved in both salvage and privateering at that period, and there had been disputes in particular between the claims to goods of the Brameses and the Hughessens.⁵⁸³ Hippiesley favoured the Hughessens and they won the pre-emption of wrecked goods in 1625.⁵⁸⁴ This situation clearly encouraged division within the town. Some measure of the unpopularity of the Duke of Buckingham among certain inhabitants can be judged from the fact that when he was killed, a health was drunk by some of them at the "Ship" inn in Dover to John Felton, his assassin.⁵⁸⁵

In a period of such obvious patronage and placement for profit, the Crown appointment of bailiff to the town was a sensitive one, and a series of bad appointments united the town in protest and in a long series of legal disputes that proved very expensive. Emmanuel Alley had been appointed bailiff by 1602, when the corporation protested that he was obtaining certain allowances "by practice", and claiming greater fees than any previous holder of the office had done.⁵⁸⁶ In spite of their petitions to be rid of him, the bailiwick, with survivorship, was granted to him and his son by the new administration in 1604. Between 1602 and 1622 the corporation spent at least £74 on suits involving Mr. Alley: on defending the town sergeant in a suit Alley brought against him, on trying to prevent him from taking petty customs and so discouraging trade, in defending themselves from a petition against them procured by him from the Exchequer, and from the quo warranto he brought against the corporation.⁵⁸⁷ They were also put to some expense when he allowed some felons to escape in 1608.⁵⁸⁸ It seems typical of the lack of understanding by the Crown of the need of provincial ports for

incentives to trade that the Lord Treasurer wrote to the customer, searcher and farmers in Dover in support of Alley's petition that he should have the right to take 2d. in the pound of all merchant strangers' goods as petty customs or "scavage." When this letter was discussed in the common assembly in Dover everyone present, except Alley himself, objected to it.⁵⁸⁹

In 1622 Emmanuel Alley "assigned", or rather sold, the bailiwick to Richard Dancy.⁵⁹⁰ The corporation then began a new battle against Richard Dancy and his brother Maximilian, who were clearly unfit for the appointment. In 1628 the mayor and jurats petitioned the Duke of Buckingham and then the Privy Council for reform, saying that Maximilian Dancy lived in London and had not appointed a sub-bailiff; as a result no court could be held nor process executed in the town.⁵⁹¹ Dancy put in a counter-petition asking that he might be allowed to execute the office of bailiff by deputy, claiming that he had been for many years an agent in London for clothiers of Hereford and Shropshire so that the 500 spinners and workpeople who were daily fed by his industry and credit would be undone if he failed to execute that office in person.⁵⁹² Some flavour of his indifference to his duties in Dover is given by his response to the charge that he had bought unwholesome food for prisoners there - he said that unless they would be ruled, dog's flesh were too good for them.⁵⁹³ In 1640 Mrs. Dancy complained that "Mr. Mayor did send no prisoners thither but beggarly felons such as were not able to pay their fees."⁵⁹⁴ Disputing the appointment of the Dancys cost the corporation over £15 in 1627-8 and over £45 in 1628-9 alone.⁵⁹⁵ Jeremy Alley attempted to retrieve his survivor's right to the bailiwick in 1626, but Sir John Hippiesley confided to the Duke of Buckingham that he thought Mr. Alley was ashamed to come to Dover because he and his father had sold the office to Mr. Dancy for £600.⁵⁹⁶

Between 1603 and 1605 the corporation spent much on legal advice and

travel while they were coming to the decision to surrender their rights in the harbour to the Crown.⁵⁹⁷ The decision, once taken, opened the commercial potential of the harbour to speculators in search of perquisites. The first was a Captain Johnson who had acquired a lease on the harbour's crane and wharf. The corporation spent over £20 in 1607 on legal advice and travel in an attempt to defend their customary right to take the profits from the crane. Nevertheless, in 1608 they had to surrender the lease of the crane and pay Captain Johnson his first annual rent of £50.⁵⁹⁸ A more serious matter was the determination of one Simon Dugdale to instal a boom across the harbour, and thus charge ships entering it. In 1634, the corporation spent over £26 petitioning the Lord Warden in London to defend them against Dugdale, complaining that the boom would deter ships from trading to Dover.⁵⁹⁹ The corporation were clearly justified in their view, since foreign ships were using Dover harbour at that time precisely because of the reduced customs rate.⁶⁰⁰

Certain inhabitants of the town who held office under the Crown were also tempted by the new profitability of the harbour to seize for themselves privileges that the corporation regarded as rightfully theirs. Between 1621 and 1624 the corporation spent at least £32.18s.6d. on pursuing a suit to the Lord Treasurer's Secretary in London against one of its inhabitants, Jacob Brames, who, on obtaining the office of Customer of Sandwich and its members (which included Dover), expressed the intention of moving the Dover custom house closer to his own house near the harbour, thus threatening to divert profitable traffic from the centre of the town.⁶⁰¹ In another case, the corporation resisted not the office-holder, who had died, but his children, who were attempting to capitalize on their father's former privileges in a way he had not done himself. William Ward had been mayor of Dover three times, in 1613-14 and from 1618-20. During the same period he had also been

Marshall of the Admiralty Courts of the Cinque Ports and Collector of Droits for the Lord Warden, a post that brought him into conflict with some of the other ship-owners in the town, notably the Brameses.⁶⁰² The Lieutenant of the Castle referred to him, in 1620, as being, together with James Hughessen, one of the favourites of the then Lord Warden, Lord Zouch. While in favour with the Lord Warden, Ward had procured to the use of the town a lease of certain harbour duties called sluisage and harbourage, or tonnage of strangers, from the Lord Warden and Assistants of the Harbour. Because this lease had been made to him in his own name, after his death in 1623 his son Edward claimed that an interest in the lease had come to him in his father's will.⁶⁰³ In 1629, the corporation spent £30 on successfully defending themselves from a suit served on them by Edward Ward.⁶⁰⁴

In spite of having surrendered their interest in the harbour to the Crown in order to hand over responsibility for its maintenance, the corporation found that this was not, after all, being attended to. At a common assembly in 1614 they noted that the walls of the harbour and the pent were in great decay and the harbour was in debt £200 at interest, yet they had been informed that the king had granted the Lord Warden £1,500 towards the repair of Dover castle.⁶⁰⁵ The mayor and town clerk consequently went to London to deliver a petition that some of this money should be spent on the harbour, at a cost of £4.16s.0d; in 1635-36 the town again sent solicitors to London to sue for the repair of the harbour, this time at a cost of almost £110.⁶⁰⁶

It is hardly surprising that, when they found themselves manipulated into agreeing with the Lord Warden's choice of Burgesses to Parliament in 1624, twenty one inhabitants of the town petitioned the House of Commons against an unlawful election, which they claimed had not been made by all the freemen of the town.⁶⁰⁷ The cost of sending certain officers to London to attend a committee of Parliament about this matter

was over £7, with an extra £12 for the mayor on another occasion.⁶⁰⁸ Perhaps some of the same resistance was expressed in the corporation's refusal to pay the small amount of 13s.4d. demanded of it annually towards the provisioning of the king's household in the early seventeenth century. In 1614 they spent 33s. in going to see Sir Peter Manwood to complain about this imposition.⁶⁰⁹ He dealt with the matter by paying their outstanding debt, so that they had to pay the full amount to him in instalments, finishing with £1.16s.0d. in 1620 that marked the "full payment for 19 years."⁶¹⁰

A further grievance against the Crown emerges from the expenditure of 1626-28 when the corporation sent representatives to London twice, Winchelsea once and Canterbury five times to claim some of the money owed them for billeting the soldiers who had flooded into the town over the period of Christmas 1624 and new year 1625 to await the setting out of Count Mansfeldt's expedition.⁶¹¹ As Francis Wilford said in a letter to Secretary Nicholas of December 27, 1624, it was hard to send 14,000 soldiers to that town only.⁶¹² The town was never compensated for the misery and fear the soldiers caused, nor for their theft and house-breaking, nor for their reported laying waste of the country 10 or 12 miles around.⁶¹³

From time to time, officers of the town were called to London to explain certain of their actions, for example to answer the charges of the Venetian Ambassador in 1609-10 and the French Ambassador in 1613 of excessively high charges in the port.⁶¹⁴ But the overwhelming tendency in the early Stuart period was for the corporation to be defending its rights and those of its inhabitants. This extended from their support of a petition by the town's merchants for free trade in opposition to the stranglehold of the London Merchants' Adventurers,⁶¹⁵ to the loan of a small amount of money to a widow in 1635-36 to help her recover land in Essex to which she had the right.⁶¹⁶

Expenditure on maintaining its relationship with the Crown and the central administration fluctuated throughout the period, depending on whether or not officers had to be sent to London to seek legal advice or to present suits or defend cases brought against them in the courts there. The expenditure on receiving and disseminating orders of various kinds was comparatively constant and not very high, nevertheless the corporation was put to some expense in order to discover how to administer the town in accordance with the wishes of the Crown. In return, in the sixteenth century most of the corporation's negotiations with the Crown, although lengthy, succeeded in adding to the town's privileges and improved its economic position. There was perhaps some degree of paternalism in the close eye kept by the Privy Council on dissension within the town during the 1580s, but the desired result of peaceful order was achieved.

The relationship seems to have deteriorated sharply in the seventeenth century, when the resources of the port that had developed from privileges obtained in the past were exploited for profit by the Duke of Buckingham, whose predecessors as Lord Warden might have defended them, and the Alleys and Dancys, bailiffs whose allegiance lay outside the town. Expenditure on transactions with the Crown at that period was primarily defensive, and often wasted. It was assumed that officers of the town would continue to administer an increasingly complex community, but their views and interests were ignored.

Rents paid by the corporation

The rents paid by the corporation provide further evidence of the economic damage to the town that resulted from the Crown's intervention in the ownership and administration of the harbour in the seventeenth century. Having lost control of the harbour, the corporation was now forced to pay fixed rents for the facilities it had formerly owned,

thereby losing fiscal flexibility and the ability to increase or diminish its harbour facilities in response to changing needs.

The accounts show that the corporation paid rent for certain facilities throughout the period, and that the number of these increased, chiefly in the seventeenth century, so that an annual bill of 4s. in 1509 had increased to over £100 by 1633.⁶¹⁷ Until 1553 the only facility leased by the town was the court hall, which it had for 4s. a year, payable on St. Martin's Day, originally from the Prior of St. Martin's. The rent remained the same after the priory lands were granted to the Archbishop of Canterbury and by him to Mr. Bingham, to whose successive rent collectors it was paid.⁶¹⁸ The corporation continued to lease it as the "old court hall" after they had built a new one.⁶¹⁹ From 1553 the corporation also paid 4s. per annum for a hog pound, called the "town pound". Thus its rents continued at 8s. per annum until 1590 when, after the improvements to the harbour, the corporation needed to lease a weighhouse, sometimes called a storehouse, at £3.16s.8d. a year, usually paid in quarterly instalments to Mr. Reynold Scott.⁶²⁰

After the surrender of their harbour rights in 1606, the corporation began to pay rent for facilities for handling goods that they had formerly owned, and also for the use of the sluice, whose repair they continued to fund. For example, in 1608 they began to pay £50 per annum for the use of the crane, £4 for the storehouse and £30 for the sluice.⁶²¹ At this time, too, they had to pay 2d. for acquittance annually on their 4s. for the court hall. They no longer leased the pound, however. They now paid a total of £84.4s.2d. in rents annually, although this is not immediately clear from the accounts since some of it was usually paid in arrears, and amounts actually paid annually became increasingly uneven.⁶²²

From 1631, the effect of the "composition" trade and the demands for space in which to store transhipped goods are very clear, as the

corporation began to pay rent for whatever covered space was available. In 1631 they hired a storehouse for £3.15s. from William Bradshaw and one for £1.10s. from Nicholas Eaton. As well as those, in 1632 the mayor's storehouse was hired for £7. In 1635, when the trade was moving towards its peak, they also hired Mr. Weekes's malthouse for £5.10s., Mark Willes's storehouse for £1.5s. for a quarter, Joseph Looper's for £8.5s. and Mr. Tiddeman's barn for £7. A marginal note in the accounts for that year shows that they had lent £200 to the harbour, and that they were allowed that sum to set against their rents to the harbour. The total amount paid in rent was £300. 12s. 8d. in that extraordinary year, an amount which had to be offset against the £1,251. 17s.5d. they received from harbour dues in the same year.⁶²³

Expenditure on the maintenance of order and keeping of special watch

The maintenance of order in the town was, of course, chiefly the responsibility of unpaid members of the ruling group, such as aldermen and constables of wards, together with the watchmen who were responsible to them. Nevertheless some small payments were made to the town officials who were responsible for the punishment of minor offenders and vagrants and also to those who temporarily guarded, cared for and transported under escort more serious offenders, such as counterfeiters, felons, pirates, and speakers of seditious words or those perceived as a threat to the state; payment was also made to men who kept watch at times of special danger or when valuable corporation property was temporarily vulnerable.⁶²⁴ Incidental expenses in this category were the amounts paid to carters who carried offenders to their punishments or lame vagrants out of the town.⁶²⁵ The corporation also had to supply food to witnesses and prisoners at times, and once lent a condemned prisoner in gaol 10s. towards the sending out of his pardon.⁶²⁶

The corporation was involved in extra expenditure during periods of

national unrest, partly because of the need to watch travellers through the port who might appear to be suspicious, and chiefly because of the need to keep under control soldiers awaiting embarkment in the town. Payments were therefore higher than usual in some years during the 1570s and 1580s when, for example, a payment was made in 1577 for taking a Papist to court, in 1580 for taking suspicious persons who had uttered seditious words, in 1582 for fetching a Spaniard to court, and in 1583 for gathering witnesses to testify in a case concerning seditious words.⁶²⁷ In 1585 and 1586 payments were made for food and a guard for some soldiers who had to be escorted to Margate to be arraigned. The accounts for 1624 and 1625 do not, however, reflect the disturbances created by the soldiers gathered in the town while waiting to embark on the expedition led by Count Mansfeldt, although in 1626 payment was made for the diet of some prisoners and for a gallows to execute one of them, Thomas Rye, who had led a disturbance.⁶²⁸

Normal expenditure was very low, ranging between 1s. and 15s. in a year. Most normal, small payments were made to the town sergeant, the porters and others who executed the public shaming or banishment of minor offenders. In 1597, however, the beadle, Abraham Beer, began to receive regular payments for whipping and banishing vagrants and those other people the bench considered undesirable occupants of the town.⁶²⁹ The social implications of maintaining order in the town are considered below, but the payments in this category offer some evidence in themselves of a change in the attitude of the bench towards minor offenders over the period. They indicate that before 1604, the majority of those banished from the town were pickpockets,⁶³⁰ rogues, vagabonds and troublemakers,⁶³¹ and whores and strumpets.⁶³² In the 1580s and 90s there is also some evidence of unwelcome vagrant soldiers arriving back from northern Europe.⁶³³ At that period poor vagrants were sometimes given money to see them on their way, even after they had been

punished.⁶³⁴

From 1604 most payments made for punishing small offenders concerned the whipping and banishing of vagrants, sixteen of them in 1616, for example.⁶³⁵ At that time, some were called vagrants and some rogues, but from 1631 all were entered in the payments as rogues, and had reached a total of 31 by 1634.⁶³⁶ The corporation's concern about the number of vagrants coming to the town is suggested by the fact that payments were made in 1633 to two watchmen at the town's end to apprehend rogues.⁶³⁷ The subject of vagrants is dealt with in more detail elsewhere,⁶³⁸ but the language, even of these accounts, seems to suggest increasing contempt for them. From 1604 until about 1620 the next most frequently punished group were women committing sexual misdemeanours, whether as harlots, whores, mothers of illegitimate children, adulteresses or fornicators. As it will be shown below⁶³⁹ the corporation paid for a public humiliation for such women that bears all the marks of the rough riding, which was normally a popular rather than an official event. Payments were routinely made for basins to be sounded before them as they were carted round the town before being whipped and, in some cases, banished.⁶⁴⁰ For the first time, in the seventeenth century some payments were also made for the public whipping of erring apprentices.⁶⁴¹ Yet between 1604 and 1635 no payments are recorded for the punishment of pickpockets or thieves from the town. It seems that the ruling group's fear of vagrants and disapproval of sexual misconduct and disobedient behaviour by the young to those in authority determined their decisions about what was deserving of public humiliation in the seventeenth century.

The years when payments to watchmen, porters and sergeants were particularly high can almost all be identified as years when there was infection in the town, that is 1609 - £6.18s.10d., 1624 - £3.19s.8d. and 1635 - £30.6s.4d.⁶⁴² As time went on, more precautions seem to have

been taken to prevent the spread of infection: in 1602 and 1603, while the amount of money spent on burials suggests there was infection, there is no record of payment for any preventitive measures;⁶⁴³ in 1609 men were paid to watch night and day to stop people entering the town from the direction of Sandwich, where there was infection; a similar watch was kept on people coming from Folkestone and Hythe in 1624, and payments were made then for bricks for a pest house, for cleaning the streets more often and for supplying herbs for the windows of the court hall.⁶⁴⁴ In 1635 expensive watches were kept for many weeks on passengers and mariners aboard ships coming from Dunkirk and Ostend.⁶⁴⁵ In that year also watches were kept on the houses of plague victims and locks and keys supplied for their doors.⁶⁴⁶

Expenditure on maintaining order and keeping special watch was thus dependent upon the circumstances of each year. The two factors that caused it to increase most noticeably were the growing number of vagrants, who were whipped and banished from the town, and the presence of serious infection, against which increasingly strict measures were taken. The variety of offences for which public humiliation was ordered seems to have decreased over the period, even including sexual offences, so that by the 1620s and 1630s expenditure in this category was chiefly on whipping and banishing "rogues", with the addition, in 1635, of many payments for watching at the doors of the "visited". This suggests that the corporation was by then focusing its exemplary guardianship on supra-local elements it feared might seriously disrupt the society for which it was responsible, rather than on the petty crime and disorder that was a constant irritant to the inhabitants of the town.

b) Expenditure on maintaining the fabric of the town and port

Expenditure on the construction and repair of buildings and facilities owned by the town, which included some houses leased out for rent, the

court hall, the market and its measures, the town's prisons and instruments of correction, and also the harbour facilities for most of the period, normally formed less than 20 per cent. of the corporation's total expenditure: often less than 10 per cent. between 1516 and 1579, and between 10 and 20 per cent. from 1596 until the pause in the accounts after 1635-6. When expenditure rose above 20 per cent. it was usually because of some major construction work, except in 1545-46 when a great deal of general repair and cleaning was undertaken in preparation for a visit from the king.⁶⁴⁷ It seems likely that the choice of projects towards which expenditure was directed was made not simply on the basis of necessity, but according to the values and priorities of the current ruling group.

A rise in normal expenditure on the fabric of the town and port from the 1590s was partly a consequence of a feature almost unique to Dover, in that the town increased in size physically by acquiring extra land that was not so much reclaimed from the sea as accidentally acquired from it as the result of work on the harbour in the 1580s.⁶⁴⁸ New walls and groins caused shingle beach to accumulate in such a way that a whole new district, known as the Pier, gradually came into being. This new land was gradually leased by individuals from the Commissioners to the Harbour and built upon.⁶⁴⁹ The responsibilities of the town for paving streets, clearing rubbish and keeping watch, for example, were thus substantially increased over a few decades, while rents from these new lands went not to the corporation but to the Warden and Assistants of the Harbour of Dover, a new body created by Royal Charter in 1606.⁶⁵⁰ The new harbour caused increased expenditure to the town in other ways also. Keeping its entrance clear from shingle had always been an expensive item for the town, but from the 1590s it became much more so, as more shingle swept round the new pier head, now in deeper water, into the harbour mouth.⁶⁵¹ The Crown had paid for the construction of walls

and sluices for "the pent", but the maintenance of the sluice and the turn water and the construction of new ones when necessary became a constant and heavy charge upon the corporation.⁶⁵² From the 1590s annual payments were made to labourers for expelling the beach from the harbour, and for rakes and baskets for their use. In 1594 the sluice gates were mended, and from 1598 there were annual payments for setting up and servicing the turn water. In 1610, for example, at least £43 was spent on the turn water.⁶⁵³ These payments were usually highest in the stormy months of October and March, but sometimes continued right through the winter.

Normal expenditure throughout the whole period 1509-1640 included repairs to buildings owned by the town, although these sometimes seem to have been neglected for long periods. There is some evidence to suggest that in the Henrician period not only the harbour but the town itself was in decay. In 1523 the mayor, Robert Dyer, refused an additional payment offered to him by the common council because the "poverty of the town" weighed much with him.⁶⁵⁴ The accounts of 1520 mention vacant town land, and in 1531 the town pulled down a house because it was in such decay "that it could not be repaired without building".⁶⁵⁵ The 1532 assessment of wards for the king's service tax describes a number of properties in four different wards as "now destroyed by the sea".⁶⁵⁶ An inquest of 1550 reveals that a traveller staying the night in an inn in Dover before crossing the Channel met his death when he left his room to look for somewhere to ease himself and fell into a "great hole in the ground which was sometime a vault or a cellar."⁶⁵⁷

Very little repair or renewal was undertaken in the first four decades of the sixteenth century. Less than one per cent. of total expenditure was spent on it between 1534 and 1537, for example. Certain tasks were undertaken regularly, such as "cutting the brook", that is clearing the flow of the river to the sea just outside the town walls.⁶⁵⁸ Some money

was spent on repairing the town walls, chiefly those at Snargate which, from 1526 were constantly breached by the sea during storms.⁶⁵⁹ "Ship bridges" were repaired - apparently ramps across which cattle could be driven and goods carried aboard ships - and the market was cleaned once or twice a year, and renovated occasionally.⁶⁶⁰ The roofs of houses were occasionally repaired, and some minor improvements were made to the Court Hall.⁶⁶¹ In some years the little available expenditure seems to have been concentrated upon the places and instruments of correction - the prisons, the Hole and the Cage, the pillory, stocks, cucking stool and gallows and their attendant locks and iron ware.⁶⁶² Money was also spent regularly at that time, and throughout the period, on maintaining and renewing the town's measures and keeping them in line with current ordinances.⁶⁶³ In other words, necessary but minimum amounts were spent on keeping the town functioning as a market, roughly maintaining the common stock of property, and keeping order among the inhabitants. Inhabitants themselves were responsible for keeping in repair the paving outside their own houses, and for cleaning out their sinks and gutters every Wednesday and Saturday; dwellers next to the brook were expected to keep their bank scoured on pain of being fined.⁶⁶⁴

There are signs of a new determination on the part of the oligarchy to improve the physical state of the town and increase the corporation's income in the 1550s, when quite extensive repairs were made to the flesh house, the shambles and the butchery in general, and when some new houses and shops were built for rent.⁶⁶⁵ Penniless Bench, originally an exchange for merchants near the sea, but now a general meeting and talking place for men, was also repaired in 1555.⁶⁶⁶ Efforts to improve the town's fabric were sometimes rendered worthless by coastal storms. In 1561 a pale, newly constructed, was overthrown by the violence of the sea, in 1564 the pier was breached and in 1567 and 1569 holes in the town wall had to be repaired.⁶⁶⁷ In spite of the need to tackle urgent

sea damage, money was also found in the 1560s for repairs to the town gate, to shops and the market cross, and some extensive improvements were made to the fish market in 1569, where an almshouse had been constructed in 1562.⁶⁶⁸ From the 1580s, repairs to the almshouse were an almost annual expense.⁶⁶⁹

Those improvements made in the 1550s and 1560s, chiefly to the markets, may have been initiated in response to the government's policy of encouraging urban development and regulating the quality of goods during the 1540s and 50s that has been pointed out by some historians.⁶⁷⁰ By the 1570s, however, it had become increasingly clear to the oligarchy, to travellers, and at last to the Crown that the survival of the town depended on some major improvement being made to its harbour.⁶⁷¹ The mayor and jurats had been petitioning the Crown on behalf of the harbour since the 1560s.⁶⁷² Much of the corporation's expenditure in the 1570s went on "hewing out the haven", and on paying the stone hewers of Bruges and Dunkirk who came to view the hard stone in Folkestone, and the sluicemakers of Dunkirk who came to advise on what might be done about the harbour, and to make a plan of it in 1578-9, when 1s.4d. was spent on pack thread to measure it out.⁶⁷³

In 1581 money and materials were made available to the town for the new work on the harbour by the Act of Passing Tolls. This required a payment of 3d. to be made towards the repair of Dover harbour for every ton burden of all ships of over 20 tons burden owned by the Queen's subjects on every voyage involving the carriage of most goods.

In the year 1580-81, with more money at last available, the corporation was not only relieved of finding money itself for expenditure on the harbour, but had the expectation of a better harbour and consequently increased revenue and better prospects for the economy of the town. In that year, presumably with a new sense of civic purpose and importance, the corporation financed a "new edifying" of its town hall. The

renovation seems to have been a fundamental one, since it involved the construction of a new frame; the building was obviously made both more dignified and more comfortable, since it was tiled and glazed and had new benches and a table.⁶⁷⁴ From that time in most years money was allowed for buying charcoal or coals for the town hall.⁶⁷⁵ In 1585, 5s.6d. was spent on colouring and painting the iron work of the market cross.⁶⁷⁶ Later, in 1598-99, a picture of Queen Elizabeth was set up in the hall; it had wooden leaves and was surrounded by carvings of dragons and lions - presumably emblems of both aggression and a strong defence - and cost £6.13s.6d. altogether. The portrait survives in the possession of Dover Corporation, but no longer has its accompanying "dragons ears and his tongue and the vanes and other things" that were carved by Stephen Best for 6s.9d.⁶⁷⁷ It seems likely that the town hall was conceived as an expression of the status and power of the common council and the ruling group.

Money spent on the Queen's portrait was the only non-utilitarian expenditure in the 1590s, however. In 1596-97 a new gate was made, with stones from St. Peter's church, probably for defensive purposes, since a sentinel house was made next to it in the following year, but the greatest expenditure went simply on trying to clear the harbour of beach, and on stopping a breach at the north head of the pier in 1599.⁶⁷⁸

Removing shingle was a growing problem in the seventeenth century. For example, in 1604, £15.19s.6d. was paid to labourers expelling the beach, in 1608-9, £7.8s.4d. and in 1609-10, £10.17s.6d.⁶⁷⁹ After storms, when the mouth of the harbour was stopped by shingle, it was lawful for the mayor to call all inhabitants to work at expelling the beach at their own expense.⁶⁸⁰ In 1609-10 a new turn water was constructed at a cost of over £36, and the cost of its use and maintenance rose from £18 in 1618 to £24 in 1627 and over £57 in 1635.⁶⁸¹ Straw, gorse, faggots and

wattles were brought in abundance from the nearby country for this work. Areas such as Walton and Poulton woods supplied hundreds of faggots over these years. In 1612, for example, the accounts record a payment to Thomas Fineux for an acre and a yard of wood - 50s.- and for the tithe of the same, "which wood was used to make faggots and which were lent to the use of the harbour."⁶⁸² The faggots were held down by "needles", pointed stakes of wood with holes at the top through which a wedge could be thrust. They were commonly used for a similar purpose in Romney Marsh. Probably for that reason, the 1,000 needles used in 1606 were shipped in from Rye; up to 500 were used in other years, but their place of origin was not recorded. In 1635 a Mr. Symonds of Tenterden was paid £13.13s. 4d. for 4,100 needles.⁶⁸³

In 1635 the corporation reluctantly surrendered to an order of the Privy Council and erected a boom across the harbour, at a cost of £29.1s.3sd.⁶⁸⁴ The boom was, however, for the benefit of the Customs Farmers rather than the town as it ensured that ships could not leave the harbour without paying duties, and in 1638 the Privy Council committed its custody to Sir John Manwood, Lieutenant of Dover Castle, to take such duties as he thought fit.⁶⁸⁵ Sir John Manwood tried to insist that he should collect the fees, so from 1638 until 1641 the corporation paid him and his successor a nominal perquisite of £40 a year in lieu of their being allowed to charge the duties.⁶⁸⁶

The passing of the control of the harbour from the town to the Crown in 1606 had been seen as necessary by the corporation,⁶⁸⁷ but it must also have been perceived as a loss to the "town and port of Dover". The corporation was now theoretically relieved of an impossible financial burden, while securing the economic advantages of the port's continuance, but it had lost control of the port and with it the emblem of the town's importance to the nation. These ambiguities seem to have been expressed in the building of a new market cross with a court hall

above it that was begun in the financial year 1605-6, with payments beginning in January, 1606.⁶⁸⁸ The proceedings of the common council show that the decision to surrender certain harbour duties to the Crown in exchange for a new grant of money "to the maintenance of the harbour" was discussed on July 1, 1605 and passed on August 4.⁶⁸⁹ At the same meeting on August 4, it was also agreed that an already projected new market cross "upon better consideration shall be enacted meet for a court hall and to be beautified with fair windows."⁶⁹⁰ This decision was taken by a ruling group that was establishing itself as a godly magistracy, conscious of its separate status.⁶⁹¹ All four of the chamberlains who were responsible for financing the work in that year were wealthy men, committed to the magistracy, who later became mayors.⁶⁹² The contemporary mayor, George Binge, had been elected as one of the two Burgesses to Parliament in 1604, as the town's nominee. In 1605 it had been he who moved that a weekly "godly exercise" should be held in the town.⁶⁹³

The building was probably needed for increased commercial and legal activity in the town, and its construction was presumably begun in the expectation of increased revenue from the harbour following the Charter of 1606.⁶⁹⁴ This parallels the circumstances of the building of the court hall in 1581, when the Crown had agreed that money would be provided for the refurbishing of the harbour. The new building of 1606 must have served as some compensation to the ruling group for their loss of control over the harbour, a reminder of their commercial and legal power in the town. In its windows were worked the arms of the King, the Cinque ports and Sir Thomas Waller, who had been elected as the other Burgess to Parliament in 1604, and who was the Lord Warden's nominee, not the town's.⁶⁹⁵ Thus the building that was an expression of civic prestige and opportunism had built into it the emblems of the town's new dependence upon the Crown and its agents.

The accounts give some indication of the origin of the materials used in the building of the new hall and of the complexity of the task, which indicate that the corporation was clearly searching for the best quality materials it could afford. They spent a total of over £330 on the building in the two years 1605-06 and 1606-07.⁶⁹⁶ In 1605-06, 20 tons of timber was bought at Woodchurch for £11. It cost £4.10s.0d. to carry it to the waterside at Appledore and 3s.4d. to be allowed to leave it there. A carpenter was sent there to hew it, and was paid for his travelling expenses and lodging for nine days, and 15s. for his work. The lighterman of Appledore was paid £2.7s.0d. to carry the timber to Rye. A Margate hoy then brought 4 tons of the timber from Rye to Dover, at a cost of £1.4s.0d. and a Dover mariner was paid £3.0s.0d. for bringing another 10 tons. Then there were the expenses of getting it from ship to shore by crane, and into the town on carts.⁶⁹⁷

Wainscot for the interior of the hall was bought in London, as it usually was when good quality was called for. Two cases of fine glass, and two cases of other glass costing a total of £3.14s.0d. were shipped from Dieppe at a cost of 5s. 458lbs. of lead came from Canterbury. Stones for the market cross were "dug in the walls of St. Martin's church". The cross had turned posts and pillars, and the King's arms and others were carved at the head of the court hall. 38 "pillars" were turned, to be placed under the seats in the court hall. The carpenter was given a £3 gratuity "in respect he has had a hard piece of work." The rails and stairs of the hall were coloured, and a man was paid to guard the paint while it was wet.⁶⁹⁸ The town clerk bought in London two stools covered with leather for the hall in 1608-09, and in 1633 the pillars under the court hall were marbled.⁶⁹⁹ In 1605-06, when the building was begun, the town spent a total of £279. 11s.11d. on the fabric of the town, 51 per cent. of its total expenditure, of which £180.8s.2d. was for the market cross and hall, and it spent an

extraordinary £187.17s.5d., of which £153. 4s.7d. was for the hall in the following year.⁷⁰⁰

Increased trade through the town early in the seventeenth century is reflected in the purchase by the corporation of the "Lion Stable" in 1615 and its conversion into a storehouse.⁷⁰¹ In 1617 a new bridge was built at the Little Pent. This was the old, abandoned harbour, and it suggests that increased traffic needed to cross the mouth of it to get from the new harbour to the pier district and the town beyond. The intention was clearly to make a sturdy bridge, presumably to take the weight of waggons, and it was built of stone that was largely taken from what remained of St. Martin's priory. The accounts of 1617-18 record many payments to labourers for spending several days at a time pulling down pillars from the church and pulling stones from its walls.⁷⁰² In 1628 a new fish market was made, and in 1634 fish stalls were made at the pier.⁷⁰³ This is an indication that market activity in the pier district had been regularized, and the movement of population to the district recognized, after a long period during which the magistrates had attempted to force sellers to bring their fish into the town as they had formerly done.⁷⁰⁴

Not only increased activity in the town but possibly a greater concern for order and hygiene by successive protestant ruling groups are reflected in the provision of better amenities in the seventeenth century. This may also have been prompted by recent experiences of dealing with outbreaks of infectious disease in the 1590s⁷⁰⁵ and in 1602 and 1603,⁷⁰⁶ more of which were to come. More attention was paid to public places and to the provision of shared facilities, which also perhaps suggests a greater degree of centralization of both economic and social control on the part of the ruling group.

For example, from 1610, there were far more payments for paving, not just in public meeting places, or for the usual repairs after the annual

fair, but in streets and highways.⁷⁰⁷ Much of the stone for this work came from St. Martin's church, which eventually seems to have been used as a mason's yard, since other stone was sometimes delivered there.⁷⁰⁸ In 1619 the place where the maypole had once stood was paved over. In 1608 a washing place was provided near Daystone bridge, and depositions show that this became a regular working and meeting place for women.⁷⁰⁹ There were further improvements: in 1601 the common dunghill was marked by a pole, and in 1629 equipped with a basket; in 1633 the corporation bought a new chiming clock for the town from William Barrett of Ashford; in 1620 a little house was provided in the town to lay nets in; in 1635 an oar house was provided for the ferry boat men, and the corporation bought new ferry boats from Rye in 1605 and 1622 at a cost of £7.10s. and £10. 11s.3d.⁷¹⁰

Possibly as a response to the Poor Law statute of 1610, in that year the corporation bought a tenement near the Almshouse in Cowgate Street from Mr. Warren, one of the oligarchy, "to set up a house of correction to set the poor on work".⁷¹¹ Correction seems indeed to have been meted out, as the accounts record 5d. spent on whipcord and cords for use there, and 1s.0d. spent on a lock to put on the legs of wanderers.⁷¹² The usual payments continued to be made for instruments of correction, but in the seventeenth century the Cage and the pillory were described as being "set up" whenever they were paid for, which suggests that they were no longer part of the permanent furniture of the market place.⁷¹³ Staves for the constables were bought in London in 1624-5.⁷¹⁴ In the seventeenth century, the corporation began to provide temporary buildings for the isolation and care of the sick when serious infection broke out. In 1602 there occurs the usual indication of such an outbreak - a payment for herbs in the town hall, and in 1625 a payment to a man for knocking dogs on the head - hogs seem to have vanished from the streets by that date.⁷¹⁵ But in 1624 special booths were also erected

on the hill for victims, and from that time payments were occasionally recorded for the repair of the pest house, and for such items as the clearing of its well.⁷¹⁶

On the whole, however, expenditure on the fabric of the town seems to have been determined only partly by urgent necessity. Policies of the Crown were also influential in general and crucial in the case of the harbour.⁷¹⁷ Most decisions on expenditure about the buildings and facilities of the town seem to have been determined by the values and priorities of contemporary ruling groups. Dover's apparent decay in the Henrician period was by no means unique, neither was its gradual response to the government's measures to energize urban activity in the 1540s and 50s. Dover's unique problem was the maintenance of its harbour, and whenever this was solved by injections of money from outside, the corporation was enabled to undertake other projects. Therefore, the fact that the proportion of total expenditure employed on such buildings as the market cross and court house, and on public, shared facilities tended to rise from the end of the sixteenth century, once the harbour had been improved, perhaps reflects not only the new demands of the market but the increasingly elitist and paternalistic attitude taken by successive protestant ruling groups from that time. Greatest sums of money were then spent on prestige buildings that both housed and represented their twin functions of controlling the exchange of goods and overseeing the lawful rule of the town.

c Expenditure on war and defence

It is not possible to disentangle defence expenditure completely from expenditure on the fabric of the town, since the provision of defensive gates, watch-houses, dikes and gun mounts are not always clearly separated in the accounts from other building projects. Into this category have been put payments for musters and the equipment of

soldiers and for the provision of ordnance for the town. £25 spent in 1609 on an adventure to Virginia has also been included under this head since most of this went on equipping and provisioning a ship.⁷¹⁸ These payments were quite low in most periods, often less than £5, rising steeply at obviously sensitive times, such 1512-13: £17.8s.11d., 1557-8: £25.7s.2., 1584-85: £18.17s.1d; 1585-86: £47.15s.9d., 1601-2: £16.17s.2d.⁷¹⁹ The period from 1614 to 1626 saw particularly high expenditure, as set out in the following table.

Table 1:23 Expenditure on war and defence in Dover 1614-1626

	£	s	d
1614-15	26	12	0
1615-16	22	15	4
1616-17	16	17	10
1617-18	21	4	10
1618-19	65	16	1
1619-20	15	19	3
1620-21	13	17	7
1621-22	11	15	9
1622-23	no accounts		
1623-24	19	10	3
1624-25	172	19	1
1625-26	29	15	7

Source: CKS Dover Town Accounts, 1603-1626

Expenditure increased again in the period between 1631 and 1636, when about £20 was spent in most years, rising to £87.18s.2d. in 1634-35 and £43.7s.3d. in 1635-36.⁷²⁰ These rises serve to indicate the serious financial effect of Crown policies on struggling provincial towns at this period. The largest amount, spent in 1624-25, represented 22% of the corporation's total expenditure that year.

The cost of musters rose during the period and they seem to have become steadily more ceremonial affairs, with more distinguished people attending and having to be entertained; for example when Sir Robert Brett attended the musters in 1614-15, the corporation paid £11.9s.8d. for his "diet", and by the 1630s the normal "gratuity" to the muster master was £5.1s.8d.⁷²¹ Dover was responsible for mustering its Limbs in Thanet, and the musters seem to have been serious military exercises;

one of the town's lawyers was paid £1 for the attentions of a surgeon in 1578 when he was hurt by fire in the musters.⁷²² In the seventeenth century more gratuities began to be paid on these occasions, to the clerk of Dover Castle, the Lord Warden's servants, and others.⁷²³ In 1625-26, £3 was paid to a sergeant appointed to train and discipline the town's inhabitants, by order of the Privy Council, and he was also paid £2.18s.6d. for food, wine, tobacco and lodging.⁷²⁴

There was frequent expenditure on the provision and maintenance of small weapons in the early sixteenth century.⁷²⁵ Butts were maintained at least until 1588-89.⁷²⁶ In 1547 trees were felled to make stocks for guns and in 1557-58 bows and arrows were bought from Canterbury.⁷²⁷ Between 1563 and 1570 money was spent on providing ordnance for the town, which then needed constant maintenance, especially of its wheels and carriages.⁷²⁸ Late in the sixteenth century guns were mounted on Penniless Bench, and a new gun mount was built, whose ordnance cost over £6 to install in 1596-97.⁷²⁹ In 1618-19 two brass demi-culverins were installed on the mount, and in 1626-27, when invasion was feared, a ship's gun was converted and mounted at the pier head.⁷³⁰ The provision of gunpowder was one of the most expensive items. It seems usually to have been obtained in London, and cost £12.18s.6d. in 1621-22, for example.⁷³¹ In 1633-34 the town sent £2.2s.4d. to Mr. Samuel Doves of London, surely a relative of all the Dover mariners called Doves,⁷³² "for shot by him there bought and by him delivered to the Tower of London the like out of His Majesty's store here borrowed for this town's use and for portage of the moneys".⁷³³ Three barrels of gun powder in the following year cost £14.8s.0d.⁷³⁴

The greatest involuntary and indirect expenditure on warfare occurred in 1624-25 when Count Mansfeldt's soldiers were left in the town unprovided for. The corporation spent £2 on bread for them, £1.5s.10d. on 45 bushels of coals, sent them a load of straw to the pier, and paid

£120 in part payment for their coats, money that proved very difficult to reclaim from the Crown.⁷³⁵

Dover's chief contribution to the defence of the realm was paid in ship service, which is examined below, together with other expenditure incurred through its membership of the Cinque Ports. Decisions about expenditure on self-defence were largely outside the control of the corporation since a coastal town like Dover was subject to attack whenever England was at war with a continental neighbour. Such expenditure could impose an unwelcome burden, especially as it was paid at the very times when trade with the Continent was necessarily suppressed. Musters seem to have been taken more seriously in the seventeenth century, when they also seem to have played a part in the increasingly formal ceremonial of the ruling group, bringing together officers of the Crown and the town and leading military men from the county.

d) Gifts and feasts: expenditure on hospitality and civic celebration

Four kinds of corporation expenditure are included under this heading, and will be dealt with in turn: first, those payments made towards the customary feasting and drinking in the town that helped to maintain the ritual civic year, the corporate festive life of the town, and increasingly to maintain the status of the oligarchy; secondly those made to supply both ordinary board and lodging and more ritual feasts to outside visitors to the town, many of the feasts being shared by the "masters", or mayor and jurats of the town; thirdly those made to supply ritual gifts or "rewards" to visiting noblemen and those in authority who might use their influence to the advantage of the town; finally those made to groups or individuals who offered entertainment and instruction to the oligarchy, or whose status as servants of noblemen made their reward by the corporation obligatory. It will be suggested

that changes in the proportions of money spent on these four areas, and changes in the occasions when, and the kinds of people upon whom, money was spent indicate profound changes in the corporate life and culture of the town between 1509 and 1635.

Actual amounts of money spent in this area rose generally, especially after the early 1580s, but they did not rise in line with inflation, and, in fact, after the 1580s they represent a diminishing proportion of the corporation's total expenditure, as can be seen in Table 1:24.

Table 1:24 Expenditure on gifts and feasts as a percentage of total expenditure by the corporation, decennial averages 1509-1628

Date	%	Date	%
1509-1518	10.89	1569-1578	15.21
1519-1528	15.22	1579-1588	14.20
1529-1538	17.87	1589-1598	8.86
1539-1548	15.01	1599-1608	9.04
1549-1558	10.04	1609-1618	6.34
1559-1568	15.63	1619-1628	5.81

Sources: BL Additional Ms 29618, CKS Dover Town Accounts 1546-58, 1558-81, 1581-1603, 1603-26, 1626-49, annual payments to innkeepers for wine, beer and feasts, also board, lodging and the care of horses of guests of the corporation; annual payments on gifts and rewards to noblemen and other guests.

Note: totals are derived from the decennial averages of expenditure shown in Table 1:2

Commensality: customary feasting and drinking in the town

The fundamental relationship between the ruling group's maintenance of their own position and their control of civic finance is clearly expressed by the fact that some annual expenditure of corporation money was always on certain of their own feasts, and that these were held chiefly for three reasons: to mark the annual establishment of a new order and the taking of oaths, to mark departures from and returns to the town of members of the ruling group, and to reward themselves for unusual efforts. The major civic celebration of the year naturally therefore centred on the election of the mayor and other officers. Elections took place in Dover at the start of the civic year on September 8, the Feast of the Nativity of the Virgin Mary, in the pause

between the land harvest and the sea harvest, the latter involving the Yarmouth Herring Fair that took place between Michaelmas and November 30. Traditionally, on the Sunday after the election there was "a dinner of Mr.old Mayor and Mr.new Mayor according to the old custom", as the accounts of 1513-14 put it.⁷³⁶ This seems to have been a dinner given by the old mayor to the new mayor, expressing the ritual transference of power and a new beginning. It was also traditionally the day on which the old administration presented its accounts to the new one.⁷³⁷ In 1514, 1s.9d. was spent on a pig and a capon at Mr.old Mayor's for this dinner, at which the wardens (chamberlains) and town clerk were also present.⁷³⁸ This traditional dinner seems to have become less frequent from about 1550, when the accounts indicate supper to the new mayor and dinner to the old mayor as two separate amounts.⁷³⁹ There continued to be a dinner, but it seems not always to have been for both mayors.⁷⁴⁰ From 1570 payments were recorded only for drinking on this occasion, not for food. The only revival of the feasting seems to have been in 1587 when the old mayor, town clerk and chamberlains were given 7s. for supper on the night they presented their accounts.⁷⁴¹

On election day itself freemen drank at the corporation's expense at the leading inns of the town. In the early sixteenth century most freemen seem to have congregated at one or two inns, and in 1555 when an innkeeper became mayor, all the election day expenses of £2.3s.0d. were incurred at his house.⁷⁴² By the 1560s, however, wine money for the commoners at election day was being paid to an increasing number of specified innkeepers.⁷⁴³ In 1573, the entry says simply "paid at the election of Mr. Warren for the commoners at 12d. a piece...£5.19s.6d.", and in the next year the amount to the commoners was paid "according to a decree."⁷⁴⁴ By 1584 freemen received 6d. each when they drank at certain specified inns, but only 3d. if they drank elsewhere.⁷⁴⁵ The amount allowed rose to 8d. each from 1585, then fell again to 6d. from

1599.⁷⁴⁶ The year 1606 seems to have marked a change in freeman celebration of the election, since from that time a lump sum, amounting to less than 6d. each, was paid each year to be divided only between those freemen who had been present at the election of the mayor, and this seems not necessarily to have been taken in drink, as it was no longer shown as having been paid to innkeepers.⁷⁴⁷ There seems therefore to have been a gradual move from the original communal celebration of the election by the freeman body towards the provision of drink that was taken in disparate groups and finally to a *payment made* simply for participating in the election.

The notional ideal of a cohesive and harmonious ruling group was maintained by their marking temporary absences from the group by eating or drinking together before and after the occasion, for example when they met for supper in 1559 at Mr. Pepper's "going over" to France, or for dinner in 1584 when the mayor, certain jurats and the Burgesses returned to the town after pursuing a cause in Parliament.⁷⁴⁸ Regular disruptions in the normal order were also marked in this way, with departures usually marked by drinking wine together and returns with a dinner or supper, for example on those occasions when the mayor and other officers went to the Brotherhood meetings at Romney, or the mayor and town clerk went to the Sessions in Thanet.⁷⁴⁹ Similarly, when Dover men were Burgesses to Parliament, they were often sent on their way to London with wine.⁷⁵⁰

The mayor and jurats also rewarded themselves for special efforts and marked special occasions by feasting together, for example when they made assessments for special purposes, or rode the liberties of the town.⁷⁵¹ The choice of the Lord Warden's friends as Burgesses to Parliament in the seventeenth century led to unusually elaborate ceremonies at their swearing of freedom; thus £1.15s.0d. was spent on wine and dinner at the swearing of Sir Thomas Waller in 1603, and

£5.10s.0d. on wine and a gratuity for him in 1606 for the great pains he took for the town at the Parliament.⁷⁵² Clearly, none of these celebrations touched the ordinary inhabitants of the town, except perhaps as observers.

Some notion of the customary festivals of the town can also be gleaned from the accounts. At the beginning of the period these were, of course, essentially linked to the religious year, and it has already been noted above that the mayor and jurats continued to be paid for wine at the four chief religious feasts throughout the whole period. In the early part of Henry VIII's reign the chief surviving popular festival of the town recorded in the accounts was the carriage of the trental to the shrine of Thomas a Becket in Canterbury on St. Thomas's day. The trental was a huge candle that was made and painted in Dover, and watched over throughout the eve of its journey. By this date, it was one of the few ceremonies, partially funded by the corporation, that would probably have been shared by everyone in the town. The accounts of 1513-14 record the expense in detail:

14th July charge of the tryndell⁷⁵³

	£	s	d
Item paid for xxxviii li. quarter of wax to the tryndell to Christchurch of Caunterbury		19	
item paid for the Workemanship of the same		3	4
item paid for v li. of wyke for the same tryndell		1	3
item paid for ii bussHELLS of coler for the same			2
item paid for expenses of mete and drynke aboute the strykyng of the same tryndell		1	4
item paid to the porters for the beryng of the same tryndell to Caunterbury			2
<u>Summa</u> of the charge of the tryndell		1	7 1

Over half this amount was "gadered by Master Mayre aboute in the town", so the corporation was left to pay just over 10s. The trental ceremony is last recorded in the accounts of 1536-37.⁷⁵⁴

Other popular civic festivals involving corporation expenditure seem to have been occasional affairs such as Triumphs, held for example in 1509 for the birth of the Prince, in 1513 when the king of Scots was slain,

in 1537 for the prince's birth and in 1588 at the "conquest of the Spaniards".⁷⁵⁵ Payments were made on these occasions for bonfires in the market place, wine for the jurats, beer for the commons and doles of bread for the poor. A gradual change can be seen in the customary annual festivals that might have involved most inhabitants. The normal public celebration of St. Thomas's day was joined, in 1536-37, by drinking by the mayor and brethren on St. George's Day and Ascension Day "after the procession".⁷⁵⁶ This is the last mention, however, of the public celebration of a specifically religious occasion.

During the reign of Edward VI the accounts show that the corporation encouraged the celebration of much more ancient festivals. In 1549 and 1550 they paid for the celebration of May Day, in 1549 supplying beer to the commons, bread to the poor, a banquet to the masters, and a hogshead of beer "to the hill", presumably to the Castle. On May Day, 1550, a banquet was made by "many honest commoners" and a pipe of beer was supplied in the hall.⁷⁵⁷ In 1550 a payment was made to the Lord of Misrule of Sandwich, and to players in the market place on Easter Sunday.⁷⁵⁸ In view of certain episodes of popular unrest in rural East Kent at that period,⁷⁵⁹ it seems possible that the ruling group in Dover perhaps chose to sanction such popular festivities in an attempt to defuse resentment among the urban population. The fact that the Lord of Misrule derived from Sandwich where the commonalty were at odds with their rulers in 1550⁷⁶⁰ may also have had some political significance, especially when taken in conjunction with the banquet given to commoners in the previous year. Whatever the reasons, that occasion in 1550 seems to have been the last celebration of a traditional popular festival sanctioned by the corporation's payment, although drinks and gun powder were supplied to soldiers on May Day in 1583 and the maypole was set up and painted at the corporation's expense in 1586-87, when many workmen from outside the town were present to work on the

harbour.⁷⁶¹ Those occasions also possibly suggest the need to provide popular diversion for a potentially restless population.

From the accession of Queen Elizabeth, the major annual festival, for which the corporation regularly provided a bonfire throughout most of the period, was the annual celebration of the monarch's accession to the throne, "coronation day".⁷⁶² This had previously been celebrated only in the year of the accession itself, when it seems likely that both jurats and people celebrated together, since the accounts of 1547-48 show that both beer and wine were sent to the market place at the "Triumph of the Coronation".⁷⁶³ It seems as though there was an attempt during Elizabeth's reign to turn this into a popular festivity because doles of bread were provided for the poor on that day in most years between 1578 and 1607.⁷⁶⁴ Yet this, too, became predominantly an oligarchic celebration. In 1570 the corporation spent £3.1s.0d. on a supper for the masters and commons at the "Triumph of the Queen's prosperous reign", and such a supper or dinner or at least a wine drinking on the relevant accession date became a regular feature of the civic year for most years until 1620.⁷⁶⁵ This, more exclusive, feasting continued after the gifts of bread to the poor had stopped in 1607, and although a bonfire was still occasionally supplied, by the 1620s the payments show that the corporation was paying for only 25 faggots of wood to burn on it, in place of the 100 faggots they had supplied in earlier years.⁷⁶⁶

This may have been because there was by then another annual bonfire. From 1610 payments were made for celebrations on November 5. On this first occasion the payment was for a bonfire followed by a supper for Mr.Gray and Mr.Richards, the two ministers, and their wives.⁷⁶⁷ This was the first time payments had been made for hospitality to Dover's ministers of the church, although in the early Henrician period the Prior of St.Martin's and the Master of the Maison Dieu had often been

included in oligarchic feasts or drinkings.⁷⁶⁸ These November 5th suppers continued as very modest occasions, however, seldom costing more than 4s. and clearly being only for the ministers and their wives. It seems an interesting and rather divisive response to an anti-Catholic celebration, with the general, secular rejoicing at the bonfire in the market being followed and balanced by the meeting together of the town's ministers of the English church, presumably in celebration of the denominational aspect of the occasion. The latter celebration was extended in 1621, when there was an influx of French protestants into the town; on that occasion after the bonfire wine, sugar and bread were given to the mayor and jurats, Captain Willesford, Mr. Reading - the vicar of St. Mary's - and the French preachers, thus uniting the protestant ministers in the town with their civic leaders and hosts.⁷⁶⁹

Occasionally, throughout the period, the current Lord Warden or Lieutenant of the Castle presented the mayor and jurats with venison, upon which they feasted. This became much more common from 1606, and involved the corporation in certain expenditure.⁷⁷⁰ The cost of these occasions rose, and their tone is indicated by the note in the accounts of 1632 that money was spent "when the buck was eaten at the "George" whereto all the choice persons of the town were invited."⁷⁷¹ This suggestion of growing exclusivity within the ruling group is reinforced by a complaint made by Thomas Weekes, jurat, in 1633 that certain other jurats and officers "being at the sign of the "Red Lion" resolving upon ...the names of such persons as should be invited to the chamberlains' feast, which they intended to make", one of them said "Weekes, he shall not be there he hath neither wit nor manners he invited us not to his feast."⁷⁷²

In contrast to these exclusive occasions, payments made for eating and drinking by ordinary inhabitants at times of exceptional corporate

effort declined between the 1560s and 1590s, which seems to signal a decline in the public recognition and celebration of the work of ordinary men, the withdrawal of the oligarchy from participation in the common culture, as well as a change in the method of payment for work. An early example of such payments occurred when the town bought, refurbished and launched its two ships, the George and the Margaret between 1514-16. The accounts for those years record an inextricable link between work, rewards, celebration and religion that clearly formed a complex knot of communal experience. Among the payments occur the following: 2s. for two dozen of bread at the launching of the Margaret, 2s.10d. for half a barrel and half a bunn of beer spent at the Margaret, 1s.10d. on half a dozen of bread and half a tun of beer at the having up of the ship, a firkin of beer at the making of the stade, 4d. reward for children that sang mass on the Margaret, 1d. for bearing the ship top into St. Martin's church and 4d. paid for an offering to Our Lady of Archcliff and Our Lady of Poulton when the Margaret was launched.⁷⁷³ It seems likely that this knot gradually loosened, partly because of changes in religious belief and an increase in the town's population, but also possibly because different methods of paying workmen and different expectations about the normal rewards for work gradually developed in the protestant oligarchy. In the Henrician period payments for food and drink to workmen were common.⁷⁷⁴ Fewer are recorded in the accounts between 1568, when drink was provided for the commoners drawing up the ordnance, and 1596-1598 when beer and diet were provided for men with courts working at the new gate and the dike.⁷⁷⁵ In 1622 beer was provided at the work done expelling the beach, which was undertaken freely by all inhabitants, and in 1630 bread and beer were given to the waggoners who brought in the corn that had been purchased for the poor.⁷⁷⁶ These last occasions were emergencies, when the oligarchy seems to have been rewarding urgent work undertaken for the

good of the commonalty that was either voluntary or more arduous than might ordinarily have been expected.

Expenditure on customary feasting and drinking in the town therefore tends to suggest that between 1509 and 1640, as the town grew, there was a gradual movement away from the more intimate social and cultural connections that appear still to have existed between its inhabitants in the Henrician period towards clearer social and cultural stratification. The ending of the public celebration of the rituals and feasts of the Catholic church mark an obvious break; the despoiling of the tomb of Thomas a Becket in Canterbury Cathedral would clearly have been keenly felt in Dover as well as in Canterbury. It is possible that popular festivals, such as May Day, were thereafter given official sanction at times of potential popular unrest. After the accession of Queen Elizabeth, the secular festivities for the people that were paid for by the corporation centred on the Crown and on the celebration of national martial and political victories. As well as drawing further away from the majority of the town's inhabitants in their celebrations, the ruling group of mayor and jurats actually seem also to have become separated from the commons, who were also perhaps divided among themselves. Nevertheless the ruling group clearly maintained some kind of unity through the continuance of their own commensality.

The feasting of visitors and friends

Dover provided meals and drink, rather than gifts, to certain kinds of distinguished visitors throughout the period. During royal visits, which occurred chiefly in the reign of Henry VIII, such officials as the king's cofferer and bearward were entertained to supper.⁷⁷⁷ Meals, and sometimes lodging, were also supplied to professional men who came to provide some service to the town, such as the surveyors for the Harbour in 1560, Roger Wood who made a "platte" of the Harbour in 1564, Mr.

Digges and Mr. Poynes successively when each surveyed the Harbour in 1581, the Queens' officers who came to consider the ordnance for the Castle in 1584, and the captains of His Majesty's ships in 1635.⁷⁷⁸

Hospitality was also extended to visiting commissioners of all kinds.⁷⁷⁹

Men who visited the town more regularly in the course of their duties and clearly became friends or close acquaintances of the ruling group were also entertained by the corporation, such as counsels attending to legal business⁷⁸⁰ and successive muster masters.⁷⁸¹ Similarly, the corporation entertained representatives of the Cinque Ports when they visited on Ports' business, and rewarded with drink deputies bringing the annual contributions from the limbs.⁷⁸²

The balance between the town's various expenditure on these groups changed, however. The small regular payments for such things as a pint of wine to the bearer of the contribution from Folkestone ceased after 1588. Thereafter the only references to hospitality to Cinque Ports' representatives occur when there was a dinner to discuss a specific topic, such as the Bailiff to Yarmouth in 1621, or ship money in 1635.⁷⁸³ The mayors and jurats of Dover and Sandwich ate together from time to time throughout the period, but from the late 1580s some reason was always recorded for their meeting. This had not been the case earlier, when such occasions seem to have been more customary, although the change may have occurred partly because of a coolness that developed between the two magistracies over the sharing of the expenses of ship service.⁷⁸⁴ The close relationship between the officers of Dover and of those of the Thanet towns was also expressed in hospitality to them. For example, in 1555 the mayor of Dover gave a dinner to the "inhabitants of Thanet", in 1558 to the deputies of St. Peter's and St. John's, and in 1564 to "the men of St. John's".⁷⁸⁵ Then, from 1585, the corporation simply paid for wine that the mayor carried with him when he went to sit

in the Thanet courts.⁷⁸⁶

Expenditure on visiting commissioners depended, of course, on the amount of interest being taken by the Crown in the affairs of the town or, in particular, the port at any time. It therefore increased fairly steadily through the period until 1606 when the affairs of the harbour were settled, after which such visits naturally declined. There was a similar decline in the felt need for hospitality to visiting ecclesiastics; the last dinner given on the occasion of an Archdeacon's visitation seems to have been in 1563, when it cost £1.8s.0d. That was apparently a less glittering occasion than the earlier dinner given in 1555 to the "Chancellor, the Cardinal's Grace, the Lord Bishop of Dover, the Commissary and the Archdeacon of Canterbury at the Visitation", which had cost £2.14s.4d.⁷⁸⁷

The most marked change through the period was the increase in money spent on entertaining visiting lawyers, while hospitality to other groups declined. The cost of providing dinner when the Admiral's Court was held in Dover rose from 9s.4d. in 1510 to 17s.8d. in 1535, and £1.4s.0d. in 1555.⁷⁸⁸ From about 1557 the feasting of visiting lawyers became normal. In that year a banquet costing 5s.8d. was given to Mr. Lovelace, the counsel, when he was in Dover for the Hundred Court.⁷⁸⁹ In 1559 Mr. Alcock, in Dover on the town's business, had dinner at £2.12s.0d., Mr. Lovell had dinner, supper and wine, at a cost of over 30s. and "our Doctor Hardy" dinner at 20s.⁷⁹⁰ Throughout the 1560s John Boys and Mr. Manwood were entertained to at least one dinner a year.⁷⁹¹ This pattern continued.

From the end of the 1590s, expenditure on Sessions dinners - first recorded as such in 1578, when the mayor and the masters drank with the counsel after his dinner,⁷⁹² seems to have become the major hospitable expenditure of the year. Sessions dinners in Coronation year, 1602-03, cost £7.1s.8d., in 1610 over £5, and by 1635 a single Sessions dinner

cost £6.10.0s.⁷⁹³ As well as these amounts, the town's counsels, and their men, were provided with lodging, supper, breakfast and food for their horses.⁷⁹⁴ It seems likely that the Sessions dinners provided an occasion for certain jurats and other educated men in the town, such as Francis Raworth, the town clerk, to share a table with guests of similar interests and education, and to press the causes of the town personally. Such immediacy is revealed, together with a certain partiality, in the accounts of 1617-18, when the chamberlain recorded the cost of a dinner for the mayor, Sir Edwin Sands, Mr. Cookin, some jurats and others at which they discussed the cause in which Mr. Alley, the crown-appointed bailiff, was seeking to have for himself the petty customs "which", noted the chamberlain, "I hope he never shall have."⁷⁹⁵

The holding of musters was always an occasion for hospitality to outsiders. The muster master was given drink and a meal, such as breakfast, and food for his horse, but from 1578 he was not simply given dinner, but invited to take it with the masters.⁷⁹⁶ The musters dinner seems to have become established in the 1580s and, like the Sessions dinners, to have become gradually more expensive and socially selective, so that in 1632 the accounts note that £17.2s.6d. was spent at an inn in Dover on a musters dinner, at which "Our Lord Warden, his Countess and other persons of note were present."⁷⁹⁷ This seems part of a general tendency to spend less money on small, occasional drinking and more on more formal occasions. From the late 1590s the festive civic year was dominated by legal and business occasions of various kinds, and by musters when they occurred, to the exclusion of hospitality to others. The fact that the Lord Warden played an increasing part in choosing outsiders as the town's Barons to Parliament also involved the corporation in greater expense on hospitality; for example in 1601-2 they spent 10s. on a dinner for Dr. Newman when he was chosen, and £5.10s.0d on a feast given to him and his friends by the mayor in London

during the Parliament.⁷⁹⁸

In the seventeenth century, therefore, it seems that the oligarchy was feasting people of a certain status, who might be of use to them, and who were perhaps like-minded. Increasing social stratification seems indicated, in which links were forged between the oligarchy and some leading legal and military men in the county. It seems possible that this had political implications for the future. There certainly seems to be not only a cultural, but also a political gap between the Jacobean period and the Henrician period when the king's frequent visits to the town meant that his physical presence was a perceived reality and that his followers must be provided with respectful hospitality, and even the earlier Elizabethan period when the oligarchy welcomed most of their visitors with at least a stoup of wine.

In this context it is interesting to read a petition of the Merchants and other Adventurers of Dover sent to the Lords of the Admiralty in 1634, complaining that commissioners coming to examine their case had neglected many knights and gentlemen, and either refused to sit with them or slighted their company.⁷⁹⁹ Admiral Sir John Pennington, writing to Secretary Nicholas in 1635, described one of Dover's leading men, Anthony Percival, currently acting-Lieutenant of the Castle, as a deputy's deputy of low capacity and condition who should be replaced swiftly by some gentleman of merit and trust from the shire.⁸⁰⁰ It seems, then, that just as the oligarchy made themselves exclusive from other inhabitants of the town, so men of affairs in the larger world perhaps no longer cared to share the hospitality of provincial ruling groups.

Ritual giving

Both the circle of recipients and the variety of gifts given by the corporation narrowed between 1509 and 1635. Throughout the reign of

Henry VIII and the early years of Elizabeth, many noblemen and ambassadors, English and foreign, were presented by the town with gifts as they paused on their way to the Continent. Typical recipients of gifts in those years can be illustrated from details given in the accounts for the year 1514-15 when they were: the French Queen's footman, Mr. Scott, the King's serving man, the king's clerk of the market, Lord Burgany, the Duke of Suffolk, Lord and Lady Poninges, the Lord Warden, the Lord Chamberlain, the Archbishop of Canterbury and Lord Brooke.⁸⁰¹ So common were these payments, that in the more orderly accounts of those before 1564 they are commonly grouped together with a marginal note saying "gifts and rewards to noblemen."⁸⁰² Gifts were still made after that date, but fewer were made to travelling gentlemen, probably chiefly because the port was in decline between that period and its reconstruction in the 1580s. After the death of Henry VIII there were also fewer occasions on which the monarch left some of his or her retainers languishing in the ports during Continental expeditions. From the late 1570s, although gifts were given to Edward Hoby's lady, Lady Drake, the Archbishop, Sir Robert Cecil, the Governor of Calais, the Archduke's Ambassador, the French Ambassador and the King and Queen, these were isolated occasions.⁸⁰³

Gifts to monarchs were most expensive when the monarch was actually present in the town. In 1512 the corporation made a part payment of £1 on £5 they owed Mr. Knachbull for two oxen they had given to the king "at his coming".⁸⁰⁴ In 1624-25 the town almost beggared itself in spending £90 on two great silver cups for the King and Queen and £29.10s. on the king's officers.⁸⁰⁵

The Lord Warden of the Cinque Ports was naturally the most regular recipient of gifts, usually given to mark his presence in the town, particularly at Christmas, and by the seventeenth century he was, in some years, the only recipient, except for his grooms, coachman and

footmen who regularly received gratuities of money.⁸⁰⁶ In 1617 the carriage on wine sent to the Castle was paid twice, because the first hogshead was brought back in order that a better one should be carried up, which suggests that by that time the wine was seen as a payment rather than a gift.⁸⁰⁷

Throughout the period, small payments were made to the porters for fishing in the "brook", the River Dour, for trout whenever gifts were to be made and, until about 1526, fish was the usual gift. The kind of fish chosen depended upon the status of the recipient. The Lord Warden received two halibuts in 1510, but the king received a porpoise in 1511. The Queen was given a trout in 1512, and trout seem commonly to have been given to women.⁸⁰⁸ Other gifts of fish were fresh herring and lampreys to the Duke of Suffolk in 1515, a porpoise, a halibut and a conger to the Archbishop in 1515 and 1516, a porpoise to the Lord Admiral in 1527 and oysters to the Duke of Suffolk in 1530.⁸⁰⁹ In 1553 a porpoise, wrapped in an ell of canvas, was sent to the Lord Warden in London, but fish given to him in 1574 had to be fetched from Rye. The last major gift of fish was herrings and two barrels of "Saintpere" given to two men surveying for the harbour in 1578.⁸¹⁰

The decline in fish-giving after about 1526 may suggest that certain kinds of fish were no longer available in the waters near Dover, but also that other things had replaced it as a high-status food. As early as 1518 a side of porpoise sent to the Lord Warden was accompanied with 100 oranges and some wine.⁸¹¹ Capons were commonly given after this time. In 1527 both oranges and apples were given, then in the 1530s wine was the most common gift, sometimes accompanied by fruit.⁸¹² Fruit continued to be given, and included peaches and pears by 1550.⁸¹³ In the 1540s fowl and game such as hens, capons, geese, quail, swan and woodcock became popular gifts.⁸¹⁴

From about 1584, however, the chief gift was wine, together with sugar

in the seventeenth century. There are some exceptions: for example three wethers, two lambs and a veal given to the Lord Warden in 1584 and a fat lamb to Lady Waller in 1608.⁸¹⁵ In the same year fish was sent to London to one of the attorneys and the town clerk when they were there, which "they bestowed on some friends to favour the town's business."⁸¹⁶ Nevertheless, imported wine and sugar had superseded the almost emblematically local gift of fish and game as presents to the nobility.

Rewards given to players and preachers

As has been noted above, the special position of Dover as the chief port of passage to the Continent and the seat of the Lord Warden of the Cinque Ports meant that it had an unusually high number of transient guests who would normally have been socially and politically beyond the sphere of a provincial oligarchy. Thus the ruling group of Dover shared to some extent in a culture that was presumably denied to similar groups in other towns, and that possibly went against the bias of their own culture at certain periods. Partly because of the presence of transient noblemen, for most of the period some of the foremost companies of players visited the town, for example: in 1546-7, the Lord of Sussex's players, in 1551-2 the King's, Lord Russell's, and the Duke of Northumberland's, in 1555-6 the children of Worcester, the Earl of Oxford's, and the Earl of Sussex's, in 1560-61 Lord Robert Dudley's, in 1564-5 the Queen's, in 1569-70 Lord Rich's, the Earl of Leicester's and the Master of the Revels', in 1570-71 the Earl of Essex's, in 1584-5 the Lord Admirals', in 1598-9 the Earl of Pembroke's, in 1611-12 the Lady Elizabeth's and in 1619-20 the Prince Palatine, the King of Bohemia's, the Prince's, and the Children of the Revels.⁸¹⁷ The accounts show that the corporation rewarded the players, but it is not certain that all of them actually played in the town. In the Henrician period, players, together with minstrels and bearwards, were sometimes in the town at the

same time as their patron, and it is possible that they were left there dependent upon some financial support from the corporation, when he departed for the Continent.⁸¹⁸ Smaller rewards were given to minstrels and bearwards, who formed part of the retinue of the monarch, the Lord Warden and other noblemen. The last reward to such minstrels was recorded in 1580, although the last payment to the king's bearward was not made until 1610.⁸¹⁹ In the early seventeenth century musicians were sometimes paid to play at special feasts, such as the one given at Mr. Bachelor's inn to the Burgess to Parliament, Sir Thomas Waller, in 1604.⁸²⁰

In some years, the accounts make it certain that a play was given before the ruling group. In 1509, for example, the town paid 3s. "for a play before Mr. Mayor and his brethren at Christmas at Mr. Fyneux", then another 3s. for "another play at Mr. Fyneux", followed by 3s. "to my Lord of Burganys players at Mr. Fyneux with other expenses".⁸²¹ In 1513 the town paid 4s.8d. "to my lord of Burgany his players", and 1s.1d. "to a play at Robert Fluice", who kept an inn; they also paid 3s.4d. to "my Lord of Arundells players", but there is no mention of their performing a play.⁸²² Other definite references to players performing occur in 1555, when the Children of Worcester played at Mr. Bowles's inn, and the Earl of Sussex's players performed a play before a great many of the commoners as well as the mayor and jurats.⁸²³ In 1568 the Queen's players received £1 in rewards for playing before the masters, and in 1569 the mayor and jurats were entertained by the Lord Warden's players, Lord Riches' players, Lord Mingy's players, the Lord of Leicester's players and the Masters of the Revels' players, most of whom received 13s.4d.⁸²⁴ In 1570 the note "paid to the Queen's players and the charges at Spritwell's...16s" suggest that wine was drunk at John Spritwell's inn during the course of an entertainment.⁸²⁵ In 1584 the Lord Admiral's players performed, and in 1596 the Earl of Pembroke's

players "played in the town" and the Queen's players received 14s. although there is no mention of their having played.⁸²⁶ It is difficult therefore to know precisely how many plays were performed for the mayor and jurats, but it seems possible that as many as five different distinguished companies of players performed in some years, presumably when they had been sent out of London.

Local players were welcomed to the town in the earlier part of the period. In 1510, the corporation gave 3s.4d. to the players of Brookland, from Romney Marsh for the repair of their church, and in 1547, 2s. and 1561, 10s. to the players of Romney.⁸²⁷ In 1550-51, during the period when, as has been noted above, May Day was celebrated and the Lord of Misrule from Sandwich was invited to the town, the corporation also gave 10s.8d. to players who played in the market place on Easter Monday.⁸²⁸ In 1570, Blind William the harper received 3s.4d. and in 1574 the "Italian tumblers or players" 10s.⁸²⁹ The Brookland and Romney plays and probably the Easter play can be assumed to have been religious in content; the accounts suggest that 1561 saw the last such performance paid for by the corporation.

No payments to players were recorded between 1570 and 1580, and from that date the numbers of groups recorded as being present in the town declined sharply, with only the Queen's players being rewarded in most years, apart from 1586, 1596 and 1598.⁸³⁰ In 1606 the Lord Sussex's players were paid 5s. "in reward for not suffering them to play", and in 1609 1s. was given to a puppet player "who was not permitted to play."⁸³¹ Since these were not years in which there seems to have been any serious infectious illness in the town, such refusals presumably sprang from the prevailing moral orthodoxy of the contemporary oligarchy, which may have brought them into difficulties with some of the lords whose companies they seem to have begun to discourage at that time.

Nevertheless, from 1608 until 1635 the corporation continued to give 10s. each year as a gratuity to the Queen's players, and some other similar groups.⁸³² The effects of central legislation are shown in the fact that from 1619, the accounts also mention that such groups had been "authorized by my Lord Chamberlain", and in that year the Children of the Revels are said to have had "the king's licence." In 1626 the accounts simply say that 10s. was paid to players "which of late came and showed forth their commission."⁸³³ It is possible that all those players who were paid 10s. were allowed to perform, since in 1630 the lesser sum of 5s. was paid to "players who were sent out of the town."⁸³⁴ In 1615 the Queen's players received £2 for a gratuity "especially for that they were so earnest that Mr. Mayor, the jurats and some other gentlemen that were at the Castle with his Lordship should be present at the play." It is interesting to speculate whether such players actually presented their play at the Castle rather than in an inn at that date. If so, it might suggest that newer dramas, requiring different facilities from those found at inns, were being performed and that were they were addressed to a culturally and socially distinct group, emphasizing the increasing separation between the oligarchy and the inhabitants of the town.

As the number of companies of players being paid by the corporation decreased after 1570, so the number of preachers receiving rewards increased, and it seems clear that lectures or sermons became the preferred form of instruction and entertainment for the ruling group. From the late 1540s there are references to men who had come to the town specifically to preach: Mr. Huntington and Mr. Turner, who received 5s. each in 1549, a preacher at St. Mary's for two days and the Chaplain of Our Lady of Southampton in 1551, at 8s.8d. and 6s.8d. respectively, Mr. Huntington again at sundry times in 1552, and unnamed preachers in 1556, 1559, 1560 and 1561.⁸³⁵ In 1574 an outside preacher preached at the

election of the mayor for 6s.8d. and in 1580 two outside preachers came, one to preach at a funeral. In 1581 five preachers were rewarded, one for three sermons, and Mr.Poundall, one of the five, received £1.10s.⁸³⁶ This pattern continued through the 1580s, with a number of preachers being given wine and food as well as money. They included ministers from other parishes in Kent, such as Mr.Pashely from St. Margaret's and Mr. Pickering from Pluckley who seems to have been especially popular. Other named preachers were Mr.Shipping, Mr. Robinson, Mr.Flower, Mr.Wood, Mr.Toplyffe and Mr.Sellers.⁸³⁷ The number of visiting preachers being rewarded declined in the 1590s and seems to have stopped altogether in the seventeenth century, although a preacher travelling from Middelburg in Holland was given supper in 1613, and in 1615 Mr. Bowness, who had been recommended to the corporation to read a weekly lecture, was compensated by some persons with 40s. when he was dismissed because they found they " did not fully agree to the appointment". The corporation repaid these charges.⁸³⁸ In the early seventeenth century, however, in Mr.Gray and Mr.Richards, Dover seems to have had good preachers of its own, and with the appointment of John Reading to St. Mary's in 1617 it had a distinguished preacher of some repute, whom the corporation paid for a weekly lecture.⁸³⁹

Rewards to players and preachers thus confirm the general tendency of the corporation's payments for hospitality, in gradually ceasing to provide a welcome to a multiplicity of social and cultural influences and the face-to-face reception of guests from outside the town, instead rewarding only those whose influence was specifically protestant and dependent upon an educated response. Taken in conjunction with their seventeenth century preference for feasting legal and military men from the county, their provision of hospitality to preachers in the late sixteenth century, and the general move away from celebrations that involved the commoners and the generality of inhabitants in the town, it

suggests a certain concentration of resources at one particular level of experience and interest and indicates a potentially political as well as social and cultural solidarity between the protestant ruling group and their contacts in the region.

e) Expenditure on the temporary relief of the poor and the sick

The expenditure recorded in the town accounts for the relief of the poor and sick consists chiefly of occasional payments made to cover emergency situations. More systematic payments might have been expected to be recorded in the accounts of the churchwardens and the overseers of the poor of the parishes of St. Mary's and St. James, but all that survives of these for the period under discussion are the churchwardens' accounts for St. Mary's parish from 1536-1558 and from 1614 onwards, which are completely uninformative on the subject. Nevertheless, such payments as were made by the corporation tend to suggest either that there was a growing problem of poverty from the late 1570s onwards, or that the corporation were beginning to take more responsibility for their impotent poor by then. Expenditure also gives some insight into the corporation's response to the poor law legislation of the time.

Reference to Table 1:2 shows that such expenditure did not begin until the 1550s, and then it remained at less than one pound annually until the 1560s. It began to rise in about 1568, but it rose more markedly - to over £8 - in 1578, the year after the first payment was recorded for keeping an illegitimate child at the corporation's expense.⁸⁴⁰ Payments for the care of bastards, orphans and foundlings then became the most regularly recorded expense of this kind for the next thirty to forty years, while total expenditure on poor relief to both inhabitants and transients, including payments for burials, rose through the 1580s, 90s and early 1600s from an average of over £8, to over £14 and then over £20 annually.⁸⁴¹ It will be shown that a change of policy in about 1610

led gradually to the end of this kind of payment for the care of children. After that time different measures were taken for the relief of the indigenous poor, which were more in line with the Poor Law legislation of 1598 and subsequent statute of 1610, and the distinction made between them and the transient poor meant that the latter for the most part no longer received relief. The occasional poor relief recorded in the town accounts therefore began to decline after 1614, in those years when there was no emergency such as dearth or an infectious epidemic, until it was less than £1 in some years in the 1620s and 30s.⁸⁴²

Before 1553, the town accounts make no mention of direct poor relief. From 1553 until 1576 payments to the poor were still rare, and largely made to long-standing and respectable inhabitants of the town, in other words the impotent, deserving poor. For example, Thomas Sweetman, who had been a member of the common council,⁸⁴³ was given 10s. in 1565 in consideration of his poverty,⁸⁴⁴ and a long-standing inhabitant, John Maye, received almost annual amounts for clothing in his old age, and even 4d. for being trimmed by the barber in 1586.⁸⁴⁵ "Jonkie the fool", who was perhaps a charge on the town, was provided with 3 yards of russet and one and a half yards of black and white cotton in 1578.⁸⁴⁶ The corporation showed some loyalty to people who had served it well, such as John Dawes, who had been town sergeant from 1561 almost until his death in 1574.⁸⁴⁷ They paid "Father Dawes" a total of 7s.0d. to relieve his poverty in the year when he was sick, then 6s.8d to his widow "in consideration of her poverty, towards her reliefs and being in debt for keeping of her husband, a servant of great contributions to the town." She and her daughter received a further 2s. in respect of their poverty in 1578, and in 1585 Mother Dawes was given £1 in her poverty to be put out of the town with her child.⁸⁴⁸

There are signs that the corporation was responding to the occasional

needs of both their own poor and some transients by the late 1560s when, between 1565 and 1570, nine payments were made to individuals in need: one to a mariner who had lost his ship, one to other mariners who had been left behind by a shipmaster to follow their ship, one for bread to a man from Yarmouth, two to keeping children "found" in the town, and the rest to poor or sick people who might or might not have been inhabitants of the town. In 1566 five hundred faggots of wood were also provided for the poor.⁸⁴⁹

Many emergency payments were made for burials, a number of which throughout the period had to be provided for unknown people who had been cast up on the shore after drowning.⁸⁵⁰ The indigenous, deserving poor can be seen to have been given more expensive burials than others. For example, William Spensar, who had been of some service to the town, was buried in 1553 at the cost of 6s.5d., having a priest and a clerk, a winding sheet and a pall, whereas in 1556 a poor man who died suddenly at the pier was buried for 8d., and in 1557 and 1558 a number of people, at least eight in 1558, seem to have been buried at 2d. each.⁸⁵¹ Since a number of payments were made to poor people for cleaning the market in 1558, it seems possible that the town was suffering, in common with others, from an epidemic of influenza or typhus then.

The corporation was clearly making some arrangements for relief to certain categories of the impotent poor before the Poor Law Act of 1572, but it seems to have responded either to that Act or to the needs of its own population in a particular way shortly after the Act was passed. From 1578 until 1618 the chief charge to the town of this kind was the care of orphan or bastard children. During those years such children were placed in the care of certain townspeople at the corporation's expense. Thus the wives or widows of poorer craftsmen, and in some cases such men themselves, were paid for caring for "the town's" children.⁸⁵²

From 1578 to 1584 they seemed to get 1s. a week for caring for a child and 1s. 2d. per week for nursing one, from 1584 until 1600 the payment ranged between 6d. 8d. and 1s. per week, according to the age of the child, and in the seventeenth century the rate rose to 10d. 1s. or 1s. 6d.⁸⁵³ There were usually four or five, but sometimes as many as seven, women caring for children in this way, one woman sometimes taking a whole family of orphaned children. In most cases the children seem to have stayed with the same carer for several months at least.

A few children, not yet old enough to be apprentices, were handed over by the corporation to the permanent care of certain townsmen. For example in 1580 Thomas Fuller was paid £3 in return for undertaking to keep "Riddley's child" with clothing and food as his own "and that the township shall be discharged." Payments in the same year show that the child had been cared for at the most expensive rate of 12d. a week for the three weeks before being handed over, so was presumably almost of apprentice age.⁸⁵⁴ In the two years 1596-7 at least nine children were discharged from the corporation's care in this way, with immediate part payments, usually 6s. 8d., of a total fee of 20s. for each child, being made to the people who took them off the corporation's hands.⁸⁵⁵ These were years in which the corporation needed to save money, and it is also possible that in those dearth years the receipt of a lump sum was a tempting proposition to the relatively poor families who took it, but it is disquieting to contemplate the possible subsequent fate of the children. Most of the younger children in the town's care were, of course, long-term liabilities to the corporation, which clothed them from time to time, then "apparelled" them and paid someone to take them on as apprentices as soon as they were old enough, occasionally in the household in which they had been cared for earlier. Such was the case of Worsley's child who was cared for by John Reason's wife from 1586 until 1589, when he was put to John Reason to be brought up as his apprentice

for 14 years, at which point John Reason was paid 4s. to enter into a bond to discharge the town of the child's expense.⁸⁵⁶ The system by which the corporation placed poor children as apprentices seems to have been formalized about 1606-07, because when John Bachelier took Dawes's son into his service in that year and promised to discharge the town of its responsibility for him thereafter, the accounts note that he was paid 40s., which was "part of £3 appointed by decree to be paid for the placing him and other poor children."⁸⁵⁷

The care of children thus seems to have been typical of the practical, participatory system of poor relief that prevailed in Dover until about 1610, in which certain fairly needy townspeople were paid by the corporation to look after others who could no longer help themselves. In 1582-3 William Valentine, a tailor, was given 3s.4d. because he was poor, but also because his wife had looked after people visited with the sickness.⁸⁵⁸ In the following year a woman who became "lunatic" was paid 1s.4d. relief; the corporation also paid for a staple, lock and key for the door where she lay, then they paid for the keeping of her child, first by her and then by other women and finally for the burial of her child and the "trimming" of her house.⁸⁵⁹ The corporation also paid surgeons, sometimes quite large sums, to heal the town's impotent poor,⁸⁶⁰ and they sometimes paid the rents of temporarily disabled tenants.⁸⁶¹ They made single small payments to those in need.⁸⁶² Not only children were cared for in others' homes; for two years from 1596, Thomas Reade's wife was paid 6d. a week for keeping Mother Osborne. Other people were helped when they were in temporary difficulty; like Goodwife Nabbs who was given money and had her children cared for when her husband was in prison⁸⁶³ after beating her and spending all his money in alehouses.⁸⁶⁴ In 1602 Mother Edwards was given 1s. in relief when she was lying hurt at the lime-kilns, and Thomas Elam, son of a former jurat of the town was given 15s. "at his humble petition for

some relief."⁸⁶⁵

During this period, from the early 1580s until the first decade of the seventeenth century, the problem of the poor was exacerbated by war and infection, which caused groups of casualties to fall as occasional burdens on the town. Between 1585 and 1588 the town spent £5.18s.2d. on food, temporary board, transport or burial for numbers of poor soldiers "from beyond the seas". Most of them had arrived in small groups from Holland or Flanders and many were sick. Some were carried out of the town, to the nearby parishes of River and Ewell; many lay sick for up to two weeks and were fed by the corporation; some were clearly held as prisoners awaiting further investigation. In 1587-88 the town paid for seven of them to be buried.⁸⁶⁶ In 1597 two payments were made for carrying sick soldiers out of the town; in 1598 over £1 was given in relief to a number of "poor distressed soldiers" who had come ashore from a sunken ship, and in 1601 six deal boards were supplied for Flemish mariners to lie on.⁸⁶⁷

Episodes of serious infectious disease caused some expenditure on relief by the corporation throughout the period, and such payments began to increase in the early seventeenth century. In 1602-03 the corporation paid a butcher 17s.6d. for meat for those who were sick with the plague. Many payments that year were to the women who cared for the sick and searched the bodies of those who died of plague, and many were for burials.⁸⁶⁸ In 1609-10 a ship lay in the harbour with plague among its crew; three men from the ship were cared for in the pest house and a boy who died in the ship was buried. The infection spread; payments were made to those who watched at the houses of sick people, and a bier bought for the pest house.⁸⁶⁹ Such payments continued to be made after the general policy on relief had changed, so expenditure increased in 1635-6, when an epidemic began among French arrivals, some of whom were sent to Rye, and spread to a number of houses in Dover.⁸⁷⁰

It can therefore be seen that in Dover war and infectious disease contributed to the problems caused by increasing population, rising prices and falling real wages during the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries. It should also be remembered that during the 1580s and 90s, the harbour works brought extra men into the town, some of whom were the recipients of temporary relief, such as the "poor labouring man of the works that was lunatic".⁸⁷¹ This period of peak expenditure on relief to the poor recorded in the accounts - between 1588 and 1614 - is coterminous with the period when the corporation gave doles of bread to the poor at civic festivities. This perhaps suggests that those inhabitants of the town who were normally the poorest were, at that period, in such difficulty that something had to be seen to be done, especially by the protestant ruling group then in power. The recipients of the doles of bread perhaps represent that part of the population Paul Slack has described as not already starving but temporarily unable to feed themselves during a period of rising population and prices.⁸⁷²

Table 1:25 Amounts of bread (in dozens) distributed to the poor at civic celebrations in Dover 1580-1607

Date	dozens	Date	dozens
1580	3	1594	15
1581	0	1595	no accounts
1582	3	1596	26
1583	0	1597	0
1584	0	1598	0
1585	8	1599	5
1586	0	1600	no accounts
1587	8	1601	18
1588	5	1602	36
1589	no accounts	1603	10
1590	8	1604	16
1591	no accounts	1605	14
1592	no accounts	1606	0
1593	no accounts	1607	16

Source: CKS Dover Town Accounts 1558-1581, 1581-1603, 1603-1626, Expenses for the relevant years: payments to bakers.

Note: The figure for 1607 includes the celebration of November 5. The bread was supplied to the corporation throughout the period at 12d. per dozen.

Table 1:25 gives the numbers of dozens of bread given to the poor on the annual celebration of the ruling monarch's accession to the throne, "coronation day." The increase in doles of bread in some of these years seems to follow the pattern of dearth quite clearly, as in 1587 and 1596. It is therefore difficult to understand why no bread was given in 1597, except that the corporation was itself in difficulties by that time. 1602, as it has been seen, was a plague year in the town, which must have affected many livelihoods. According to Hoskins' table of harvest fluctuations⁸⁷³ the first six years of the seventeenth century yielded above average harvests, but it is clear that in Dover provision was still being made for corn for the poor in 1601 and 1604, as well as in 1608, which yielded a particularly bad harvest and was described in Dover as a year of dearth.⁸⁷⁴ It was not until 1609 that surplus corn was again exported from the town.⁸⁷⁵

The fact that such doles ceased in 1607, when the number of the poor was likely still to have been rising, must be set against the more careful provision by the corporation of cheap wheat and rye to be sold to the poor in small measures in years of dearth after that date.⁸⁷⁶

The new market cross had been planned in 1605 with a loft designed to store grain for the poor.⁸⁷⁷ As the number of vagrants in the town also began to swell at that time, it is possible that the corporation could no longer distribute bread in the earlier face to face manner, and was in any case reluctant to supply the bread of charity to outsiders.

The end of this public charitable giving coincided with a general change in methods of dealing with the poor in Dover in the first decade of the seventeenth century. This, in turn, coincided with the Poor Law legislation of 1598. It seems likely, however, that national legislation empowered the corporation to take new actions to suit new circumstances rather than driving them to do so. It has been noted that the corporation was already indicating its anxiety to rid itself of the

burden of children in its care in the late 1590s. In 1609 and 1610 the common council passed a number of decrees that show further anxieties about the problems the poor were setting them. In 1609, they decreed that because too many poor people were settling in the town, houses must not be let to incomers unless they had certificates and could give sureties.⁸⁷⁸ It seems unlikely that this was entirely successful, since Sir Cavalier Maycott claimed in 1613 that "all the whores and rogues Mr. Darell could get were harboured in the Maison Dieu for the increase of his rents."⁸⁷⁹

That decree was followed, in 1610, by the decision to buy a tenement in which to set up a House of Correction, in which poor people could be set to work, and a decree that there were to be no more allowances for bastards, who were to be kept where they were born.⁸⁸⁰ Payments for the care of children did not stop immediately, probably because the House of Correction did not actually come into operation until 1618.⁸⁸¹ Several women continued to be paid for caring for children until 1619, when the new overseer of the House of Correction was given an allowance for keeping children under twelve.⁸⁸² The accounts after that date show no examples of the poor being cared for in the homes of other inhabitants. The fact that over £11 was spent on rebuilding the almshouse in 1612 also suggests that new efforts were being made at central supervision of the poor and needy.⁸⁸³ Expenditure on poor relief shown in the town accounts naturally declined as the treatment of the poor became more institutionalized and more dependent on the wardens of the almshouse and the overseers of the poor, whose accounts have not survived. It is clear, however, that certain fines that had normally gone into the corporation's general funds, were, in the seventeenth century, given by means of the overseers directly to the poor,⁸⁸⁴ and that confiscated bread and meat was also routinely distributed among the poor.⁸⁸⁵

The Poor Law legislation of 1598 sanctioned the punishment of vagrants

and their return to their own parish. The subject of vagrancy in Dover is discussed in detail below.⁸⁸⁶ Expenditure shown in the town accounts makes it clear that the principle of returning vagrants to their parish of origin was already being put into practice by some authorities in the 1580s, since the corporation began to send away vagrants who had been returned from other parishes to Dover as their place of origin - a woman who had been sent from Cheshire and a man from Scarborough in 1583-4, for example.⁸⁸⁷ Payments made for carrying children, lame adults and pregnant women out of the town show that by the 1590s Dover had also adopted the practice, although it may have been sending healthy vagrants away earlier without its showing in these accounts.⁸⁸⁸ The chief difference between the corporation's treatment of the transient poor before and after about 1610, is that before that date they sometimes still gave them relief, and did not routinely punish them. In the years just before 1610, a woman who was put out of the town because she was likely to give birth in the almshouse was given 3s.4d., a poor boy who was banished was given 2d., two poor women were given 6d. when they were sent to Deal, after they had been whipped, and another two given 1s. "to rid them out of town." Even some "roguish vagrants who called themselves Egyptians" were given 1s.2d. in 1606, and the daughter of a vagrant woman who had died in the Priory Barn was christened Charity and cared for until she too died.⁸⁸⁹ These people were indicators of the numbers of vagrants to come. After 1607, there is no sign that they were given any relief at all; instead they were punished and sent out of the town.

The town accounts give some indication of emergency poor relief. They suggest that either there was little need for this until the late 1560s or that other agencies, such as the church and private charitable giving, were dealing with it. It seems likely that need had increased by the 1580s and that national poor law legislation was the response to a

situation, of which Dover represents one small sample, in which a combination of economic, demographic and political circumstances had rendered normal poverty acute. In the case of Dover, the chief interest of these accounts perhaps lies in the different methods of dealing with both the indigenous and the transient poor before and after the end of the first decade of the seventeenth century. Before that, the corporation supplied money for care for its inhabitants that was carried out in the homes of the near-poor themselves, possibly helping them marginally to improve their own lot; later, the poor were taken into a house of correction or an almshouse. The earlier public, charitable giving of bread was replaced by a possibly more realistic method of supplying small quantities of wheat at low prices. The transient poor, the more vulnerable of whom had previously been helped on their way, were later seen entirely as a threat to the moral and economic well-being of the town, and treated in that way. In both cases a haphazard, but personal, method of relief had been replaced by a more rule-governed and impersonal system, which attempted to keep the poor out of sight as far as possible.

f) Expenditure on Ship Service and membership of the Cinque Ports

Expenditure by the corporation on membership of the confederation of the Cinque Ports was, by this period, perhaps the most conspicuous example of the ruling group's assumption that it should use the common resources of the town to preserve its own status, traditions and privileges. The Crown rarely looked to the Cinque Ports for the provision of ship service by the sixteenth century. Because of their gradual silting up, the ports were no longer physically capable of harbouring ships of the required size, and the statutory fifteen days of free service was no longer a realistic period for anything much more than transport duty to the near Continent.⁸⁹⁰ Yet it was during the

sixteenth century that the ports grew closer together in acting as a confederation to protect their customs and privileges - particularly their freedom from taxes, their right to hold the courts at Yarmouth during the autumn herring fair, their pursuance of debt through the custom of withernam and their right to carry the canopy over a monarch at every coronation. Their pursuance of these rights, which had become unjustifiable and self-assertively ritualistic by this period, was expensive, as the Dover town accounts demonstrate, usually accounting for between about 15% and 25% of its total expenditure, although it fell temporarily in the first two decades of the seventeenth century to between 9% and 12%. This has to be balanced, however, against the 30% of its income it managed to acquire from taxation exemption between 1596 and 1603 noted above in the discussion of income deriving from the Cinque Ports.

The provision of ship service was traditionally paid for by a tax on "lands" within the town of Dover, as has been shown above.⁸⁹¹ Each of Dover's 20 wards was traditionally responsible for the provision of one ship and the lands in each ward were taxed at different rates so that each ward yielded a roughly equivalent amount of money, regardless of the number of "lands" within it.⁸⁹² Some of the town's wealthier inhabitants held a number of lands in different wards, and would thus have been responsible for a considerable amount of the sess. This tax was known as the "land sess" and was called for throughout the period whenever ships were demanded by the Crown.⁸⁹³

The demands of the Crown and the response of the Ports on a number of occasions during the period reveal changes in attitude on both sides. Demands from the Crown became rarer, but more onerous, showing, after the Henrician period, less sensitivity to the normal, seasonal demands on the Ports, and the small size of ships at their disposal.⁸⁹⁴ On the other hand the Ports' earlier fairly prompt and spontaneous response to

the demand, which was always at least couched in courteous language, and managed independently by each Port, became increasingly grudging and, as it will be shown below, emerged only after a series of meetings between the Ports where they shared out their responsibilities in detail. There was a great contrast between Henry VIII's demand for ships from the Ports to add to the significance of his host departing for the Field of the Cloth of Gold, and the Stuart demands for ship money, both in the manner of the request and the amount demanded.⁸⁹⁵

At the beginning of the period each port seems to have managed its ship service independently, falling into a well known routine, with no need for consultation with the other ports. Henry VIII called for ship service for fifteen days in May in two consecutive years, 1513 and 1514.⁸⁹⁶ The Dover town accounts for 1512-13 include "a book of service made for Henry VIII" which shows that only nine ships from Dover performed the service, the biggest being 80 tons and all the others 50 tons or under, and that the corporation paid the owners 6d. per ton for the ship, and paid each master and his men for their wages, livery and victuals for fifteen days. Most ships carried a master, nine men and a boy, who seem to have received on average just over 2d. per day for victuals and 3d. per day for wages, and just over 2d. each for livery. The total amount paid was £58.6s.0d., to which, at the end of the year, the wards of Dover were said still to have owed £34.6s.3d. and the Members, or Limbs, outside the town £15.0s.0d.⁸⁹⁷ The owners and masters of the ships were all local men, and the ships were the small ships in normal use. In 1514 nine ships again performed the service, four of them the same ones as the year before. This time the biggest ship was 50 tons, two were 40 tons and two only 26 tons, one of them a cutter. This time the town paid £10.16s.3d. to the owners and masters and to the men "for prest."⁸⁹⁸ The masters had clearly had to impress men from outside Dover in order to man their ships, since the account

shows that they had paid men from Hythe, Folkestone, Rye, Kingsdown, Sandling, Faversham, Queenborough and even one from Holland and one from Zealand.

Dover clearly found it difficult to provide ships and men on that occasion, and the prospect of increased activity under Henry VIII seems to have led the corporation to buy and refurbish two ships of their own for the purpose. Between 1514 and 1517 the town spent over £80 on buying and rebuilding the George and the Margaret.⁸⁹⁹ They paid William Newton of Calais £16.13s.4d. as part payment of £18 for the George in 1514 and completed the payment in 1518. These ships were of 50 and 36 tons respectively, and after their use in the ship service of 1520, the accounts for 1521-22 show that "stuff of the town's ships" was sold for £2.3s.8d., the George was sold to one of the ruling group for £13.13s.4d. and the Margaret to two others for 12s.11d. in what seems to have been an asset-stripping operation.⁹⁰⁰

The last of the traditional ship services seems to have been the one undertaken in 1520 at the request of Henry VIII as transport to the Field of the Cloth of Gold. Having received his summons, the Ports held a conference and agreed that each port should make its own return by itself, upon which the mayor and jurats of Dover replied to the Warden of the Cinque Ports that they had made ready all the ships in the port with their necessary fittings, masters and mariners.⁹⁰¹ The town accounts for 1519-20 show that the town paid for 13 ships owned by Dover men, two of 80 tons, five of 50 tons, and the rest very small ships ranging from 45 to 30 tons. The two town ships were, of course, included.⁹⁰² In October 1522 when the king asked for ships to go to Calais to collect his army from France, the mayor called the ship owners to the Court Hall, where they said they would be glad to serve the king, but they lacked mariners and so asked the mayor to help them have mariners from the Limbs.⁹⁰³ This may have been an honest response,

since Dover seems still to have been in decline in the 1520s. In September, 1532, the Ports received a request from the king for ships to transport horses and other necessities in October; he realised this would be much to their discomfiture at the time of the herring fair, so he would be satisfied with only ten ships.⁹⁰⁴ Dover's share of even this modest number cost over £60.⁹⁰⁵

After that date, any demand from the Crown for ship service seems to have thrown the Cinque Ports together for meetings to discuss how many ships they could supply.⁹⁰⁶ Even under Henry VIII, as has been shown, the number of ships supplied had diminished, but there had still been an automatic and independent response by each port. This was no longer the case. In August 1587 the mayor of Dover, instructed by the Lord Warden, passed on to the common assembly the Queen's protests that the Ports were not playing their part in the defence of the narrow seas, and her threats that their privileges would be removed; a meeting of officers of the Ports had decided to prepare twelve "good ships of war", but had asked for time first to communicate their decision to the commons of every town in the ports.⁹⁰⁷

It can be seen that the mayor and jurats of Dover were alive to the threat of Spanish invasion in April 1588 because they took a number of measures to defend the town then.⁹⁰⁸ Yet their response to the demand for ship service was leisurely and reluctant. In April 1588 letters sent from the Privy Council to the Ports, demanding that they should furnish to sea five serviceable ships, none of them under the burden of 60 tons, together with Dover's pinnace, provoked the mayor and jurats to call another meeting in Dover of representatives of the Ports.⁹⁰⁹ Eleven days later it was agreed that every port should be limited to its own portion of shipping, which meant that Dover was appointed to supply 100 tons, and Faversham, its limb, would find a pinnace of 40 tons at its own cost. Five days after that meeting, the mayor and jurats ordered

that a general sess should be levied in Dover to furnish a ship of 60 tons burden and upwards, amounting to £200 taken in two equal payments.⁹¹⁰ The common council chose the boat of George Sisely, one of its oligarchy, but found that it was "already hired for Hythe"; then the master of their second choice of boat certified that he could not be there with his ship to serve.⁹¹¹ Thereupon the mayor took a mariner to London to buy a ship and provision it; having chosen one of 100 tons, the mayor had to order that the lands within the town and liberties of Dover held by non-residents should be rated and sessed to pay for it.⁹¹²

While this was happening, the Ports used their meeting in 1588 not only to discuss the division of their responsibilities for ship service, but also to appoint lawyers to represent them in a legal controversy with the Privy Council, which had accused them of exceeding the charges allowed to them at the taking of the fifteenths.⁹¹³ Thus not only were they reluctant to provide the service for which they were traditionally exempted from paying fifteenths, but were simultaneously defending their abuse of the arrangement and demonstrating that they were not using the tax exemption for the purpose intended.

In 1596 the Ports were called upon to attend upon Her Majesty's navy against the Spaniards, and this time were asked to provide only four ships.⁹¹⁴ This again led to meetings between the representatives of the Ports, and a final arrangement by which the ports were to divide the charges of ships provided by Sandwich, Dover and Hythe.⁹¹⁵ This resulted in an expensive legal battle between Dover and Sandwich, which continued for some years, in which Dover claimed that Sandwich had defaulted on its payment to her.⁹¹⁶

It was the provision of these ships that caused Dover to call for the heavy and unpopular general sesses of the late 1590s. In July, 1596, the mayor and jurats decreed that "money from the sess made for setting to

sea of the ship shall be employed only to that use", clearly an unusual notion at that time.⁹¹⁷ In 1599 the corporation had to pay a Dover sailor, Thomas Jacob, over £1 for the charges he had sustained in being arrested in London for the gunners' wages for the "Calais voyage",⁹¹⁸ and the mayor was charged with fraud in his accounting for money spent on the ship used in that voyage.⁹¹⁹ This matter was not settled until 1601, in which year debts to those who had taken part in the voyage were still being paid by the corporation, and the land sess needed to pay for them was still coming in.⁹²⁰ It is clear that the corporation was no longer making any financial provision for ship service, even at a conceptual level, and that its demands threw their fiscal procedures into chaos.

From this time, the Crown asked for money rather than ships from the Ports, since their ships were by then too small to be of use. The Ports continued to divide the charges between them on the basis of the number of ships they had once provided, as they did all their communal charges, so that Dover paid on the basis of 20 ships.⁹²¹ The next major request to the Ports was for money to suppress the Algiers pirates in 1618.⁹²² This matter was not irrelevant to the Ports since William Gurley, one of Dover's brokers, was given 11s. in 1619 to go to London about ransoming his son, who was a prisoner of the Turks at Algiers.⁹²³ There is a revealing item among the payments in the town accounts for 1618-19, "Paid to the mayor for charges at a Special Guestling last Lent, which should have been paid towards the suppressing the pirates at Argier, but was expended in soliciting the Ports' causes: £30.19s.0d."⁹²⁴ Nevertheless in that year Dover did pay its share of two amounts of £100 called for from the Ports for this purpose, that is £33.0s.0d. "rated at 33s. the ship", of which Faversham was later to pay her a proportionate part.⁹²⁵

The provision of ship money became a matter of serious concern to the

Ports in November 1634 when they received a demand from the king that a ship of 800 tons together with 260 men should be furnished by them, together with other towns in Kent and Sussex, by the next March.⁹²⁶ This led to a meeting at Cranbrook, at which Dover was assessed at £260, just over half of which she passed on to her members, although Faversham refused to pay.⁹²⁷ The town accounts of Dover show that her corporation alone spent £26.11s.11d. simply on arranging and holding meetings between the towns concerned, to protest about and finally arrange payment of the money.⁹²⁸ In 1640 Dover and its members were required to find £330 for ship money, and the common assembly agreed that an assessment was to be made according to the last book of assessment for the ship, doubling the sums on every person assessed.⁹²⁹ The demand for ship money came now in the form of a royal writ from the Privy Council, which was filtered through to the individual ports and other towns involved, and was very different in style as well as content from earlier requests for the ports to send out some of their own ships for fifteen days' service.⁹³⁰

During the war, in the mid 1620s, the Channel became extremely dangerous for small ships, and the Ports petitioned the Duke of Buckingham for two ships to guard their coasts.⁹³¹ The Lieutenant of Dover Castle also wrote to the Duke of Buckingham in 1626 saying Dover wanted "for the service" six or seven ships of good lading no matter how old or torn "if they will swim in the sea."⁹³² At this period, the Duke of Buckingham constantly urged Sir John Hippiesly, the Lieutenant of Dover Castle, to send ships to reinforce the fleet lying near Dunkirk, which was the base for the marauding ships. In 1625, when asked to send James Hughessen, a Dover merchant to attend the Privy Council to answer certain charges against him, Sir John replied that if Hughessen were to be taken away the Duke would lose £2000 and the alien ships at Dunkirk would not be burnt, because Hughessen was the man he employed in that matter and in

fitting out the four ships, which had all been done upon the credit Hughessen got for him.⁹³³ Perhaps nothing could indicate more clearly the difference between the communal action of the fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries and the dependence upon the power of one man to command appropriate lines of credit in the seventeenth century.

Dover's membership of the confederation of the Cinque Ports naturally involved the town in regular expenses, as well as the occasional one of ship service. Not the smallest financial obligation of membership of the Cinque Ports was the provision of gifts to the Lord Warden. Each new Lord Warden was traditionally presented with 100 marks by the Ports,⁹³⁴ but this was increased in the seventeenth century, and Dover's share was then £25.⁹³⁵ Since the Lord Warden was also Constable of Dover Castle, his occasional presence there obliged the town to provide him with gifts and meals, as has been noted above in comments on the corporation's expenditure on hospitality. Since the Lord Warden was the ruling group's intermediary with the Crown, this was clearly a necessary investment.

The most regular expenditure resulting from membership was incurred at the meetings of the Cinque Ports' court, variously called the Brodhull, Brotheryeld, or Brotherhood, held at Romney, which were usually combined with a meeting of the special court of Guestling.⁹³⁶ The number of these meetings held each year declined over the period, but the duration of each lengthened, so that in 1513-14, for example, there were four meetings of the Brotherhood, each lasting a day and costing the town between £1 and £2, while in 1626-27 the single meeting of the Brotherhood and Guestling lasted six days and cost £45.18.7d.⁹³⁷

Excursions to the meetings at Romney clearly formed part of the annual ritual of the oligarchy, and the corporation paid for horse hire, lodging and food for the mayor, town-clerk, Bailiff to Yarmouth and other jurats who attended. Traditionally, they took wine at their

departing and supper at their returning, more wine on the journey, at Hythe, and a formal dinner and supper at Romney.⁹³⁸ The amount of money given to officials and servants at the Brotheryeld house in Romney also increased over the period.⁹³⁹

Another annual expense was the fee to the Bailiff to Yarmouth. This post had become an anachronism by the sixteenth century as fewer fishermen from the Cinque Ports were going to Yarmouth for the annual herring fair, and the bailiff no longer had anything to administer there; his presence had become simply an elaborate ritual through which the Ports' privileged position in Yarmouth was minutely displayed. The records of the Brodhull for the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries, written by successive Bailiffs, show that by that period they were merely concerned with empty ceremonial, such as the degree of friendliness with which they were met at Yarmouth and the quality of the meals they were given.⁹⁴⁰ Nevertheless the Bailiff's fee rose from £3.6s.8d. in 1509, to £3.15s.0d. in 1568, £4.11s.3d. in 1580, £5.16s.3d. in 1602, £8.11s.3d. in 1625 and £10.11s.3d. in 1632.⁹⁴¹

Legal costs, divided between the individual ports, increased as they fought to maintain their privileges. In 1594 Dover spent £25 on sending the mayor and a solicitor to London about a suit to retain the system of billets, by which certain men owning land outside the town shared the inhabitants' exemption from fifteenths and tenths.⁹⁴² The common assembly gave the mayor permission to "spend £100 if need did so require."⁹⁴³ This money, of course, would have come from the common money of the town, a great deal of which would have been drawn from the trading taxes and fines, harbour dues and rents of men who did not receive the benefit of billets. In 1620-21 Dover's share of the charges of solicitors at the Guestling was £16.0s.0d., and in 1625-26 the corporation spent £13.12.2d. as its share for the Ports' defence of the fifteenth and tenth exemption, and £11 in complaining about ship

money.⁹⁴⁴ In the early thirties the town's share of charges for renewing the Ports' charters totalled £79.12s.0d.⁹⁴⁵ Thus the commons continued to pay for the privileges of the few.

The mayor's obligation to conduct sessions courts in Thanet and to act as coroner there seems to have become increasingly heavy, particularly during the early seventeenth century when he had several times to enquire into riots there, as well as conduct such ordinary business as checking weights and measures.⁹⁴⁶ His duties as coroner often seemed to involve two visits, the first to view the body and the second to take evidence.⁹⁴⁷ This seems, however, to have represented a normal administrative expense that could be set off against the financial contribution made to Dover by its Limbs and Members.

For the most part, by the period under review membership of the Cinque Ports had become an expensive luxury, which benefited only the wealthy and powerful men in each of the towns involved. It must have been clear before the end of the Henrician period that the Ports were no longer capable of providing suitable ships for the royal service and that demands for larger ships meant simply demands for money, which the Ports showed themselves increasingly reluctant to supply. In the Stuart period such demands became unrealistic. Yet throughout the period no serious action was taken to relate the privileges of the Ports to the service required of them. In Dover, there is no doubt that the financial privileges originally granted to the tax-paying level of society to compensate them for paying ship service sesses were being used for completely different purposes, one of which was the ritual preservation and celebration of their position. The very men who should have paid for ship service were instead calling for contributions from everyone in the town. The Ports did not succeed, either, in acting together as a trading federation; their co-operative efforts were used chiefly to complain about their loss of privileges. It seems likely that the ruling group's

association with the confederation would have been perceived as granting unfair privileges, and that the money the corporation spent on it would have emphasized its divisive effect.

In commenting on Dover's civic accounting system it has been impossible to overlook contingent circumstances over which it had little or no control such as the decline and growth of its port, with the sudden, temporary bubble of foreign trade in the early seventeenth century, the town's particular vulnerability to the effects of war, the receipt of transient strangers and the transmission of disease from abroad, and to the constant physical effects of the sea and storms. Its harbour and its membership of the confederation of the Cinque Ports brought the town into an unusually close relationship with the Crown, which also had its effects on civic financial arrangements. Successive ruling groups showed themselves flexible in managing the financial implications of all these things. Nevertheless, the corporation's management of its finances was not governed simply by a series of responses to changes in such circumstances, but was structured by successive notions about what a town should be like and how it should be managed that form merely part of a continuum of urban development. An attempt has been made to understand how those notions changed over time and what implications they had for the urban society concerned.

At the root of the whole accounting structure was the system of credit, which in itself exhibited some characteristic changes over the whole period, moving from a complex arrangement in which duty and obligation to the corporate life of the town were involved with power and dependence on personal relationships, to an outwardly simpler system by which money was invested in corporate projects, sometimes by strangers to the town, and interest paid in return. It remained a hand to mouth economy, but borrowing at interest and such devices as farming the

harbour dues, enabled the corporation to keep afloat in the difficult period at the beginning of the seventeenth century, and take such advantage as it could of the temporary boom in the 1630s.

Throughout the period the corporation spent most of its money on the administration of the town, that is on maintaining its own office-holding structure, defending its liberties and privileges, and regulating the town's economic and social life. It secured the money with which to do this from fines, taxes and rents taken from most of its inhabitants, from harbour dues paid by most merchants and seafarers and by the tax advantages and contributions it received from its membership of the confederation of the Cinque Ports, which also benefited some of its wealthier inhabitants. The corporation's first loyalty was to the maintenance of the freeman body and the ruling group that rose from it. Throughout the period it also showed some favourable bias in its expenditure towards other long-term inhabitants of the town, including some who fell foul of the law.

The accounts provide some evidence to suggest that, after a long period of decline, the corporation began to fund more energetic and direct urban administration in the late 1540s, possibly partly to replace the services previously performed by ecclesiastical institutions such as St. Bartholomew's Hospital and the Priory and by such able administrators as John Thompson, the Master of the Maison Dieu. Direct and centralized administration did not, however, develop in a marked way until the 1580s when a number of factors combined to produce a stimulus to intervention. They were: the rebuilding of the harbour, threats of Spanish invasion, a growing number of poor immigrants and, possibly, demographic pressure. The situation was at first complicated by conflict among the ruling group, but then simplified by the emergence of what appears to have been a predominantly protestant and like-minded oligarchy.

Consequently, the 1580s saw the beginning of more careful measures for regulating the market, keeping the town clean, controlling the entry of immigrants and caring for the poor. All these measures were developed more fully in the early seventeenth century when the corporation began to pay more officials regularly to see that they were carried out, and to centralize social control so that, for example, by the second decade of the seventeenth century, the corporation no longer paid for the poor and needy to be cared for in the community, but in institutions such as the House of Correction. At the same time, the vagrant poor were in essence criminalized and cast out of the town.

Expenditure by the corporation on commensality and rewards also reveals a tendency, over time, to move away from a comparatively inclusive culture that still seems to have existed in the Henrician period and towards the more exclusive culture of the seventeenth century. The mid-sixteenth century saw the end of the already declining religious festivals in the town, and the decay of the harbour at that time brought to an end the corporation's obligation to entertain voyaging noblemen - a custom not revived with the renewal of the harbour. Expenditure on hospitality suggests that successive mayors and jurats were growing closer to the county's lawyers and muster masters at about the same time as they were choosing to pay for preachers rather than players to instruct and entertain them.

The gradual establishment of what seems to have been an educated, protestant consensus among the ruling group of the town and their friends should be seen also in the context of the corporation's changing relationship with the Crown. Payments recorded for the corporation's prosecution of suits show that in the sixteenth century liberties and privileges that had been granted earlier were confirmed and even extended, whereas in the seventeenth century, immediately after the Stuart succession, liberties were curtailed, and even justified

complaints were overridden or ignored. While the corporation continued to pursue the aims set out many years earlier in the town's customal, its resources were dependent partly on national events outside its control. In maintaining the freeman body and an increasingly exclusive ruling group, the corporation was using its finances partly to maintain a religious and cultural solidarity that expressed itself in the government of the town. Because it had an increasing number of grievances against the monarchy, the solidarity could probably also be described as political by the third decade of the seventeenth century.

CHAPTER 2 ASPECTS OF THE ECONOMY OF THE TOWN AND PORT OF DOVER
1509-1640

The economy of Dover had a tripartite base in maritime, agricultural and market activities. Each of these three activities interacted with the others in response to those varying circumstances which, it has been seen, also influenced the corporation's handling of its finances. The economy of the town cannot be considered in isolation from its maritime situation and its rural region. For much of the period Dover was simply a small market town with a decaying harbour that townsmen were obliged to maintain because its topography made it significant to the national interest. The town seems to have been slow to recover from the events of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, and some evidence has been brought forward to show that it was probably still underpopulated and in decay in the 1520s.¹

An injection of money by Henry VIII into improving the harbour in the 1530s provided a temporary stimulus to the economy and it has been suggested that the ruling group made some attempts at direct intervention in the economy of the town in the late 1540s and 1550s. Such attempts may have been driven not only by encouragement from central government but also by the arrival in the town during the post-dissolution period of a number of active entrepreneurs. It seems likely that such men would have been attracted by the opportunities offered by the new freedom in leasing arrangements, together with new opportunities for farming tithes, on the lands formerly held by religious houses.² The circumstances of that period seem to have encouraged an active land market, in which the original recipients of leases of large areas of land let it out to new men in smaller parcels. It is probably fair to say that the descendants of some of the men who entered the town and

invested in land in the post-dissolution period became providers of capital to townsmen in the seventeenth century.³ Although such men secured their prosperity by having a rural base, they must have looked to the sea for opportunities to exchange their goods, thus creating a new impetus for the development of the harbour. More effective improvements were made to it in the 1580s, which brought some economic growth. This was interrupted by the depression of the 1590s in the second half of which, it has been suggested above, some of the traditional norms of civic financial administration broke down. The early seventeenth century was also a difficult period, in which war and the strength of the London merchant companies disrupted the otherwise improving maritime economy.

Exceptional, sudden and temporary change came in the second decade of the seventeenth century with the establishment in Dover, for about thirty years - with an interruption during the Anglo-Spanish war - of an international entrepot for the transshipment of goods at reduced customs rates. Increased trading activity apparently transformed the economy of the town for the last thirty years of the period under review, only to decline rapidly shortly afterwards. This rapid increase in activity served to speed up and make obvious changes that had already been working through the economy, such as the development of commercial credit arrangements. It seems unlikely that the temporary boom reached through all levels of society, however, and there is some evidence to suggest that the disparity between rich and poor became more marked at that time.

It will be shown that a large proportion of the individual merchants who profited at this period had their origins in continental Northern Europe and were able to finance themselves partly through opportunities offered by privateering and salvage recovery during periods of war in the early seventeenth century as well as by their existing trading links with the

Continent. There is also some evidence to suggest that capital was drawn in from the surrounding region to finance urban projects, and that urban credit was extended, in turn, to the country during periods of dearth.

It will be argued that increased trade seems to have led to some specialization, for example separating the function of growing grain from distributing it, following a very long period in which wealthy townsmen with a rural base and perhaps a small investment in ships, had performed both functions. For the first time at that level of wealth, a distinction perhaps began to appear between predominantly urban and rural occupations.

A survey of commodities available in the town suggests that Dover men who made money on a moderate or even fairly considerable scale did not become buyers of durable luxury goods, although they might have spent more money on food and other perishables, but that they invested in their own occupations, in property - particularly in the harbour area, and in financial dealings. There is some evidence to suggest that private marketing took place more overtly, on a larger scale, and was more difficult to control in the seventeenth century and that there was considerable evasion of market regulation - all of which perhaps exacerbated the disparity between rich and poor.

The most important elements in the town's economy will be examined in turn: the sea, the rural region, and the market, in an attempt to discern their relationship to one another, their importance to the town as a whole, and any observable change over time.

i) The Sea

a) Fishing, ferrying, piloting and carrying

There were four strands in Dover's normal maritime economy. At the beginning of the period, the smallest boats were used to pursue two of them - fishing in local waters, and ferrying goods and passengers to and

from larger boats, although it has been noted above that the function of ferriage was taken over from independent boat owners by the corporation in 1605.⁴ One of the chief occupations of the skilled mariners, or lodesmen, throughout the period was piloting ships not only into the home harbour, but across the Channel and into other English harbours. The same men usually owned ships that were capable of fishing in more distant waters, but were chiefly used for most of the period to carry passengers and goods along the coast and across the Channel.

Unfortunately very few records of the volume and nature of coastal trade survive. Port Books and customs material give more evidence for overseas mercantile trade passing through the port of Dover, but since detailed examination of those records would form a study in itself it has been decided that they are beyond the scope of this work, which will confine itself to noting general trends in trading. The effects of these trends upon the town of Dover will be discussed in relation to both its economy and its society. All maritime activities were disrupted by war and piracy at different periods, and the relative importance of each to the economy of the town fluctuated.

Fishing had originally been so important to the town that its seasonality helped to frame the corporate year: Dover's customal shows that no hundred courts were held between the beginning of its year, on September 8, and St. Andrew's Day, November 30, a period which coincided with the herring fishing season and the Yarmouth Herring Fair.⁵ Herring fished in the autumn, when salted, provided protein for the winter. Mackerel were fished in the summer.⁶ There is some evidence to suggest that by the beginning of the period under review ferriage had, however, replaced fishing as the preferred occupation of men with small boats. This carrying of men and goods from ship to shore was made necessary by the absence of a deep entrance to the harbour or a jetty suitable for the mooring of even moderately sized ships. It seems likely that ferriage

had become more reliably profitable than the seasonal fishing trade because when, in 1540, John Thompson, the Master of the Maison Dieu, offered - at the corporation's expense - to see to the construction of a creek at the Sea Gate that would be jettied at both sides in order to accommodate boats of 20 tons right up to the town walls, the majority of the commoners replied that they "in no wise will allow or agree thereunto."⁷ Their refusal came to the attention of Henry VIII, who rebuked the Dover mariners for abandoning fishing for ferrying, thus depriving the inhabitants of their town "of the plenty of fish that came"; he promised that a quay should be built in Dover, and told the faringmen to "get them again to the sea and fish."⁸

In response to this, in August, 1541, twelve mariners, "the most part of the mariners of this town," met and agreed to use some of their boats for fishing. Robert Giles would put a small craft and eight men to the use of fishing, Thomas Peter and John Burnell would send off their boat with nine men and hooks for great fish, Thomas Legent would take his boat of 21 tons "with all speed to Scarborough", and Mr. Touch would send another of 20 tons there. John Burnell and Harry Touch were already out on "mackerel fare" with their boats of 23 and 10 tons respectively.⁹

This suggests that very small boats of ten tons and less, capable of fishing only in local waters, were confined to the seasonal herring and mackerel trades, while larger ships could go to the North Sea for a variety of fish at other times.

The town accounts for 1541-42 show that after these expressions of intention to fish, John Burnell and Harry Touch paid a maltote on mackerel fare that year, and that John Burnell and Thomas Legent paid on "fish from Scarborough"; Burnell and Touch also paid in the following year, but never again.¹⁰ In general, the maltote on fishing supports the view that the industry had declined by this period. The last receipt of the straightforward maltot piscatores was recorded in the town

accounts of 1500-1501.¹¹ Between 1509 and 1515, various amounts were recorded as having been paid by fishermen, but under different headings almost every year. The amount usually included a maltote on cods and sprats, and sometimes one called "faring pence", presumably a tax on ferriage.¹² In some years it also included an amount paid by rippers when they sold fish in the town.¹³ The amount received by the corporation was never more than 17s.9d., however, and usually less than that. From 1516-1542, the maltote was usually recorded as "cods, herring and mackerel", and was normally between £1 and £2,¹⁴ The last such maltot was paid in 1546-47 by one sailor "for a mackerel voyage."¹⁵ Between 1559 and 1563 fines were paid for drying nets on the beach, but those were the last maltotes or fines paid specifically by fishermen.¹⁶ The possibility that herring had declined in local waters is suggested by the fact that in 1552-53, two ship's masters from Tynmouth paid market fines for selling herring in the harbour.¹⁷ The fact that a group of only twelve men constituted most of the mariners in the town at the meeting in 1541 indicates the small size of the town's total fleet then. The decline of seafaring in general, and the all-purpose nature of the boats at that time is also indicated in the mayor and jurats' response to the king's criticisms. They pointed out that since ancient times the inhabitants had been "given to true and profitable labour", partly by fishing between Michaelmas and Christmas, and also "by their diligence given to the king's passage, merchants ships and many other..." Nevertheless the harbour had fallen into ruins and other ports had taken the passage trade, so that fishing and other ships had diminished, and the inhabitants had had to resort to employing their ships for faring "with the invention of many other idle occupations."¹⁸

In fact, some men continued to fish throughout the period but it seems likely that the pattern of fishing changed. The importance of the annual

Yarmouth herring fair to the Cinque Ports declined until in 1626 the Questman to Yarmouth had to be given 40s. in compensation for small profits.¹⁹ It seems likely that over the period the supply of fish in local waters decreased. By 1631 Rye fishermen attributed the lack of fish to the destruction of fry by the use of improper fishing nets by both French and English fishermen.²⁰ Local, small-scale, fishing seems to have become gradually less rewarding by the mid-sixteenth century, as the ending of the maltotes on fishermen suggests. In 1564 a number of fishermen, apparently impelled by economic necessity, rebelled against an attempt by George Bingham, the farmer of the Priory, to reimpose a fish tithe that "honest and substantial fishermen" had once paid to the Prior. They seem to have been led by Edward Thoby, a fishermen, who was said to have earned his living "only" by fishing and to have sold straight from his boat at the pier and in the market, and who had been often heard "to complain of losses he has sustained by fishing".²¹

A few connections between men and women from Dover and Scarborough in the late sixteenth century perhaps suggest that fishing in larger boats was continuing in that area; inhabitants of Dover born in Scarborough were, for example, Isabel Gill, wife of Bartholomew, a fisherman, Henry Harwood, a fisherman, and the wife of John Merchant, a fruiterer.²²

Depositions taken in a case in the town court in 1578 also refer to Dover men fishing for herring off Youghal in Ireland.²³ An examination of late sixteenth and early seventeenth century inventories suggests that there were great differences between the wealth of small-scale local fishermen with very small boats of their own, or perhaps no boat, but only a few nets and hooks, and that of men with large boats who could go fishing in the North Sea. The inventories of the former were invariably of very low value, for example those of Hugh and Richard Jacob, Christopher Gray, James Harrison and William Taverner, whose inventories ranged in value between £4.7s.2d. and just over £1, and some

of whom slept on straw beds.²⁴ In contrast are the inventories of men, described as mariners rather than fishermen, but who can be seen to have used some of their boats for fishing - such as Alexander Kenton, who had shares in six boats, and whose inventory totalled almost £200, and John Wallop, who had shares in five boats, and whose inventory totalled nearly £900.²⁵

It seems likely that, in the seventeenth century, north sea fishing was being pursued on a larger scale, and naturally by the owners of larger boats, and that herring fishing particularly was dominated by a few men whose boats went far into the North Sea - as indicated by the petition in 1628 by the fishermen of Yarmouth and the Cinque Ports to the Duke of Buckingham to grant them a convoy for two fishing fleets - 160 boats to Iceland and 230 to the North Seas - in which they claimed that the livelihood or utter ruin of 10,000 people and families lay in the good or ill success of that trade.²⁶ Two boats taken by a Dunkirk frigate in 1637 had been furnished for north sea fishing by Jacob Brames, one of the most important merchants in Dover, whose boats were among the largest in the port.²⁷

It also seems likely that in the early seventeenth century herring began to be cured and dried in herring hangers on a large scale, as well as simply being salted in barrels by many individuals as they always had been. A corporation decree of 1610 complained that large buyers of fish were getting many herring for their "new erected herring hangers", and set out the proportion that they must in future supply to the ordinary market, a decree that was revived in 1635.²⁸ Before this period, two comparatively wealthy sailors, John Robins and William Tiddeman, had "fish houses" listed in their inventories of 1580 and 1589 respectively.²⁹ "Herring hangers" were first mentioned in the inventories of two wealthy men in 1611 - Charles Brames, a merchant, and Alexander Kenton, a sailor who owned a fish shop and also sold butter

and cheese, which suggests that he traded with Newcastle.³⁰ Between 1621 and 1637 herring hangers were recorded in the inventories of eight men, seven of them wealthy sailors, and one a shipwright, whose inventories ranged in value from about £100 - £900.³¹ The decline of opportunities for small fishermen is also suggested by the figures given by a survey of ships in Dover of 1626.³² It listed only 4 "fisherboats" of from 10 to 16 tons, one of which was owned by men from Hythe. It also listed 19 fishermen, but 55 sailors and 18 pilots.

Pilots, who will be discussed below, were high-status sailors who were particularly vital to the Channel passage trade. The passage from Dover was important to the country at large, although its beneficial economic impact on the town itself was probably experienced chiefly by innkeepers and hackney-men, who lodged travellers and transported them onwards to Canterbury or London, and the chief of whom was always responsible for organizing the transport of the king's post between London and the Continent.³³ The corporation's expenditure on gifts to travelling noblemen, discussed above, suggests that the traffic of distinguished men and women to France was particularly frequent in the period before the fall of Calais. Ambassadors and noblemen continued to cross the Channel after that, however, and it is possible that the concern about the state of the harbour expressed in some of their letters to influential people in the mid-sixteenth century put pressure on the Crown to improve it.³⁴ The ships used for the passage trade in the Henrician period were small, as is indicated by a list of the boats serving the passage trade in 1542: there were four boats, all crayers - small trading vessels of 40 tons and under.³⁵ The list was made in response to the king's request that Dover mariners should serve the kingdom better and cut down the number of boats used in ferriage; the corporation promised to increase the number of ships in the passage trade to six by building two new ones.³⁶

The majority of mariners who shared ownership of the passage boats and, for the most part, also sailed them across the Channel were members of the most persistent and long-standing guild in Dover - the company of lodesmen, or pilots. The society seems to have been in existence long before the start of the period under review, but set itself up with regulations and officers in 1526.³⁷ Its members were clearly determined to keep the passage trade in the hands of Dovorian sailors as far as possible, and in 1542 it was agreed by the mayor and jurats that a gentle warning should be given to Calais men who came to Dover with their ships that they should no longer go into taverns or inns to hawk for merchants or passengers across the Channel as long as any Dover ship was available, unless they went to the mayor or the wardens of the passage for a licence.³⁸ Records of the proceedings of the Court of Lodemanage survive from 1550, showing how the lodesmen governed themselves under four wardens, who always included the current mayor and bailiff and usually the Lieutenant of the Castle.³⁹ These records show that in 1550 they instituted a system whereby they were divided into two classes, according to the tonnage assigned to each man, which depended on his seniority as a lodesman. This meant that a father was sometimes in the senior group and his son in the junior.⁴⁰ The original aim seems to have been to determine and enforce the order in which men might take their turns to pilot boats, but they also set turns for annual inspections of the channels between the South Foreland and the west end of the Nore "for the attainment of knowledge, and to certify to the companies of the alterations of marks and channels," in which both senior and junior members of the company participated.⁴¹ Fines were particularly strictly demanded from those men who bargained to go to Flushing, or elsewhere on the continent, and afterwards took a ship to London or Tilbury instead, which suggests that this was a fairly common practice.⁴² It is likely that the sailors who belonged to this company

were in a position to set and demand high fees from merchants and passengers who used their services, and to oust foreign competitors from the port. From 1557 the corporation regularly took the profitable fine of "half passage" from them,⁴³ which before that time had in theory been used specifically for repairs to the harbour, and which was indeed used in that way in 1510-11.⁴⁴

The passage of ships across the Channel was, of course, severely affected at times by both war and piracy. Some of the attacks on Channel shipping are recorded, and show that there was little hope of compensation for goods that were lost, and little help given to sailors to get home after they had been taken to France.⁴⁵ In 1588, for example, a sailor deposed in the town court of Dover that the ship he had sailed in from Dieppe had been boarded by French men who had taken all the freight, weapons and tackle from the ship, then beaten and bound the crew and taken them back to Dieppe, where the ship and her master were still detained for the sum of £90 that the French claimed were the charges owing to the surgeon who had attended to the wounds sustained by the French crew in boarding the ship.⁴⁶ Later, in the seventeenth century, the packet boat carrying the mail came under continual attack from small boats manned by Dunkirkers sailing from Calais; the Earl of Lindsey told Secretary Coke that the post of Dover who plied to Dunkirk had declared he was unwilling to undergo the service any longer unless he were better provided to resist violence.⁴⁷ Violence was not all on one side, however; for example in 1587 an English sailor took a wheat crayer and threw 13 people overboard.⁴⁸

The carriage of goods from the port of Dover and their destinations were limited by the small size of available boats. During the sixteenth century these were mostly under 80 tons, and the same boats seem to have been used for carrying goods, carrying passengers, fishing in distant waters and performing ship service for the Crown.⁴⁹ No really

substantial Dovorian merchant involved in the shipment of goods on a large scale can be identified in the town before the seventeenth century, and such evidence as exists suggests that, in the sixteenth century, goods carried abroad went chiefly to Boulogne, Dunkirk, Flushing, Ostend, Newport and La Rochelle and were handled chiefly by merchants from London and Calais.⁵⁰ The strong hold of London merchants on trade through the port is indicated by the fact that when, in 1523, the corporation decided to appeal to merchants to provide money for the repair of the harbour, in return for no longer having to pay a duty normally levied on them, representatives from the town had to go to London to meet the merchants involved.⁵¹ The grip of the London Merchant Adventurers on trade became a constant source of grievance among men of the Cinque Ports.⁵²

While port books supply evidence for the predominance of London and Calais merchants working through the port of Dover in the sixteenth century, the records of the town court also give some evidence of the customary presence in the town of merchants from outside it, of the importance of inns in the town in the conduct of trade, and of the close connections between some Dover men and continental merchants. In 1544, for example, a haberdasher from London swore before the mayor and jurats that he had agreed to take delivery in Dover of wine shipped over by a Calais merchant.⁵³ In 1587 a Dover sailor, Edmund Hawke, deposed about goods he had shipped eight years earlier in his 18-ton crayer for Matthew Butler, a London merchant, some to London and some to Calais.⁵⁴

In the same year a Dover innkeeper made a deposition about a bargain struck in his inn between two men from London - a merchant tailor and a draper - and Peter Peterson of Great Brook near Auchuson in Holland, master of a 350 ton hulk. The Londoners agreed to buy the ship and gave 6d. in earnest of their bargain to a poor woman of Dover, agreeing that upon delivery they would bestow 5s. to the poor of the English church of

Dover and 5s. to the poor of the Flemish church there.⁵⁵ Such records also indicate the dominance of certain ports at the time, as when a Norwich merchant deposed about his ownership of goods laded in Amsterdam and shipped to Dover in a Sandwich boat in 1552, or when the court made over some property in Dover to John Taylor of Antwerp, Englishman in 1581.⁵⁶ The will of John Grubham, who died and was buried in Dover in 1584 shows that he was Officer to the Merchant Staplers in Bridges (Bruges), and that his overseers were Dover men, one of whom, John Skeith, had himself been born in Calais.⁵⁷

Certain local products such as beer, lime and grain were handled independently by local men. From quite early in the sixteenth century there was an active trade in beer to Flanders, so that in 1545 the corporation was able to decree that Flemings were to pay 12d. to the brewer - and thence to the corporation - for every tun of beer they shipped to Flanders or Boulogne.⁵⁸ From 1553 a fine on the exporting of beer was recorded in the town accounts; the detailed list given in the first year shows that it was paid chiefly by men from Calais, Dunkirk, Ostend, and "divers Flemings", also a "French man" and men from Hastings and Rye, as well as three Dover brewers.⁵⁹ Some Dover men, chiefly beer brewers, also handled their own traffic in hops.⁶⁰ Lime was a local product and the corporation started taking a fine on its export in 1584.⁶¹ Typical of the merchants who shipped lime was Edmund Michell, a prominent entrepreneur and member of the oligarchy who was also part-owner of one of the town's lime-kilns.⁶² Grain was exported from Dover both to Flanders and to London.⁶³ Nevertheless, Sandwich was the main port for the shipment of grain. This can be seen clearly during the period in the 1580s when, under the licence granted for a fine on the export of grain to go the harbour works in Dover, the common council records of Dover show that composition on the export of grain was made with a number of Sandwich merchants.⁶⁴

A variety of records suggests that there was a regular traffic down the east coast, bringing coal and butter from Newcastle and cheese from East Anglia; for example the town accounts show that fines were paid on sea coal from Newcastle from early in the period.⁶⁵ More evidence of this trade appears in testamentary material and will be dealt with below. Evidence of coastal trade to and from the western ports emerges from depositions of sailors from ports such as Lyme, Bridport, Poole and Plymouth, who were occasionally brought before the Dover court on charges of unruly behaviour, or to testify about goods carried in ships that were damaged when they were forced into Dover by storms.⁶⁶

Testamentary material discussed below also shows some credit links between Dover merchants and ship masters and men in Fowey and Exeter. When, in 1523, the crew of a Dover ship, the Mighell Bailly, stole herrings, eels, butter and bacon from "the George of Usterdam" lying at the Camber, they kept some for themselves but sold the rest to named men they clearly knew well all along the near coast - in Winchelsea, Rye and the Dover road.⁶⁷

In the sixteenth century therefore it seems likely that most boats out of Dover were small. For the years 1510-11 and 1512-13, accounts kept by the Master of the Maison Dieu for repairing the harbour indicate the number of cross-channel voyages made by ships of Dover, usually to or from Calais, and occasionally Boulogne.⁶⁸ Taken in conjunction with similar information given in the town accounts, these suggest that about twenty ships from Dover regularly made these journeys, of which there were never more than 100 in a year. Fifteen of these ships were most regularly in use, of which only the nine employed in the ship service of 1512 seem to have been of any serviceable size. Even of these, only one was of 80 tons burden, the rest were of 50 tons or less.⁶⁹ The accounts of the Master of the Maison Dieu show that small trading boats - crayers and ketches - from Calais also crossed regularly; and boats, ketches and

hoys (boats small enough to have been used for river traffic) from Boulogne, Colchester, Rochester, Hythe and Whitstable made occasional voyages to or from Dover.⁷⁰ Half-passage payments were made for people, as when £5 was paid for "the half passage of Welshmen pilgrims going to Rome" in 1523-4.⁷¹ Unfortunately, especially considering the absence of Port Books for this period, there is no information about goods transported.

Over one hundred years later, in 1618, the merchants of the Cinque Ports, replying to the Lord Warden's request for money towards the suppression of pirates at Algiers and Tunis, said they were not involved in trade in the affected area, and they had been able to find only one ship in the Ports

"and that of Dover, which is not above 50 tons, that yearly tradeth to Malaga and Bordeaux, and is only freighted by two or three merchants of that town. All the residue of ships of the Cinque Ports and other vessels are of small burden and have trade only to Newcastle and into the west ports of England with malt, and some few passage boats are employed for France, Holland and Flanders".⁷²

They pointed out that masters of ships of good burden had inhabited the Ports in recent years, but had been forced to go and settle in London in order to get employment from London merchants, who "are of late so incorporated into several companies" that they otherwise barred them from trade.⁷³ This was clearly used as an opportunity for special pleading, but nonetheless supports the view that the outports were experiencing real difficulties by that period.

Four years after that, in October 1626, the mayor and jurats of Dover sent an exact survey of ships belonging to the town to Sir John Hippiesly, Lieutenant of Dover Castle.⁷⁴ This shows that by then the town had 29 "great ships", that is of 40 tons burden or more, ten of which were 100 tons or over, including one of 240 and one of 350 tons. Most of these carried ordnance. There were 14 barques of between 30 and 40 tons, 11 barques between 18 and 30 tons, and 4 "fisherboats." Yet the

survey ends with a note that "the most part of the said ships and barques lie in the harbour not employed for want of trade and men, there being no sailors in this Town to man a third part of them."⁷⁵ By 1635, however, well after the end of Anglo-Spanish hostilities, the town council had to make a regulation to prevent fire in the harbour since "by reason of the great trade of merchandize in this town, many more great ships and vessels do come daily to the harbour of this town than formerly."⁷⁶ and a deposition of the period describes people walking across the harbour from deck to deck.⁷⁷

The reason for the creation and development of a short-lived international entrepot, and the resulting massive expansion in trade through Dover at the end of the period under discussion has been examined above.⁷⁸ Clearly the system of transshipping goods afforded many opportunities to defraud the Customs, and the Dover town records show that goods were sometimes transhipped outside the harbour, in the Downs, without being brought ashore.⁷⁹ In fact larger ships could not actually enter the harbour, although their goods could be brought ashore by the town's ferry boat. Customs records are therefore likely to under-record the amount of merchandize involved. Kepler has used available Port Books to arrive at totals of the official values of commodities (excluding silver and wines) re-exported from Dover to various ports in selected years. They indicate clearly the growth in the value of trade over the period, from £44,749 in 1621-22, to £193,427 in 1632-33, £517,424 in 1635-36 and £598,451 in 1636-37.⁸⁰ His table shows that there was, of course, a particularly high increase in the value of goods exported to Spain and Flanders- especially to San Lucar and Dunkirk. Exports also increased to France, particularly Rouen, and to the United Provinces, Germany and Italy. Much trade went to Genoa, and the increased importance of Leghorn in the 1630s is also obvious. Trade to Venice increased, although not spectacularly, but exports to Naples

faded away. The value of trade for the Straits of Gibraltar increased more than tenfold between 1633 and 1635, and there was a modest increase in the value of goods to the Barbary ports and to Norway.

The fact that a ship was named as being "of Dover" did not necessarily imply its full ownership by Dover men, or even Englishmen. As early as 1623 the corporation were concerned that although some masters of ships were "reputed to be of this town" yet the owners or part-owners of them lived at Dunkirk and elsewhere and therefore were not paying duties to the town or the harbour. For that reason they insisted that masters of such ships should be examined to discover what part of their ships belonged to strangers.⁸¹ A number of the consequent certificates were recorded in the common assembly minutes and show that some ships were owned entirely by men from London, Edinburgh, Calais, Dunkirk and Bruges, while others were owned jointly by *Dover men and strangers* and one that had been wrongly suspected was owned entirely by Dover men.⁸²

The composition trade nevertheless stimulated some Dover men to have new ships built. Trinity House Certificates show that between 1633 and 1637 at least five sizeable ships were built for Dover merchants: the Alice and Hannah - 180 tons, the John - 120 tons, the Thomas - 90 tons, the Blessing - 300 tons, and the Dover Merchant - 350 tons; they were not, however, built in Dover, but in Nieuwport, Colchester (2), Shoreham and Redriffe respectively.⁸³ The last was owned jointly by Arnold Brames, merchant, and William Legent, mariner, of Dover and by James Pickering, fishmonger, and Captain John Hyde, mariner, of London.

This "great trade" had an impact on the economy of the nation. Most obviously, the Exchequer benefited from increased Customs revenue.

Silver was still coming into the Mint in the 1640s, at a time when it could be useful to Parliament. The increased demand for ships encouraged some ship-building. On the other hand, it has been argued that the re-export of northern European new draperies from Dover to Iberian and

Mediterranean ports, in the areas which had become the most important markets for English new draperies, resulted in serious competition for English cloth manufacturers.⁸⁴

To consider the impact in local terms, it is clear that the whole inland region, centring on Deal, between Dover and Sandwich, and lying behind the Dover Roads had new demands made on it for provisions, both for the crews of the merchant ships and of the naval ships that accompanied them, although it was not until 1626 that Sir John Hippiesley suggested to the Duke of Buckingham that fighting pinnaces might be victualled in Dover instead of London.⁸⁵ A letter from Lord President Manchester to the King in 1627 claimed, however, that the victuals provided for the fleet at Dover and Plymouth had not been good, and the loss was to be made good by the providers.⁸⁶ By 1639 the Privy Council advised the Lord Warden that he should instruct the mayor or clerk of the market at Sandwich to see to the fact that goods at Deal and thereabouts were being sold to English and foreigners at excessively high rates.⁸⁷

The impact of the trade on Dover was both economic and social and will be examined under a number of heads throughout this study. Analysis of the town accounts, for example, has shown that the corporation received a large boost in income in those years, but that it was forced into an almost correspondingly large outlay to keep the harbour open, and to provide dry and secure accommodation for goods awaiting transhipment. Clearly the labour market was affected, and it will be shown that competition for portage work, for example, created some social unrest. More will also be said, in a discussion of religion, of the problems created by the residence in Dover of many merchants and factors, most of whom were not English and many of whom were not protestant.

The increase in trade in the seventeenth century was fortuitous, but it had been made possible by two slightly earlier developments in the harbour area. One was the reconstruction begun under Elizabeth. The

other was the opportunistic development of coastal waste land, which land came into the ownership of the Warden and Commissioners to the Harbour under the arrangement of 1606 by which the town council ceded responsibility for the harbour to the King.⁸⁸ Little had been built there by that time, and as the land was gradually leased to individuals, its proximity to the harbour meant that quays and storehouses could be built there just at the time when trade began to increase. The opportunity to lease land there and so exploit the new trade had an influence on personal wealth that will be examined below.

The commodities stored in Dover at that time were, of course, merely passing through the port for re-export but it is interesting to compare them with what had been imported and exported earlier. A crude comparison of two sixteenth century Port Books, for the period Michaelmas to Easter 1567-68 and September 1575 to April 1576, with the Port Books for 1632-33, 1633-34 and 1637-38 reveals the development in the range of goods being traded over the period and, perhaps more interestingly, the new areas from which they originated and to which they were sent.

The book for 1567-68 records wine - Gascon and Canary - as the chief commodity coming inwards to Dover from Dunkirk, Middelburg, Ostend and Calais, apart from 500 barrel hoops from Dunkirk. The most expensive cargoes were, however, three separate groups of cages containing a number of birds of prey - falcons, goshawks and tassel gentles - that appear to have been bought abroad, and sent from Dunkirk to Dover. Goods going outwards were mainly cloths, white and black hasborow and one consignment of bayes, all going to Dunkirk or Middelburg. Two consignments of hops went to Dunkirk and one to Ostend.⁸⁹ The book for 1575-76 is for outward goods only, and shows the enormous expansion in the range of cloths being exported, possibly partly because of the Walloon settlers in Sandwich. Cloths and yarn now included holland,

fustian de Naples, worsted yarn, gauntlet lace, woollen cloth and yarn, crewel, mocadoes, cambric, lawn, barretts, inkel wrought and unwrought, turkish grograine, damask, raw silk, dornix, millam fustians, caddis, sipris cottons, ripkins, brown canvas and grosgrain chamlet as well as the hasborow previously exported. Made up goods such as cuffs, ruffs, handkerchiefs, shirt laces, towels, women's head bands, leggings, bugle chains "mercery wares de Paris" and glass buttons also went to Calais or Dunkirk. Two Dover grocers exported prunes to Calais, and an innkeeper sent vinegar to Dunkirk. A number of Dover brewers exported hops to Calais and Dunkirk. Once again falcons were exported in their cages, and there was one consignment of 5 dozen writing tables to Calais. No goods went to Ostend at this period, presumably because of the failure of Antwerp as an international port.⁹⁰

The goods coming inwards in 1632 consisted entirely of consignments of wine, but it now came not only from northern France but directly from Bordeaux, San Lucar and Cadiz, with some having been transhipped in the Downs. In that year new stuffs, Flemish kerseys, half Kent cloths, short web cloths, "poroposes" and plain gloves went outwards to Malaga, east country wax and Lynscot says to St. Sebastian and thread to Cadiz. Welsh cottons, bays, Ilminster kerseys, West Indies hides, cochineal and indigo went to Calais, and cochineal and indigo were also re-shipped to Hamburg. Kent cloths went to Middelb^{urg}rough and linseed to Dieppe. No destination is given for a shipment of horses, Newcastle coals, Ghent linen, double broadcloth, buttons, stockings, grosgrain, east country wax, buffins, tapestry, silk, new stuffs and Spanish wool.⁹¹ In 1633 imports included cobweb lawn, cambric, Spanish tobacco, raisins, olives, lemon and cochineal from Malaga and San Lucar. The Orange Tree, an Amsterdam boat, had brought a cargo from Venice, and presumably originally from much further east, of Turkey grosgraines, long raw silk, and rice. It can be seen that the harbour would have been full of

English ships, as well as foreign ones, bringing cloths for export. Merchants resident in Dover would have had a new importance in conducting that trade; at the same time English merchants could now deal directly with wine growers further south and not have to rely on importing through northern French and Flemish ports.

Imports shown in the port book for 1637-38 still include French wine, but also an even wider range of goods, including many bars of silver that were coming in with other cargoes. Much of the merchandize consisted of sugar, spices, nuts, dried fruits and dyes, but iron, hides, sheepskin, wool and Castile soap were now coming from Spain, and new merchandize such as Muscovia hides, clapboard, potashes and gunpowder must have originated in the Baltic, Muscovy and East Indies routes.⁹² Even though most of these goods were destined for re-export, their range suggests that English diet, clothing and building must at least have been modified at that time.

b) Ships and the accumulation of wealth by merchants, factors and mariners

The expansion of trade in the seventeenth century brought opportunities to individuals for the creation of wealth and, probably for the first time, there were merchants in Dover who were not simply exporting local products or trading on a small scale in the kind of goods they sold from their shops. Michael Burnley and the brothers Robert and John le Marle, for example were "merchants and factors for diverse other merchants of the cities of London, Rouen, Amsterdam, Calais and other places in the dominion of the King of France and States of the United Provinces."⁹³

At the same time, it will be shown that a larger number of ship masters began to accumulate wealth, through acting as merchants themselves. In spite of the dominance of the trading companies based in London, it seems to have been possible at this period for independent merchants to

operate with some success from an outport like Dover, although the evidence of inventories shows that at least two Dover men had links with the East India Company: Peter Eaton, a mariner, sailed for them and was owed money by them at his death and Nicholas Eaton, a merchant, had ventures in the Company.⁹⁴

It also seems likely that joint stock companies in some simple form were set up by inhabitants of the town, since the inventory of Francis Augar, merchant, in 1620 shows that he was owed desperate debts which should have been paid by a "Bill of Adventure under the hand and seal of Captain Fermer, Henry Bacon and Jacob Brames", and that he was also owed about £300 "for part of the stock in the late pretended voyage for Virginia."⁹⁵ Such joint ventures were not new to townsmen. It has been noted above that joint ownership of boats had long been the norm in Dover, but there had also been a tradition of joint exploitation of lime-kilns that extended from one generation to the next, for example between William Eaton, Anthony van Dene and Edmund Michell, between Robert Garrett and Francis Raworth, and between William Warde, Peter Eaton, James Hughessen and Thomas Michell, in which the land, stock and profits were divided between the partners and passed on to their heirs after death.⁹⁶ A tithe dispute in 1634 gives details of a temporary investment in a lime-kiln partnership in the suburban parish of Charlton and describes how Thomas Harvey, a maltster, put his money into the partnership and had delivered to him a book of accounts "at their first shutting in their partnership."⁹⁷ It seems likely that such arrangements might have been extended to joint ventures in the exchange of other goods.

Many of the factors and merchants who came to Dover in the seventeenth century to conduct the transshipment of goods were aliens, whose residence in Dover was temporary, although prolonged for a few years in some cases.⁹⁸ Some of the most successful merchants and factors came,

however, from originally alien families who were already established in the town. The most important of these were James Hughessen senior and junior, Nicholas Eaton, and Charles Brames and his sons Jacob and Arnold. It seems worth noting the activities of these three particular families who prospered in the seventeenth century before looking back at earlier ship-owning tradesmen and mariners, if only because their names recur throughout this study. It will be shown that testamentary and other evidence suggests that they were among the wealthiest men in the town in the first half of the seventeenth century. Clearly they were all enterprising and opportunistic men, but it also seems likely that they operated from a substantial urban basis and that they had mercantile connections and lines of credit of a kind not then available to most provincial English merchants, which helped them to obtain either office or perquisites from the Crown.

The Hughessens acted as factors for Dunkirk merchants.⁹⁹ James senior had been born in Dunkirk and was a "free denizen" of England. His three sons, all born in England, were merchants, James junior being born in Dover in about 1585.¹⁰⁰ In 1614 the elder James Hughessen had a dwelling house in the town at Snargate but, in English fashion, he had already established himself in a country house at Linsted by the 1630s.¹⁰¹ As early as 1624 he made a charitable covenant with the corporation of Dover for £150 to start three or four male children in business annually, from a desire to show his thanks to God for the growth of his estate "by trading in merchandize" while he lived in Dover.¹⁰² Two of James's sons became freemen of Dover - Peter in 1608 and James junior in 1611.¹⁰³ The third, Abraham, who was born in London, also lived in Dover from the age of four.¹⁰⁴ Peter seems to have lived sometimes in Dover and sometimes in Deal.¹⁰⁵ The younger James was the most prominent of the family in Dover's affairs, yet it seems he continued to be perceived by townsmen as a Dunkirker, even

though the Lieutenant of Dover Castle, John Hippiesley, expressed the wish in a letter to the Duke of Buckingham in 1628 that he could make James Hughessen a Burgess to Parliament.¹⁰⁶

The whole family had a number of mercantile and shipping interests, supporting each other with money and credit. Records of debt pleas in the Dover Hundred Court between 1583 and 1636 reveal many occasions on which James Hughessen, father and son, "merchants", were plaintiffs for amounts of up to £220, but only one when the son was a defendant - for £58.¹⁰⁷ Such freedom from debt by those who were themselves owed money is unique in that record. The testamentary accounts of another Hughessen - Cornelius - were presented by James junior, to whom Cornelius owed £872 at death.¹⁰⁸ The young James had sufficient financial backing from his family to enable him to pay £269 to Dover corporation in advance in order to farm the town's harbour dues in 1611, the year in which he became a freeman.¹⁰⁹ He was also importing rye from Holland in order to sell it in Rye as early as 1609, and he continued to deal in corn throughout the 1620s.¹¹⁰

Because of the needs of Sir John Hippiesley while he was Lieutenant of Dover Castle, and the greed of Secretary Nicholas and the Duke of Buckingham, the Hughessens appear to have managed to retain certain perquisites from the Crown in spite of their occasionally unlawful behaviour. James, father and son, acted as agents for the import of Spanish silver, under the Crown arrangement with the Asentistas, but on at least one occasion sent less of it to the Mint than they should have done.¹¹¹ They were also accused of breaking restraints on goods for Dunkirk during the war by sending them there via Calais.¹¹² They were sent for by the Council to answer these charges, but were apparently spared in response to the arguments of Sir John Hippiesley, first that James Hughessen junior was the man on whose credit he had relied in order to obtain four ships to attack the fire ships at Dunkirk, and

later that Hughessen was so engaged on the business of the prize goods - in which the Duke of Buckingham had a share - that his presence was needed in Dover.¹¹³

The younger James had been salvaging wrecks since at least 1618.¹¹⁴ In 1625 Secretary Nicholas obtained for him the preemption of wrecked goods, on condition of his giving one third of the profits to him, Nicholas, and one third to the Lieutenant of Dover Castle. James and his brother Abraham were also among the Dover ship owners who received letters of marque and commissions to take pirates in 1628, having petitioned Secretary Nicholas for these in 1627.¹¹⁵ The survey of Dover's ships in 1626 shows that the family were part-owners of ten of the 58 ships listed, seven of them "great ships."¹¹⁶ By 1626, James junior had also been appointed Postmaster of Dover, responsible for all the mail passing through Dover on its way between London and the continent; anyone wanting a horse or a guide was obliged to go first to his post house.¹¹⁷

Nicholas Eaton, another prominent Dover merchant, was actually born in Dunkirk.¹¹⁸ He was uncle to James Hughessen junior, through a marriage of his father, William Eaton, a Flemish draper, who lived in Dover at the time of his death but retained property in Dunkirk.¹¹⁹ He spent most of his youth in Dover, apart from a year that his father willed should be spent in France to learn French.¹²⁰ When young, he was servant to John Skeith, a prominent linen-draper and member of the Dover oligarchy, who left him his shop and stock and made him executor of his will.¹²¹ John Skeith had himself been born in Calais and was overseer to the will of John Grubham, an officer to the Merchant Staplers of Bruges.¹²² In spite of these continental connections, Nicholas Eaton appears to have become deeply enmeshed in Dover society, and married Jane Tiddeman, one of a seafaring, ship-owning and office-holding family long rooted in Dover.¹²³

Although Nicholas Eaton was variously called grocer and merchant he clearly gradually invested in ships - possibly getting his first through his marriage to Jane Tiddeman. The 1626 survey of ships shows that he owned six great ships in partnership, some with James Hughessen, some with London merchants and one with his wife's brother.¹²⁴ Like James Hughessen, he received letters of marque for some of his ships in 1626.¹²⁵ His will of 1636 survives, together with an inventory, dated 1637, of the goods he had dispersed to his eldest son, William, during his life-time. The inventory lists parts of 4 ships - a sixteenth part of a ship of 300 tons worth £200, an eighth of a ship of 80 tons, a quarter of a ship of 50 tons and one eighth of the salvaged parts of a ship that had been cast away at Malaga. The inventory also lists £118 in commodities adventured with his second son, Nicholas, and an adventure of £64 in the "East India new company". At this stage he had also passed on the quarter share of the lime-kiln his family held with the Hughessens and others, malt worth over £300 in a malthouse in Dover, and some wheat and peas growing in the ground. The total amount of this inventory of part of his goods is £2,113, which was very high by the standards of Dover at that time.¹²⁶ His will left more ships and a further £900 to his son, Nicholas, together with the profits of an adventure of goods and merchandize that Nicholas had recently carried to sea for him. His Overseers were his kinsman, James Hughessen of Linsted, and Antony Percival, who was Collector of the king's tenths on prize goods - that is ships that had been taken as prizes.¹²⁷

It is difficult to specify the origin of the Brames, or Braemes, family, as they appear on no lists of strangers, neither is there any reference to their obtaining free denizenship - but that is also true of Nicholas Eaton. Their name suggests a Dutch origin and they have been confidently described as "Dutch merchants".¹²⁸ In spite of their wealth and importance in Dover they were clearly felt to be alien to the community

and were prosecuted unusually often for minor trading offences.¹²⁹

Charles Brames, the patriarch, became a freeman of Dover in 1594. When he died in 1611 his inventory was worth £838.19s.2d; including less than £4 in desperate debts.¹³⁰ His will shows that he left parts of two ships and, more importantly, he left the lease of some wasteland belonging to Dover harbour on which he had to his "exceeding great cost ...built several tenements, store houses, cellars, herring hangers and a wharf or quay"¹³¹

Charles Brames divided his property between his sons Jacob and Arnold, with most of the property round the harbour going ultimately to his older son Jacob. Jacob became a freeman at the age of 15, in 1613; the mayor and jurats thought him too young, but legal counsel advised them that their refusal of him would be "prejudicial".¹³² As well as apparently becoming a substantial merchant, he was Customer of Sandwich, its Creeks and Members, which included Dover, from 1621 until his death in 1641, and conflicted with the corporation of Dover when he took office in 1621 because he attempted to move the custom house to his own house, a scheme which the town prevented.¹³³ Nearly twenty years later he was again in open dispute with the town when he tried to get all goods in transit into his own new storehouse, thereby circumventing the "housage" tax taken by the corporation.¹³⁴ He had put the land inherited from his father to good use, and the Eldred map of 1641 shows that one of his holdings, at the entrance to the harbour, occupied about a third of the total area available.¹³⁵ Like the Hughessens, Jacob Brames was involved in salvage work. As early as 1615 he and another merchant, Michael Burnley, put in a bond for £500 for the wreck of a French ship.¹³⁶ He also became Deputy to the Lieutenant of Dover Castle, and on one occasion claimed that he put his oath to the king before any duties to the mayor and corporation of the town.¹³⁷ Jacob's brother, Arnold, also a merchant, was a factor for Harman Beckman of

Hamburg.¹³⁸ Port books indicate that he was one of the more important factors for the silver trade through Dover.¹³⁹ He was also part-owner of three of the big ships, mentioned above, that were built between 1633 and 1637.

Although these men loomed large in Dover, it is unlikely that they even approached the wealth of the great London merchants of the time. The Hughessens and the Brameses, in particular, appear to have been opportunists, drawing support from their continental mercantile connections as they used their ships, and those of others, to combine their work as merchants with salvaging and privateering, and with the Crown appointments that were available because of Dover's strategic position - politically and defensively through its Castle, and economically through its harbour and its Customs. Their path to such appointments was probably eased by the money they were able to lend to the Crown indirectly, chiefly through the officers of the Castle. For example, Sir John Hippiessley pointed out to Secretary Conway in 1625 that, as well as the four ships already funded by James Hughessen, he was to buy seven more "which I have by this man's credit" so that "the king is out of purse but £120...and this is the man that I engage for all and he being taken away men will cry to me for money and I shall not be able to pay them..."¹⁴⁰

Of them all, the Brameses remained most remote from the corporate affairs of the town, although Charles Brames served as chamberlain from 1608-1610, just before his death.¹⁴¹ The family settled inland at Bridge Place near Canterbury after the decline of trade in Dover.¹⁴² James Hughessen junior became a jurat in 1619 and was suspended in 1620.¹⁴³ Only Nicholas Eaton followed the normal path of earlier wealthy entrepreneurs. He was a conscientious jurat of the town and thrice mayor.¹⁴⁴ Like the Hughessens he received letters of marque for some of his ships, and he accepted a temporary Crown office in 1634 when

he acted as Lieutenant of Dover Castle in the absence of Mr. Dering.¹⁴⁵

Unlike the Hughessens and the Brameses, some of the Eatons remained in Dover and continued to play an active part in the life of the town long after the temporary boom in trade was over.

It can be seen from those examples that ship-ownership could play an important role in the acquisition of wealth during the seventeenth century, and that ship-owners were not always themselves seamen.

Nevertheless the majority of ship-owners in Dover were also mariners, at least at the start of their careers. In the sixteenth century it was, however, very unusual for mariners to accumulate wealth. In fact testamentary evidence, which is admittedly slight for the first half of the century, records only five mariners who did so, of whom three - Edward Maye, John Robbins and Richard Sisely - were substantial enough to become mayor, an office seldom held by mariners.¹⁴⁶ The first of the five, John Maye, was able to build a "fair new house" in Dover in 1522¹⁴⁷ and his son Edward, unusually for a mariner at that period, left some land as well as ships in his will in 1560.¹⁴⁸ John Robbins' inventory in 1580 totals goods worth over £106, including two herring houses and two thirds of a crayer; this was a remarkably high sum for a mariner at that period.¹⁴⁹ William Tiddeman's inventory in 1589 totalled just over £65, and shows that he had acquired shares of a number of small boats and lived in above average comfort.¹⁵⁰ Richard Sisely, dying in 1606, left his parts of six existing ships and of two new ships building at Rye and Shoreham, on which he had already spent £20. He also left the lease of a storehouse and yard near the Pier. His will gives his inventory total as over £113.¹⁵¹

Testamentary evidence indicates that there might have been some movement towards investment in larger, more expensive boats in the seventeenth century as the economic importance of the sea began to increase. Some allowance has, of course, to be made for inflation. A direct comparison

can be made of the valuation of the boats listed in the inventories of James Neales, mariner, who died in 1608 and of his widow, Isabel, who died in 1619.¹⁵² She inherited his boats, and obviously disposed of the two smallest and oldest ones. Of the others, in the intervening eleven years, the estimated value of his sixth share in the Pleasure rose from £10 to £14, his sixth share in the small bark, the Ellen, from £5 to £8, his quarter of the Ann from £2 to £9, and his quarter of three quarters of the small boat, the Speedwell, from £2 to £6. The rise in the values of boats in inventories in general suggests, however, that larger boats were acquired during the entrepot period. It must be remembered that valuations given in inventories may not be reliable, but by using them crude figures can be arrived at that suggest a general trend.

As it has been seen, boats were usually jointly owned and therefore only a part of the value of a boat is assessed in the inventory of any part-owner. An estimate of the total value of each boat mentioned in an inventory has been arrived at by multiplying the assessed value of the part of a boat mentioned by the total number of parts. These totals have then been added to arrive at the average value of a whole boat owned at death in a particular year. This shows a rise in the average value of a boat from just over £6 between 1580-89, to over £9 in 1590-99, £25 in 1600-09, £43 in 1610-19, £126 in 1620-29 and £288 in 1630-39. This seems to suggest an investment in larger boats in the second and third decades of the seventeenth century rather than simply the effects of inflation over 60 years.

Although some of the largest boats were, as has been said, owned by men who were not mariners, there is also some evidence to suggest that from about the turn of the century a number of more successful mariners began to invest in a greater number of boats than they had done earlier, since this begins to show in inventories from the second decade of the seventeenth century. For example in 1613 Richard Willoughby had parts in

3 boats valued at over £26, in 1618 Henry Tiddeman had parts in 5 boats worth over £29, in 1623 Robert Foster had "divers parts of shipping at sea" worth £205 and in 1625 Robert Garrett had parts of 14 ships valued at £150.¹⁵³ Greater prosperity among certain mariners in the seventeenth century is also suggested by the testamentary evidence that reveals that a number of them had by then begun to trade on their own account, either independently or in partnership with other merchants. They were thus enabled to make some small investments other than simply in their boats, as will be shown below.

It seems clear that the first modest expansion of wealth among mariners resulted from the regular carriage of Newcastle coal. The frequency of this trade is suggested by the number of mariners' inventories that show firkins of "Newcastle butter" in their cellars or storehouses, bought from the dairymen who had developed their industry in that area in order to benefit from the trading links originated by the coal industry.¹⁵⁴

In 1611 Alexander Kirton, mariner and fishmonger, owned parts of six boats, but he also had a fish shop containing fish, butter, and cheese, and he had a herring hanger and salt worth £5. He was owed £30 in good debts on bond, and he had already given two boats to his mother and sister. The value of his goods was estimated at £192.¹⁵⁵ John Tooke, one of the town's oligarchy, variously described as "fisherman", "mariner" and "tallow chandler", had already disposed of his boats at his death, but he had many leases in Dover, including a storehouse, and his goods totalled over £472 in 1617.¹⁵⁶ In 1618 Henry Tiddeman, like some other fishermen of this period, had not only nets, lines and salted fish in his storehouse, but Newcastle butter, Rye billets, and a large supply of coal.¹⁵⁷ Evidence of the existence of casual, small-scale trading up the East coast from Dover is given in a deposition of 1630 by Martha Bowden that she had given Thomas White, mariner, 30s. to buy her butter "at his late going to Newcastle."¹⁵⁸

Later, as trade through Dover developed, greater evidence of trading on their own part is found in the inventories of some other sailors: in 1621 John Sherman left some linen cloth, some silk, several yards of kersey, and ells of linen and other cloth, together with wheat and tares and parts of two boats, all totalling over £255; in 1622 Bartholomew Hopkins, who was drowned in Calais haven, left 20s. worth of raisins, and debts owing on a ship and crew who had been taken by the Turks; Peter Eaton, who also died in Calais, was described as "mariner" in his inventory, which shows that he also owned the working premises and stock of a tallow chandler, and a shop with a stock of dried fruit, soap, sugar, spices, starch and cloth.¹⁵⁹ He seems to have been the brother of Nicholas Eaton, merchant, which helps to explain his dual occupation.¹⁶⁰

There are many inventories for 1625 because of the many sudden deaths from infection.¹⁶¹ Among these are some inventories of ship's masters who can be assumed to have been active at their time of death, and these suggest that some of them at least were trading on their own behalf. Richard Doves, whose inventory of 1625 totalled £194, left part of a ship and a doubtful debt of £60 from a merchant. In debt cases in the Dover courts he was described as "mariner a.k.a merchant".¹⁶² William Tatam left parts in 11 ships of Dover, and had butter, salt and herrings worth £81 in his herring hanger - total £419.¹⁶³ The inventory of John Woodgreene, "mariner," shows that he also had a shop in which he sold soap, oatmeal, thread, points, laces, currants, earthenware, oil, painted boxes and primer books. His storehouse also held butter, vinegar, acquavit and herring spits.¹⁶⁴ The testamentary accounts of Thomas Mayre, mariner, show that he had owed £1.10s. to a Newcastle man, and £18.14s.0d. to the two mariners who had been masters of his ship on a Newcastle voyage; his inventory lists 88 firkins of butter "good and bad."¹⁶⁵ Further expansion into trade by seamen is illustrated by the

information given to the Admiralty by John Wallop and Henry Tiddeman, mariners, in 1636 when one of them had been surprised near Gravelines by a Calais sloop. He had been to Flanders about the "recovery of 12,000 lemons and oranges" which they had "sent over in a ketch of Rainham in Kent."¹⁶⁶

It appears that in the seventeenth century a number of mariners began to have sufficient surplus resources to invest in other areas. For most, their first investment after buying parts of ships was in leases of land round the harbour. These are discussed in greater detail below. Unlike most sixteenth century mariners, they also began to invest in land outside the town, although it is impossible to quantify the extent of this investment. The inventory of John Chalke, mariner, in 1628 shows that, as well as property in Dover and the eighth part of a ship, he also had lands in Hougham.¹⁶⁷ George Fagg, who died in 1630 had parts of four ships, totalling £111, 32 firkins of butter and 100 salt fish. His will was made in Hougham, which suggests that he had bought land there, and he had a tenement in Bushe Lane, London, as well as other lands and tenements. His inventory totalled £468.19s.4d.¹⁶⁸ John Wallop, another mariner, died in 1637 holding parts of five boats and one whole hoy, or trading vessel, that was alone worth over £200. As well as his harbour leases, he also held some arable land.¹⁶⁹ It seems likely that at least one mariner used his surplus wealth to supply credit. The inventory of Joseph Looper, mariner, in 1644, shows that he was owed £330 in bills and bonds. His shares in seventeen ships were valued at £500, and his inventory totalled £1653.10s.6d.¹⁷⁰

One other maritime group affected by the increase in trade were the ship's carpenters and shipwrights, whose wealth and status seems to have increased during the early seventeenth century from being comparable to that of ordinary carpenters, to the extent that William and Thomas, two sons of Richard Dawkes, a gentleman mercer, both became shipwrights in

the 1630s, having apparently gone to London to learn the craft.¹⁷¹ The inventory of William Tatnall or Tadnoll, senior, in 1624 lists his tools and shows signs that his business had expanded. He had pumps and ends of timber in his yard, and on his wharf oakum and deal boards in an old storehouse, scales and tools in a new storehouse, boards, pitch and rosin in an old herring hanger, and anchor stocks, timber, barrels of tar, masts and timber "which he had in partnership", in his new storehouse and "lying about the harbour". He also owned parts of nine ships, one of which he shared with the Eatons and Hughessens, and had in store some bay salt, four firkins of butter, and wet and dry fish - total £261.3s.0d.¹⁷² He was invariably described as "ship carpenter," but Valentine Tatnall, who was probably his nephew, was called "shipwright", and seems to have prospered, seeking to buy ground from the corporation in 1639, and standing surety for John Smith gentleman in 1637.¹⁷³ Unfortunately none of his testamentary documents survive.

Thomas Gull, described as "ship carpenter" in his inventory and "shipwright" in his will, died in 1637. His inventory lists timber, boards, tar, pitch and brimstone, frankincense and rosin, train oil, iron pots, anchor stocks and masts kept in two store houses, two herring hangers and several lofts. There was a new boat in his backside and an old boat that he may have been working on. His inventory totalled £587.¹⁷⁴ These inventories are also a reminder of the extent to which shipwrights were using goods such as pitch, tar and boards, which were normally imported from the Baltic ports at that time.¹⁷⁵

Investment in the ownership of ships by non seafaring men seems to have been responsive to the relative importance of trading in certain commodities over the period. Lime and beer have been mentioned as local commodities exported by Dover men, but the most important local export was grain, about which more will be said. Evidence to be examined below suggests that local non-seafaring men with surplus wealth normally

invested in ships when they had grain to export; maltsters, for example, developed into general merchants as a result of importing goods in the ships in which they had exported grain. Naturally, men who were primarily merchants or factors dealing in all available commodities came to the town and bought shares in ships only when trade was flourishing. The men who owned the biggest boats in Dover in the first quarter of the sixteenth century were Thomas Vaughan and Robert Nethersole and, apparently almost uniquely, they owned their boats outright.¹⁷⁶ They appear to have been the most substantial men of their time in the town; each was elected Burgess to Parliament and each became mayor three times.¹⁷⁷ Both were assessed for lay subsidies on land,¹⁷⁸ and Robert Nethersole's numerous kin held land throughout the region.¹⁷⁹ Thomas Vaughan paid ship service tax on a total of 47 "lands" in Dover itself.¹⁸⁰ As well as being land owners and rentiers, both appear to have imported wine and coal since, although there is no evidence that either man had an inn, both paid the excise on wine, and paid to have the coal measured that they bought "in the Road and brought into the Wike".¹⁸¹ There is little other evidence of investment in ships by entrepreneurs with such widespread interests until the advent of John Tench, who died in the 1580s and is discussed below.

Table 2:1 below sets out the available information about those ship-owners who were not themselves seafarers. Although this evidence cannot be regarded as complete or conclusive, it suggests that there might have been a shift in the pattern of investment in ships over the whole period. In the early sixteenth century, Robert Nethersole and Thomas Vaughan, urban entrepreneurs with an agricultural base, invested surplus wealth in some of the larger ships that mariners then could not afford to buy into. The yeoman and the gentleman soldier of the 1550s were possibly men of a similar background. The apparent lack of investment in ships by urban entrepreneurs during the 1560s and 1570s

bears out the slackness of trade and the decay of the harbour already noted at that period in the discussion of civic finances.

Table 2:1 Non-seafaring ship-owners in Dover 1550-1639

Date	Name	Occupation
1550-59	William Bendes	yeoman
	Edmund Mody	gentleman-soldier
1560-69	none	
1570-79	none	
1580-89	Edward Redwood	merchant/chandler
	William Gibbons	merchant and cattle grazer
	John Tench	merchant, maltster and land-owner
	Jane Eaton	widow of merchant of Dover/Dunkirk
1590-99	Geoffrey Glide	merchant/tailor
1600-09	John Brome	maltster/merchant
	John Bredgate	merchant
1610-19	Robert Austen	land-owner
	William Graunt	baker
	Charles Brames	merchant
1620-29	William Warde	merchant
	Peter Hughessen	merchant
	Cornelius Hughessen	merchant
	John Waller	merchant
1630-39	John Finnes	grocer/chandler
	John Alderstone	brewer
	Robert Jefford	brewer
	Thomas Weekes	maltster
	William Wentworth	merchant
	Nicholas Eaton	merchant

Source: Wills and inventories administered in the Consistory Court of Canterbury¹⁸²

Once the new harbour made trade possible, it seems likely that the desire to have some control over the distribution of his own produce, particularly grain, may well have been an important factor in determining whether a land-owner also invested in shipping. One of the wealthiest men in Dover at that period was John Tench. His inventory of 1588 begins with the phrase "Abroad in the fields and at sea", and lists 30 acres of wheat, 48 of barley, 7 of tares, parts in two ships worth £80 and £60 respectively, then 66 sheep and some other livestock. Among his goods were 300 quarters of malt and certain parcels of holland cloth, and he had the lease of a malt house. It can be seen that he was a grower of grain and a maltster, for whom it made sense to invest his surplus wealth in the distribution process and thus become a merchant

and a ship-owner.

The apparent lack of investment in ships by those urban entrepreneurs who died during the 1590s might reflect the dearth of grain and the consequent restraints on its export during that period. It will be noticed that the one merchant ship-owner who died at that period was most likely to have been involved in trading cloth. Geoffrey Glide was mayor from 1589-91.¹⁸³ He left his part of a ship to be sold to pay his debts, thus treating it merely as an investment in a way mariners very rarely did. His will also mentions debts he was owed by the Queen for his "purveyorship and other service due about the harbour", which suggests that he held minor office from the Crown. He had a tailor and draper's shop in the town, but the fact that he was in contention with the customs officers of the town and that he went on at least one occasion to Bruges suggests that he was trading goods abroad as well.¹⁸⁴

In the following two decades, between 1600 and 1620, all the ship-owners on the list, apart from Charles Brames, are likely to have had an interest in the distribution of grain and those who became merchants probably did so originally through exporting that commodity, or at least because the sale of grain had brought them disposable wealth. John Brome was certainly a maltster, John Bredgate was directed to sell wheat at a specific price in 1604, which suggests that he was too.¹⁸⁵ Since Robert Austen held land at Adisham, it seems likely that he had grain to dispose of.¹⁸⁶ Little is known about William Graunt, but as a baker he may have been dealing in grain, or simply supplying bread to ships of the King's fleet while they were in the Dover roads.

Charles Brames, however, was the precursor of the group of men listed in Table 2:1 between 1620 and 1630 who were primarily merchants above all else. The term "merchant" covered a wide range of wealth and success in the early seventeenth century. The Brameses, Hughessens and Nicholas

Eaton have already been discussed. John Waller, described as "merchant" in his will and "gentleman" in his testamentary accounts, was a merchant in a small way, possibly because of his connection with William Warde, to whom one of his daughters was married.¹⁸⁷ His part of a ship was valued at only £2.10s. and his total inventory amounted to well under £100. His testamentary accounts show that he had been owed £21.1s.3d. for his share in a "venture at sea", which was now paid, and that he himself owed £14 to a merchant in the City of London. William Warde was the son of a mariner.¹⁸⁸ He may have been one himself at the start of his career, but apparently bettered his lot by marriage to the daughter of John Tench.¹⁸⁹ There is no evidence that he held land outside the town, although his will shows that he left a malt house, store houses, herring hangers, wharves and quays within it, as well as shares in 11 ships, and his inventory shows that he left some "lead sent upon adventure for Spain," and that his goods totalled over £700. He also held a Crown appointment as Marshal of the Admiralty Courts of the Cinque Ports and the Lord Warden's droit-gatherer.¹⁹⁰ He seems to have been a rare example at that period of an entrepreneur native to the town, holding an office from the Crown, whose interests and investments were entirely urban and maritime, and the explanation for that may perhaps have been his seafaring origins.

Two later inventories indicate ship-ownership by men who seem more typical of the majority of the wealthy merchants operating from Dover in the seventeenth century, since there is no record of their presence in the town before the period of the expansion of trade. William Crux who died in 1643 owned parts in six ships, totalling £118.10s.0d.¹⁹¹ He seems to have lived in comfort, and his goods totalled over £500. Daniel Porten, whose inventory included two Dutch Bibles, had parts of ships totalling £500. Although it seems likely that he was not of English origin, he became a freeman of Dover in 1629, when most of his fee was

returned because it was thought he "would bring benefit to the town by trade", and he became a jurat in 1637.¹⁹² Like the Hughessens and the Brameses, he also imported Spanish silver.¹⁹³ The varied books in his inventory suggest that he was, unusually in Dover, a man of wide culture, and his goods were valued at £2188.9s.10d.¹⁹⁴

The occupations of those men listed in Table 2:1 in the 1630s indicates the renewed importance of grain dealing at that time, and also suggests that some men might have been profiting from supplying beer and grocer's supplies to the ships anchoring near the town. The inventories of John Alderstone, father and son, in 1601 and 1637, show how a brewing family expanded its interests over that period. The father, called "brewer", had corn worth £60 in his house, but his inventory totalled only £80.14s.2d.¹⁹⁵ His son, listed in the table above, had part of a ship, a stock of red herring, horses and a waggon, and his goods totalled £457.17s.10d. It seems likely that he was exporting his beer. The inventory, in 1638, of the brewer, Robert Jefford, shows that he owned the sixth part of a ship as well as three horses and a dray. It also gives a list of 57 debts that were paid to him for beer, many of them by ship-masters,¹⁹⁶ one of £17 by James Hughessen, some by wealthy Dovorians,¹⁹⁷ most of them by identifiably local people, and a few by people from nearby villages, Ewell, Charlton, and Whitfield. He was also owed £30 for harvested corn by a maltster. His widow had received £580 in debts since his death, but was still owed £77 on his brewing book, and another £379 in bad and desperate debts, so that the total value of his inventory - £1088.9s.4d. - represents a great deal of beer sold on credit during that busy period, and suggests that he had extended his resources in response to demand.

The inventory of the maltster, Thomas Weekes, shows that his goods and furniture were sparse and cheap, but his wearing apparel, purse, girdle and ready money were valued at £250. His barn at Folkestone contained

grain worth £163, and his malt house at Dover barley worth £80; he had wheat at Sibertswold and oats and peas near the Pier. The lease of his two dwelling houses, store house and barn at the Pier were worth £180, and he owned parts in two ships, each valued at £40; he was owed about £772. Although he had two horses and their harness, together with some basic agricultural implements at his house, his total inventory of £1745.3s.0d. represents not so much the production of grain as its storage and distribution.

The part played by ship-ownership in the accumulation of wealth by individuals thus varied in importance over the period. Throughout the sixteenth century it seems to have been difficult for mariners themselves to accumulate substantial wealth through the use of their ships; in fact in the first half of that century it is likely that only a few men with widespread interests could afford to invest in the largest ships. It seems that the east coast trade in particular gradually improved the position of certain ship-masters, who began to invest in more ships as a result and so employ other mariners. Local men who appear to have acquired surplus wealth through grain-dealing in particular began to invest in ship-ownership in the 1580s once the harbour had been improved and in some cases to have become merchants in a more general sense. This trend seems to have continued, particularly in the third decade of the seventeenth century, when there is also some indication that brewers, bakers and grocers might have profited from using their own ships to supply the needs of the increased numbers of ships in the harbour.

Most wealth was accumulated from ship-ownership in the seventeenth century by those who owned large ships that were involved in privateering and salvage work. They were also the men who appear to have made most from the composition trade in that period. Other men who profited from that trade were mainly specialist merchants and factors

originating from the northern continent, who began from a stronger base and apparently had access to better sources of credit than most local men had. It seems unlikely that many Dovorians could do more than take a temporary advantage of the situation. It is possible, however, that increased trade encouraged maltsters such as John Brome and William Weekes to specialize in the buying, storage and distribution of grain, rather than in growing it and marketing it where they could. Some distinction seems to have been appearing between men who chose to use their resources predominantly in the production of goods and others who were increasingly concerned with their collection and distribution. For the latter, investment in land in the town, particularly near the harbour, where malthouses, storehouses and quays could be built, and even investment in ships, had become more vital than the ownership and exploitation of agricultural land.

c) Investment in harbour leases

The seventeenth century development of the Pier district on new waste land, already mentioned above, owed nothing to the Warden and Assistants to Dover Harbour, except in that they leased it in parcels to individuals. One of the most striking features of inventories of the first quarter of the seventeenth century is the high proportion of their total value that was represented by such leases. Although it is impossible to know how much of a man's disposable income was spent on perishables such as food, an examination below of the evidence of the kind of goods consumed by the makers of inventories suggests that they chose to spend very little on ostentatious dress or furniture, or on investing in plate, unless they were very wealthy indeed. It will be argued that a good deal of available surplus capital seems rather to have been invested in these leases, and in the subsequent development of the holdings. By 1641, 326 tenants had holdings there.¹⁹⁸ At the time

when trade through the port increased, ownership of the leases clearly became more desirable.

Inventories are notoriously unreliable guides, since they are so selective of the population, indicate only the situation at death, and were likely to have been unreliable in their valuations, but in the absence of any other information they are used in Table 2:2 as an indication of the way in which lease holding in the town developed from 1570 to 1639. All useful surviving inventories for the period have been examined for mentions of leases held at death by the deceased. These have then been assigned to a category of owner where possible: "private" meaning that the owner was an individual from whom the lease was held, and so on. "Harbour" signifies that the lease was held from the Warden and Assistants to the Harbour, who took over responsibility for the land round the harbour from the King in 1606. Some of the inventories tabled under "private" may also have been Harbour leases that were being sub-let, but only those recorded specifically as being held from the Warden and Assistants to the Harbour have been tabled as Harbour leases. The leases from the Crown at the end of the sixteenth century were chiefly of pieces of wasteland near the shore that were later granted to the Warden and Assistants to the Harbour, and suggest the growing popularity of that land then.

Table 2:2 Lease-holding recorded in Dover inventories 1570-1639

Date	Private	Church	Town	Crown	Harbour	Total leases	Total inventories	% leases
1570-79	7	1	1	0	0	9	36	25
1580-89	14	1	0	0	0	15	59	25.4
1590-99	18	0	0	2	0	20	80	25
1600-09	7	0	0	5	1	13	49	26.5
1610-19	13	0	2	0	19	34	63	53.9
1620-29	12	2	3	1	61	79	138	57.2
1630-39	10	1	0	0	41	52	133	39.1

Source: Inventories of Dover men and women administered in the Consistory court at Canterbury, 1570-1639

As it can be seen, the proportion of inventories recording a lease began

to rise in the decade when harbour land began to be leased out, from about a quarter before 1610 to over half in the years 1610-1629.

A surprising feature of some inventories is the high proportion of their value that derives from Harbour leases. For example, in 1638, John Sisely and his son, Thomas, both tailors, died, the father leaving two thirds of a Harbour lease for a small cottage and garden, and his son the remaining one third. The father's lease was valued at £6.13s. 4d. in an inventory of £7.1s. 4d., and the son's at £3.6s.8d. in an inventory of £4.19s.8d.¹⁹⁹ In 1618 Henry Tiddeman's leases were worth £28 of a £77 inventory, and in 1624 John Fagg's leased tenement was valued at £10 of his total £16; Richard Cloakes, mariner, had land and two small tenements near the harbour worth £13.6s.8d. of his £25 inventory.²⁰⁰

In fact it was common for the leases to represent at least half of the total value of the goods.

Almost no information survives about the rents the lessees paid to the Harbour, but it seems likely that they were very low, certainly initially. Charles Brames's accumulated buildings on lands belonging to the Harbour were valued at £300 in his inventory of 1611, but for this "he paid yearly to the use of the harbour 30s."²⁰¹ The will of Thomas Sickerman, lime-burner, in 1616 says that he held a tenement and ground, by then converted into dwellings, under the cliff near Snargate, "of the grant or demise of the Right Honourable Lord Warden and the Assistants of the harbour of Dover for divers years yet to come at 5s. per annum." He had sold part of the tenement and ground to a spinster, and the lease was valued at £6 in his inventory.²⁰² In 1626 Henry Stone, mariner, had two houses on Harbour land valued at £20, for which his testamentary accounts show that he paid 14s. per annum, and which were valued at £30 in the inventory of his widow ten years' later.²⁰³

There is also some information to suggest that the leases had the advantage of being very long. For example, the will of Samuel Ellison,

shipwright, in 1635 shows that he had an indenture with Dover Harbour dating back to March 1611 for "a parcel of waste or beach ground belonging to the Warden and Assistants of Dover Harbour and a messuage or dwelling house by me built on it now converted into several tenements for 40 years to come". He had sold parcels of this ground and the tenements to his children and to his shipwright brother, and he had sold his son-in-law, William Royall, shipwright, one piece of this ground, 60 feet long and 19 feet wide for £7.10s.0d.²⁰⁴ A number of wills and inventories suggest that, once the lease had been obtained, the property was treated almost as though it were owned by the lessee; sub-letting was common, and leases were passed on to heirs and divided between them.²⁰⁵

It is impossible to assess changes in the value of leases satisfactorily in the absence of knowledge about their rents and the number of years for which they ran. There are some indications that they rose over the period, as would be expected. For example, the lease of a house "belonging to His Majesty" in 1604 was valued in the inventory of Lewes French at £22. The same house, now belonging to The Warden and Assistants of the Harbour, was valued in his widow's inventory in 1610 at £25.²⁰⁶ The demand for such leases is suggested by the note in the inventory of Robert Jefford, brewer, of 1638 that two of his houses, formerly appraised at £30, "which are since proved to be Harbour lands and holden by lease" had been sold "for over and above the same £30 for the sum of £165.10s."²⁰⁷

What is clear is that lessees of the land built upon it. The building done by merchants like Charles Brames, and shipwrights like William Tatnall has already been mentioned above. Some of the wealthier ship-masters also made maximum use of their holdings, like John Wallop, the owner of parts of six ships, who had a quay there on which he put a house for himself and a herring hanger.²⁰⁸ But other men built houses,

which were then converted into more, smaller dwellings. Since inventories record building that has been done earlier in a man's life, it seems likely that building began in earnest soon after the 1606 take over and persisted into the following decades. Examples can be found in the inventories of men of modest means who exploited their leases, for example George Whittingham who had a piece of waste ground at the Pier Head on which "he had set three small cottages of small value", John Atkins, schoolmaster, who had built a tenement at the Pier "upon a piece of waste beachy ground there belonging to Dover Harbour now called the Prince's Arms", Thomas Perkins, mariner, who had erected a small house on harbour land that was occupied by his four sons and valued at £40, John Chalke, mariner, who left the lease of a number of houses to his son, but excluded "the new building there in part already begun," and Henry Sargeant, mariner, who had a small parcel of Harbour land "upon which he had at death three small tenements and a herring hanger" worth £40.²⁰⁹

The social implications of this seventeenth century movement of population away from the town to the Pier will be discussed below.

Clearly it must have had economic implications for the corporation and for private rentiers with property in the town. The inventory of one of them, John Sherman, shows that in 1621 he held the lease of six small tenements in the town, "but no one are dwelling in them."²¹⁰ It obviously indicates the increased importance of the sea to the economy of the town at that time, although the fact that the move began slightly earlier than the full development of the composition trade also suggests the possibility of some demographic pressure in the old town. It has further interest in showing that quite small surpluses of money were used to invest in property that would be put to immediate working use by merchants and sailors, or exploited for rents by men of modest means, rather than being spent on ostentation or increased comfort.

d) Restraint and the supply of grain

The economic aspirations of wealthy men in the town were often in conflict with the economic needs of the poorer inhabitants, and also at times in conflict with national policy. These conflicts can be seen most clearly in tensions that occasionally arose over the export of grain and its restraint. It has been argued that central legislative control of the corn trade in the late sixteenth and early seventeenth century, by laying down and constantly revising floor prices for grains above which their export was prohibited, meant that there were very few years between 1590 and 1670 when the free export of grain was permitted.²¹¹ A brief study of some of the tensions recorded in the Dover common assembly minutes that arose from the corporation's need to supply grain to the inhabitants of Dover and restrain its export from the town by maltsters and merchants suggests that the magistracy was responsive to the situation in the town, making use of the Orders of the Privy Council when it was expedient to do so, but taking measures of its own based on local needs and symptoms of unrest. At the same time, there is some evidence to suggest that it was capable of finding ways round government legislation when times improved and it came under pressure from its freemen to be allowed to export their grain. This notion is reinforced by the fact, discussed in the previous section above, that maltsters began to invest in the ownership of boats during the very period when there were restraints on the export of grain. Although, by its nature, smuggling leaves little recorded evidence, it is difficult not to accept the view of those who have suggested that it occurred.²¹²

The demands of London for grain were already making themselves felt in East Kent at the beginning of the period under review. Ordinances from the Crown against transporting wheat were occasionally recorded in the common council's records during the reign of Henry VIII.²¹³ In September 1535, when John Whalley was the Crown's paymaster for the

harbour works and responsible for feeding hundreds of labourers, he wrote to Cromwell summarizing a number of the problems of grain supply that persisted through the whole period: the demands and rewards of London, co-operative regrating on a regional scale, and the possibilities of fraud offered by Crown appointments. Whalley pleaded for a restraint to be made on corn leaving Kent,

"for here is much conveyed from hence daily unto all places, for bakers and brewers of London hath bought much upon the ground so that wheat is worth in the barn 11s. and 12s. the quarter, malt at 5s., and when I came to Dover, wheat was but 6s. and a noble a quarter and malt at 2s.8d."

He feared that the price would rise to 20s. in the following year if no restraint was made and described how, under cover of being purveyor of grain for the king, a Sandwich man was "buying grain at his own price", so that the farmers of the county were at composition with him "that they shall take their profits, and (he) holdeth the grain at such a price that the people in this county cannot live."²¹⁴

In a list of regrators of corn in the region, he mentions Ralph Buffkyn of Dover, who had laded 40 or 50 quarters of wheat to London that day "saying that it was laden for the king's use, for wheat is worth there 14s. and 15s. a quarter."²¹⁵ The difference between Whalley's perception of the situation and that of the oligarchy's is demonstrated by the fact that Ralph Buffkyn became mayor during the year 1536-7, and was re-elected to the office in 1537 and 1538.²¹⁶ He is an example of the ambiguity that those who could afford to be appointed to legislate for the welfare of the commonalty had often achieved wealth at the commonalty's expense. Such a situation became more obvious during the dearths of the 1590s and the early seventeenth century, and was not lost on the populace who, it will be shown, expressed their resentment. This seems to have been an important reason for both local and central intervention in the supply of grain at that time.

Tensions were obviously greatest during times of dearth, and not only

the poorest inhabitants of the town were worried about the supply of grain. In September 1593, the malt-makers and "poor brewers" of Dover complained that some of the larger brewers had cornered the grain market so that the price was "excessively enhanced." Part of their argument was that smaller brewers could not afford to make beer at prices that "strangers", or aliens, could afford to pay; the mayor and jurats thereupon set a limit of 500 quarters of grain to be converted to malt by any individual brewer.²¹⁷ This predates the 1597 Act to restrain the excessive making of malt.²¹⁸ Grain was clearly in short supply in the town in 1594 because barley was being imported from King's Lynn in that year.²¹⁹ The situation worsened in the following years. In 1595 two chamberlains were committed to prison for refusing to lay out their own money for wheat bought for the town, and by September, 1597, the mayor referred to "times of great scarcity".²²⁰ Books of Orders were issued by the Privy Council in 1594, prohibiting the export of grain and suggesting other methods of dealing with the scarcity.

The corporation, as has been said, was attempting to get some grain to the market from outside the town, but clearly did not succeed in suppressing criticism of grain dealers, who were often members of the oligarchy themselves. In 1595 it was claimed in court that John Haines, an innkeeper, had spoken contemptuously of the mayor, John Moore, saying among other things that he had begged a knightship in Windsor, cut the market bushel, and carried away corn from the town.²²¹ Since John Moore was the maltster who was normally required to deliver the largest amount of corn to the market, this was presumably a sensitive matter.²²² In 1596 it was reported in the court that John Atkins, a schoolmaster and innkeeper, had said "that there were so many corn buyers in Dover as they were the cause of the dearth of corn there, and that he hoped to see some of them hanged".²²³ Possibly because of their fear of unrest, in 1596 the mayor and jurats decreed that on every market day all the

town's maltsters should bring to the market, by specified turns, one seam of good barley to be sold in the open market for 16s. a quarter. Four maltsters, themselves members of the oligarchy, were seen to agree publicly to this decree.²²⁴ In the following year, 1597, it seems to have been felt necessary to enforce the guidelines of the Privy Council. The mayor and jurats undertook to provide 100 quarters of wheat and rye between April and midsummer "to save the poorer sort of people of this town".²²⁵ As instructed, they made a certificate of the quantities of grain each maltman had in his loft: it amounted to 900 quarters between 9 maltmen, one of whom was the mayor and six of whom were the jurats making the certificate.²²⁶ In the same year, the mayor went to Thanet to enforce the restraint on exporting corn.²²⁷

The supply of grain looked risky again in 1604, and the common council recorded that in accordance with letters it had received "from the Lords of the Privy Council," in future of every score of wheat to be shipped at the port of Dover, two quarters were to be put in a loft for the poor, to be sold at 20s. the quarter, and two quarters were to be sold at 24s. the quarter to other inhabitants of the town.²²⁸ There was some scandal in the town when a Chichester man, Henry Young, bought up 200 quarters of wheat in the Dover area, which he was then about to transport by a warrant directed to the mayor by "the Right Honourable Lord Treasurer of England". Because "some scandalous persons" in Dover had reported that the mayor had had a hand in this for his own profit, Henry Young had to come into the court and take an oath that the mayor had had "no part thereof to be adventured but that as much as he could or durst he went about to restrain the transportation of the same."²²⁹ Thus it was, in fact, possible for certain people to be granted permission to avoid the restraints, but such actions were keenly observed. In November of that year the corporation ordered Charles Brames, who was not a member of the oligarchy, to deliver 10 quarters of

wheat to the poor and others at 2s.6d. a bushel, and to sell 10 quarters in the market at 3s.4d. a quarter, while two maltsters belonging to the ruling group promised to deliver 7 quarters of wheat to the poor at 20s. the quarter.²³⁰

The mayor and jurats learned from experience, and perhaps from previous attempts to follow the Books of Orders, and as soon as there was the threat of dearth in 1608, a view of wheat in the town was taken by a group of the magistrates.²³¹ It was agreed that £80 of the town's money should be adventured for the provision of corn, and that 90 quarters of wheat should be bought from "a ship in the harbour of this town laden with wheat which is to be bought at a more reasonable price than in these parts."²³² This perhaps suggests that local maltsters were making excessive profits from grain. The same decree determined that wheat ^{belonging to} ~~that~~ a local maltster, John Golder, ^{that had been} ~~had~~ laden aboard a ship to be sent to London, which was still in the harbour, "shall not be permitted to be sent from hence, but shall be taken up again and sold in the market or elsewhere in the town."²³³ When it was discovered, in 1609, that wheat was not going to be scarce after all, it was agreed to send all that could be spared to the west country, or to Hastings.²³⁴ In this case the magistracy enforced its own restraint on export, which it lifted at its own discretion.

Although the corporation tried to get the maximum amount of corn to market in times of need, there is evidence that its market regulations were flouted, sometimes by jurats themselves. Private marketing seems to have been impossible to eradicate. In 1612, for example, the common council warned the maltsters, several of whom were jurats, "in friendly sort" not to engross such quantities of barley to convert to malt, and not to resort to farmers' houses to buy there, but to attend the coming of the farmers to offer it for sale, whereby they hoped the prices would abate at that time of dearth.²³⁵ In September 1614 it was reported in

court that Richard Golder, described as maltman, who was not yet a freeman, had recently bought 100 quarters of French barley in Dover harbour from a man of Calais, of which seven quarters were seized by Henry Harwood, the town's broker, as "foreign bought and foreign sold".²³⁶ Because of this infringement of market regulations, the barley was to be converted into malt and sold to the use of the corporation. In 1617 two bakers complained about the way corn dealers behaved. Edward Dell complained that George Dunkin, maltster, bought a bargain of wheat "out of his hands" of one Johnson of Elham, "and would not suffer him to have half with him." John Pringle made a similar complaint about John Nethersole, another grain dealer.²³⁷ It was scarcely surprising that maltsters became increasingly unpopular in Dover, as they did in other towns; perhaps they were even more unpopular in this coastal town where they could be seen to be cornering and exporting grain at times when poorer men perceived it to be in short supply or simply too expensive for them to buy.

In 1616 Thomas Partridge petitioned Lord Zouch, the Warden of the Cinque Ports, against the increase by the mayor of Dover of impositions on malt and wheat carried through the town to be shipped - presumably an increase by which the mayor intended to make public his care for the welfare of the town.²³⁸ If so, it did not work, for in 1618, a year in which there are no references to a bad harvest, seven labourers were brought to court for having spoken much against corn buyers. One labourer had sworn that he would "make one to cut the throats of corn buyers rather than he would want or starve", and another, who denied that he had said anything at the time, now said in court to the mayor and jurats that "he could be contented if any rising were among the commons to take their part."²³⁹

The impotence of central government to restrain the export of corn from outports when local opinion deemed it suitable that it should go is

evident in the certificate made by Jasper Fowler, Searcher of Kent, in September 1620 that he often heard compositions made between the Custom house officers and maltsters of Dover for licence to export malt, if the wind would not serve to carry it to another part of the kingdom; that no fraud was thereby intended, and that without such favour, much malt must have been spoiled by lying waiting for a wind.²⁴⁰ Julius Deedes, Collector, and William Haines, Controller of Customs, who were the local officers, wrote to Lord Zouch that some townsmen of Dover who had been sued for transporting malt, had first compounded for its export at the custom house, and were allowed a large reduction in the usual duties, without which they would not have ventured to export it, as it was cheap and there was no certain market for it.²⁴¹

In August of the next year, 1621, a note in the common assembly minute book suggests that the corporation was once again anxious about the new harvest, since it shows that James Hughessen, junior, promised to "lay up so much of wheat of his present store for serving of markets till Christmas next at such reasonable price as the mayor and jurats should think fit on each market day".²⁴² Yet two days later a certificate was granted to the officers of the custom house, at Hughessen's request,

"that price of grains does not exceed that price limited by statute when it may be transported, viz 24s. a quarter of best wheat and 12s. of barley at the last market, and therefore if it should be permitted to transport 400 quarters of wheat it would not in the opinion of the mayor and jurats be prejudicial to any."²⁴³

This serves to illustrate what a crude mechanism the price floor was, since it clearly did not match the perceptions of ordinary people about scarcity, yet it drew their attention to the dangers of exporting grain. Three days after Hughessen had been given permission to export grain, Henry Barnacle confessed to the common council "that in respect that corn was carried away, if others would be ruled by him he would cut the sacks as they passed by".²⁴⁴

In April, 1622, by which time dearth was obviously threatening, Adam

Woodford deposed in the Dover court that he had seen a number of women in the corn market on Saturday with their bags to buy corn. They were verbally attacking Susan Dugdale, daughter of James Hughessen senior, and one said to her "a pox of your brother and your father and all the generation of you for they have been the cause of dearth of corn in sending it away." Susan Dugdale denied that her house and other storehouses at the Pier were filled with corn by her brother, and said she had not sufficient for her own provision. Some of the women had threatened to pull out her brother's throat.²⁴⁵ In September of that year, with wheat at 44s. the quarter, Hughessen promised to sell 20 quarters of rye for the use of the poor, and another 20 quarters to the market, at 3s.6d. the bushel, and afterwards to have as much rye as would be needed for the poor.²⁴⁶ In spite of this, the mayor and jurats pressed the Dover factor of a Calais merchant to let them have a quarter of every score of his rye in the harbour for the use of the poor "at such price as it had cost the merchant."²⁴⁷

In 1630 the magistracy took the initiative in asking the Privy Council to intervene, not so much to restrain the export of all grain as to ensure that some grain was kept back and sold to the poor at a reasonable price. In April of that year the mayor and jurats of Dover complained to the Lord Warden of the lack of wheat in the market, which had been the occasion of complaints by the poor. They claimed that the scarcity had grown because of the recent export of wheat from Sandwich and Margate. A Dutchman called Rickeses living in Thanet had transported 300 quarters of wheat since Michaelmas, and yet refused to furnish 2 quarters in the score to the relief of the poor.²⁴⁸ In May they successfully petitioned the Lord Warden to move the Council to authorize Justices of the Peace to search the farmers' stores and order them to furnish the market with corn.²⁴⁹

In September of that year 25 of the jurats and common council gave sums

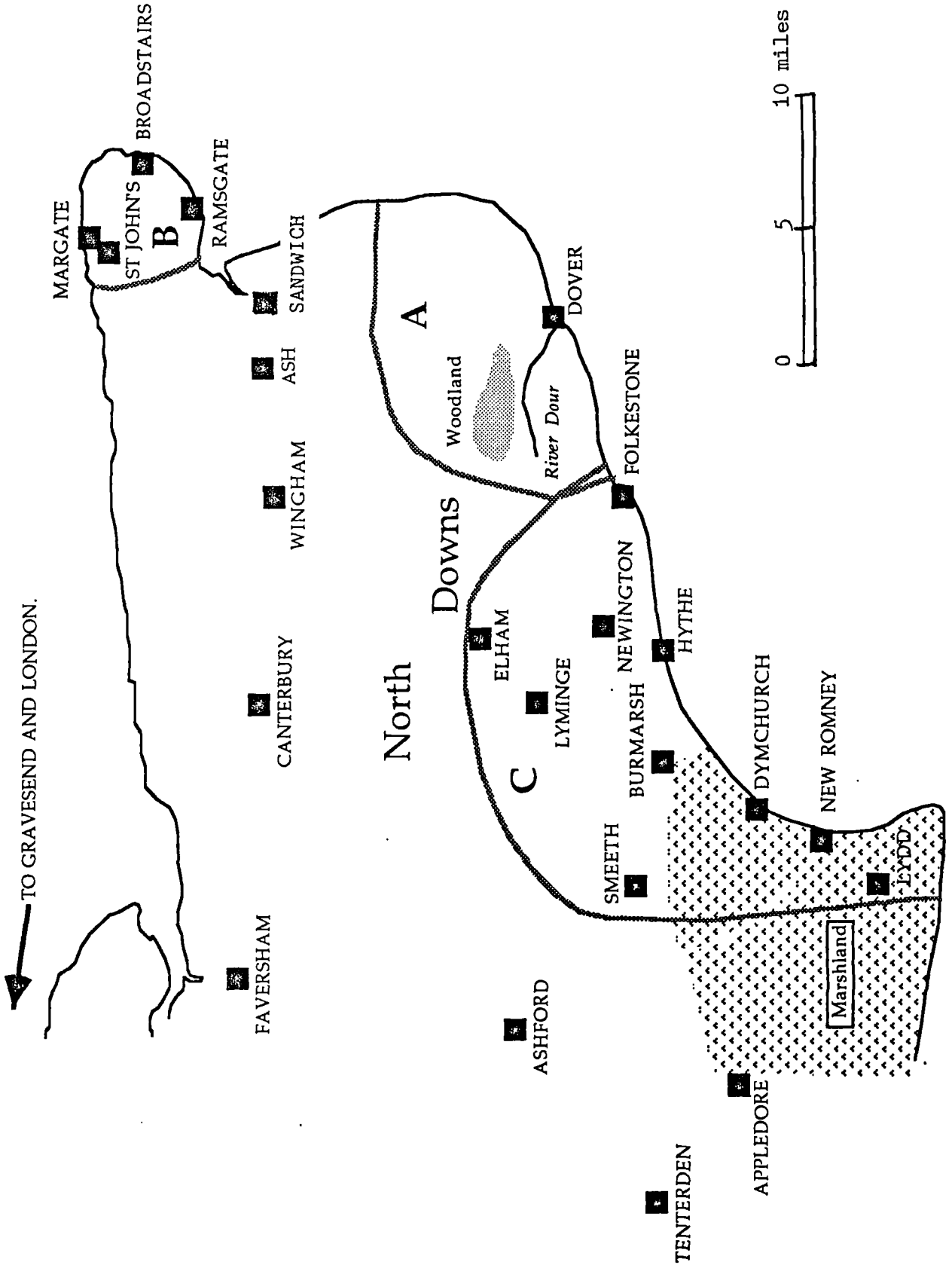
of money or amounts of wheat for the use of the poor. The money would be used to buy wheat, and both the money and the price of the wheat would be refunded on its sale.²⁵⁰ They also acted in accordance with the spirit of the Privy Council's orders suppressing maltsters in that year by making a proclamation of their own, raising the dues that foreign maltsters had to pay the town for exporting corn because

"diverse young men...not of this town have taken malt houses, and join with others in making malt within this town, and transport great quantities of malt, oats and other grain to the port of the city of London and other ports, and have paid but a petty droit for it...whereas in Sandwich greater droits are required."²⁵¹

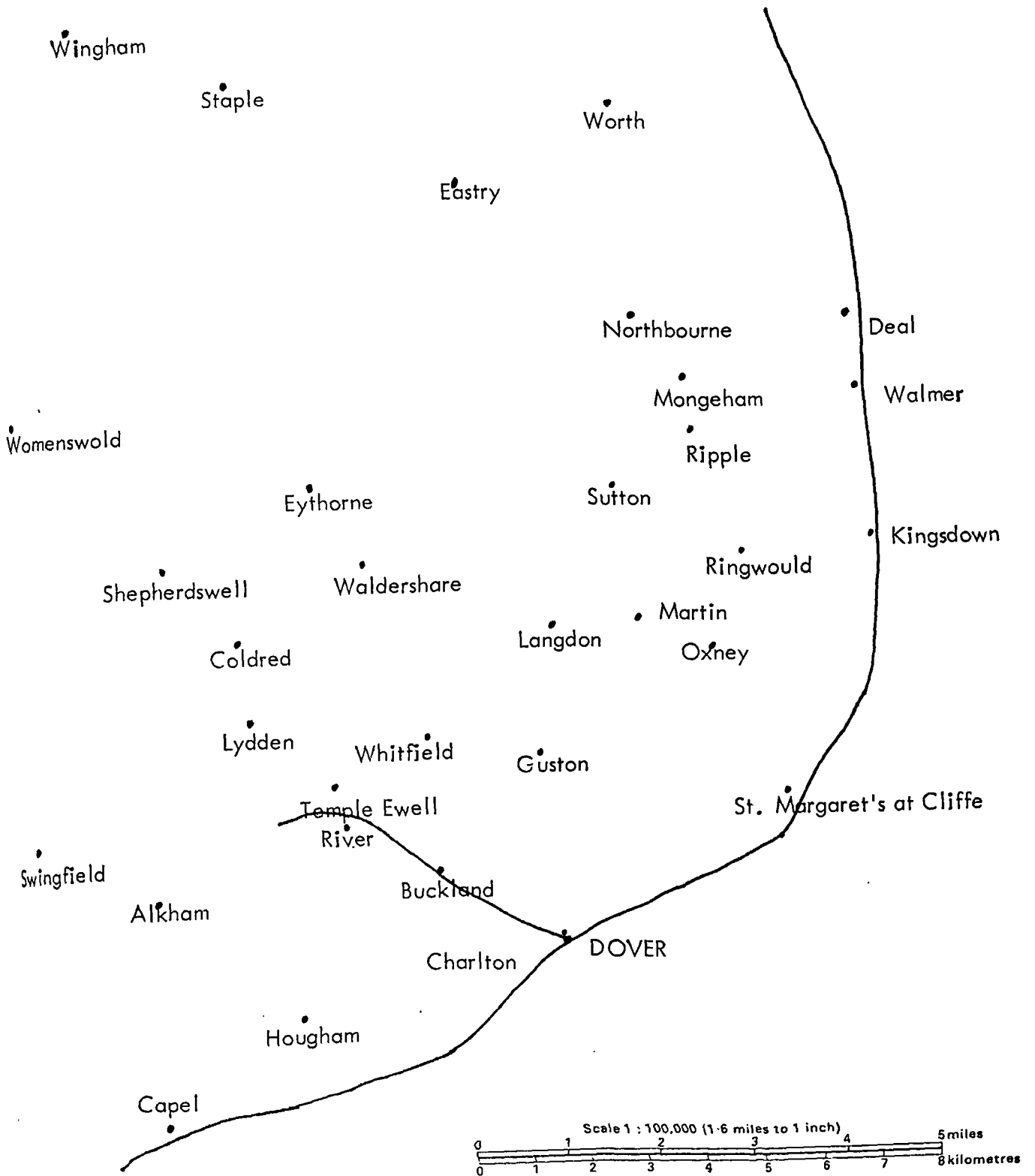
Thus the town took the initiative and intervened on its own account, thereby claiming some advantage from the situation. It seems that, although there had been another issue of the Book of Orders in 1630, the new harvest dispelled fears of shortage because in September of that year a Dover merchant, Daniel Skinner, wrote to the Privy Council, saying that in the hope of doing good service he had imported 200 quarters of wheat and maslin from France to Dover, but having bought at a high rate, and the price of corn having much fallen at Dover, he begged leave to transport it to some other port that stood in greater want.²⁵²

This illustrates the difficulty of intervening centrally in the supply of grain. Merchants circumvented restrictions and magistrates sometimes had to use their initiative to prevent trouble. The chief cause of tension seems to have been the congregation of merchants and maltsters in this area that was convenient both for the supply of grain and its export; having bought the region's grain, they held it from the market in the expectation of high prices from London and elsewhere. The fact that the Privy Council continued to intervene in the matter as late as 1630 could be useful to local magistrates, but they were capable of taking the initiative themselves when famine or disorder threatened, and of ignoring breaches of the regulations when it suited them to do so.

Dover's economic region.



Dover's Near Region.



ii) The region

a) The evidence of testamentary materials

Testamentary materials such as wills, inventories and accounts will be examined below in an attempt to discover the nature and extent of the region that was important economically to the inhabitants of Dover in terms of the exchange of goods and credit. Such materials give only partial evidence, since they are available for only a small proportion of the population and normally illustrate the economic state of a man at the end of his life-cycle, rather than at the period of his most intense activity. Nevertheless because they illuminate the affairs of the group who profited most from the economy of the region, when taken in conjunction with other records they can be used to provide an indication of the areas that came within the economic influence of the town or, as in the case of London, exerted an influence upon it.

The evidence of testamentary accounts in particular suggests that in economic terms, the region important to Dover can be fairly easily divided into a number of partially overlapping sub-regions. There are the local regions, marked A, B, and C on Map 2:1, (A, the near region, is expanded in map 2:2) which had slightly different functions from one another. These local regions were the most important ones to the town's market functioning. Then there were the other Cinque Ports and their limbs, with which the town had legal, administrative, and social links as well as economic ones. Other towns in East Kent, particularly Canterbury, Ashford, Sittingbourne and Gravesend, each had different and specific roles in relation to the town. More distant than these, but probably more influential economically, was London. Because Dover was a port, some mention must also be made of its maritime links, which have been treated in some detail in the section above.

The region that influences the economy of a port is obviously more extended than that of other towns. In the preceding discussion of the

maritime economy, mention was made of Dover's trading links with such east coast ports as Ipswich, Yarmouth, King's Lynn, Scarborough, Whitby and Newcastle, and western ports like Fowey, Plymouth, Exeter and Lyme. Testamentary material records debts incurred between Dover sailors and merchants and men in other ports, particularly Newcastle, Yarmouth and some of the West country ports.²⁵³ Something has also been said of the trading links between Dover and the northern continental ports. Ties of kinship also seem to have connected Dover with the areas round Calais, Dunkirk and Bruges whence some of its inhabitants appear to have come well before the late sixteenth and early seventeenth century migrations of refugees, a matter that is taken up in more detail below in a discussion of their effect on the religious culture of Dover.²⁵⁴ In economic terms, these relationships possibly meant that some of Dover's inhabitants were linked to the economic systems of northern Europe, and certainly meant that her sailors and merchants sometimes shared their boats with men who lived abroad, and would have been accustomed to sophisticated credit arrangements.²⁵⁵ Because testators who owned shares in boats normally left the shares to their heirs, the other owners are seldom recorded in testamentary material. Seventeenth century certificates of ownership were sometimes recorded in the common assembly minute books, however, and a typical one of 1632 gives details of three boats. It shows that Mr. Lloyd of "Bridges, Flanders" had a quarter of a boat, the remainder of which was owned by Dover men. Mr. Lettin and Mr. Demarke, who were alien merchants or factors living in Dover, shared the Mary and Alice with four Dover men. Andrew Earsley of Dunkirk shared the John with four Dover merchants, one of whom, Peter Nephew, was the son of Jeremy Nepveu of Dieppe, a stranger who had come from France in the early summer of 1622.²⁵⁶

For the most part, however, testamentary material suggests that Dover's normal market economy was essentially local. The overwhelming majority

of debts were owed to and by local men and women, tradesmen and sailors in the town itself. Such local debts varied: most were small sums owed to townsmen and women for everyday commodities, like those of Elizabeth Church who owed 4s.0d. to a mercer, 2s.6d. to a shoemaker, 1s.0d. to an alehouse keeper and 1s.6d. to a woman "for small wares bought", or those of Richard Neales, a sailor, of amounts of £2 and under to two Dover brewers, an apothecary, a woollen draper, an innkeeper, a shoemaker and another mariner.²⁵⁷ They also give evidence that merchants were buying supplies from local brewers and butchers, and that local craftsmen were used for such services as iron-work. Richard Boys, a merchant, owed almost £60 in all to three Dover brewers - Robert Poulter, Humfrey Mantle and John Valley, presumably for beer he was exporting.²⁵⁸ The list of good debts in the inventory of Robert Harford, a butcher, show that he was patronised by both small customers like Goodman Pysing, who owed him 5s.0d. and also by merchants and yeomen: Mr. Brames owed him £42, Mr. Marsh £16 and Mr. Gibbon £15, for example.²⁵⁹ Robert Fleming, a sailor, owed local ropemakers and smiths for cable ropes and iron work, as well as a baker and brewer for bread and beer; similarly, William Streeting, an innkeeper owed money to suppliers of goods in Dover - £31 to Peter Nephew, a wine merchant, £6 to John Kenton, a brewer, £1.12s.0d. to Mrs. Kenton, the widow of a brewer, £2 to Robert Oatley, a wine cooper, and £1 to Goodman Harris, a pewterer.²⁶⁰

The names of certain Dover tradesmen recur frequently in testamentary accounts so that their popularity as suppliers of goods can almost be plotted from the debts owed to them. Roger White, a woollen draper, is mentioned in 23 such accounts between 1609 and 1640, 11 of them during the 1620s, which appears to have been the period of his greatest activity. The sums owing to him between the start of his trading career and the 1630s varied between 5s., in 1609, and a normal amount of just under £5 in the 1620s. These were usually "for cloth" or "for work and

apparel". The sums for cloth appear to diminish again in the 1630s, but in 1640 he was owed £8.17s.8d. "by bond and wares", and in 1642 - the last record - over £5 "for debt and rent due".²⁶¹ Thus the debts owing to him illustrate the normal life-cycle of a moderately successful tradesman, whose steadily increasing trading activity slowed down in later life to be replaced by the activities of a rentier who was able and willing to use his capital to grant small loans.

A large minority of debts due at the death of Dover men and women involved the inhabitants of the villages surrounding Dover, shown as the area marked "A" on Map 2:1 and in more detail in Map 2:2, which was the area most intimately linked with the town. The section below on debt cases brought before the hundred court in Dover will define the area closest to the town in more detail. It was an area of mixed agriculture, with grazing for sheep and some cattle on the Downs, and with extensive woodland near the source of the short river Dour, but it was predominantly arable. The few testamentary accounts that give details of the debts owed to Dover tradesmen show that the inhabitants of these near villages were sometimes their customers. For example the smith, Edmund Powell, was owed sums of money for his work by men in Ewell, Whitfield, Houghham, Alkham and even Folkestone; Charles Pullen, the butcher, had a customer in Coldred, and the shop book of Stephen Wiles, cordwainer, in 1627 lists 34 debts, for the most part desperate, ranging from 6d. to over £3 owing to him for shoes by people who are chiefly identifiable Dovorians; among them, however, are Simon Lushington of Alkham and Thomas Watson of Bladbean. He in turn owed men at Langdon and Whitfield for eight bushels of wheat.²⁶² A search of testamentary evidence from men and women in these villages would probably cast more light on the importance of Dover as a centre of exchange.

Evidence of small-scale suppliers to the town market from the surrounding villages is scanty, as it has been gleaned only from the few

cases of infringements of market regulations that were recorded in detail. Such cases supply only the following information: that some butter came from Hougham, Buckland, Coldred and Evering, that in 1618 a collier from Stelling was selling coals in the market and in 1621 a cherry seller from Hardres and an oyster seller from Deal were there.²⁶³ In 1638 a deponent recalled that he had noticed a man and his daughter from Lyminge selling green peas round the streets "in pea-time, a little after Midsummer."²⁶⁴

It seems likely that the inhabitants of the area extending for a radius of about eight miles would have been at convenient horse-riding distance of Dover's Saturday market. The customary habit of going into the town on Saturday is illustrated by a deposition of 1577. Edward Mereweather from Shepherdswell - who had lived there for 25 years, and before that for his first 28 years in Eythorne - testified that he and his son, towards evening one Saturday, "being in Dover market the same day", went together to Thomas Foxley's house in Dover to take their leave of him, as they were "accustomably used to do" because Foxley, who was a jurat in Dover, had married Edward Mereweather's mother. On that occasion they drank wine and witnessed a will.²⁶⁵ This interpenetration of town and country was normal in Dover, as it was in other small towns of the period, so that an important jurat, Nicholas Aldy, had to be "ridden for" to his home in Ash three times during the summer of 1515²⁶⁶ and John Benger, a yeoman, was sworn in late as a jurat in 1617 because "his harvest business" prevented his coming earlier.²⁶⁷ In 1615, explaining activities that were pertinent to a case in the town courts, John Goodwin, an attorney, said that on his way to the Pier he spoke with his father at his house, and was "then required by him to look to his corn in the field near the Castle."²⁶⁸

Many townsmen came from the rural area surrounding Dover, where they still had families and, in some cases, land: for example, John Brome,

Robert Brome and Robert Nethersole all had land in Hougham as well as other villages; Richard Elam had land in River and Buckland, Henry Marsh in Martin and Staple, Thomas Fisher in Lydden and Ewell, Thomas Elwood in Hougham and Ewell, Thomas Foord in Whitfield and Bewfield and John Golder in Hougham and Charlton.²⁶⁹ One of the most comprehensively recorded examples is the minor gentry family of Moninges, or Monins, branches of which persisted in Waldershare and Lydden throughout the period and beyond.²⁷⁰ From time to time members of the family inhabited the town of Dover, where it was natural that they should hold office, so that Richard Monings was mayor of Dover in 1509-10, John Monynge was Lieutenant of Dover Castle when he made his will in 1554, and Stephen Monins was mayor from 1627-1630.²⁷¹ Similarly, the names of certain yeomen families, such as the Nethersoles, the Marshes, Gibbons, Philpotts and Hanningtons will be shown to recur in the records as having lived in the rural area throughout the period, and from time to time some of their members entered towns as freemen, apparently circulating between the towns of the region - Folkestone, Dover, Sandwich and Canterbury.

This habit also accounts for some of the economic, as well as social and administrative links with the local areas marked C and B on Map 2:1, most of whose inhabitants might have been presumed to be more likely to go to market in Elham and Hythe, or in Sandwich. The Elwood family, prominent in Sandwich, and having lands in the Ash and Thanet areas, also gave Dover two prominent Customs men in the late sixteenth and early seventeenth century.²⁷² Similarly the Huffams, whose land was in Ash and Eastry, had two Dover freemen in the early seventeenth century, the first, Vincent, apparently having been brought there by a good marriage opportunity.²⁷³

In the sixteenth century, having entered the town, a number of freemen from the surrounding area then accumulated more land in the area outside

it, while immigrants from elsewhere in England bought or leased land in the area as a result of their success in the town. At that time they sometimes bought or leased this land from gentry families, who were presumably exploiting less of their land directly. For example, the brewer Thomas Pepper, who died in 1574, had accumulated land in his own life time. Pepper's will shows that he had bought 20 acres of marshland, a close at Guston, lands and tenements in Ewell, and the manor of Sybberston, as well as other land in Hougham, Charlton and Dymchurch; he had bought most of this land from established gentry families, the Moninges and the Derings.²⁷⁴ Tithe cases brought against Pepper's widow after his death show that he had been harvesting the land himself.²⁷⁵ Another brewer, Thomas Colley, inherited land from his father in 1513, but by 1554 he also had on lease all the pastures and lands belonging to a farm called the Barton that was gavelkind land belonging to John Moninges.²⁷⁶ Inn-keepers, with their need for woodland to supply fuel, were also buying and leasing land in the sixteenth century. A good example is John Bowles, landlord of the "Arms of England", who died in 1558 and who had clearly bought some land from the gentry Fyneux family, and who also leased land released by the dissolution of St. Bartholomew's Hospital and Dover Priory.²⁷⁷ The butcher, James Smith, died in 1576, and his will shows that he had acquired the manor of Trianston in Burmarsh, which he was letting for £60 per year, and that he was leasing the manor of Roche to exploit it himself.²⁷⁸ The lack of reference in wills made after the 1590s to such large-scale accumulation of land possibly suggests that it had begun to decline from the late sixteenth century. The ownership of inherited land continued in yeomen and gentry families - the Huffams above being one example - but no Dover wills of the early seventeenth century indicate the same active accumulation of large manors and blocks of agricultural land by lease or purchase that is reflected in the wills of earlier tradesmen.

A brewer whose testamentary accounts suggest that he was still farming on a fairly large scale when he died in 1604 was John Kenton, whose widow had paid debts of £1.5s.0d for the rent of 6 acres of arable land, and further amounts of £14 and £18 for "lands in his occupation", together with £5.5s. for the farm of some great tithes in Hougham. She had also paid one man for moving 68 acres of her late husband's wheat, barley and oats, and two men for harvest wages, as well as other servants and his master brewer.²⁷⁹ Edward Kempe, who died in 1613, left 200 sheep, 36 acres of wheat and 43 acres of barley "in the fields", but no indication is given of his land-holding. His brew house, however, was one of a number of buildings, valued at £250, that he leased from Dover Harbour.²⁸⁰ There are no later examples in such material of the personal exploitation of land by brewers on that scale.

Testamentary material, particularly accounts, of the early seventeenth century suggests that brewers and maltsters were by that time more likely to buy a large proportion of their grain than to grow it themselves, possibly preferring to rent out any large holdings of land they held rather than to exploit them personally. Some brewers seem to have turned increasingly to dealing in grain. John Alderstone, for example, still harvested some land at his death in 1638, because his wife paid someone just over £1 to reap his corn. His debts suggest, however, that he was buying grain from men in Hougham, St. Margaret's at Cliff, Guston, Swingfield and Shepherdsweil and his inventory shows that his chief property was in Dover and was occupied by another man; it was valued at £230 and included a dwelling house, malt house and brew house with its equipment. He lived in a leased house in Dover and also leased a storehouse at the Pier from the Warden and Assistants to the Harbour.²⁸¹ The will of James Collier, maltster, in 1619 makes no mention of land, but his inventory shows that he had malt worth £25 in Dover.²⁸² Adam Wildes, maltster, owed debts in Elham and Alkham, of

which the Elham debt was certainly for barley. The only land he leased were some cliffs on which he had liberty to gather samphire.²⁸³ The will of Thomas Foorde, maltster, who had inherited land in Whitfield, shows that in his own life-time he had purchased not land but a malt house and some other houses in Dover, including an inn.²⁸⁴ Another maltster, John Golder, left a will in 1633 showing that he had lands and tenements in Hougham, Charlton, Dover and elsewhere in Kent, but that he was renting them out; while leaving them to his son, he instructed that they should be sold if necessary to give portions of over £200 to each of his five daughters.²⁸⁵ Such evidence from testamentary material is not, of course, in any way conclusive, but perhaps tends to suggest that occupational and economic specialization was increasing in the early seventeenth century, possibly stimulated by the temporary inflation of trade through the port, and that men who chose to live and work chiefly in the town were concentrating on the marketing of agricultural produce and the investment of capital resources rather than on balancing production and marketing in the traditional fashion that had combined the functions of yeoman farmer and tradesman.

It seems likely that the chief commodity supplied to Dover by the rural area closest to it was grain. Some mention has already been made of testamentary debts owed by maltsters to men in that area. The evidence of recorded debt suggests that not only maltsters but other Dover tradesmen bought grain in the area closest to the town, in spite of the attractions of Sandwich market and the rich corn lands of Thanet. For example, William Nethersole, yeoman of Alkham, who was frequently recorded as a creditor in testamentary accounts, deposed in 1632, that he had sent his servant to deliver to William Harvey of Dover, a maltster, five loads of oats, for which he was owed £8. He was also owed £97 at the death of William Willis, a Dover brewer.²⁸⁶ The testamentary accounts of Richard Garrett, a sailor, show that he owed Leonard Eridge

of Buckland £1 for wheat in 1627; similarly, Thomas Bartlet, a baker, owed Bosely of Buckland £8 for corn in 1637.²⁸⁷ Edmund Dell, another baker, owed money to William Nethersole, and to other yeomen in Charlton and Ewell, the latter possibly for fuel.²⁸⁸ Thomas Stookes, a yeoman of Swingfield, testified in 1636 that he had sold barley at 28s. the quarter to John Alderstone, brewer, and to Thomas Weekes, maltster.²⁸⁹ George Richards, maltster, died owing money in Lydden, Sheperdswell, Guston, Swingfield and Alkham.²⁹⁰

Grain also came into Dover's market from the more distant area marked B on Map 2:1, which can be seen to be closer to Sandwich, but which was linked to Dover by the fact that the villages of St. Peter's and St. John's in Thanet were "limbs" of Dover through the constitution of the Cinque Ports, as were the nearer villages of Ringwold and Kingsdown.²⁹¹ In 1587 nine grain dealers from Ringwold and Kingsdown were instructed to supply Dover market with 84 seams of barley and 34 seams 4 bushels of wheat, and Thomas Philpott the younger was fined for sending his wheat to Sandwich market instead of Dover.²⁹² In 1594-5, when grain was in short supply, the mayor went to Thanet to inquire about provision of corn for Dover.²⁹³ It is clear that, particularly in times of dearth, there was some compulsion on Thanet corn-growers to be mindful of their link with Dover, although they were normally more attracted to the nearer and more important market at Sandwich.

In spite of the periodic attempts by the magistracy to bring corn to the market, it seems likely that much grain from the local areas was sold privately, without notice having been given to the market officials. In 1578, a servant to the Dover brewer, Thomas Leonard, deposed how his master "using to travel to Sandwich with his wagon did once every week leave an empty sack with the miller of Northbourne mill as they went to Sandwich. And coming back again, they received of the said miller the same sack with meal" and he had heard his master say that "he bought the

meal of the miller as he should buy it in the market at Sandwich."²⁹⁴

The matter of market regulation is discussed more fully below.

The other part of the local region, to the south and west, marked C on Map 2:1 was of most importance to butchers, graziers and leather workers. Hythe was clearly an important centre for buying and selling cattle. In the sixteenth century butchers from Folkestone and Elham sometimes rented a space in Dover market.²⁹⁵ Butchers' testamentary material shows a concentration of debts owing by them at death in the local area "C", and suggests that landowners extended credit for grazing cattle, often for at least a year. James Smith, a butcher who leased land in Burmarsh, has already been mentioned. In 1606 Humphrey Briant owed a Tenterden man half a year's farm of marsh land - £16; he also owed £2 to a "looker to the land and for scots", £300 to Thomas Godfrey of Lydd, and smaller amounts to two men of Cheriton.²⁹⁶ William Chandler owed money in Burmarsh and New Romney when he died in 1612 and his son Abraham, who was killed by a horse in Hythe in 1641, owed 10s. "for keeping cattle in the marsh".²⁹⁷ William Sacrey, in 1611, owed £7 in Dymchurch, as well as smaller amounts closer to home, and his son William, in 1640, owed £15 in Challock and £10 in Lyminge, together with £6 "for fat cattle" to a man in Hawkinge.²⁹⁸ A more colourful instance of the importance of the area to butchers is provided by a case in the Dover court, when a butcher, James Lord, was accused, in 1621, of offering violence to a milkmaid as he came down the hill from Folkestone to Dover early one morning. He was on his horse, driving bullocks he had apparently bought at Hythe the day before.²⁹⁹ It seems likely that Hythe was the chief cattle market in the triangle formed by Dover, Elham and Lydd.

Some notion of the regional nature of credit arrangements set up between butcher and tanner is given by depositions in the Consistory Court in October 1593, concerning the attempts of the widow of a Dover butcher,

Humphrey Bradshaw, to settle the debts due at his death. She rode to New Romney with a group of the town's officers when they made their annual visit to the Brotherhood, or meeting of the Cinque Ports. One of the officers deposed that she went "of purpose to require certain acquittances of graziers in the marsh, of whom Mr. Thurbarne of New Romney was one, whom...her husband did in his life deal with and bargain for cattle." They met in "The George" in New Romney and the matter was settled with the help of John Goodwin, the Dover attorney, who was one of the party attending the Brotherhood meeting.³⁰⁰ Later, she settled a debt for cattle with Mr. Harrington of River, much nearer Dover. On that occasion Sibilla Barreck, als Jerman, of Canterbury deposed that Humphrey Bradshaw had owed her husband £10 at the time of his death, which his widow had later paid out "in hides and skins", since she kept up the trade for a quarter of a year after her husband's death. The former Mrs. Jerman said she had heard her husband say in his lifetime that Humphrey Bradshaw owed him £10 "which he had lent him beforehand according as the order of tanners is to let their butchers have money before hand and afterwards to set it out in hides."³⁰¹

Such circulating credit is typical of the period, with the tanners financing the butchers' buying and bringing on of cattle to the point of slaughter. Butchers, in their turn, extended credit to their customers. A schedule of the debts owing to a Dover butcher, John Rutter, in 1583, shows that 37 people owed him a total of £6.18s.1d. in small amounts. Most of his customers were Dover men and women, including the Collector for the Poor in St. James's parish, sailors, a smith, a shoemaker, some members of the oligarchy and three Flemings called respectively Willes, Hendrik and Jury, but some were from the outlying villages of Shepherdswell, Alkham, Ripple and Walmer.³⁰² Butchers sometimes paid their own debts in kind; the will of William Almonson, merchant, shows for example that the butchers James Smith and William Lovell paid their

debts of £10 and £5 to him in tallow.³⁰³

Testamentary accounts of 1619 and 1639 also show Dover butchers owing amounts of £5 and £6 to two Canterbury "felmongers," Richard Stockden and John Lee.³⁰⁴ The debts of leather workers and the records of proceedings in the town courts suggest, however, that most leather was supplied to Dover by local tanners, although some came from Hythe or Smeeth, to the south-west of the town. Two Dover saddlers were indicted for debt in the hundred court in 1552 by John Fyxes of Hythe.³⁰⁵ In 1634 and again in 1638 hides from a Mr. Fox - perhaps a descendant of Mr. Fyxes - of Hythe were brought before the Dover magistrates as being insufficiently tanned.³⁰⁶ In 1638 and 1639 hides from Ashford and Smeeth were similarly examined.³⁰⁷ In 1627 Stephen Wildes, cordwainer, owed a tanner of Smeeth, £8.10s. when he died.³⁰⁸

Dover had a special ceremonial and legal relationship with the other Cinque Ports and their members, but the relationship also had some economic significance. Since the Lord Warden of the Cinque Ports was based in Dover Castle, and the Admiralty courts were held in Dover, Portsmen came fairly frequently to the town, and therefore presumably to the market. Because a freeman of one of the Ports could of right take up his freedom in any of the other Ports there was also some exchange of personnel between the different towns, which probably extended financial links along the coast between Rye and Sandwich, and even as far as Dover's limb of Faversham, in a flexible way unusual at that period.³⁰⁹ Kinship and credit links between Dover and the other Ports are exhibited most clearly between the merchants of Dover and Sandwich, some of whom were based in a shared rural hinterland, and between the sailors and fishermen of Dover, Folkestone, Hythe and Rye.

Nicholas Aldy, the early sixteenth century mayor of Dover, has already been shown to have had land in Ash. His will connects him with the Aldys of Sandwich, in showing that he owned cellars and lofts in the

fishmarket there.³¹⁰ The kinship connections between the Elwoods of Sandwich and Dover in the seventeenth century have also been mentioned above, and these are perhaps most obviously illustrated by the fact that John Elwood, a brewer, who lived in Sandwich, moved to Dover in 1610 where he lived apart from his wife for at least two years, visiting her in Sandwich at the week-ends, as he deposed to the ecclesiastical court in 1612.³¹¹ Economic contact between the merchants of the two towns can be illustrated by a few examples. Edmund Mitchell, a mercer and grocer of Dover, who became Town Clerk in 1574 appears to have begun his career in Kent by being apprenticed to the merchant John Tiffar of Sandwich.³¹² John Rawely, a Dover merchant, described in 1587 how he had acted as an agent in persuading a stranger living in Sandwich to be kind to John Kenton, a Dover brewer, in a matter of debt.³¹³ A deponent in the Dover court in 1581 described how Henry Harwood of Dover had attempted to persuade him to alter a bond made between Henry Harwood and the deponent's son who lived in Sandwich.³¹⁴ It was Henry Harwood who brought from Sandwich the "Order for buying and selling merchandize" in 1586 that was then adopted by Dover corporation in emulation of Sandwich's practice.³¹⁵

Some seafarers in Dover had kinship ties in the other Ports. This probably arose from their custom of marrying the daughters and widows of other seafarers, and thus of putting to use inherited stocks of boats, which is examined in more detail below.³¹⁶ A share in a boat was likely to have been more crucial than a particular place of abode to sailors in the small towns along the coast. Examples are Beatrice Brockman, the widow of a mariner, whose cousin lived in Folkestone, and Agens Trapham, a fisherman, whose married sister lived there.³¹⁷ John Wallop left bequests to the poor in Hythe, and to a married sister who lived in Folkestone.³¹⁸ Some sailors held property in other Ports, which suggests they might have been born there, or have lived in more than one

place. William Tiddeman had lands in Folkestone, Thomas Hudson a tenement, yards and a herring hanger in Hythe, and William Foreman and Robert Garrett had tenements in Rye.³¹⁹ Richard Powell, a fisherman, was owed money for his last fishing voyage to Yarmouth, which was in the hands of another Dover fisherman, and he left the residue of his goods to an innholder in Dymchurch when he died in 1637.³²⁰ Henry Vamman, mariner, in 1625, owed rent to a widow in Rye, and another debt to a kinsman in Faversham.³²¹ It seems likely that fishermen, in particular, sometimes moved from place to place along the coast.

When restraints were put by the Crown on the shipping of goods from one of the Cinque Ports or their limbs, merchants were quickly able to move them to another. In 1586, for example, a number of men, including a servant of the Customer, deposed that when a restraint had been made on ships exporting goods from Dover to Calais, a trough of white combed wool was sent from Dover to Hythe, as part of four wagon loads of goods, and put on board ship there for Calais.³²² This was treated as normal practice, and was discussed in the courts only because the vessel had subsequently been taken by a French man-of-war. Things were not always arranged so legally, however. In 1625 a tanner's servant deposed how, by order of his master, he had carried leather to the seaside "to be secretly transported." He had been required to do this on a number of occasions, each time carrying four horse loads of raw hides to Kingsdown. They were later shipped in a French shallop "that came so near the shore as the horses went to the boat side."³²³ This kind of illegal trading along the coast was presumably eased by the close connections between the inhabitants, and must have led to the under-recording of exports of commodities in Port Books.

Of the other Kent towns that might have come within Dover's economic ambit, Ashford seems to have had some limited importance in the supply of cloth. In 1522 the corporation of Dover spent £5.6s.8d. on thirty one

and a half yards of cloth for the town livery with one Deward of Ashford, who might have been connected with the "Samson Dode of Ashford" listed twice in a Port Book for 1567-68 as a trader in "white and black hasborow" through the port of Dover.³²⁴ As it will be seen, the name "Dodd" was also recorded in Canterbury as a supplier of cloth. In 1573, John Hobday, a draper, died owing £10 of a £20 debt to a man of Ashford.³²⁵ When Solomon Lovell, a shoemaker, died, he left £2 for Mr. Mascall of Ashford to make clothes for his son, whom he was to take into his service.³²⁶ Dover's access to the products of the Weald, particularly timber, seems to have been by way of Appledore, after their transport by water, rather than by road through Ashford.³²⁷ Links with Sittingbourne and Gravesend were made chiefly by hackneymen, for whom they were stops on the way to London, and who must have used inns and stabling there.³²⁸

Obviously, the most important Kentish town to Dover outside its immediate environment was Canterbury, although the City's importance was probably greater as a legal, ecclesiastical and social centre, than as an economic focus. The simple fact that so many people had to stay overnight in Canterbury if they were conducting legal business, such as settling testamentary accounts, made it a natural meeting-place. John Goodwin described, for example, how he and a number of other prominent Dover men fell to discussing a disputed will while they were in the "Crown" in Canterbury in 1594.³²⁹ People from Dover sought out lawyers there to help them in their cases in the Consistory Court, as when Mrs. Wappoll and her daughter went to the lawyer Philemon Pownall in his mother's house in Christ Church Canterbury, while his brother Abdias - a merchant from Charlton near Dover - was there, to ask him to go with them to the Commissary to help them present their case.³³⁰ It seems likely that some financial arrangements were made between Dover and Canterbury men, although the evidence is slim. Testamentary accounts

record two such cases of debt that were settled in the Guild Hall of Canterbury, one in 1590 when Henry Marsh of Dover was proceeded against by Richard Marsh of Canterbury for a debt on speciality of £200, and one of 1591 when Edward Nicholson of Canterbury recovered money from the accounts of Edward Warren of Dover.³³¹

Cloth was again the commodity most frequently purchased in Canterbury. In 1553 the corporation bought silk there to make a banner.³³² John Hobday, a mercer, owed Sampson Dodd of Canterbury £15.13s.1d. in 1573.³³³ A number of people, such as Margery Almonson in 1597, Thomas Owill in 1598 and Gilbert Rosse in 1609, owed small debts to Canterbury drapers, all these three to the same one, John Hodgkins, as though they had gone there for some small luxury unobtainable in Dover.³³⁴

Canterbury felmongers have already been mentioned, and the corporation sometimes bought horse hair used in building from them.³³⁵ Dover men occasionally apprenticed their children in Canterbury, for example William Bosworth apprenticed his stepson to a broadweaver there in 1561.³³⁶ Nevertheless the chief importance of Canterbury to Dover seems to have been as a social centre, where a lawyer could always be found to witness an agreement.

London was important economically to Dover because it provided a market for local products such as grain, and an outlet for goods that had been imported from the Continent. In 1618 those merchants of Dover "selling salt, malt or other merchandize at London" were to be free of the tax on purveyance for the king's household.³³⁷ Testamentary evidence for trade to London is rare, although the accounts of George Richards, a maltster, in 1631, showed that his administrator was left to pay £3 for the carriage of Richards' malt to a ship, after it had been appraised, and to custom it and transport it to London.³³⁸ There was also some contact between Dover shippers of wine and London merchants.³³⁹ Controversy between Londoners and Dover port officials and customs men is also

recorded from time to time.³⁴⁰ On the whole, however, testamentary materials suggest that Dovorians were far more likely to be in debt to Londoners than vice versa.

Some goods came to Dover from London. They were chiefly manufactured goods - furnishing and clothing - and grocery goods. In 1522, when Henry VIII was frequently in the town, an upholsterer and a haberdasher from London thought it worth coming to the market.³⁴¹ Normally during the sixteenth century Londoners, usually upholsterers, tapestry men or haberdashers, came only to the annual St. Martin's Fair.³⁴² In the seventeenth century, in the absence of detailed records for the market or the fair, there is little evidence that goods from London were still being brought to the market, although in 1611 a London soaper was charged with having defective weights; in 1636 a London cheesemonger was selling cheese from Ipswich and in 1639 another was buying and selling Holland cheese in the town.³⁴³

Testamentary evidence suggests that the kind of goods and services purchased by Dover people from London changed slightly over the period. In 1558 William Almonson, usually described as "merchant", left the following debts to Londoners, among others in his will:

To Robert Breinche, girdler of London dwelling on the bridge there	... £9.13s.6d.
To Roger Colle, grocer of London on the bridge there	... £14. 0s.0d
To James Shaiest, haberdasher on the bridge	... 15s.0d
To Penyfater eyrmonger on New fish street hill	... £1. 0s.0d ³⁴⁴

Similar trading debts are to be found in the testamentary accounts of the yeoman/mercator, John Hobday, who died about 1573. As well as many local debts, he owed William Pennington of the City of London, grocer, £6 for wares and John Halles of the City of London, merchant, £40 for linen cloth, as well as another £20, of which £10 had to be paid the following Whitsun, and £10 "at Berkely fair the next following, at the city of Canterbury." He also owed debts to a number of men "of the City of London": Henry Bishop, mercator, 15s.(the remainder of £6.15s.) for

cloth, Isacke Snitterden 24s. for wares, John Lawe 27s. for soap and Mr. John Hewet £16.12s.8d. "for a reckoning."³⁴⁵

All the references in Dover testamentary materials to debts to London tradesmen before 1610 seem likely to have been for grocery, mercery and other small wares; for example in 1599 John Lovell, a woollen-draper, left seven debts unpaid to London men, totalling nearly £60, some of which were only part payments of larger debts; in 1606 Gregory Elwood owed £2 to Augustine Lynne of London, grocer; in 1607 Henry Sadler, whose inventory suggests he might have been a petty chapman, owed over £22 to Michael Butler of London; in 1610 Susanne Cooper, a widow, owed three debts to Londoners - just over £2 to Thomas Nutt, grocer, a similar amount to Thomas Newman, grocer, and 30s. to Mr. Ball, haberdasher, all "for wares".³⁴⁶ There are no references in testamentary material after that date to a debt owing to London for grocery or small wares. In 1610, however, Thomas Ladd, an apothecary, died owing £100 by bond to a London vintner, and in 1630 Henry Raworth, another apothecary, owed over £9 to two London druggisters, Robert Hill and Mr. Wiles.³⁴⁷ The dearth of references in wills and accounts after 1610 to mercery and grocery goods bought from London might simply mean that relevant records have not survived, or that such goods were being made locally, or that they were arriving at the port of Dover as trade there increased and some part of them being distributed directly by local merchants and factors rather than going straight to London. This may have been the case with consumable grocery goods that are, by their nature, not recorded among a testator's moveable goods. There is certainly some evidence that goods such as nutmegs and pepper were stolen from boats and sold to local people.³⁴⁸ On the other hand, the inventories of shopkeepers and people of the poorer and middling sort suggest that a more likely assumption should be that expensive mercery wares and drapery, for example, were simply not being bought by them in

the lean years of the early seventeenth century. As it can be seen, even in the sixteenth century, it is only a handful of accounts that reveal bulk purchases by tradesmen in London. It seems likely that wealthy people visited London sufficiently often to buy for themselves such luxury items as they wanted. The town accounts show that when there was a civic need for any items of special status, such as leather-covered stools for use in the new court hall, two drums to be hung up in the town hall, new constables' staves, or the two great silver cups bestowed on the King and Queen, they were brought from London.³⁴⁹

There seems no doubt that the frequent contact with London that had always taken place at the top level of society was extended in the seventeenth century, and that it became common for merchants and sailors, as well as town officials and lawyers, to be there often. Complex credit relationships with Londoners are suggested by a note among the Lord Warden's letters that William Haines and John Waller of Dover certified that Nicholas Knott of Dover Castle, gentleman, had delivered £3 to William Haines, which Haines had then delivered to Mr. Waring of London, merchant, to the use of a London goldsmith, which £3 Knott had owed to the goldsmith.³⁵⁰ An illustration of the easy communication between people in Dover, Canterbury and London is given in a letter hastily written at the end of the inventory of William Jones, gentleman of Dover, who died in 1637, by his son Jeremy, a London merchant, to Mr. Somner at the Consistory Court in Canterbury. It ends:

"and so with my love expressed and remembrance of love to my brother Humfrey Mantell of Dover when you do see him at Canterbury and remember me as he and I did remember you the last week when he was with me at London, I commit and commend you to God and remain your loving friend..."³⁵¹

A further illustration is given in 1627 when Abraham Hughessen of Dover, gentleman, deposed that he had attempted a reconciliation between Robert Bennett, a ship master, and Thomas Gourley, a mariner, both of Dover, chancing to meet them "accidentally" in the tavern called the "Nags Head"

in Thames Street in London," near the Custom House quay.³⁵²

Testamentary materials confirm the increasing financial liabilities of Dover mariners to Londoners. Among the debts owed by the same Thomas Gourley when he died in 1630 was £13 by bond demanded by one Sanerton of the City of London.³⁵³ In 1618 the will of Bartholomew Smith, a fisherman, showed that he stood bound with his brother to John Ulan of Limehouse for £6, which was clearly a long-term loan as his assigns were to inherit the term of years for the payment of it.³⁵⁴ It may well have represented his share in a boat. Among a number of quite small debts owed by another fisherman, Robert Cloake, in 1626, there was one for 10s. to a Mrs. Pettie of the City of London, and William Warde, a Dover shipowner, owed £22 to Fortrey of London, merchant, in 1629.³⁵⁵

The chancy nature of a mariner's investment in a voyage and of his relationships with the London merchants who employed him are illustrated by the testamentary accounts of Captain Adrian Adrianson of Dover in 1639. He died on a voyage, leaving his widow to clear up his affairs in Flanders, his country of origin, France where he had left some goods, Dover, his home, Plymouth, where he owed debts, and London where he had taken instructions for his last voyage. He had been Master of a ship for Sir William Curteene of London, merchant, "in negotiation of whose affairs the deceased has by sea and land...disbursed several sums of money for cables, anchors, provision for the ship and the like amounting to about £400", claimed his widow. Curteene refused to make the payment

"standing upon strict proof of the deceased's disbursements and no exact proof being presently to be made because the disbursements were made in other far countries and places and some of the witnesses being in foreign parts and dead."

In spite of her having obtained a signed testimony from the ship's purser, the widow could not prevail upon Curteene to pay the £400; instead he actually questioned other accounts she had made that had already been agreed.³⁵⁶

Richard Willoughby, a mariner, ventured money in a voyage jointly with a London merchant, Giles de But, and the other part-owners of a boat. His testamentary accounts in 1613 show that his last voyage was to Denmark, where he fell sick and died. His widow therefore had to pay £17.8.10d. for his funeral

"in the City of Danske in the kingdom of Denmark...because he was a merchant and Master of the ship and therefore the other officers and merchants were constrained to perform the funeral both for the custom of the country and the reputation of our nation in a more chargeable manner than had been otherwise convenient."

She also had to pay £7 to the other part owners of the boat and £2.3s.6d. to a mariner of Redriffe, near London who had paid for her husband's care in his sickness.³⁵⁷ Willoughby's inventory shows that he had an astrolabe and other sea instruments, and that as well as a share in the boat that went to Denmark he owned a third part of a Dover boat, half a ship of London, and an eighth part of a "small barque belonging to Calais if it please God she safely arrive at her port."³⁵⁸ A final example is the mariner/merchant Philip Bagthwaite who at death owed large debts in Dover to a butcher, a baker and a shipwright, presumably for provisioning and fitting a ship, £7.7s.7d. to Mr. Abrahall of the City of London, chandler, and over £6 to a flagmaker in London. Since his wife went to London to get money that was owing to him, his ship had presumably returned successfully.³⁵⁹

Frequent travel to London by Dover merchants is suggested by the testamentary accounts of Francis Augar, who died there, apparently by drowning in the Thames, and whose funeral was at St.Catherine's. Among the debts his widow paid were one for her husband's frequent horsehire to Gravesend, and for 32 days' horse meat at Gravesend, with other small debts there, also an amount for her "entertainment in the absence of the deceased in his life-time".³⁶⁰ Another merchant, Richard Boys, died while he was in Redriffe in London, and two others, John Waller in 1630 and John Spicke in 1637, owed money in London when they died; Arnold

Brames had recovered debts for John Spicke's widow "from certain merchants beyond the seas."³⁶¹ Associated with these people who had financial liabilities in London were hackneymen, who presumably had to pay for lodging for themselves and care for their horses while they were there. Thomas Hicke, who was both inn-keeper and hackneyman in Dover, owed £2 to John Archer of London and another £7 to the masters of his two sons, who were apparently apprenticed there.³⁶² The reasons for the London debts of John Wilson, hackneyman, remain conjectural: he died there in 1613 owing £2 to the Lord Mayor of London and his under porter, £26 to Mr. Mouse of London, and £8 to Mr. Willcock of London and Dr. Spencer of Canterbury by bill.³⁶³

Testamentary materials in particular point up another change in Dover's relationship to London over the period. Until about the 1580s bequests suggest that the movement of permanent inhabitants tended to be from London to Dover. For example, in 1559 Richard Fyneas left bequests to kinsmen in London; John Halyday, a leading blacksmith in Dover in the first half of the sixteenth century, had an aunt in London when he died in 1546, and Rowland Macklin, in 1572, still had an inherited house there.³⁶⁴

After that, the movement seems to have been in the other direction, with children of Dover men going to London to be apprenticed or to work. In 1588 John Daniel had a son in Southwark; in 1626, Edmund Dell, a baker, owed money to a gentleman of London to whom he had apprenticed his son; the son of Alice Harwood, widow of a Dover innkeeper, was a shoemaker in London in 1621; in 1630 Stephen Askew, a fisherman, had two daughters married to mariners and living in London and in 1637 William Jones's son, Jeremy, as mentioned above, was living there as a merchant.³⁶⁵

Some men seemed to move between the two towns, as Richard Dawkes did. He was a mercer, who tried to give the king the title to certain lands in Dover on which his own house stood.³⁶⁶ By 1615 he was dealing with

London merchants because he complained in Dover that one of them had deceived him in exchanging gold for white money.³⁶⁷ When he died, in about 1644, he was buried in London, and his widow paid his debts of £300 to the late sheriff of London and £200 to Alderman Cullum there. He had also left unsatisfied a recognizance of £4000 made in the right of his wife. Since she had only £870 with which to meet her charges, it appears that he had been out of his depth in his London dealings.³⁶⁸ Attention has already been drawn to the despair felt by the Cinque Ports' merchants at the stranglehold on trade exercised by the merchant companies of London.³⁶⁹ In 1619 the common council of Dover decided that there was "little encouragement to continue in the suit" for free trade since they were so strongly opposed by the Merchant Adventurers "and their great friends."³⁷⁰ Nevertheless they took their petition to Parliament, where it was denied and a charter granted to the Merchant Adventurers who "pretend thereby to have the sole trade" to Germany, Flanders and elsewhere. Further, merchants from the Cinque Ports had even been denied the right to buy and sell in London, especially cloth in Blackwell Hall.³⁷¹ In the light of these actions, the testamentary evidence, although slight, of some move towards London by merchants and mariners in particular tends to give credit to the response of the Cinque Ports' merchants in 1618 to the Lord Warden's request for money for the suppression of the Algiers pirates, that there were no sizeable ships in the Ports because their masters had been forced to move to London to get work from the merchants there.³⁷²

The increasing economic pull by London on the provinces thus seems to be illustrated in a small way by the testamentary materials of Dover's inhabitants. It was, however, most marked among the leading merchants and mariners of the town. It must be remembered that such examples represent exceptions to the majority of the town's inhabitants. Most credit relationships concerned with the exchange of goods revealed by

testamentary materials existed within the town itself, and it is clear that Dover people bought from butchers, brewers, bakers, fisherman, drapers, shoemakers mercers, coopers and smiths there. The area within about an eight mile radius of the town was particularly important to it, but this was extended to the west by butchers' need for grazing on marshland and the importance of Hythe as a cattle market, and to the east by the town's need for grain, in which direction it came into conflict with Sandwich. The peculiar circumstances of the shared freedom of men in the confederation of the Cinque Ports probably encouraged mobility of personnel, trade and credit over an unusually wide area. The temporary phenomenon of increased trade through Dover harbour in the early to mid-seventeenth century might have led to an increased distinction between urban and rural occupations within the region. It seems clear that the town's economic region was formed from a combination of its topographical position, the constraints of land use and human mobility, and traditional patterns of family settlement.

b) The evidence of pleas of debt, 1547-1559 and 1584-1635

One of the factors that helps to determine the boundaries of an economic region is the extent to which credit relationships are set up between the people within it. Further evidence of credit relationships between Dovorians, and between them and people from outside the town is to be found in the pleas of debt in the Hundred Court. Records of pleas exist for two tranches of years in the period under review - 1547-1559 and 1584-1640, and some comparison is made below between the two periods. Greater use could be made of these records if biographical material were collected systematically for the inhabitants of the rest of the region, since in the sixteenth century names of litigants were most often recorded in these pleas without reference to their place of origin or to their occupation, although this information was sometimes given in the

seventeenth century. It is nevertheless clear that litigants frequently included men from the rural area surrounding Dover and from its Thanet jurisdiction, as well as some foreigners and aliens who found it necessary to sue for or answer charges of debt in Dover. In some cases such men can be identified because their names are to be found elsewhere in the records relating to Dover, but it has not been possible at this stage to analyse the material fully in a manner that would give a completely reliable picture of the balance between urban and rural credit.

The first problem, however, has been to determine the nature of the pleas. Five kinds of debt plea were recorded. The most common plea from 1547-1559 was that by which the plaintiff appealed against the defendant de placito debiti super demanda fn. A second plea that occurred in that period but superseded it in frequency from 1597 onwards was that the plaintiff appealed against the defendant de placito quod reddat ei fn quas ei debet et iniuste detinet... The simple plea of "debt" occurred in 1601 and 1602, then reappeared in 1609, becoming increasingly frequent from 1626 until it almost entirely replaced the first two pleas from 1635 onwards. Unfortunately, against this simple plea of "debt" no amount of money was recorded, as it had been in the earlier pleas. Two other pleas occurred throughout the period, although far less often - the plea of breach of contract, and the plea of A that B capiat et iniuste detinet certain goods, usually some sheep, horses, cattle or grain. These pleas usually recorded no monetary equivalent. It is likely that many debt pleas also lie concealed in the ubiquitous plea of "trespass against the case" but, since that is impossible to determine, such cases have not been included in this examination.

Table 2:3 Relative frequency of types of debt pleas recorded in the Dover Hundred Court 1547-1559

Date	dem. %	r.e. %	debt %	breach of contract %	cap. %	£	s	d	Total cases
1547	77.5	3.4	9.0	10.1	0.0	223	11	10	89
1548	85.0	8.2	4.1	2.7	0.0	90	7	3	73
1549	74.0	0.0	11.6	14.4	0.0	177	2	8	69
1550	73.5	2.0	14.6	8.5	1.4	252	7	3	68
1551	86.3	0.0	4.1	9.6	0.0	349	17	4	73
1552	86.2	5.2	3.4	5.2	0.0	190	16	8	58
1553	64.7	1.5	17.6	16.2	0.0	232	5	4	68
1554	83.9	1.1	7.5	7.5	0.0	396	4	2	93
1555	85.7	0.0	4.8	9.5	0.0	535	2	11	84
1556	90.3	1.1	1.1	7.5	0.0	446	17	4	93
1557	92.6	0.0	0.0	7.4	0.0	218	2	2	54
1558	91.8	1.7	0.0	5.5	2.0	766	18	8	146
1559	89.3	0.0	6.1	4.6	0.0	208	9	4	65

Table 2:4 Relative frequency of types of debt pleas recorded in the Dover Hundred Court 1584-1639, eight-year averages

Date	dem. %	r.e. %	debt %	breach of contract %	cap. %	£	s	d	cases (ave)
1584-91	49.0	46.5	0.5	0.0	4.0	540	2	2	28
1592-99	44.2	45.2	39.0	0.0	6.7	450	1	6	13
1600-07	20.6	72.0	1.9	0.9	46.0	377	1	0	13
1608-15	7.1	85.7	1.3	0.0	5.9	1002	1	9	30
1616-23	4.5	85.0	3.0	1.0	6.5	1011	1	9	28
1624-31	3.3	70.4	19.6	0.7	6.0	950	3	1	34
1632-39	0.0	29.0	58.2	3.1	9.7	no figures			36

Source: CKS Records of Pleas in the Books of the Dover Hundred Court, 1546-1559, 1583-1591, 1591-1603, 1603-1625, 1626-1656. (Unfoliated volumes)

Note: Pleas are abbreviated thus: dem - debiti super demanda; r.e. - reddat ei...; cap - capiat et iniuste detinet.

The relative frequency of each of the five pleas in the two periods is shown in Tables 2:3 and 2:4, where each is expressed as a percentage of the total number of debt cases before the court in a year. The first table shows every year in the earlier, comparatively brief, period recorded. The second deals with the later, longer, period in eight-year averages. The total amount of money involved in such cases is also recorded, in the first table as an annual total, in the second as an average total.

Table 2:3 shows that more cases were consistently brought to court in

Dover between 1547 and 1559 than in the later period 1584-1639, yet the total amount of money recorded as owing was lower in most of those early years. The years 1593 and 1594 were exceptional in the later period in showing low totals of £52.15s.7d. and £108.15s.2d. The average amount of debt involved in individual pleas was also lower in the earlier years. The average amount pleaded for in cases of debiti super demanda between 1547 and 1559 was £4.10s. The cases of reddat ei were too sporadic in that period to be averaged. From 1584-1635 the average amount claimed in a case of debiti super demanda had risen to £10, but the more frequent pleas of reddat ei averaged £38.10s. It seems likely that pleas of debiti super demanda concerned simple trading debts, where the amount owed was liable to be paid on demand. Debts claimed under the plea of reddat ei might have referred to debts that had been recorded, at least in a personal book, or created by contract - by specialty, bond or covenant. When testamentary accounts are used as a gloss on the court cases, they provide some, although not completely, convincing evidence for this view. For example, in 1584 the children of John Marychurch pleaded against Silvester Lovell, the administratrix of William Lovell's goods, that she reddat eis two amounts of £10 and £6.13s.4d. Her testamentary accounts of 1584 show that she paid many other debts to these and other people, but that those two alone were owed "by obligation", and were "recovered by action in the town of Dover".³⁷³

The notion that the plea of debiti super demanda perhaps implied a more informal debt is reinforced by the amounts of money involved, which tend to be smaller and rarely in round figures, whereas as early as 1547 and 1548 figures of £40 and £30 were being pleaded for in cases of reddat ei. Amounts were not always recorded in round figures in the latter cases, but were far more likely to be so than in the former. The figures for 1599, for example, are distorted by a claim by John Brames, a merchant, that Henry Van Bookholt reddat ei £1000, a plea that was

removed to Chancery. By the seventeenth century most, though not all, claims of reddat ei were recorded in round figures.

If this distinction between the two pleas is a correct one, then it suggests that, in Dover, litigants used the courts far more often to recover small debts in the mid-sixteenth century than they did in the early seventeenth century. It might also suggest that higher numbers of pleas of reddat ei reflect periods of higher formal borrowing of capital, perhaps for investment purposes, or crisis-management, rather than the day-to-day credit given for goods or services. The depression of the total number of pleas during the period 1590-1608 suggests not only that there was no point in suing for debt then, but that trade had decreased and that few people had surplus cash for lending. From 1592-1596 more claims of debiti super demanda were made than of reddat ei - reversing the normal trend at that period, and suggesting that people were simply trying to lay their hands on whatever small debts they were owed. During those years very few debt cases were brought at all, and they were mainly for small amounts, except that in 1596, out of a total of 16 cases, 5 actions of reddat ei - 4 for £100 each - were brought against John Bargar, a tanner and merchant, but here described as "yeoman", and in 1597 out of a total of 14 cases, four were brought against the bailiff and land-holder, Thomas Andrews, one for unjustly withholding cattle, and three of reddat ei - £42.14s. 2d., £100 and £20 - and pleas of reddat ei were also made against two yeomen, one from Dover and one from Barham, of £20 and £80.³⁷⁴ Such a high proportion of cases against yeomen and landowners was rare at that time, and both the kind of plea and the amount of money involved suggests that during a period of poor harvests they were having to borrow at interest as well as living on credit from harvest to harvest in the normal manner. Throughout the period, the majority of cases were between men from Dover, with a substantial minority between men from the surrounding

district or from St. John's and St. Peter's in Thanet.³⁷⁵ A very few cases were between men from other towns or countries.³⁷⁶ In 1611 there was, however, a sudden increase of pleas against townsmen by men from outside the town, indicating perhaps a revival of trading activity, and they illustrate the likely geographical spread of such activity. Pleas were taken out by a London clothworker against John Colbrand, a Dover brewer, by a Chichester collar maker against a Dover wheeler, by William Richardson "of Dover and Sandwich" against a Dover merchant, by Leonard Sweeting and the administrators of Robert Winne, both of Canterbury, against John Young, woollen draper of Dover, by Robert Parker of Newcastle against John Tiddeman, mariner of Dover, by a London merchant against a Dover yeoman and by Josias Bridge, a Canterbury chandler, against John Bullock, a Dover tanner.³⁷⁷

The early 1620s were again a period of little activity; debt cases fell to 13 in both 1627 and 28, presumably affected by lack of trade during the war with Spain. They rose to 42, however, in 1629 after the harbour had been reopened to foreign trade. These fluctuations, which seem to have been so immediately responsive to events, suggest that borrowing throughout the period was short-term, that is seldom for more than a year or two. An increase in numbers of cases during more prosperous periods also suggests that men were most likely to borrow in the likelihood of expansion.

The evidence of debt pleas is most interesting in suggesting how credit might have circulated in the region, and how rural wealth might have played a part in funding urban projects, and urban wealth, in its turn, might have helped rural landowners survive through periods of dearth. Although it has proved impossible to assign a definite geographical origin to a substantial number of the litigants in these cases, chiefly in the early periods, a tentative attempt has been made to sketch the underlying dynamics of credit in the region by examining those cases in

which a Dovorian was one party and someone from outside the town, who is identifiable either from this source or from others being used, the other.

Table 2:5 Geographical distribution of litigants in debt cases in the Hundred Court of Dover

Origin of litigant	As plaintiff	As defendant	Total cases
The near region			
1. Ringwold	20	26	46
2. Dour Valley	5	16	21
3. Alkham/Hougham	6	11	17
4. Thanet	5	10	15
5. Shepherdsweil etc.	3	1	4
East Kent			
Canterbury	15	1	16
Sandwich	6	3	9
Barham/Elham	4	4	8
Folkestone	3	3	6
Hythe	2	4	6
Ash and Wingham	2	2	4
Faversham	3	0	3
New Romney and Lydd	1	1	2
Elsewhere			
Other Kent villages	10	8	18
Sussex	4	1	5
London	21	7	28
Newcastle	5	1	6
Essex	1	1	2
Western ports	4	1	5
Bury St. Edmunds	1	0	1
Great Yarmouth	1	0	1
Scotland	0	1	1
Dublin	0	1	1
Total	122	103	225

Source: CKS Records of pleas in Dover Hundred Court, 1546-1559, 1583-1591, 1591-1603, 1603-1625, 1625-1656.

For this purpose, the region immediately adjacent to Dover was divided into five areas. The first is the area immediately along the coast to the north east, and its hinterland. This area includes the villages of Guston, Ringwold, Langdon, Westcliff, Kingsdown and St. Margaret at Cliff - all within about three miles of Dover. Second is the string of woodland villages stretching north along the Dour Valley, from Charlton (by then a suburb of Dover) and Buckland, through River and Ewell as far as Lydden, on the Downs, about three miles away. Third is the downland area of Alkham and Hougham to the south west - again within about three

miles. These districts are all those nearest to Dover in the area marked A on Map 2:1. Fourth is Thanet, from 10-12 miles away, and part of B on Map 2:1. The fifth includes Coldred, Shepherdswell and Womenswold - beyond Lydden. These villages are in the more distant parts of area A on Map 2:1.

Aliens appearing in debt cases against Dovorians seem to have come largely from the Channel ports of Boulogne, Calais, Dieppe and Flushing, although several are called, loosely, "Fleming", one "Dansk" and one came from Bruges.³⁷⁸ In the later period some aliens have not only Flemish but Spanish-sounding names, and they may have been factors who were living in Dover, for example Diego de Laneda, Balthazar Moritus.³⁷⁹ It is impossible to give exact numbers, as men with obviously foreign names are often given no location. The years when there were the highest numbers of such cases were 1550(5), 1551(6), 1635(5), 1636(12). There appear to have been no such cases between 1587-1597, or between 1612-1631.

Over 2,500 pleas were actually recorded in these years, so that the cases between Dovorians and men from outside the town represent a very small proportion of the total, thus reinforcing the impression given by the testamentary materials examined above, that men in the town were for the most part mutually dependent for goods, services and credit. It must, however, be remembered that Dovorians might themselves have been sued in other parts of the country. The figures for the distribution of litigants also tends to support the testamentary evidence. The balance of credit between Dover and other towns seems to have been very much in favour of Canterbury and London, and slightly in favour of Sandwich, Faversham and Rye. The table also suggests that, in terms of the region, there was a tendency for litigation over debt to occur most frequently between men from Dover and from the Ringwold area north east of the town, and close to it.

The names of certain families from this area recur in the Records of Pleas; they are Philpott, Marsh, Young, Sampson, Gibbons, Verrier and Brett. The Sampsons, Youngs, Bretts and Gibbons, in particular, were prone to sue one another.³⁸⁰ They clearly had extensive lands in the area since they are described by different locations in different cases, for example Nicholas Brett was described as yeoman of Ringwold in 1624, and of Herne in 1629; John Sampson was usually described as yeoman either of Ringwold or of Ash, and in 1631 was "of Ringwold, aka of Ash." Similarly, Abraham Gibbons was described in 1629 as "nuper Buckland, Canterbury, husbandman aka of Shepherdswell."³⁸¹ The Marshes were a widespread family, some of whose members seemed to be in contention with each other from time to time, chiefly because of their disputes about land ownership and inheritance.³⁸² Throughout the period a few members of the Marsh family occasionally lived in Dover, but the majority of them remained as yeomen on the lands they held in the surrounding area. Richard Marsh, who was born at East Langdon³⁸³ but was Clerk of Dover Castle when he died in 1625 left lands in Deal, Newchurch, Dover, East Langdon, Martin, Sutton and Worth, and the lease of the King's Meadow in Canterbury.³⁸⁴ His will also shows that his wife was the daughter of a Dover freeman, that one of his daughters was married to Colfe of Canterbury, and another to Henry Foche, a yeoman of Dover, who had lands in Ripple - also in the hinterland between Dover and Deal. Richard had inherited some of this land from his father, Henry, who had also left land to his sons Thomas and James, and made some provision for a nephew.³⁸⁵ It is therefore not surprising to find that Marshes were quite often involved in debt cases in the Dover court, sometimes against each other, both as plaintiff and defendant and, when assigned a location, they were shown as coming from different villages.³⁸⁶ Together with other landowning gentlemen, yeomen and husbandmen in the rural area surrounding the town, they were clearly involved in the urban

credit system.

Women, of course, played a crucial role in establishing such family ties within the region, and there is some evidence that widows in Dover sometimes advanced credit to men outside the town, possibly in those neighbourhoods with which they had earlier connections. The percentage of widows involved in cases on their own, that is other than in connection with the settlement of their husband's or father's estate at death, rose from 0.5% of the total in the period 1546-1559 to 1.5% between 1584 and 1599 and 4% between 1600 and 1640. Joan Marychurch, a Dover widow, whose father was the Richard Marsh mentioned above, entered pleas of debt for £10 and £20 against Robert Poulter, a brewer, and Thomas Moorecroft, a gentleman.³⁸⁷ Among the pleas of Cecily Wappoll, widow of the merchant, Thomas Wappoll, were those against William Marsh for £40 and against John Sampson for an unspecified amount,³⁸⁸ and Catherine Woodgreene, the widow of a mariner who had owned a ship in partnership with Thomas Marsh, among others,³⁸⁹ entered a plea against John Sampson, yeoman, for £44 in 1628.³⁹⁰

It seems likely that rents from land helped to capitalize urban enterprises. A gloss on both the rural capitalization of urban projects and the nature of the region is provided by a testamentary case of 1616³⁹¹ concerning the will of Thomas Philpott of Ringwold, who came from one of the families mentioned above. Because it illustrates a number of features relevant to the way credit operated in the region, which are normally concealed by the laconic recording of pleas, it is worth examining in some detail. The case seems to have arisen from a dispute between Philpott's two Executors, a kinsman also called Thomas Philpott, and Robert Broome, vicar of Ringwold, who was said to have exerted an undue influence upon the testator in his last years. Philpott's two daughters, Elizabeth and Alice, urged on by their husbands, Philip Gibbons of Westcliffe and Thomas Sampson of Ringwold,

were also in dispute about their inheritance. The case includes much evidence about Thomas Philpott's manner of lending money at interest. According to his kinsman-executor, a Thomas Philpott who had been born in Folkestone but lived all his life in Shepherdswell, the testator had told him that in his old age he had gone to Robert Broome, the minister, because he "hoped to have comfort from him for my soul, and his help to gather in my money and to bestow it upon land, because I do now abhor usury and am sorry that ever I used it." But he had found that "Mr. Broome is well contented that my money shall remain at interest, that he may have the letting of it and get my estate into his hand, as at this present he hath bonds to receive money of mine."³⁹²

James Jeakyn, a yeoman of Oxney, near Ringwold, testified that Thomas Philpott was "a great and common lender of money upon use or usury", and that he would never have consented to lend out money gratis, although at the persuasion of Robert Broome he "lent out some money to some persons for which he took but after the rate of £8 and sometimes £9 in the £100, which he would never have done but by Mr. Broome's persuasion". His normal rate was £10 in the £100. He claimed that Robert Broome was not a factor for Thomas Philpott, but spoke to Thomas Philpott at other people's request. Robert Broome, himself, had lent him and others money gratis. Everyone agreed that Robert Broome had condemned the lending of money at use as "damnable" from the pulpit, but had also said that in some cases and under some reservations he thought it as lawful "to hire money as to hire land".³⁹³

From a long series of depositions about Thomas Philpott who, like King Lear, lived in his old age first with one daughter and her husband and then with the second, there emerges the picture of a wealthy but illiterate man who came to depend on the vicar of Ringwold for help in his financial dealings. In the last few years of his life he seems to have lent at least £1,160, usually at £10 in the £100 for a year.

Francis Raworth, the then town clerk of Dover, deposed that when the Wardens and Assistants of Dover Harbour authorized him to take up £200 upon interest for the necessary use of the Harbour," he solicited Thomas Philpott

"to borrow of him, who then told him he must first talk with Mr. Broome before he could make any certain promise, and after a short time Thomas Philpott came to him - Francis Raworth - and told him that now Mr. Broome had received some money of his, and the deponent should have the sum of money he requested against the day he desired it."

Francis Raworth went on to describe how Robert Broome

"brought into the house of Mr. Nicholas Eaton, jurat, the sum of £200, and took two several bonds of writings obligatory for the repayment of the £200 together with the interest... at the end of one year following, for the repayment of £100 of which money and interest this deponent and one William Warde, jurat, stood bound in one writing obligatory, and for the repayment of the other £100 and interest Mr. George Binge and Mr. John Bacheler, jurats, stood bound in another writing obligatory.

"The £200 was taken up and borrowed upon the rate of £10 in the £100 profit and since the death of Thomas Philpott this deponent hath paid and satisfied...the Executors the sum of £20 for the interest of the £200...which he saw the Executors divide between them. At the same time he paid in £50 of the principal, part of the £200 to the Executors and then gave in new security to the Executors in their own names for the repayment of £150 and interest...." ³⁹⁴

The repayment of interest at the end of each year seems to have been customary. Stephen Verrier, maltster of Sandwich at that time, deposed that about one and a half years before Thomas Philpott's death, he had borrowed "£100 for a year after the rate of £10 in the £100 use in the same year, and gave him security for the repayment thereof." On that occasion, Stephen Verrier called directly at the house in Westcliff where Thomas Philpott had formerly lived with his daughter Gibbons.

Having gone into the house to get the £100, Philpott returned with two empty sacks because his son in law had stolen the money from a chest he had left there. Thomas Philpott then took Stephen Verrier to the house of his daughter Sampson in Ringwold, where he was then living, and gave him £100 there.³⁹⁵

From various depositions it becomes clear that in the few years before his death, Thomas Philpott had lent £200 to the Warden of Dover Harbour,

£100 to Stephen Verrier, maltster, £100 - at £9 interest - to James Jeakyn, yeoman, £600 to Thomas Tuck, or Tooke, of Canterbury "in a matter of business"³⁹⁶ and an undisclosed amount - at 10% - to Edmund Parbo, a merchant of Sandwich, who also explained how Thomas Philpott, by means of Robert Broome, had recovered a debt of £200 from the Executor of Mr. Rutter of Sandwich, "which debt was hardly, or not at all, to be recovered by law...which thing no doubt was very acceptable and pleasing" to him.³⁹⁷ Richard Marsh of Dover Castle deposed how he had stood bond for Philip Gibbons, Thomas Philpott's felonious son-in-law, when he was in debt for £160 to Nicholas Eaton of Dover, and how concerned he had been when Philip Gibbons paid this debt off early with money Philpott had left in Gibbons' house.³⁹⁸

Philpott's great-nephew, Roger White, a Dover tailor whose career has been noted above in relation to the debts owed to him³⁹⁹ was also a deponent. In view of the regional nature of this case, it is perhaps worth noting that Roger White had been born in Ringwold, but that he was the son of John White, a tailor born in Flanders, and that Roger became free when he married the daughter of Edward Michell, from one of the ruling families of Dover.⁴⁰⁰ In this case, White recalled an interview he had had with his great-uncle in his shop in Dover:

"Uncle, they say that when you die, Mr. Broome shall have the greater part of your wealth."

"No, you must not think I am so unwise, but I will not make a better man than myself my servant for nothing, for he hath put life in that which lay dead a great while".

This meant, said Roger White, "that he had recovered some desperate debt for him."⁴⁰¹

The case raises questions about the possibility of deriving more than partial information from debt cases that arrived in court. For example, the vicar, Robert Broome, was clearly able to apply some pressure other than that of the law in order to persuade Rutter of Sandwich to repay his debt. The testimony of Francis Raworth is also valuable as a

reminder of the way in which men took responsibility for the debts of others, dividing responsibility for large sums, holding bonds and acting as debt collectors. In demonstrating that interest was paid off annually as a separate sum, his evidence also raises questions about whether amounts recorded in pleas of debt might sometimes merely be for comparatively small amounts of interest, rather than the capital sum. The role of Robert Broome as an intermediary between would-be borrowers and the owner of the money they sought also has implications for the interpretation of records. His attitude to the moral ambiguities of usury is unfortunately not relevant to this argument, but is nonetheless interesting.

The importance of this case here is that it illustrates very clearly how, throughout the region, people knew where to go for money, and also how close the connections were between town and country, and between town and town. Thomas Philpott's kinsman claimed that Philpott asked him to find him somewhere to live to escape the clutches of Robert Broome, saying that either Dover or Canterbury would do.⁴⁰² As late as 1637 Thomas Philpott's daughter, Elizabeth Gibbon, then a widow, was suing in the Dover court for money she had lent to a Dover man.⁴⁰³ When Thomas Tuck discussed his business with Thomas Philpott in Canterbury he did it in the presence of George Martin, a butcher from Dover⁴⁰⁴ and Thomas Philpott complained about his children to Peter Philpott of Faversham in the "Bull Head" in Burgate, Canterbury.⁴⁰⁵

Mobility within the region is illustrated in the Records of Pleas in the seventeenth century because at that period the place of habitation of litigants seems to have been recorded if it happened to be in some way unusual. Like the assigning of occupation, it was perhaps case-specific. Some examples suggest that men of the wealthier sort were able to spread their investments and responsibilities. Leonard Sprackling, a merchant, was "of Canterbury" in 1590 and "of Dover" in 1601. In 1612 Thomas

Lambe, a glover, was described as "of Dover and Sandwich" and Robert Nethersole "of Dover and Knowlton". In 1613 Roger Gillett, yeoman, was "of Hougham and Elham". In 1623 Peter Hughessen was of "Dover and Deal" and Richard Hooker, a butcher, "of Dover and Sandwich." In 1624 John Winter was "of Wingham aka of Dover, yeoman." John Hope was described as "husbandman" when in debt for £10 to a Hythe surgeon and as "husbandman aka maltster of Charlton" when in debt to a Rye shoemaker for £6 and as "maltster of Charlton" when in debt to a Dover yeoman for £40. There appears to have been a particularly free flow of tradesmen between Dover and Sandwich.⁴⁰⁶

It has not been possible satisfactorily to analyse the circulation of credit between the rural and urban area, merely to attempt to demonstrate that it existed, most particularly between the area closest to the town to the north east, where a number of long-persisting and competing families held land. The evidence of pleas of debt in the hundred court suggests that by the end of the sixteenth century small trading debts were less likely to be sued for in the court, but that men were borrowing, and being sued for, larger amounts, possibly taken out as loans. Most cases were naturally between the wealthier sort of men - merchants, land-owners, brewers and, particularly in the sixteenth century, inn-keepers. This evidence tends to support the evidence of testamentary materials in suggesting that credit relationships were mostly made within the town itself, but that at a certain level of wealth men, and a few women, were likely to extend such relationships throughout a region that included the nearest coastal towns and their hinterland, and that could extend to Canterbury and London and to certain Continental ports.

iii The Market

a) The consumption and availability of goods in Dover

It has long been argued that the trade boom in England in the 1540s, in conjunction with demographic pressures and the growth of towns, particularly of London, brought an increased demand for consumer goods.⁴⁰⁷ It has also been suggested that during the sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries, the government encouraged domestic projects in an attempt to replace foreign imports.⁴⁰⁸ Evidence of such consumer demand has been sought in the surviving inventories of Dover people for the period from the late 1560s until 1640. The evidence suggests that consumption of luxury goods was confined to a very small elite, although certain manufactured goods, such as glass, became more common, and there was probably a wider variety of food available. If anything, there seems to have been a greater demand for non-luxury items, such as the coarser English cloths, in the harder times of the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries. Evidence for the consumption of goods, provided by their listing in the inventories of those who had bought them, is dealt with first. Evidence for their availability in the town, provided by their listing in the inventories of shop-keepers and artisans, is then examined.

As a very rough guide to the value of the inventories being discussed and their relation to various occupational groups, Table 2:6 divides percentages of total inventories into bands, according to their value. Such an exercise is, of course, difficult to justify, partly because some men died having already disposed of their wealth. The inventories of people who can certainly be identified as having done that have been excluded from the table.

Table 2:6 Dover inventories 1570-1639: percentage distribution in bands of value

Date	Total inventories	£10 and under %	£10-£50 %	£50-£300 %	£300 and over %
1570-79	36	42	44	8	6
1580-89	59	32	49	17	2
1590-99	80	49	43	7	1
1600-09	49	30	50	18	2
1610-19	63	35	33	24	8
1620-29	138	26	41	29	4
1630-39	133	22	44	23	11

Source: CCA Registers of Inventories of Dover men and women administered in the Consistory Court of Canterbury

The small percentage of people in the final band is an indication of how small the demand for luxury goods was likely to have been in a town like Dover. The composition of that band is, however, interesting, and might be summarised thus:

1570-79 1 draper
 1580-89 1 maltster
 1590-99 1 brewer
 1600-09 1 yeoman
 1610-19 3 merchants, two of whom owned ships; 1 brewer.
 1620-29 2 merchant/ship-owners, 1 ship-owner who held Crown office; 1 mariner, 1 yeoman
 1630-39 4 maltsters, 3 brewers, 3 land-owners - two called "gentleman" and one, a yeoman, who was also a carrier licensed to carry silver; 2 mariners, 1 ship's carpenter, 1 merchant, 1 innkeeper/money-lender.⁴⁰⁹

The bands have been drawn wide, partly to allow for the effects of inflation over the period; they have been drawn against a background of anecdotal biographical evidence from other sources, such as depositions in the town and ecclesiastical courts, which give some impression of perceptions of gradations of wealth. On the basis of such impressionistic evidence, it seems broadly true that inventories of £10 and under represented people on the edge of poverty at the beginning of the period, and almost certainly over the edge by the end. The band £10 - £50 includes those small traders sailors and artisans who seem to have been holding on to a modest living, and even investing in property in some cases. The band from £50-£300 includes most of the oligarchy,

wealthier artisans, shop-keepers and ship-masters, men who were beginning to speculate, sometimes by making loans. The band over £300 includes only the wealthy, even after the effects of inflation over a period of time, but the occupations of the people in this band changed slightly over the period.

It can be seen that the range of occupations through which wealth could be achieved widened in the seventeenth century, and that the influence of sea-trade on wealth, remarked above, became marked. It has already been pointed out that the wealthiest maltsters were also acting as merchants in a more general sense. Their contact with overseas ports presumably had its effect on their access to imported goods. Men in the wealthiest band were also those most likely to be frequently in London. The table suggests that the poor harvest years at the turn of the century affected a large proportion of the middling population, since the percentage of inventories in the £50-£300 category fell while those under £10 rose. The fact that the proportion of men in the category £10-£50 was the same in 1600-1630 as it had been in 1570-79, and that it formed 44% of those making inventories suggests that, in a period of inflation, the market for expensive goods probably declined over the period. The fall in the percentage of inventories under £10 may merely suggest that goods much below that value were no longer found to be worth recording.

Through the whole period, in the poorest inventories there is no sign of spending on unnecessary consumer goods. Beds were sometimes of straw,⁴¹⁰ furniture chiefly took the form of chests, ship's chests in many cases, and possibly one table and a stool or two⁴¹¹ and linen was coarse, sometimes consisting of as little as the one pair of canvas sheets owned by John Brown in 1573,⁴¹² but more typically the five pairs of old, coarse sheets owned by the victualler Edmund Dunstone in 1626.⁴¹³ Earthenware replaced wooden trenchers and bowls quite slowly

among poorer people and was not in general use until the 1620s, when it seems to have become popular, so that even a labourer like Thomas Marsh and a poor widow like Gillian Colley had some earthenware drinking pots.⁴¹⁴ The more substantial middling sort of people seem to have preferred blue earthenware or stone.⁴¹⁵ China began to be used in the seventeenth century but, apart from Winter Stone, who had a "crackle cheyney cup" in 1603, the owners of china were all wealthy men.⁴¹⁶ There is no sign of luxury among the middling groups either, although there is a greater degree of comfort, and certain commodities were gradually more often acquired. From the 1580s "Dansk" and "fir" chests and tables were quite frequently owned, suggesting that imports of timber from the Baltic ports were being commonly used in the manufacture of relatively cheap furniture.⁴¹⁷ In the 1580s only John Tench, a wealthy man, had a walnut table, presumably made from expensive English wood.⁴¹⁸ Wicker furniture also began to appear.⁴¹⁹ From quite early in the seventeenth century a few people, not all of the wealthiest sort, began to have leather chairs and leather cushions, often gilt. These were frequently of Spanish leather.⁴²⁰ "Cypress" chests were owned by some of the more substantial people from the 1620s;⁴²¹ from that period also it seems that wealthier people began to hang up their clothes: in 1630 William Wentworth, gentleman, had "a thing to hang cloaks on", and in following years a number of hanging presses were listed.⁴²² The growth in the manufacture of glass, and the lowering of its price are indicated by these inventories. In 1585 the glass of his windows was valued at 6s. in the inventory of Edward Henniker, but that is the last reference to the valuation of window glass.⁴²³ In 1590 a grocer had drinking glasses, and in 1594 a widow had water glasses, with waters in them, and Thomas Allen, gentleman, had crystal glasses and bottles.⁴²⁴ Then, from about 1597, glass cases and looking glasses became quite common in the inventories of people of even modest means.⁴²⁵ In the

seventeenth century a number of wealthier people had cases of glass bottles, and glasses that were more specific in purpose, such as Thomas Huffam's wine glasses in 1631 and Avis Kingsnod's beer glasses in 1636. John Sherlock, a mariner, had a Venice wine glass in 1638.⁴²⁶

Beds are frequently cited as indicators of wealth and this seems to hold true in Dover. In all but five cases, people with extravagantly luxurious beds are to be found among those with inventories of over £300. The most ostentatious was John Tench's in 1589. In his middle chamber he had a carved bedstead with three featherbeds and curtains and a valance of double taffeta, all valued at £20.⁴²⁷ Even Charles Brames, in 1611, had a bed worth only £16, and William Warde's bed with red silk valance was valued at £10 in 1623.⁴²⁸ Although the number of people having curtains and good feather beds increased over the period, there was certainly no general move to luxury.

Clothing should provide an indicator of how far new fabrics had penetrated the market, but unfortunately fewer details of clothing were given in the seventeenth century than in the sixteenth. The terse phrase "his purse, girdle and wearing apparel" was most often used in later years. There are more indications of ostentatious dressing among the town's oligarchy in the sixteenth century, with Richard Elam wearing satin and lace in 1574, John Robbins having sables, velvet and taffeta in 1580 and John Tench wearing velvet, satin, silk, silk lace and silk stockings in 1589. In 1591 John Nethersole was wearing local draperies, having a cloak faced with say, and a doublet and a pair of drawers of Sandwich grosgrain.⁴²⁹ Other men who dressed gorgeously in damask, velvet and lace were John Barley, Captain of Archcliffe Bulwark and Michael Wimsherst, Lieutenant of Moates Bulwark.⁴³⁰ With these exceptions, clothing for the most part, even of the comparatively wealthy, was of fustian, frieze and russet, sometimes lined or faced with budge or cony. Presumably from religious conviction, most clothes

were sober in the early seventeenth century. Bays and says appear from time to time as bed hangings, but very rarely in descriptions of clothing.

In the same way, "linen" meant coarse linen or canvas for many people, although a substantial minority of people had at least a pair or two of "fine" sheets, and perhaps some diaper towels and cloths. The wealthiest usually had some damask cloths as well, such as Edward Kempe, mayor, who left two damask table cloths as well as 50 pairs of sheets and 32 dozen napkins in his inventory of £2008.3s.9d. in 1613.⁴³¹ "Dornix" covers were used by a number of people in the middle range of wealth, and Robert Fleming had "a coverlet of Norwich work" in 1623.⁴³²

The distribution of spinning wheels in inventories is perhaps lower than would be expected in a rural situation, and it seems to have fallen overall through the period, perhaps suggesting that urban women were fully employed as part of the family trading group. Three out of the five surviving inventories of the years between 1567 and 1569 mention spinning wheels, but the percentage of inventories listing them fell from 31% in 1570-79 to 22% in 1580-89, rose to 26% in 1590-99, then fell sharply to 10% in 1600-1609, rising to 21% in the next decade, then falling to 17%, and finally to 15% in 1630-39. Often, spinning wheels were found among "other lumber" in attics, although some were clearly still in use, for example in the households of Thomas Iggleden, cooper, where 10 lbs. of linen yarn and 2 linen wheels were listed, of Edward Henniker, shoemaker, who had a spinning wheel and 3lbs. of linen yarn, and of Henry Marsh, a yeoman, who had stocks of wool and hemp, a woollen wheel and 2 linen wheels, and hemp growing in a garden.⁴³³ It seems possible that in households that had several wheels in this way spinning was a by-employment for women, and their yarn was sold. In this context, it is interesting to note that in 1617 Hester Elwood, the widow of Gregory Elwood, a former town sergeant who was said in 1604 to "have

received some losses",⁴³⁴ when called as a witness to a case of defamation in 1617, described how she and her daughter were "at work at their jersey wheels" at 6 a.m.⁴³⁵ Nevertheless, the comparatively small proportion of inventories listing wheels by the seventeenth century, and the complete absence of looms, implies that very few urban dwellers were making their own yarn or selling it to weavers in Dover, and that most cloth was presumably supplied to Dover drapers from elsewhere.

Because Dover was a port, some of the more exotic imports appear as individual items in the inventories of not particularly wealthy mariners, who presumably brought them home from voyages. The new importance of the port of Leghorn to English merchants in the early seventeenth century is indicated by four mentions of Leghorn earthenware in the inventories of mariners between 1613 and 1637.⁴³⁶ Three inventories in the seventeenth century mention coconut cups, as "a cup made from bark", "my West India nutshell cup and silver", and "3 coker nuts with silver feet and tipte".⁴³⁷ James Sherlock, mariner, had an East Indies quilt, and another mariner, Robert Fleming, had Spanish earthenware, Spanish cushions and Spanish carpets.⁴³⁸ It was usually mariners, other than wealthier people, who had pepper querns and spice mortars among their belongings and, unlike the wealthy, mariners began to have them in the sixteenth century.⁴³⁹

Wealthy men seemed inclined to embellish those imports they perceived as intrinsically valuable, so that William Warde, in 1623, had a silver sugar box and Henry Raworth, an apothecary, in 1630, a tobacco box garnished with silver.⁴⁴⁰ It is, incidentally, not surprising that an apothecary should show some sign of extravagance, since testamentary accounts suggest that spending on medicines during illness increased in frequency in the seventeenth century, a number of them mentioning debts for "physic and apothecary stuff", especially for people who died during a visitation of infectious disease.⁴⁴¹ One of the most extravagant was

perhaps Catherine Marychurch who, in 1616, supplied her husband with "unicorns horn, sucket and other cordial and comfortable things" during his sickness.⁴⁴² The acquisition of silver, and valuable plate of various kinds appears to have increased generally after the first decade of the seventeenth century. The frequency of mention of plate in total inventories fell from 17% in 1570-79, to 15% in 1580-89 and 11% in 1590-99, then rose to 16% in 1600-10, to 30% in 1610-19, fell to 24% in 1620-29 and rose to 31% in 1630-39. In some cases its value was as little as 14s.- the estimated value of Thomas Wildes' four silver spoons, and most frequently it was about 20s., for example the "general ring", 1 silver spoon and small toothpick owned by John Sherman.⁴⁴³ Such items might well have been inherited rather than bought by the owner.

It seems likely that the wealthiest men of the early seventeenth century, when the town was dominated by an apparently Calvinist oligarchy, expressed their wealth not in ostentatious clothes but in the grandeur of their tables. Examples of conspicuous investment of this kind are provided by Charles Brames, whose plate was valued at £45, Edward Kempe at £91, William Warde at £34 and Daniel Porten, a merchant, at £56.⁴⁴⁴ Most of the plate in these inventories was of a kind that would probably have been used to embellish a table, and therefore suggests that the food and drink being consumed at formal meals was itself of high value. Edward Kempe, who died during his mayoralty and whose inventory therefore may have been particularly complete, had 3 white silver bowls for beer, 3 small silver cups for wine, 2 stone cruses with silver lids and feet - one double-gilded, 3 broad wine cups parcel gilt, a silver pot, 2 Spanish wine cups double gilt, a small salt trencher, 18 silver spoons - some gilded, and a golden chain - the last presumably used both to conserve and display wealth. Charles Brames's gold and silver was also concentrated on table display, and included 13

apostle spoons. As well as his silver sugar box, William Warde had gilded salt cellars and wine cups, silver beer bowls and beakers, white silver wine cups and 2 dozen silver spoons. Daniel Porten's plate was valued without being listed, but it is perhaps interesting in this context to note that his dining room appears to have been the most splendid room in the house, with a great oval table and carpet, window curtains, a pair of virginals, five pictures, of which one was a landscape and one a scutcheon of arms, the usual brass andirons but also a brass hanging candlestick and a brass circle to set dishes upon. A number of land-owning yeomen, gentlemen and maltsters had plate valued between £10 and £20, and this was usually in the form of silver cups, salts and spoons.⁴⁴⁵ These items are likely to have been bought outside the town, and their possession must have set their owners apart from the general populace.

Only one sailor is recorded as owning silver worth as much as £10,⁴⁴⁶ and it seems more likely that sailors preferred to invest in boats. This would have been more typical behaviour, since the general impression given by the inventories of most of the people of Dover at that period is that they spent very little of their surplus money on imported, manufactured or luxury goods, but rather invested in their own trade, in property or in lending money on credit. It seems likely, however, that the very wealthy spent some of their surplus money on food and drink and on the ceremonies of the table. The impression that spending on luxuries may have been largely confined to the table is to some extent confirmed by an analysis of the inventories of shopkeepers. The chief exception to goods they held that were either locally-produced or comparatively cheap lies in the range of goods offered by grocers and mercers - the spices, oils, imported dried fruit and small goods that appear in the inventories of suppliers but, by their nature, not in the inventories of their consumers; it will be shown below that these indicate that the

range of food and small goods available in the town expanded towards the end of the sixteenth century.

The kind of cloth and clothing supplied to local people was hard-wearing and generally fairly coarse. Some comprehensive inventories exist for woollen and linen drapers, which give details of goods sold in the town. The inventory of William Foxe, in 1577, shows that in his shop was over £11-worth of cloth and clothing, all of it native and coarse - a coarse canvas doublet, coarse stockings, very coarse russet breeches or slops, black and white cotton, russet cloth and friars grey cloth - the kind of cloth used to make the clothes poor men wore every day.⁴⁴⁷ The inventory of Robert Simpson, draper, in 1580, lists over 110 items; it reads like a catalogue of British cloth of the period. He sold kersey, friars grey, "white home-made kersey", russet, gosted green, northern checker, northern, Hampshire and Devonshire kerses of various colours and qualities, sheep coloured Kentish cloth, northern puke, Welsh frieze, northern cotton of different colours, stamell frieze, Pennistone cottons, narrow bays in purple, blue and black, Devonshire kersey stockings for men, northern white rugs, blue and yellow cotton "of London dye", Irish rugs, sack cloth and northern broad cloth.⁴⁴⁸ The bays and stamell would presumably have been available from the stranger weavers by then resident in Sandwich, but the list suggests considerable inland, or coastal, trading in cloth, and the 20s. in his purse in French and Flemish money, may have meant that he was exporting English cloth as well as selling it at home.

John Lovell, a woollen draper, who died in 1599, had a shop as a retail outlet for his cloth in Dover, but bought from London and the west country and traded in a fairly small way to France. He died in Bordeaux and, among the 97 debts totalling over £67 that were owing to him, for the most part by local men, were also two very small debts by men of Boulogne, while Captain Nashler of Fowey owed him £5 and a man of

Totness £3; his testamentary accounts show that he owed over £58 to seven London men.⁴⁴⁹ His debts, many of them desperate, were greater than his assets, which is perhaps not surprising for a draper at the end of the 1590s. The cloths in his shop were English: broad cloth at 6s. and at 1s. a yard, Hampshire at 22d., says at 8d. and russet at 4d. He also sold Devonshire cloth, black, white and coloured cotton, bays and rug - at 4d. a yard. The cloth was valued at £14.9s.6d. in total.

There are a few inventories listing cloth in the early seventeenth century. John Skeith's shop in 1603 contained black and brown thread, fustians worth £6, linen cloth and canvas worth £5 and buckram worth £2.10s.⁴⁵⁰ William Waters, a haberdasher, left 30 yards of linen cloth worth £1 in 1619; John Newton, tailor, left remnants of only russet cloth and kersey in 1625, and John Waad, jurat and draper, had remnants and pieces of cloth totalling £260 - once again broad cloth, kersey, Pennistone, bays and cottons.⁴⁵¹ John Moore, tailor, left fourteen and a quarter ells of white cloth at 2s. the ell in 1640.⁴⁵² Robert Simpson, John Lovell, John Newton and John Skeith all supplied cloth or clothing to the town for the use of the poor at various times, and this would not have been at odds with their normal stock-in-trade.⁴⁵³

It seems likely that well into the seventeenth century there was little demand in the town for luxurious, light or imported cloth. One exception to this seems at first sight to be provided by the inventory of Robert Forman in 1612, which lists the usual fustians, canvas and sack cloth, but also buffyns, grosgrains, says, linsey woolsey, serge, phillosoles, striped mockadoes, Gentish cloth, lawn, cambrics, silk and taffeta, as well as silk ribbon, silk and silver buttons and velvet lace.⁴⁵⁴ His inventory does not, however, list a shop, and although he was described as a mercer in the courts in 1611, his will describes him as "merchant."⁴⁵⁵ He was born in Rye, but was apprenticed in Dover, during which time he did business abroad for his master.⁴⁵⁶ The large

quantities of goods listed in his inventory - 70 pairs of worsted stockings, 3 dozen whalebone bodies, 100 lbs. of sugar, 100 lbs. of starch, 100lbs. of raisins and 100 lbs of prunes, and several pounds' weight of various spices, for example - suggest that he was trading abroad rather than selling in the town.

It is difficult to draw conclusions about the demand for footwear on the basis of shoemakers' inventories, although there are a number that list shoes, hides, bark and tools. As early as 1588 Christopher Herringham had shoes in his shop in sizes, and was therefore presumably making them speculatively rather than to demand. His shoes were valued by their sizes, from 6d. for size 5 to 1s.0d. for sizes 11 and 13. Children's shoes seem to have been 4d. a pair. He had as many as 7 pairs in stock of size 7 and of children's shoes.⁴⁵⁷ In John Filleys' inventory of 1625 his 10 dozen pairs of "shoes and slippers small and great" were valued at an average of 1s.0d. per pair, as were the 18 pairs of Edward Hudless in 1627. Both these later shoemakers had a far greater quantity of hides and skins in their shops at their death than earlier ones had - to the value of £20 and £30 respectively, which may either be coincidental with their dying while they were fully employed or a reflection of greater demand. John Filleys' shop book showed that he was owed £50, £32 of which was in desperate debts. Edward Hudless was owed £15 in desperate debts.⁴⁵⁸ The inventories of John Wilmot in 1637 and his widow in 1638 show not only that she continued his business, but that they were using imported Spanish skins, which were valued at 2s. each, the first skins other than English ones to be mentioned in connection with shoe-making in Dover.⁴⁵⁹

It is tempting to suppose that the trade boom in the town in the 1630s brought a vast new range of grocery goods to its people, but the evidence from inventories does not bear this out. Rather, the range of such goods seems to have increased earlier, towards the end of the

sixteenth century. The most comprehensive list of such goods appears in the inventory of William Reve, who died in 1590. He was established in the town, had already been a chamberlain, and had two houses and two shops.⁴⁶⁰ In his main shop he sold chiefly food items and some hardware; in the other, goods such as birdlime, vinegar, halters, earthenware pans and dishes and yarn. The variety of goods in his main shop is not matched by any later grocer. He sold raisins, prunes, a conserve of barberries, cumin, mustard seed, long pepper and aniseed, ginger, nutmeg, mace and cinnamon, green treacle, salad oil, bay salt and white salt. He also had alum, brimstone, gunpowder and galls, turpentine, glue, red ochre and candles and eight pounds of match. He had soap, pins, drinking glasses and small bottles, tankards, cruses and stone bottles, shoemakers' and other knives, black and grey thread, rosin, pack thread, wax and pitch. He had luxuries - white paper, playing cards, brown and white sugar and sugar candy, lace and ribbon, dice and looking glasses, purses and girdles. Most of the necessities and luxuries of home, and of some crafts, apart from ironware, pewter and clothing, could have been bought from him. Yet the goods in that shop were valued at only £8.2s.8d. and in the other at 17s.5d., out of his total inventory of £80.13s.2d.⁴⁶¹

Other "merciers and grocers" in the seventeenth century sold a narrower range of goods, although Thomas Patterson, in 1603, sold some coarse linen and canvas, fustians and sack-cloth as well as threads, buttons, coarse inkle points, pins, pots, trenchers, bed ropes, wax and other small wares, together with "grocery ware" totalling £15.⁴⁶² Henry Sadler, who sounds like a petty chapman, in 1607 left a box of bone-lace worth £4.10s. and a trunk with linen cloth and some small-wares worth £15.10s in a total inventory of just over £21.⁴⁶³ Two apothecaries, Thomas Ladd, who died in 1608 and Henry Raworth, who died in 1630 both sold "grocery wares" as well as physic; Thomas Ladd also sold

haberdashery, and Henry Raworth sold alum, galles and glasses.⁴⁶⁴ A comparison can be made between the shops of three of the family of Finnes (Fineas, Fynniss) - Walter, Thomas and John, who died in 1592, 1593 and 1634 respectively. Walter, a "mercier/linen-draper" left no stock, having presumably handed it over to his son, but had a working candle-loft, and his goods were valued at £13.10s.3d. Thomas had a shop, in which he seems to have sold small quantities of such grocery wares as currants, pepper, sugar, salt, vinegar, soap and candles; the total value of his goods was £18.10s.0d. In 1634 John was selling dried fruit, soap and butter, salad oil, vinegar, salt, cheese, sugar and candles. He had a half-share in a ship, the leases of two houses, and his goods were valued at £170.15s.6d.⁴⁶⁵ No valid conclusion can be drawn from this comparison, but it perhaps suggests that as the population of the town increased there was a greater demand for goods, but not for a wide range of the kind of goods that might have been too expensive for people to buy.

Inventories of craftsmen and workers in the construction trades also lead to a similar conclusion. Numbers of craftsmen's inventories increased, but there is little sign of radically new manufactured goods or processes. The inventory of John Whetstone, pewterer, in 1585, lists just those items that the middling sort of people had in their homes - pewter platters, dishes, saucers, spoons, salt cellars, skimmers and ladles, chamber pots and so on. He also had brass candle sticks and mortars, stone cruses, brass pots, kettles and weights, and there was a lead still, surely a health hazard. His workhouse and tools, the moulds, old metal and coals show that he manufactured his goods himself.⁴⁶⁶ No later pewterer's inventory shows a greater range of goods. Stephen Best was both pewterer and victualler in 1600, and had a shop with moulds and tools, and also several pack saddles and tilts, which suggests he traded at some distance; in 1618 Edward Sturman, brazier, had old and new brass

and pewter and tools in his shop, altogether worth £15.⁴⁶⁷ The inventory of a substantial innkeeper, William Streeting, in 1638, shows that he had a small brass furnace, which sounds like a new manufacture, possibly made outside Dover.⁴⁶⁸

The inventories of blacksmiths show that they fashioned metal-work for horses, ships, fish curing, domestic cooking, and construction work.

Edmund Powell, in 1603, had tongs and hammers, sledges, horseshoes and a waggon-wheel-tool as well as quantities of iron, which ranged in value from just over 1s. per lb. for new iron to about 6d. per lb. for less good quality old iron.⁴⁶⁹ In 1620 Adam Wilson's forge held many locks,

some anchors, and nails, but also 2,000 herring spits, some pothooks and a gridiron.⁴⁷⁰ When he died in 1625, Henry Barnacle, smith, had no stock in his shop, only his tools, but the beds in the "folk's loft over the shop", and in the other lofts, suggest that he had employed a number of people in the past. At this stage his goods amounted to only

£18.7s.8d.⁴⁷¹ He had worked for both the corporation and the Castle, however.⁴⁷² Four glaziers, two of them father and son, left

inventories. Thomas Wimbleton, who died in 1643, seems at first sight to have done better than his father, Ralph, who died in 1624, since

Thomas's goods were valued at over £20 and his father's at just over £14, yet the value of Thomas's goods have to be set against a total of £94.17s.0d. he owed in debts by bond and book.⁴⁷³ The glass and

working tools of the two other glaziers, who died in 1628 and 1638, were valued at £2.10s.0d. and £6.0s.0d. respectively.⁴⁷⁴ When the

corporation wanted glass for its new court hall, it called upon Thomas Wimbleton to do the work, but it imported the glass from Dieppe.⁴⁷⁵

On the whole the technology used in the construction of buildings and ships seems to have depended on the use of fairly simple tools together with the expertise of local craftsmen. For much construction work it seems to have been usual for wealthy men to keep their own supplies of

raw materials, with which craftsmen could work when necessary. Charles Brames's inventory, for example, lists large quantities of oak and deal boards, hart lathes, wainscots, ends of timber, the quarter part of 51 masts, and "timber already framed for a house" - worth £13.4s.0d. Some 4,000 bricks, four mill stones worth £24, and hundreds of paving tiles and pantiles were kept in various lofts and storehouses. He also had 5 hogsheads of "bad claret wine fit only to make aqua vitae", which shows that one new technology had reached Dover.⁴⁷⁶ John Pearson supplied many of the baskets used in construction work in the town, particularly in clearing away the shingle from the harbour. His inventory in 1625 shows that he had 50 bunches of osiers in his garret, valued at 15s., but that he also kept a flock bed in a house at Newington near Hythe, where he had 280 bunches of osiers worth £3, with which to make baskets, and where he presumably went for his supply of raw materials.⁴⁷⁷ A number of coopers' inventories testify to the dependence of fishermen, brewers, grocers and construction workers on the production of barrels. Yet the tools of a cooper, John Rosse, who died in 1540, were valued at only 10s., and he left behind a "small heap of straight and round hoops", some old and new barrel boards and a few old tubs and hoops, worth altogether less than £4. Nevertheless he had the lease of a small house and a herring hanger, held from the Harbour, valued at £65.⁴⁷⁸ An example of the survival of old skills is provided by Robert Bonyard, who was still making bows and arrows when he died in 1597; his stock and tools were valued together at 13s.⁴⁷⁹ Two men who might have been more dependent upon imported materials were the dyer William Wylberd, whose inventory of 1592 shows that he was using cochineal and logwood, and Henry Wytham, the "saltpetre man", who died in 1601.⁴⁸⁰

Yet the overwhelming evidence from the inventories is of a community still very dependent on what it could produce itself from materials that came from near at hand, or from elsewhere in England. Goods imported

from abroad seem to have been chiefly timber, pitch and tar, some luxury glass and earthenware, some leather towards the end of the period, and dyes, spices, oil and dried fruit from the end of the sixteenth century. Inventories suggest that the gap between rich and poor might have widened by the seventeenth century, however. Personal wealth might have been displayed, not by clothing, but by the consumption of food and wine at the lavishly furnished tables of a comparatively small number of rich merchants who had access to the goods of the growing number of countries with which they traded.

b) The regulation of the market

Two basic principles underlay the regulation of the market in Dover. The first was that the inhabitants of the town should, through the market, be provided with adequate goods, of agreed quality, measure and price, and the second that the freemen of the town should have the advantage over strangers and others in buying and selling goods. These two principles are enshrined in the custumal dating from the early sixteenth century, the first in the clauses: that "the assize of bread and ale, flesh and fish shall be kept after the law merchant" and that "no tanners nor brewers sell not with no measures but if they ben sealed...", and the second in the clause that:

"all manner merchandizes brought into the franchise by strangers...by land or by water, every freeman that cometh between the sun rising and the sun rest may buy without any interruption, paying the customs due unto the king. But it is to understand that in case that victuals comen to the town, the regrators should not buy till the mayor, Bailiff and commons be served. And also...when strangers comen with any merchandize and they have hosts to sell it, the host may have to him ward the half, if he will, before all other, paying therefore as other will."⁴⁸¹

The general custumal of the Cinque Ports of 1549 added to these general statements by stipulating that the clerk of the market should not only set the price of goods, for both buyer and seller, but ensure "that it be good and wholesome for mans body and in season", as well as ensuring

the keeping of true weights and measures and the proper assize of bread and drink.⁴⁸² Normally the mayor was the clerk to the market, but he was to appoint someone else if he happened to be a victualler himself. That was certainly the practice in Dover, although by 1612 such a mayor had to be replaced by two clerks.⁴⁸³ The general custumal also spells out the duties and oaths of the Common Measurer, the porters and common carriers.⁴⁸⁴

A third principle, not mentioned in these early custumals, can also be seen to emerge from the town's decrees, and that is the principle of maintaining the town's corporate profit from market dues. This was clearly spelt out in an order of 1585 that forbade waggoners to "defraud the town of their duty" by selling their load to foreigners on the way between Dover and Canterbury.⁴⁸⁵ The collection of such dues underpinned civic finance, as has been shown in the previous chapter. The fact that the collection of civic dues on trading is not mentioned in either custumal suggests that it was originally perceived as being of secondary importance, while the presentation of many infringements of the principle before the town's magistrates, particularly in the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries, as will be shown below, suggests that the corporation had come to depend upon this source of income, but found it increasingly difficult to collect.

An examination of the proceedings of the common council throughout the period - with the exception of the missing years from 1562 to 1575 - suggests that the magistrates were moderately successful in maintaining the first of the regulatory principles - that they should get an adequate supply of goods to the market - until about 1600, and that they managed to hold down prices of some commodities during the worst period of inflation and keep the market supplied with grain of some kind even during periods of dearth. The principle of protecting the profits of freemen was also largely maintained, but it will be shown that various

additional measures were taken throughout the period to achieve this. It will be argued, however that there are some signs that from the late sixteenth century and certainly in the seventeenth century civic regulation of the exchange of goods was more difficult to maintain. This is not to ignore the probability that some people had always operated in the black economy and avoided market regulation, but it seems possible that large-scale private marketing increased at the beginning of the seventeenth century. A market that was escaping from rigid civic regulation would then have coincided with a young, poor population, a series of infectious diseases and some poor harvests. While those able to take advantage of increasing trade would have been able to profit from a freer exchange of commodities on a larger scale, the labouring poor, dependent on buying from the market in small quantities, might have found survival difficult.

Decrees concerning market regulation were most frequent in the 1550s, 1580s and 1590s. The decrees of the 1550s were partly the result of attempts to keep in line with royal ordinances expressed in statutes.⁴⁸⁶ Those of the 1580s seem to have been protectionist, possibly in reaction to increasing numbers of incomers.⁴⁸⁷ The decrees of the 1590s were made chiefly in an attempt to deal with the threat of lack of grain from September 1593 but also reflected an increased concern about the evils of Sunday trading.⁴⁸⁸ Recorded cases of evasion of market regulations are most frequent in the period 1600-1640, and it was during that period that fines for illegal trading, together with fines for such frequent offences as drunkenness, were often paid directly to the poor, rather than into the town's treasury, which suggests a slightly revised, and possibly more realistic, attitude to corporate responsibility for seeing that all the town's inhabitants were provided with food.⁴⁸⁹

The principle of ensuring the provision of wholesome food and drink for

the populace was maintained throughout the period by the normal means of the time: by the periodic assizes of bread and beer, the searching of meat and leather, the inspection of weights and measures. Most attention was paid to the quality of bread, beer and meat and to the availability of bread, beer, fish and tallow, which were obviously staples. Threats to the supply of these came from different quarters. The supply of grain, and thus of bread, has been discussed above.⁴⁹⁰ Clearly, there were times when bakers and brewers were in conflict over grain, as they were in 1588, when it was agreed that victuallers were not to bake their own bread but to get it from bakers.⁴⁹¹ The price of bread was set by the mayor and jurats whenever the price of grain changed.⁴⁹² It seems that this price was adhered to, with extra profits being made only by selling underweight loaves, a common offence to judge by the frequent fines paid by most of the bakers in the town.⁴⁹³ From the end of the sixteenth century it seems to have become common practice to distribute underweight, confiscated loaves to the poor.⁴⁹⁴ One of the most striking examples of underweight bread was recorded in 1611, when the parson of St James's church showed the bench two halfpenny rolls of white bread made by John Pringle, a baker and one of the oligarchy; one of these weighed much less than the other. He urged that the mayor should remedy this "that His Majesty's subjects and other for the private gain of John Pringle might not be wronged." When the white rolls of three bakers were weighed, they varied between Edward Dell's at four and a half ounces and John Pringle's worst example at two and one eighth ounces. Pringle claimed that there was spice and butter in his rolls for which there was no assize. But bakers were told then to make rolls only according to the white bread assize.⁴⁹⁵ Civic concern for the poor is illustrated by a realistic judgement when, in 1604, a miller was enjoined not to bake any more bread with intent to sell it, "albeit he is tolerated to bake it and put it to sale in the market on

Wednesdays and Saturdays, and not elsewhere, because it appears that same bread is both wholesome and of a very large assize, which is for the good of the poor people."⁴⁹⁶

It seems to have been difficult in some years to achieve an adequate supply of beer: the main requirement of an order of 1520 setting out prices for brewers was that there should be "no lack of beer" for the town.⁴⁹⁷ Brewers' recognisances committed them to supplying adequate quantities of wholesome beer.⁴⁹⁸ Exports of beer to Flemish ports were banned in certain periods; a man was fined in 1560, for example, for loading beer into Flemish hoys in the haven, and in the same year the town clerk was paid for going to London "about the licences of them that bring wheat to Dover to employ their money upon beer here at Dover."⁴⁹⁹ In August 1583, at harvest time, the mayor called all the town's brewers before him to explain why "there was no small beer to be had", and in the same year he had to ask two leading brewers to explain why they were exporting beer to Flanders.⁵⁰⁰ The situation was immediately rectified, and it is clear that such regulation could still guarantee the necessary supply to the town. Nevertheless, such was the quantity of beer being exported, that a new order had to be made in 1590 that brewers should sell double beer in five-hooped pots to the inhabitants of the town, and that they should deliver beer to victuallers in their houses.⁵⁰¹ In the seventeenth century there seems to have been plenty of beer available and the magistrates' main complaints were against brewers, themselves often magistrates, who continued, against the orders, to deliver beer to unlicensed victuallers.⁵⁰²

The provision of tallow also seems to have caused some anxiety in the sixteenth century. In 1551 the mayor and jurats commanded certain tallow chandlers to serve the inhabitants of the town first with candle at 2d. a pound, and to pay a forfeit for all candles sold "into any of the country or other strangers".⁵⁰³ Furthermore, in 1553 it was decreed that all butchers were to sell their tallow to chandlers at 23s. a way

"to be paid at the beam."⁵⁰⁴ In 1583 all butchers, free or non-free, were to sell their tallow only to tallow-chandlers of the town.⁵⁰⁵ This remained a condition of the recognisance of a butcher.⁵⁰⁶ In 1586 a list of tallow chandlers was drawn up, together with a different, named, butcher for each one, and the amount of tallow he was to supply.⁵⁰⁷ The records give no later examples of the need to regulate the supply of this particular commodity.

Civic concern over meat was chiefly over its quality and the times and places at which it was slaughtered and sold. The regulations were to do basically with hygiene, the observance of religious feasts such as Lent, and the avoidance of fraud.⁵⁰⁸ There were no orders about supplying adequate quantities of meat to the market, presumably because it was not seen as a staple food. Fines to butchers were chiefly for the usual frauds of puffing up veal and kidneys and for wrong weights.⁵⁰⁹ The need for hygienic regulation is underlined by a case in 1624 when a servant was made seriously ill by eating meat from a sow bought by his master, which proved to have drowned in the harbour, whence it had been retrieved by one Edmund Smith and dressed by a butcher. The master had bought the head, feet, ears and one breast of this carcass.⁵¹⁰ Serious underweighing was revealed when a former apprentice and a servant of William Sacrey, a butcher, deposed in 1635 that their master had twice used his 20lbs. weight for 28lbs., "once weighing out to a Dutchman and once to another man for the sea," and that he commonly used a two and a half pound weight to weigh three pounds in selling beef and suet.⁵¹¹ Following this, the mayor searched butchers' houses and shops and found a number of sheep and calf carcasses and sundry joints of mutton and veal stowed in back chambers. He threatened to confiscate all such meat on the next occasion, but for the moment simply took a representative joint or part carcass from each of the four guilty butchers, then distributed the meat among five of the deserving poor.⁵¹²

Butchers themselves were concerned to eliminate competition and to be allowed to trade for at least a short time on Sundays. In common with people in other occupations, butchers seem to have felt the pressure of competition most strongly in the 1580s. In April 1586 they exhibited a bill of complaint to the mayor and jurats against foreign and stranger butchers who lived near Dover and came into the town. They asked that such butchers, coming into the market on market days, should not be allowed to sell meat unless they brought the skin of the cow or sheep still fast to its head or tail so that all could see what beef and mutton they were killing. They also asked that the practice in other towns such as Canterbury, Sandwich and Rye whereby only two butchers in turn opened their shops on Sundays should be introduced in Dover.⁵¹³

Fish was the commodity whose sale was most difficult to regulate in a seaport, and the records show many examples of people selling fish straight from their boats instead of bringing them to market. In 1530, for example, a man was fined for forestalling 200 mackerel and "a Pickards fish".⁵¹⁴ The authorities kept a sharp eye on sales of fish throughout the period, and a formal declaration to the bench, such as John Mason's in 1552 that all such mackerel as he had bought he had bought for sale only, was fairly common.⁵¹⁵ Since salted herring seems to have been the main source of winter protein for Dover's inhabitants, any attempt to corner the market or sell it outside the town was treated seriously. In 1583, for example, Emmanuel Millward, a prominent brewer, was sent to prison for forestalling fish.⁵¹⁶

As the Pier district grew in the early seventeenth century, and new herring hangers were built near the harbour, there was a greater incidence of the large-scale buying of fish, which deprived the poorer people of their small supplies. In 1604 two fishermen from St. Peter's in Thanet deposed before the Dover bench that they had recently brought 323 couple of cod fish to Dover, laid them on land near the pier and

caused them to be cried at 13d. the couple, and before it was fully cried Charles Brames, the merchant, had bought all the fish at £3.5s. the hundred, accounting 62 couple to the hundred, "and immediately caused them to be carried and laid in his storehouse."⁵¹⁷ This is only one of a number of examples of such cases of buying before the fish had been called, or buying before the fishing boat was brought to shore and its cable fastened.⁵¹⁸ A number of decrees were passed, the first in 1610, following complaints that the year before the inhabitants had not been able to buy sufficient herrings to salt for their own provision because "so many buyers furnished their new erected herring hangers". It was decreed that every person buying herrings to hang should, for every last, sell or deliver 2000 to the inhabitants of the town at such price as he could buy them of the fisherman.⁵¹⁹ A committee was set up to work out how this should be organized, but it seems unlikely that the system was ever made to work effectively. Cases of forestalling and engrossing fish seem to have increased from about 1610, a number of them involving French, particularly "Pickard", fishermen.⁵²⁰ In 1618, following complaints against forestallers and engrossers, "whereby the inhabitants dwelling in the upper parts of the town often times could not have fish for money, but the same has been sold to rippers and carried away", the mayor and jurats named "certain honest poor women to be buyers of fish and to sell the same in the town." These four women were widows or wives of fishermen.⁵²¹ This system may have been successful for a few years, but by 1620 a shipwright was in the courts for buying codfish at the harbour before the seller had caused them to be cried, and this was only the first of several such cases.⁵²² It is perhaps interesting to note that, while a new pent house was made for fish sellers in the old fish market in the centre of the town in 1607,⁵²³ a decree of 1635 shows that fish were by then sold in bulk in the Pier district, where they would have been unloaded. The decree says

that all people coming from the sea with any kind of fish should bring it "to the common place, or near the crane at the Pier - the same being the appointed place for the sale of such fish", and never sell it aboard their boats or on the beach "to hucksters and rippers and others as formerly." It also forbade hucksters and rippers to buy fish until two hours after the first ringing of the bells for notice of such fish brought into the harbour. All rippers bringing fish from other places must sell it in the "ancient fish market in this town and port." Fish brought in at night should be declared to the mayor before it was sold⁵²⁴. Clearly, the civic authorities had for some time been ineffective in preventing the free buying and selling of fish on a large scale, and small buyers were being deprived of their share.

Fish was not the only commodity coming into the harbour whose sale was difficult to control. As the number of ships arriving in Dover increased during the seventeenth century, and the transshipment of goods became common, food that should have gone to the market seems increasingly often to have been sold from ships. The men who were able to take advantage of this were, of course, the merchants, ship-masters and shipwrights who had quays of their own, and their friends. Complaint was made against the master of a Dutch hoy from Middle^{elburg}borough in 1619, for example, that he had sold quantities of cheese to five inhabitants of the town who sold it again. It should have been cried in the town so that the poor inhabitants could have bought it, but he said that would have been in default of his Company, the cheeses being their adventure. Randolph Partridge, an apothecary and grocer, and Valentine Tatnall, a shipwright, had bought 11 of these cheeses each, and Thomas Cullen, a merchant and maltster, 9 of them.⁵²⁵ Randolph Partridge and Thomas Cullen were in the court again in 1624 for regrating 42 firkins of butter from a Whitby hoy. They were fined and ordered to sell half of it to the inhabitants of the town the next day in the market, when it would

be cried at 15s. the firkin.⁵²⁶ There are further examples of such buying of cheese from ships from Holland and Essex, and of coal from Newcastle. In 1630 one of the town's Brokers deposed that he saw "certain Flemings fling out of a boat in the harbour two baskets and one sack of Holland cheese", which a Dutchman standing on the quay received - about 60 cheeses. The Dutchman told the Broker "he might have seen it and not have seen it."⁵²⁷ The impression given by these cases is that under the current circumstances civic control over buying for the market had become difficult if not impossible.

Further problems must have been created by the sheer size of loads that moved through the town on the larger wagons of the period. In 1615 Edward West, a yeoman waggoner, was charged with bringing in his wagon certain packs of merchandize privately to the town, with no duties paid.⁵²⁸ Since West's inventory shows him to have been a carrier of the silver imported from Spain and delivered to the Mint, many of his loads might have passed through the town unquestioned.⁵²⁹ To add to this, men who held office with the Crown, and merchants with interests outside the town, seem increasingly to have expressed their open indifference to civic attempts at regulation. When Antony Keilock, a deputy searcher, was asked to come before the mayor in 1636, he sent word by his maidservant that he was too busy to come. There were six ships to go out and "till they were gone he could not and would not come."⁵³⁰ The merchant, Charles Elwood, when taken by the watch in 1640, said the mayor and all the town had nothing to do with him, and he would do what he did in spite of them.⁵³¹ Similarly, Jacob Brames claimed that his oath to the king as a customs officer superseded his duty to the bench of magistrates.⁵³²

The 1630s saw an increasing number of complaints about illegal selling, many of them coming from the inhabitants themselves, who were clearly finding it difficult to buy such goods as fish, cheese, oatmeal and wood

in small quantities and at fair prices. It seems that private trading was increasingly common, and partly intended to take advantage of the need of poorer inhabitants to buy goods in small quantities; it seems likely too that certain goods, such as firewood, were in short supply. In 1635, for example, a woman was accused of buying wood in the open market and then selling it "by retail in her house."⁵³³ The constant offender, Randolph Partridge, was accused of commonly offering 1s. per load of wood more than others, and of thereby on one occasion taking a sale from a glover who had offered the price and a pair of gloves for a waggon load of oastry wood.⁵³⁴ In 1635 the servant of a Dover draper deposed that Bate, a Canterbury clothier, had laid up a pack of 30 lbs. of wool secretly in his master's stable for private sale.⁵³⁵ On a much smaller scale, a sailor's wife was accused of buying one bushel of oatmeal from "an oatmeal man who weekly on market days" brought it to sell, and the next day in the market selling it by quarts and pints. Three other women were also accused of this.⁵³⁶ This seems a vivid illustration of the need of poor people to be able to buy small quantities of food: a pint of oatmeal is a very small amount. It suggests the erosion of the first of the original principles of market regulation under the pressures that had led to a larger and probably poorer population in the seventeenth century.

The second principle, that freemen should take most profit from buying and selling, was also confirmed in various ways in the 1550s and 1580s. A decree of December 1551 said that freemen must make a profit when selling to non-free men.⁵³⁷ This was followed by the setting up of a rudimentary corporate trading organization, whose members were decided by civic election. It was agreed that thirteen named men, of whom four were jurats, should be the sole buyers and sellers of all merchandize above the cost of £10 that came into the liberties of the town. They were to sell the goods to any buyers from the free commons of the town

at the prices they had paid, with "the charges considered." If any merchandize chanced to be left unsold they could

"employ upon the same merchandize all such money which shall be put into the bank or stock by any of the free commoners and...sell the same again to the most advantage and profit of the said stock or bank".

They were to make a just account four times a year

"to all those of the said freemen which have or shall have any money in the said bank or stock whereby all the advantages and profits which ensueth or cometh thereof or else losses may be equally divided amongst those that have put in any money to the said bank according to their parts and portions."⁵³⁸

Unfortunately there is no further mention of this apparently radical corporate venture, and no hint of whether new men were elected when the first withdrew, or what happened to the investment of those who died. It seems likely that it might have foundered on such complexities.

In what may have been an attempt to regulate and protect trades and so protect the interests of freemen, in 1553 it was agreed that five "fellowships" should be set up.⁵³⁹ It seems possible that the fellowships disintegrated, for in 1582 three "corporations" were formed - the shoemakers, the tailors and drapers, and the mercers and grocers. Details of the grants of corporation were set out in the town record and much more significance seems to have been attached to this occasion.⁵⁴⁰ The town continued to receive money from corporations until 1598, after which only the shoemakers paid.⁵⁴¹

In 1586, in a further attempt to keep civic control over buying and selling, Dover adopted the brokerage system from Sandwich. This "order for buying and selling merchandize" stipulated that everyone coming into the town with fish, salt, corn, butter, cheese "or any other victual or merchandize whereof the commonalty of the town might profit", must go first to the brokers and tell them what they had brought to be sold. The brokers then had to go immediately into the town and get the seller a merchant "which is a friend of the town" to buy the merchandize. When they had agreed a price, the buyer was to have one half of the goods and

the commonalty of the town the other half if they willed, or as much as might serve the town. And lest the commonalty should be deceived,

"the brokers are enjoined to go to their houses and let them understand what the commodity is that is so bought to be sold, where the merchant is and what price is agreed upon."

No man might buy or sell such merchandize without the brokers, upon pain of a £10 fine for each offence, and two brokers were to be elected each year, when they had to put in two sureties apiece to deal fairly with both buyers and sellers. In return, they received 3d. in the pound of money they received for merchandize sold.⁵⁴²

The system was clearly cumbersome and open to deceit, but it remained in force until 1604. In 1602, however, it was clearly not working and some freemen who were accustomed to buy salt fish, butter, cheese, coals and other merchandize in Dover harbour, complained that recently certain inhabitants of the town had bought and engrossed the whole quantity of such goods to sell again to them, and others who needed them, at excessive prices against the decrees. The agreement was therefore renewed that all merchants bringing goods to the town should resort to the brokers in the first instance.⁵⁴³ Henry Harwood was fairly consistently elected as one of the brokers, and it is clear that he abused his office on a number of occasions. In 1604 the common council agreed that because of his and his fellow broker's recent misdemeanours, they should no longer remain in office, "and for that such officers are holden not needful" none should be appointed for the moment.⁵⁴⁴ A new system was introduced, which seems to have remained in force for the rest of the period. Sellers bringing merchandize such as victuals, fuel, butter, cheese, salt, coals, wood and fish that were to be sold in the harbour had first to acquaint the mayor and take him a sample, "to examine whether the same be good and wholesome for men's bodies and whether the merchandize be merchantable". If all was well, the mayor then gave the merchant a ticket in writing under his hand allowing the

goods to be sold. The fine for ignoring this procedure was £3.6s.8d.⁵⁴⁵ Although it must have been extremely time-consuming for the mayor, the system was clearly put into practice, because a merchant stranger was fined in the following year for selling fish in the harbour "without the mayor's licence".⁵⁴⁶ The fine was raised to £10 for town merchants buying goods from "merchants not inhabiting here" in 1611.⁵⁴⁷ Some kind of brokerage system seems to have been revived by then, because the 1611 addition to the 1604 decree also said that if the seller used brokers to sell his goods and take up his money, they should not now take above 2d. in the pound for doing it.⁵⁴⁸

The principles of getting wholesome goods to the market and giving preference to freemen in selling them thus remained in force. By the seventeenth century, the onus was on the merchant coming into the harbour to go to the mayor, rather than on the mayor to go to the merchant. Nevertheless, the mayor still had his duty, as clerk of the market, to visit and supervise sellers of goods there. It seems likely that he performed the latter function increasingly in periodic sweeps round various tradesmen, as in his examination of carcasses stored illegally in butchers' houses mentioned above. The evidence suggests that by the seventeenth century, although the principles of market regulation remained firm, the authorities found them increasingly difficult to maintain in the circumstances of the time, and that some sort of compensation for the poor was recovered from offenders by fines set in the town courts. Such evidence as exists suggests that fines and confiscated food were most likely to be given to the deserving poor, well-known to the authorities, since their names recur in the town records.⁵⁴⁹ This can hardly have matched the ideal of market regulation: that all the inhabitants of the town should be supplied with wholesome food at reasonable prices.

c) Wages and prices

Evidence for wages and prices is very difficult to extract and to interpret. In both cases it is almost impossible to find evidence that allows a comparison between like and like. Wages recorded in Dover are for work done for the corporation on the town and the port, and, in the 1530s, for the Crown on the harbour, and therefore may not be typical of wages as a whole. In certain groups of years, however, enough wages are recorded to provide worthwhile examples and indications of changes over time. Prices for single commodities such as sugar, butter, cheese, tobacco, cloth and clothing, and various building materials appear randomly and not in comparable qualities or amounts, and therefore cannot be used. There is, however, a reasonable run of figures for the assize of bread for the later period, and some representative figures for the price of beer and candles set by the town throughout the period, which allow an assessment of the relationship between wages and the prices of some basic commodities.

It is difficult to determine what was included in a wage, and also for how much of the year men could expect to find paid employment. It is certainly clear that before about 1535 workers employed by the corporation of Dover could expect some kind of subsistence as part of their wages, and that wages varied slightly, being highest in August, the harvest period, and lowest in December.⁵⁵⁰ It seems likely also that seasonality was built into patterns and expectations of working throughout the period. For example, the inventory of Richard Powell, a Dover fisherman, who died in 1637, shows that he fished in the autumn and carted in Dymchurch through the summer, meanwhile grazing a couple of sheep on Romney Marsh.⁵⁵¹ During the herring fishing season of October 1610, men of various crafts who were absent from church gave as their reason that they were busy packing or salting herrings.⁵⁵² In June, 1618, a labourer failed to attend court because he had "gone into

the Marsh to mowing".⁵⁵³ In 1620 a merchant, Mark Willes, and his wife were absent from court because they were living near Ashford during the "pease harvest."⁵⁵⁴

Men of one occupation seem to have undertaken others as opportunity arose. Sixteenth century ecclesiastical depositions concerning tithes reveal that Dover mariners sometimes worked in the fields during harvest.⁵⁵⁵ Labourers were often needed to work in the harbour on urgent repairs and improvements, and craftsmen of all kinds seem to have abandoned their own craft in favour of paid employment there from time to time. When investigations were being made into materials stolen from the harbour works in 1622 a tailor deposed that a month earlier he had worked in the harbour for two days, a cobbler that he had worked there for five or six weeks a year before, and a weaver that he had worked there about twelve months earlier "when the rage of the sea did break up part of the North head of Dover harbour".⁵⁵⁶ Whatever their own craft, all the men had been working with timber on those occasions. The case also sheds some light on the way in which men were paid and the casual nature of normal employment. There was some jealousy among the carpenters who normally worked at the harbour because one of their number, Thomas Collens, was favoured, and allowed to work in the new store house "on wet afternoons and other times when the other workmen did not work." Also his pay "was paid full weeks in the harbour when other men sometime wanted a day or more."⁵⁵⁷ All the carpenters were fined 12d. a piece when an iron bar was lost, and none of them but Thomas Collens was allowed to let his children come and carry away the block ends and chips of wood that were left over. Presumably the taking of useful waste was normally considered part of a man's wage.

Such records of wages as exist come in tranches of years, as various projects were carried out. In the period from 1510 to 1527 the harbour accounts show that the majority of workers, both craftsmen and labourers

received wages and board from the corporation.⁵⁵⁸ This is unsurprising in the case of teams of masons from Boughton Monchelsea and Folkestone, but many workers from Dover did too, possibly because the work took place mainly during the summer months in hours of long daylight and when alternative occupations might otherwise have tempted them away. A man's board averaged 1s.3d. per week, regardless of status, in 1510, and very consistently 1s.4d. per week thereafter. Labourers who are sidelined "find himself", sometimes nevertheless received a "noneshyne", which seems to have cost about a halfpenny per man.⁵⁵⁹ The rest of the men were paid "meat, drink and wages." At that period wages alone, when subtracted from board, seem to have ranged between 5d. and 8d. per day for skilled craftsmen such as masons and carpenters, depending on the season and on the status of the man involved. A master mason from Rochester Bridge and a carpenter from Thanet both received 8d. and board. The normal wage for labourers was 4d. a day, which amounts to 6d. if board is included, but which often included meat and drink.⁵⁶⁰

The next useful record of wages occurs between 1535 and 1539, again for work on the harbour, this time financed by the Crown, which was also responsible, although it often failed, for feeding the workers it had imported and for keeping them out of the town. At first, labourers were earning an average of fourpence halfpenny a day, but in September, 1535, having absented themselves to work in the fields, they demanded and got 6d. per day.⁵⁶¹ Rates of pay for craftsmen varied between 6d. for sawyers and 8d. for carpenters, most masons, and clerks, with the "warden mason" receiving 1s.0d, the purveyors 1s.0d., the controller 3s.4d. and the Paymaster 4s.0d.⁵⁶²

By 1547, according to the town accounts, craftsmen were consistently earning 8d. a day, and labourers 6d., but there is no mention of subsistence payments.⁵⁶³ In the 1550s, the normal rate for labourers remained at 6d. per day, in every case for very short periods of work.

The best master craftsmen were by now receiving as much as 1s. a day, although 10d. was a more normal wage.⁵⁶⁴ From the late 1570s, it became more usual for the corporation accounts to record the whole payment made to a craftsman for a job for which he had overall responsibility. This makes day rates much more difficult to discover. There is, however, enough evidence to suggest that labourers' rates rose to 8d. per day in the 1580s and to about 10d. in the 1590s, with some very menial jobs, like clearing out the brook, still rated at 6d.⁵⁶⁵ From early in the seventeenth century 1s. per day became normal for labourers, although 6d. could still be paid for completely unskilled work.⁵⁶⁶ During the 1620s the rate for labourers seems to have varied between 1s. per day and 1s.6d., with 1s. remaining a normal rate until the end of the period.⁵⁶⁷

It becomes, however, increasingly difficult to say what a normal rate was as the seventeenth century progressed. There is some evidence that work was compounded for, and that men would accept a rate below the norm in order to have certain work for a fairly long period. In 1618, for example, a committee appointed by the corporation compounded with some labourers for a day rate to make a bridge.⁵⁶⁸ The accounts suggest that these rates were low, but that the work lasted for some months.⁵⁶⁹ At about the same time, the wages of two servants in husbandry were recorded as being respectively £3 and £3.10s. a year, far below even 6d. a day, but including the certainty that they would be fed and the likelihood that their work would persist.⁵⁷⁰ In 1630 a Dover man refused to work for John Wallop for 6s. a week plus meat and drink, but a Calais man worked for him for 20s. for three months.⁵⁷¹ It seems likely that labourers' wages levelled out at about 1s. a day in the early seventeenth century. When a building was made to strengthen the court hall in 1620, craftsmen's labourers were paid 1s. per day, but unskilled work was sometimes paid at a lower rate, as when a man was

paid 1s.3d. for carrying rubbish for two and a half days.⁵⁷²

Craftsman's ^{wage rates} wages, like labourer's, seem to have risen towards the end of the sixteenth century. There are examples of tilers, carpenters, masons and a smith earning 1s.2d. per day in the 1580s, and their sons and servants getting amounts from 10d. to 1s.⁵⁷³ By the end of the 1590s the best rate had risen to 1s.4d.⁵⁷⁴ When the new court hall was built in 1605, day rates for craftsmen were much more variable, carpenters receiving amounts ranging from 10d. to 1s.6d., although some of the lower paid men were also receiving "expenses" or a "gratuity". A plumber received 1s.8d. per day, and a specialist carver 2s. and 2s.6d.⁵⁷⁵ When stones were taken from the old church to build a new bridge from 1615 onwards, master masons and carpenters received 2s.0d. per day and other carpenters and bricklayers 1s.8d. and 1s.6d.⁵⁷⁶ Carpenters and masons were still receiving 1s.8d. and 1s.6d. in 1620.⁵⁷⁷

Prices are even more difficult to determine. Dover's records contain complaints about rising prices, usually made by wealthy officials who had to spend time in London.⁵⁷⁸ Statutory maximum prices were given to the town from time to time for bread, beef - very seldom - beer and tallow. Bread prices show by far the greatest fluctuations, although it should be noted that whenever the civic authorities bought bread for the poor or for workmen they paid 1s. per dozen to bakers throughout the whole period.⁵⁷⁹ The assize of bread was based on the price of a quarter of wheat, plus 6s., which was allowed for the fuel and labour involved in baking it.⁵⁸⁰ The 6s. allowance seems to have remained constant throughout the period, in line with the apparently normal reluctance of the authorities to raise the cost of services in line with those of raw materials. The earliest reference to the assize of bread suggests that it was 10s. in 1523.⁵⁸¹ The assize was regularly recorded in the common assembly minute books from 1560, when it was 26s.8d.⁵⁸²

This, of course, means that no figures survive for much of the 1560s and 70s.

The assize was given by the mayor to the bakers as the price of grain changed, which means it sometimes remained constant for several years at a time, and sometimes changed twice or more in a year. In summary, the figures show that the assize fluctuated between 20s. and 30s. until 1581. After that it remained at 30s., then rose to just over 40s. in 1596. It then fluctuated between 30s. and 40s. until 1608, when it jumped to 56s. in September, after the harvest. It then fluctuated between 30s. and 50s. until 1623 when it rose to 58s. During the course of 1631 it rose from 52s. in February, to 58s. in June, and 60s.6d. in July, then fell to 48s. in August and 44s. in September. It never reached 60s. again, but often went above 50s. until it fell to 44s. in November 1638, then to 38s. in 1639 and 36s. in June, 1640 - its lowest price since April, 1620.⁵⁸³

There were two prices for a bunn of beer - the lower for single, or small, beer, and the higher for double, or Crown, beer. The price of single beer dropped out of the lists between 1586 and 1589, but Dover double beer was the same price as Newcastle beer - 6s.8d. - in 1588.⁵⁸⁴ The two prices re-emerged in 1590,⁵⁸⁵ and from 1607 to 1612 there were actually three prices, for small, strong and strongest beer, which presumably meant that small beer had become an even more inferior brew in order to keep its price down.⁵⁸⁶ The price of double beer rose gradually from 2s.8d. in 1520⁵⁸⁷ to 8s.0d. in 1590,⁵⁸⁸ where it seems to have remained until 1625, apart from a jump to 10s.0d. in 1596 and to 15s. in 1624.⁵⁸⁹ The civic authorities managed to hold down the price of small beer, however. It was 2s.0d. in 1509, rose to 3s.3d. in 1550 and to 4s.4d. in 1557.⁵⁹⁰ In 1583 the price of small beer went down to 4s.0d., was still there when it was next given in 1590, and remained there until it was last mentioned in 1619.⁵⁹¹ The comparative stability

of the price of small beer might thus help to explain the apparent prevalence of drunkenness in the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries.

In an attempt to relate the wages of workmen to the price of bread and beer, an index has been constructed, using the earliest definite figures recorded in the period, those from 1510 to 1534, as the base, and grouping the years in such a way as to show periods of change most accurately. The assize of bread has been averaged for each tranche of years.

Table 2:7 Comparative index of the wages of craftsmen and labourers with the price of bread and beer in Dover 1510-1639

date	WAGES		PRICES	
	crafts.	labs.	bread	beer
1510-1534	100	100	100	100
1535-1559	157	150	-	200
1560-1579	200	200	250	200
1580-1589	214	225	290	250
1590-1599	257	250	420	200
1600-1609	314	300	340	200
1610-1619	314	300	370	200
1620-1629	343	300	495	200
1630-1639	-	300?	491	200

Source: Dover Common Assembly Minute Books and Town Accounts.

This shows how labourers went ahead of craftsmen for a time in their rate of increase of wages, but fell behind in the seventeenth century when skills were needed and when there was probably a surplus of labourers. It also suggests that the gap between wages and the price of bread widened gradually through the sixteenth century and catastrophically in the 1590s, after which it shrank for a time only to open up again in what must have seemed a disastrous way in the 1620s. It is a crude model, based on intransigent material, but tends to support the view that life was becoming increasingly difficult for the labouring poor, especially those who were partially employed or not employed, at all, at a time when the market was somewhat freer from restriction and trade through the harbour was at its zenith.

In the above examination of some aspects of the economy of Dover, an attempt has been made to address the balance between the importance to the town of the sea, the region and the market. It seems clear that the extraordinary development of the sea trade towards the close of the period changed the balance at least temporarily. Dover was a small-scale fishing port with a decayed harbour for cross-Channel traffic in the early sixteenth century, and early improvements in the harbour were soon destroyed by natural hazards. Trade clearly declined in the 1560s and early 70s, when it must have been affected, not only by the deficiencies of the harbour but by the activities of the Netherlands' privateers, the Gueux de Mer, or Sea Beggars, although the absence of the relevant Dover corporation records for that period precludes any first hand knowledge of the base they made in Dover.⁵⁹² Nevertheless the east coast trade began to bring some prosperity to individual men after the major improvement to the harbour in the 1580s.

Throughout the period the inland region to the east and west of the town played an important part in providing the market with grain, meat and tallow, and the inhabitants of the near region seem in their turn to have bought goods from the market of Dover. Thus credit circulated between Dover, the surrounding rural area and other towns in the region. For the most part the inhabitants of the town seem to have been reliant upon local goods and services, and craftsmen used simple tools and local materials, which were not capital intensive. The expansion of trade in the seventeenth century must, however, have brought considerable demands for large amounts of capital to underwrite ventures of goods for trading. It seems likely that some of this capital was drawn in from the region, encouraging rural money to be invested speculatively rather than in agricultural exploitation. It was presumably not coincidental that the greater majority of men who were able to exploit the situation to the full were those whose origin was continental rather than English,

and who appear to have had access to greater supplies of credit and capital. At the same time, the increasing number of ships in the harbour made extra demands on the agricultural resources of the region, and certainly increased the amount of beer exported from the town.

It will be seen below that increased opportunities for carrying and portering goods brought extra people into the town, and this increased the pressure on the market and the demand for grain at the very time when maltsters and merchants were cornering all the grain they could for export. At this period, too, new technology in curing fish seems to have stimulated buying on such a large scale that poorer inhabitants were unable to get what they needed for their own consumption. The town's magistracy attempted to regulate the market so that the poor might be served, but they themselves were maltsters and brewers who flouted the regulations they made. There seems to have been a widening gap between the rich and the poor in the seventeenth century, and the differences would probably have been more visible than in an earlier period. Wealth no longer lay chiefly in fields, crops and barns outside the town, but in storehouses, malthouses and brewhouses within it, on quays, and in waggons rolling through the streets carrying goods to and from ships.

CHAPTER 3 THE POPULATION

Population size can both determine and result from economic and social change, yet this crucial area cannot be treated with precision in the early modern period. Trends in population movement over time are more susceptible to estimation than total size of population at a given date, and such trends as they occurred in Dover will be discussed here. The available sources of information about the population of Dover include the registers of two parishes, St. Mary's and St. James's, of which only the first is useful at this period, some random lists of jurats and commoners in the chamberlains' accounts, some foreigners' maltote lists, some early seventeenth century lists of freemen intrants, two muster lists of 1617 and 1618 and a list of signatories to the Protestation Oath of 1642, together with stray information from depositions made in the church courts about migrants to the town, and a few contemporary anecdotal comments. As a Cinque Port, Dover was exempt from subsidies so although some assessments survive for exempt land held outside the town there are no normal subsidy lists.

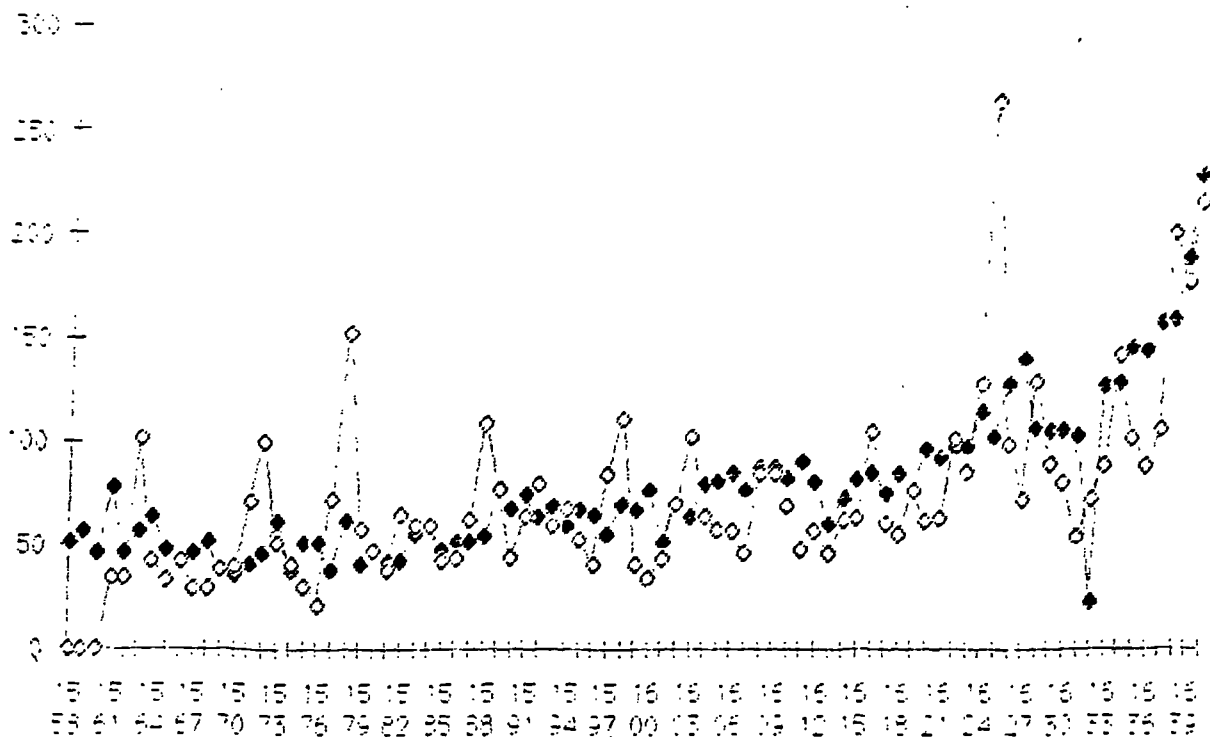
The muster lists of 1617 and 1618 and the list of signatories of the Protestation Oath made in February 1642 provide some basis for comparing the number of adult males in the town between those dates, which fall at the latter end of the period under discussion. The musters taken on September 1, 1617 record a total of 566 names and those of August 4, 1618, 529 names. A small proportion of names has been excised in both cases, which suggests that the list was kept up to date.¹ These lists, in theory, give the number of men between 16 and 60 years old living in Dover at that date, although the 1617 list includes 7 women, 5 of them widows. There were 1147 signatories to the Protestation Oath in 1642.² Presumably minors were not included in the latter list, and their

exclusion may help to balance the numbers of extremely poor men who might have been excluded from the muster list. Whatever multiplier were to be applied to this information would be likely to reinforce the apparent conclusion that the population of adult males, and therefore probably the total population, had more than doubled between 1617 and 1642.

Particularly rapid population growth at that period is also suggested by the figures for baptisms and burials recorded in the parish registers. Before presenting those figures, however, it seems prudent to mention certain problems experienced in using the parish registers as a statistical source. By the period when registration of baptisms and burials began, most of the population of Dover was divided between the two parishes of St. Mary's and St. James's, although the parish church of St. Peter's still existed and was occasionally still used for the burials of prominent local men.³ St. Mary's register begins in 1558, but the list of burials has been misbound, and seems likely to be particularly unreliable until 1561. Much of the register is damaged and in some years entries have had to be counted rather than read. Details other than names are given only from 1583. The register for St. James's parish has only a few figures before 1594. Numbers of years are missing completely and entries for other years seem hastily written and possibly incomplete, so that it has been difficult to assess what proportion of the population lived in that parish. Therefore, only the parish register of St. Mary's has been used, to supply what can only be an indicator of the likely trend of population in the town. When such vital figures as survive for St. James's parish were divided into those for St. Mary's, they suggested that the population of St. James's might have been between a half and a third that of St. Mary's in the 1560s and 70s, falling to between a third and a quarter at the turn of the century and perhaps as low as a fifth by the 1630s. This would, of course, need to

be taken into account in any attempt to assess the total population of Dover.

Figure 3:1 Baptisms and burials in St. Mary's parish Dover 1558-1640



Source: Parish Registers of St. Mary's Dover.⁴

Note: the dark line represents ~~births~~ baptisms.

A further problem in using urban parish registers for demographic evidence is that it is likely to be distorted by the inclusion of vital events relating to transients through the town, or migrants who settled there for only a few years. A port such as Dover had many transients, and their presence could distort the numbers of burials in particular. For example Figure 3:1 shows a sharp rise in burials in the years 1587 and 1588. It happens that in those years, when the Spanish force was threatening the south coast, some details about individual events were recorded in the register. These show that out of a total of 62 deaths in 1587 at least 11 were those of people from outside the town, and in 1588 out of 108 deaths, at least 28 were those of men who had been aboard the ships Achates, Rainbow, Roebuck, Nonpareil, Vanguard, Ark and Antelope,

and who came, not from Dover, but from places as far apart as Stonehouse in Ireland, and Rye in Sussex. The reason for their burial in Dover seems likely to have been an outbreak aboard the ships of an infection whose spread is probably reflected in the higher than average figures for burials in the town itself in those years.⁵

The aggregative figures of vital events show episodes of high mortality at roughly ten-yearly intervals between 1564 and 1598 and then rather more frequently in the early seventeenth century. The problem was most serious in 1578, 1625, 1638 and 1640. The common assembly minute books refer to "plague" or "pestilence" in 1602-3, when it seems to have arrived from London, and in 1635-6 and 1638.⁶ Testamentary accounts recording expenses incurred in those years give further evidence for outbreaks of plague and small pox.⁷ Finally, the town accounts for 1625 and 1638 show that special provision was made for the victims of infection then.⁸

In spite of these years of high mortality, it can be seen that numbers of baptisms show a generally upward trend from the end of the 1580s, after a series of quite sharp fluctuations between 1562 and 1582, having reached their lowest point in 1570 and 1574. Baptisms rose most steeply in two periods, 1620-27 and 1631-40, thus offsetting the effects of infectious disease. The number of marriages also rose most steeply between 1620 and 1625, presumably boosting the population in the following years. This seems to be in line with the rise in population suggested by the comparison between the Muster list of 1617 and the Protestation signatures of 1642. The natural increase in the population by quinquennium based on the figures from St. Mary's parish register is set out in Table 3:1.

The low birth/death ratios in the 1570s and 80s are unusual in the national experience.⁹ Wrigley and Schofield suggested that between 1585 and 1640 the underlying trend in deaths began to rise more swiftly than

that of births and that this, combined with a new period in which mortality was more disturbed, decelerated the rate of natural increase of population. Yet they show a birth/death ratio ranging between 1.24 and 1.61 for that period, higher than that of Dover, where births were rising steadily. This suggests that the experience of towns was different from that of rural parishes, and that the replacement of population necessary to explain the rise in the number of births in Dover must have been largely the result of immigration, the implications of which will be explored more fully below.

Table 3:1 Natural increase and birth/death ratios by quinquennium, St. Mary's parish Dover, 1561-1640

	Baptisms	burials	Natural increase (births-deaths)	Ratio (births/deaths)
1561-65	292	246	+49	1.19
1566-70	214	246	+34	1.19
1571-75	238	294	-56	0.81
1576-80	240	352	-112	0.68
1581-85	249	255	-6	0.98
1586-90	299	335	-36	0.89
1591-95	333	322	+11	1.03
1596-00	334	364	-30	0.92
1601-05	345	371	-26	0.93
1606-10	416	342	+74	1.22
1611-15	386	278	+108	1.39
1616-20	415	359	+56	1.16
1621-25	503	642	-139	0.78
1626-30	586	472	+114	1.24
1631-35	525	458	+67	1.15
1636-40	874	784	+90	1.11

Source: Parish Registers of St. Mary's Dover.

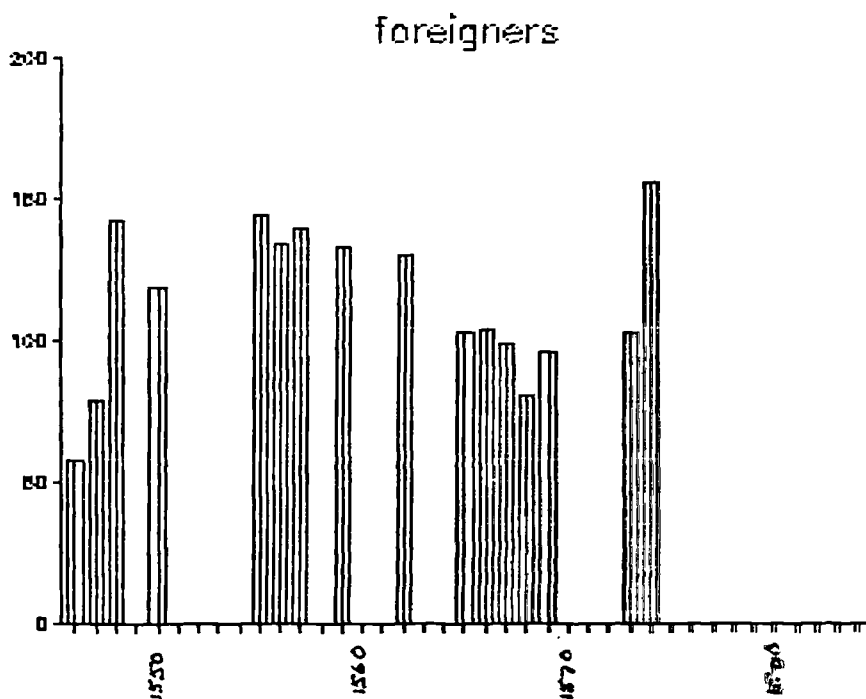
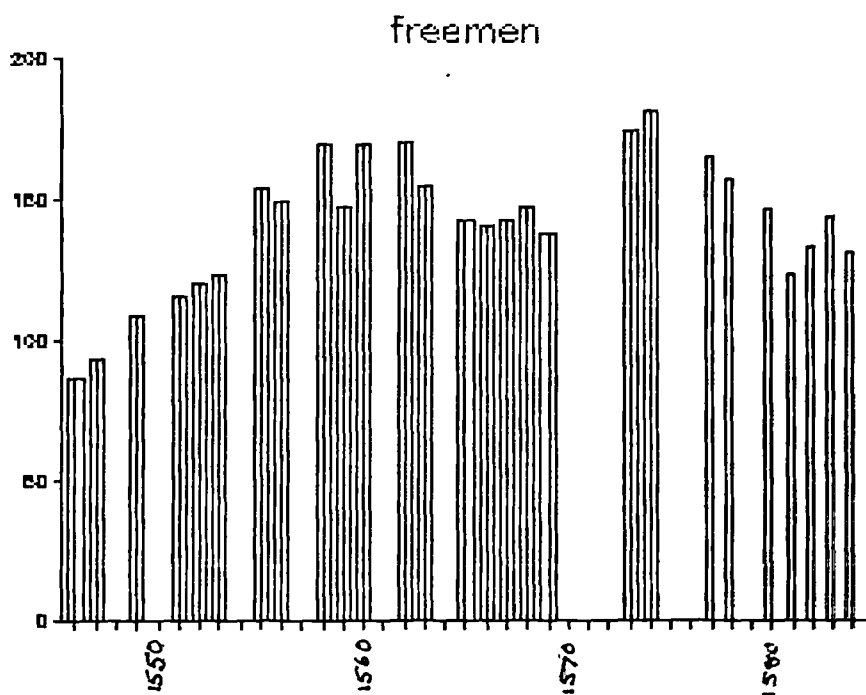
There is some economic and anecdotal evidence to support the general conclusions arrived at on the basis of the aggregative figures. A fall in the population in the late 1560s and early 1570s was perhaps part of the reason for the apparent lack of economic growth during that period that has been discussed in the first part of this study.¹⁰ But an uncomfortably swift rise in population in the first half of the seventeenth century is perhaps suggested by the apparent growth of disorder in the town and by the number of petty squabbles pursued in the ecclesiastical courts.¹¹ It is also supported by a comment made by the

churchwardens of St.Mary's in March 1634 that their parish "is of late years by reason of new buildings and strangers that are come to inhabit here, so exceedingly enlarged and grown so populous, that the church is not sufficient to contain them therein to sit or place themselves."¹²

Further evidence for fluctuations in the male population is provided by the lists of freemen and foreigners recorded occasionally in the chamberlains' accounts. There are very few freemen's sess lists, but names seem to have been listed from time to time until 1584, simply as a record of the distinctive status of the town's freemen as jurats, common councillors or commoners. This could mean that the numbers are more complete than a tax list might be. Foreigners were listed only in the context of paying their maltote, or "foreigners' assessment", which probably implies an under-representation of names. The two groups were not recorded simultaneously in most years and are therefore shown separately in Figure 3:2, which ends in 1584, after which lists of freemen ceased.

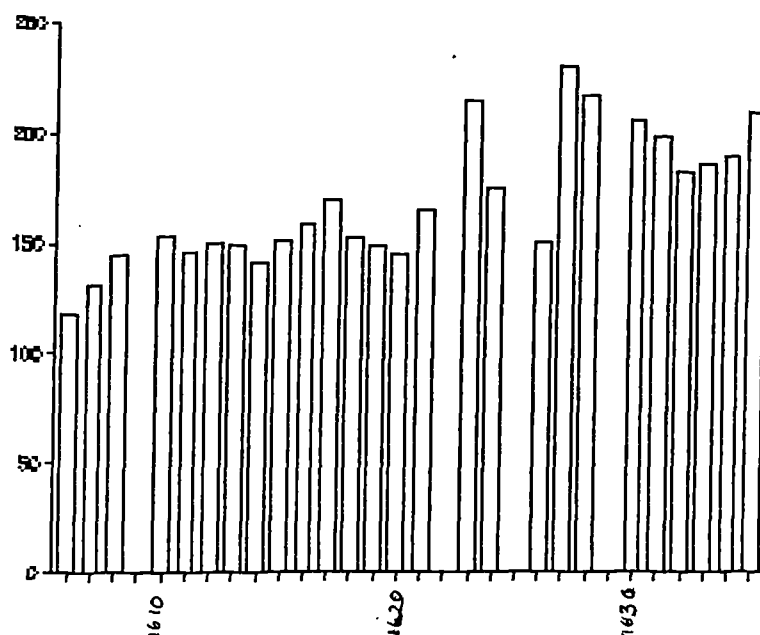
The figures for foreigners would be more likely to reflect temporary fluctuations than those for freemen, who are likely to have stayed longer in the town; detailed examination of foreigners' maltote lists has revealed a high turnover of names. Figure 3:3 gives the numbers of foreigners derived from maltote lists from 1606 until 1635. When the numbers of foreigners shown in Figures 3:2 and 3:3 are taken together it is perhaps significant that they were lower than usual in the years 1567-69 and consistently at their highest level, that is above 180 a year, from 1627 until 1635, and thus in line with the trends already noted. It must be emphasized that the numbers in both these figures should be treated only as trends.

Figure 3:2 Numbers of freemen and foreigners in Dover 1546-1584



Source: BL Additional Ms 29618; CKS Dover Town Accounts 1546-1635.

Figure 3:3 Numbers of foreigners in Dover 1606-1635



Source: as Figure 3:2

Entrants to freedom were recorded from 1601, although entries are unreliable for the first few years and none has survived between 1623-1627; reliable numbers are given in Table 3:2.

Table 3:2 Numbers of entrants to freedom in Dover 1601-1641

1604	32	1616	9	1630	17
1605	10	1617	16	1631	14
1606	18	1618	18	1632	12
1607	18	1619	16	1633	16
1608	27	1620	15	1634	23
1609	17	1621	15	1635	21
1610	19	1622	19	1636	15
1611	13	1623	23	1637	27
1612	2	no figures		1638	9
1613	7	1627	11	1639	16
1614	12	1628	19	1640	25
1615	12	1629	14	1641	30

Source: CKS Register of Dover Freemen 1601-1721

Table 3:2 shows that numbers tended to rise in the 1630s, the temporary

fall in 1638-39 probably being due to infection in the town.

Nevertheless neither these figures nor those shown in Figures 3:2 and 3:3 exhibit the same steep rise as that of baptisms in the 1630s. It seems probable, therefore, that a substantial proportion of the population at that time would have been very young.

The attempt to relate urban population to topography also raises difficulties in the post-reformation period. It seems that after the suppression of St. Martin's Priory and other parish churches, some inhabitants of Dover pleased themselves in deciding which of the surviving parish churches to attend, and had been changing parish at will, until the matter was brought to the Consistory court and settled by a decree in 1579. This said that all those people whose houses had definitely been in one parish for 20 years should continue in that parish. And that

"all such as were sometime of St. Peter's parish or of St. Martin's, the parish church now being down, dwelling on the other side of the Brook or water towards St. James church shall be from henceforth parishioners of St. James church there. And they that are of St. Peter's or St. Martin's parish dwelling on this side the said water or brook and all the new builded houses shall belong to St. Mary's parish."¹³

Yet even in 1607 Walter Richards, who was at that time curate of St. Mary's, presented a difficulty over tithes and oblations since there was still uncertainty over the parish boundaries.¹⁴

A further complication arose when many new houses were built at the Pier, and in 1621 Sir Henry Mainwaring wrote to Lord Zouch arguing against the intended division of the decayed parish of St. Peter and the Pier houses between the parishes of Hougham and St. James.¹⁵ The attempt of the vicar of Hougham, a parish that included some of the downland immediately to the west of the town, to incorporate these houses into his parish failed but led to confusion for several years, until they were granted to St. Mary's. Thomas Huffam, farmer of the site of the Priory of Dover, withheld his church tithes and taxes for some

years, claiming that the Priory land was not within the liberties of the town, and owed no dues to St. Mary's parish. In 1621 the mayor and jurats complained of this to Lord Zouch since Thomas Huffam was encouraging his neighbours to do the same thing.¹⁶ A similar, but longer-running dispute, was conducted by William Hannington who lived in the Maison Dieu, which he claimed was situated in the parish of Charlton.¹⁷

This raises yet another area of difficulty in dealing with urban populations: at what point did suburbs become absorbed into the town? By the seventeenth century, the parish of Charlton next to Dover was becoming increasingly part of the town, as cases in the town courts concerning the inhabitants of Charlton demonstrate; Dover men frequented inns and victualling houses there, for example.¹⁸ Charlton victuallers were assessed in Dover for foreigners' maltote.¹⁹ The 1617 Dover muster list includes 16 names under the heading Charlton, which was treated as a ward heading, listed between George and Nicholls ward and North Pier ward. The vicar of St. James was also the rector of Charlton. In the absence of the Charlton parish registers it is, therefore, difficult to gain a complete picture of the population of the town.

Topographical changes in relation to the harbour have been frequently mentioned. Lyon reports a survey of 1564 that returned a total of 358 houses in the town, 29 of which were uninhabited.²⁰ In his survey of the holdings of the Wardens and Assistants of the Harbour in 1641, Eldred records 326 tenants, by which he seems to mean holders of individual leases, in the area along the Great Pent and round the harbour. Although some of those leases were for storehouses and wharves, his plans show that most were for small plots, and other records show that a number of tenements had been built on such plots in some cases.²¹ It seems certain, therefore, that the later-developed coastal area alone had more houses in 1641 than had existed in the whole town in

1564.

The muster list of 1617 suggests that wards were rationalized following the development of the harbour, so it is difficult to make accurate comparisons with earlier records. The original 21 wards had now become 12; some wards to the east of the river Dour had apparently been amalgamated into one ward and a number of small wards had disappeared, presumably having been incorporated into the new wards of North Pier and South Pier. The former suburb of Charlton also appeared as a ward. The list shows that even by 1617, 233 men were recorded as living in the North Pier, South Pier and Snargate wards, which fell into the area surveyed by Eldred in 1641, and 333 in the other 9 wards that covered the rest of the town, including the market area; if the numbers for Charlton are added to those of the harbour area, it can be said that 44% of adult males in 1617 were living outside the area that would have been perceived as the town in 1564. Eldred's figure of 326 lessees in 1641 suggests that the number of adult males in the harbour area would have increased still further by then; whether they would still have formed 44% of the total population cannot be known.

It is unlikely that the natural rate of increase of population - at its highest at 1.39 in the period 1611-15 - could have produced this apparent growth without the effects of continued immigration. It is, of course, not possible to determine even a hypothetical figure for emigration, and if a balance between emigration and immigration is assumed, the estimates become circular. It seems necessary, therefore, to hypothesize that immigration exceeded emigration in Dover in the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries. In order to arrive at some indication of the proportion of immigrants in the population, the short biographies at the head of depositions before the ecclesiastical courts were examined. It is very possible that these might represent a skewed sample of the population, since comparative newcomers to the town might

have been more likely than others to be involved in the most commonly prosecuted cases - those of defamation, although it could also be argued that natives might have been perceived as being more acceptable and therefore more popular witnesses. At the turn of the century the social level of those involved seems to have extended further, and included many more people unconnected with the office-holders of the town; it is unlikely that they included the destitute, however.

The total number of witnesses from the town examined in cases occurring between 1560 and 1640 was 394, of whom 114, or 28.9%, had been born in Dover. Analysis of indenture lists of apprentices entering service in Dover from 1598 to 1640²² shows that native apprentices formed 34.2% of the whole number over the whole period, which is not too far from the 28.9% of native deponents in the church court material. It is tempting to speculate on the basis of these two groups that at any given moment from the late sixteenth to the early seventeenth century roughly only one in three of the population would have been born in the town.

Table 3:3 Comparative numbers of immigrant and native deponents in the Church Courts when treated as cohorts by age 1520-1639

	15								16			
	20-29	30-39	40-49	50-59	60-69	70-79	80-89	90-99	00-09	10-19	20-29	30-39
Immigrants	3	1	5	12	16	26	38	33	34	43	42	21
Natives	1	0	3	4	6	7	10	11	19	7	23	7

Table 3:4 Comparative numbers of immigrant and native deponents in the Church Courts when the entry date of migrants is related to the birth date of natives

Immigrants	3	1	5	12	16	26	38	33	34	43	42	21
Natives	3	4	6	7	10	11	19	16	23	7	1	

Source: Depositions of Dover men and women taken in the Consistory court at Canterbury.²³

Note: Natives would have been too young to depose at the end

of the period in Table 3:4

In most cases, the biographical preambles to depositions give the dates of birth of deponents, which enables some comparisons to be made between the native and migrant deponents. In Table 3:3 similarly-aged migrants and natives are treated as a cohort; in order to do this, the births of native deponents were grouped into decades, then moved forward twenty years to make possible a comparison with numbers of immigrant deponents, whose average age ranged between 22 and just over 28 years over the period. This gave a numerical comparison for successive decades, beginning in 1520-29, which does not include the total sample because the necessary information was not always available. In Table 3:4 the arrival date of an immigrant in the town has been treated in the same way as the birth date of a native, in an attempt to suggest the overall change in population numbers in different decades.

This comparison, although based on a very small, possibly untypical, sample, seems to suggest the importance of migrants to the growth of the population. It indicates that even from the 1550s the number of immigrants arriving in the town was greater than the number of native births occurring, actually double the number in the 1570s and 1580s. It also seems likely that, in cohorts, immigrants increasingly outnumbered natives, except during the war years of the 1620s.

The short biographies of deponents give information about the origins of at least some of the immigrants to the town. As might be expected, a majority came from Kent, although not all from near at hand. Distances were divided in a way that included the whole county of Kent and also segmented recognisable units of towns and villages, to give the following profile of deponents originating from Kent between 1520 and 1639:

Natives	114
Under 5 miles	37
5-12 miles	54

12-25 miles	40
25-42 miles	16
Over 42 miles (Deptford)	2
Total.....	263

The area between 5 and 12 miles away includes the towns of Folkestone, Hythe and Sandwich, from which came 6, 8 and 9 immigrants respectively. Canterbury, lying in the next band, sent 18 immigrants. Immigrants from the more distant parts of Kent tended to be wealthy.²⁴

Immigrants to Dover also included natives of 30 other English counties, from Cornwall to Northumberland, and of Wales, Scotland, France, Flanders and Zeland. Of the 95 coming from other parts of England, the highest concentrations were 13 from London, 12 from Sussex, 7 from Derby, 6 each from Warwickshire and Yorkshire, and 5 from Norfolk. 6 men came from Wales - from 5 different areas - and 2 from Scotland. 5 deponents came from Calais between 1557 and 1590, with the majority coming in the earlier period at the time of the fall of the town to the French. 3 came from Flanders between 1583 and 1585 and 6 from named places such as Cassell and Stenworke in 1558, 1568 and the 1580s. The birth places of this particular cross-section of deponents were distributed thus:

Dover	114
Elsewhere in Kent	149
Other English counties	95
Wales	6
Scotland	2
Overseas	15
Not known	13
Total	394

Aliens, or "strangers", are probably over-represented as a proportion of total immigrants because many of them were involved in one particular case brought by Jane Vandelemer against John Rawlie in 1585 in which every witness was from their community.²⁵

Origin of apprentices 1598-1640:

Dover	86
Under 5 miles	23
5-12 miles	52

12-25 miles	39
25-42 miles	8
Beyond Kent	43
Total	251 ²⁶

Similar information based on the list of apprenticeship indentures gives the above profile of the origins of apprentices.

The greatest difference between the origins of apprentices and other migrants seems to have been that fewer apprentices came from very distant places. Nevertheless, 14 came from Sussex, 7 from Devonshire, 4 from Cornwall and London, 3 from Dorset and Northumberland, and others from Essex, Warwick, Yorkshire, Wiltshire and Hertfordshire.²⁷

The age of immigrants at their entry to the town was of course crucial in terms of the birth rate. Unfortunately the age of marriage of women is almost impossible to interpret from deposition materials, which precludes speculation about periods of potentially high fertility. Certain other tendencies that might have contributed to population growth can, however, be observed, by examining the distribution of ages of immigrants at their entry in certain periods. Once again, it must be stressed that this is a small and possibly untypical sample.

Table 3:5 Distribution of ages of immigrants at their date of entry to Dover in decades 1520-1639

Decade of entry	Age at entry, in decades							Total
	0-10	11-20	21-30	31-40	41-50	51-60	61-70	
1520-29	1		2					3
1530-39			2					2
1540-49		1	2			1		4
1550-59		2	6	3	1			12
1560-69		1	8	6	1			16
1570-79	4	2	11	6	3	1		27
1580-89	1	13	12	7	2	2	1	38
1590-99	2	11	12	4	1	3		33
1600-09	2	7	14	8	2	2		35
1610-19	2	8	19	11	2			42
1620-29	2	10	14	9	5	1	1	42
1630-39		6	9	2	3		1	21

Source: as Tables 3:3 and 3:4

It would be unwise to suggest that the increasing number of migrants

deposing in the church courts necessarily reflects a similarly increasing number in the town, although that might be the case. More interesting, perhaps, is the rise in the proportion of young people of apprentice age, that is the 11-20 age group, in the 1580s, when it rose to 34% of the whole, a larger percentage than the 21-30 age-group, who had formed at least 50% of the whole until 1570. It is yet another pointer to an increase in economic activity in the town in the decade in which the harbour was renewed. Since a successful apprenticeship was a guarantee of freedom in the town after 1602,²⁸ many of those apprentices might have stayed on and fathered some of the growing number of children born in the early seventeenth century. In most decades the age-groups most likely to be fertile, that is 21-30 and 31-40, formed the largest percentage of these immigrant deponents, some of the latter group probably bringing children with them. Nevertheless, the wider distribution of ages that occurred over time perhaps suggests that the town had become more attractive to those outsiders seeking a livelihood than the places where they were already established.

There are some indications that family size in Dover was perhaps larger than might be expected in the early seventeenth century. Testamentary accounts of the later period itemise the testator's surviving minors with their ages, and these figures give some clue as to frequency of births within marriage. The average gap between births was just under three years (2.9 years) over the whole period. A number of testamentary accounts were those of sailors who died at sea while still of working age, and these show evidence of large families with frequent births. For example, Adrian Askew's children were 15,9,7,6 and 2; three of Richard Doves' were adult and the others were 20,18,9 and 7; Thomas Mayre's were 12,9,4, 2, and an infant, and Daniel Shortwilliams' were 15,13,11,8,6 and 4 years of age.²⁹ The families of more wealthy men followed a similar pattern, such as those of Thomas Harvey, with children of

19,16,14,10,9 and 6 and Richard Golder, with children of 19,17,16,14 and 4 years' old.³⁰ Numbers of children surviving a father may, of course, reflect more than one marriage. These seventeenth century figures suggest that the birth rate was likely to have been high then, and the population proportionately young.

No attempt has been made to assess the actual population of Dover in the period under review. Available sources suggest that the population of St. Mary's parish began to increase in the 1580s and rose sharply in the first four decades of the seventeenth century, in spite of setbacks during periods of infectious disease. The population of St. James's parish, to the east of the river, is likely to have risen less sharply, owing to a movement of population towards the harbour on the western side of the bay. Migration, although difficult to quantify, seems likely to have played a large part in the replacement and growth of population, particularly from the 1580s. The very small amount of evidence that exists for family size suggests that the population was likely to have had a high proportion of minors in the early seventeenth century, and to have recovered rapidly from episodes of high mortality.