PART IV
THE SOCIAL CONTEXT OF DEER PARKS

There were positive and negative attitudes towards deer parks evoked partly by feelings of inclusion or exclusion, which crossed social barriers. Chapter Seven concentrates on how monarchs, noblemen and gentlemen perceived their parks, the use of the park in sporting and recreational activities, in the advance of patronage through hospitality and gifts of venison, and how it was valued aesthetically in the landscape.

Chapter Eight deals with the negative attitudes towards deer parks, specifically focusing on park breaks, illegal hunting and other activities, which challenged the notion that the park was only there for the privileged few.
PART IV - CHAPTER SEVEN
THE PERCEPTION OF CROWN, NOBLES AND GENTRY TOWARDS PARKS

Whatever its size, topography and management, the presence of deer remained the raison d'être of Elizabethan and Jacobean parks. The enjoyment of hunting by monarchs, nobility and gentry alike ensured the continuance of parks and led to strong urges to display and defend one's own park, and to emulate and envy the parks of others. Surviving documents seldom make direct reference to appreciative responses towards parks, but can be used with a degree of empathy to illustrate the emotional capital expended upon them. Such reconstruction is in itself a challenge, but even greater is to find examples from Kent. This chapter will open with the eminence of the culture surrounding royal and elite hunting (i) and the use of the park for the production of venison for the household and for gifts (ii). The park was an adjunct to hospitable entertainment, apart from hunting, and (iii) will show how parks were inextricably linked to the life-style and mentality of Tudor and early Stuart gentry society, including in (iv) the aesthetic appreciation of the park in the landscape. Lastly, the case study (v), centred on Sir Robert Sidney's attempts to gain Otford Great park from the crown, illustrates the significance put on park ownership at the highest state level and the importance to individuals of the concept of the park vis á vis their own social standing.

(i) _Attitudes to hunting in parks_

Evidence of hunting in Kentish parks is rare, as it is for the medieval period, which has provoked a great deal of debate about the role of parks in hunting. Historians such as Rackham and Birrell have underplayed the role of hunting by park owners, the latter arguing that areas of parkland were more suited to breeding than hunting deer, and that while servants hunted regularly, the owner and his guests enjoyed sporadic and occasional hunts.¹ Milesen has recently strongly refuted these premises by placing the popularity of hunting at the pivotal core of the park's function.² He contends that hunting was under-recorded, yet indirect evidence for it can be found in a wide range of

sources, and that there was a growing need for parks to provide deer for sport as numbers of deer in the wild diminished.³

The pervasiveness of the hunting culture in the sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries is better documented. Henry VIII's love of hunting has been researched by Williams; Manning's wider ranging research, covering 1485 to 1640, revealed hunting to be a 'consuming activity' which had a profound effect on popular culture; more recently, Beaver has also testified to the popularity of hunting, but in particular has drawn attention to the ritualised killing at the end of the hunt, symbolically conveying gentility and honour to differentiate the governing elite from the rest of society.⁴ Deer counts for two years, 1603 to 1605, at Penshurst(71) showed that a quarter of the deer taken were hunted by the Sidney family, guests and friends, which, if replicated in other Kentish parks, implies that hunting occurred more frequently than records reveal.⁵

The publication of contemporary hunting manuals reflected continuing interest in the sport. Gascoigne in 'The Noble Arte of Venerie or Hunting,' of 1575, wrote of hunting as a sport 'for gentle blood, ordained first for men of noble kind.'⁶ Markham in the seventh book of 'Maison Rustique, or The country farme' also covered the subject of hunting, leaning heavily on Gascoigne's text.⁷ Literary references associated the culture of hunting with gentlemanly status, typical adages being similar to that of James Cleland in 1607 'he cannot be a gentleman which loveth not hawking and hunting' or, as put by 'A Jewell for Gentrie' of 1614, hunting, hawking, fowling and fishing were 'the absolute parts of Musicke which make the perfect harmony of a true Gentlemen.'⁸ Markham considered hunting to be beneficial 'for the better obtaining of a greater readinesse, nimblenesse, cheerfulness, and strength of bodie.'⁹ Hunting skills were also associated with character formation during the transition from youth to manhood.

---

⁵ CKS U1475/E47.
⁷ Markham G., Maison Rustique, or The country farme (London, 1616) pp.66-69.
⁹ Markham, Maison Rustique, p.673.
and were thought to help build a code of conduct worthy of a gentleman – courage, honour, loyalty – qualities useful in other spheres of life, such as being a magistrate or leadership on the battlefield.¹⁰

Whether or not enforced, restrictive laws were a reminder of the elitism of the hunt because only the affluent would qualify to hunt, own hounds or possess crossbows.¹¹ Added to which, the expense of the upkeep of horses, dogs and hunting paraphernalia and, for even fewer, parks in which to indulge the sport, would have been prohibitive to most of the population.¹²

Kentish aristocrats and gentlemen lived in the midst of this culture, as testified by their parks and by the hunting enjoyed both by park owners and by illegal intruders, some of whom were members of the gentry. Deer parks were inevitably linked with hunting pursuits, especially as Kent contained no royal forests as alternative hunting grounds, but although illegal hunting activities can be elicited from court depositions, anecdotal rather than substantive evidence has to be used to give an insight into the hunting enjoyed by Kentish park owners, their families and friends. Before turning to this, the role Elizabeth I and James I played in promoting and influencing the hunting culture in Kent will be examined.

(a) Hunting in royal parks in Kent

Hunting had been one of many skills acquired in childhood by Elizabeth I and her enjoyment of it never deserted her. In 1560 William Cecil, lord Burghey, confided to de Quadra, the Spanish ambassador, that the queen was abandoning government for Robert Dudley, earl of Leicester, with whom she spent days hunting, at the risk of her health and life.¹³ Towards the end of her reign, in August 1602, his son, Sir Robert Cecil, reported that the queen, now aged 68, rode ten miles a day and also hunted, 'whether she was weary or not, I leave to your censure.'¹⁴ Deer parks provided her with venues in which to indulge in hunting at leisure, and in the chase and kill she could

¹² Munsche, *Gentlemen and Poachers*, p.32.
¹⁴ Ibid. p.393.
participate as an equal in a man's world. The urge to hunt felt by her successor James I, bordered on obsession.\textsuperscript{15} In July 1604 after the king's cursory inspection of the fleet at Rochester, the Count de Beaumont, wrote:-

He took so little notice of it that not only the seamen, but likewise persons of all ranks were much offended, and said that he loved stags more than ships, and the sound of hunting-horns more than that of cannon.\textsuperscript{16}

Both Elizabeth I's and James I's enjoyment of hunting was in contrast to their predecessors, Edward VI and Mary I, whose preoccupations in their short reigns lay elsewhere and whose poor health limited their ability to indulge in vigorous physical activity. The long reigns of Elizabeth I and James I enabled their influence in many spheres to become more deep-rooted, including the impact on their court of their passion for hunting. The monarchs' love of hunting led to a more positive attitude towards parks in which the recreation could be enjoyed. Many courtiers felt encouraged to maintain and enhance not only their residences, but also their parks, in an attempt to vie for royal favour and to entice the monarch to visit them while on progress. The crown's preference for certain palaces was partly influenced by the proximity of good hunting grounds or parks.\textsuperscript{17} Grants and leases of crown parks, keeperships and related park offices could also be used to confer royal favour as well as being a means of raising revenue.\textsuperscript{18}

The county of Kent was inexorably drawn into this theatre of court emulation, flattery and competition. Greenwich palace, Elizabeth I's birthplace and James I's early delight, and Eltham palace, surrounded by three parks(31-33), were located in northwest Kent close to London. The former was retained by both monarchs, although after 1607 less frequented by James I.\textsuperscript{19} Eltham palace became somewhat neglected, but the parklands of over 1000 acres continued to appeal because they were only about four miles from Greenwich palace.\textsuperscript{20}

\textsuperscript{16} Rye W.B., 'Visits to Rochester and Chatham made by royal, noble and distinguished personages, English and foreign, from the year 1300 to 1783' in \textit{Arch. Cant.} VI (1864-5) p.55, 18/7/1604, cited from Dépêches, Royal Mss.126, fo.421.
\textsuperscript{17} Dunlop I., \textit{Palaces and Progresses of Elizabeth I} (London, 1962) I pp.31-32.
\textsuperscript{18} See Chapter Four (i) pp.122-135.
\textsuperscript{19} Willson, \textit{James I & VI}, p.403.
That no records have so far come to light about Elizabeth I hunting in
Greenwich(39) park might be attributable to the time of year she was accustomed
to take up residence in Greenwich palace - her stay usually coinciding with the close
season, from February until late June.21 Although she occasionally visited Eltham
palace throughout her reign, little is known about her use of the parks(31-33) there.22

James I, however, did hunt in Greenwich(39) park and in the parks at
Eltham(31-33), where, as previously mentioned, he encouraged the creation of Lee(53)
park as an adjunct to the existing hunting grounds.23 He was in his late thirties at his
accession, and on his arrival in London he inspected his inheritance with delight and
enthusiasm. He spent the summer and autumn travelling from one royal house to
another, all within easy reach of the capital, 'and therein took high delight, especially to
see such store of deer and game in his parks for hunting, which is the sport he preferreth
above all worldly delight and pastime.24

James I took foreign dignitaries out hunting with him when a suitable occasion
arose, such as the visit of his brother-in-law, Christian IV of Denmark, to Greenwich in
July 1606 – a visit recorded by Henry Roberts.25 Christian IV spent five days in
Greenwich, during which the two kings spent one day hunting along with Prince Henry
and 'many honorable persons moste richly mounted on steeds of great prize, and
furniture fayre.' In the morning two bucks were taken in Greenwich(39) park, and in
the afternoon the party rode to Eltham and on horseback killed a further three bucks
with crowds following as best they could on foot, as they had whenever Elizabeth I
went hunting, and 'never wearied in view of so Royall Company, thinking themselves
most happy (of many other) to behold so rare and excellent sight, two Kings and a
Prince.' At this stage James I was willing to put himself on public display, but he soon

---

and magnificent Festivities of King James the First (New York, c.1977, reprint of 1828 edition) p.445, in
1612 James I stayed at Eltham.

21 See Chapter Three p.91 for hunting seasons.
22 Brook R., The Story of Eltham Palace (London, 1960) p.45, 1568 x2, 1569; Cole, The Portable Queen,
pp.179-202, Appendix 2; 1559, 1576, 1581 x2, 1597, 1598, 1601, 1602.
23 See Chapter Four p.138.
24 Willson, James I & VI, pp.164, 185, source not given, but Thomas Wilson (Pollard, Sir Thomas Wilson
d.1629) (http://oxforddnb.com/articles/29690) is next quoted.
25 Nichols, The Progresses and Pubic Processions of Queen Elizabeth, II pp.54-63; Moore, Henry
Roberts[Robarts](1585-1617) (http://oxforddnb.com/articles/23/23753), Henry Roberts 'England's
Farewell to Christian the Fourth.'
tired of being on show, avoiding crowds and becoming less accessible to the general public, although he did sound out local gentlemen's views during his hunting progresses.\textsuperscript{26}

James I paid two visits to Greenwich and Eltham for longer periods, when he hunted in the Eltham(31-33) parks in 1612 and 1619.\textsuperscript{27} On the final visit in May and June 1619, he was just beginning to recover from the ill health and depression that had overwhelmed him at the death of Queen Anne. However, he resumed hunting after mourning, even though racked with gout, and killed a buck. After it had been slit open, he immediately 'stood in the belly of it and bathed his bare feet and legs with the warm blood', after which he claimed that the gout had been cured because he had been 'so nimble' since.\textsuperscript{28}

It was commonly believed that various parts of the deer had healing qualities so James I's behaviour was not as bizarre as it would appear to modern observers.\textsuperscript{29} The blood of the deer also held symbolic qualities, which the king exploited to display his social superiority. He personally cut the deer's throat, as on this occasion, and would daub blood onto the faces of the attending entourage, who were not permitted to wash it off.\textsuperscript{30} The power of the blood taken after the ritual killing of the deer has been likened to the ritual of sacrifice, with religious connotations. 'The circulation of blood ... reveals a purifying and transformative power, even a sacred quality, that cannot be explained in terms of noble entertainment'; not only did it mark out favoured courtiers and convey gentility, ritualised killing also had political implications in reinforcing the unique status of

\textsuperscript{27} Nichols J., The Progresses, Processions and magnificent Festivities of King James the First, II pp.445-446; TNA SP14/108/41, 22/5/1619; TNA SP14/209/92, 12/6/1619.
\textsuperscript{28} TNA SP14/209/92, 12/6/1619. Brook, The Story of Eltham Palace, pp.45-46, a ballad of the time based on this event ends:-
   But be it this, or be it that, or Eltham's healthy clime,
   Without a doubt the bout of gout did quit him for a time.
   So let us all sing, 'Long live the King!' right merrie may he be.
   When next, in luck, he kills a buck, may I be there to see.
\textsuperscript{29} Gascoigne, The Noble Arte of Venerie, pp.39-40.
\textsuperscript{30} Thomas K., Man and the Natural World (London, 1983) p.29.
the monarch 'in a culture that represented social order as part of the natural order.'\(^{31}\)

(b) Gentry hunting in Kentish parks

Although Markham confined his discussion of parks to the last section of 'Maison Rustique', he acknowledged the need for a gentleman to enjoy the recreation of hunting within his park after more important affairs had been dealt with.\(^{32}\) There were several methods of hunting available to Elizabethan and Jacobean huntsmen, and records, though few in number for Kent, give glimpses into hunting practices in the county, its variety and social function.

Hunters could follow deer on foot, on horseback or take aim from a stationary position, perhaps from a standing or platform using various weapons, most notably the crossbow and the longbow – a weapon that was increasingly going out of fashion.\(^{33}\) The possession and occasional use of guns were mentioned in court cases, but it would seem that guns were not generally used to hunt deer as a sport.\(^{34}\) Occasionally hunting in the open countryside was an option, as occurred in July 1617 when a deer was released from Lullingstone(55) park for Lord and Lady Wotton to chase towards Otford, on their way to Knole(50).\(^{35}\)

Coursing was very popular. This was either done by flushing out a deer and allowing the dogs free pursuit after it, or was more organised over a set course within the park where a deer was released over a base line with dogs being unleashed later to give chase. The latter coursing was viewed as a spectator sport with bets being placed on which dog would bring down the deer first.\(^{36}\) The popularity of coursing, with or without permission, is conveyed in the few records for hunting extant for Kent.\(^{37}\) The formal method of watching the sport often required standings or raised platforms used

---

32 Markham, *Maison Rustique*, p.672.
34 TNA STAC8/290/17.
36 Dimbleby, *How We Built Britain* (BBC2 TV, July 2007) in James I reign an ornate stand was built in Lodge Park, Gloucestershire, from which heavily betted coursing could be viewed.
37 For examples of illegal coursing see Chapter Eight (iv) (b) Case Study C pp.283-289 (d) Case Study D pp.294-299.
Plate 7.1
Standings

(a) The property called King's Standing at Somerhill(93b), on the ridge, once part of Southfrith(93a) park or forest.

(b) The dry valley at Knole(50) along which it is thought coursing occurred. A possible site for the standing has been identified as being on the left on a platform where the present tree line ends.
as vantage points from which deer could be watched being brought down, although they might also be used as stations from which to shoot passing deer. Standings are likely to have existed in most parks, but only five records exist for Kent - at Bedgebury(4), Halden(41), Hemsted(44), Knole(50), and Somerhill(93b) (see Plate 7.1). 38 An illustration on a 1599 map of Hemsted(44) shows the standing as a scaffold-type structure round a tree (see Plate 3.12(a) p.106). 39 The standing at Knole(50) was more substantial because in the 1580s John Lennard spent £400 in repair works, including the standing ‘with the covenante’, which might have been located near a possible deer course along a dry valley (see Plate 7.1). 40 The Queen's standing in Bedgebury(55) park mentioned in 1607, perhaps refers to Elizabeth I's visit during her progress of 1573, while 'King's Standing' at Somerhill(93b), with a commanding view over the park, might well have been the site of a standing dating back to at least Henry VIII's reign, since Edward VI and James I are not known to have hunted in Southfrith(93a), which was disparked in 1610. 41

The frequency with which hunting occurred is open to speculation. In the 'Note of deere taken' for Penshurst(71) park hunting accounted for 15 deer (or 17, if two 'taken upp by my ladye' were hunted) out of 57 deer killed over a two-year period from 18 November 1603. 42 There is no way of judging whether these years were typical for Penshurst, let alone other parks in Kent, because this 'Note of deere taken' is the only one of its type yet found in the county. However, this period did coincide with the early years of James I's reign when Sir Robert Sidney was very much preoccupied at court making the most of his improved position under the new monarch, so was absent from Penshurst for long periods. 43 With only 11 days of hunting in two years, seven for 1603/4 and four for the following year, the park seems to have been under exploited for recreational hunting, but there might have been unsuccessful outings that would not have appeared in the figures. Five hunts were led by family members, including Lady

38 See Plate 7.1 p.197; CKS U1475/E23/2, 1571 Halden.
42 CKS U1475/E47.
43 Shephard, Robert Sidney, 1st earl of Leicester (1563-1626) (http://oxforddnb.com/articles/25/25524); see pp.215-216.
Barbara Sidney and her daughter, Mary, who had her own dogs, which her mother also used, showing the active participation of women in the sport, not unlikely in view of the example set by Elizabeth I's life-long interest in hunting. The other six hunts were arranged for friends ranging from the teenaged Robert Devereux, earl of Essex, to 'one of the prince's wine seller with his dogg'. Generally at Penshurst the use of dogs predominated, five deer being brought down by dogs at the end of a hunt and seven as a result of coursing, one was shot by crossbow, and two killed without the method of hunting being noted.

Owners of parks delighted to invite their friends to join them hunting or to allow guests to hunt in their absence, as a mark of gentlemanly hospitality. Special invitations might be sent on an ad hoc basis, or warrants issued to family and friends allowing them to hunt at their own convenience. Being given a warrant to take deer from other people's parks was a way in which the park owner would convey favour or show regard to the recipient. A warrant given to those without parks allowed them to enjoy the sport and to acquire extra venison for the household or to pass on as gifts. Warrants issued to park owners provided them with a change of hunting venue or one to use when they were distant from their own park. Edward Dering of Surrenden had warrants to hunt in Eastwell(28) and Boughton Malherbe(10,12) parks, as his park(84) at Surrenden did not seem to contain deer. Some warrants of long-standing were difficult to fulfil if stocks were low. Lady Wroth, Sir Robert and Lady Barbara Sidney's daughter, was asked by her parents to be 'sparing' of the deer in 1617 because the herd had been depleted in the winter.

Less open-ended invitations to hunt also occurred, and friends passing by were allowed to hunt. In 1561 Dean Wotton was 'greatly entertained' at Westenhanger(96) by Lady Winifred Sackville, in her husband's absence, with hawking in the afternoon and 'a fair course at a buck' the next morning. Sometimes formal parties were difficult to fit into busy schedules, and weeks went by before the house party at Penshurst that Robert Sidney, earl of Leicester, was planning for his courtier friends finally took place on 4

---

44 Morill, Robert Devereux, third earl of Essex (1591-1646) (http://oxforddnb.com/articles/7566).
45 Yeandle, Sir Edward Dering's 'Booke of Expences' (www.kentarchaeology.ac.uk) p.296.
Richard Sackville, earl of Dorset, an avid hunter, travelled from Knole for this whole day's hunting, but following a disagreement with his wife over finances, refused to allow her to leave Knole. The hunting party had given accompanying wives the chance to meet together on an informal basis, and Lady Anne Sackville felt very aggrieved at her enforced exclusion, but managed to visit Penshurst a few days later during her husband's absence in Lewes and 'had much talk' with her hostess and her female guests.

An invitation to a hunt might be used to further business negotiations or delicate family agreements. John Lennard invited Sir Thomas Walsingham of Scadbury to hunt with him at Knole in August 1579 at a critical point in the marriage negotiations between their children. Whether part of the tactics or unavoidably true Sir Thomas Walsingham could not 'accordinge to my good will, and your desire' accept the invitation because he was delayed at court, but he agreed to go hunting as soon as he had more leisure. The marriage went ahead in December 1579, so perhaps the hunt played a part in the successful outcome.

Whatever the method of hunting, dogs invariably participated in tracking, chasing and retrieving, and were seen as an important component of the hunting culture. Markham devoted most of Chapter XXII "Of hunting or chasing of the Stag,' to descriptions of breeds of dog and their care. Hounds were perceived to be noble, sagacious, generous, intelligent, faithful and obedient, compared with other breeds, and their owners often regarded them with special affection, caring for them better than for their servants. The ownership of lyme hounds, deployed to pick up scent, and greyhounds, used in pursuit, must have been common among huntsmen, but evidence is scarce. Sir Edward Dering of Surrenden possessed a mastiff, usually regarded as a

---

49 Sackville-West V (ed.), The diary of Lady Anne Clifford (London, 1923) p.75.
52 Markham, Maison Rustique, pp.273-682.
guard dog, and greyhounds, for which on three occasions he bought collars, slip or line. His greyhounds pursued and brought down deer in Eastwell(28) and Boughton Malherbe(10,12) parks.\textsuperscript{54} Gentlemen undertaking illicit excursions into parks frequently took their own dogs.\textsuperscript{55}

Although random records for legal hunting in about a dozen parks have been found, evidence for illegal hunting exists for several more, making it likely that all parks with deer were venues for hunting. The royal taste for hunting struck a chord with Kentish park owners, their families and friends, and this was intensified by royal visits to the county.

(ii) \textbf{Venison on the menu and venison as gifts}

There are more references to gifts of venison than to hunting in Kent, but the two were not mutually exclusive. Deer killed in hunting might later be gifted as venison, other hunted deer would be consumed by the household, and yet other deer, destined either for the household or to be gifted, were killed by deer keepers on the order of the park owners. Over the two-year period, 1603 to 1605, at Penshurst(71) park, just over a quarter of the deer killed were gifted.\textsuperscript{56}

William Harrison, chaplain to Lord Cobham, noted that venison was not sold on the open market, but was consumed by the household or given and received as gifts, sometimes in return for or in expectation of favours, or to further business.\textsuperscript{57} There was a black market in venison, which persisted despite sporadic efforts by the authorities to stamp it out, but this did not detract from the special status of the meat as a gift ‘not much contaminated by contact with commerce.’\textsuperscript{58}

The significance of the context, language, and strategies surrounding gifting in conveying messages of social and political obligation has been the focus of much

\textsuperscript{54} Yeandle, \textit{Sir Edward Dering’s ‘Booke of Expences’} (www.kentarchaeology.ac.uk) pp.24, 27, 210, 309.
\textsuperscript{55} See Chapter Eight (iv)(b) p.268 onwards with Case Studies B pp.276-283 and C pp.283-289.
\textsuperscript{56} CKS U1475/E47.
\textsuperscript{57} Holinshed R., \textit{Holinshed’s Chronicles of England, Scotland and Ireland} (London, 1587) p.204.
research in recent years.\textsuperscript{59} The 'gift register' can be cast widely but this discussion will concentrate on gifts of venison, which expressed a number of ideas between donor and recipient, and which was perceived in the culture of 1558 to 1625 as being the most prestigious item of consumption. There is no shortage of examples in Kent to illustrate the various facets of the giving of venison, but first will come the household use of venison, of which only one illustrative detailed example survives.

A finely bound volume of Robert Sidney, earl of Leicester's household expenses for the period 7 April 1624 to 21 March 1625 details the amount and cost of provisions including food during his stay at Penhurst from 15 May 1624 until 5 February 1625.\textsuperscript{60} Other pages listed the dishes served at the high table, the low table, the children's table and tables in the hall. Venison was included infrequently among the many meat, fowl and fish dishes and was listed under the heading 'Provisions of your Lordship's owne' with a notional value by the side. On 26 June 1624, prior to a busy time at Penshurst when the book recorded visits by Sir John North, Lieutenant Percy and his men, Lord Wallingford, Sir Anthony Forrest and Mr Arundell, a fat buck worth £1 10s was delivered to the kitchen and various venison dishes appeared on the menu over the next month.\textsuperscript{61} On Thursday 1 July two haunches were prepared for the high table with two pecks of flour, 19 eggs, six pounds of butter and half a pound of pepper.\textsuperscript{62} On Friday 2 July deer's foot featured among the supper dishes, and on Sunday 4 July venison pasty was made. In the following week venison stew was enjoyed for supper at the high table and afterwards formed part of the menu for the low table. At the end of July another buck worth £2 came from the park and in August half a buck valued at £1. These venison dishes were made from fresh meat, but it is likely that venison over and beyond what was immediately required was salted, as in medieval times, although no specific evidence for this practice has been found for Elizabethan and Jacobean Kent.\textsuperscript{63}

Venison was also served to mark special occasions. At Penshurst a doe was freshly killed for Lady Mary Sidney's birthday on 18 October 1603, for Sir Walter Merry's funeral, and for Christmas in the same year. On 28 September 1605 venison

\begin{footnotes}
\item[59] Heal, 'Food gifts,' pp.42-43, for summary citation of research in this field.
\item[60] CKS U1475/A27/7.
\item[61] CKS U1475/A27/7.
\item[62] Peck = a measure of capacity for dry goods, equal to 2 gallons or 8 quarts.
\item[63] Birrell J., 'Procuring, Preparing, and Serving Venison in Late Medieval England,' pp.180-182.
\end{footnotes}
from the park was enjoyed at the wedding feast of Lady Mary Sidney to Sir Robert Wroth, one of James I's hunting companions. Francis Leigh of East Wickham, killed a doe in his park to celebrate his wife's churching in January 1615, but found the deer too emaciated 'by reason of age and want of teeth' to be edible, so he had to beg a piece of venison from Nicholas Carew instead.

Not surprisingly, recipients of gifts of venison were often family members, including distant kin. Such gifts expressed and strengthened family and wider kinship ties. From 1603 to 1605 at Penshurst of the 17½ deer used to provide gifts of venison eight went to family members, including Sir Robert Sidney's aunt, born Lady Katherine Dudley, countess of Huntingdon, and to the countess of Pembroke, widow of his nephew, Sir William Herbert, both being among his most influential supporters at court. The exchange of venison was also an affectionate way of keeping in touch with distant spouses. When Sir Robert Sidney was away from home, even when serving as governor of Flushing, his wife sent him venison and he reciprocated with special treats for the larder when he could. In September 1610 he was sent a doe during his stay at Shurland, and in 1616 a doe and eight partridges were delivered to him at the royal court of Oatlands, Surrey. Gifts of venison from husband to wife occasionally acted as a peace offering. The three red deer pies Robert Sidney, earl of Leicester, sent to his wife from Nonsuch in 1617 came with an apologetic note about his continued absence, 'but yet I cannot say when the company will come to Penshurst.' Richard Sackville, earl of Dorset, did not win favour from his wife after 'a great falling out' with an indifferent kind letter' accompanying half a buck sent on 20 April 1617

As part of local social networking and to cement relationships between acquaintances, neighbouring families would exchange venison, for example, the Sidneys sent a buck or a doe to the Willoughbys of Bore Place, the Lennards of Knole

---

64 CKS U1475/E47.
65 Joyce Hoad, pers.comm. e-mail 8/5/2005, no reference given; churching = first occasion when church attendance was resumed by the mother after childbirth.
66 CKS U1475/E47; see (iv) p.237.
68 Ibid. p.157, letter 201, p.199, letter 266.
69 Ibid. p.193 letter 258.
and the Bosvilles of Sevenoaks between 1603 and 1605.\textsuperscript{72} These gifts might have been reciprocated in kind, but even if the recipients did not immediately respond to the gift, each one invariably carried an obligation of some kind when called upon by the donor.\textsuperscript{73} Thomas Wotton sent venison to 'his verye assured frende Mr Best' in May 1580, both by way of gratitude for a favour received and to celebrate the forthcoming marriage of Mr Best's daughter. Thomas Wotton's covering letter was deliberately disparaging about the quality of the buck to underline 'the great disparity between the value of the gift and what it signified,' offering Mr Best the best deer in his park whenever and wherever he chose to receive it, 'for suche hathe your curtesye ben towarde mee, as at my handes yt deservethe greater matter than Buckes.'\textsuperscript{74}

Gifts of venison could be sent as a mark of patronage in gratitude for favours or services rendered to the donor, such as the buck killed at Penhurst(71) in 1603 for three key figures serving under Sir Robert Sidney as governor of Flushing.\textsuperscript{75} To encourage a favourable outcome to business, gifts of venison might be sent to social inferiors to enhance image and to make business more palatable. In an effort to encourage William Cowdrey to pay rent due on land in Sundridge, John Lennard of Knole sent him some venison. The elderly William Cowdrey was pleased with the gift, 'Seldome cometh any venysone in these megre old daies; Wherefore I gyve unto your Worshipp the hartier thanks for your Venysone.' However, he still had excuses over his non-payment of rent!\textsuperscript{76}

There was special public significance when venison was sent for community consumption. Such a gift underlined a sense of social hierarchy and was a chance for the donor to display conspicuous giving.\textsuperscript{77} At the Admiral's court held at Sheerness on the Isle of Sheppey in June 1580, the mayor of Rochester's hospitality feast included a buck from William Brooke, lord Cobham 'to be merie with.'\textsuperscript{78} The value of a yearly buck given by Sir Robert Sidney to the tenants of Otford as being 'to my great credit' was recognised in 1600 by his solicitor, Francis Woodward, when he held the manorial

\textsuperscript{72} CKS U1475/E27.
\textsuperscript{73} Heal, 'Food gifts,' p.62.
\textsuperscript{75} CKS U1475/E27.
\textsuperscript{76} Barrett-Lennard T., \textit{An Account of the Families of Lennard and Barrett}, pp.132-134.
\textsuperscript{77} Heal, 'Food gifts,' pp.64, 67.
\textsuperscript{78} Blencoe R.W., 'Rochester Records' in \textit{Arch. Cant.} II (1859) p. 84.
court on behalf of Sir Robert Sidney. Lastly, venison might be sent to create favourable negotiating conditions. In a letter of 16 September 1601 his solicitor stressed how Sir Robert Sidney's gift of a buck to the townspeople of Wiche in Warwickshire for a communal feast had so increased his 'fame and honnour' that the whole town 'wold be at your commandment yf you should have any occasion to use them.'

The distribution of some venison seems to have been arranged as a regular allocation under the system of warrants, and did not necessarily represent spontaneous giving. When John Lennard took over the lease of Knole(50) in 1570 he was expected to honour warrants for deer issued by his predecessors as a form of patronage, for example, Sir Henry Sidney of Penshurst, was permitted to take 15 deer from Knole(50) and Northfrith(89-91). Others who held warrants for deer at Knole(50) were Richard Sackville, lord Buckhurst, Richard Lewknor of Northfrith and William Lovelace. John Lennard even importuned Richard Lewknor 'when he dyd lye sick yn his deathe bedd' so urgently did he desire to discover the extent of his obligations. The implications of making a mistake over the venison seem to have been so dire that others by the bedside did not criticise John Lennard's insensitivity. As a result of the consultation John Lennard honoured Sir Henry Sidney's warrant for 15 deer, six of which came from Northfrith(89-91). In 1576 William Lovelace allocated one of his bucks from Knole(50) to a Mr Sellinger, another example of the filtering down of patronage. However, in this instance the recipient was so ungracious that John Lennard felt him to be 'evyll worthy to good venyson,' and was likely 'to spede worse another tyme' – a hint that an inferior beast would be selected if the request was repeated.

It must have been galling to John Lennard, after the trouble the warrants had caused him, to find that, even as sitting tenant at Knole with responsibility for the park, he did not have complete freedom to take deer from there himself. His good friend, Sir William Cordell, master of the rolls, who was either allocated royal deer through his office or was in a better position to acquire warrants, in 1580 sent him a New Year's

79 CKS U1475/C75/4 4/8/1600.
82 Ibid.
present of a warrant for two does from Knole(50) park 'nye unto yow' and some very
good claret to accompany them 'bycause you shall not surfitt of the flesshe.'

Sir William Cordell's gift of venison was in response to John Lennard's New
Year gift in 1580 of two silver pots, which had put Sir William Cordell in an awkward
position. It was difficult for him to reciprocate in like measure, yet a lesser gift might
imply under valuation of the friendship. He rebuked John Lennard for sending such a
valuable present, when 'thyngs of smaller valew myght serve to recognyse that love and
frendshyppe that one of us bereth to another.' However, he hoped his gift of venison
and claret would match John Lennard's generosity, although no price could be put on
the 'mutual amyte' they shared. The whole incident underlines the delicate balance
governing the donation and receipt of gifts.

As has been shown, gifts of venison were highly esteemed, but they involved
donors and recipients in obligation and expectation. The motivation behind the gift
might stem from genuine familial affection and friendship, from expectations of
advancement or favour, from gratitude for favours received or from the need to develop
and reinforce patronage networks. In all cases, like other food gifts, but with the added
significance venison embodied, gifts of venison were an important currency in the
cultural ethos of the period.

(iii) The use of parks for recreation and hospitable entertainment, apart from
hunting

Parks were multi-functional in terms of land use and productivity, and they were
equally versatile in the way they were used for enjoyment. Monarchs and their
privileged subjects not only hunted in their parks, but also used them for ceremonial
occasions, informal entertainment, riding, walking and contemplating. Lord North's
sentiments, expressed in Charles II's reign, that the pleasure of a deer park was not just
having deer around, 'but in having so much pasture ground at hand lying open for
riding, walking and any other pastime,' would have been shared by earlier generations.

83 Barrett-Lennard, An Account of the Families of Lennard and Barrett, pp.42-44.
84 Thomas K., Man and the Natural World, pp.201-202, c.1669.
Both Elizabeth I and James I enjoyed their royal parks and appreciated the parks of their hosts on progresses and for short visits. This section highlights Elizabeth I's affection for Greenwich (a), royal visits to parks in Kent (b), and how the noblemen and gentry of Kent appreciated their parks (c). Evidence for all these aspects is patchy, so well documented events are covered in more detail to evoke contemporary reactions and attitudes to Kentish parks.

(a) The royal park at Greenwich

Elizabeth I visited Greenwich for the first time as queen a year after her accession. The palace with the backdrop of the park had been upgraded into a principal residence for Henry VIII, and it became Elizabeth I's favourite early summer residence, prior to her progresses, which usually occupied the high summer from July to September. The park was used as an adjunct to the palace both for formal, ceremonial occasions, for entertaining notable guests and for informal, recreational pursuits.

A detailed description of set pieces held in Greenwich park during Elizabeth I's first regnal visit conveys the flavour of state occasions, which lent colour and pageantry to reinforce the power and prestige of the crown. On 2 July 1559 the city of London organised an elaborate military entertainment on the lawn of the park, with Elizabeth I, ambassadors and nobility observing the manoeuvres from a viewpoint in the gatehouse overlooking the park (see Plate 7.2). Robert Dudley, earl of Leicester, inspected a muster of 1400 men-at arms, with trumpets blowing, drums beating and flutes playing. Divided into two groups, the soldiers then skirmished before the queen, 'guns were discharged on one another, the morris pike encountered together with great alarm; each ran in their weapons again, and then they fell together as fast as they could in imitation of close fight.' This impressive military pageant was followed by a

87 Dunlop, *Palaces and Progresses of Elizabeth I*, p.50; morris-pike = a type of pike supposed to be of Moorish origin (http://dictionary.oed.com).
demonstration of public loyalty, when, after the queen had thanked the participants, 'immediately was given the greatest shout as ever was heard, with hurling up of caps.'

A few days later, from the same vantage point Elizabeth I, ambassadors and distinguished guests, watched another martial display of three challengers against 'defendants of equal valour with launces and swords.' Afterwards the queen rode into the park with her entourage for a masque followed by a banquet in a 'goodly banqueting house' made from fir poles, intertwined with birch branches and covered with flowers. Separate tents were provided for the kitchen and for provisions for the combatants. To end the day there were deafening volleys of gunfire until midnight.

Regular events, such as the traditional May Day celebrations, also took place in Greenwich park. In Henry VIII's reign, with great fanfare, a procession of hundreds climbed to Duke Humphrey's tower on May Day. Though with less panoply, Elizabeth I, and her court, marked the day by climbing the same hill 'into sweet meadows and great woods to rejoice their spirits with the beauty and savour of sweet flowers and with the harmony of birds, praising God after their kind.' This aesthetic appreciation of parkland surroundings is seldom mentioned, but nevertheless played a vital part in the informal use of any park.

The queen was an enthusiastic walker, striding so fast through the bracken at Greenwich and elsewhere that she tired her courtiers. Towards the end of her reign Rowland Whyte remarked that while at Greenwich the queen 'uses to walke much in the Parke and great walkes out of the Parke and about the Parke.' One old oak tree, now dead and fallen, popularly known as the Queen Elizabeth oak, is said to be where she stopped for a refreshing drink, sitting within its hollow trunk (see Plate 7.2). She herself was 'sure the house, garden and walks may compare with the most delicat in

---

88 Nichols, The Progresses and Public Processions of Queen Elizabeth, I p.72.
89 Nichols, The Progresses and Public Processions of Queen Elizabeth, I p.73.
90 Dunlop, Palaces and Progresses of Elizabeth I, pp.49-50, eyewitness account in 1515 by Niccolo Sagadino, Venetian Secretary, 'Bringing home the May'.
91 Dunlop, Palaces and Progresses of Elizabeth I, p.51, quoted without reference.
93 Kingsford & Shaw, Manuscripts of Lord De L'Isle and Dudley, II p.468, 11/6/1600; see Plate 7.2 p.209.
94 Webster A.D., Greenwich Park - its history and associations (London, 1902) p.7; see Plate 7.2 p.209.
Plate 7.2
Greenwich park and Elizabeth I

(a) Wyngaerde's panorama of Greenwich and the palace complex in Henry VIII's reign, looking south > north. The gatehouse entrance from which Elizabeth I and her guests viewed staged events in the park can be seen to the centre of the outer wall.

(b) Remaining hulk of Queen Elizabeth I's oak at Greenwich park
23 February 2008
Italy.\textsuperscript{95} Even when relaxing in the palace garden the queen would gaze out onto the park through a window she had inserted into the garden wall in 1588.\textsuperscript{96}

In 1598 the German traveller, Paul Hentzner, who marvelled at the number of parks in England, noted the various 'wild animals' in Greenwich(39) park and the plain, 'where knights and other gentlemen use to meet at set times and holidays to exercise on horseback.'\textsuperscript{97} A painting of the park in about 1620 by an unknown artist graphically depicts the ways in which various people responded to the pleasing parkland landscape. 'A view of Greenwich palace from One Tree Hill' shows sheep grazing on the hill in the foreground, where one couple is strolling and another couple is seated admiring the view over the park to the palace and beyond, up the winding river, to London set against the skyline. Deer graze by Duke Humphrey's tower and among the scattered trees, while a lone horseman rides towards the palace, and, nearby, a man on foot with a dog puts a deer to flight (see Plate 7.3).\textsuperscript{98}

(b) Royal visits to parks in Kent

Both Elizabeth I and James I travelled extensively in their reigns, but while Elizabeth I preferred to visit local residences within a limited radius of London on a full progress, James I's interests centred on appropriate hunting venues where convenient royal residences or hunting lodges were located.\textsuperscript{99} However, despite the presence of Greenwich and Eltham palaces with their parks, neither monarch ventured regularly further into Kent.

An analysis of 23 Elizabethan progresses found that Surrey figured in 13, Hertfordshire in 12, Buckinghamshire and Oxfordshire in nine, Essex and Berkshire in eight, Hampshire in seven, but Kent only in three.\textsuperscript{100} Elizabeth I made a two-month extended progress through Kent and into Sussex in 1573, and she undertook two shorter

\textsuperscript{95} Barker, Greenwich and Blackheath Past, p.19, no source given.
\textsuperscript{96} Drake H. H. (ed.), Hasted's History of Kent corrected, enlarged and continued to the present time, Part I The Hundred of Blackheath (London, 1886) p.61 footnote 6.
\textsuperscript{97} Naunton R (ed.), Travels in England during the reign of Queen Elizabeth by Paul Hentzner (London, 1889) pp.51-52.
\textsuperscript{98} See Plate 7.3 p.211 for the painting, NMM BHC1820, by kind permission of © National Maritime Museum, Greenwich, London.
\textsuperscript{100} Cole M.H., The Portable Queen, pp.24-25.
Plate 7.3
Panoramic painting of Greenwich c.1620

NMM
BHC1820,
‘View of
Greenwich
Palace from One
Tree Hill,’
c.1620, by an
unknown artist.
By kind
permission of
© National
Maritime
Museum,
Greenwich,
London
journeys in 1559 and in 1582. However with palaces at Greenwich and Eltham, the county was easily accessible and a number of shorter trips were made into it, such as a visit to William Isley at Sundridge near Sevenoaks in 1581 and to Thomas Walsingham, whom she knighted at his home, Scadbury, near Chislehurst, in 1597. Both had parks, but Sundridge(83) had been disparked, and there is only seventeenth century evidence for Scadbury(later park, 105) park, although there is a strong possibility that it existed earlier. These 58 shorter visits were the second highest for any county.  

It is impossible to quantify the impact of the crown on the mindset of the Kentish owners of deer parks, but with the likelihood of even irregular visits there would be an incentive to maintain parks in the hope of encouraging royal favour through a visit. Additionally, if the monarch's status might be partly judged on the ownership of deer parks, so would be that of his or her subjects.

Several reasons for Elizabeth I's institution of progresses have been put forward. Among these were her love of travel through England, her wish to display her person and court to a wide range of her subjects in order to promote her image and popularity, and her inclination to combine politics and governance through personal contact and strengthened social ties with the aristocracy and gentry. On a more practical level, she wished to avoid disease prevalent in the summer heat of London. Although her travels put her hosts to great expense, they did not reduce the royal household costs as Lord Burghley illustrated in his analysis of the itemised expenses of the progress of 1573 into Kent and Surrey, which showed additional costs of over £1000, including £229 to feed the 140 horses in the queen's train.

---

102 Cole, The Portable Queen, pp.180-202, Table 1: Chronology of Royal Visits and Progresses.
103 Nichols, The Progresses and Public Processions of Queen Elizabeth, II p.49, Edmund Bohun wrote that during Elizabeth I's progresses 'she would amuse herself with considering and commending the pleasantness and goodness of her country' and 'admire the goodness of God, in diversifying the face of the earth, by the mixture of fields, meadows, pastures and woods, and, she would, as occasion offered, hunt too.'
105 Dunlop, Palaces and Progresses of Elizabeth I, pp.115-118.
Very full accounts were written of the entertainment the queen received from hosts such as Robert Dudley, earl of Leicester, at Kenilworth in 1575 or Anthony Browne, viscount Montagu, at Cowdray in 1591, but unfortunately no such detail survives for her visits to Kent.\textsuperscript{107} However, it is likely that her hosts there made sure that an asset like a park was maximised for a variety of amusements including pageantry, plays, music, banquets and hunting.

The fullest extant description is of her stay from 18 July to 21 July 1559 at Cobham Hall, the residence of William Brooke, lord Cobham, lord warden of the Cinque ports, lord lieutenant of Kent, and one of the few members of the aristocracy living in Kent.\textsuperscript{108} The manor house at Cobham had not yet been improved and extended, so the park(23) was exploited to the utmost in entertaining the queen with 'sumptuous fare and many delights of rare invention', as Francis Thynne enthused years later.\textsuperscript{109} Other dignitaries present would be duly impressed and the standing of Lord Cobham further enhanced in his neighbourhood, county and further afield.

Particularly noteworthy were two temporary buildings constructed around trees, which aroused great admiration and wonder. One building was a banqueting house 'with a goodlie gallerie thereunto', erected between rows of hawthorn trees and 'composed all of greene, with severall devises of knotted flowers.'\textsuperscript{110} To provide even more space a lime tree was trained into a pavilion, 'the goodliest spectacle mine eyes ever beheld for one tree to carry.'\textsuperscript{111} The bark was stripped off for about nine feet and the branches bent over and spread round to reach the ground to form one arbour, then another two arbours one above the other were formed in the same way, with a stairway linking one floor to another, and the boughs supporting floor boards. So huge was the tree that within each gallery 'might be placed halfe an hundred men at the least.' Crowds from miles around gathered and as Elizabeth I approached this green shelter specially commissioned verses of welcome were read out.

\textsuperscript{107} Chambers, The Elizabethan Stage, I pp.122-124; Wilson, Entertainments for Elizabeth I, pp.86-95.
\textsuperscript{110} McKeen, A memory of honour, I p.134, citing John Parkinson, Paradisi in sole paradisus Terrestris, 1629.
\textsuperscript{111} Ibid. pp.133-134, Francis Thynne.
Elizabeth I next journeyed to Otford where she stayed in her own mansion from July 23 to 28 July 1559. Supplementary space also had to be found here, and Robert Dudley, earl of Leicester, acting as host, had his tents sent from London at the cost of 77s 8d. In one of the tents he entertained the queen to a banquet costing £6 14 0d. It is likely that she went hunting while in Kent because the earl of Derby wrote to Robert Dudley on 15 July 1559 that he had been looking out for a lyme dog and suitable greyhounds which he would send 'when the Quenes highnes shalbe in progesse.' Also Robert Dudley's account book shows that he sent two bucks from Otford to Mr Chelsham and Mr Gresham, the carriage cost of which was 6s 8d.

The only description of Elizabeth I's long progress through Kent and Sussex from late July to late September 1573 comes from Gilbert Talbot, who concentrated on how she was received by the towns of Sandwich and Canterbury, rather than by the hosts of country houses. Elizabeth I stopped at 27 locations in Kent in 1573, of which 12 are known to have had parks, and three others had parks near their mansions; Sir Percival Hart at Orpington owned Lullingstone park, Sir Thomas Kempe of Olantigh owned Stowting park, while Thomas Tufton of Hothfield leased Westwell park. Although the majority of Elizabeth I's hosts had parks in which to extend their hospitality, others who did not were still honoured by the queen, so park ownership, though advantageous, was not necessarily decisive in determining where the royal progress went.

Further opportunities to display parks and to gain admiration and respect were provided as a result of Kent's unique position as the nearest gateway to the continent. Many travellers passed through the county to and from London and a park owner might therefore be called upon to entertain a passing visitor. In February 1582 Elizabeth I and

116 Otford(62), Knole(50), Comford at Birling(7), Oxenhoath(65,66), Bedgebury(4), Hemsted(44), Sissinghurst(79), Boughton Malherbe(10,12), Brabourne (Scot's Hall,77), Westenhanger(96), Canterbury(18) and Cobham(23).
the Duke of Alençon, en route for France, stayed with Sir Roger Manwood, the lord
chief baron, in his newly remodelled house at Tyler Hill, Canterbury, and might have
taken the opportunity to hunt in the surrounding park(94). Occasionally, the lord
lieutenant would meet distinguished guests on behalf of the monarch, and arrange
diversions for hawking and hunting at suitable parks on the way to London.117

In James I's reign, 'the solemn slow progresses of Elizabeth I gave way to 'the
hurriedly arranged hunting parties of which James was inordinately fond,' but which no
longer provided the measured opportunity to spread the influence of the court into the
wider community and amongst the few who entertained.118 However, in Kent there is
more direct evidence in the early years of his reign for the enhancement of parks or
creation of parks, such as Lee(53) and East Wickham(29) parks near Eltham in order to
entice a royal visit.119

Robert Sidney was particularly susceptible to one-upmanship and was prepared
to commit himself to expense he could ill afford in order to have the king visit
Penshurst.120 He had first hunted with James I (then James VI) in Scotland during the
Armada crisis of 1588 and had the stay been longer the king would have 'killed all his
buckes in Fauckland' hunting with him.121 James I thought him 'so rare a gentleman' that
he created him Viscount Lisle in 1605 and appointed him lord chamberlain of Queen
Anne's household.122 However, Viscount Lisle to win even more favour proposed
enlarging Penshurst(71) park to lure a visit from James I.123 In a letter of 6 May 1611
his steward, Thomas Golding, expressed dismay at the cost when his master was already
burdened with 'consuming debts.' He alluded to the underlying motive for the scheme,
namely a royal visit, 'Your Lordship knows well that this parte of the countrey is not
pleasant nor sportely, and therefore not lykely to have it visited by suche for whose sake

117 Rye W. B., England as seen by foreigners in the days of Elizabeth and James I (London, 1865) p.182, e.g. the duke of Saxe-Weimar in 1613.
119 See Chapter Four p.138 for Lee, and see Chapter Eight p.291-292 for East Wickham.
120 Robert Sidney's title underwent various changes – he was knighted in 1588, in 1603 he became Lord Sidney, in 1605 Viscount Lisle and in 1618 Earl of Leicester.
122 Hay, The Life of Robert Sidney, pp.68-69, citing James VI to Elizabeth I, September 1588, Bruce, Letters of Elizabeth and James VI, pp.54-55.
you would inlardge yt." He hinted that the craze for hunting might pass, writing that if 'the humor of hunting should last in another age, yett yt is not lykely to continew for ever.' He did concede that an enlarged park would add status to the family, but that its reputation was high enough because 'You have alreadye a very fair and sportlyke a park as any is in this parte of England.' His advice was sound and Penshurst(71) park was not extended.125

However, Thomas Golding was proved wrong about the unlikelihood of James I visiting Penshurst. Perhaps shortly after his letter, the king and Prince Henry, out late hunting, arrived unannounced finding the ideal household establishment because it was always ready to entertain, even in the absence of the host. The visit was celebrated in Ben Jonson's poem 'To Penshurst,' in which he devoted several lines to the park, encapsulating the essence of parkland, which helps to explain why so many of the greater landowners continued to enjoy parks on their estates.126 The park allowed Robert Sidney to 'feast and exercise' his friends; it abounded with deer, conies and pheasants; it provided grassland for cattle and sheep; it held his stud; and its woodlands were productive. It was ironic that the royal visit that Viscount Lisle had longed for, and which Elizabeth I had denied him, was fulfilled under James I, but in his absence!

While monarchs continued to be lured by the delights of the hunt, men like Robert Sidney, viscount Lisle, were prepared to maintain the honour of their house by keeping their parks, despite loss of annual rental income and the expense of park maintenance. Elizabeth I's and James I's predilection was partly responsible for the continuance of deer parks, but it was also in tune with the image of a gentleman's standing as displayed by his coat of arms, pedigree, clothing, mansion, garden and parkland.127

---

How nobility and gentry appreciated their parks

In an age of conspicuous consumption parks were perceived by many as an essential adjunct to a gentleman's estate, especially if that gentleman desired outward display of his status or had aspirations for advance in his county community, or even nationally at court, in the law or to attract state progresses. Though Harrison acknowledged that parks gave pleasure to the owner and his friends, he thought that parks wasted valuable land and fulfilled no useful purpose except to produce deer - 'that vain commodity, which bringeth no manner of gain or profit to the owner.' Harrison's emphasis on lost profit missed the point. This study has already demonstrated that parks were of value to their owners in other ways than the monetary sense. Deer as prey for hunters and in the form of gifts of venison were valuable currency in the pursuit of social recognition, obligation and expectation, but parks offered other advantages and pleasures to the owners. Norden pointed out that as well as yielding 'relief to the Table', parks also provided 'often recreation to the Mynde' and 'exercise to the Bodie.' As has been shown, hunting and other recreational activities were not just a means of exercise, but carried with them social, political, cultural and, in the sacrificial element of the kill, even religious connotations. More than that, Norden gave priority to the restorative effects of parks when he touched on their deeper emotional, aesthetic significance with his reference to them yielding 'recreation to the Mynde' - here using a now obscure meaning of 'recreation' as giving mental or spiritual comfort or consolation through the arousal of the senses.

A distinction used to be made between the medieval 'practical' park and the 'aesthetic' post-medieval park, but reassessment in the last 20 years has led to the recognition that medieval parks had 'an ornamental function as well as a practical and prestige value.' Pluskowski has examined the relationship between the physical and conceptual reality of medieval parks, asking whether it was possible that parks were

---

130 John Norden, Speculum Britanniae Pars Altera or a Delineation of Northamptonshire (London, 1728) p.31.
perceived as idyllic hunting grounds – an aristocratic paradise on earth.\(^{133}\) His answer was that although by the fifteenth century parks had become multi-functional economic, social and aesthetic enterprises, they remained overwhelmingly geared to the management of deer.\(^{134}\) However, that did not preclude the incorporation of conceptual aspects, so that landscape and the ecological environment could be manipulated to suit the owners' tastes and imagination. He concluded that 'the park was as much the product of the seigneurial imagination as it was of economic practicality, but it was not a fantasy world divorced of any sort of reality – it was a social structure fully integrated into the seigneurial landscape.'\(^{135}\)

What constituted the basic elements within a park has been fully explored in research of medieval parks, in Rackham's pioneering works on the history of woodland and of the countryside, and evidence from the Elizabethan and Jacobean eras indicates a close similarity.\(^{136}\) The most detailed description of the attributes of an ideal Elizabethan or Jacobean deer park appeared in Markham's wide-ranging book, '\textit{Maison Rustique}'.\(^{137}\) Markham's choice of words clearly showed that elements within parks combined the practicalities of deer keeping with aesthetic qualities that were appreciated by the users and viewers of the park. He noted that the hills were called 'the viewes or discoveries' in parks, the terms giving a sense of the unexpected surprise when the scenery opened out on reaching higher ground. 'The beautie and gracefulnesse' of the park was enhanced by 'all goodly high woods of tall timber' and all came to life when the hills and woods rebounded with the echoes of the dogs, horns and huntsmen during a hunt, with 'the cries of the hounds, the winding of hornes, or the gibbeting of the huntsmen ... doubling the musick, and making it tenne times more delightfull.' The launds or grassy plains where deer fed were 'very champion and


\(^{134}\) Ibid., p.71.

\(^{135}\) Ibid., p.77.


\(^{137}\) Markham, \textit{Maison Rustique}, pp.668-671.
Plate 7.4
The mansion in parkland setting

(a) Penshurst Place from the park(71).
By kind permission of Lord De L’Isle.
fruitfull' and suitable for the pleasure of coursing greyhounds who racing 'in the view of the beholders ... beget a delight past equall.' He summarised the scenic aspects of parks as consisting of 'view, laund, and covert, and hill, valley and plain.' All parks required water features, either natural streams, ditches, or ponds where the deer could refresh themselves and drink, and these too, reflecting light and giving movement by flow or in the wind, added another dimension to the scene.

There is no reason to suppose that Elizabethan and Jacobean park owners were less responsive to the landscape than their predecessors or less keen to add features or make adaptations to suit their tastes. With wide variations of sites within Kent the idealised park was not always achievable, but park owners could make the most of advantageous characteristics, enhancing the park by adding new features or expending their energies at least in conserving their assets.\textsuperscript{138}

Direct evidence of the attitudes of the gentry and noblemen towards parks in Kent is lacking, and it is rare to gain an insight into a woman's attitude to parks, but extensive parks provided them with a secure environment in which to walk and take leisure, which must have made their home life seem less claustrophobic. Rowland Whyte wrote that after Lady Barbara Sidney's return to Penshurst after illness, she 'takes great pleasure in this place, and surely I never saw sweeter ... All things finely prospering about yt,' (see plate 7.4).\textsuperscript{139} Lady Anne Sackville, locked into an unhappy marriage, gained solace by walking in Knole(50) park:-

16 March 1617
Spent day walking in the park with Judith carrying my Bible with me, thinking on my present fortunes and what troubles I have passed through.\textsuperscript{140}

A few days later she, joined by her husband, walked in the park and the garden together talking business. When he returned to London, she spent the day walking and sitting in the park, having more peace of mind as a result of his visit.\textsuperscript{141} Both Lady Barbara and Lady Anne were probably not untypical in spending more time at home than their husbands, and without their parks to give them freedom to roam they would have felt more confined.

\textsuperscript{138} See Chapter Two p.31-43.
\textsuperscript{139} Kingsford C.L. & Shaw W.A. (eds.), \textit{Manuscripts of Lord De L’Isle and Dudley}, II pp.466-467, 6/6/1600 letter; see Plate 7.4 p.219 for Penhurst Place with park.
\textsuperscript{140} Sackville-West, \textit{The diary of Lady Anne Clifford}, pp.58-59.
\textsuperscript{141} Ibid. pp.61-62.
The sensitivity of Kentish park owners to their surroundings is not so much to be found in documents, but in the legacy they have left in the landscape. By Elizabethan times parks had reached a maturity, which could be appreciated on many levels, but offered limited scope for creativity. Additions such as Sir Peter Manwood's new cony warren or Sir Robert Sidney's proposed heronry could not fundamentally reshape the park, so attention was turned onto the house and its immediate environs, within the wider setting of the park. Apart from a few prestigious families with substantial landholdings beyond Kent, most individuals owned one park in or near their main seat, at a time when it had become accepted that a park 'replete with deer and conies' was 'a necessary and pleasant thing to be annexed to a mansion'. It was on their mansion and the area immediately around it that Elizabethan and Jacobean park owners in Kent lavished attention during the decades of internal peace. Only a fraction of the improvements to house and garden have survived further change or destruction over the intervening centuries, but what remains today gives an idea of its scale and nature. In the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries when many houses were enlarged, modernised or remodelled, gardens were created to become more accentuated, intermediate, private spaces between dwelling and park (see Figure 7.1). The unity of the landscape was paramount with the garden being a buffer between the house and the wilder, yet controlled and private, landscape of the park. Fynes Moryson, as a visitor from Scotland in 1617, was much struck by this combination, 'there is no Countrie wherein the Gentlemen and Lords have so many and large Parks onely reserved for the pleasure of hunting, or where all sorts of men alot so much ground about their houses for pleasure of Gardens and Orchards.'

142 See Chapter Three pp.99-100, 112.
144 See Figure 7.1 'Upgrades to houses and gardens' p.224. No comprehensive study has been undertaken.
145 Jennings A., *Tudor and Stuart Gardens* (London, 2005) p.25; see Figure 7.1 'Upgrades to houses and gardens' p.224.
Plate 7.5
Viewing park from garden

(a) Penshurst walled garden with garden tower. Penhurst Place itself in the background with the brick staircase tower. Photographed by Newbery Smith Associates, 1989. By kind permission of Lord De L'Isle.

(b) The northeast corner of the walled garden at Knole, looking from the park(50) side to where the wall has been lowered. The ground in the garden behind the wall has been raised and railings installed to enable those within the garden could look out over the park. See also Plate 7.8 p.227. 2 October 2010
Plate 7.6
Viewing park from house

(a) The tower at Sissinghurst with viewing access to the roof from which the park(79), garden and countryside can be seen in every direction.
(b) Below, the present garden, on the Tudor garden site, and former parkland looking northeast from the roof of the tower.

14 December 2005
Figure 7.1 - Upgrades to houses and gardens

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>House</th>
<th>Garden</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Boughton Malherbe</td>
<td>enlarged</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Boughton Monchelsea</td>
<td>rebuilt, extended</td>
<td>walled garden</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21b</td>
<td>Chilham</td>
<td>new, c.1616</td>
<td>terrace, park, 1620s Tradescant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23</td>
<td>Cobham</td>
<td>new, c.1584-1602</td>
<td>wall garden, terrace</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28</td>
<td>Eastwell</td>
<td>extended</td>
<td>moat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40</td>
<td>Groombridge</td>
<td></td>
<td>mount walk, moat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>41</td>
<td>Helden</td>
<td>extended</td>
<td>moat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>44</td>
<td>Hemsted</td>
<td></td>
<td>moat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50</td>
<td>Knole</td>
<td>extended, 1604-08</td>
<td>walled garden, wilderness, mount</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>54</td>
<td>Leeds</td>
<td>extended</td>
<td>medieval ponds, dam, terrace</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>55</td>
<td>Lullingstone</td>
<td>interior c.1600</td>
<td>walled garden, moat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>58</td>
<td>Lynsted</td>
<td>new 1599</td>
<td>walled garden</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>71</td>
<td>Penshurst, Northlands</td>
<td>extended c1600</td>
<td>walled garden, gatehouse, terrace, pond,wilderness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>74</td>
<td>Roydon</td>
<td></td>
<td>mount walk, gazebos, terrace</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>76</td>
<td>Scotney</td>
<td>rebuilt c.1580</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>77</td>
<td>Scot's Hall</td>
<td>rebuilt c.1580</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>78</td>
<td>Shurland</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>79</td>
<td>Sissinghurst</td>
<td>extended, tower c.1560/70</td>
<td>moat, walled garden</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>84</td>
<td>Surrenden</td>
<td></td>
<td>sumac bought 1620</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>93b</td>
<td>Somerhill</td>
<td>new, c.1610</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>94</td>
<td>Tyler Hill</td>
<td>enlarged</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>95</td>
<td>Well Hall</td>
<td>enlarged c1568</td>
<td>walled garden</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>99</td>
<td>West Wickham</td>
<td>remodelled c.1600</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This has been compiled from secondary sources in Park profiles p.260
Plate 7.7
Garden terraces overlooking parks

(a) The top terraces at Chilham castle looking eastwards.

(b) Below, looking south and east. Digby Digges new park(21b) of 25 acres was probably to the right beyond the terrace.

13 January 2006
In the late Tudor and early Stuart period Italian renaissance elements were introduced into the garden, and nowhere else in England can the transition better be followed than in Kent, which has an unusual number of relatively unaltered gardens dating from that period. As in other spheres of life, the urge to display led to competition between garden creators such as the Brookes at Cobham, the Sackvilles at Knole and the Sidneys at Penshurst, who undertook gardening schemes on a grand scale. Typical features would be walled gardens, as at Penshurst(71), with delicate peaches, apricots, cherries and plums cordoned or espaliered along the walls, and orchards or knot gardens within. However, these enclosed gardens contained various forms of elevation to give views of the park beyond. A garden gatehouse was constructed at Penshurst in 1585 to overlook the park (see Plate 7.5). The mansion at Sissinghurst was dominated by an Elizabethan three-storey tower, which gave panoramic views over the park from the roof (see Plate 7.6). In other mansions staterooms were sited on the first floor, as at Penshurst, Knole or Lullingstone. Gazebos, such as at Roydon(74), gave views over garden and park, while terraced walks, like those at Cobham(23) and Chilham(21b), also gave elevated views, and mounts, as at Knole(50) or Groombridge(40), provided viewpoints from which to survey the park (see Plate 7.8). Former moats, like the one at Sissinghurst(79), were transformed into water features, and ponds, canals and fountains were added to gardens. Wilderness areas, of which Knole(50) had one of the earliest, brought a touch of mystery to contrast with the formality of the rest of the garden. Kentish landowners were among the first to cultivate new, exotic species, which pioneering plant hunters introduced into England.

... the rare garden there, in which no varietie of strange flowers and trees doo want, which praise or price maie obteine from the furthest part of 

148 Hall E., Garden of England, the evolution of Historic Gardens in Kent (Maidstone, 1995) p.15.
151 See Plate 7.5 p.222; De L’Isle, Penshurst Place Home of the Sidney Family, p.15.
154 Hall, Garden of England, pp.16-17, 20; see Plate 7.8 p.227 for Knole.
156 Taylor, ‘The development of the Park and gardens at Knole’ p.173.
157 Yeandle, Sir Edward Dering’s ‘Booke of Expences’ p.55, 7/3/1620, Sir Edward Dering paid one shilling for a sumac tree from Virginia; Jennings, Tudor and Stuart Gardens, p.34.
Knole House, lower left, is set in a large ornate walled garden. It is likely that some Elizabethan and Jacobean elements of this continued into the eighteenth century. The south (front) elevation of the house stands directly onto the park (50). This view depicts the garden to the rear of the house. There is a gate into the park in the back wall of the garden, and in the upper right corner can be seen the railings inset to allow those in the garden to look out into the park (see Plate 7.7 p.222 for photograph of this from the park side). Beyond the upper left corner of the walled garden can be seen a mount (labelled D) in the park itself.
Europe, or from strange countries, wherby it is not inferior to the garden of Semiramis.\textsuperscript{158}

John Tradescant senior, with strong Kent connections, travelled to Russia with Sir Dudley Digges, bringing back new plants and later helping him to shape the terraced garden and park at his new house at Chilham(21b) (see Plate 7.7).\textsuperscript{159}

At Knole the integration of all the elements of a stately home were expressed in a 'Particular' of 1614 which referred to the 're-edified' mansion together with its outbuildings, walled gardens, orchards and wilderness 'beautified with ponds and many other seasonable delights and devices' situated within the park which was 'well furnished with fair timber trees,' (see Plate 7.8)\textsuperscript{160} The writer of the 'Particular' was conveying an aesthetic response which was likely to be shared by those in Kent who enjoyed their impressive mansions, flourishing gardens and delightful parks.

(iv) Canterbury(18) and Otford Great(62) parks – transition from keepership to ownership

During the early years of Elizabeth I's reign, Canterbury(18) and Otford Great(62) parks were administered under keepership in the expectation that the monarch would regularly use them, but as Elizabeth I's inclinations gravitated away from Kent, her grip was relaxed, with Canterbury(18) park eventually being leased out to the Brooke family, while Otford Great(62) remained for several decades under keepership of the Sidney family. The struggle to persuade Elizabeth I to transfer ownership of these two parks exemplifies the great attachment the crown had for its parks – it being a national emergency, towards the end of her reign that led Elizabeth I reluctantly to sell both parks.\textsuperscript{161} In the case of Canterbury(18) park the transition of ownership to the Brooke family was relatively smooth, but the transference of Otford Great(62) park to Sir Robert Sidney was far more fraught and protracted, because his attempts to acquire the park were blocked by the queen, influenced by her own inclinations and by the machinations of Sir Robert Sidney's rival courtiers.

\textsuperscript{158} McKeen, A memory of honour, pp.456-457, citing William Harrison, Historicall Description (1587 edition) p.210; the garden of Semiramis = the hanging gardens of Babylon.
\textsuperscript{159} See Plate 7.7 p.225 for Chilham; Hall, Garden of England, pp.10,17.
\textsuperscript{160} CKS U269/T1/A:8:4:4; see Plate 7.8 p.227 for Knole.
\textsuperscript{161} CKS U1475/T86.
While William Brooke, lord Cobham, was unable to put any plans he might have had for Canterbury's park into motion because he was given ownership in reversion to his father's trustees and, in any case, was attainted three years after the grant of the park, Sir Henry's and Sir Robert Sidney's plans for Otford Great's park were more apparent, but shifted in emphasis to reflect changes in negotiating stances over time. Both Sir Henry Sidney and his son each initially offered to maintain Otford Great's park as a deer park, although it emerged that Sir Robert Sidney would have preferred to keep a reduced herd of deer in a smaller park in order to raise income from the other land. Finally, ownership of a royal deer park gave way to the need to acquire Otford Great's park to dispark it in order to gain the full financial benefits that would accrue from more productive land. Otford Great's park as a deer park was important, but became less of a priority as time passed, its acquisition becoming more a question of honour. Sir Robert Sidney already owned Penshurst's park as a symbol of his wealth and status, so he could dispense with Otford Great's park, while still gaining prestige by acquiring profitable land by favour of the crown, which would more than compensate for the loss of a luxury item such as a deer park.

In 1558 Sir Thomas Finch had been put in charge as steward of the manor and keeper of Canterbury park, but after his death in 1563 Elizabeth I divested herself of direct control of Canterbury park by granting William Brooke, lord Cobham, a 30-year lease in 1564. The lease included other lands in Canterbury and, for the whole, he was to pay a fine of £400 and rent of £20 a year. A condition of the lease was the maintenance of a herd of 200 deer, but Lord Cobham could have the herbage, pannage and the wood of the park, and he was given permission to remove building materials from the ruinous St. Augustine's abbey. This lease was extended for a further 21 years in 1593, and after the death of William Brooke, lord Cobham, in 1597, this lease with others were put into a trust, because he doubted that his eldest son and heir, Henry Brooke, would satisfactorily carry out his wishes if he were made executor. Resentful of the trust, Henry Brooke, lord Cobham, sought to strengthen his position by purchasing the reversion of the park for himself and his heirs directly from the queen. He might also have been motivated by the knowledge that Sir Robert Sidney had

---


163 Salisbury papers (Hatfield) 242/21, 9/11/1605; Scott Robertson W.A., 'Six Wills relating to Cobham Hall' in Arch. Cant. IX (1877) pp. 209-216.)
already submitted a suit to purchase Otford Great(62) park, and he would not have wanted the Sidney family to extend its influence in Kent without an addition to his own estate.

Elizabeth I was fond of Henry Brooke, lord Cobham, there being 'none of her subjects whom she more delighted to honour,' but this alone would not have swayed her to sell the park, which she finally did when the government urgently needed money to meet the dual threat of Spanish aggression and Irish insurgency.164 Lord Cobham probably submitted his suit in 1599, and he was fortunate to have it promoted by leading men in the queen's government, namely the secretary of state, Sir Robert Cecil, his brother-in-law, and Thomas Sackville, lord high treasurer.165 By January 1600 the suit had made good progress and Thomas Sackville, lord Buckhurst, informed Lord Cobham that the queen had agreed to accept his bill for Canterbury(18) park.166 However, in August 1601, when Lord Cobham had failed to pay the deposit, Lord Buckhurst urged him to pay it immediately, 'Pray send it up with all speed, that we may presently receive it, for we have great cause to use it; do not fail, or I fear what may follow.'167 In the absence of payment, Elizabeth I had at first 'utterly rejected' the bill, but she was eventually persuaded to sign it. As Lord Buckhurst reported 'by my earnest dealing with Her Majesty, declaring how profitable a bargain it was for her, and with the help of Mr. Secretary, who in this point stood favourably for you', she had 'with much ado' granted the park in reversion to Henry Brooke, lord Cobham, although at the same time she had 'utterly refused' to grant Otford Great(62) park to Sir Robert Sidney.168 This was a moment of triumph for Henry Brooke, lord Cobham, but it was short lived, because following his attainder in 1604, Canterbury(18) park devolved to his brother-in-law, Robert Cecil, viscount Cranbourne, in 1605.169

166 TNA SP12/274/30, January 1600.
167 TNA SP12/281/57, 16/8/1601.
168 TNA SP12/281/57, 16/8/1601.
169 Salisbury papers (Hatfield) 115/17 & 1593-1605 Box S/9.
The steward and keeper of the house or palace of Otford, and keeper of its 430-acre Great(62) park since 1552 was Sir Henry Sidney of Penshurst Place, positions granted to his son, Robert Sidney, after his father's death in 1586.\textsuperscript{170} The bid for Otford Great(62) park by the Sidney family was initiated by Sir Henry Sidney in 1573, but was taken up in earnest by his son, Sir Robert Sidney, in the 1590s.

Sir Henry Sidney was the first of his family to reside in Kent, but both he and his son were keen to challenge the Brooke family, one of the leading county families since the twelfth century. The rivalry had its roots in the ambition of the Sidneys to rise further up the social scale, perhaps springing from Sir Henry Sidney's marriage in 1551 to Mary Dudley, sister of Robert Dudley, earl of Leicester.\textsuperscript{171} This marriage was to have a continuing impact on the family fortunes in the decades that followed because Mary's brother, Robert Dudley, created earl of Leicester, became highly favoured by Elizabeth I, as did his step-son, Robert Devereux, earl of Essex, and both were prepared to promote the wider family cause. The Brooke family had greater wealth, more influence in the county and better connections in the inner circle of the royal court, but neither Sir Henry nor Sir Robert Sidney were deterred because they felt justified in seeking recognition for their service to the queen, wanted to gain a greater share in the financial benefits of her patronage and were eager to receive tangible marks of her favour. Such reward as Elizabeth I might bestow was inextricably linked with family honour and status, and in this instance one of the prizes was the ownership of Otford Great(62) park.

Although Elizabeth I had intended to use Otford mansion regularly, she is only recorded as having visited Otford in July of 1559 and of 1573.\textsuperscript{172} In 1561 through the influence of his brother-in-law Robert Dudley, earl of Leicester, Sir Henry Sidney was appointed president of the council in the marches of Wales, a position he held until his death in 1586. In 1564 he was made knight of the Garter, and twice was sent to Ireland as deputy from 1566 to 1571 and from 1575 to 1578. All these posts took him away from the court and from Kent, so his ability to keep a close watch on Otford was


limited. However, between his terms of office in Ireland, in April 1573 he urged the crown to make a structural survey of Otford mansion and its outbuildings, perhaps triggered by plans for the royal progress through Kent that summer.\textsuperscript{173} It was clear that the mansion had deteriorated since Elizabeth I's previous five-day visit in 1559, because in July 1573 she spent only one day at Otford, before staying five days at Knole, a couple of miles south at Sevenoaks.\textsuperscript{174} With the cost of Otford mansion's restoration estimated to be £1629 9s 10d, Sir Henry Sidney offered to repair the mansion at his own expense, and 'the same by him so repayred to mayntaine for ever at his owne charges for hir Majesties access.'\textsuperscript{175} He would also provide the same number of bucks and does for the royal larder as had been done for the previous ten years, and keep the herd of deer 'for hir majesties disporte and pleasure at such tyme as she shall come thither.'\textsuperscript{176} In return he desired to have the palace, park and manor of Otford 'at hir Majesties hands in fee-farme for ever,' at a yearly rent (not revealed) paid to the crown, plus he would pay £39 11s 8d annually to the crown, which was the equivalent to the yearly keepership fees he was currently receiving.\textsuperscript{177} In other words, he was offering to buy Otford and to make the palace and park available to Elizabeth I whenever she chose.

Sir Henry Sidney might have hoped to win royal favour by offering to upgrade and maintain both Otford mansion and park,\textsuperscript{62} perhaps calculating that he would recoup the investment later by judiciously leasing out the lodges, woodland, pasture, or by other income generating activities. In any case, the outlay would be worthwhile if the purchase gave him a prestigious addition to his landed estate, which would consolidate his family holdings in Kent. He also needed more land to achieve the necessary income to support a peerage, which he coveted.\textsuperscript{178} In the event, Elizabeth I rejected the Otford proposal, so no major repairs were undertaken, and the mansion continued to deteriorate.\textsuperscript{179} Sir Henry Sidney's duties took him away from Kent for another term in Ireland, thereafter returning to Ludlow castle to fulfil his duties as president of council in the marches of Wales, and he took no further steps to acquire Otford. It was only in 1582 when approached to serve yet again in Ireland, that he

\textsuperscript{173} Hesketh C., 'The Manor House and Great Park of the Archbishop of Canterbury at Otford' in \textit{Arch. Cant.} XXI (1915) p.9.
\textsuperscript{175} \textit{Arch. Cant.} V (1862-3) pp.328-330, transcription; Clarke & Stoyel, \textit{Otford in Kent}, p.132.
\textsuperscript{176} \textit{Arch. Cant.} V (1862-3) pp.328-330, transcription; Clarke & Stoyel, \textit{Otford in Kent}, p.132.
\textsuperscript{177} \textit{Arch. Cant.} V (1862-3) p.329.
\textsuperscript{179} Hesketh, 'The Manor House and Great Park of the Archbishop of Canterbury at Otford,' p 9.
unsuccessfully renewed his quest to gain recognition from the crown by requesting a peerage with lands to support the honour, as well as the title of lord lieutenant of Ireland. He was bitterly disappointed by the refusal - a disappointment which his son, Sir Robert Sidney, sought hard to rectify in the 1590s.  

After his father's death in 1586, Robert Sidney, still in his twenties, succeeded him as keeper of the mansion house of Otford, its gardens and the Great park. As a younger son this was a promising start for an aspiring courtier. Within two years, in 1588, at the battle of Zutphen his older brother, Sir Philip Sidney, was killed, leaving Robert Sidney, who was knighted on the battlefield, heir of the Sidney estates. His patron, Robert Dudley, earl of Leicester, secured him the post of governor of Flushing in 1589, but thereafter his career stalled, despite serving Elizabeth I conscientiously until the end of her reign. He became increasingly frustrated at being away from his family, from the centre of power at court and at the perceived lack of recognition for his military and diplomatic endeavours in the Low Countries. It is against this background that in the 1590s he decided to embark on an offer to lease or purchase Otford mansion and park.

Initially, he seems to have been driven by practical considerations. His lengthy tours of duty in the Low Countries inevitably strained a happy marriage, especially complicated by the difficulties of travel. When in England his freedom to visit Penshurst was constrained by business at court, and his wife’s ability to travel to him was hampered by eleven pregnancies and a growing family of young children. Otford was conveniently situated en route between Penshurst and London, and in 1594 Sir Robert Sidney, on leave in England, but unable to leave the court then at Barn Elms, suggested that Barbara might like to spend winter at Otford because it was nearer to London, and she liked it so much that he decided to apply to buy Otford palace, little

---

182 Robert Sidney's title underwent various changes in James I's reign – in 1603 he became Lord Sidney, in 1605 Viscount Lisle and in 1618 Earl of Leicester.
knowing how complicated and frustrating the process was to become.\textsuperscript{185}

After commissioning a survey, he wrote to Lord Burghley on 21 June 1596, stressing the ruinous condition of the mansion and pointing out that patching it up would be wasteful because even if Elizabeth I spent £1000 on it 'it would be money lost; that sum would not make it fit for her to live in, and two or three years hence it would require mendinge again.'\textsuperscript{186} He recommended that as the queen no longer required the building it could be sold for its materials, in which case he and his friends would like to buy it, and the park, and he would build a new residence there should the queen wish to visit. 'I will build a pretty house at my own charge and keep it in repair so that she may dine there as she passes by.'\textsuperscript{187} This offer was not unlike his father's two decades before, except no mention was made of maintaining deer in the park, although he proposed to repair the pale at the cost of £200, set aside £100 on maintenance, and pay the crown the full value of any timber extracted from the park.

Apart from having a halfway house between Penshurst and London, Sir Robert Sidney's application to purchase Otford also stemmed from his own financial straits, caused by underwriting the costs of diplomatic missions undertaken for the crown and by supporting a living standard in keeping with his perceived status.\textsuperscript{188} His accountant later calculated that, at the beginning of James I's reign, Otford manor with extensive sub-manors, palace and park generated a gross income of £400 a year (a considerable portion of the total gross income of £1790 from Sir Robert Sidney's landed estates).\textsuperscript{189} Sir Robert Sidney admitted to being in debt and, rather than sell land to satisfy creditors, hoped to acquire more from which to generate income. He felt the acquisition of Otford would be a fitting reward for the queen to offer him, and a reasonable request that he expected to be favourably received:–

I am in debt and must sell land if Her Majestie does not relieve me, although my greatest debts are merely growing from her service; yet I will not move

\textsuperscript{186} Hesketh, 'The Manor House and Great Park of the Archbishop of Canterbury at Otford,' pp.10-11, citing TNA SP12/259/54.
\textsuperscript{187} Hesketh, 'The Manor House and Great Park of the Archbishop of Canterbury at Otford,' pp.10-11, citing TNA SP12/259/54.
\textsuperscript{188} BL Add.Mss.12066, a retrospective overview of Sidney's finances compiled in Charles I's reign, lists as 'being very chargeable unto you' a mission to Scotland in 1588 and two to France.
\textsuperscript{189} Hay, \textit{The Life of Robert Sidney}, p.189; BL Add.Mss.12066.
anything unfit for her to give, for one to ask, or for your lordship to favour.  

His expectations for a speedy conclusion proved unrealistic. It was to take five fruitless years before his request was met, and then not through any recognition of his service, but because of the financial needs of the crown.

Events, as they unfolded, are revealed in the letters of Rowland Whyte, a friend of Sir Robert Sidney since their student days at Oxford University, and his agent at the royal court. In prolific correspondence to Sir Robert Sidney, 67 of Rowland Whyte's letters, from 22 September 1596 to 26 September 1600, referred to his attempts to progress his master's suit for Otford mansion and park(62) (see Figure 7.2). In these letters Rowland Whyte explained why various setbacks occurred as told to him by influential people at the royal court.

Rowland Whyte's initial mild optimism was tinged with prescience after an interview with Sir John Fortescue, under treasurer and chancellor of the exchequer, on 2 October 1596. 'Sir John Fortescue puts me in great hope, but God knows what issue yt will take, for all things are subject here to crosses.' There was expectation that Elizabeth I might agree to the sale because she was opposed to spending money on repairing Otford mansion and maintaining the park, saying that she would rather 'the house fall and the deer perish than so much money be disbursed.'

Rowland Whyte's comment that unexpected obstacles might well lie ahead proved correct. A crown survey of Otford palace and park(62), on 13 December 1596, estimated the cost of repairing the palace at over £2400, double that of Sir Robert Sidney's survey, but dismantlement might raise just over £1197 from sale of materials. Although most of the park paling could be patched up, 780 perches required total replacement. Of the 430 acres of parkland, 60 acres were woodland, 80 acres chalk downland, 40 acres marshy or 'moorish ground', five acres meadowland with 60 acres of

---

190 Hesketh, 'The Manor House and Great Park of the Archbishop of Canterbury at Otford,' pp.10-11, citing TNA SP12/259/54.
191 Hannay, Kinnamon & Brennan, *Domestic Politics and Family Absence*, p.253
192 See Figure 7.2 (Appendix 8 pp.334-337) for the schedule of letters.
194 BL Lansdowne Charter 82.55.
195 Perch/rod = 5½ yards.
grounds around the house and lodge. The park contained 456 deer including 70 does, but extra enclosures were needed to keep a supply of fresh pasture. Although the young oaks might provide timber for fencing posts and rails, it was recommended that the timber be left to grow larger to provide fuel for the mansion and lodge, and browsing for the deer. It was reckoned that if the park was leased out with the deer, and reparations laid on the lessee, the value would be £5 a year, but without the deer and with the upkeep of the pale and lodge becoming the responsibility of the lessee, then the rentable income would be £300 a year. These contrasting valuations highlight the difference between the cost of maintaining a deer park compared with the positive financial rewards to be obtained after disparkment.

The noteworthy disparity between the rentable value of Otford Great park as a functioning deer park compared with its rent if disparked was a great disincentive to the crown, and to Sir Robert Sidney, to continue to upkeep the deer park, especially when it was seldom used by the monarch. Indeed indications are that Sir Robert Sidney intended to dispark the park, because, through his intermediary, Rowland Whyte, he made clear that he did not wish to retain 100 deer, as assumed by Sir John Fortescue, the chancellor of the exchequer, and pay the high rent (unspecified in the text) that had been proposed. The exact terms of this deal are not laid out in the correspondence, but Rowland Whyte considered them to be ‘very profitable to the Queen and no great benefit’ to Sir Robert Sidney. With lower rent Sir Robert Sidney might agree to keep a reduced deer herd, but otherwise he would see quicker and higher returns on his investment without that obligation. Otford Great park was a potent symbol of power and status as a deer park, but its retention as such was not unconditional. In straitened circumstances a deer park was dispensable when compared with the acquisition of land.

It was no fault of Rowland Whyte that so little progress was made in the years that followed. He was hampered by the prolonged absences of his master abroad which caused not only delays in communication, but also meant that Sir Robert Sidney was not personally there to intervene at critical times when the influences at court ranged against him had grown stronger. William Cecil, lord Burghley, the lord treasurer, and his son,

Sir Robert Cecil, now secretary of state, with their kinsman by marriage, Henry Brooke, lord Cobham, formed the core of a powerful central faction. On the other hand Sir Robert Sidney's position had been weakened by the deaths of his uncle, Robert Dudley, the earl of Leicester, in 1588, and of his brother-in-law, Sir Francis Walsingham, the queen's principal secretary, in 1590. In the late 1590s, the well meant involvement of Robert Devereux, the earl of Essex, who had married Frances Sidney, Sir Philip Sidney's widow, proved to be counter productive. However, Sir Robert Sidney did retain the backing of two redoubtable widows - Anne Dudley, countess of Warwick, sister-in-law of Robert Dudley, the earl of Leicester, who was 'more beloved and in greater favour with the queen than any other woman in the kingdom,' and Katherine Hastings, countess of Huntingdon, Sir Robert Sidney's aunt, who was eager to promote his career. Despite these friends, Sir Robert Sidney had one crippling disadvantage in that both Elizabeth I and William Cecil, lord Burghley, distrusted him and this blighted his whole career in her reign. Whereas William Brooke had the queen's complete confidence and his son, Henry, her affection, Sir Robert Sidney won neither. Elizabeth I's prejudice fuelled by mischance and factional elements, thwarted any of Sir Robert Sidney's hope of advancement, including obtaining Otford Great(62) park.

The machinations faced by Sir Robert Sidney in his pursuit for a greater personal stake in just one park in Kent are illustrative of many others taking place around Elizabeth I. The Sidneys' struggle to acquire Otford confirms Neale's observation that quarrels between families within the same county were often reflected in court, while at the same time 'the Court created its own rivalries in the struggle for royal favour, office, place, and patronage.' As Elizabeth I aged, it became increasingly difficult for her to maintain control because within this 'perpetual clash of

199 Neale, Queen Elizabeth I, p.348.
202 TNA SP12/259/82, July 1596; Manning, Hunters and Poachers, pp.136-142, a 192 year long law suit (the longest in legal history) between the Berkeley and Dudley families over land in Gloucestershire, caused a feud involving constant invasion and illegal hunting in the others' parks.
203 Neale, Queen Elizabeth I, pp.70-71.
interests and ambitions' to satisfy one, several others might take offence. The later years of her reign have been called the 'bottleneck years' by Esher, when for psychological reasons, the ageing queen refused to advance men like Sir Robert Sidney.\footnote{Hay, \textit{The Life of Robert Sidney}, pp.160-161, citing Esher, \textit{The Aspiring Mind of the Elizabethan Younger Generation} (Durham N.C., 1966).} The perspicacious Rowland Whyte recognised this and in 1600 warned his master of the queen's reluctance to grant any favour unless forced by necessity to do so:-

\begin{quote}
I doe observe the fashions of the Court and ... find the way to preferment very difficult; I mean for men of your sort. Besides there is in her Majesty no great inclination to bestow any place that falles, unles meere necessity occasion it for the good of her service.\footnote{Kingsford & Shaw, \textit{Manuscripts of Lord De L’Isle and Dudley}, II p.455, 19/4/1600.}
\end{quote}

Even if Sir Robert Sidney had initially partly wanted to secure Otford for practical or financial considerations, over the years, when international, national, factional and county politics intervened to block or procrastinate a successful outcome, acquiring the park became a question of honour.\footnote{See Figure 7.2 'Schedule of letters containing references to Otford from Rowland Whyte to Sir Robert Sidney, 1596-1601' (Appendix 8 pp.334-337).} In another letter, Rowland Whyte perceived, like his master, that it was not the intrinsic value of Otford that mattered any more, but that its acquisition symbolised the crown's recognition of Sir Robert Sidney's service to the nation as an able and loyal administrator, and locally, in Kent, would enhance his standing. Failure to gain Otford would bring humiliation at both levels. Rowland Whyte reported his reply when asked why his master wanted Otford:-

\begin{quote}
My answer was you esteemed Otford, not for the profit, but because it was her Majesty's gift, and of the reputation in your own country, which you would never sell.\footnote{Kingsford & Shaw, \textit{Manuscripts of Lord De L’Isle and Dudley}, II p.451, 22/3/1600.}
\end{quote}

The reference to 'your own country' in this context means the county of Kent, where Sir Robert Sidney was trying, like his father before him, to take his family further up the social hierarchy, and the acquisition of Otford might make a difference to this. Beaver has observed a similar stance over potential parkland at Stowe, where possession became more potent than the material income of the land, because monetary value meant less than 'gradations of gentility and honour relative to other families of comparable status.'\footnote{Beaver D.C., ''Bragging and daring words': honour, property and the symbolism of the hunt in Stowe, 1590-1642', pp.149-187 in Braddock M. J. & Walter J., \textit{Negotiating Power in Early Modern Society} (Cambridge 2001) p.153.}
In 1597 international politics gave the Cecil faction the opportunity to block Sir Robert Sidney's personal attendance at court, while it remained free to pursue its domestic agenda. Sir Robert Sidney, whose role as governor of Flushing was exacting and unenviable, longed for leave, which through the influence of the Cecils was denied him. Tension increased when Robert Devereux, the earl of Essex, unsuccessfully championed Sir Robert Sidney against Henry Brooke, lord Cobham, for the wardenship of the Cinque ports, and thereafter the Cecils' attitude hardened further. Neither the grant of leave nor the Otford suit was likely to succeed in these circumstances, which were to become even more unfavourable as the year advanced. The impression of the court being a 'feverish community' was reflected in Rowland Whyte's letters, which informed Sir Robert Sidney of other contenders for Otford.

Henry Brooke, lord Cobham, actively sought Otford for himself after the humiliating defeat of his younger brother behind Sir Robert Sidney in the 1597 elections to the House of Commons, because he was as eager as his rival to gain and retain as much property as possible. Ownership of land gave influence over freeholders as Sir Robert Sidney's accountant observed 'for by it you shalbe ever able to have many freeholders at your command, which in a mans own cowntrey is specially to be regarded.' Thomas Sackville, lord Buckhurst, frustrated over his inability to occupy Knole, turned his attention to Otford as an alternative residence. He therefore decided to support Sir Robert Sidney only if he could be granted reversion of Otford after Robert Sidney's death; that failing he offered £1000 for Sir Robert Sidney's interest in Otford. Lastly, an unexpected threat emerged from John Whitgift, the archbishop of Canterbury, who wanted the keepership of Otford to be attached to the See despite the dilapidated state of Otford palace, because according to Thomas Sackville, lord Buckhurst, the lord treasurer, he had complained that 'he has never a house in Kent fit for a graces garrison.'

---

211 Neale, Queen Elizabeth I, p.71.
213 Ibid. p.189, BL Add.Mss.12066.
214 See Chapter Six pp.178-179.
for him.\textsuperscript{215}

With rival bids on offer, Rowland Whyte frantically urged Lady Barbara Sidney to leave ‘sweet Penshurst’ to come to court in November 1599 or the park would be lost ‘if she wold not take the paines in your Lordships absence to come.’\textsuperscript{216} As an extra incentive he intimated that her presence might persuade the queen to allow Sir Robert Sidney to come home on leave.

At this stage Sir Robert Sidney seems to have dropped proposals to purchase Otford in favour of a lease, which led Rowland Whyte to study previous crown park leases to see what terms might be available.\textsuperscript{217} The resulting offer was that the Sidneys hold the park for three lives, with the herbage and pannage, at an unspecified annual rent, and in return Sir Robert Sidney would waive his keeper’s fee, maintain a herd of deer, while also keeping the lodge and pale in good repair.\textsuperscript{218} Anne, countess of Warwick, in February 1600 presented the draft lease privately to Elizabeth I, and was reassured that Sir Robert Sidney was both respected and the preferred candidate for Otford.\textsuperscript{219} His loyal agent, Rowland Whyte, thought that this had quashed Lord Cobham’s manoeuvres, but Lord Cobham continued to undermine Sir Robert Sidney’s position by circulating rumours that Sidney had sold his interest in the park to his deputy, Edward Jones.\textsuperscript{220}

The sign of hope was soon dashed by the rebellion of Robert Devereux, the earl of Essex, after which the Cecil faction triumphed. However, Sir Robert Sidney had managed to distance himself from his erstwhile patron, and had discreetly approached Sir Robert Cecil for support.\textsuperscript{221} In August 1601 Lord Burghley raised the matter of Otford with Elizabeth I, who ‘utterly refused and denied to graunte him Otford,’

\textsuperscript{216} See Figure 7.2 ‘Schedule of letters containing references to Otford from Rowland Whyte to Sir Robert Sidney, 1596-1601’ (Appendix 8 pp.334-337); Kingsford & Shaw, \textit{Manuscripts of Lord De L’Isle and Dudley}, II p.409, 3/11/1599.
\textsuperscript{217} TNA SP12/166, A Book of Leases of 1583, granted by Queen Elizabeth, from the 1st to the 26th year of her reign, is probably the document to which Whyte refers.
\textsuperscript{218} Whyte’s letters (see Figure 7.2 in Appendix 8 pp.334-337) show that different proposals were pursued, but rejected, with letters of 8/1/1598 and 10/11/1599 giving more details of proposals.
\textsuperscript{219} Kingsford & Shaw, \textit{Manuscripts of Lord De L’Isle and Dudley}, II p.440, 21/2/1600.
\textsuperscript{220} CKS U1475/T86, 30/7/1599.
\textsuperscript{221} Brennan & Kinnamon, \textit{A Sidney Chronology 1554-1654}, pp.166-171.
although she had agreed to Lord Cobham's purchase of Canterbury park. Sir Robert Sidney had lost out yet again, and must have felt as bitterly disappointed as his father, especially when contrasted to the favour shown to his rival. However, he was permitted to return home so Rowland Whyte's informative letters stop at this point. Lord Burghley had also promised to renew Sir Robert Sidney's offer for Otford with expectation of success 'your suite being so reasonable and for her benefitt and easinge of a great charge.'

In 1600 Rowland Whyte had observed that Elizabeth I was disinclined to grant any favours unless forced by necessity. That 'meere necessity' arose only a few months after Elizabeth I's 'utter refusal' when funds were required for a military expedition to quell rebellion in Ireland. The royal mansions in Otford and Dartford were put up for sale and Sir Robert Sidney quickly bought the former for £2000. By patent of 5 November 1601 he gained possession of the mansion house and all the buildings and grounds around it; the Great park with herbage, pannage, the deer and the three lodges in the park. The whole was to be held as tenant-in-chief of the crown for the fortieth part of a knight's fee and a yearly rent of £30.

In many ways it was a hollow victory, because Sir Robert Sidney still had not received the recognition from the crown that he felt due to him. He had, however, upheld the honour of his family in the county, rather than face the humiliation of losing Otford palace and park(62) to another, especially, as noted by Rowland Whyte during the struggle to obtain Otford, the manor of Penshurst was subservient to the manor of Otford, making the honour of retaining Otford 'of more valew then any money; seeing your house of Penshurst holds of it.'

---

226 Ibid. pp.11-12.
227 Kingsford & Shaw, Manuscripts of Lord De L’Isle and Dudley, II p.440, 21/2/1600; BL Lansdowne 82.55, Survey of Otford, 1596.
Sir Robert Sidney had borrowed £1500 from the earl of Pembroke and three other family members, who were subsequently given use of the park, and another loan of £1000 to cover the cost of the purchase of Otford - £500 going as a bribe to 'a partie I will forbeare to nominate,' notes Thomas Knevett in his accounts. To repay and service the loans, Sir Robert Sidney had to raise money from his newly acquired assets, a task made easier without deer in the park. Otford Great(62) park was soon disparked and leased off in plots, as noted in John Manningham's diary of February 1602. The potential revenue generated is indicated by the annual rent of £80 18s 0d paid by Thomas Sackville, earl of Dorset, in 1607 for the Great Lodge and 138 acres in the Great Park(62).

Sir Robert Sidney also used park assets to secure dowries or settlements for his four daughters, fast approaching marriageable ages, and needing suitable partners when 'economic matters had a considerable bearing on the winning of general consent and goodwill' towards a match. Under the loan agreement, £3500 was to be levied from the rents and incomes of the park 'for the advancement and betterment in marriage' of his daughters and 'for affection and fatherly love.' Mary Sidney was to receive £2000 and Katherine £1500 on marriage or at the age of 18, whichever came first, and in 1605 Otford Great(62) park was again used as security to raise £4000 for Phillipp(sic) and Barbara Sidney on the same terms.

Despite raising money by effectively mortgaging the park, Robert Sidney, now viscount Lisle, continued to have financial problems, so in October 1607 he decided to 'bestir myself to recover again my broken fortune' by asking Robert

---

228 CKS U1475/T86, 22/11/1601 draft document, 20/12/1601 formal document signed; BL Add.Mss.12066; Kingsford & Shaw, Manuscripts of Lord De L’Isle and Dudley, II p.534, 16/9/1601, Francis Woodward, Sir Robert Sidney's solicitor, had suggested bribing 'Mr Attorney'.
229 Bruce J. (ed.), Diary of John Manningham (Camden Society, 1868) p.20.
Cecil, lord Salisbury, to buy the park, though nothing came of it. In 1622 he did eventually sell Halden park and 1100 acres at Otford, including the 430-acre Otford Great park, to the wealthy Sir Thomas Smythe of Sutton-at-Hone, who bequeathed it equally to his four nephews after his death on 4 September 1625.

Rowland Whyte's letters give a unique Kentish example of the negotiations leading up to the sale of a particularly high-profile park. Even though only from one perspective, this glimpse shows the parlous state of royal finances, with the pressure of external events weakening the queen's position and leading to Sir Robert Sidney's success. The tenacity with which Sir Robert Sidney pursued his quest for Otford mansion and Great park was symptomatic of his ambition to enhance the status of his family in Kent and in the wider realms of the royal court. His efforts went largely unrewarded in Elizabeth I's reign, but his desire for higher office and for a peerage were fulfilled under her successor.

Conclusion

The perception of individual park owners would have varied in nature and degree in ways that now elude the historian, but there is sufficient evidence to show the significant part parks played generally in the lives of Kentish park owners, their families and friends. Parks provided a venue for personal and shared enjoyment in hunting and other recreational activities. They could be very productive, not least in providing venison for the table and for gifts. They symbolised a prestigious social status from which sprung the basis of prodigious hospitality, including that extended to royalty. With house and garden at the core, parks embodied the ideal aesthetic experience, a retreat from the world outside. With adequate financial wherewithal deer parks were a valued luxury. However, as in the case of Otford Great park, priorities could alter, where the prestige and status bestowed by a deer park diminished compared with the prospect of better financial returns from converting the land to other uses.

Thompson drew attention to the eighteenth-century paradox of the high profile of the gentry in carrying out their functions, for example as magistrates, and their low visibility when they physically withdrew behind the pales of their parks to avoid face to face relations with the ordinary people beyond. The pale and gate accentuated their seclusion, while on public occasions their visibility in distinctive clothing, demeanour and expression was designed to exhibit authority and exact deference. This view of the gentry might well be applied to the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries. It might be rather harsh, in that it is understandable that those in stressful public life would feel the need to withdraw to recuperate their energy. However, those who were excluded from the parks were likely to perceive them differently, and it is to their attitudes that the next chapter will turn.

---

236 Thompson, *Customs in Common*, pp.45-46.