

ARMADA PREPARATIONS IN KENT AND
ARRANGEMENTS MADE AFTER THE DEFEAT
(1587-1589)

By J. N. MCGURK

THE militia of Kent formed part of that vast mobile army, 27,000 foot and 2,500 horse, which was detailed to stay in the maritime counties and to shadow the Armada up the Channel.¹ Special arrangements were made for mutual aid between the maritime counties, and these covered the more vulnerable parts of the coast on which the enemy might hazard a landing. Kent, for example, was to send 4,000 men to any port or part of Sussex threatened, and should the Isle of Sheppey be chosen by the enemy, the shire of Essex would send 6,000 men to join the 4,000 in Kent for that area of defence.² A list of the 'dangerous places' and of places 'fittest to be putt in defence to hinder th'enemye' was drawn up for Kent;³ numerous lists for the other maritime counties also exist. One such surviving in the Leveson Papers⁴ reads:

<i>The Place of Landinge</i>		<i>To be commanded by:</i>	
The isle of Sheppey		Sir Thomas Sondes	
The isle of Tannet		Mr. Edward Wotton	
The Downes		Mr. Michael Sondes	
Shernesse and Romney Marsh		Sir Thomas Scott	
The North		Mr. Henry Woode	
<i>Places of Retrait</i>			
Canterburie; Sandwich; Rochester; Aylesforde; Maydstone.			
<i>Companies appointed to repaire to the isle of Shepwaye</i>			
<i>Sir Thomas Sondes</i>			
Captaine John Cobham	.....	300	} Trayned
Capt. Marvin	.....	114	
Mr. Harlarkden	.....	150	} Untrayned
George Denham	.....	150	
Mr. Ramsey	.....	100	
Mr. Bourne	.....	100	
Mr. Gyles	.....	100	
The town of ffordwich	.....	100	} Trayned
		1114	

¹ S.P.12/212/40. Sir Thomas Scott to Lord Burghley, 13th July, 1588. Harl. MSS. 168, ff. 110-14. *Bruce, Reports*, apps. xx, xxii, xxv, xxvi.

² S.P.12/209/49, 50d, 51.

³ S.P.12/209/50d. 'These places following are aptest for the armie of fflanders to land in; Downes and Margat in Kent, River Thames, Harwich, Yarmouth, Hull, Scotland.'

⁴ D.593/S/4/12/2, n.d. but found in a bundle dealing with the year 1587/8. (The document is transcribed above and overleaf.)

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Companies appointed to the isle of Tannet.

Mr. Edward Wotton

Capt. Crispe 250	} of the trained
Capt. Partridge	..... 200	
Capt. Charles Hales	..... 120	} untrayned
Capt. John Finch	..... 150	
	720	

It was obviously impossible for the government and the maritime shires to cover adequately all the dangerous places with fortifications and defence forces, nevertheless the coastal forts in Kent were inspected in 1587, in addition to the previous inspection carried out by Lord Cobham and six other Commissioners.⁵ But the plan for inter-county aid stood as government policy, despite the proposals and counter-proposals for other plans both within the Council and among the militia leaders in the shires.⁶ Reports of the King of Spain's preparations for an invasion had been coming in to the Privy Council from as early as January, 1584. Many of these were confirmed as true by Thomas Rodgers, *alias* Nicholas Berden, Walsingham's private agent abroad. Sir Francis Drake and Sir John Gilbert reported that an army of c. 60,000 at the least was being prepared for an expedition against England.⁷ Lord Cobham's report to the Council of the military preparedness of the shire at the beginning of 1586 in the form of an abstract of his certificate makes it appear that Kent was reasonably ready.⁸

‘There are’, he writes, ‘trained in this county 2,500 men and put under captains; to which His Lordship hath added 700 more with the good liking of the county. 300 horse put in readiness under captains; to each captain 50, with a lieutenant, trumpet, cornet and all in suitable cassocks. There are appointed to each company of 300 trained men, 50 pioneers; and to every company of 200 men, 39 pioneers furnished under the leading of the head constables of the place where they are levied, and to every companie two carts. The Justices will see 300 shot mounted upon ordinarie naggs for the firing of the beacons, viz. 50 out of each lath. The Justices of the quorum and th’other Justices have agreed to find petronells but such of them as have the leading either of horse or foot desired to be eased thereof, in respect they are otherwise employed . . .’

After that report, instructions and orders for military preparation intensified in Kent. Watches were set at Hoo, Sheppey, Graystones, Elmes, Dymchurch and Sandgate, and the beacon system of the county which was to base its movement of light on a signal from Fairlight near

⁵ SP.12/163/5; D.593/S/4/7, 8. Detailed reports on the forts in Kent, 580-1.

⁶ D.593/S/4/11/3. Copy letters from the Privy Council to William, Lord Cobham, and to his Deputy Lieutenants.

⁷ Quoted by H. Abel, *History of Kent* (1898), 183.

⁸ H.M.C. *15th Report*, app. pt. v, p. 16. The Council thanked Cobham ‘for the great pains we perceive you have taken by the certificate of your doings sent unto us’. *Ibid.*, p. 18.

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Hastings, was put into a state of readiness.⁹ Detailed instructions were sent out by Lord Cobham to his deputies to view and train the foot bands. They were to choose the time judiciously so that there would be the least burden to the subject. The training of the shot (the more troublesome) was to be carried out by the corporals in every band on the holy days after prayer. 'Men of ability' were to be chosen to serve in such bands so that this service might be performed without burden to the county. There is a final and express warning in these instructions that those who have become retainers to noblemen and gentlemen are not to be exempt no matter to whom they belong. Everything was to be ready for the muster master's coming.¹⁰ The Council had already instructed Sir Thomas Churchyard¹¹ to meet the Sheriff and Commissioners for musters in Kent to arrange the days and places for the training and viewing of the select bands, which then in Kent totalled 4,000 men.¹²

Training went forward at the appropriate times during 1586, and special orders were taken for guarding the River Medway and the ships at Upnor and Chatham: these orders were complicated, but sought to achieve harmony between the warning systems, the forces in the ships, and those stationed on land, especially those at Rochester.¹³ Cobham also had to see to the repair of damage caused to coastal places by the Dunkirkers. The Queen in correspondence to him found 'it odd that the Cinque Ports should be so remiss with the Dunkirkers'.¹⁴ Throughout that year he was also responsible for reminding the justices of the shire of their duty to provide petronells, to watch the beacons, to disarm all ill-affected persons, to prevent rumours and to make sure in the viewing and training of the men that a proportion of the archers was transferred to muskets.¹⁵

The year 1587 was naturally one of great tension and activity in the shire. In March of that year all the maritime counties were alerted to

⁹ H.M.C. *15th Report*, app. v, p. 18. The Privy Council had expressed a wish that the precedents 'touchinge watch and warde . . . remaining with Sir Thomas Scott and Mr. William Lambarde should be renewed and put into practice' (with respect to the above places).

¹⁰ D.593/S/4/11/1. Lord William Cobham to the deputies, Sir Thomas Fane and Sir Henry Cobham, 1st August, 1585.

¹¹ S.P.12/170/63, 64, 65.

¹² Sir Roger Twysden's, *Book of Musters in Kent*—Lambeth Pal. Lib. 1392, ff. 103-5. The High Sheriff in Kent for that year was Justinian Champneys. William Lambarde was one of the eleven Commissioners for musters in the shire at that time.

¹³ D.593/S/4/18/1. 'Orders taken for guarding the Medway' signed by Henry Palmer, W. Waller and W. Borough, 2nd January, 1586.

¹⁴ H.M.C. *15th Report*, app. v, p. 18. The Queen to Lord Cobham, 20th August, 1587.

¹⁵ D.593/S/4/11/1. Lord William Cobham to his Deputies, 13th December, 1586.

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have their forces ready to repel an invasion.¹⁶ Like all the other Lieutenants, Cobham was directed to have his troops assembled under captains by the 20th of the month. All the vulnerable parts of the coast were to be pointed out to them so that they might take the necessary steps to make them defensible.

Despite the urgency of these orders, or maybe because of the intense activity they engendered, five shires including Kent did not make the necessary certificate on time.¹⁷ The returns required of the Vice-Admirals suffered the same fate.¹⁸

The dispatch of the Armada having been postponed for various reasons, martial activity in Kent slackened off in the spring and summer of 1587, but as the autumn and winter approached anxiety began to mount in expectation of a Spanish attempt being made the following spring. The rising fears are almost in proportion to the amount of paper instructions issuing from the Council to the county and from the Lord Lieutenant to his deputies and the latter's to the captains, constables and other minor officials. Specific and urgent orders began again in October, 1587. The preamble of the Council's letter on the 9th emphasized the gravity of the time.¹⁹

'The Queenes Majesty beinge sundrie waies at this present enformed of the great preparations nowe presentlie made readie in Spayne for the furniture of a mightie armie with a navie to come presentlie into the Seas and haveinge great cause to doubt not of some attempte; it is most necessarye that the whole realme sholde be forthwith well guarded and in readines in such strength as God hath given unto Her Majesty both by land and sea . . .'

Cobham is told that he will not have time to make a general muster, nevertheless he is to certify in writing the number of the forces that are furnished and to indicate their weapons and the names of their captains. Burghley also reminded Cobham that he did not have an answer to instructions sent earlier in the summer: 'whereof we knowe not what sholde be the impediment'.²⁰

¹⁶ S.P.12/199/93. Directions for a new view of horse and foot throughout the realm. Lord Burghley to the Deputy Lieutenants. *A.P.O.*, xv, 212, 253, 254. 'The trained bands are to be viewed and put in strength and to repair to such places as were formerly instructed within an hour's warning.'

¹⁷ *A.P.O.*, xv, 254. 9th October, 1587.

¹⁸ H.M.C. *15th Report*, app. v, p. 26. Privy Council to the Vice Admirals on 5th October, 1587, to make a stay of all ships to be employed in H.M. service. A marginal note reads: 'To this there was never any certificate returned from the Vice Admirals for the number of ships and mariners belonging to every port.' *Ibid.*, p. 27.

¹⁹ D.593/S/4/12/9. Copy of the Privy Council's letter dated 9th October, 1578.

²⁰ Notwithstanding the urgency of the demand that a certificate be sent 'forthwith and without delaie'; the certificate does not appear to have been made out until January, 1588 (S.P.12/208/25—26th January, 1587/88), nor does it appear to have been sent until April of that year; Harl. MSS. 168, f. 168—abstracts of the Lord Lieutenants' certificates April, 1588; S.P.12/209/42 mentions Kent, among ten other shires that have not yet certified; March, 1587/88.

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The previous order for the stay of all ships was qualified to allow the release of craft belonging to fishermen so that their trade could continue.²¹ The months of November and December, 1587, were particularly busy as the rumours of invasion indicated that it might take place in the following spring. Before the government gave specific orders for the recall of 1,000 veterans from the Low Countries, many had already deserted and had taken refuge in the Cinque Ports. The Lord Chancellor then directed a commission of *oyer and terminer* to Sir Thomas Scott, Sir Edward Hoby, Edward Boys, John Boys, William Partridge and Robert Honeywood to inquire about those who had received Her Majesty's pay and who had taken refuge in Kent.²² Lord Cobham directed the Mayors and Jurats of the Cinque Ports to send any man that did not have a passport under his captain's hand, back to the Earl of Leicester.²³ However, before the end of the year, almost all the English garrisons over in the Low Countries were withdrawn to reinforce the home defences.²⁴ The Council also made arrangements for ordnance and munitions to be apportioned to the six maritime counties. The Earl of Warwick, the Master of the Horse, was to see that these were delivered from Her Majesty's stores.²⁵ Much attention was also given to the disarming of known recusants between 1586 and 1588. In May, 1587, Cobham sent Richard Berkeley, a man well acquainted with Jesuits and seminary priests, to Walsingham with information.²⁶

Meanwhile, in November, 1587, the training of the bands went forward in the lathes in Kent. Sir Thomas Fane was then Lord William Cobham's chief deputy²⁷ and, as such, he was responsible for relaying his Lordship's instructions as well as those of the Council to the other deputies and eventually to the justices and captains. His letter of the 13th November²⁸ required all defaults in armour and weapons to be supplied by the 20th and the threat of the muster master's arrival in the shire was used to speed up the arrangements.²⁹

"There shall verye shortlie be sent into this countie a gentleman of good experience and credit to viewe and see all the armour within this

²¹ *A.P.O.*, xv, 218.

²² *A.P.O.*, xv, 110, 212.

²³ *Ibid.*, 154, 195.

²⁴ D.593/S/4/12/10. Copy of the Privy Council's letter to Lord Cobham.

²⁵ S.P.12/203/17, 18, 19; *A.P.O.*, xv, 213, 215; Add. MSS. 33, 923, f. 215. It is of interest in that last reference that any man who was a good archer, was not to be trained in the use of fire-arms.

²⁶ S.P.12/201/2.

²⁷ Sir Thomas Fane did in fact take charge of the lieutenantancy in October, 1586, in the absence of Lord William Cobham—D.593/S/4/11/15.

²⁸ D.593/S/4/11/1. Sir Thomas Fane to the other deputy lieutenants of Kent.

²⁹ The muster master sent was Sir Henry Norris, who was allowed 20/- *per diem* for his services. £30 was impressed on the county to pay him. H.M.C. *15th Rep.* app. v, p. 29; 21st December, 1587. Copy of the Warrant for the entertainment of certain Captains.

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shire and weapons and to whom the same are fitted, therefore I praie you see all defaults amended with speed.'

From the trained bands he wanted a sufficient number of able 'argulatiars'. Despite the obvious haste implied, it is of interest that this letter did not get to one captain of light horse, Roger Twysden, until the 22nd November.³⁰ Special mention was made by Fane for training the tallest men and that the trained bands should not go out 'unless some great and necessary occasion to the realm required it'. On one duplicate of the letter there is a note of the cost of the bills and corslets furnished in Kent, viz. 897 bills at 20d. each and 68 corslets at 13s. 4d. each.³¹

The following month (December, 1587) the government reiterated the previous month's instructions to the Lord Lieutenant in Kent and with further additions, as can be seen from Cobham's letter to his deputies,³² and from Sir Thomas Fane's letter directed to John Leveson,³³ who was later to be Cobham's chief deputy when Sir Thomas Fane died. Cobham's letter emphasized that as many muskets as possible should be used in the several bands, and that the deputies were to persuade their friends of the great necessity of this measure.³⁴ More detailed arrangements were made by Sir Thomas Fane for that month; the Hundreds of Larkfield and Wrotham were to be mustered and trained 'uppon Twesdaie nexte at Malling Heath and the other hundreds of this limit [lathe of Aylesford] upon Fridaie nexte at Yaldingæ Heath'. Last year's constables were to bring the accounts, the powder in their possession, the coats and pikes, and to deliver them to the new constables at the rendezvous. He finished his letter addressed to Leveson and Lambarde by remarking that he understood the said martial men were now as ready as any other in the shire.³⁵ Lambarde made a very long reply directly to Lord Cobham. His letter proves to be an excellent commentary on the county's state of preparedness, the attitudes of the leading men, and Lambarde's own opinion of the burdens placed on the shire at this time.³⁶ As important evidence it is here used extensively.

The main theme of the letter was to give Lord Cobham a good idea

³⁰ Lambeth Pal. Lib. 1392, f.94. The letter is endorsed 'this came to my sighte the Wednesday at nighte the 22nd'. Sir Roger Twysden, grandson of Sir Roger Twysden, confirmed that this was written in his grandfather's hand; 'indorsed with my grandfather's own hand'.

³¹ *Ibid.*, f. 113d, which is a duplicate of the above with the additional note of the cost to the shire.

³² D.593/S/4/11/1(e). Cobham to Sir Thomas Fane, 19th December, 1587.

³³ *Ibid.*, 11/1(f). Sir Thomas Fane to William Lambarde and John Leveson.

³⁴ *Ibid.*, 11/1(f).

³⁵ *Ibid.*

³⁶ *Ibid.*, 11/1(g-j). William Lambarde to Lord Cobham, from Halling, 13th December, 1587.

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of the state of things³⁷ in the shire because of his absence, and to complain in great detail of the demands made on those least able to bear taxation, purveyance and levies. On the first page he claimed that the shire could do much more than furnish 2,000 foot and 200 horse. This was Cobham's wish and to have them drawn together, then divided into four parts and trained over 16 days. Lambarde acknowledged that his Lordship's judgement was grounded on a good knowledge of the shire, but he thought because of the power of the shire and the present crisis it could do more and 'several will prove more ready than at first appeareth'. He commented on the long peace as being the mother of riches and the father of many children and that, by comparison with former years, there was no increase in the present assessment. But from that point on, he complained about landowners increasing their rents to the detriment of good and honest farmers, many of whom had become broken and fallen into beggary and the same held for many large farmers also and 'this is the state of our neighbourhood' (lathes of Aylesford and Sutton-at-Hone). He related how the years 1581, 1582, 1585, 1586 and 1587 brought with them a payment of a subsidy and a fifteenth, and that also during most of the said years the shire had been charged with many musters, and extraordinary days of training and had several times of late sent forth several companies of soldiers.

Then followed a complaint about purveyance:

' . . . but which is the most heavie of all Her Majesty's purveyors doe daily growe upon us not on lie by the taking of more part of the provisions than hath heretofore been yeeled but also by exacting of greater proportions (or rather complemeante for they exceed all proportion) than we maie conventientlie beare, for which they paie verie little or noe money at all.'

Lambarde went on to outline to Cobham the cost of the present training demands: 'for there are within this division almost 300 armed persons, besides the officers, pioneers, artificers, carters, etc. besides the lighthorsemen'. He made the claim that no footman could be drawn from home and trained for less than 12 pence a day or any horseman under 20 pence a day. For 20 days' service, i.e. 16 in actual training and 4 for coming out and going home again. The entire amount would have been £300. Then, he went on to ask that if they sent men other than the already trained bands, how could £300 supply them with coats for that time of year (December) not to speak of powder, match and bullet? Furthermore, he went on to say, 'if this amount is levied on the men that actually serve it will be thought an unequal distribution', and if they should be exempted, 'who are for the moste parte of the wealthier sorte', then it will be intolerable for the rest, as 'amountinge to a double or treble subsidie'.

³⁷ D.593/S/4/11/1/9.

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He asked leave to go even further and complained that many have been persuaded by 'your Lordship and by John Leveson and others' to leave almain rivetts, harquebuses and handguns aside as being unserviceable, 'which nevertheless were thrust upon us by authoritie', and to buy instead, good corslets, calivers and muskets even though these were not demanded by law 'in respects of their abilities, when many better in substance than they wolde hardlie come to that which by lawe they ought'. Hence, he advanced, that these dutiful men will find themselves more and more charged and 'their chearfull rediness the cause that they are the more urged'. He assured Cobham that he did not fear any mutiny, but did think it a dangerous practice to first arm men and then offend them. He also knew the great loyalty of the shire and that the common man will not in any number for any cause lift his hand against Her Majesty. He then apologised for allowing himself to go beyond a page, and said that his Lordship's time is not to be wasted in reading babbling letters, but that he had to explain at length how this new charge might be levied. In view of the many difficulties, he would rather wish this service not done at all since he has no means to perform it well. Lambarde ended his letter by remarking that since he (Cobham) was a natural inhabitant and loving father to the county so it concerned none more than himself to know what is the state of things in his absence and Lambarde claimed 'nor is anyone more than me to advertise sincerely what I thinke and finde of the same'.³⁸

The week following Lambarde's lengthy complaint and report, the Council wrote to Lord Cobham³⁹ complaining that the soldiers lately returned from the Low Countries and who had gone down to their homes were for the most part unpaid, despite the fact that the Captains were paid for themselves and their men last summer. He was to require the deputies and the justices, where such men were levied, to make enquiries of 'those that pretend that they have not receaved their full paye'. Those that were found in this category were to be sent up to the Council with their passports under the Justices' hands. Cobham sent the letter on to his brother Sir Henry Cobham, and to Sir Thomas Fane his deputies.⁴⁰ These were the last instructions of the year and were dated 18th December, 1587. It is probable that these men were brought back from the Low Countries out of Leicester's army to reinforce the home defences. Their arrears of pay obviously related to service abroad, because 'our good lord the earle of Leicester found it very strange that anie such complaynt sholde be made'⁴¹ the Privy Council reported.

³⁸ D.593/S/4/11/1/j.

³⁹ D.593/S/4/12/10.

⁴⁰ D.593/S/4/12/10/1.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*

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On 1st April, 1588, directions were sent out to the Lords Lieutenant 'for the reviewinge, training and newe musteringe of soldiers with a presente certyfyng backe unto their Lordships what defects were found'.⁴² Repeated requests were made for the return of their certificates.⁴³ In the local documentation there is more than a premonition of the forthcoming new levy mentioned, especially when Sir John Norris was sent down to Kent to pay the victuallers for the soldiers. Lord William Cobham wrote to his brother, and deputy lieutenant, Sir Henry Cobham, to appoint some gentleman of good repute to bring the unpaid bills to Sir John Norris, 'who has nowe taken leave of Her Majesty'.⁴⁴ Apparently, then, during these hectic months Lord Cobham remained at Court.⁴⁵

On 2nd April, the Council wrote in some desperation to Cobham concerning the absence of his certificate:

'Forasmuch as contrarie to Her Majesty's and our expectation it is found that no suche certificat hath been sent upp from your Lordship . . . we earnestlie require your Lordship forthwith and with all the speede that possibly maie be to cause a view of all horsemen and trained men.'⁴⁶

On the same day, Cobham received a letter from Sir Francis Walsingham asking him what martial men he had in the county who had already served in the wars as captains, lieutenants or ensigns. He was then to direct this letter, which was by express command of Her Majesty, to all his captains of the trained bands and to ask them to make particular certificate of the names of such men, of any charge they may have had, and in what position they were now employed in the trained bands.⁴⁷ This pressure and the imminent advent of Sir John Norris into Kent, as the Royal Commander-in-chief over the counties of Kent, Hampshire, Sussex, Dorset, Essex, Norfolk and Suffolk⁴⁸ hastened the lesser lieutenantcy officials into a frenzy of activity. Norris had obviously found his tasks too much and had

⁴² *A.P.C.*, xvi, 16. Richard Mayo was the Royal Messenger sent to Kent.

⁴³ *S.P.*12/209/42 and 125. 'What counties have not certified upon the formes sent in April on the state of the forces of the shires.' Kent is mentioned as well as 22 other counties. The certificates as the end product of the musters were used by the Council as ready reckoners to gain an approximate idea of the strength of the shires. When they eventually reached London they belonged to the province of the Secretary of State.

⁴⁴ *D.593/S/4/12/15*. 21st February, 1588, signed your loving friend and brother, William Cobham.

⁴⁵ Cf. *D.593/S/4/11/1(g-j)*. William Lambarde's letter to Cobham.

⁴⁶ *D.593/S/4/11/3*. Privy Council to Cobham, 2nd April, 1588. A copy.

⁴⁷ *D.593/S/4/11/3*. Francis Walsingham to Lord Cobham, 2nd April, 1588.

⁴⁸ Sir John Norris's dispatch to Kent announcing his appointment was directed to the deputies, Sir Henry Cobham and Sir Thomas Fane. Although with overall responsibilities for those shires, Norris had to report specifically on Kent in his capacity as the government's expert for viewing the fortifications on the coast. Cf. L. Boynton, *The Elizabethan Militia* (1967), 145.

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written to the Council for help in inspecting and training the men as well as in viewing the places on the coastline.⁴⁹ The Leveson papers contain many letters of deputation from Sir Henry Cobham, and Sir Thomas Fane, to the constables of the Hundreds to implement the above order.⁵⁰ Their instructions also presuppose something like a general view, since the charge is laid on all between the ages of sixteen and three score years, except spiritual persons, the lame and impotent. Those of the trained bands were to appear before Captains John Lennard, Thomas Willoughby and Thomas Potter to name but three from the letters to the constables of Codsheath, Sommerden, Westerham and the village of Brasted. These are dated the 11th of April. Norris had been appointed to his charge on the 6th.

From the East of the shire, Sir Thomas Scott and Sir James Hales, the deputy lieutenants there, made answer to Sir Francis Walsingham's letter, telling him that they had already sent in their part of the certificate with the names of the martial men and their present employment to Lord Cobham and to Sir Thomas Fane to be consolidated into the whole and perfect certificate. They also sent a list of the 'landing places' in the lathes of Scray, St. Augustine's and Shepway, but added that they did not send any returns from the city of Canterbury nor from the liberties of the Cinque Ports.⁵¹

At long last, the county's certificate was with the Council by the end of April, although it apparently had been made out in January; Cobham was obviously awaiting the full returns from the shire.⁵² An abstract was made for the use of the Council and is transcribed here.

'Kent 30, Eliz. Reg.

<i>Ablemen in all</i>	.....	12654
<i>whereof</i>		
Trained selected footmen	.....	2958
Untrained armed	.....	4166
<i>Armour of all forces</i>	.....
<i>whereof</i>		
"		6354
Muskets and calivers	.....	1762
Corsletts	.....	1742
Bowes	.....	1662
Bills and halberds	.....	1189

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*

⁵⁰ D.593/S/4/11/1. A copy. (The deputies also enclosed a transcript of the previous Privy Council letter for a general muster.) U.1000/3K.C.A. is the original of one letter of deputation, 11th April, 1588.

⁵¹ S.P.12/209/106.

⁵² S.P.12/208/25. H.M.C. *Report*, xv, app. v, p. 37, B.M. Harl. MSS. 168, f. 168 r. are other versions; the latter being an abstract. The names of the Captains are given and the numbers of horse, but no figures for the foot nor the names of their captains are included in this abstract.

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<i>Horses</i> of all forces	711
whereof		
Launces	64
Light horses	263
Argualators or shott on horseback	300
Petronells to attend upon my Lord Lieutenant	.....	84
<i>Powder</i> One last ⁵³ and 66 half barrells kept in 12 fitt townes. Match and bullett proportionable.		
<i>Pioneers</i>	.....	1077 ⁵⁴

The marginal note on the full certificate reads:

'In the last generall view of the forces of this shire (certified 1580) the complete furnitures of footmen amounting to 7548 only, which are now increased to the number of 8268 accompting the Captaines. Besides all which the furnitures be (for the most parte) renewed since that tyme. So the whole number of the furnished on foote and horseback in this Shire, with the Portes is 9912 persons.'⁵⁴

While not to be taken at their face value on every occasion, certificates do provide valuable information on the militia. This one, for example, gives all the names of the captains at that time in Kent, enumerates all the types of weapon and by comparison with earlier Kent returns⁵⁵ the ascendancy of the musket over the bow. From 1588 onwards, the Council itself did not accept the certificates at their face value but employed muster masters to verify the details with the deputies and local captains.⁵⁶

During April, May and early June nothing spectacular took place in Kent by way of preparation, though at sea Drake had attacked and sunk, burned or captured (on his own estimate) thirty-seven vessels in Cadiz harbour, on a semi-unauthorized venture at the end of April. During these months, the more obvious defensive measures were seen to be fortifying the places of descent, organizing the beacon watches, distributing quantities of powder, match and bullet, and keeping a watch on recusants, suspected persons and aliens.⁵⁷

It is clear from the Leveson papers that the disposition of the Kent forces was to be based on the time-honoured divisions of East and West Kent. Lord Cobham placed East Kent under the charge of his two deputies, Sir Thomas Scott and Sir James Hales; the former commanded the foot and the latter the horse, while his other two deputies, Sir Henry Cobham and Sir Thomas Fane, were to take command of the

⁵³ A last of gunpowder is said to be 2,400 lb. (= 24 barrels). *O.E.D.*, L. p. 85.

⁵⁴ S.P.12/208/25.

⁵⁵ S.P.12/170/64, 65, 85; returns for T.B.'s.

⁵⁶ Cf. J. Hurstfield, *The Queen's Wards* (1958), 197, in another context.

⁵⁷ S.P.12/211/93, D.593/S/4/11/1 and S/4/12/various folios. A list of the chief recusants in Kent was drawn up at this time and is to be found in S.P.12/208/40.

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western division.⁵⁸ The plan stated that the coastal force under Scott and Hales was to delay the enemy long enough to give the inland army time to intercept and prevent him from marching on London, which was well guarded with at least 10,000 men.⁵⁹ These two armies in Kent did not represent the full Kentish contribution of armed force to the national effort; the shire had to send a force of 2,000 foot to guard the Queen's person, another of 50 lances and 100 light horse to the Lord Steward at Brentwood and 500 pioneers to Gravesend.⁶⁰

On the 18th June, the Council issued clear instructions to Lord Cobham: 'beinge advertised that the kinge of Spaine's navie is alreadie abroade on the Seas and gone to the coast of Biscaye'. He was to give immediate order that all gentlemen that are captains, or leaders of men in the county were in no wise to be absent out of the shire; all the bands were to be complete and to be in a readiness to be employed as occasion would serve; the beacons were to be watched; the authors of doubtful rumours severely and speedily punished and on his own authority he was to appoint a provost marshal, who was to be assisted in all places by the justices and the constables.⁶¹ Ten days later Sir John Norris, who was apparently then in Sir James Hales' house, wrote to the deputy lieutenants⁶² to say that he was coming with Sir James Hales and Sir Thomas Scott to take a view of all the companies 'on Thursday nexte' and since John Cobham's band was near Aylesford, they would also view his on Thursday. From the letter, it is obvious that he had forwarded the previous Privy Council letter to the deputies and not to the Lord Lieutenant, Lord William Cobham.

When the enemy fleet was again sighted on the seas, the Council wrote to Cobham on the 8th July to tell him that the forces in Kent were to be ready to march to any part of the coast to prevent a landing. No persons other than the trained bands were to be allowed to assemble and all rogues and vagabonds were to be arrested.⁶³

It was thought that an attempt might be made against the Essex coast, and this was the reason given for the order to send 50 lances and 100 lighthorsemen to Gravesend by the 27th of the month, where the Earl of Leicester, the Lord Lieutenant of Essex, would take them into

⁵⁸ S.P.12/212/40; Add. MSS. 33,923, f. 180 *et seq.* and the Twysden, Scott and Leveson papers for 1588. S.P.12/211/71, 89—1,100 men are mentioned as forming the coastal army in Kent.

⁵⁹ S.P.12/212/35, 40, 60; S.P.12/213/21, 45.

⁶⁰ *A.P.C.*, xvi, 169; *H.M.C. 15th Report*, v, 47, 48 and S.P.12/213/32, 45. Sir Robert Sidney and Sir Edward Moore were the Captains appointed to the Kent force sent to guard the Queen: *Harl. MSS.* 168, f. 173v.

⁶¹ D.593/S/4/11/3(ii). Privy Council to Lord Cobham, 18th June, 1588.

⁶² *Ibid.*, S/4/11/1. Sir John Norris to Sir Henry Cobham and Sir Thomas Fane.

⁶³ Lambeth MS. 1392, f. 37, and p. 70 of the *Calendar, K.C.R.*, x. Privy Council to Lord Cobham, 8th July, 1588. There is also a further copy in Add. MSS. 33,923, f. 222.

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his charge.⁶⁴ The government's plans to keep the armies mobile, 'to be ready to serve where occasion shall arise', is also well illustrated by Sir John Leveson's directions to two of his captains, Roger Twysden and George Rivers, when he wrote that it was the Council's wish to have all the companies of horse in the shire and 6,000 foot and 600 pioneers, with all the powder, bullets, match and victuals to be ready to march either to the sea coast or to join with the forces in Essex, Sussex or London.⁶⁵

The actual movement of troops took place on the 11th July when the horse and trained foot proceeded to Rochester under their captains and were there reviewed by Sir John Norris, as he had previously arranged by letters to the deputies on the 28th June.⁶⁶ The three major commanders were Sir Thomas Fane for those from West Kent, Sir Thomas Scott, for the Eastern division and Sir James Hales in command of the horse. No new returns went up to the Council after this review; in any case not all were present, since horse patrols were left on the coast to give information of the enemy's approach; nor were all the captains of the trained bands present, since many were engaged in assisting, assembling and training the untrained forces throughout the shire. About 2,500 trained footmen were there at Rochester.⁶⁷

Two days following the review at Rochester, Sir Thomas Scott wrote two interesting letters, giving an insight into the hectic atmosphere of those days in Kent. One of them also clearly shows how the general overall command of Sir John Norris was resented on the part of the captains and by Scott in particular. The letters also reflect the continued controversy over the strategy to be adopted in the face of the enemy.

Scott's first letter⁶⁸ on the day following the review is in effect an answer to the Privy Council's earlier letter⁶⁹ regarding 2,000 of the best footmen in Kent to be sent to protect the Queen's person if the necessity arose. Scott wrote:

'Whereas by occasion Sir John Norreys and wee ourselves were much busied yesterday in viewing, martialling and trayning of the most part of the select and trained bands of this county . . . it was not remembered to answer a letter sent by the Lords of the Council a good tyme synce concernyng the sending forth 2000 out of the county to attend Her Majesty's person and 4000 to make head agaynst the

⁶⁴ Lambeth MSS. 1392, f. 37.

⁶⁵ *Ibid.* f. 92, contains a Commission of Lieutenancy to the Earl of Leicester for Essex and Hertford—Lambeth Palace Library.

⁶⁶ D.593/S/4/11/1.

⁶⁷ S.P.12/208/25—gives the names of all commanders, and captains. The captains to be at Rochester at the 'Crown' before 9 o'clock. Lambeth Palace MSS. 247, f. 37d.

⁶⁸ S.P.12/212/35. Sir Thomas Scott to the Privy Council, 12th July, 1588.

⁶⁹ S.P.12/211/89. 'A note of footmen . . . for the guard of H.M. person.' June, 1588.

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enemy after he is landed. In answere whereof we are nowe bound to signifie unto your good lordshippes we thincke it verie meete that out of the number of 2500 trayned soldiers, 200 of the best to be sent to attend Her Majesty and 500 of the worst to be drawn equally out of everie band and left to join with the other bands to the 4000 we verily thincke may be sent to make head as aforesaid.'

Perhaps the deputies in Kent did not want such a large force to be taken out of the shire for fear of lessening morale should the Kent coast be attacked and their presence on the coast, they thought, might have been the best possible way in which to protect Her Majesty rather than await the enemy's advance on London.⁷⁰

The rest of his letter takes the form of a report to the Council on the decisions taken at Rochester, some of which merely confirm former arrangements.⁷¹ One important decision, not reported by Scott, but probably because it was long since decided, was the places of assembly for the forces in Kent. These were confirmed by the meeting, as follows:

<i>Lathe</i>	....	<i>Rendezvous</i>
St. Augustine's	....	Canterbury, Sandwich, Dover.
Shepway	....	Folkestone, Hythe, New Romney.
Scray	....	Ashford.
Aylesford	....	Rochester, Maidstone, Tunbridge.
Sutton at Hone	....	Dartford, Sevenoaks.

Geographically and by long practice these were the usual meeting places for viewing and training the various companies of the shire.

It was also confirmed at the Rochester meeting, and was apparently Sir John Norris's decision, that Sir James Hales should have charge of the horse and to scout along the Downs and that Scott should keep his place at Sheerness with the foot. The Council's other request that they endeavour to increase their numbers was chafed at:

'we have endeavoured ourselves for the effecting thereof but considering the verie great charges already imposed to this county wee cannot greatly yet Increase the numbers.'

reported Sir Thomas Scott.⁷²

Scott's second letter, the very next day, brought out the conflict of

⁷⁰ Scott goes on to recommend William Sedley 'in respect of his learning, state of living and distinction' to be the most fit person to be provost marshal. Cf. the Council's request to Cobham dated 18th June, 1588, that a provost marshal be appointed by him. He had obviously not filled the post by 12th July, the date of Scott's letter.

⁷¹ S.P.12/212/35. Sir Thomas Scott and Sir Thomas Fane to the Privy Council, 12th July, 1588.

⁷² S.P.12/212/35. Sir James Hales had 64 lances, 263 light-horse, 300 harquebusiers on the Downs. S.P.12/213/99. Sir Thomas Scott had c. 4,000 trained and untrained armed men on foot. S.P.12/213/86. In this second letter, S.P.12/212/40 he mentions 5,000-6,000 men, which new figure may have included Sir James Hales' force of lances.

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policy on strategy. Sir John Norris's plans, which were no doubt government policy, were at variance with Scott's ideas. From Sir Thomas Sondes' house he wrote on the 13th July to the Privy Council.⁷³

'Synce the letter written yesterday unto your Lordshippes by Sir Thomas Fane and myself I have thought upon such a course as may well land with the answering of the enemy at the seat of fire before they can be with any forces on land.'

This new course of action, which apparently came to him overnight, was nothing more than the original orders of Lord Cobham, before Sir John Norris's appointment.⁷⁴ This he acknowledged:

'all former orders sett downe by my L. Cobham which in my poore opinion cannott much be amended and will not greatly alter Sir John Norreys his determination *viz* that Sir James Hales and I should keep our places in our owne persons with such forces as were assigned to each of us, he at the Downes and I at Shornecliff . . . [in his former letter he called his station Shorneness] where I confidently shoulde not, may not, doe the best service that we shall be able to doe either by keeping the enemy from Landing by disordering or destroying part of his forces or at the least by staying him for a tyme.'⁷⁵

No doubt the government's policy, as enshrined in Sir John Norris's plans, was to prevent the confusion it feared on invasion by arranging measures for an orderly retreat, if necessary, and for a counter-attack in due course. Apparently, Scott thought it better policy to prevent a landing at all and would have liked more forces at his command to do so. Yet, there is more than a hint in his writing that he either misunderstood the directions of Norris or that he did not like to admit the latter's ideas without some objection, *a fortiori*, since to his mind they conflicted with his Lord Lieutenant's ideas.

It was shortly after his major review at Rochester that Sir John Norris was called into conference with the Lord Chamberlain and Vice-Chamberlain to consider means of strengthening the Thames against 'any forraign attempt'. Sir John Norris and Sir Thomas Layton then went down to Gravesend to make a view of the defences.⁷⁶ A sketch by Sir John Norris is extant⁷⁷ which shows the position of the blockhouses at Tilbury and Gravesend and the placements of the great ordnance. The conference was held on the 18th July and Sir John's sketch is dated the 19th July. A much more professional survey of the Thames from London to Gravesend, showing the disposition of the vessels as well as the blockhouses, was drawn up by Robert Adams.

⁷³ S.P.12/212/40. Sir Thomas Scott to the Privy Council, 13th July, 1588.

⁷⁴ D.593/S/4/11/1.

⁷⁵ S.P.12/212/40.

⁷⁶ Harl. MSS. 6994, 128r. and v. From Sir Francis Walsingham to Lord Burghley, 18th July.

⁷⁷ D.593/S/4/12/13.

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Despite the seeming attention given to the inland forces, the government had long been conscious of the weakness of the long coastline and the vulnerability of the major ports. In order to secure the latter, able but untrained men were drafted to them as follows: Falmouth, 11,000; Plymouth, 17,000; the Sussex coast, 15,000; the Isle of Sheppey, 20,000; Yarmouth, 13,000; Poole, 14,000; Portsmouth, 16,000; Harwich, 17,000 and the Suffolk coast, 13,300. Lord Cobham as Lord Warden of the Cinque Ports received many instructions to repair the bulwarks, to bring the garrisons up to strength and to have adequate stores of powder and ordnance.⁷⁸

At the end of July, and especially as the running fight was taking place in the Channel, from the 21st to the 27th July, orders fell thick and fast from the Council to the Kent military authorities. The movement of troops which these orders 'triggered off' show how the Council and the county commanders followed the progress of the enemy. We saw how the Lords Lieutenant had been ordered to have their men at Brentwood by the 27th.⁷⁹ Shortly after this order the Privy Council redirected them:

' . . . that whereas their Lordships were required by late letters from the Lords of Her Majesties Privie Councill to have a certain number of launces and light horse to be sent to Brentwodde . . . they are now praied that all the rest of the launces and light horse levied in that countye might be sent up hether or to London.'⁸⁰

Those from Kent were to be at Brentwood by the 7th August; obviously the government had anticipated a longer fought-out-war in the Channel than in fact took place. But then, shortly after this order, letters were immediately directed to the deputies lieutenant in Kent to cause forces and especially the muskets and shot to be brought to the coastal towns and placed in fit areas in readiness to be sent to the aid of the Lord Admiral as he would require. The Lord Admiral was then informed that order had been sent to the county of Kent that their choicest shot of the trained bands would be sent to the sea side to aid him in the double manning of the ships.⁸¹ These orders were then followed by a letter to Richard Barrey, the Lieutenant of Dover Castle, and to all the justices in Kent to see to it that Sir Edward Hoby, the Vice-Admiral, had sufficient ships to convey powder, shot and munitions and to aid him in anything else he required.⁸²

Immediately after the Council's instructions, Sir Thomas Scott, from his position on the Downs, informed the Lord Treasurer on the 27th that

⁷⁸ D.593/S/4/13/4 and 12/17. The powder necessary for each of the Cinque Ports and their members is detailed, amounting in all to 3 lasts and 113 barrels. The three lasts were to be provided from Canterbury, Rye and Maidstone.

⁷⁹ *A.P.C.*, xvi, 169.

⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 181-4.

⁸¹ *Ibid.*, p. 185. Apparently musketeers were required in the fleet.

⁸² *Ibid.*, p. 188. Letters to Richard Barrey, Lieutenant of Dover Castle.

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having observed the Armada they had drawn up the coastal forces to make a show of strength on the Downs, viz. 30 ensigns of foot and 3 cornets of horse. He assured Burghley that all was guarded "according to the plott' including the Isle of Sheppey but that the Isle of Thanet 'wanteth the assistance of Edward Wotton and Thomas Fane (the younger) which cannot be performed because they are served from the east part; except for some direction from your lordship or from my Lord Steward'.

It is of interest that his historic letter is not addressed from the camp on the Downs, which was near Northbourne, some three to four miles from the coast, but from Dover. The letter must also have been on its way during the night since it is endorsed 'Sittingbourne at four in the morninge'.⁸³

Had the Spaniards landed where Scott was prepared to meet them, the planned orders were that both Scott and Hales should retreat from the seat of fire once contact had been made and then join the reserve force of over 2,000 from East Kent, who were then assembling at Canterbury. Both forces were to meet either there or at Ashford. Scott pointed out that this plan would have raised the force to between 6,000 and 7,000 footmen besides horse and pioneers—a formidable force indeed, if we did not remember that only about 300 of them would have been trained soldiers.⁸⁴

From West Kent another reserve of nearly 3,000 men was to be collected at Maidstone under Sir Henry Cobham and Sir Thomas Fane. This force consisted of 200 trained men, 100 well armed but only partially trained men and 2,500 imperfectly armed and trained men. But these forces were never called upon to fight since the Armada was decidedly defeated within the next three days and dispersed at sea. It was also in those final days of July, 1588, that the famous army at Tilbury was being formed, never completely, in accord with the paper plans since the government apparently never intended to have it finally formed. "The government succeeded admirably in its aim to have the trained bands near or en route, so that they could be brought up quickly if there was a landing but not to have more than the minimum actually at Tilbury, where the government and not the counties paid for them."⁸⁵

An assessment of the Kent contribution to the various defence forces in 1588 can now be made. It is difficult not to be sceptical⁸⁶ about

⁸³ S.P.12/213/45. Apparently Sir John Norris had appointed that all the forces there should encamp near Lydd, which is near to Dover.

⁸⁴ S.P.12/212/35, 40.

⁸⁵ L. Boynton, *The Elizabethan Militia* (1967), p. 163.

⁸⁶ C. Read, *Lord Burghley and Queen Elizabeth* (1960), p. 579, n. 37, claimed that Harl. MSS. 168 and the Foljambe papers (H.M.C., *Report*, xv) give the more reliable figures for this service.

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some of the figures if one does not allow for a natural discrepancy between the numbers officially ordered and those actually in the field. The following tabulation is a conflation of those actually presented, and given in Harleian MSS. 168, f. 168; State Papers Domestic, 12/213/32, 45, 82, 84, 95, 96, 97, 99; H.M.C., xv, Rep. app. v, and numbers mentioned in the Leveson, Scott and Twysden Lieutenantancy papers.⁸⁷

THE DISPOSITION OF KENT FORCES IN JULY, 1588

	To the Queen's Army St. James'	To the Coastal force The Downs	East Kent Reserve at Canterbury	West Kent Reserve at Maidstone
<i>Foot</i>				
Armed and trained foot	2,000	500	275	183
Armed un- trained foot	0	3,500	546	120
Partially armed foot	0	0	1,200	2,500
Pioneers	500	1,077	0	0
<i>Total Foot</i>	2,000	4,000	2,021	2,803
<i>Horse</i>				
Lances	—	64	—	—
Light horse	—	265	—	—
Harquebusiers	—	300	—	—
Petronnels	—	84	—	—
Total of Horse to include 12 officers			was	725
Total of Foot to include 56 officers			was	10,880
Total of Horse, Foot and Pioneers				13,182

After the defeat of the Armada the disbanding of the forces took place in stages throughout the month of August. On the 3rd the shires were ordered to withhold the march of any further forces towards the capital. On the 5th the Earl of Leicester was ordered to dismiss two-thirds of his army at Tilbury.⁸⁸ On the 16th, Sir John Norris instructed

⁸⁷ Leveson Papers; D.593/S/3/Staffs. C.R.O. Scott Papers U1115/04, 05, 06 Kent C.R.O. Twysden Papers, Lambeth Palace Library MSS. 247,1392. These last are calendared in *K.C.R.*, x, by G. Scott Thomson (1925).

⁸⁸ S.P.12/215/7. 13th August, 1588.

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Captain Roger Twysden to take his horsemen home, i.e. to the lower division of the lathe of Aylesford, because . . .

'Her Majesty⁸⁹ fears that Captain' Twysden's horses will take great harme by living heere aboute the campe.'

Nevertheless he was instructed to keep them in a state of readiness to go anywhere within an hour's notice. Further forces had been dismissed by the 13th on account of the harvest. In writing to Lord Cobham, both Sir Thomas Scott and Sir James Hales mention that . . .

'Yet are wee now but 3300 footmen in this campe besides the officers and oure horsemen, which amounte to 300.'⁹⁰

It is of interest that Leicester wrote to the Lord Treasurer to justify his previous action of massing the forces near Lydd.⁹¹ He wrote:

'Sir Francis Drake sent information *via* Mr. Neweson from Margate that the Spaniards did intend to land at Dengeness neare Lidd and there to intrench themselves and to be supplied from time to time out of Fraunce with victuals and all necessaries. I have thought it very meete to advertise your Lordship thereof. From the campe at Northbourne ix. of Aug. 1588.'

On 16th August, Leicester wrote⁹² to the deputies of Kent that the soldiers now in camp were to be disbanded for the harvest and that a fresh body of 1,000 foot from the south and west of the shire should be assembled to replace them. He advised that the officers should be continued in pay and that Captain Morgan's men be 'planted on the sea coasts of Kent'.⁹³

By the end of August the camps were broken up and the men sent home. The splendour of the final review at Tilbury and the Queen's speech on that occasion are too well known to elaborate on here, but what is of immediate interest is the comment of an old soldier on the appearance of the troops at Tilbury. It speaks for itself:

' . . . and because that no man can conveniently and fitly be armed, unles he be first fitly apparrelled for his armour and also for the use of his weapon and that in the campe and armie of Tilburie in 1588 whereas there were regiments of divers shires with divers bands both of demilaunces and lighthorsemen I did see and observe so great disorder and deformitie in their apparrell to arme withall, as I saw but verie fewe of the armie that had anie convenience of apparrell and chiefly of doublets to arm uppon, whereof it came to pass that most of them did wear their armour verie uncomelie, uneasilie . . .'⁹⁴

Militia activity in Kent did not end with the defeat of the Armada;

⁸⁹ Lambeth Palace MSS. 1392, f. 37d.

⁹⁰ S.P.12/215/7.

⁹¹ S.P.12/214/52. Leicester to the Lord Treasurer. 18th August, 1588.

⁹² D.593/S/4/12/14; a copy of the original.

⁹³ *Ibid.*

⁹⁴ Quoted in Sir John Smith's *Instructions, Observations and Orders Militarie* (London, 1595), 183.

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lieutenancy records until the end of the year 1588, indicate the further collecting of troops, assessments for money and (in the light of the recent experience) detailed instructions were sent out for the training of troops. On 2nd September, the Lord Lieutenant recalled Captain Roger Twysden's band of light horse to Rochester.⁹⁵ Two groups of lieutenancy papers⁹⁶ are particularly full both for the remainder of the year 1588 and the following year. One contains an interesting treatise on defence in the form of proposals submitted to the Privy Council. It is most likely the work of Sir Thomas Wilford for it contains many of his favoured ideas on the strategy of guarding the key places on the coast.

In November, 1588, a Thomas Cobham of Cliffe was appointed⁹⁷ captain of the argulatiors or 'shot on horseback' by the justices of the peace, Sir John Leveson and William Lambarde. This appears to be administratively interesting, since the Lord Lieutenant usually placed such appointments in the hands of the deputy lieutenants, who in this case were Sir Henry Cobham and Sir Thomas Fane.

Special instructions were also issued to captains of foot in November, 1588; they were to muster between the date of the order (29th November) and Michaelmas; every officer's name was to be set down with his 'furniture'; likewise for each soldier and his sort of weapon; also the names of pioneers, the owners of carriages, the quantities of powder, match and bullet each captain had for his band, and finally the muster book was to be sent to John Leveson. There is a last point that had been constantly advised by the government, viz. that each captain should do his best to increase the number of his musketeers.⁹⁸ That month, too, the Council called for a general muster in the shire of all horse and foot, trained and untrained men. The same two justices (Leveson and Lambarde) elaborated the general order into eight major points and addressed them to the various captains. Besides the usual orders of assembling the men, noting defects in men and armour and having them supplied, they specified that the shot of the trained bands should have two pounds of powder, two of lead and two rolls of match provided them at the place of rendezvous. They added that the money and arms for all bands would be provided at the next imprest of men; each 100 of the trained bands was to be accompanied by 15 pioneers 'furnished with bill, dagger, mattock, and sword, three carriages, three smiths, and three carpenters, a victualler, and a clerk'. The 'perfect certificate is to be handed in before the end of November'. All were to be assessed and taxed according to the last subsidy for this service and constables

⁹⁵ Lambeth Palace MSS. 1392, f. 38.

⁹⁶ D.593/S/4/11 (a group of 22 documents) and *ibid.* S/4/12, a group of 27 documents, the last one being the Treatise on Defence.

⁹⁷ D.593/S/4/12/1.

⁹⁸ D.593/S/4/12/ii, iii.

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were to report refusals to pay, after allowing one day's grace, and if they should persist in refusal after a report to the deputy lieutenants . . .

'they shall be committed to prison and to remain there until he have paid the same, and before his delivery he shall come to the next Q.S. and there answer his contempt tending to the ill of this H.M. service of so great importance.'⁹⁹

Before the year was over the county had to bear a further charge. The Queen had apparently given permission to Sir John Norris and Sir Francis Drake to levy certain numbers in the home counties for a special service. Kent was to supply 200 soldiers and 75 pioneers,¹⁰⁰ but, in consideration of the very heavy charges the county had previously to bear, the soldiers were to be merely furnished with swords and enough money to bring them to the sea-side. It was requested that they were to be chosen from those willing to be employed, but, according to Lord Cobham's letter to his deputies on this matter, they are to be 'taken from such as can be spared and that they have able, serviceable and strong bodies'.¹⁰¹

Cobham most likely added this to their Lordships' letter to avoid the levy of rogues and vagabonds who were not likely to meet those requirements. The Deputies, Sir Thomas Fane and Sir Henry Cobham, passed on these orders to John Leveson, Thomas Willoughby and Thomas Potter. By later letter, it was specified that they were to be in London and to be allowed 8d. a day. The charge was well spread over the county, so that, for instance, only 8 of these men and 4 pioneers were levied out of Tonbridge, Brenchley, Watchlingstone, Twyford and West Barnefield.¹⁰² The day for the 200 men and the 75 pioneers was changed from 20th January to the 25th and the place changed from London to Canterbury, by letters from Lord Cobham on the 11th January.¹⁰³

The price of peace seemed, indeed, to have been eternal vigilance! Kent was kept alerted in the new year, 1589. The Council wrote to the Lieutenants that it was Her Majesty's pleasure that the forces of the realm of late years prepared, mustered and furnished with arms and weapons 'shall be forthwith put into a state of readiness'.¹⁰⁴ The letter is long and descends to minor details, more reminiscent of the type of orders that usually emanated from deputy lieutenants and justices of the peace. The general view was to be taken by the 1st March, 'the tymes are still doubtfull', so that no gentleman was to depart from the shire without special leave; and the numbers in the bands both select

⁹⁹ *Ibid.*, iv, v, vi, vii.

¹⁰⁰ Lambeth Palace MSS. 1392, f. 38d.

¹⁰¹ U.1000/3. K.C.A.

¹⁰² Lambeth Palace MSS. 1392, f. 38.

¹⁰³ *Ibid.*, f. 39.

¹⁰⁴ D.593/S/4/11/1, 2nd January, 1589.

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and general were to be kept full and furnished. Special attention was to be paid to the quantities of powder and match, which were to be kept in some convenient place and under the charge of some fit and discreet person, so that 'the said powder be specially guarded to avoid inconveniences'. On this occasion, Lord Cobham was somewhat tardy in sending out the Council's instructions and in implementing them with further details, since his letter to his brother, Sir Henry, was dated the 4th February, 1589.¹⁰⁵ It is of note that he had to advise him to be at the musters himself, but that if not, 'the justices that have not charge of any band [were] to assist the captains'. The towns that were to have deposits of powder are pointed out for the two lathes of Sutton-at-Hone and Aylesford, viz. for the former Dartford and Tonbridge to have three barrels each and the latter Cranford and Rochester to have three each, and Maidstone one 'last'. We see from a very detailed scheme of arrangements for defence in the county, drawn up after the Armada,¹⁰⁶ that the other two towns detailed to have stores of powder were Canterbury and Sevenoaks. Sir Henry Cobham then copied his brother's letter and enclosed it with a covering note to his justices on the 8th February; so more than four weeks¹⁰⁷ had passed before the Council's order for the general muster was known in the localities.

Similar orders and their elaboration were issued in June and in August.¹⁰⁸ That the earlier general muster, ordered for March, did actually take place is evidenced in the Twysden Muster Book when the constables of the hundreds, under the charge of Roger Twysden, George Rivers, Robert Binge and George Cateline, took the local view at Yalding on Monday, 17th March, at eight of the clock in the forenoon.¹⁰⁹ The same men assisted at the August muster. The occasion for this new and general muster only a few months after the previous one is stated in the letter to Lord Cobham as being: '(H.M.) certaintlie knows that the Kinge of Spayne¹¹⁰ hath all this yeare made grete preparations in buildinge of newe shippes in all his north coast of Spain'.

Once again the Council had to ask for the certificates from the previous muster and demanded that it have them by the middle of October.

Throughout the year 1589, despite the obvious enthusiasm of some in Kent, for example the men who drew up the scheme already referred to, and the author of the proposals to the Council¹¹¹ (most likely Wilford),

¹⁰⁵ *Ibid.*, 4th February, 1589.

¹⁰⁶ D.593/S/4/14/4.

¹⁰⁷ *Ibid.*, 8th February, 1589.

¹⁰⁸ U.1000/3 'Book of Musters in Kent', D.593/S/4/11/1, 14th June, 1589; *ibid.*, 6th August, 1589.

¹⁰⁹ Lambeth Palace MSS. 1392, f. 44.

¹¹⁰ *Ibid.*, f. 29.

¹¹¹ D.593/S/4/12/20.

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there was a reluctance in the shire to have these orders carried out. There was a definite sense that the testing time was over. This was apparent to Lord Cobham himself who, on one occasion in that year, asked Walsingham how Kent was to replace lost armour, observing that he saw more unwillingness in the county than inability to pay.¹¹² He could make the last remark with justification for more than likely he was aware of the returns of the double subsidy in 1589 voted to make provision against further Spanish attack.¹¹³

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¹¹² S.P.12/230/74. W. Cobham to F. Walsingham, 16th February, 1589.

¹¹³ John E. Neale, *Elizabeth and her Parls, 1584-1601*, p. 201. D.593/S/4/13/8— a list of persons (43) possessing lands worth £20-£100. These were apparently (according to the endorsement) taxed for the setting forth of 1,000 men in Kent.