

WAS SIR THOMAS WYATT ABLE TO DRAW ON A CULTURE OF REBELLION IN KENT IN 1554?

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On 25th January 1554 Sir Thomas Wyatt unfurled his banners in Maidstone High Street and proclaimed his intention to prevent the proposed marriage between Mary Tudor and King Philip II of Spain. Loades estimates that Wyatt led 3,000 men to London where he was defeated in a battle at Temple Bar by a force led by the earl of Pembroke (Loades 1992, pp. 58-60). Where did Wyatt get his support from? Who were they and why did they follow him? More particularly, can we ascertain whether or not the attitude of the people taking part in the rebellion was more important than the avowed objective of the rebellion? Was there indeed a 'culture of rebellion' in Kent?

Mark Stoyle provides a useful comparison for this study with early modern Cornwall; in his article 'Dissidence and Despair' he considers that the only county to have been as rebellious as Cornwall was Kent (Stoyle 1999, pp. 423-442). He says: 'Kent was, after Cornwall, perhaps the most culturally distinctive shire in England: a county whose inhabitants held themselves to be descended from the Jutes, and believed (like the Cornish) that 'their country was never conquered''. He refers to rebellions in Kent in 1450, 1549, 1554, 1643, 1645 and 1648. He makes no mention of 1483 ('Buckingham's Rebellion'), the rebellions of the later 1450s, the rebellion in east Kent in January 1450, 'Oldcastle's Rebellion' of 1414 or the Peasant's Revolt – in all of these events Kent had either a central or unique role. Moreover, he makes no mention of Kentish support for the earl of Warwick or Fauconberg during the Wars of the Roses.

It is the present author's intention to concentrate on the pattern of events in 1450 (Cade's Rebellion) and those in 1554 (Wyatt's). If there was a 'culture of rebellion' it is likely that it would manifest itself in the same places at different times, even when the reasons for a rebellion had changed. These two major rebellions provide us with the opportunity to look at the degree of involvement of different parishes across the county. Those pardoned, both in 1450 and in 1554, are noted in the Calendar of Patent Rolls (hereafter CPR). We have to bear in mind that those people

who applied for pardons may not necessarily have been involved in a rebellion. For example, somebody who lived in a village implicated in a rebellion, who did not take part, might nevertheless apply for a pardon. Such a person may hope that they were not subjected to any punishment meted out to the other villagers. Villages that had the rebel army pass through them may have wanted to ensure that they were absolved of any guilt and so applied for a pardon. On some occasions constables might apply for a pardon for their hundred so as to try to ensure its blamelessness. At the end of Cade's Rebellion many people who had no idea what had happened applied for a pardon because they feared the rebels' anger. One such person would be Robert Est of Maidstone who appears on the pardon roll for 1450 (CPR, 28th Henry VI, Part II, 1446-52, 356). He was despised by Cade's rebels and appears in their 'Complaint' (Harvey 1991, p. 192). Nevertheless the record of pardons provide a means of seeing the demographics of a rebellion and which areas, towns, villages and in some cases families were particularly affected.

Before considering these pardoned names more carefully it is worth thinking about the factors that might have engendered a rebellious characteristic in Kent. Stoye has alluded to a strong sense of local identity, some elements of which may have been derived from the early Kentish Kingdom— for example, 'gavelkind'. It allowed many peasants in Kent to view themselves as 'free'. 'Kentish freedom by birth had been part of the law of the land' says Lyle (Lyle 1950, p. 6). Gavelkind influenced the dispersal of a family's lands and family relationships. Du Boulay comments on the individualistic nature of society in Kent and Lyle considers that gavelkind created a more personal interest in the land (Du Boulay 1966, p. 149; Lyle 1950, p. 6).

No county is closer to France than Kent. The French had been England's enemy from 1337 seemingly without interruption until Tudor times. They had attacked and ravaged Kentish ports on several occasions, just as the English had attacked French ports, but when Normandy was lost in 1450 the Kentish coast became the effective front-line of the war. Ships that would normally be used for trade with Flanders or Burgundy would be commandeered during war time by the Crown; indeed the Cinque Ports were required by custom to provide ships for the Crown by way of 'ship service'. Consequently merchant ships would be attacked by the French in the knowledge that they were likely to be attacking Crown ships. Even after the end of the Hundred Years War, the Seneschal of Normandy attacked and sacked Sandwich in 1457. Henry VIII conducted wars with France in 1513, 1522 and 1544 and to some on the coast it may have seemed as if the war was uninterrupted (Scarisbrick 1968, pp. 586-7).

With the county's long coastline so vulnerable to French attack it had been tempting for many years for people to move inland. Property prices

in the Weald were affected: 'refugees from the coast helped to keep up the price of land in the Weald; for those who could afford it, cattle breeding and timbering had become a better investment than shipping' (Searle and Burghart 1972, p. 379). War not only affected shipping and fishing along the coast – the clothiers of the Weald found their trade with Flanders interrupted.

When the Crown had no money then the cost of repairing fortifications would fall upon local people. The cost of billeting troops in Kent would often fall on local people as well. An alternative, sometimes required by the Crown, was to provide your own defence (Searle and Burghart 1972, p. 384). Consequently the local men might have to assist in the repair of fortifications, at their own expense and fight off the French as well, not necessarily with support from elsewhere. Loyalty to the Crown could be stretched in such circumstances.

In the late medieval period the merchants of London used Kent as a highway to the Continent, bringing with them their news and gossip. At different times troops moved backwards and forwards through the county as well; idle or hungry soldiers often being disruptive. At the end of the Hundred Years War the people of Kent were privy to the 'great mysery and poverté' of the returning troops and some of the soldiers 'drew to theft and misrule' (quoted in Harvey 1991, p. 68).

So we have a county whose political awareness was facilitated by an easy dissemination of news from the seat of government. A county whose inhabitants had enjoyed and had determinedly retained the custom of their county (and who perhaps saw this as a right). A county that found itself attacked and disrupted by its King's enemy, not exclusively so, but to a greater degree than other parts of the kingdom.

Rebellious Places?

This section considers whether there were parts of Kent that were more rebellious than others and whether there were distinct regional differences within the county. The names of those people from Kent who were pardoned after Cade's Rebellion appear in the Patent Roll of 28th Henry VI, 1446-52. For Wyatt's Rebellion the names can be found in the Patent Rolls for Mary Tudor's reign: 1553-4 (vol. I), 1554-5 (vol. II), 1555-57 (vol. III) and 1557-8 (vol. IV). There are also names on Loan Manuscript 15 (Add. Ch. 76668,69 & 70) in the British Library. This latter is an indictment written in Latin. In all these documents each name has a place of origin and very often an occupation beside it. There are some records for intervening rebellions but they are less extensive; for example, there are some indictments from the Kings Bench that refer to Hasilden's Rebellion of April 1451 and Wilkyns Rising of May 1452 (K.B. 9 file 47 and K.B. 9 file 48) (Virgoe 1964, pp. 214-65). Both Wilkyns and Hasilden

gleaned support from the Weald and the Medway Valley, but recorded numbers for these rebellions are few by comparison with Cade and Wyatt. Cade and Wyatt provide records that are more useful. Moreover, as 104 years elapsed between the two rebellions we can get a better idea of any sense of continuity.

Figs 1-3 are compiled from the Patent Rolls. The recorded number of people from each village receiving a pardon after both Cade's and Wyatt's rebellions are placed in bar graphs. Where villages contributed people to both rebellions then the columns for the two rebellions are shown side by side. For convenience, the author has divided the county into five regions – Mid Kent North; Mid Kent South; the Weald; East Kent and West Kent (see Table 1).

TABLE 1. THE NUMBERS PARDONED BY REGION

	Cade's rebellion	Per cent of total	Wyatt's rebellion	Per cent of total
Mid Kent	761	41	250	47
West Kent	361	20	120	22
East Kent	269	15	31	6
Weald	452	24	132	25
Total	1,843	100	533	100

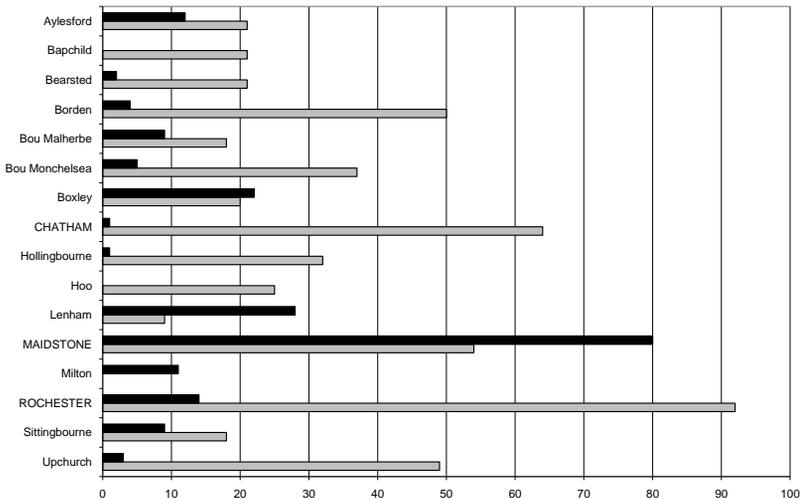


Fig. 1 Mid Kent: bar graph showing those parishes with 20 or more participants in Cade's rebellion (*grey*) and/or 5 or more in Wyatt's (*black*).

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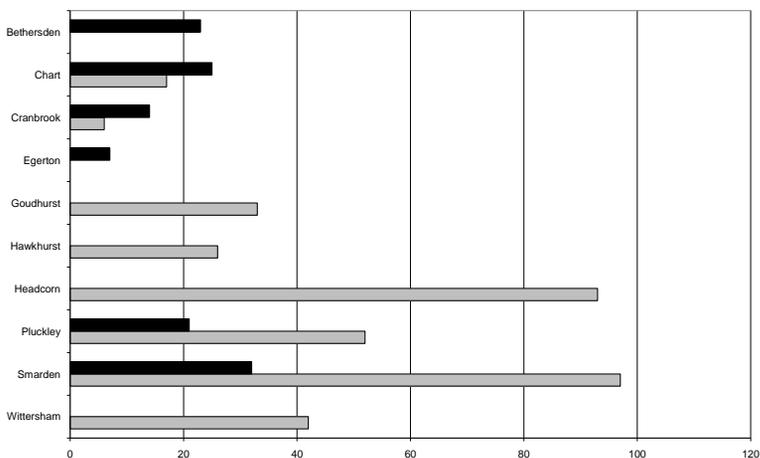


Fig. 2 Weald: bar graph showing those parishes with 20 or more participants in Cade's rebellion (*grey*) and/or 5 or more in Wyatt's (*black*).

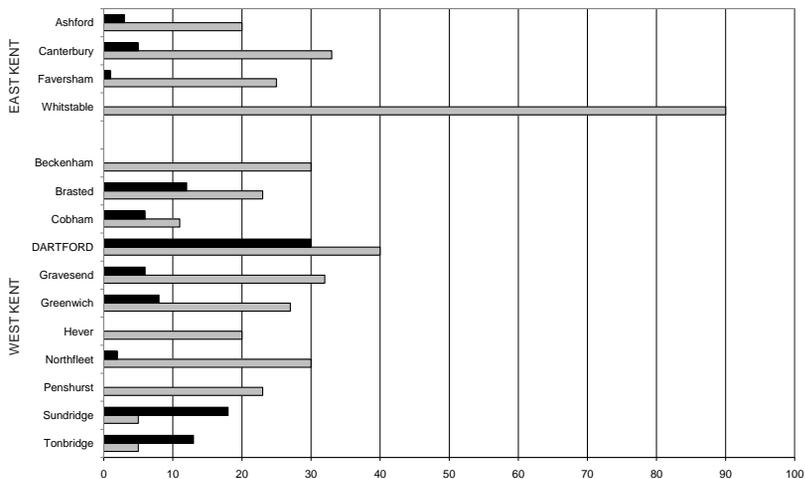
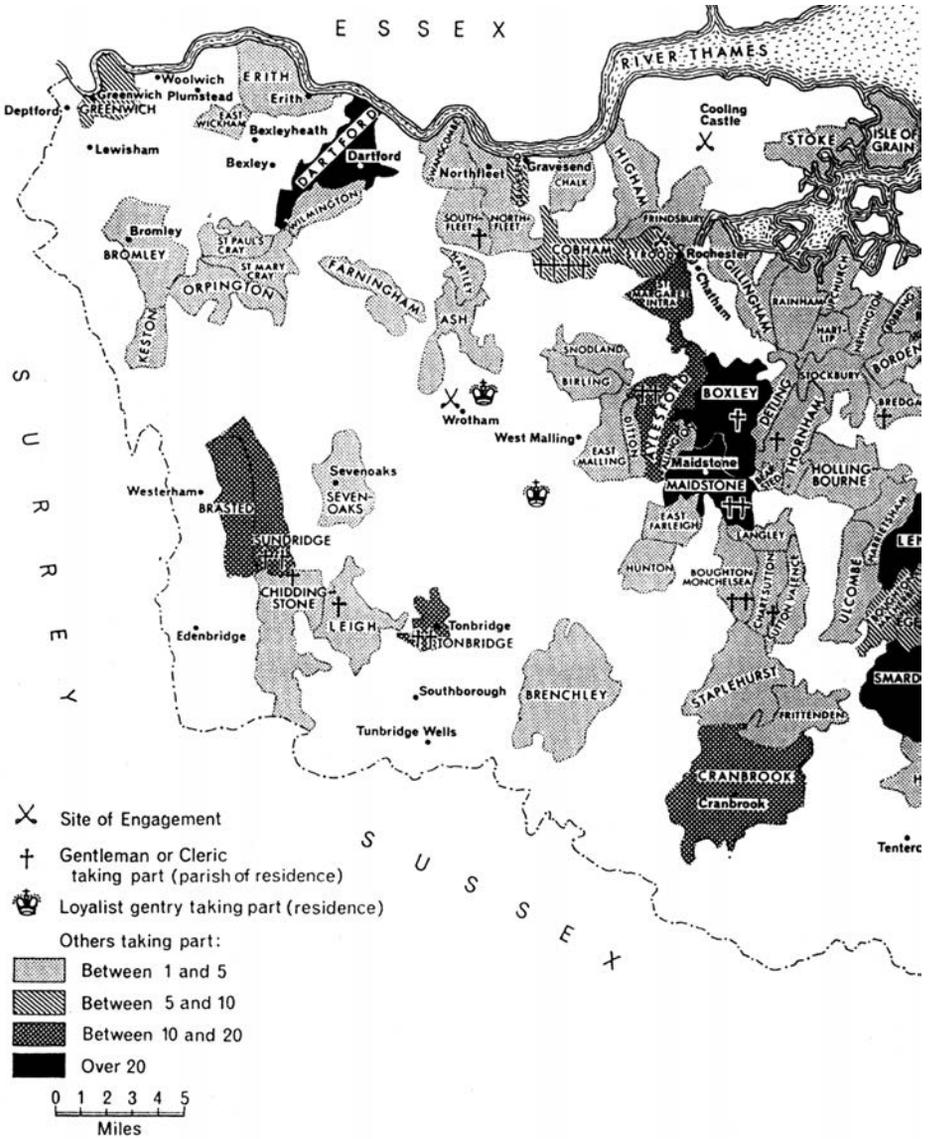


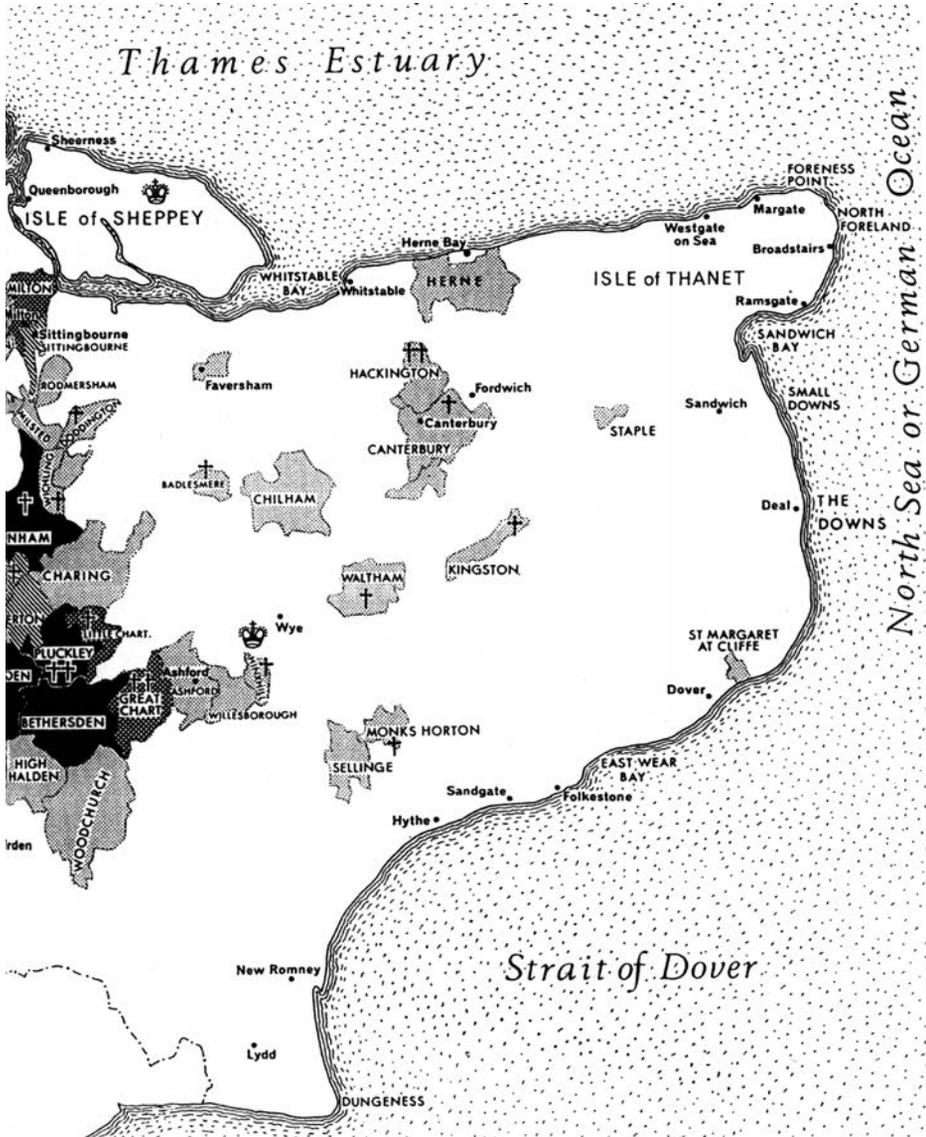
Fig. 3 East and west Kent: bar graph showing those parishes with 20 or more participants in Cade's rebellion (*grey*) and/or 5 or more in Wyatt's (*black*).

In turn the bar graphs refer to two maps. In Loades's book, *Two Tudor Conspiracies*, he has a map showing the distribution across the county of the participants in Wyatt's Rebellion, reproduced here as **Map 1** (Loades 1965). In addition, the author has drawn a map to show the distribution across Kent of those pardoned after Cade's Rebellion, for direct comparison (**Map 2**).

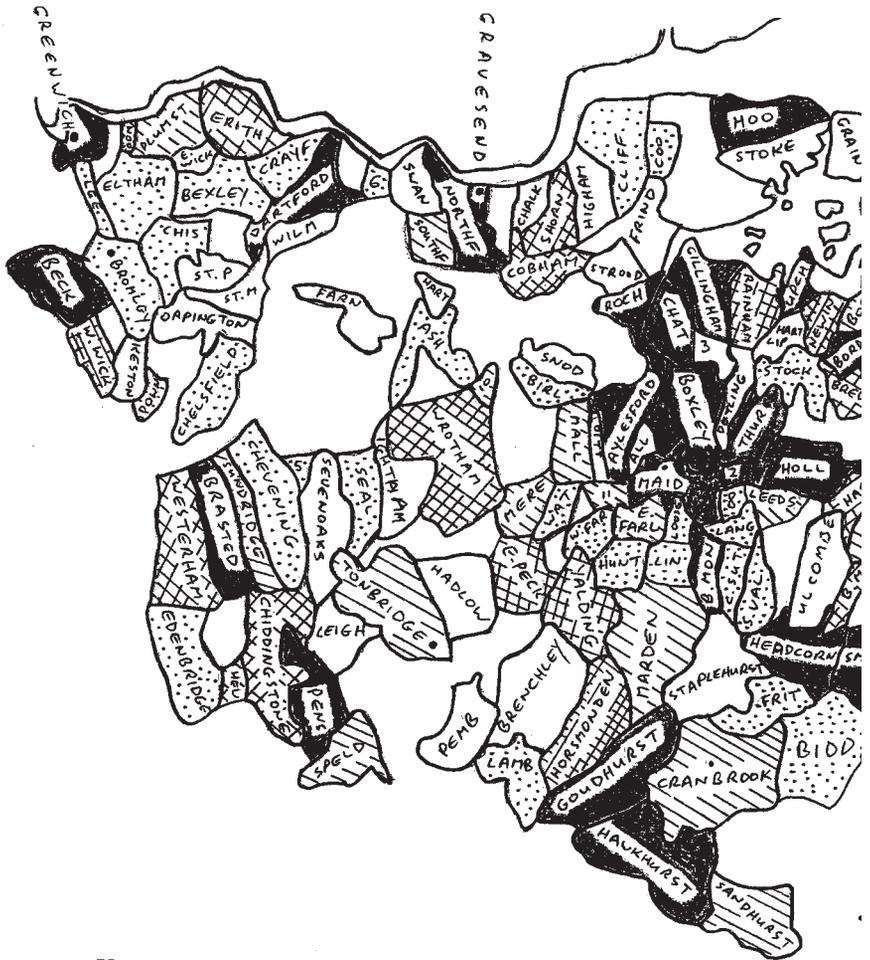


Map 1 Distribution of recorded participants in Wyatt's rising, by parishes

SIR THOMAS WYATT IN 1554 AND THE CULTURE OF REBELLION IN KENT



(reproduced from D.M. Loades, *Two Tudor Conspiracies*, 1965).



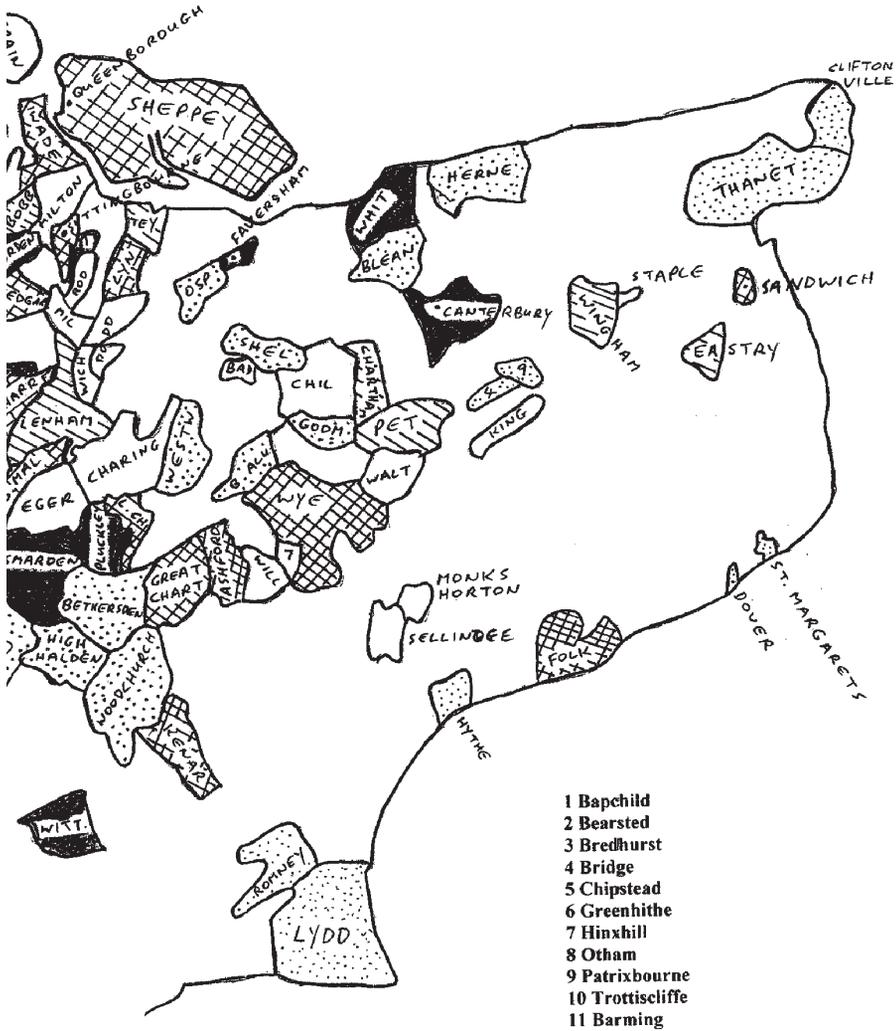
Key

		Under 5
No. names		5-10
per parish		11-20
		Over 20

Parishes where no names are recorded for Cade's rebellion but which contributed to Wyatt's

Map 2 Distribution of recorded participants in Cade's rebellion, by parishes.

SIR THOMAS WYATT IN 1554 AND THE CULTURE OF REBELLION IN KENT



Mid-Kent: Maidstone

The Tonbridge schoolmaster John Proctor published *The History of Wyatt's Rebellion* in 1555. In it he says: 'but certain it was that Wyatt ... armed himself and as many as he could: and ... at Maidstone, in the market time, being the 25th day of January, in the first year of the Queen's reign, by Proclamation in writing, published his devilish pretence'. We can see in Fig. 1 that there are eighty people from Maidstone named as applying for pardons after Wyatt's rebellion. The population of Maidstone in 1548 is estimated to be about 1,900 people (Clark and Murfin 1995, p. 42). When Wyatt called for supporters in 1554 he was well aware of the disturbances around Maidstone five years previously. Many of the riots over enclosures had taken place on his land and had been against his own enclosing policies. However, Proctor says that Wyatt's 'proclamation ... had wrought in the hearts of the people that divers (which before hated him, and he them) were now, as it seemed, upon this occasion mutually reconciled' (quoted in Pollard 1903, p. 210).

Had the people of Maidstone been easy to stimulate into rebelliousness? In 1525 the people of Maidstone are said to have 'evil entreated' Sir Thomas Boleyn when he tried to collect the 'Amicable Grant' (Bernard 1986, p. 101). Indeed in the 1500s the town had been a contentious issue for two of the largest gentry families in the county. The Nevilles and the Guildfords were found fighting in the streets during the county quarter sessions as their factional rivalry developed into violence (Clark 1977, p. 14). The presence of Penenden Heath a mile to the north of Maidstone High Street must have had some influence on the town. It was used as a place of punishment but also as a meeting place. Harvey states that: '... parishioners were summoned to gather in their church or churchyard by the ringing of the church bells; the men of the parish would then move off to congregate under their parish and hundred constables at the traditional meeting places – very often at crosses or on an open common – of their respective hundreds' (Harvey 1991, p. 75). From their hundred meeting places the men would then have marched to a more central place; Penenden Heath probably serving as such for mid-Kent. The rebels of 1483 met on Penenden Heath though it is difficult to tell exactly how many there were and where they came from due to the lack of available sources.

Half a mile to the north of Penenden Heath is Boxley. Though comparatively small, it provided as many men for Wyatt's Rebellion as it did for Cade's (see Fig. 1) although, of course, Boxley's contribution to Cade's Rebellion was much smaller proportionately than to Wyatt's.

There are 55 names of people from Maidstone who were implicated in Cade's Rebellion (Fig. 1). In contrast Canterbury's population in 1450 was over twice that of Maidstone's and yet contributed fewer people to Cade's Rebellion (Fig. 3). Indeed Harvey suggests that Canterbury may

have been an instance of a constable applying for a pardon simply so as to try to ensure the blamelessness of his hundred. For example some of the people on the pardon roll from Canterbury were responsible for arresting a known rebel, Simon Scryven, and presenting him to the King. Furthermore Canterbury was resistant to Cade's army when it advanced on the city from the west. Maidstone's involvement in Cade's Rebellion may not have been as limited as is sometimes suggested – for example by Clark (Clark and Murfin 1995, p. 35).

Mid Kent: the Medway Valley

The demand from London for an ever increasing amount of produce meant that agricultural goods were transported to and from Maidstone; sometimes along the Medway from Yalding and sometimes by road from the Wealden villages and the villages by the river Len. The tidal stretch of the river Medway ran to East Farleigh, so goods could be carried easily to Rochester and beyond when the tide was high (Clark and Murfin 1995, pp. 43-6). It is clear from Fig. 1 (and Maps 1 and 2) that that fewer people were involved in Wyatt's Rebellion compared to Cade's, particularly in the case of the Lower Medway and north Kent. This is most noticeable in the greatly reduced figures for Wyatt's Rebellion for Rochester, Chatham and Gillingham. It was at Rochester that the London 'Whitecoats' deserted to Wyatt and it is surprising that so few names from Rochester itself are recorded as supporting Wyatt (Loades 1992, p. 66). The villages closer to Maidstone, such as Lenham and Aylesford, are however well represented in Wyatt's Rebellion.

In 1450 Cade could count on significant support in north Kent from villages such as Upchurch, Borden and Hoo. All of these villages are either near, or on, the coast and are close to Watling Street. Moreover there had been a strong Lollard tradition in north Kent, particularly around Sir John Oldcastle's former residence of Cooling Castle. Queenborough was attacked by the French in April 1450 and the fear of further attacks may well have played a part in the area's contribution to Cade's army. There was much activity on Sheppey later too: Jones comments on the attack on Sir Thomas Cheyney's land on the Isle of Sheppey in 1549 during the 'Commotion Time'. Five hundred villagers are said to have knocked down Cheyney's fences (Jones 2003, p. 170).

The Upper Medway shows not only a good deal of support for Cade, but also support for Hasilden's Rising in April 1451. Indictments presented to a Commission of Oyer and Terminer held at Maidstone between 16-19 September include the names of men from Hunton, Farleigh, Mereworth, Yalding and East Peckham. They also include the names of men from Loose, Loddington, Linton, Boughton Monchelsea, Sutton Valence and Leeds. Though numbers are few, the largest numbers being the nine

men from Yalding and the seven from neighbouring East Peckham, the rising might be indicative of the strength of feeling in the area after the collapse of Cade's Rebellion (Virgoe 1964, pp. 244-51). East Peckham also contributed seven men to Wylkin's Rebellion in May 1452, one of whom, William Souter, had supported Hasilden as well (Virgoe 1964, pp. 257-60).

The Lower Medway was less involved in Hasilden's Rising, though indictments were presented to the same commission for men from Cliffe, Strood and Frindsbury. However, in May 1452 substantial numbers rose in Cliffe, Higham, Hoo, Cooling and Halstow to support John Wylkins (Virgoe 1964, pp. 257-8). The indictment says that they 'as heretics and lollards ... would have the petitions sought and desired in the last parliament at Westminster' (a reference to Cade's Rebellion). Rochester and Malling also had Lollard groups and Lollardy had a significant presence in the Weald as well.

The Weald

Fig. 2 shows the large number of people from the Weald who took part in Cade's Rebellion. Indeed Harvey suggests that it was travelling groups of Wealden men that, in 1452, stirred up other parts of the county to support John Wylkins (Harvey 1991, p. 164). In Wyatt's Rebellion, where the total number of rebels was generally fewer, the Weald nevertheless provides a large number compared with other parts of the county.

One feature of the Wealden parishes can be seen immediately – those such as Cranbrook, Tenterden, Brenchley, Staplehurst or Benenden were much larger than average (see Maps 1 and 2). Their size and more scattered populations allowed for greater secrecy. Thus, Lollardy had been strong in the Weald throughout the fifteenth century. The centre of Wealden Lollardy was Tenterden where prosecutions for attendant disorders were frequent (Thomson 1965, p. 3).

The 'Seven Hundreds' was the title given to the central Wealden parishes of Kent. The Seven Hundreds were Barkley, Blackborne, Selbritten, Barnefield, Rolvenden, Cranbrook and Tenterden. Fig. 2 shows that the six villages from the Weald who were the largest contributors to Cade's Rebellion were all in the Seven Hundreds (Goudhurst, Hawkhurst, Headcorn, Pluckley, Smarden and Wittersham). Similarly, four of the five largest contributors to Wyatt's Rebellion were in the Seven Hundreds (Bethersden, Cranbrook, Pluckley and Smarden). The Seven Hundreds were unusual in several ways. There was one 'court leet' held 'at any place within them' and a court baron called 'The Three Weeks Court' which was usually held in Cranbrook. The manorial structure was therefore weak in this area. Much of the land was in direct ownership of the king in the medieval period and he appointed a bailiff to collect any revenues.

Authority figures seem to have been few in the Weald; a possible exception being the Guildford family who held land at Cranbrook, Rolvenden and at one time held Romden Castle at Smarden (Hasted, vol. VII, pp. 92-100). The Weald was populated later than other areas of the county and those that lived there often found themselves answerable to few and the effective masters of the land that they lived on.

When the Flemish weavers came to the Weald they established themselves initially in Cranbrook; but then other villages such as Smarden, Pluckley, Staplehurst, Headcorn and Benenden developed clothing industries. A quarter of the male population of Smarden was involved in the cloth industry at the time of Cade's Rebellion. At the time of Wyatt's Rebellion over half the listed rebels from Smarden were involved with the clothing industry in some way (CPR, 4 and 5 Philip and Mary, Part III, 1557-8, 55). There would be many skills and trades dependent on the clothing industry – much of the work being done by outworkers in cottages (though jobs such as fulling were done increasingly in the clothier's mills). At Maidstone, drapers and chapmen would act as middlemen between the Wealden cloth industry and London merchants (Harvey 1991, p. 19). The men of the Weald therefore might well have been aware of what was going on in the capital.

Much of the trade of the Wealden cloth industry had been with the Continent, particularly Flanders. Before 1450 English cloth had been excluded from the markets of Holland, Brabant and Flanders. This happened again in 1528, when there were risings in Goudhurst and Cranbrook as a result (Clark 1977, p. 22). A war with the Netherlands in 1552 produced further disruption, with Spanish wool displacing English in the trade at this time. Wyatt's call to prevent Mary's Spanish marriage and the influence of 'strangers' may have found sympathetic ears in the Weald therefore. It seems likely that disruption in the trade across the channel and the consequent fluctuations in the economic fortune of the clothing industry unsettled and aggravated Wealden weavers. In this context it is surprising to see the recorded contribution of Cranbrook, centre of the industry, to both Cade's Rebellion and Wyatt's as being lower than other weaving villages.

The total numbers from the Wealden area for Wyatt's Rebellion are far less than they are for Cade; Lyle says that in 1450 seven Wealden villages provided every available man of military age for Cade (Lyle 1950, p. 19). Even the numbers for Smarden are less than half their numbers for 1450. Headcorn appears to be an anomaly, however. Many people from this parish may have worked in the clothier's mills in Smarden village or were employed as outworkers for the Smarden clothiers. How can one explain the complete absence of a record of anybody from Headcorn being involved in Wyatt's Rebellion?

The intervening period between Cade and Wyatt also shows much

activity in the Weald. Parmynter, the so-called ‘Second Captain of Kent’ and a former confederate of Cade, clearly drew some support from the Weald, including the Sussex Weald. ‘Wylkins Rising’ of May 1452 drew support from the Weald and the Medway Valley. However, in April 1456 the rising of John Percy was almost exclusively Wealden, with the villages of Hawkhurst and Rolvenden most implicated (Harvey 1991, p. 170). We know from a letter from the duke of Norfolk to John Paston that the men of the Weald were involved in Buckingham’s Rebellion of 1483: ‘Right well-beloved friend, I commend me to you. It is so that the Kentish men be up in the Weald and say that they will come and rob the city ...’ (quoted in Conway 1925, p. 104). Indeed the men of the Weald were premature in their rising: they rose on 10 October 1483 when the rising had been planned for October 18th.

West Kent

It is noticeable from Fig. 3 that the Thames-side towns and villages of Dartford, Gravesend and Northfleet, all on the main London to Dover road, provided a good many to Cade’s Rebellion. Dartford also contributed substantial numbers to Wyatt’s Rebellion; it was here that Wyatt halted on the way to London and parleyed with the Queen’s emissaries and where, says Proctor, that Wyatt said that he wanted ‘the custody of the Tower, and (of) her Grace in the Tower; the displacing of certain councillors, and placing others in their rooms as to me shall seem best’ (Pollard 1903, p. 237). The names of thirty men from Dartford are recorded as having been involved in Wyatt’s Rebellion. It must surely have been stirred by Wyatt’s presence there.

Many of the villages to the west of Maidstone are represented in both rebellions. Brasted, Chiddingstone and Sundridge appear in both lists of names as does the town of Tonbridge. Penshurst was significant for Cade’s Rebellion, but not for Wyatt’s. The lord of the manor of Penshurst in 1450 was Humphrey Stafford, Duke of Buckingham. He had been part of the King’s delegation to parley with Cade at Blackheath. Two of his relatives, William Stafford and Sir Humphrey Stafford, were killed when Cade ambushed them at Sevenoaks after the rebel army initially withdrew from Blackheath. The numbers from Penshurst applying for a pardon may reflect this fact and demonstrate an ignorance of what had happened to Cade and a fear of retribution from the rebels. There must have been a fear of retribution in the area from the King’s adherents as well – many loyalists ransacked north-west Kent after Cade made his first retreat from Blackheath (Harvey 1991, p. 84).

The same area of Kent saw many contributions to the rebellions that occurred in the aftermath of Cade’s Rebellion. Ightham, Shipbourne and Mereworth are all mentioned in the Kings Bench indictments as are 13

men from Wrotham who followed John Wylkins in May 1452 (Virgoe 1964, pp. 257-265). In 1453-4 Robert Poyning (who had been Cade's 'Carver and Sword-bearer') travelled throughout west Kent attempting to gather support. Dartford, Westerham, Ightham and then Maidstone all witnessed his progress.

The west of Kent showed some significant disturbances in the 1520s as well. Archbishop Warham was not as assiduous in his collection of the 'Amicable Grant' in Kent as Cardinal Wolsey was elsewhere. Warham seems to have thought it unwise to press the county too much, but by 1528 resentment boiled over. Warham wrote to Lord Rochford from Knole Park saying: 'on Tuesday in the Esterweke laste, came to my maner at Knoll a multitude of yomen of the countrey, to the number of one hundreth as it was supposed by thaim that sawe thaim' (quoted in *Archaeologia Cantiana*, 1, pp. 36-9). Warham says that they wanted repayment of their loan money.

East Kent

This is an area where the influence of Canterbury and the Cinque Ports held sway. Neither the earl of Warwick nor his relative the Bastard of Fauconberg had any difficulty recruiting support from east Kent during the Wars of the Roses. Though Fauconberg's Rebellion of 1471 seems to have gained support from the Cinque Ports and especially Canterbury, Richmond points out that 60 of the county's 65 hundreds were fined after this rebellion (Richmond 1970, p. 686). However he suggests that this should be interpreted less as evidence of a widespread quantity of support and more as indicative of the new government's intention to punish the county and establish its authority. (The names of those from Canterbury who took part in the city's significant involvement in Fauconberg's Rebellion are detailed in document number LVI of Woodruff's List in the Cathedral Archives).

When Warwick came to Kent in July 1459 he was 'feted like a hero and followed like a king, he had no trouble recruiting a great fellowship...' (Kendall 1973, p. 42). However if we look at Fig. 3 (and Maps 1 and 2) we can see the apparent paucity of support for Wyatt from the east of the county. Moreover the figures for Cade's Rebellion may be deceptive. As we have seen Canterbury might be an example of the constable applying for a pardon for his whole hundred. Certainly Canterbury resisted Cade's rebels in 1450 and closed its gates to them. There was a rebellion in east Kent in January 1450 led by Thomas Cheyne (alias 'Blewbeard'). It died out when the rebels got to Canterbury and Cheyne was arrested. Canterbury closed its gates again in 1549, but for very different reasons. During the 'Commotion Time' of Kett's Rebellion Canterbury had an encampment of rebels outside the walls. The citizens seemed to have

feared that the rebels would enter and sack the city (Jones 2003, p. 170).

The earl of Warwick was Constable of Dover Castle, Warden of the Cinque Ports and Captain of Calais. His position meant that he had influence on coastal trade, on defence arrangements against the French, as well as on the fate of the Crown. While he was securing the supply lines to Calais he would help to secure east Kent's trade with the Continent. This was the peak period of east Kent's insurgency, but with the deaths of Warwick and Fauconberg in 1471 the area's rebelliousness seems to have abated. By 1495, with Henry VII establishing his own governance on the country, the people of east Kent rose to repel an imposter. Posing as Richard of York, Perkin Warbeck landed at Deal, perhaps encouraged by the county's reputation for tending to be Yorkist in its favours, only to find himself repulsed on the beach and sent to find support elsewhere. A little encouragement may have been needed to recruit an army for Henry VII (free beer seems to have done the trick), but men from Canterbury and Lydd are known to have formed a force that successfully killed and captured many of Warbeck's supporters, though not the pretender himself (Wroe 2003, pp. 236-40). There seems no longer to have been any enthusiasm in the east of the county to depose another king.

There appears to be an anomaly in Fig. 3 – namely the remarkable numbers of people pardoned in Whitstable after Cade's Rebellion; far above the other towns and villages of the area. This may have been due to anxiety after the attack on Queenborough in 1450.

Rebellious Families?

Local issues and environment clearly influence people's decisions, but the names of those involved can tell us a lot more, particularly the role of families. The names of those pardoned or indicted as a consequence of Wyatt's and Cade's Rebellions give us an opportunity to examine whether the same family names occurred in both rebellions. We might also be able to trace these names through some of the intervening rebellions. There are many factors militating against this; disease took away many lives and by the fifteenth century migration was accounting for substantial population change among the 'lower orders'. Moreover it is not always clear from the records what the relationship might be between those of the same name.

Kent did not have many great landed magnates in the period under study. However, as Harvey points out, 'the total number of gentry families resident in Kent between 1422 and 1509 was two hundred and fifty six. This Kentish gentry was both abundant and of quite modest means. A very high proportion of them were lesser gentry, rather than esquires or knights' (Harvey 1991, p. 7). Moreover the number of gentry increased

during our period. Different monarchs would reward their loyal servants with lands in Kent. No doubt their intention was to try to reduce the potential for rebellion in the county. Moreover, London merchants such as the Rudstones would seek land in the county as a means of enhancing their status; this family moved to Boughton Monchelsea and Robert Rudstone, a fervent Protestant, helped Wyatt organise his militia in 1549.

Each landowner would have an 'affinity'. In times of conflict he would attempt to draw on as many of his tenants, servants, friends and relatives as he could to follow and fight for him. Indeed such 'affinities' could result in private wars developing between feuding gentry families. An illustration of this could be found at the Clifford's manor house in Sutton Valence, which had a gateway decorated with a carving of a Clifford impaling an Isley and inside a picture of a Clifford impaling a Culpeper (Hasted, vol. V, 1972, p. 369). From 1548 George Harper lived at Sutton Valence; he and his cousin John (of Cobham) both took part in Wyatt's Rebellion. If we look at Maps 1 and 2 we can see the influence of different families on their local areas and in the spread of support for Wyatt and Cade across the county.

Some of the gentry families are worthy of histories in their own right. The Nevilles and the Culpeppers, for example, were large, disparate and often influential families, both in local and national politics. Some families had different branches in different counties each with their own property.

The *Isley* family lived at Coombe Bank in Brasted which is bordered by the parishes of Sundridge and Chiddingstone in the hundred of Somerden. In the fifteenth century the family's name was written as 'Isle'. William Isle had inherited his estates from Roger Isle on the latter's death in 1429. A William Isle of Sundridge is named as receiving a pardon in 1450 (CPR, 28 Henry VI, Part II, 1446-52, 343). He was, however, an object of the rebel's anger and, like Robert Est, a fellow member of Lord Say's despised faction. William Isle had held the position of Sheriff and might have turned a blind eye to any crime committed by Lord Say's adherents; for example, the looting of Edward Neville's (Lord Abergavenny's) property by Stephen Slegge and Robert Est. Along with Slegge, Est and William Crowmer, Isle received a special mention in Cade's 'Bill of Complaints and Requests of the Commons of Kent'. The request was that he should be handed over to Cade. However unlike Lord Say himself (who was the then occupant of Knole Park) William Isle survived Cade's Rebellion only to be murdered in his sleep in December 1463 (Harvey 1991, p. 179). His estates passed to his nephew John Isley.

John Isley was a supporter of the duke of Buckingham's Rebellion in 1483. He was pardoned for his involvement in 1484 and died 10 years later. John was succeeded by Thomas Isley (who married Richard Guildford's

daughter Elizabeth) and Thomas's eldest son was Henry Isley who was one of Wyatt's adherents in 1554. It was Henry's force that was defeated at Wrotham Heath during Wyatt's Rebellion by an army raised in support of the Queen by Sir Robert Southwell and Henry Neville (the then Lord Bergavenny, Loades 1992, p. 63). Henry Isley lived at Brasted while his brother (also named Thomas) lived at Vinters Park near Maidstone (Hook and Ambrose 1999, p. 14). Henry Isley was a fervent Protestant who was arrested on the downfall of the duke of Northumberland, but then released almost immediately. His brother Thomas was with Wyatt in Maidstone when Wyatt declared his intentions in January 1554. Both Henry and Thomas Isley were executed after Wyatt's Rebellion, but Henry's son William was pardoned. William Isle was the object of the rebel's anger in 1450, but the Isleys found themselves swaying to the faction that suited them.

Guildford family: 'John Gylford, gentleman' appears in the Patent roll for 1450 as having been pardoned after Cade's Rebellion. (A 'Richard Gildeford' of Hawkhurst also appears as having been pardoned in 1450 – CPR, 28 Henry VI, Part II, 1446-52, 341 – though it is difficult to say if he was related). John Gylford lived at 'Halden', near Rolvenden, and the family also had a house at Hemsted, near Benenden. From 1465 he was Lieutenant of Dover Castle – an influential appointment which he owed to the earl of Warwick (Mercer 2002, 145). He was involved in the rebellion of September 1470, which he survived and then helped to lead the Kentish arm of Buckingham's Rebellion in 1483 with his son Richard. After the failure of the rebellion Richard fled to Brittany and returned with Henry Tudor when Henry landed at Milford Haven in 1485. John Guildford died in 1493. Richard was much in favour with Henry VII and it was he who Henry sent to east Kent to thank the local people for their support against Warbeck. However, Richard was plagued by indebtedness. He was arrested for debt by Edward Neville and Clark says 'the result was frontier violence down the Medway Valley and into the Weald' (Clark 1977, p. 14). The Nevilles and the Guildfords had a long running feud at this time and give the impression of being Kentish Montagues and Capulets. The Nevilles had retained Yorkist sympathies whereas the Guildfords were on the winning side in 1485.

Richard Guildford's son Edward inherited his father's debts and estates in 1506. In 1510 he became guardian to John Dudley after Dudley's father had been executed. John Dudley then married Edward's daughter Jane Guildford (Dockray 2004; Lehmborg, 2004). The Guildford fortunes could not then have risen higher. John Dudley inherited his father's title of duke of Northumberland and his and Jane's son was named Guildford Dudley. As we have seen the fall of the duke of Northumberland affected others in the county, such as Henry Isley. Edward and his half-brother

Henry Guildford had no male heirs. However the Dudley name continued to resonate loudly in Tudor England.

Fisher family: two of the Maidstone rebels of Cade's Rebellion named in the Patent Roll of 28 Henry VI (Part II, 1446-52, 347) are John Fisser ('carpenter') and Robert Fysshier (tailor'). (A William Fisser 'carpenter' is named in the same paragraph as John Fisser, but from Wadhurst, Sussex.) One of the members of the 1483 rebellion is described by Conway as 'Richard Fisser of Lye' (Conway 1925, p. 114). Conway considers that he might be the Richard Fisser who was buried at St Faith's in Maidstone in 1523. In 1554 Sir Alexander Fisher was involved in Wyatt's Rebellion. He was the tenant of Harpole Farm on the edge of Penenden Heath and consequently may well have had an involvement in the enclosure riots in that area in 1549. John and Robert Fisser were certainly brothers; Robert's grandson was an Alexander Fisher, but John had a son also called Alexander Fisher. Hasted tells us that : '... in the heraldic visitation of the county of Kent, taken in 1619, is the pedigree of Fisher of Maidstone, one of whom, Walter Fisher, became mayor' (Hasted, vol. IV, 1972, p. 269). Moreover, a Henry Fisher is named as a burgess of Maidstone in 1563 (Hasted, p. 281). By the time of Wyatt's Rebellion Sir Alexander Fisher was an avowed Protestant. He survived the rebellion and retained his religious zeal.

During Henry VII's reign an Alice Fisher, whose brother was John Fisher (gent.) of Hadlow (Hasted, vol. V, 1972, p. 182) married Henry Fane. Hadlow Place may have become Alice Fisher's inheritance and Henry Fane moved there on their marriage. In Henry's will he refers to his brother-in-law Richard Fisher – is this the same Richard Fisher who is buried in Maidstone and who fought for the rebels of 1483? Henry Fane's illegitimate nephew Ralph inherited Hadlow Place when Henry died (Thirsk 2007, p. 72). Ralph was executed in 1552 after having been accused of plotting against Northumberland. On Ralph's death his property at Penshurst was granted to Sir William Sidney and Hadlow Place went to the Rivers family. There are two Fanes who are named as having been pardoned after Wyatt's Rebellion; a Henry Fane, likely to be Ralph's half-brother, who died in 1560 and Thomas Fane. Thomas is likely to be from the branch of the family that lived at Badsells in Five Oak Green.

The writer can find no reference to the Fanes having been involved with Cade though the Fishers may well have been. The Fanes and the Fishers were emerging gentry and both had ardent Protestants amongst them – likely allies for Wyatt.

Poynings family: Robert Poynings' concern was his manors at Eastwell (near Wye), Westwood (by Faversham) and the two adjoining manors of Newington and Tirlingham (near Folkestone). On the death of his father

these lands had been settled on Robert's niece Eleanor. Robert claimed that as the lands had been held under gavelkind tenure the lands should be his and not those of the daughter of his late older brother. Poynings lost the title of 'Lord Poynings' as well which went to Eleanor's husband Henry Percy. Robert Poynings joined Cade; however, Robert's step-brother was William Crowmer who was a member of Lord Say's faction and was beheaded by Cade at Mile End (Harvey 1991, pp. 39-40).

Robert Poynings was killed at the battle of St Albans in 1461, but he had had a son by his wife Elizabeth Paston, Edward Poynings, who was brought up by his mother and her second husband Sir George Broun. Like the Fishers, the Brouns and the Poynings were associated with Maidstone. Sir George Broun was executed for his part in the 1483 rebellion (Conway 1925, p. 114). Edward Poynings escaped to France in 1483, but returned with Henry Tudor to Milford Haven in 1485. He had a distinguished career as a soldier thereafter and in December 1495 was made Lieutenant of Dover Castle. When Edward died in 1521 his in-laws, the Percys, grabbed as much as they could of his land, just as they had in 1461 when Robert had died.

There is a Robert Broune ('fruiterer') and a George Brown ('shoemaker'), both from Maidstone, named as having been pardoned after Wyatt's Rebellion (see CPR: 2 and 3 Philip and Mary, Part II, 1555-57, 46; 4 and 5 Philip and Mary, Part III, 1557-8, 53). It is not clear if there was a family connection here; the Browns and the Poynings seem to have been likely rebels.

Neville, Cheyney and Culpepper families: Edward Neville took possession of estates at Birling in 1435. He was a cousin of the earl of Warwick (Richard Neville). George Neville, Lord Latimer, was Warwick's uncle and he had lands at Ash, near Sandwich. Robert Neville, Warwick's secretary and another cousin, was pardoned after Fauconberg's Rebellion in 1471. The Nevilles were often powerful and involved in dynastic politics and warfare. Positions of authority were often conferred on members of the family – they were more likely to be rebelled against than rebelling. However, Sir George Neville, described as 'a bastard scion of the line that had produced ... Richard Neville, Earl of Warwick' (Wroe 2003, p. 92), was banished from England and became a follower of Perkin Warbeck whom he eventually deserted. Hasted tells us that Sir George Neville was at Blackheath in 1497 when the Cornishmen were encamped there and that he helped to prevent Kentish men from joining the Cornish (Hasted, vol. IV, p. 480). Much later Henry Neville distinguished himself in the crown's cause by defeating Henry Isley's force at Wrotham in 1554. The Nevilles of Kent were involved in the private wars of the county and suffered both at the hands of Lord Say's faction, prior to Cade's Rebellion, and later at the hands of the Guildfords.

Sir John Cheyne appears on the Patent Roll for 1450 as having received a pardon. His family lands were on the Isle of Sheppey. His sons John and William were prominent members of the 1483 rebellion. The family had difficulty escaping any rebellion in the county. In 1549 rioters were clamouring against enclosures on Sir Thomas Cheyne's estates (Jones 2003, p. 170). However, at the time of Wyatt's Rebellion it was Cheyne inertia that was conspicuous. Henry Neville and Sir Robert Southwell (who was married to Margaret Neville) were expecting his support in combating Wyatt's insurgency. Thomas Cheyne was slow off the mark claiming that he could not muster sufficient support on Sheppey.

The Culpeppers had held land in Kent since the twelfth century. There were two related branches: those that lived at Bedgebury, near Goudhurst, and those that were based near Aylesford. The name appears four times in the Patent Rolls as having been pardoned after Cade's Rebellion: Walter Culpeper, John Culpeper ('gentleman'), and Richard Culpeper, all of Goudhurst (CPR, 28 Henry VI, Part II, 1446-52, 362) and another Richard Culpeper ('gentleman') who is described as being 'late of Estfarlegh' (CPR, 28 Henry VI, Part II, 1446-52, 355). There is yet a further mention for a Richard Culpeper and all his '... men, tenants and servants in Kent' (CPR, 28 Henry VI, Part II, 1446-52, 369). John Culpeper's son was Alexander Culpeper who participated in the 1483 rebellion and a Richard Culpeper of Aylesford was probably also involved in 1483 (Conway 1925, p. 115). Thomas Culpeper was due to join Henry Isley's force in 1554 and galloped down from London so to do, but at the last minute he changed his mind.

Mantell and Digges families: the Mantells appear on the list of those pardoned for Cade's Rebellion. Thomas Mantell is described as being the Constable of the hundred at Boughton atte Blean in 1450. Two Walter Mantells, father and son, were both executed after Wyatt's Rebellion in 1554. They had land at Stockbury as well as at Boughton atte Blean. Walter Mantell of Stockbury is named on the indictment in the British Library as well, though he is described there as 'husbandman'. The Walter Mantells were ardent Protestants and Clark says that they were part of a Protestant group centred around Sir William Hawte – a group that also contained Thomas Culpeper and Thomas Wyatt the younger (Clark 1977, p. 52).

The mathematician Leonard Digges helped Wyatt to organise his militia in 1549 and was subsequently pardoned after his Rebellion. He came from an old county family with lands at Barham and Wootton in east Kent. In 1450 a John Dygges and a Richard Dygges were pardoned after Cade's Rebellion; however, they are named as coming from Newington, 'in Milton hundred' by Sittingbourne (CPR, 28 Henry VI, Part II, 1446-52, 365). It is not clear if they are related, though it is not a common name.

Wyatt family: a name that does not appear as having been pardoned after Cade's Rebellion was that of Wyatt. Sir Henry Wyatt owed his position and his property to his service to Henry VII and by 1492 he had accumulated enough wealth to be able to buy Allington Castle. He may have been involved in the 1483 rebellion and the king would have been pleased to see a supporter such as him settle in a county perceived as being otherwise troublesome (Burrow 2004). Sir Henry's son, Sir Thomas Wyatt the elder, served Henry VIII in different diplomatic roles and suffered various tribulations as a result, including gaol. At a time when others were losing their heads he enjoyed the luxury of dying of fever in 1542.

Sir Thomas Wyatt the younger retained Protestant beliefs though he, like others, swore allegiance to Mary Tudor. His son, George Wyatt, claimed that his father would have left England during Mary's reign but for the fact that his wife, the former Jane Hawte, had become pregnant (Loades 1968, p. 201). Wyatt may also have been concerned about losing the lands at Boxley Abbey that the family acquired after the Dissolution in 1536.

Wyatt looked to his mother's family, the Brookes for support. George Brooke, Lord Cobham was the brother of Wyatt's mother and a powerful man in Marian England; both of Lord Cobham's sons, William and Thomas, took part in Wyatt's Rebellion. The diversion that Wyatt made to Cooling Castle after his army left Rochester on its way to London had much to do with this being Lord Cobham's residence (Pollard 1903, p. 236).

Non-Gentry families: among the list of those pardoned after Cade's Rebellion is William Beale of Maidstone (CPR, 28 Henry VI, Part II, 1446-52, 347). Similarly after Wyatt's Rebellion John Beale ('boocher') and Thomas Beale ('boocher') are named as receiving pardons (CPR, 2 and 3 Philip and Mary, Part II, 1555-57, 46). The Beal family of Maidstone were probably more than butchers. In 1561 and 1574 Thomas Beale became Mayor of Maidstone and several of his forbears were portreves of Maidstone. Some families of yeoman status often had more income than members of the gentry and the Beals must have been influential people in Maidstone. Peter and Gervase Maplesden of Maidstone, both pardoned after Wyatt's Rebellion (CPR, 1 and 2 Philip and Mary, Part V, 1554-5, 92) were described as 'yeomen' in the Patent Rolls – they were wealthy men, indeed Peter Maplesden helped to establish Maidstone Grammar School and was a jurat of the town (Clark 1977, p. 90). The Maplesdens also owned land in the Weald at Rolvenden; the hamlet of Maplesden still exists within the parish of Rolvenden. In the nearby parish of Wittersham, John Mapysden ('yeoman') and Jacob Mapysden ('yeoman') appear in the Patent Rolls as having received pardons in 1450. Maplesden is not a

common name and it is possible that there is a family connection there (CPR, 28 Henry VI, Part II, 1446-52, 361).

In the west of the county Robert Seylyard and John Seylyerd of Sundridge appear in the Patent Rolls as having received a pardon (CPR, 28 Henry VI, Part II, 1446-52, 348). In 1554 Nicholas Siliarde ('yeoman') of Brasted is named as having received a pardon (CPR, 4 and 5 Philip and Mary, Part III, 1557-8, 53). The two villages are adjacent and again a family relationship is possible.

John Colyare, a yeoman of Lenham (another weaving village) is named as having received a pardon in 1450 (CPR, 28 Henry VI, Part II, 1446-52, 361) and in 1554 Roger Collier, also of Lenham, ('Sherman') received a pardon (CPR, 4 and 5 Philip and Mary, Part III, 1557-8, 53).

It is not easy to find a correlation between those pardoned after Cade and those pardoned after Wyatt in the villages of Kent. Where this can be established it is often found among those who are designated as having 'yeoman' status. In Smarden, however, there is a greater and more varied correlation. For Cade's Rebellion the names of William Marlare ('tailleur'), Laurence Marlare ('tailleur'), Thomas Pell ('husbondman'), Richard Scot ('clothmaker'), John Philpot ('fleccher'), William Philpot ('colyer'), John Hunt ('wever'), Richard Couper ('labourer') and Robert Couper ('wever') occur (CPR, 28 Henry VI, Part II, 1446-52, 363-4). For Wyatt's Rebellion the names of Richard Marler ('husbandman'), John Pell ('clothier'), John Pell ('weaver'), Robert Pell ('weaver'), John Filpott ('glover'), John Hunt ('weaver'), William Skotte ('wever'), Thomas Skotte ('wever') and Thomas Cowper ('weaver') occur (CPR, 4 and 5 Philip and Mary, Part III, 1557-8, 55). These names suggest that 30 per cent of the people from Smarden known to have taken part in Wyatt's Rebellion came from families who participated in Cade's Rebellion. Moreover John atte Wode ('husbondman') and John atte Wode ('tanner'), both from Smarden, are named as having received pardons in 1450 and a Richard Wood ('clothier') of nearby Pluckley received a pardon in 1554. The fact that many Smarden families were involved in both rebellions suggests that there had been less migration from Smarden than from other villages.

Richard Couper, the labourer from Smarden pardoned after Cade, might have been considered a member of the deserving poor in the late Medieval period. A little above Couper in income and standard of living would be the artisans which would include trades such as glovers, cobblers, fletchers, carpenters, tallow-chandlers and others. Clothworkers however might also be smallholders and therefore possibly described by the generic term 'husbandman'. The distinction between 'husbandman' and 'yeoman' might only have been one of income or acreage owned, the latter being the wealthier man. Here again the term 'yeoman' can be unhelpful. John Pell, the clothier from Smarden pardoned after Wyatt's Rebellion, may

have been a man of some substance. He would be an employer and might be described as a 'yeoman'. Wealthy farmers too could be described as 'yeomen'. There was greater social mobility in the fifteenth century than there had been in earlier times. We have already seen how gentry such as the Fishers and Fanes began to emerge during this period.

Conclusion

A culture requires shared ideas and attitudes. Moreover these attitudes have to be held sufficiently strongly for them to be handed down to succeeding generations if a culture is to sustain itself. We can see that certain areas of the county have consistently been prone to rebellion, most notably the Weald.

The route taken by Wealden goods to market goes north towards the river Medway, probably joining it at Yalding or Maidstone. Nearly all the gentry families who supported Sir Thomas Wyatt came from this area. Proctor tells us that those people who were formerly against Wyatt (in 1549) then decided to follow him five years later (Pollard 1903, p. 210). Different objectives for different rebellions so close together – what does this tell us about the people involved?

Wyatt was able to call on far fewer people than Cade. We have seen in families such as the Fishers and the Beals how, by the sixteenth century, people were increasingly willing to hold public office. Higher levels of literacy empowered such families and others of 'yeoman' stock. Men of this social status clearly had much influence – even in rebellions. The fewer numbers that followed Wyatt could be explained by an increased willingness of such people to adopt a political role rather than resorting to rebellion.

We can see what might be the influence of a landowner's 'affinity' in the two maps – particularly in the west of the county. The parishes of Brasted and Sundridge seem to have risen for the Isleys in Wyatt's Rebellion. Many of those villages that surround Brasted and Sundridge did not contribute at all or had no names recorded. What influence might the Guildfords have had on the Weald? The duke of Northumberland had fallen from power in 1553 calling for support from 'The Protestant Weald' (Clark 1977, p. 85), but there was no rising in the Weald until it was too late for the duke. Many from the Weald followed Wyatt, but no Guildfords took part in 1554.

Looking at the figures and the maps allows divisions in the county to become more distinct. The difference between east Kent and the rest of the county is clear. There was little or no support from this area in 1554 and only a patchy support for Cade in 1450. However this was an area active during the Wars of the Roses. The area has been described by Professor Everitt as the 'Kentish Wolds' (Everitt 1985, pp. 41-59). The coastal area

was largely deforested in the Middle Ages and had become cultivated, but the western parts, closer to Canterbury, have poorer soil and remained well wooded. We can see on Map 2 that it was this western area of 'The Kentish Wolds' that contributed the most men from east Kent to Cade's Rebellion. Therefore can we describe east Kent's activity in the late fifteenth century as being solely determined by the earl of Warwick's influence? Might there also be some connection between landscape resources and rebelliousness? David Underdown's study of Wiltshire villages in the seventeenth century has shown a connection between landscape and culture (Underdown 1985). Patterns of population and their development and an individual's relationship with his environment are also important. If we can find a link between environment and rebelliousness in this period then we might learn a great deal. The best place to start looking for it might well be the dens of the Weald. What were the characteristics of a place like Smarden that led to so many familiar names to turn up amongst those pardoned in successive rebellions? The origins of these families and reasons for settling in the Weald might provide an explanation for the area's involvement and the nature of Kentish rebellions generally. And might there have been something about Smarden's location and setting that encouraged its inhabitants to support Cade's and Wyatt's rebellions?

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