

This thesis is the candidate's own work.

Signed:

Prof. E. B. Fryde
University College of Wales
Aberystwyth
(Director of studies)

J. M. W. Harvey
(Candidate)

The work is concerned largely with the revolt of Jack Cade in 1450 and with other associated risings which occurred in England during the period 1450-1456. It includes quite a detailed survey of the years 1449-1450, during which a crisis took place in Henry VI's reign, a crisis which gave rise not only to Cade's revolt but also to risings throughout southern England and East Anglia. Two underlying themes are the corruption of the court party associated with the Duke of Suffolk, William de la Pole, and the fortunes of the war with France.

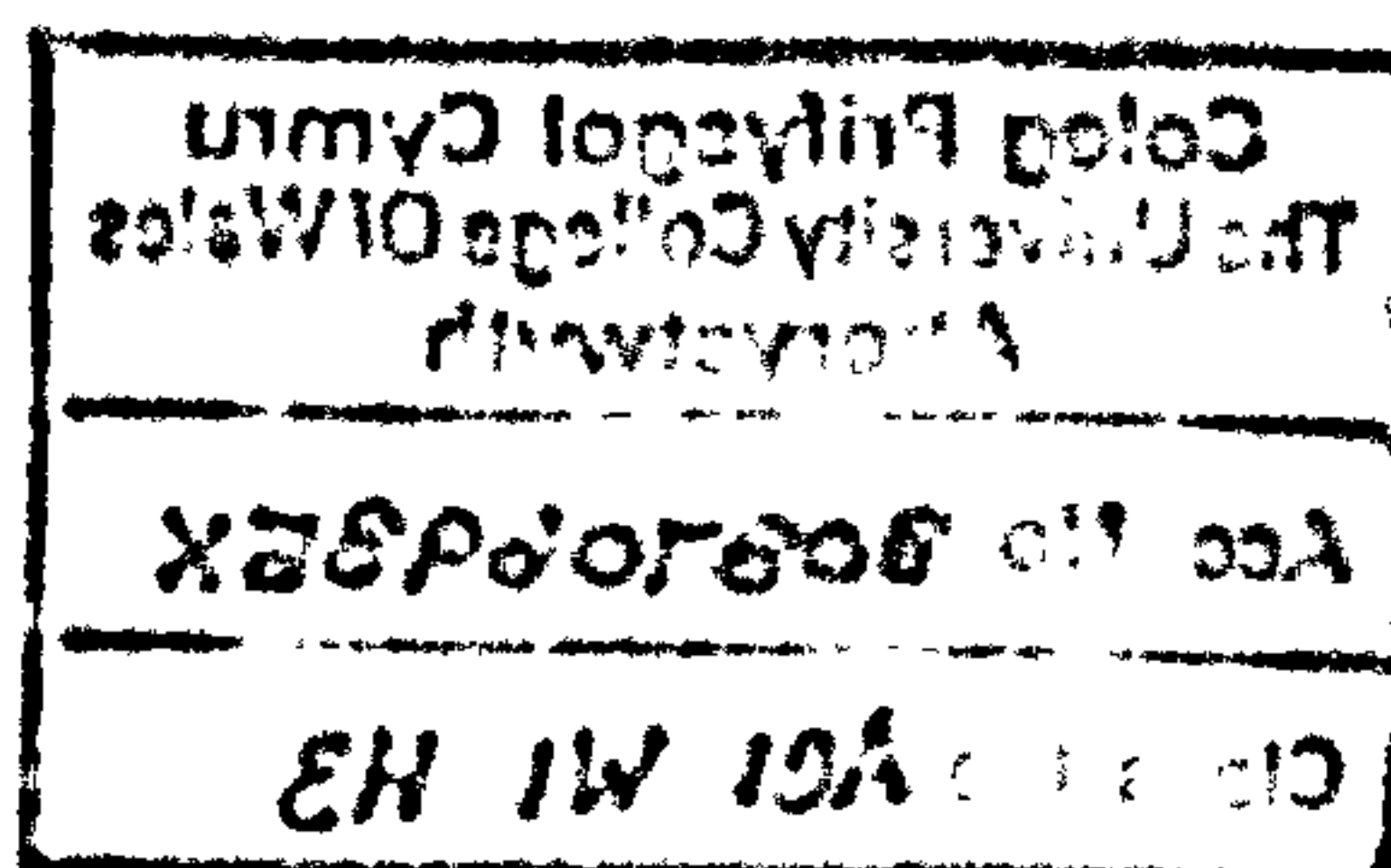
I declare that this work has not already been accepted in substance for any degree, and is not being concurrently submitted in candidature for any degree.

Signed: *J. M. W. Harvey*

(Candidate)

Popular revolt and unrest in England during the second half of the
reign of Henry VI

A thesis presented for the degree of Ph.D.in the University of Wales by
I.M.W.Harvey



Contents

Preface	3
List of abbreviations	8
Maps	before pp. 10, 185, 252
Chapter 1 : The South-East of England during the Reign of Henry VI	10
Chapter 2 : The 1440s: The Approach of a Crisis	36
Chapter 3 : Before the Storm: 1449-1450 (to May 1450)	80
Chapter 4 : Cade's Rebellion in Kent and Middlesex	108
Chapter 5 : Cade's Followers and Troubles in the Rest of the Country during the Summer of 1450	149
Chapter 6 : Subsequent Uprisings during Henry VI's Reign	185
Chapter 7 : Epilogue: The Last Decade of the Reign	237
Appendix A : A new version of the bill of complaints, BL Cott. roll IV.50	248
Appendix B : The composition of the pardon roll of July 1450	252
Bibliography	265

Preface

The central topic of this thesis, Cade's rebellion of 1450 and other associated risings, has until recently been unduly neglected. In 1892 G. Kriehn brought out his *The English rising in 1450* (Strassburg, 1892), in 1950 Helen Lyle produced a short pamphlet for the Historical Association on *The Rebellion of Jack Cade, 1450* and in 1970 Dr. Barron in her unpublished University of London doctoral thesis contributed a detailed chapter on Cade's rebellion in London. This was the state of writing on the subject when I embarked on the present thesis. It was not until 1981 that a thorough, penetrating study of the whole subject came out as a chapter in Ralph Griffiths' *The Reign of King Henry VI: The Exercise of Royal Authority, 1422-61*. In that year another helpful but less detailed account came out in B. Wolffe's *Henry VI*. These two publications have greatly facilitated my task. Other works that have been of particular assistance are Roger Virgoe's editing of 'Some Ancient Indictments in the King's Bench referring to Kent, 1450-1452' printed in F. R. H. Du Boulay (ed.) *Medieval Kentish Society* (Kent Records, 1964) and R. L. Storey's *The End of the House of Lancaster* (London, 1966). I have tried to supplement Professor Griffiths' admirable chapter by researches in the Public Record Office and into local county records in the hope of discovering more about how the rising affected the counties of the South-East. I have also tried to look longer and harder for evidence concerning East Anglia's involvement in the rising; and also in greater detail at risings immediately subsequent to 1450 throughout



the South-East and East Anglia.

Any piece of late medieval research suffers from the impersonality of the records of royal government. A closer knowledge of the personality and motives of most of the major protagonists in this story would be of immense value. Henry VI remains an enigma. Similarly frustrating is our inability at this distance to know more about the duke of York, his character and what his contemporaries really felt about him. A collection of private letters of this period such as the Paston letters of East Anglia only highlight what we lack in this kind of insight and information for the rest of the country at this time. So, inevitably, many questions remain unanswered.

Because the rebellion of 1381 proved to be a more cataclysmic shock to the whole fabric of government and society it has left behind a more abundant documentation than the risings of 1450. For the events of 1450 our major sources are some ten or more chronicles of near contemporary date which give a fairly detailed account of events in and around London. By and large they do not contradict one another. What is largely, although not entirely, lacking for 1450 is evidence from King's Bench indictments. The rebels from Kent, Surrey, Sussex and Essex were pardoned in large numbers, so indictments do not exist to suggest to us how they rose, from which villages, or who their ringleaders might have been. This is not true of Wiltshire, however, where the insurgents were indicted, or of Essex where indictments would be presented in 1453 concerning the 1450 rebels there. A few glimpses of what was going on in the affected counties during 1450 can be seen among the records of Early Chancery Proceedings. Those risings which followed

the rebellion of 1450, in contrast to the 1450 rising, go unmentioned by the chroniclers, but are well documented in the records of the King's Bench.

In its organisation the rising of 1450 apparently carries a strong resemblance to the revolt of 1381. In both instances men within easy riding distance of London betook themselves to the capital. As in 1381 (and as would happen in 1549) there were troubles in East Anglia in 1450 but these turned upon local targets for attack instead of taking the road to London. In 1450 as in 1381, men of Kent, Surrey, Sussex and Essex rose up in large numbers and marched up to London where a petition was offered to the king and unpopular courtiers were murdered. Indeed, Shakespeare in his Henry VI part 2 for his account of Cade's rising made use of the actual events of 1381. There is some evidence that in 1450 men were affected by the memories of what had happened in 1381: on one occasion the justification for a particular action was given as 'for this was how it was done in the time of Jack Straw'. Both risings were precipitated by the mismanagement of the wars against the French. Both were protests against misgovernment and the failures of the judicial system and produced murderous violence against some of the central and local ministers and officials regarded as the source of these evils. But the Great Revolt of 1381 had many important features largely, or even wholly, lacking in 1450. The intolerable fiscal demands of the Crown during the decade before the rebellion of 1381 had no parallel in 1450. Above all, in the seventy years dividing the two revolts there had been changes in the organisation of agrarian society so fundamental as

to alter radically the nature of economic and social grievances of which the population of South-eastern England might still complain. Serfdom, and the pressures of the seigneurial system which loomed so large in 1381, ceased to be important issues. There was, however, both in 1381 and in 1450 an underlying tide of discontent due to depressed conditions of trade and of the textile industry. Where we have the evidence of indictments for 1450, as for Wiltshire, this reveals a strikingly large number of rebels recruited from among workers in the cloth industry - always particularly vulnerable to economic dislocation, just as this is very prominent in the much better documented events of 1381. But, unlike in 1381, in studying the grievances raised by the rebels in 1450 one has no impression that they were trying to reform the social order of their day. As in the case of 1381, a study of the events of 1450 has an importance which far exceeds the details of the circumstances of that year. What it does is to make intelligible the way in which Henry VI's reign ultimately dissolved into the Wars of the Roses.

Placenames are spelt in their modern form but county boundaries remain those of the fifteenth century. The expressions 'men of Kent' and 'Kentishmen' are employed loosely, meaning no more than simply the inhabitants of the county, without any suggestion that these are people from one particular side of the river Medway.

It is a pleasure to thank here all the friends and colleagues who have been so generous in their help to me during the writing of this work, especially to the medievalists amongst my friends for their discussions and for reading parts of the text. Particular thanks are due to Dr. Thomas Charles-Edwards, to Joyce and Michael Martin and also to Corpus Christi College,

Oxford, for giving me such ideal conditions in which to complete this endeavour.

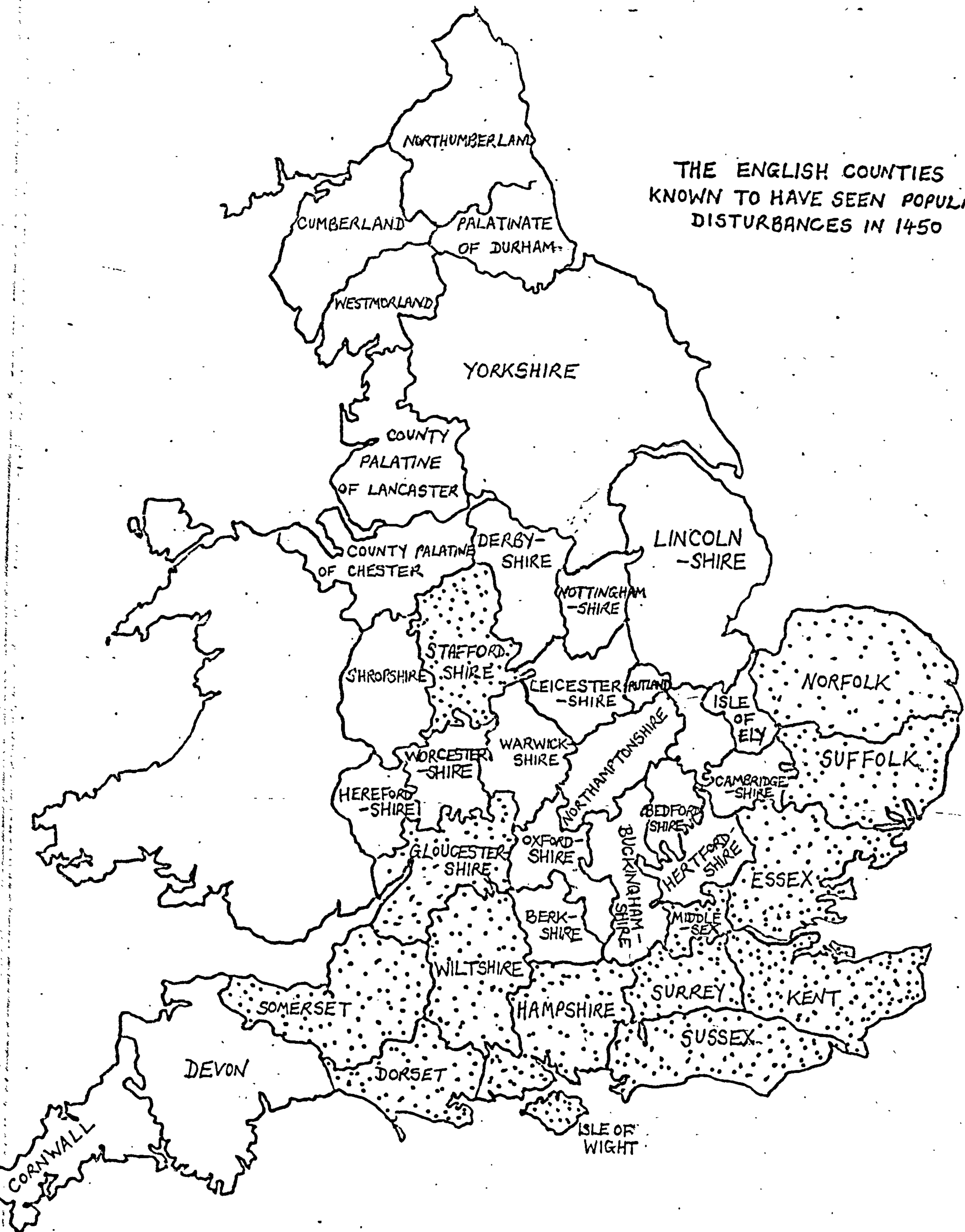
List of Abbreviations

Arch. Cant.	Archaeologia Cantiana(Kent archaeological society)
Benet's Chron.	'John Benet's chronicle for the years 1400 to 1462', (eds.) G. L. and M. A. Harriss, in <i>Camden Miscellany</i> , vol. XXIV (Camden society, 4th series, IX, 1972), pp.151-233
BIHR	<i>Bulletin of the Institute of Historical Research</i>
BJRL	<i>Bulletin of the John Rylands library</i>
BL	British Library
Brut	F. W. D. Brie (ed.), <i>The Brut, or the chronicles of England</i> , vol.II (Early English Text Society, CXXXVI, 1908)
CCR	<i>Calendar of the charter rolls</i>
CClR	<i>Calendar of the close rolls</i>
CFR	<i>Calendar of the fine rolls</i>
Chron. of London	N. H. Nicolas and E. Tyrell (eds.), <i>A chronicle of London, 1189-1483</i> (1827)
CPR	<i>Calendar of the patent rolls</i>
Davies Chron.	J. S. Davies (ed.), <i>An English chronicle of the reigns of Richard II, Henry IV, Henry V, and Henry VI</i> (Camden society, old series, LXIV, 1856)
Econ HR	<i>Economic History Review</i>
EHL	C. L. Kingsford, <i>English historical literature in the fifteenth century</i> (Oxford, 1913)
EHR	<i>English Historical Review</i>
Fabyan's Chron.	H. Ellis (ed.), <i>The new chronicles of England and France</i> , by Robert Fabyan (1811)
Flenley	R. Flenley (ed.), <i>Six town chronicles</i> (Oxford, 1911)
Gregory's Chron.	J. Gairdner (ed.), <i>The historical collections of a citizen of London in the fifteenth century</i> (Camden society, new series, XVII, 1876)
Great Chron.	A. H. Thomas and I. D. Thornley (eds.), <i>The great</i>

	chronicle of London (1938)
HMC	Historical manuscripts commission
London Chrons.	C. L. Kingsford (ed.), <i>The chronicles of London</i> (1905)
PBA	<i>Proceedings of the British Academy</i>
PL	J. Gairdner (ed.), <i>The Paston Letters</i> (6 volumes, 1904)
Political Poems	T. Wright (ed.), <i>A collection of political poems and songs relating to English history, from the accession of Edward III to the reign of Henry VIII</i> (2 volumes, RS, 1859-61)
PPC	N. H. Nicolas (ed.), <i>Proceedings and ordinances of the privy council</i> (7 volumes, Record Commission, 1834-37)
RS	Rolls series
Stevenson	J. Stevenson (ed.), <i>Letters and papers illustrative of the wars of the English in France during the reign of Henry the sixth, etc.</i> (2 volumes, RS, 1861-64)
Three Chrons.	J. Gairdner (ed.), <i>Three fifteenth-century chronicles</i> . . . (Camden society, 3rd series, XXVIII, 1880)
TRHS	<i>Transactions of the Royal Historical Society</i>
VCH	<i>Victoria history of the counties of England</i>
Virgoe, Ancient Indictments	R. Virgoe (ed.), 'Some Ancient Indictments in the King's Bench referring to Kent, 1450-1452', in F. R. H. Du Boulay (ed.), <i>Documents illustrative of Medieval Kentish Society, Kent Records, XVIII</i> (Ashford, 1964)
Wedgwood, Biographies	J. C. Wedgwood (ed.), <i>History of parliament: Biographies of the members of the Commons house, 1439-1509</i> (1936)
Wedgwood, Register	J. C. Wedgwood (ed.), <i>History of parliament: Register of the ministers and of the members of both houses, 1439-1509</i> (1938)

**TEXT BOUND
INTO
THE SPINE**

THE ENGLISH COUNTIES
KNOWN TO HAVE SEEN POPULAR
DISTURBANCES IN 1450



Chapter One: The South-East of England during the reign of Henry VI

While this study has for its subject popular agitation in England, yet it is a story largely dominated by the South-East. An introductory look at this region offering some picture of the landscape and people from which rebellion sprang helps to explain why this should have been so. The other area important to this story, East Anglia, is looked at later, forming as it does quite another case.

The 'South-East', for these present purposes at least, comprises the five counties of Kent, Middlesex, Surrey, Sussex and Essex. The term is more than just a convenient tag used to tie together five adjacent counties, since the area has a certain regional unity of its own. The chalk escarpment of the North Downs runs west-east through Surrey and Kent to end just on the Essex bank of the Thames; the large, roughly circular, wooded prominence of the Weald extends from eastern Sussex and the corner of south-eastern Surrey into central Kent; whilst the Thames ebbs and flows in its wide estuary bounded to the north by Essex and to the south by Kent. But that which above all binds these counties together into a geographical and, what is more, a political coherence is a common proximity both to London and to the Continent - this will be one of the most important factors to consider when discussing later why the major popular uprising of Henry VI's reign occurred here in the South-East.

A crow flying at a good height over Kent from Canterbury to Sevenoaks at any time during the first half of the fifteenth

century would look below to its right and see flocks of sheep grazing the treeless, level stretches of the Isle of Sheppey and the marshes north of Cliffe, Cooling and St. Mary's Hoo, just as far away in the distance to the left there would be sheep grazing Romney Marsh. But a more striking feature of its bird's eye view would be the hedged and wooded nature of the landscape. Woodland was to be seen both on the chalk Downland west of Canterbury and on the Chartland, the hill country with its numerous quarries at the foot of the Downland escarpment.¹ There in the Downland at Sevenoaks it would see expanses of wooded slopes on the Weald stretching away to the south into Sussex. Likewise, areas of woodland were to be found in Surrey, Essex, and northern and eastern Sussex.² As always, timber was a cash crop worth farming. Large scale landlords who leased out most of their other property often chose to continue exploiting their woods directly. They were encouraged to do so by a tendency for timber to increase in price throughout the century.³ In the twelve months from Michaelmas to Michaelmas 1427-28 the archbishop of Canterbury's woodward at his important wood at Bexley in north-western Kent sold 5,000 talwodes (a largish variety of firewood) and 5,500 tosards (a smaller variety); but during a similar period 1447-48 he sold 9,000 talwodes and 11,000 tosards, along with 27 oaks sold to a shipman.⁴ Nor was it always just the large scale landlords who were in this business. Lumbering could well take up a substantial proportion of an average Kentish farmer's acreage alongside his arable and pastoral interests. In the 1430s John and Margaret Branchesle had property on the edge of the Kentish Weald in Benenden and Rolvenden comprising 150 acres of arable, 140

acres of marsh, meadow and pasture, and 150 acres of woodland.⁵ And in Sussex in the second half of the century, when derelict lands belonging to Battle Abbey were being brought into use again, the new tenants sometimes chose to turn the land to timbering or to cattle pasture rather than to resume their use as arable land.⁶ Not all woodland, however, was put entirely to commercial use. Some landowners had enclosed part of their woodlands and turned them into deer parks. Such parks could be of considerable size; large enough, for example, in the case of the duke of Buckingham's park at Penshurst in Kent, for a big gang of poachers allegedly to carry off no fewer than 82 deer in one raid in the middle of the century.⁷ Poaching was a particularly exciting and popular sport pursued with enthusiasm throughout the country.

In the absence of the acid uplands which characterize the northern and western extremities of Britain, arable crops could be grown through most of these five south-eastern counties. Wheat and barley predominated on the most fertile soils, as, for example, on the rich soil of the foothills of north and east Kent. Fringed to the seaward side by coastal marshes and inland by the not so fertile Downland, these gently undulating foothills were the main grain growing districts of Kent, the county's most populous and affluent portion, and one of the factors contributing towards making the South-East one of the richest areas of the country. An example of the kind of farm found here is the manor of Ackholt, on the edge of this belt a few miles south of Wingham in east Kent, which in 1445 had all of its 274 acres down to arable crops but for ten acres of woodland.⁸ This was an important area

of supply for the London market; wheat was sent by boat up the Thames estuary from harbours of the north coast such as Faversham and Margate. Another prominent cereal growing belt, likewise enjoying ideal soils and gradients, was the south coastal belt of Sussex which had a farming economy specializing in the combined growing of grains and raising of sheep which supplied the necessary manure, although the latter were increasingly being supplemented by cattle. Here too the most popular crops were wheat and barley. Such was the concentration of arable farming on this coastal plain of Sussex that it created a demand for teams of reapers during the harvest period and drew a seasonal labour force down from the Weald.⁹ This relative wealth of eastern Kent and maritime Sussex within the South-East was of long standing and was reflected in the figures of the 1334 subsidy a century earlier.¹⁰

Throughout the South-East oats, peas, beans and a certain amount of rye were grown alongside the more commercially valuable wheat and barley. The fields of peas and beans, scenting in summer the down wind roads and lanes were grown primarily for human consumption. Other leguminous crops, vetch and 'horse-meat', had been grown as animal fodder and as improvers of the soil in an important way since the late thirteenth century in the cereal belts of Kent and Sussex, an innovation that had shown these regions to be at the forefront of farming methods in England.¹¹

Yet the emphasis should not be laid too heavily on arable crops alone. Speaking generally, the five counties would best be described as having a notably balanced mixed farming economy. Indeed, there was an observable trend in the later Middle Ages away from cereal farming towards more pastoral farming. Even in the grain

growing belt of Kent itself a farmer would prefer to combine intensive livestock husbandry with raising arable crops. The manor of Ackholt, mentioned above as an illustration of the importance of arable farming in this area, is somewhat misleading in its suggestion of an area of exclusively arable cultivation. William Aldelond, who grew wheat and barley in the parish of Minster on the Isle of Thanet in the north-eastern corner of the Kent grain belt, left behind him as his winter minimum of livestock five (presumably draught) horses, twenty pigs, eight bullocks, and a flock of a hundred sheep, when at the end of January 1445 - a month of short days and cold east winds - he drowned himself.¹²

The large orchards which until very recently were one of the most characteristic features of the Kentish countryside were possibly a much less conspicuous aspect of the landscape during the fifteenth century, although the presence of apple mills suggests large scale apple growing.¹³ The imaginary landscape described in a poem probably of Henry IV's reign, *Mum and the Sothsegger*, must have conformed closely to the actual appearance of some rich rolling portion of Sussex or Kent in high summer: here is a landscape of green woods and hedges, homesteads set among mown meadows and harvested corn fields where blackberries and honeysuckle grow along the waysides; beans, broom and wild meadow flowers blossom, there are plums and pears in the orchards, grapes in the garden, deer out on the dale, and grazing the pasturelands sturdy horses and cattle; and hidden in the available shade, sheep lying in the cool as their lambs sport along the hedges. ¹⁴

Sheep, the most numerous of the different livestock present in

the South-East, were kept very much less for their mutton than as dairy animals and wool producers, and for their use in manuring arable land. John Leventhorp, who in the early 1420s leased out to farm his dairy at Wennington in Essex a few miles south-east of Romford on the edge of Thames-side marshland, included in his lease 56 cows but 168 sheep for milking.¹⁵ Likewise, at Easter 1450 at another Essex grange a John Bewham took on the dairying of 17 cows and 300 ewes.¹⁶ The flat open marshlands of southern Essex where the salt breeze carried a clinking of sheep bells along with the cries of the waders were renowned for their fine cheeses.¹⁷

Wool from the south-eastern counties was none of it of the highest quality grade required by the medieval wool trade. In a list of 1454, grading 51 different kinds of English wool, the wools of Middlesex, Kent and Sussex were placed almost at the bottom of the list, worth, in the case of Kentish wool, 4 marks per sack. This compared with 14 marks per sack for the finest English wools from the March of Shropshire and Leominster. Nonetheless, these 'slight' wools of Kent and Sussex were not without their export market and they also had the local cloth industry to supply.¹⁸ The evidence points to large flocks of sheep particularly on the South Downs and throughout Kent.¹⁹

The widespread depopulation and changed landlord-tenant relations of the latter half of the fourteenth century had given rise by the first half of the fifteenth century to a larger class of well-to-do peasantry. These men were prospering particularly in the South-East with its grain growing fields and plentiful markets. The big landholders were going out of direct exploitation of

their estates and these men were coming in. The demesne manors of the archbishop of Canterbury, for instance, like many of the large scale estates, were wholly farmed out by 1450²⁰ and many of the lessees came from this class of yeomen. In Kent, Surrey, Sussex and elsewhere they had been prospering since the late fourteenth century from farming the archbishop's land together with his livestock, buildings and, where these were important, also rights to customary services. And if a man held some of his land from the archbishop, he was quite likely in the late Middle Ages also to be leasing from a couple of other large landowners and from several of his own neighbours too. Competent managers, with valuable local knowledge, often former estate officials for landlords themselves, these men rationalized and increased their holdings assiduously often in jigsaws of small plots.²¹ The grant by Simon Sage, of Litlington in the Cuckmere valley not many miles from the Sussex coast, who in 1458 alienated all his lands in neighbouring Exceat and Westdean, is a catalogue of tiny plots. He had one 50 acre piece of arable, a 10 acre piece of meadow and 17 acres of saltmarsh, but the remaining 30 and more acres of his property came in four, three, one and half acre portions, no doubt patiently accumulated with aspect and soil in mind.²²

The evidence shows that this was a group of yeomanry who bulked large in south-eastern society. These were, after all, counties where the powerful influence of a few great magnate houses was much less conspicuous. There is no sure way of estimating how large a fraction of society the yeomen were, but after Cade's rebellion in 1450 a long pardon roll was drawn up of some 3,000

names from the south-eastern counties and just a few hundreds enumerate sufficiently large numbers of their inhabitants to be statistically interesting. There is Milton hundred with an unparalleled 314 names from 14 villages; Shamull hundred with 123 individuals from ten different towns and villages, and an additional 12 men from whereabouts unknown in the hundred; Eyhorne hundred with 211 men from 17 localities; and Maidstone hundred with 94 individuals from six towns and villages. All these were hundreds from around or near the Medway valley in northern and central Kent. Looking at these lists of names the yeomen and lesser husbandmen are very conspicuous. Not every name is accompanied by occupation or status, but among the greater number who are, a substantial 30% in the hundred of Maidstone are designated as either yeomen or husbandmen, a proportion which rises to a rough 50% in the hundreds of Eyhorne, Milton and Shamull. Even in Sussex where the greatest number of names in any given hundred is a mere 67 from Netherfield hundred, 45 from Steyning hundred, 33 from Swambergh hundred and 32 from Longbridge hundred, the proportion is 35%, 55%, 51% and 84% respectively. And in the Surrey hundred of Wallington and Brixton with its plentiful 243 names 37% of persons are designated as either yeomen or husbandmen.²³ These terms were not employed rigidly, but in a general fashion a yeoman was a more prosperous kind of farmer than a husbandman.

With their increasing literacy and material prosperity the yeomen are a social group about which it is possible to be quite precise. They were not wealthy on any scale but the better off among them knew a solid domestic comfort by the standards of the time. Their homes had bacon hanging in the roof, silver spoons on

the table and feather beds to sleep on. They indulged a taste for vivid colours in clothing and hangings, gave affectionate petnames to their cows, remembered the local poor in their wills, owned a book or maybe two and wanted their sons sent to school.²⁴

It is worth looking at this group in some detail in order to convey how different Kentish society of 1450 was from what it had been in 1381 when it participated in the Great Revolt. By the middle of the fifteenth century the prominence of the men still recorded as bondmen had been replaced by that of yeomen whose descent and original status was ceasing to matter. John Cotyng from Sittingbourne in Milton hundred may or may not have been a rebel in 1450 but he certainly had his name placed on the pardon roll issued after it was over.²⁵ Howsoever, as a landlord and entrepreneur he represents the most prosperous kind of Kentish yeoman, one who had everything to lose if the terrible rumour of 1450 were true that Kent was to be made a wild forest in revenge for the death of the duke of Suffolk. To be more precise he had, give or take a few acres (since this was his total in 1459) more than three messuages, 12 virgates and an additional 27 acres. In addition to this he owned a house, the Swan in Sittingbourne, furnished with a good display of silver and plate, two barns and also stalls in the market place at Milton and Sittingbourne.²⁶ Living within the smell of the sea and only half a dozen miles or so from the castle of Queenborough on the Isle of Sheppey, which the French had attacked in April 1450, the threat of enemy occupation or looting must have been an acute

anxiety for him and a great many men of coastal Kent that summer.

Property consciousness was the hallmark of this group. To take an example of a more modest yeoman, Henry atte Bregge, the younger, farmed in the village of Laughton set in the low-lying countryside east of Lewes in Sussex. He apparently enjoyed a little illegal sport and may have taken an interest in national affairs, but more than anything else his over-riding concern was with his own farming affairs. In April 1449 he is to be found being fined for keeping a greyhound bitch, a franchise granted only to those with property valued at over 40s. a year. Since his father was fined at the same time for keeping a greyhound dog this looks suspiciously like a family poaching enterprise.²⁷ He may perhaps have been involved in the rising of July 1450, yet in the first week of August of that year, which would have been almost immediately upon his return from the turbulence of the capital, he was busy protesting in the local manor court over a longstanding grievance, that a neighbouring landholder had not scoured out his ditch properly for years and that as a consequence Henry's own meadow had been under water and useless, causing him a farthing less than 40s. in damage; in response to which his neighbour was equivocating, acknowledging some damage but disputing the amount.²⁸

At the lowest end of the yeoman-husbandman group were men such as Thomas Jerveys, a husbandman farming during the 1440s at Thundersley, just north of Canvey Island on the Essex bank of the Thames. In the summer of 1443 he had 20 acres under wheat, 27 acres under barley and dredge, and 24 under peas and oats. He kept three horses (one of them no longer fit to work), two cows and

seven piglets.²⁹ Even such modest property holding would have lent him some status in the local community, for there were those whose holdings were too small to support them and who were obliged habitually to hire out their labour. The livestock of such a labourer in the parish of Otford just north of Sevenoaks in Kent in the summer of 1445 consisted of no more than three young bullocks and a pig; in addition he had a mere three roods of land sown with wheat and two acres sown with peas and oats.³⁰

Whilst Hodge may have come to rule the fields by the second quarter of the fifteenth century, the status of the artisan was little changed. Of course the distinction between the two groups was very far from absolute; much of the manufacture of textiles had moved from the towns into rural areas where cloth workers were commonly also smallholders. But the concentration of artisans - cobblers, glovers, fletchers, tallowchandlers, carpenters and cordwainers - continued to be in the towns and large villages. Some of these retailed their own goods in shops or stalls at the weekly markets and at their towns' fair days. Often they formed a vocal, mobile and independent-minded element in the community, prominent in the religious and political dissent of the period.

In some instances one particular craft or trade predominated in a town. This was the case, for example, at Thaxted in northern Essex where since the later fourteenth century approximately 40% of the working male population may have been employed in tool manufacture as cutlers or sheathers.³¹ In some coastal towns of the South-East it was shipping and fishing which gave the greatest employment, although, it must be added, this was not the

case as often as might be expected. It was true of Hythe where a majority of the working population were fishermen,³² and where the work of craftsmen, for example that of the net knitters,³³ was often allied to the fishing trade. The boats of Kent and Sussex ports such as Hythe, Folkestone, Romney, Rye and Brighton fished the local inshore waters for plaice and mackerel, and from June onwards their larger boats went up to the North Sea fisheries of Scarborough and Yarmouth to catch herring.³⁴ Oyster fisheries were a local speciality of the estuaries of the north Kent and south Essex coasts.

Apart from actual fishing, another important source of revenue for the boat owners and shipmen of the region was the carrying and supplying trade over the Channel to the English troops operating in France and to the permanent garrison in Calais. Here was a network of trade, indeed, which extended all over the South-East of England and beyond. Calais formed a more or less captive market. Set on flat and marshy ground, the castle and town could not even supply its own building materials of freestone or timber: in 1440 the woods of three Essex monasteries supplied 1,400 great oaks and woods at Langley Park near Leeds Castle in Kent supplied a further 1,760, all for the harbour and waterworks at Calais.³⁵ The garrison could buy some wheat in the March of Calais and wheat and wine were on occasion acquired from Norman and Breton traders, but its main traffic in live cattle and sheep, bacon, stockfish, saltpetre, arrows and the like came through the ports of London and Sandwich.³⁶ As regards cross-Channel passengers, Dover enjoyed a monopoly of the Calais traffic; mariners were not allowed to take merchants and pilgrims from Calais to any other

Kentish port.³⁷

The whole enterprise created all kinds of incidental benefits for the area, such as a demand for pasturage near Sandwich for hundreds of cattle and sheep whilst they awaited embarkation³⁸ or a demand in the quarries of the Maidstone area for stone missiles for siege machines.³⁹ And with an outgoing stream of troops, pressed labour,⁴⁰ foodstuffs and military equipment, together with incoming merchants, merchandise and visitors, making the main roads of the region among the busiest in the country, the hostelry business could not but benefit as it inflated its prices to suit demand. At Rochester, a stopping place for travellers en route from Dover to London, an inn-keeper in the July of 1445 thought some French ambassadors in the peace negotiations between England and France suitable customers to buy fish at three times its true value. And of course it was the same story with the wine they bought too.⁴¹

Porchester and Southampton on the south coast were both used as disembarkation points by visiting embassies, taking their road to London through Hampshire, Sussex and Surrey, as an alternative to the Dover-Canterbury-Rochester-Dartford route. This meant that a large portion of the population of the South-East were exposed at various times, and most particularly at the time of the bringing over of Henry VI's new French queen in 1445, to very colourful and vivid manifestations along their own parish roads of the ever important French connection.⁴²

There was another side, however, to the South-East's cross-Channel dealings. Soldiers and camp followers were quartered in the countryside

on their way to and from France and were apt to commit every sort of outrage. Ships were commandeered to transport troops. A zone was created, 12 miles wide and extending in length right round from Sandwich to Appledore, from which purveyors might take (regardless of the inconvenience and without any sure guarantee of repayment) livestock or grain exclusively for the supply of Calais, its marches and Kent's own Dover castle. The rich arable lands of the Isle of Thanet and the central hundreds of Maidstone, Eythorne and Twyford also came under this special preserve of royal purveyors that made a parasitic neighbour of Calais in times of stress.⁴³ When in the late 1440s commerce was badly disrupted by an increase in piracy and England through military defeat lost a friendly French coast in Normandy the whole business of proximity to France was to turn very sour. Sandwich in particular declined through this disruption: its exports of wool and cloth dropped dramatically in 1449, whilst its wine imports fell to a quarter of what they had recently been. As a key Kentish port, Sandwich's decline had repercussions upon the health of the whole county's trade. In neighbouring Sussex in 1448 Rye and Winchelsea had been burned by the French.⁴⁴ All along the Thames estuary, at Gravesend, Cliffe, Hoo and the Isle of Sheppey on the Kentish bank, and at Horndon, Tilbury, Fobbing and Shoebury on the Essex bank, there were manned beacons, part of a chain extending around the South-East coast, watching day and night for enemy craft.⁴⁵

There was a busy domestic carrying trade through the roads of the region with the movement of passengers, pilgrims and local materials: chalk from Lewes perhaps, or from Northfleet, pot clay from Wrotham, or timber from Sevenoaks to name a few.⁴⁶ Certainly

the Thames was as much a thoroughfare as a barrier with ferries plying across from Kent to Essex and back from Gravesend, Greenwich and Higham.⁴⁷ The condition of the roads varied from season to season, but it was possible to move about the countryside at a fair speed. An estate official of the archbishop of Canterbury could ride in May from Pinner Park in Middlesex via Hayes to Otford in Kent and down to Wadhurst, Frankham Park and Mayfield in Sussex attending to business at each of these manors as he came to them in a matter of four days.⁴⁸ Moreover, the trade in a commodity as perishable as fresh fish, carried by rippers from Folkestone, Hythe and Rye to London, confirms the suggestion of serviceable roads.⁴⁹ Indeed, Kent was notorious for the speed with which news could travel from one end of the county to the other. There was a constant problem of upkeep: at the beginning of Henry VI's reign a stone bridge was newly constructed over the Medway between Rochester and Strood⁵⁰ and the repair of the highways was regularly remembered by men in their wills with bequests made for the upkeep of local roads or even for the repair of specified stretches.⁵¹

There is one craft which merits special attention: the cloth industry. In the chapters which follow it will be seen again and again how frequently cloth workers were insurgents in the troubles of mid-fifteenth century England, in the Midlands, in Wiltshire, in East Anglia and in Kent, men such as the weaver from Faversham, William Horne, who at Canterbury on 14 June 1451 was judged to be hanged for high treason and whose goods were forfeit, his most valuable possessions being his two looms.⁵² Wool and woollen cloth

enjoyed a position of supreme importance among the exports of Henry VI's England. This singular role dated back well into previous centuries, with the difference now that by the second quarter of the fifteenth century cloth had overtaken wool as the more important export of the two. English cloth was bought throughout the Mediterranean. As far away as Greece it was known that the British Isles produced the best wool in the world and had a flourishing cloth industry.⁵³ A good deal of cloth was also produced for the home market. Some of the finest broadcloths in England were made in the area around the southern Cotswolds, and just to the south there was an important kersey producing area in south Wiltshire and Berkshire. Another equally important cloth producing area concentrating on the production of kerseys existed along the Suffolk-Essex border.⁵⁴ In this area around the river Stour and its tributaries where the grinding and pounding of watermills, some for fulling cloth and some for corn,⁵⁵ accompanied the normal sounds of the river, kerseys and straits were manufactured in large quantities at prospering towns such as Dedham, Sudbury, Clare, Hadleigh and Lavenham. Cloth production was also important in certain other towns of Essex and Suffolk such as Coggeshall, Braintree, Bury St. Edmunds and Halstead. A woollen district, although not of the importance of either the Wiltshire-Gloucestershire or Suffolk-Essex groups, extended through the southern counties of England from Hampshire through Surrey, (Guildford was an important centre), to the villages of the Kentish Weald and beyond.

The Weald had the advantages of access to the fuller's earth, found plentifully to the west around Nutfield and Reigate in Surrey, needed in the finishing of more valuable varieties of

cloth, of fast flowing streams to power fulling mills, and above all a surplus population lacking sufficient employment. For example, during the 1440s in the villages of Smarden and Pluckley, just on the edge of the Low Weald or Vale of Kent, a few miles west of Ashford, it is likely that almost a quarter of the male population was engaged in the cloth industry.⁵⁶ Serving the cloth villages of the Weald was the important town of Maidstone to its north in the lower Medway valley. Here were the drapers and chapmen who acted as middlemen between the workers of the Weald and the London merchants: commerce and connections with the capital were continuous.⁵⁷ Occasionally this familiarity bred contempt, as in September 1442 when two Londoners set upon a Maidstone servant carrying goods for his master and a Bearsted draper as they rode along the roads of Kent and made off with 30 yards of woollen cloth worth 35s. and eight pieces of woollen cloth worth 7 marks.⁵⁸ But it is precisely this dubious kind of connection between Maidstone and the capital which, by entering the criminal records, allows us a closer look at the chapmen's wares. Another robbery by the same pair of Londoners that September, this time from two Maidstone chapmen, permits us to discover that in this district of Kent there was not only a market for cloth dyes but also for cloves, ginger, cinnamon, dates, sugar cane and silk.⁵⁹

The Wealden cloth villages nurtured a tradition of religious dissent so strong as to constitute one of the more distinctive features of this singular district - a tradition encouraged by large parishes, scattered settlements and the weakness of the local manorial structure.⁶⁰ This was a Lollard district, which would,

moreover, take its full share in the political unrest in Kent during the early 1450s. Indeed, with its wooded, incised valleys, its comparative absence of large, nucleated settlements, and its sense of remoteness and secrecy, it was a natural refuge for fugitives.⁶¹

Besides the manufacture of cloth the economy of the area was based on small pastoral holdings, local crafts, iron smelting and its allied charcoal burning. It was a peculiarity of the land holdings here that Kentish manors all over the county, some of them many miles distant, owned discrete portions of woodland or clearing - denes. In the fifteenth century the manor of Wye for example, away to the north-east of Ashford on the river Ouse, owned eight denes there.⁶² There is no doubt that the Weald's distinctive nature was recognized at the time. It is likely that a Wealden man could be identified by his speech: Caxton, who was born and learnt his native tongue in the Weald during the 1420s, reckoned, in a preface to one of his English translations, that there there was spoken 'as brode and rude englissh as is in ony place of england'.⁶³

But to return to the textile industry, signs of the industry were present throughout the South-East. It had made a spinster of almost every woman and dotted the river valleys with its tenter grounds, fulling mills and plots of teasels and dye plants. In 1452 at Braintree in Essex the bailiffs declared that the art or mystery of weaving was practised in their town more than any other and had been so from time beyond memory.⁶⁴ Just to their north was the greatest of the Essex cloth towns, Colchester. A wide variety of cloths were made there from a low quality

russet, regarded by some as fit only for hermits, to high quality varieties exported by Italians.⁶⁵ A man possessing one of the skills of the industry was not likely to be left unemployed long provided relations with foreign customers were good. Many of the immigrants who were resident in England at this time came from the Low Countries and were employed in the manufacture of cloth, bringing to it their expertise. Among the 128 aliens in Kent who failed to evade the oath of allegiance in 1436 the occupation is known of only 11, but of these four were weavers and one a mercer. Similarly, of the 12 aliens whose occupations are known in Essex that year, three were weavers and five were tailors, two of whom lived in Colchester.⁶⁶

London was the chief centre for bargaining in English cloth. Wherever the finished cloth of the South-East ended up it was likely either to have travelled through London or to have been bargained for there and delivered directly to harbours of shipment elsewhere. In the middle of the fifteenth century London was the market for those great exporters of English cloth, the Italian merchants. The business was transacted in Blackwell Hall which had been specially constructed for the purpose in the last years of the previous century. At the beginning of the century wool destined for the Mediterranean had left England from London, Southampton and Sandwich, but by the middle of the century the Venetian galleys had almost ceased to go up the estuary to London, and Southampton with its excellent harbour and Sandwich as an outpost to London were the main ports dealing in this trade.

To discuss any aspect of the South-East at this time, whether

it be political or economic, makes little sense unless the counties are seen in their proper regional context as a hinterland, closely connected with this expanding capital city. For all its orchards, straying pigs and the countryside of grazing cattle just outside its walls, London was a truly urban community by the standards of its day.⁶⁷ The fifteenth century saw it outpace more decisively such cities as York, Norwich, Chester and Bristol as its population grew from a possible 35,000 in the mid-fourteenth century to perhaps somewhere around 50,000 at the end of the fifteenth century so as to become comparable with all but the very largest cities of the Continent.⁶⁸ London was the great market for the wares of this adjacent region, its grains, fish, fruit, cloth, iron, timber, stone and manpower. When in 1439 there was a general shortage of corn the mayor of London was ordered to send purveyors into the city's normal regions of supply - Sussex, Kent and East Anglia - to buy grain to feed the inhabitants of the city.⁶⁹

The South-East was a region inhabited by a gentry class who had been up to London and quite possibly looked at the king. Conversely, every well-to-do merchant or craftsman who made a prosperous living in London looked to Middlesex and the counties of the South-East for property in which to invest. Landed property not only set a seal upon a man's affluence and gentry status but also provided him with a solid asset.⁷⁰ A citizen and saddler of London might hold a manor in Surrey,⁷¹ a London dyer might look to south-western Essex for land in which to invest,⁷² or a London alderman such as John Gedney might enjoy a desirable warren out in the Middlesex countryside at Tottenham, (so desirable,

that is, that men from the parish of St. Clement Danes would trouble to visit it by night and unannounced).⁷³ During the mid-1430s Kent and Middlesex were the counties which attracted the greatest number of such Londoners with money to invest in land. The 1436 lay subsidy roll for London revealed that there were 358 men there with assessments of over £5, of these 15 were detailed as holding land in Hertfordshire, 17 in Surrey, 33 in Essex, 35 in Middlesex and 37 in Kent.⁷⁴

In short, London, the political, financial and commercial capital of England, with the royal court just outside its walls at Westminster, was the hub of the south-eastern counties and part of what made them a region. It was the obvious target for any popular uprising.

1. A. M. Everitt, 'The Making of the Agrarian Landscape of Kent', *Arch.Cant.*, XCII (1976), pp.1-31, now also printed in A. M. Everitt, *Landscape and Community in England* (London, 1985), pp.61-91. For a detailed description of the physical characteristics of the different regions of Kent, see chapter 3, *Regions and Pays*, in A. M. Everitt, *Continuity and Colonization: The Evolution of Kentish Settlement* (Leicester, 1986), pp.43-68.
2. O. Rackham, 'The medieval landscape of Essex', in D. G. Buckley (ed.), *Archaeology in Essex to A.D. 1500* (Council for British Archaeology, Report no.34, London, 1980).
3. F. R. H. Du Boulay, *The Lordship of Canterbury* (London, 1966), pp.215-18.
4. Lambeth Palace Library, Estate Documents 246, 254.
5. KB9/251,m.145.
6. E. Searle, *Lordship and Community : Battle Abbey and its Banlieu, 1066-1538* (Toronto, 1974), pp.369-70.
7. R. Virgoe, *Ancient Indictments*, pp.254-5.
8. KB9/251,m.12.
9. P. F. Brandon, 'Demesne arable farming in coastal Sussex during the later Middle Ages', *Agricultural History Review*, XIX (1971), pp.118-19.
10. This was reflected in the assessments for the 1334 subsidy, see R. E. Glasscock, *The Lay Subsidy of 1334* (Oxford, 1975), p.xxviii.
11. P. F. Brandon, 'Demesne arable farming in coastal Sussex during the later Middle Ages', *Agricultural History Review*, XIX (1971), p.123.
12. E357/38, Kent and Middlesex: Goods and Chattels of outlaws etc..
13. It is thought that refugee Flemings in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries were the first to introduce market-gardening to Kent and that they probably also did much to encourage fruit growing too. S. G. McRae and C. P. Burnham, *The Rural Landscape of Kent* (Wye College, Wye, Kent, 1973), p.106. References to apple mills are to be found in inventories of goods of rebels in 1381.
14. J. Burrow, *English Verse 1300-1500* (London, 1977), pp.260-61.
15. Essex Record Office, D/DL M33. I am grateful to Mr. S. P. Potter of Purleigh for bringing this document to my attention.
16. SC6/848/16.

- 17.VCH Essex, II, pp.369-70. For an instance of a merchant selling 164 Essex cheeses in Calais in 1448-50, see E101/194,m.26v.
- 18.E. Power and M. M. Postan, *Studies in English Trade in the Fifteenth Century* (London, 1933), pp.49-50.
- 19.For a well documented account of the organization of sheep farming by a Kentish landowner as important as Christ Church Priory, Canterbury, especially during the boom of the first quarter of the fourteenth century, see R. A. L. Smith, *Canterbury Cathedral Priory* (Cambridge, 1969), pp.146-56.
- 20.F. R. H. Du Boulay, *The Lordship of Canterbury* (London, 1966), p.221.
- 21.The leasing to *firmarii* who were usually prosperous peasants and small landowners by Christ Church Priory, Canterbury, is discussed in R. A. L. Smith, *Canterbury Cathedral Priory* (Cambridge, 1969), pp.193-4.
- 22.Abstracts of Sussex Deeds and Documents, *Sussex Record Society*, XXIX (1924), pp.25-6.
- 23.CPR, 1446-52, pp.338-374.
- 24.The evidence for these statements comes from the reading of wills, Kent Record Office (Maidstone) PRC 32/2, PRC 17/5. 'Almond' and 'Nightingale' are two examples of petnames of cows. An example of how fruitful a source of information wills can be for examining late medieval Kentish society is the essay by P. W. Fleming, 'Charity, faith, and the gentry of Kent 1422-1529', in *Property and Politics: Essays in Later Medieval English History*, ed. Tony Pollard (Gloucester, 1984), pp.23-54.
- 25.CPR, 1446-52, p.362.
- 26.'Sittingbourne Wills', *Arch. Cant.*, XLI (1929), pp.49-50.
- 27.BL Add. Roll 32471.
- 28.His name is on the pardon roll but this is inconclusive evidence, CPR, 1446-52, p.345. BL Add. Roll 32004.
- 29.E357/37 Essex and Herts.: Goods and Chattels of outlaws etc..
- 30.KB9/254,m.62.
- 31.KB9/26/1,mm.24, 30; a list of men from Thaxted who rose in support of the duke of York at Chelmsford on 22 and 23 February 1452. It appears to name a large proportion of the able-bodied male population of the town: of the 268 named, 106 were described as either 'shether' or 'coteler'.
- 32.A. J. F. Dulley, 'Four Kent towns at the end of the Middle Ages', *Arch. Cant.*, LXXXI (1966), p.103.

33. Mentioned, for example, KB9/253, m.34.
34. A. J. F. Dulley, 'Four Kent towns at the end of the Middle Ages', *Arch.Cant.*, LXXXI (1966), pp.105-7.
35. *The History of the King's Works, Vol.I: The Middle Ages*, eds. R. Allen Brown, H. M. Colvin, A. J. Taylor (London, 1963), pp.426, 439. Even lime had had to be brought over regularly from Kent until a kiln was built at Calais 1438-9 to burn local chalk. Bricks, however, had been made over there since the fourteenth century, *ibid.*, pp.426-7.
36. E101/194/6, mm.1, 1v, 13, 13v, 25-29v and elsewhere. For the business of maintaining Calais and its March during its early years as an English possession see S. J. Burley, 'Victualling of Calais 1347-65', *BIHR*, XXXI (1958), pp.49-57.
37. *CPR*, 1446-52, pp.427-8.
38. E101/194/6, mm.3, 30v.
39. L. F. Salzman, *English Industries of the Middle Ages* (1923), p.88. In 1418, for example, 7,000 stones for guns of divers sorts were ordered from the quarries of Maidstone and elsewhere, *CPR*, 1416-22, p.134.
40. Royal purveyors were given powers of impressment to gather masons and carpenters for the work at Calais and bring them to ports of the south coast for embarkation. Unlike Normandy, Calais had a strict policy of employing none but English workmen. This created one more nuisance for the roads and villages of the South-East and Hampshire. *The History of the King's Works, Vol. I: The Middle Ages*, eds. R. Allen Brown, H. M. Colvin, A. J. Taylor (London, 1963), pp.427, 463.
41. KB9/252/1, m.82. The embassy had an altogether unfortunate experience of Rochester that year. Their journal reports that Rochester had an epidemic that July, that the water was unclean, and that accommodation for themselves and their horses was so unsatisfactory that they went out to nearby villages. Stevenson, I, p.95.
42. The new queen, Margaret of Anjou, landed at Porchester from where she went to nearby Southampton and thence to London.
43. These special arrangements were re-affirmed on 15 May 1449 in the light of the worsening military situation of that spring, *CPR*, 1446-52, p.244.
44. Ralph Griffiths, *The Reign of King Henry VI: The Exercise of Royal Authority, 1422-1461* (London, 1981), pp.631-2. Henceforth cited as Griffiths, Henry VI.
45. H. T. White, 'The Beacon System in Kent', *Arch.Cant.*, XLVI (1934), pp.80-1.

46. Mention of these local commodities is made, for example, in the parker's account for Mayfield (Sussex), Lambeth Palace Library ED 714; in the reeve's account for Northfleet (Kent), SC6/1129, m.12; in the parker's account at Wrotham (Kent), *ibid.*, m.11; and the manorial accounts for Otford (Kent), *ibid.*, m.2, during the 1440s and 1450s.
47. The Higham-Tilbury ferry is mentioned, for example, in connection with the transporting of Kentish wool to Colchester in 1441, CC1R, 1435-41, p.418.
48. Lambeth Palace Library ED 715.
49. Dulley, 'Four Kent Towns', p.102.
50. C143/448/19.
51. For example, the will of John Bunting of Milton dated 1464-5 gives 40/- 'to repair the bad road between Middleton church and Colshale', 'Milton Wills', *Arch.Cant.*, XLIV (1932), pp.91-2.
52. E357/42 Kent and Middlesex: Lands, tenements, goods and chattels of traitors, outlaws, felons and fugitives.
53. A. Ducellier, 'La France et les Iles Britanniques vues par un byzantin du XVe siècle: Laonikos Chalkokondylis', in *Économies et Sociétés au Moyen Age: Mélanges offerts à Edouard Perroy* (Paris, 1973), pp.439-45.
54. E. M. Carus-Wilson, 'The Woollen Industry', Chapter VI in *The Cambridge Economic History II*, eds. M. Postan and E. E. Rich (Cambridge, 1952), pp.355-428.
55. DL29/40/747 (Dedham Ministers' Accounts).
56. This figure is taken from lists of names of those men from Smarden and Pluckley who were pardoned on 7 July 1450 for having risen with Cade, *CPR*, 1446-52, pp.363-4, 365-6. The lists for these two villages are exceptionally full, appearing to name a large proportion of the working male population and giving their occupations. At Smarden of the 101 names, 22 are employed in the cloth industry; at Pluckley the figure is 10 out of 51.
57. For examples of Maidstone men (a draper, spicer, chapman, husbandman and tailor) in debt to London citizens, *CPR*, 1416-22, p.284; *CPR*, 1429-36, pp.98, 157; *CPR*, 1436-41, p.208; *CPR*, 1452-61, p.619.
58. KB9/248, m.19.
59. *Ibid.*
60. Alan Everitt, 'Nonconformity in country parishes', in *Land, Church and People: Essays presented to Prof. H.P.R. Finberg*, ed. J. Thirsk,

61. For example, John Wilkyns who led an uprising in Kent in May 1452 fled to the Weald for hiding, E404/68, m.133.
62. Five in Biddenden, one in Halden, one in Tenterden, one in Woodchurch, cf. Robert Furley, *A History of the Weald of Kent*, II part I (London, 1874), p.413.
63. *The Prologues and Epilogues of William Caxton*, ed. W.J.B. Crotch, *Early English Text Society, Original Series*, no.176 (London, 1928), p.4.
64. VCH Essex, II, p.330.
65. *Ibid.*, p.384; E.B. Fryde, *Studies in Medieval Trade and Finance* (London, 1983), chapter XV 'The English Cloth Industry and the Trade with the Mediterranean c.1370-c.1480', p.351.
66. M. R. Thielemans, *Bourgogne et Angleterre: Relations Politiques et économiques entre les Pays-Bas Bourguignons et l'Angleterre, 1435-1467* (Brussels, 1966), pp.556-9.
67. For example, in 1447 a London butcher could allegedly take a dozen cattle from fields at Tyburn, KB9/996, m.17.
68. J. R. Lander, *Conflict and Stability in Fifteenth Century England* (2nd ed., London, 1974), pp.42-4.
69. CPR, 1436-41, p.253.
70. Ann Brown, 'London and North-West Kent in the later Middle Ages: the development of a land market', *Arch.Cant.*, XCII (1976), p.145.
71. CPR, 1446-52, pp.184-5.
72. *Feet of Fines for Essex*, IV, 1423-1547, Essex Archaeological Society (1964), pp.42, 45.
73. KB9/997, m.4; S. L. Thrupp, *The Merchant Class of Medieval London* (Chicago, 1948), p.345. For other examples of aldermen who held property in the South-East during the reign of Henry VI, see *ibid.*, pp.334-5, 352, 373.
74. Ann Brown, 'London and North-West Kent in the later Middle Ages: the development of a land market', *Arch.Cant.*, XCII (1976), p.145.

Chapter Two: The 1440s: the Approach of a Crisis

I

Popular unrest and revolt were to be a major feature of the crisis of Henry VI's reign which occurred during 1449-50. Up until that time - at least in Henry's English possessions - they were rare events.¹ The only exceptional year in this regard was 1431.

English religious life in the fifteenth century had its own sub-group - a disparate group at that - of individuals who were always potential insurgents: the Lollards. It was their rising in 1431 during Henry VI's minority which presented the one important popular disturbance his government had to deal with before 1450. It is worth noting that the troubles which broke out during the early 1450s in southern England would again centre around areas of strong Lollard tradition.

The Lollards called for a return to a simpler Christianity purged of the trappings of worldly institutions. Their emphasis was upon the authority of Scripture made accessible by translation into English, hence their nickname, the 'Bible-men'.² Their beliefs were also characterized by a denial of priestly sacramental powers (anyone could baptize or hear confession) and an iconoclasm. Yet it was not the ecclesiastical authorities alone who were on the alert against these heretics. There were too considerable political implications for the secular authorities in the Lollard refusal to accept the legitimacy of the central secular authorities. Memories were still alive of the Lollard rising led by Sir John Oldcastle in 1414. The gallows at Tyburn were known as the 'Lollers

galewes'.³ Throughout the 1420s clerical versifiers inveighed against these 'ingrati, maledicti, daemone nati',⁴ whilst convocations and synods for their part kept issuing statutes and ordinances against Lollards, false preachers and the possession of sacred books in English. Norfolk, Essex and London were among some of the places which saw men burnt as heretics at this time.

Quite apart from explicit Lollardy there existed what was at times a violent anti-clericalism. This was something which would be evidenced in 1450 following Cade's revolt and was a sentiment felt by men and women who probably would not call themselves Lollards but whom the authorities would almost certainly label in this way. 'Lollard' had always been a word used in a derogatory fashion, meaning an idler or a vagabond, and in the mid-fifteenth century the term was used very loosely by royal officials and justices' clerks to mean no more than priest-hater or even just general trouble maker. A word, indeed, which was ideal for making the authorities prick up their ears if one wished to get one's enemies or relatives into trouble, although such tactics were effective only if employed judiciously. In 1434, for instance, a Thomas Tournour, a Middlesex labourer, misjudged the matter and ended up getting himself taken to court for accusations made on insufficient grounds.⁵

The Lollard rising of 1431 was in many respects a political affair. The rebels of 1431 were apparently almost all laymen (this had not been the case in 1414), and when some of them came to be indicted no charges were made of doctrinal unorthodoxy. Their offences lay scarcely in their beliefs at all but rather in their attitude towards the Church, in particular its clergy and its

wealth. To this extent the rising of 1431 may not have been a thorough-going Lollard revolt in the strictest sense.⁶

The troubles began in the spring of 1431, after the king had been absent from the realm for a year. They started in the form of pamphleteering and the flagrant advertising of heretical and subversive opinions. During March and April in the parish of St. Giles without Cripplegate in the northern suburbs of London, between the open spaces of Finsbury fields and the clutter of the city proper, Lollards fomented discontent against the existing order of church and government.⁷ At secret meetings they composed letters and bills expounding their views on church doctrines and, more especially, on their plans to disendow the Church. These bills were distributed to towns of the Midlands and the West such as Salisbury, Oxford, Northampton and Coventry, to be placed on doors and windows as public notices.⁸ Their productions continued into May when they allegedly drew up a detailed list for the replacement of the great prelates and peers of the realm with Londoners from their own ranks. For example, a London weaver, John Cok, was to become the duke of Gloucester and lord of Westminster, whilst a fellow citizen, Ralph Bukberd, was to become head of the Carmelite friars of London.⁹

Yet it was in the West and Midlands, especially in Wiltshire, Berkshire, at Salisbury and Abingdon that most of the outbreaks of trouble took place. At Abingdon a group had done its active share in the billing campaign of April, distributing them on the same network to London, Salisbury, Coventry and Marlborough.¹⁰ The leader and probably the instigator of much of this religious disaffection

was a weaver from Abingdon in Berkshire, William Mandeville, who had assumed the name of 'Jack Sharp of Wigmoreland'. This movement's strong westcountry support and, as was the case in London, its ties with the cloth industry, came to view that May as some men of Salisbury joined the campaign. On 9 May a group there, including a weaver of the city, a clerk and a weaver from Westbury some 20 miles and more away to the north-east, and a fuller all the way from Abingdon, distributed and put up in the city and in other towns bills and posters containing heretical statements.¹¹ Their alleged plan of action was to make an energetic assault on Salisbury cathedral in order to raze its buildings to the ground and to carry off its goods and relics. It was intended that this should set the pattern for a countrywide purge of the possessions of abbeys and priories. On 15 May a gathering of Lollards marched in upon Abingdon from the neighbouring village of East Hendred to attack the abbey.¹² Two days later, on 17 May, Sharp's followers made their presence known in Frome in eastern Somerset close to the Wiltshire border.¹³ There a dyer from the town and other Lollards distributed subversive religious literature, again exciting others to rise up and attack religious houses.¹⁴ In indictments later presented at Salisbury and Frome the juries outlined the activities just mentioned (certainly a biased first source for our information) and added, no doubt for good measure, that the Lollards were also out to kill the dukes of Bedford and Gloucester and other magnates who opposed their opinions, be they archbishops, bishops, dukes, earls, barons or knights. According to one chronicler, the rebels at Abingdon said that they would have three priests' heads for a penny.¹⁵ Religious dissent was here tantamount to

anarchy and it is not surprising to find either chroniclers or commissions dealing with them ready to believe these Lollards capable of any atrocity.

Since Oldcastle's rising in 1414 the secular government had taken on a more active role in seeking out and dealing with aberrant religious views in conjunction with the ecclesiastical authorities. In 1431 a special commission under the duke of Gloucester, who was then acting as regent for the absent king, undertook the task of dealing with these offenders who were regarded as much as traitors as heretics. And it was before Duke Humphrey that Sharp, who had been put to flight and who was finally apprehended at Oxford, appeared that May.¹⁶ Indeed, indictments made before special commissions and justices of the king's bench form a great bulk of our evidence about Lollard activity (or alleged activity) at this time. Tilting the balance of the evidence slightly, there remains a copy of one of the handbills distributed by Jack Sharp and his followers at the time of his trial in which we hear the Lollards put their own case, rather than listen to the allegations and hearsay of juries and chroniclers.¹⁷ It is a longish document in English addressed to Henry and 'to alle the Lordys of the reme of this present Parlement' which reveals the Lollards - at least at leadership level - to be naive and impractical reformers surprisingly limited in their demands. The petition argues that the wealth of the temporalities of bishops, abbots and priors was being wasted and should be utilised far better and to the general good of the realm if it were redistributed in favour of the king and used for the

creation of a specified number of earls, knights, esquires and houses of alms. This point is underlined by an impressive, if inaccurate, list of all the major English and Welsh bishoprics and abbeys and the value of their temporalities which such a scheme would release. The theme is amendment and reform, 'that alle the temporaltes of chyrches thus apropred azens Crystes lore be turned to Godde, and to the prosperyte of the reme.'

However reasonable and sound this may have seemed to the Lollards it was of course heretical and treasonable rubbish as far as Duke Humphrey or any other law enforcer was concerned. The duke acted with speed and dispatch in taking justices around the country; he was always prone to energetic reactions against any challenge to his position and authority. Jack Sharp, along with a group of his fellow Lollards, was hanged, drawn and quartered on charges of treason.¹⁸ His head was set on London Bridge as a sober warning to that Lollard contingent which the authorities well knew existed in London, whilst his quarters went to two other main centres of trouble, Oxford and Abingdon.¹⁹ John Russell, the main London ringleader beside Sharp, charged also as a thief, was likewise hanged and drawn. The authorities made examples of other followers wherever there had been disturbances, for example in Coventry and in Salisbury where that June at least two of the Lollards involved in the activities of the previous month there were found guilty of treason and felony and sentenced to be hanged, drawn and quartered. Severe penalties for conspirators against the peace seemed all the more in order at a time when the young king was absent from the country in France.

II

Throughout the 1430s Lollard doctrines continued to be taught and discussed, albeit in a less overtly proselytising fashion, probably all over the country and most certainly in southern England where little gatherings continued to meet 'to jangle of Job or Jeremye'.²⁰ Whilst up at Tendring in north-eastern Essex a franklin and his wife were teaching heretical propositions such as that the sacrament of Christ's body was not his actual body and translating the Gospels into English for their teaching,²¹ at the same time down at East Woodhay in Hampshire another layman was preaching the Gospels in English in his home.²² Eccentric views were also aired concerning marriage, baptism, confession and religious images in east Hampshire and west Surrey where a commission of 1440 uncovered what appears to all accounts to have been a well established local Lollard tradition centred in the vicinity of Odiham, Crondall and Farnham.²³ Meanwhile, at Selhurst in Sussex, it was the parish priest himself who owned the four Gospels in English and allegedly taught the 'pestiferous opinions of John Wycliff'.²⁴

Kent, particularly the Kentish Weald, was another Lollard centre and an active one at that. This was a county in which the images of saints were liable on occasion to have their heads lopped off.²⁵ Although there is no evidence for Kent's direct involvement in the 1431 risings there was some kind of rising here in 1438 which may locally have been quite serious.²⁶ It would appear that the preaching of a certain William White, a chaplain who abjured his heresies before the archbishop in Convocation in 1422, sowed

the seed for what was to be a persistent heretical tradition at Tenterden in the Weald.²⁷ By 1428 the matter had been serious enough to warrant a (partially frustrated) round up of suspects in the district by Archbishop Chichele from the villages of Tenterden, Romney, Cranbrook, Benenden, Rolvenden, Woodchurch, Halden and Staplehurst. 1431 saw public abjurations wrung from two Wittersham men and from a Hadlow and a Brenchley man; these two latter men doing penance at Tonbridge and Malling as well as in their own parishes and in Rochester cathedral, suggesting that either their preaching or some Lollard influence had reached these villages. When in 1438, as a royal letter described it, 'aswel lollardes as other robbers & pillers of oure peple, were, in grete noumbre, & in ryotous wyse, gaderyng in the said Shire of Kent',²⁸ five men from Tenterden were executed for heresy at Maidstone. Other offenders in the rising were carted off to be imprisoned in London. Again, two years later, in 1440, Tenterden's notoriety as a centre of disaffection was signalled for all to see when a man executed for treason had his head set on a pike in the village, whilst two of his quarters were sent for public display at Cranbrook and Appledore. Tenterden and other Lollard villages of the Weald may have subsequently played some kind of part in the risings of 1450. John Glover, one of the Wittersham men to have made a public abjuration in 1431 on the charge of having associated with other heretics and having been present at the reading of reprobate books, may have been the man who took advantage of the opportunity of a royal pardon in 1450 following Cade's revolt. The same may be true of Thomas Harry of Halden, one of those men from the Weald imprisoned in Newgate in 1438 on suspicion of

heresy, who had his name included on that same pardon roll of 1450.²⁹

III

Lollards apart, there was little in the way of overt popular insurrection during the years of Henry's reign before 1450. Some kind of uprising may have threatened in March 1443 when Edward Hammys, a London tallow-chandler alias soldier, and John Oddeshole of Lewes, soldier, allegedly associated at Isleworth in Middlesex with a couple of hundred other men from Middlesex, London, Hertfordshire, Essex, Surrey and Kent with the intention of attacking Henry and various magnates of the realm.³⁰ On the day this happened Henry was several miles downstream at Eltham in northern Kent and nothing came of it - although the allegations here of regional support coming from several counties are interesting and suggestive.

More significant for the 1440s than any such single incident, however, is what would appear to be a new degree of restlessness among Henry's subjects during the decade. This is to be measured less in planned uprisings against the king than in criticisms levelled against him by his people which, in the criminal records at least, reach a crescendo at this time. The infant Henry had begun to acquire his first critics and would-be assassins at about the time as he acquired his first set of teeth,³¹ but it was the late 1440s and early 1450s which saw the nadir of his popularity in the country as reflected in contemporary charges of seditious speech. Before the second half of the 1440s recorded

criticisms of Henry are few, but during the 13 years between 1444 and 1457 some 26 charges of seditious speech came before justices of the king's bench. The accuracy of such charges may be doubted of course but their significance remains: even false accusers in the interest of their own plausibility would reflect something of the kinds of accusations or abuse which were being cast against the king in the common talk of the time. What strikes one about these charges is that the same kind of thing was being said (or being said that it was said) all over the country. The constant underlying theme of such speech was that men simply did not regard Henry as fit to be a king. At best he was regarded as a hapless idiot, and at worst as a predatory menace to his country's domestic finances and its foreign affairs. He was a fool, a simpleton;³² he looked like a child;³³ he had murdered his uncle, the duke of Gloucester, in 1447;³⁴ he was losing all the wealth of the crown;³⁵ he was grasping;³⁶ he was no soldier;³⁷ it was the earl of Suffolk and the bishop of Salisbury who really had power;³⁸ indeed, it was because of their influence that Henry was still childless;³⁹ Henry were better dead;⁴⁰ if 'the comyns were well avysyd they schuld aryse and destruye hym and all hys consell that is a bowte hym'.⁴¹ These sentiments were expressed during the 1440s. From 1450 onwards, once the commons of the South-East had actually risen, such sentiments were if anything to increase in rancour. Would God (it was to be said) that the captain of Kent - that is to say, Cade, - was reigning instead of Henry;⁴² how much better it would be if the head stuck on London Bridge was not Cade's but his.⁴³

Some regions of the country may have felt more strongly about

Henry than others. As early as 1438 a gang of thieves, predominantly Londoners, could go down to Rainham in Kent and be sure of drawing a big crowd (some 70 are said to have turned up) by making plans and suggestions for Henry's destruction. Having lured together and excited the locals in this way the thieves then went about what may perhaps have been their true business of the night: stealing the valuables from Rainham church. The following night on the road back to London they ransacked Meopham church.⁴⁴ Northern Kent, then, even in the late 1430s would appear to have been an excellent place for such decoy techniques and quite possibly had a reputation in the London area as a place where feeling was running high against the king.

IV

This vehement and persistent criticism of Henry VI requires some explanation. Half hidden by his portrayal as a royal saint, he remains to the historian an elusive, inept and colourless figure.⁴⁵ Certainly, as we have seen his detractors suggest, he did lack those attributes expected of a medieval monarch: prowess on the battlefield; an evenhanded distribution of royal justice and favours; qualities of firm leadership and financial independence. It was his misfortune to have inherited his father's military commitments and large debts without Henry V's own military enthusiasm and administrative flair. Henry VI blighted his court, moreover, with favouritism, offered pardons and grants with thoughtless liberality and affronted his subjects with the

concessions offered to France in his search for a permanent peace.

The problems of misgovernment and injustice are of course perennial evils. If one restricts oneself to the history of the fourteenth and fifteenth century there seems to be a pattern of oscillation between periods of particular tolerance of these evils and other times when the government's energy and good intentions in combatting lawlessness was greater. The later years of Edward II were a period in which the level of tolerance of misgovernment and injustice by those in power was particularly high. The minority of Richard II may have been another such period and this may have contributed to the rising of 1381. As far as we can tell the personal rule of Henry VI witnessed another similar period of royal mismanagement.

If one were to put in a nutshell one of the causes of persistent dissatisfaction with his rule, it would be his obvious surrender to the wills and influence of stronger-minded and more active men (and women) around him. No medieval king who was obviously not his own master and therefore seemed the plaything of others could avoid major trouble sooner or later.

By the late 1440s this lack of royal leadership had put the country into the hands of an unscrupulous court party headed by the duke (as he became in 1447) of Suffolk, William de la Pole, and a few others, notably the bishop of Salisbury and the bishop of Chichester. They, it was reckoned, were the ones with the real power. Cardinal Beaufort, the king's great-uncle, had earlier worked to develop a clique of his supporters around the king, so ousting the influence of Gloucester, the king's uncle and heir. By the 1440s, however, Beaufort was ageing. From 1441 onwards Suffolk, then

steward of the royal household, had begun to attend the king's council regularly, forming part of the marked trend towards adding figures from the royal household to Beaufort's satellites in the council.⁴⁶ By the end of 1446 Beaufort was no longer involved in active politics and when he died in 1447 control of the royal household was securely in the hold of a small grouping of men - largely Suffolk's dependants and often household men - whose influence extended equally through household, council and departments of state. Heading this privileged group were Suffolk himself, by 1449 grand chamberlain of England, Adam Moleyns, keeper of the privy seal and bishop of Chichester, William Aiscough, bishop of Salisbury, and James Fiennes, lord Saye and Sele. Indeed, Suffolk had 'made his influence about the young king unassailable - except by violence',⁴⁷ and violence was what was shortly to come.

To look at the Suffolk 'court party', Adam Moleyns, doctor of laws and dean of Salisbury, had acted since 1438 as both clerk of the council and of the privy seal but was made keeper of the privy seal in 1444. He was closely involved with the embassies negotiating with France during the 1440s, being sent across the Channel in the later part of the decade as the king's plenipotentiary, and was there to ride out of Le Mans at its surrender in 1448. Much of the hostility felt towards him then and later stemmed from one complaint: he delivered Maine to the French. Willaim Aiscough, who came to be regarded by the mid-1440s as having, alongside Suffolk, such power as to set the king's rule at nothing, had held the office of bishop of Salisbury since 1438, although his diocese scarcely ever saw him.⁴⁸ He had acted

first as the king's chaplain then as his confessor during Henry's youth and was close in his confidence. He officiated at Henry's wedding ceremony in 1445. During the 1440s he became one of the most regular attenders at the meetings of the council. Walter Lyhert, bishop of Norwich, was another absentee prelate much more involved with his role at court as a royal councillor than with his pastoral duties in his own diocese. He, like Moleyns, took an active part in the negotiations with the French, leading an embassy in 1447 which met Charles VII and amongst other things agreed to yet another extension of the existing truce. Like Moleyns he was seen as one of the leading implementors of Henry's peace policy.

There was a lower echelon in Suffolk's circle, below the prelates, drawn from amongst the esquires of the body and yeomen of the chamber. Three individuals in particular from this group were hated beyond any others: Thomas Daniel, John Trevelian and John Say. Their greed and the success with which they engrossed the king's favours explains much of the hatred they incurred. In an assessment of Henry VI's reign made after Edward IV's accession one of the major grievances which remained in the mind was that under his rule 'the Duke of Suffolk, the Lords Say, Daniel, Trevelian, and other mischevious people around the king were so covetuous towards themselves'.⁴⁹ Daniel, originally from Cheshire, had his main connections in Norfolk, marrying a sister of John Howard, the future duke of Norfolk. Daniel acted as sheriff of Norfolk and Suffolk 1446-7, as JP for Norfolk December 1447- October 1450, and was appointed constable of Castle Rising in western Norfolk in 1449.⁵⁰ Besides this he acted as MP for Cornwall 1445-6, for Buckinghamshire in 1447 and 1449, as well as holding various offices

in the royal grant, including that of King's Remembrancer in the exchequer. His influence in Norfolk by the second half of the 1440s was such that men speculated as to whose rule would be the greater, his or Suffolk's. But by 1449 their rivalry was transformed into an alliance through which Daniel became an acknowledged adherent of Suffolk: Daniel would play a prominent part in the story of the events in Kent in 1450.

John Trevilian was from Cornwall and through the king's favour obtained grants of lands, wardships, stewardships and keeperships there as elsewhere.⁵¹ During the 1440s he represented the borough of Huntingdon in parliament at least twice and in 1446 was made keeper of the armoury in the Tower, the same year in which he was made joint constable of Hadleigh castle in Essex.

Sir John Say of Broxbourne (five miles south-east of Hertford) like Daniel held offices largely in East Anglia but also in Hertfordshire. He was escheator for Cambridgeshire and Huntingdonshire 1445-6 and for Norfolk and Suffolk 1446-7. In February 1447 he was first elected to parliament as member for the city of Cambridge in the notorious parliament which met not far away at Bury St. Edmunds, and that same year he obtained as a gentleman usher of the chamber the manor of Lawford up in northern Essex not far from the Suffolk border. In 1448 he began acting as JP for Cambridgeshire. He had been a member of the embassy of 1444 which Suffolk led to negotiate the royal marriage, and it may have been as one of Suffolk's clients that he found his way to many of his household and local East Anglian offices. During 1449-50 he held the office of sheriff of Norfolk and Suffolk.⁵²

The degree to which he was seen as Suffolk's creature can be heard in a popular poem composed after Suffolk's death which had Say intoning at the duke's funeral offices, *Manus tue fecerunt me.*⁵³

There were other popular compositions in which Daniel, Trevilian and Say figured. The influence and prominence in the king's council of this trio in particular was never seen as anything but malign:

'The Cornysse Chowgh [Trevilian] offt with his trayne
Hath made oure Egulle [Henry] blynde'

went one of these works.⁵⁴ Whilst elsewhere:

'Tome of Say and Danielle bothe,
To begyn be not to lothe.'⁵⁵

With men holding positions in the royal household and in the counties, Suffolk's affinity extended tentacle-wise through southern and eastern England. Suffolk's own hereditary estates were above all in East Anglia - his Wingfield inheritance.⁵⁶ His adherents were most prominent in Norfolk, Suffolk, Kent, Surrey and Sussex. They took over these areas both socially and politically, impinging upon some of the older established gentry. The courtiers went about the buying up of estates and the securing of property in a rapacious and often violent manner.⁵⁷ In 1447, for instance, John Trevilian, the esquire of the body just mentioned, together with another household squire, Thomas Bodulgate, forcibly expelled William Wangford, William Ludlowe and Stephen Wymbyssh from the manor and castle of Stone in Kent, two miles east of Dartford and not far down river from London. They then held it themselves for at least the following three years.⁵⁸ Kent made rich pickings for such opportunists. It was a wealthy county, the advanced level of whose economy had created an unusually large gentry class divided by numerous feuds.

The same wealth also appears to have encouraged there 'a peculiarly sophisticated body of abuses and corruption in local government and justice'.⁵⁹

The Fiennes family offers one of the best examples of adherents of Suffolk who through royal service and patronage came to be one of the most influential families in the South-East. Their family home was at Herstmonceux in Sussex where Sir Roger Fiennes lived as a prominent county gentleman. His brother James' career, however, spread the family influence through Sussex, Surrey, and Kent. In Kent James accumulated through royal grants the manors of Monkecourt (later exchanged for Witley in south-west Surrey), Capel, Huntingfield, Shorne and Tracy and land in Chelsfield.⁶⁰ In Surrey in 1439 he gained interests at Camberwell through the grant of a wardship and marriage and that same year acted as sheriff of Surrey and Sussex.⁶¹ Other offices came his way, continually strengthening his connection with the South-East, only the occasional gift coming from outside the region. In 1442 he was constable of Rochester castle for a spell; in 1443 he was appointed bailiff of Otford and Ukfield Stonham with the hundred of Loxfield in Kent and Sussex; in 1446 he became steward of all the late duke of Warwick's Sussex and Kentish lands and lordships.⁶² Beginning as an esquire of the body he had made himself so invaluable as a royal servant within the household and in the counties (he acted as a justice on every commission of the peace appointed in Kent between 1436-1447)⁶³ that by 1447 he enjoyed the offices of chamberlain of Henry's household, constable of Dover castle, warden of the Cinque Ports and a place in the

king's council as lord Saye and Sele. In September 1449 he reached the height of the office of lord treasurer, a precipitous height as it soon emerged.

As for his conduct within the offices he held, presentments made in 1450 before a commission investigating offences and malpractices committed by the recent county administration in Kent revealed him to be pre-eminent amongst the group of parvenus intruding themselves into Kentish society. In 1447 he and Stephen Slegge, sheriff of Kent 1448-9, had allegedly expelled a man violently from his 250 acres in Elmley on the marshy flats of the Isle of Sheppey and forcibly kept him from it right up until July 1450.⁶⁴ Again, in 1448, so it was said, he, his wife and Slegge had so threatened a Reginald Peckham with imprisonment, death, drawing and hanging that he had given up to Fiennes his own property in the parish of Seal (hard by Fiennes' seat at Knole) in exchange for a lesser property belonging to Fiennes. Although Peckham enfeoffed Fiennes in Fiennes' newly acquired property, Fiennes, on his side of this fraudulent bargain, made no such security for Peckham for whom the transaction altogether amounted to a loss of a £100.⁶⁵ And again at Michaelmas 1449, as lord of the manor at Seal and Kemsing, Fiennes, once more abetted by Slegge, had distrained tenants in their lands so obliging them to pay an additional 50% and more per acre than was their annual due, and this was from small men who felt the increase badly.⁶⁶

If our source is to be trusted - and it is the view of a contemporary ecclesiastic, Thomas Gascoigne - it would appear that Fiennes, fully aware of his own notoriety and that of his colleagues in the royal household, was one of several who took it

upon themselves to censor preachers coming before the king. Echoing closely allegations made by Thomas Brunton, bishop of Rochester, of similar censoring at the end of the fourteenth century, Gascoigne reports that there were those, especially among the London clergy, going about denouncing the vices of the time and that Fiennes and others would let no one preach in front of the king unless the sermon had first been written and submitted to them or unless the preacher had promised on oath that his sermon would not attack the king's household, the king's own conduct, or the conduct of his privy council, (which Gascoigne prefers to call his 'depraved council').⁶⁷ Likewise a popular poem had it that as far as the commons were concerned,

'The lorde Say biddeth holde hem downe,
That worthy dastarde of renowe,
He techithe a fals loore'.⁶⁸

Both these accounts of him suggest that there was a good deal of truth in the picture offered by the rebels' complaint in 1450 that men below the rank of hereditary peers had been exalted to amongst the chief of Henry's privy council 'the which stoppeth matters of wrongs done in the realme from his excellent audience,' with the result that such wrongs could not be remedied without the use of bribes among the council members.⁶⁹

The Stephen Slegge, gentleman, mentioned above as acting in conjunction with Saye, is likewise revealed by the 1450 indictments to be amongst the most notorious office holders in Kent during the 1440s, abusing his position again and again by extortion and the violent taking of land and property.⁷⁰ Under-sheriff to Saye in 1436-7, under-sheriff to John Warner 1441-2, escheator of the county

1442-3 and sheriff in 1448-9, he also acted as MP for Dover in 1449.⁷¹ It was usual for sheriffs to fail to recover and answer for all the revenue due from their respective counties, but after Slegge's term of office expired in 1449 the exchequer was suing him for a debt of £4,078 10s.5¼d. and finding him difficult to bring to book.⁷² Slegge was not a man to waste the advantages of being sheriff of the county. In October 1449 he and Robert Est, a gentleman from Maidstone, together with a great gang, allegedly 200 strong, broke into the close of Edward Nevill, Lord Abergavenny, at Singlewell, two miles south of Gravesend, looted his granary and assaulted his servants. And this was not, the allegation revealed, the first time he had raided Lord Abergavenny in this way.⁷³ Throughout the 1440s Slegge had stood witness to Saye in his transactions, acted as his co-feoffee, collaborated with him in crime, and was generally one of his most frequent associates.⁷⁴ He was lucky to survive him.

William Crowmer, like James Fiennes, was a recent incomer to Kentish society. His father, a London alderman, had come from Norfolk and then like so many other prosperous Londoners bought some property in Kent.⁷⁵ A king's squire, William was given the office of sheriff of Kent in 1444-5 and again, significantly, in December 1449. The only kind of details known of his terms of office are of an unremarkable kind: in August 1445 11 prisoners escaped his custody in the gaol of Canterbury castle, and in the Easter term of 1450 he was fined for insufficient returns.⁷⁶ This belies the kind of corrupt and malevolent administrator he was. In the summer of 1450 he was revealed to be one of the most hated men in Kent, explicitly named by rebels as one of the county's

four great extortioners, alongside Stephen Slegge, William Isle and Robert Est. Even his own step-brother, Robert Poynings, seems to have sided with the rebels of 1450 as part of a quarrel against him. But for most men it was hatred for Crowmer as an administrator and as father-in-law to lord Saye which fired their action.⁷⁷

Crowmer's character may be deduced from the well documented behaviour attributed to those acting directly under his authority in Kent during the 1440s, attributed again by the commission of 1450. John Alpheigh, a gentleman from Chiddingstone, a Wealden village west of Tonbridge, acted as under-sheriff to both Slegge and Crowmer. By colour of his office he extorted sums of money from the inhabitants of the county and joined raiding parties taking livestock and household goods. His was a lawlessness so habitual that it apparently went unchastened even by the loss of some of his closest protectors. Likewise, another of Crowmer's henchmen, John Watte of Sandhurst, a bailiff during his (and also Slegge's) shrievalty, extorted, oppressed and defrauded those with whom he dealt in the Weald.⁷⁸ Again, another of Crowmer's bailiffs, Richard Snelgare of Boxley, north-east of Maidstone, was similarly a 'common extortioner and oppressor of the people' as an indictment of August 1450 was to describe him.⁷⁹

William Isle, a gentleman from Sundridge in the Weald west of Sevenoaks, was another associate of Saye's, representing Kent alongside him in parliament in 1441-2 and acting as witness to his business transactions.⁸⁰ As part of this same network to which Saye, Slegge and Crowmer belonged, his regular appearance on commissions of the peace in Kent throughout the 1440s must have

been helpful to his colleagues. In addition to which he had a term as sheriff in 1446-7 and again represented the county in the parliament of 1449-50 along with John Warner.⁸¹

Robert Est, the Maidstone gentleman mentioned above as an accomplice of Stephen Slegge in his autumn raid on Edward Nevill's property in 1449, has provided historians with an ample dossier on his doings in Kent during the 1440s. The commission of 1450 would bring charges against him on no less than 11 separate counts. He kept much the same company as the rest of the Saye 'connection' and was for instance a member of a raiding party of July 1449 at Ash in which Stephen Slegge and John Alpheigh also took part.⁸² In 1441 in his home town of Maidstone he expelled a Thomas Hilles from some property and nine years later Thomas had still been unable to regain possession.⁸³ The next year it was money he obtained by fraudulent means, persuading a debtor in Maidstone that he was the creditor's appointed attorney and then making off with the 15s. debt himself. Est's complete disregard for the possible consequences of his conduct on this and no doubt many other occasions explains well why he should have engendered such hatred in Kent, for the creditor considering the debt to have been unpaid then took the debtor to court. As a result the debtor was outlawed and his goods forfeited to the king, so that finally through Est's cruel chicanery he lost not only the original 15s. but £30 worth of animals, goods and chattels.⁸⁴

Est used another, this time more elaborate, ploy in 1449 when, together with a John Brok, he entirely fraudulently and without any royal writ drew up and sealed warrants to attach and seize tenants of the archbishop of Canterbury at Wingham, and using these

fabricated warrants extracted considerable sums from three tenants there.⁸⁵ Est was an employee of the archbishop during the second half of the 1440s, acting as his receiver in his bailiwick of Otford, a job which would have taken him about the roads of a largish district of western Kent and opened up considerable opportunities for extortion.⁸⁶

However, in his capacity as keeper of Maidstone gaol his greatest lever for extracting monies, and the one he most frequently employed, was imprisonment. In 1444, for example, he forcibly seized a man at Maidstone and kept him in prison for a day and night until his victim paid a fine to have his release.⁸⁷ In 1448 he and John Brokke forcibly imprisoned a man at Maidstone, on this occasion for almost a week, until he paid for his freedom.⁸⁸ This, it might be observed, happened whilst Est was holding one of the more prominent county offices: from November 1447 to November 1448 he was escheator for Kent and Middlesex. Like John Alpheigh, he would be apparently undeterred from his old ways by the seeming overthrow in 1450 of the court party with whom he was connected through Saye.

Est and his kind were able to carry on as they did unchecked because they were never brought to court during the 1440s, despite their patently criminal activities. The presence of such fellow criminals as Saye and William Isle on the commissions of the peace must have been of assistance in this matter. If the allegations made by the commons of Kent in 1450 concerning the activities of the king's bench are accurate, then the royal courts of law were used as vehicles of exploitation in the county. They

alleged that in cases of treason defendants' lands were granted away before any conviction was made, these grants adversely prejudicing their chances of ever standing a fair trial. Indictments were feigned by sheriffs, under-sheriffs and others in hunting cases just to generate income from fines. Justice was held in such contempt by its protectors that when certain of the king's household chose to make false claims to property in Kent (so the allegations continued) there was no way in which the true owners could claim their rights in it.⁸⁹

Office holders in Kent were hated and distrusted in all their activities. They were suspected - probably rightly, as is suggested by the case of Est mentioned above - of making extortionate use of the so-called summonses of the Green Wax, that is, mandates issued to county officers under the Exchequer seal authorizing the taking of fines. Summonses of the Green Wax were always associated with the grasping hand of government and had been a major target of the looters and burners of the 1381 rising in the South-East.⁹⁰ More money was raised in the county by means of the Green Wax, the ominous rumour ran, than was ever recorded in the books of the king's exchequer.

Since the county returning officer for parliamentary elections was the sheriff himself, another later allegation, this time suggesting the rigging of the elections of county members during the 1440s, is likely to have had a good deal of truth in it. This was after all a decade which saw sheriffs such as John Warner (1441-2) - a relation of William Isle - William Crowmer (1444-5), Stephen Slegge (1448-9) and Crowmer again (1449-50).⁹¹ There was a close connection between the facts that all four sheriffs who had

responsibility for making the returns for the five parliaments immediately preceding Cade's rebellion came from Saye's charmed, but unpopular, circle' and the 'near-monopoly of representation of the county and its major towns by a small group of men closely connected with Saye, the household circle, or government service'.⁹² Hence in the parliament of 1442 Isle, Warner and Saye represented the county; in 1445-6 Saye (again); in 1447 Saye (once more) and Crowmer; and in 1449-50 Isle again and Crowmer again.

And if the sheriffs and their underlings were corrupt, the choice of county MPs managed, and the operation of the justices of the peace grossly partial, royal purveyance made yet another Kentish grievance during the 1440s. The beef, mutton, cereals and other goods taken were not paid for. Needless to say such matters rarely reached the courts, so we must take the word of the men of Kent when they complained of this in 1450. The 'kynges taker' was of course not a nuisance confined to Kent by any means. However, Henry's tendency to keep himself and his household in the south, and the creation of a special zone around the coast of Kent for the purveyance of goods may explain why Kent felt so especially victimized.⁹³ It was also of course a rich county. The fact that there were local con men trying their hand at purveyance around the Sussex and Kentish coast speaks for the predatory and lucrative nature of the practice; such a man as James Bowelond of Romney who successfully passed himself off as victualler of the king's kitchen and so was able to go out into the Channel with his men and bring back to Winchelsea a Hansard ship he had spotted 'saillyng upon the See charged with hamburgh Byer and

The influence of Suffolk's affinity in Kent was perhaps all the more conspicuous because the county had not been accustomed to the dominance of any particular great magnate. Christ Church Canterbury owned extensive property in Kent, and the lords Cobham, the duke of Buckingham, Edward, lord Ferrers of Groby, and Edward, lord Abergavenny, owned land in Kent, but no great family clan dominated county life. This was true also of Middlesex and Surrey. Among those lords summoned to parliament in January 1449 one earl and two barons had their seats in Sussex: William Fitzalan, earl of Arundel, Thomas Hoo, lord Hoo and Hastings, and Reynold West of Broadwater, lord Delawarr.⁹⁵ No lords resided principally in Surrey or Middlesex, and the one baron to have his seat in Kent was of course James Fiennes of Knole, the recently created lord Saye and Sele. More characteristic of Kentishmen in central government perhaps were men like John Prisot of Ruckinge, a village six miles from Ashford (he also had land in Hertfordshire) the chief justice of the common pleas; Walter Moyle of Eastwell not far from Ashford, serjeant-at-law; or descendants of former sheriffs like the Septvans family.

Suffolk's predominance in East Anglia by the late 1440s formed a special case. There Suffolk supplanted John Mowbray, the third duke of Norfolk, the greatest landowner and natural leader of the region.⁹⁶ It was an irksome position for Norfolk to be in, with the duke of Suffolk based at Wingfield castle only a few miles from his own seat at Framlingham. Throughout the 1430s and 1440s the rivalry of the two magnates was played out in East Anglia by their respective affinities, on occasion seriously threatening the region's

stability.⁹⁷ Apart from the duke of Norfolk, his relative the duke of York was another major East Anglian and Essex magnate with his combined properties of the Honour of Clare, the Essex lands of the House of York and the Holand manors (which went down into Surrey, Sussex and Kent).⁹⁸ The county of Essex also had John de Vere, earl of Oxford, at Earl's Colne and Henry Bourchier, Viscount Bourchier, at Stansted, whilst Thomas, lord Scales, was up in Norfolk at Middleton.

During the 1440s, then, both Norfolk and Suffolk were in the grip of adherents of the duke of Suffolk. Under their administration Norfolk and Suffolk saw the kind of violent corruption and injustice which was characterizing Kentish society at that time. The sufferings of the counties of Norfolk, Suffolk and the city of Norwich at the hands of Suffolk's clients is especially well recorded in the records of commissions which sat during the last four months of 1450. These hearings give a retrospective view of persistent bullying, extortion and harmful interference in county life and government by a small group of men headed by Thomas Tuddenham, John Heydon and John Ulveston. Their careers in East Anglia during the 1440s were a matter for scandal. Of course, such evidence offered by victims during an eclipse of the influence of their persecutors is heavily partial, but bar one or two improbable stories such as a patently unjust charge concerning Suffolk's alleged allegiance to the king of France, there is nothing implausible about them, and every good reason why they had not been heard publicly before. These malefactors were, after all, the law enforcers themselves.

The notorious Sir Thomas Tuddenham of Oxburgh acted as MP for Suffolk in 1431 and thenceforward for Norfolk in three parliaments during the 1430s, and again in 1442 and 1443-4.⁹⁹ During 1432-3 he was sheriff of Norfolk and Suffolk. In 1447 he was entrusted with the custody of the Great Wardrobe, and so flaunted the law in the provinces from the doubly safe vantage of household man at court and of Suffolk's adherent in Norfolk. John Heydon from Baconsthorpe in Norfolk was a lawyer and JP for the county 1441-50 who acted as MP for Norfolk 1445-6.¹⁰⁰ John Ulveston of Debenham in Suffolk was a lawyer-JP in Suffolk 1443-50. He was escheator for Norfolk and Suffolk 1442-4 and MP for Yarmouth in 1447 and 1449-50; he was also dignified during the 1440s with the office of receiver of Eton College, and in 1444 became keeper of the writs and rolls of the common bench.¹⁰¹

Those, then, were their official positions. As for their unofficial, but no less public, activities, according to the several sets of jurors presenting indictments late in 1450, Tuddenham, Heydon, Ulveston and others of Suffolk's clients such as John Belley of Wingfield, Suffolk, gentleman, and Thomas Brigge of Eggfield, Norfolk, gentleman, had leagued, sworn and combined together to pursue each other's quarrels in Norfolk, Suffolk and Norwich, taking goods, lands and sometimes lives.¹⁰² Their intention was to maintain one another and to ensure that the men of these counties should know the might of the earl of Suffolk. In 1436 Tuddenham, Heydon and Thomas Brigge allegedly tried to elect their own candidate as mayor of Norwich against the wishes of the Norwich electors, but failed in the attempt.¹⁰³ So perhaps it is not surprising to hear that in 1438 these men threatened the city that

they would inform the earl of Suffolk that the citizens of Norwich intended to rise against the king in order that Suffolk might turn against them and inform Henry. Under the pressure of such intimidation the city, anxious for Suffolk's goodwill, paid a very considerable sum of over £80 to Tuddenham in September 1441 in the hope that in return he would incline his lord in its favour.¹⁰⁴ The gamble did not come off. As the city saw it, Tuddenham merely turned Suffolk against them all. Individual citizens too were harassed for sums of money by Tuddenham and Heydon under threat of having all their goods distrained through rigged suits or of being indicted for treason and felony and so hanged. Coming from men who were JPs in the county this was not an idle threat.

The list of their misdoings covers membrane after membrane among the records of the king's bench. It was in Norwich that they also falsified returns from the sheriff's tourn; were behind the formation of an illicit and disruptive gild of St. George; helped in the destruction of a city watermill; and colluded in the appropriation of city tolls by the prior of Holy Trinity. Beyond the city in the two counties they so intimidated some men that they dared not go about their business openly; rustled flocks of sheep in their hundreds; concocted judicial records (something which required the forging of 13 signatures); threatened individuals into writing obligations for sums like £100; and interfered with other men's views of frankpledge. These are just some examples of their activities.¹⁰⁵

Among this East Anglian affinity Heydon may have been the most violent. A man as rich as Sir John Fastolf admitted to a

correspondent in the spring of 1450 that he had not taken up pleas against Heydon 'because the world was alway set after his rule'.¹⁰⁶ Fastolf lost possession of four valuable manors through Suffolk and his associates but he (realistically) had thought it futile to challenge the earl at common law or through a suit in chancery. Instead he sought a negotiated private settlement with Suffolk and his advisers.¹⁰⁷

Heydon had a running feud with Norwich, which may have dated from his dismissal sometime in the mid-1430s from the office of recorder of the city by the mayor and commons.¹⁰⁸ His methods included the use - in conjunction with the prior of Holy Trinity - of gangs which on at least four separate occasions during the 1440s prevented coroners from their duties of conducting inquisitions into various deaths.¹⁰⁹ No motive is offered for this action. His intimidatory tactics were notorious: in October 1440 he took 50 marks each off four men in Norwich.¹¹⁰ Perhaps the best recorded example of his heavy handed use of force comes in January 1449 when he and Lord Moleyns backed and incited the attack and seizure by a large gang of several hundred armed men of John Paston's manor at Gresham, smashing gates and doors, rifling possessions in the house; and with the manor taken, combing the countryside in pursuit of Paston's friends, tenants and servants through houses and barns, stabbing into sheaves and straw after their quarry.¹¹¹ Poor tenants of the manor were intimidated into making false complaints in the hundred courts against these associates of Paston who naturally dared not appear in public to defend themselves in court, nor could they even obtain copies of the complaints to answer them by law because the keeper of the court

was in league with Lord Moleyns and Tuddenham. It is a picture of a complete breakdown of proper law and order although the processes and functions of the law continued as a charade played out by the oppressors.

There are also well documented examples of a similar misuse of government and law by associates of the regime in other parts of the country that do not closely concern us. In Cornwall, for example, favoured servants of the king were active participants in piracy.¹¹² The principal owner of the *Edward of Polruan* which in November 1449 robbed a Spanish ship anchoring off Plymouth of £12,000 of goods was John Trevilian, yeoman of the Crown.¹¹³

V

Yet for all the perversion of justice and entrenched favouritism which Suffolk's regime represented in the South-East and East Anglia, it was in connection with his foreign dealings that his enemies hoped to bring about his downfall. The oppression of its local officials was perhaps a sufficiently common phenomenon as to be regarded as an inadequate pretext for ousting any clique, but the matter of France and of the movement of an enemy army towards the French ports of the Channel coast was an issue of life and death which affected all of southern England. It was certainly on this matter that popular opinion swung most strongly against the duke, although just how manipulated this popular opinion was it is very hard to say.

The great preoccupation of the royal council during the 1440s was the search for peace with France, a search in which Suffolk

took a leading role.¹¹⁴ The decade saw a perpetual to-ing and fro-ing of embassies across the Channel, amicable relations reaching their height in 1444-5 with the sealing of a marriage alliance but sliding off sharply at the end of the decade as open hostilities resumed in 1449. The deep animosity shown towards Suffolk and his 'false progeny' during the second half of the decade was in significant part based upon what was seen as Suffolk's disastrous mishandling of negotiations with France. In early 1450 when Suffolk was first denounced in parliament it was in the guise of a volley of accusations about his duplicity in the Anglo-French negotiations and his alleged work on behalf of the French in bringing about the loss of Normandy. Topical poems and songs made obsessive repetition of the idea that 'Suffolk normandy hath swold'¹¹⁵ and that it was through his fault that able captains personified by John Talbot, earl of Shrewsbury, taken as hostage by the French after the surrender of Rouen in 1449, were kept from a proper defence of France.

'And he is bownden that oure dore shuld kepe,
That is Talbott oure goode dogge,'

and again,

'Jack Napys [Suffolk], with his clogge,
Hath tiede Talbot oure gentille dogge.'¹¹⁶

As has already been noted, other individuals besides Suffolk who were also involved in these bargainings became objects of popular contempt. It was in large degree in this connection that the names of Adam Moleyns, bishop of Chichester, Walter Lyhert, bishop of Norwich, and Reginald Boulders, abbot of St. Peter's, Gloucester, gained the reputations that had them lampooned in popular verse by the end of the 1440s. In contrast, Humphrey duke of Gloucester's

consistent defence of the need to pursue and uphold what he saw as England's just claims to sovereignty in France gave him his popular estimation as 'Good Duke Humphrey', 'verray fader and protectour of the land'.¹¹⁷

Despite his uncle Gloucester's opinion, Henry VI himself had long been anxious to end what he saw as the wasteful loss of property and money which the war entailed. It was he who in 1440 had decided - against Gloucester's advice - to release England's most prized French prisoner, the duke of Orléans, and a strong card in diplomatic manoeuvres with France, in the hope that he would promote the cause of peace between the two countries - a card, which as it turned out, was thrown away to no benefit. By 1440 Henry and his councillors were taking up a new line of approach to what they hoped would be reconciliation with France: a truce to be sealed by a marriage alliance with a French princess. Suffolk was decided upon as the leader of the embassy to go over to negotiate the matter with the French, a role, it is worth noting, that he was reluctant to take up. He saw himself as an inappropriate candidate for the job since not only had the French asked for him but Orleans had been his guest and he had other friendships amongst the French aristocracy. Also on Suffolk's mind was the kind of popular odium which had greeted the return of earlier ambassadors to France in the cause of peace. Nonetheless, at royal command he went on an initial embassy in the spring of 1444 accompanied by Adam Moleyns, then dean of Salisbury, the new keeper of the privy seal. Following another grander embassy of the autumn of 1444 Suffolk returned to Henry with an Angevin bride,

the second daughter of Rene of Anjou, king of Naples (until 1442), count of Anjou and of Provence and brother-in-law to Charles VII of France. Margaret of Anjou did not bring with her a substantial dowry, and the truce terms accompanying this alliance, admittedly the first general truce for 24 years, were given a cautious two years.¹¹⁸

Much time and thought was given to making a permanent truce between the countries and for months the possibility of a meeting of the two kings in person was mooted amongst the negotiators. In the meantime the truce of Tours, initially due to expire in April 1446, was given short term extensions. A final peace settlement, however, evaded the ambassadors despite their continual consultations. So impatient became Henry's desire for peace that in the last days of 1445 he signed an agreement ceding the county of Maine to the French. This opened up the entire southern border of Normandy to attack. Not surprisingly he was to find his soldiery there obstructive and full of delays when it came to implementing the agreement. In retrospect this event was seen, rightly, as the beginning of the fall of Lancastrian France: to his enemies in parliament Suffolk's complicity was central. He had promised Maine to Rene 'above his Instruction and power to hym by you [Henry] committed' to Henry's 'over grete disheritaunce and losse irrecuperable, enforsyng and enrichyng of your seid Enemyes, and grettest mean of the losse of youre seid Duchie of Normandie'.¹¹⁹

Early in 1447 the pace and temper of events moved up another gear. Humphrey, duke of Gloucester, the leading opponent of Henry's peace-seeking policies died suddenly in very suspicious circumstances at the parliament held at Bury St. Edmunds in

Suffolk, which was, as no one would have failed to notice, in the heart of de la Pole country. The rumour was soon about that he had been murdered. The fact that 42 of his retinue were seized at Bury and imprisoned in castles throughout the south of England increases the likelihood that this was a deliberate attack upon the duke.¹²⁰ Five months later the keeper of Gloucester castle allegedly said that the king had killed the duke of Gloucester and that the duke was more fit to be king than Henry. Whether this was actually spoken by the keeper cannot be proven, but it is significant that the idea was already current by the second half of 1447 when the case came to court.¹²¹ Chroniclers, too, were ready to interpret Gloucester's death as murder. The crime was laid at the door of Suffolk and his associates. According to one chronicler the Bury parliament,

'was maad only for to sle the noble duke of Gloucestre, whose deth the fals duke of Suffolk William de la Pole, and ser James Fynes lord Say, and othir of thair assent, hadde longe tyme conspired and ymagyned'.¹²²

James Fiennes certainly reaped benefit from Gloucester's death. Immediately after the duke's death he petitioned for some of Gloucester's offices and was successful in receiving the constablership of Dover castle and wardenship of the Cinque Ports. It was at this time too that he was made lord Saye and Sele. Indeed, the death of the duke was followed by a fairly extensive use of the crown's recently introduced power to create additional lords temporal by patent.¹²³ But not all chronicle accounts took the line that Gloucester had been murdered. Some did not even intimate that there had been foul play. However, this was undoubtedly the version which caught the popular imagination and became crucial to the

reputation of the duke of Suffolk. Indeed, it was perhaps for his death that Gloucester was best remembered: 'To dine with Duke Humphrey' was to become a wry euphemism for going hungry.¹²⁴

1447 was the year in which three important figures disappeared from the political scene. Following Gloucester's death in February, Cardinal Beaufort, uncle of Henry V and elder statesman of Henry VI's minority, died on 11 April.¹²⁵ The death of Beaufort left Suffolk as unquestioned chief councillor in the royal council. The third magnate to die that year was John Holand, the duke of Exeter. Custody of his young heir, Henry Holand, was granted to Richard duke of York.

The gaining of this custody was one small sign of recognition and favour granted to York during the late 1440s amidst many signs to the contrary. For this second half of the decade saw - under Suffolk's ascendancy - York's virtual political elimination. The government owed him huge sums of money, unpaid arrears of his wages and expenses which caused him real financial embarrassment. Despite his position as lieutenant-general in France, John Beaufort, earl of Somerset, had been given the government of Gascony in 1443, and had been given preferential treatment by the exchequer. In December 1446 Edmund Beaufort was appointed as lieutenant-general in place of York. By the late 1440s, more especially after the death of Gloucester and Beaufort, York lacked powerful friends at court to speak for him. Bishop Aiscough, Sir John Beauchamp and James Fiennes had all been annuitants earlier in the 1440s, but by 1447 these household men were unlikely to gain the king's ear on York's behalf, they were now too much the king's men.¹²⁶ In June

1449 York would sail for Ireland.

Meanwhile so obdurate were Henry's commanders in Maine in their stalling tactics over the county's surrender that the French in March 1448 after months of waiting resumed hostilities with the siege of Le Mans. Adam Moleyns and Sir Robert Roos, already on their way to France, hastened to reaffirm an earlier agreement for the surrender of Le Mans and other fortresses in Maine. And so Maine was finally ceded. Henry's captains there asked for indemnities to declare that this had been a performance of their duty and not (as it seemed to them) a desertion of it. For all that, the handing over of Maine failed to make surer the prospect of a final peace as Henry had hoped. The English soldiers had retreated to garrisons in the disputed territory on the Breton-Norman frontier and for the time being an uneasy truce prevailed. That winter of 1448-9 the quarries of Caen, the source of some of the finest building stone for the king's new college under construction at Eton, ceased their regular export to England.¹²⁷ The master of the works responsible deemed it time to look for substitutes in Yorkshire and Oxfordshire. His timing was apt, for the truce ended in March 1449 after which there were no more truces in Normandy.

1. There were uprisings in Henry's French possessions, such as that which occurred in 1435 in the Caux region north of Rouen shortly after the death of the duke of Bedford, C. T. Allmand, *Lancastrian Normandy 1415-1450: The History of a Medieval Occupation* (Oxford, 1983), p.40.
2. C. Babington (ed.), *The repressor of over much blaming of the clergy*, I (RS, 1860), p.xxii.
3. KB9/1057,m.12.
4. T. Wright (ed.), *Political Poems and Songs*, II (RS, 1861), p.128. Henceforth cited as *Political Poems II*.
5. KB9/958,m.30.
6. J. A. F. Thomson, *The Later Lollards 1414-1520* (Oxford, 1965), p.61. It is his view that 'Lollardy may have helped to prepare the ground for the rising, but it is unlikely that it did anything more'.
7. KB9/225,mm.2-4, 21, 22. For a more comprehensive look at Lollard troubles in the late fourteenth century and early fifteenth century see, M. E. Aston, 'Lollardy and sedition, 1381-1431', *Past and Present*, XVII (1960).
8. H. T. Riley (ed.), *Annales monasterii S. Albani*, I (RS, 1870), pp.63-4; KB9/225,m.21.
9. KB9/225,mm.2-4, 22; a passing allusion is made to this in reference to Russell, Gregory's Chron., p.172.
10. BL Add. Ms. 14,848 fols.89-89v..
11. KB9/227/2,mm.1B, 2, 23.
12. J. A. F. Thomson, *The Later Lollards 1414-1520* (Oxford, 1965), pp.58-9.
13. KB9/227/2,mm.1A, 36.
14. This dyer appeared before the king's justices the following year and was actually acquitted. Thomson, *Later Lollards*, p.30.
15. *London Chrons.*, p.97.
16. PPC, IV, pp.107-8; Gregory's Chron., p.172; H. T. Riley (ed.), *Annales monasterii S. Albani*, I (RS, 1870), pp.63-4.
17. BL Ms. Harl. 3775 fol.120a, printed as Appendix F in H. T. Riley (ed.), *Annales monasterii S. Albani*, I (RS, 1870), pp.453-6.
18. Gregory's Chron., p.172; *English Chron.*, p.54; *Brut*, p.457; H. T. Riley (ed.), *Annales monasterii S. Albani*, I (RS, 1870), pp.63-4.

19. *London Chrons.*, p.97; *Brut*, p.457.
20. *Political Poems II*, p.243.
21. KB9/996, m.63.
22. KB9/1059, m.30.
23. KB9/234, mm.77, 78.
24. W. R. W. Stephens, *Memorials of the South Saxon See and Cathedral Church of Chichester* (London, 1876), pp.140-2.
25. *Political Poems II*, p.246. This poem is undated although thought to belong to some date about the reign of Henry VI. It is just possible that the iconoclasm belonged to a particular few years and so I could be antedating it by my suggestion here that it was prevalent during the 1430s.
- 26. For this subject in greater detail see, J. A. F. Thomson, *The Later Lollards 1414-1520* (Oxford, 1965), pp.173-81; also J. A. F. Thomson, 'A Lollard rising in Kent: 1431 or 1438?', *BIHR*, XXXVII, (1964).
27. Margaret Aston, 'William White's Lollard followers', in *Lollards and Reformers: Images and Literacy in Late Medieval Religion* (London, 1984), pp.71-99.
28. BL Add. Ms. 14,848, a letter from Henry VI to the abbot of Bury St. Edmunds, printed in *Archaeologia*, XXIII (1831), pp.339-41. For the dating of this letter to 1438 see, J. A. F. Thomson, 'A Lollard rising in Kent: 1431 or 1438?', *BIHR*, XXXVII, (1964).
29. J. A. F. Thomson, *The Later Lollards 1414-1520* (Oxford, 1965), pp.176, 178; *CC1R*, 1435-41, pp.197-8; *CPR*, 1446-52, p.361.
30. KB9/245, m.13.
31. For example, KB9/203, mm.2, 5.
32. 1449, Norfolk, KB9/262, m.78. The subject of seditious speech against the king is treated at rather greater length in B. Wolfe, *Henry VI* (London, 1981), pp.16-8.
33. 1446, Suffolk, KB9/260, m.85; 1449, Cambridgeshire, KB9/262, mm.2, 5.
34. 1447, Gloucestershire, KB9/256, m.13.
35. 1446, Suffolk, KB9/260, mm.85, 9.
36. 1446, Suffolk, KB9/260, m.85; 1448, Lincolnshire, KB9/260, m.1.
37. 1448, Westminster, KB9/260, m.87.

- 38.1446, London, KB9/996,m.55.
- 39.1446, Suffolk, KB9/260,m.85.
- 40.1447, Gloucestershire, KB9/256,m.13; 1449, Suffolk, KB27/760 rex side m.3.
- 41.1446, Suffolk, KB9/260,m.85.
- 42.1453, Southwark, KB9/273,m.103.
- 43.1451, Southwark, KB9/265,m.92.
- 44.KB9/230A,mm.24, 28, 29.
- 45.See, B. Wolfe, *Henry VI* (London, 1981), chap.I.
- 46.For greater detail concerning the growing influence of the household in the king's council, see, Griffiths, *Henry VI*, chapter 12.
- 47.Griffiths, *Henry VI*, p.285.
- 48.Thomas Gascoigne gives absenteeism as the major cause of resentment amongst Aiscough's murderers in 1450, Thomas Gascoigne, *Loci et Libro Veritatum*, ed. J. E. T. Rogers (Oxford,1881), pp.158-9.
- 49.J. O. Halliwell (ed.), *A Chronicle of the first thirteen years of the reign of King Edward the fourth by John Warkworth* (Camden society, O.S., X, 1839), p.11.
- 50.Wedgwood, *Biographies*, pp.253-5.
- 51.*Ibid.*, pp.873-4; J. P. Collier (ed.), *Trevelyan Papers*, pt.1 (Camden society, O.S., LXVII, 1857), pp.27-37.
- 52.Wedgwood, *Biographies*, pp.744-6.
- 53.J. S. Roskell, *Parliament and Politics in Late Medieval England*, II (London, 1981), p.155.
- 54.*Political Poems* II, p.223.
- 55.*Ibid.*, p.229.
- 56.J. S. Roskell, *The impeachment of Michael de la Pole earl of Suffolk in 1386 in the context of the reign of Richard II* (Manchester, 1984), pp.205-8.
- 57.Griffiths, *Henry VI*, pp.630-1.
- 58.R. Virgoe, *Ancient Indictments*, pp.221-2.
- 59.E. B. Fryde, from his chapter for *The Agrarian History of England and Wales*, III (Cambridge University Press). I am most grateful to

- Professor Fryde for giving me access to this manuscript.
- 60.CPR, 1436-41, pp.77-8, 93, 100, 428, 471, 493; CPR, 1441-46, pp.140, 296.
- 61.CPR, 1436-41, pp.245, 248.
- 62.CPR, 1441-46, pp.83, 160, 445.
- 63.CPR, 1436-41, p.584. CPR, 1441-46, p.472; CPR, 1446-52, p.590.
- 64.Virgoe, *Ancient Indictments*, pp.225-26.
- 65.*Ibid.*, p.234.
- 66.*Ibid.*, pp.233-4.
- 67.G. R. Owst, *Preaching in Medieval England* (Cambridge, 1926), p.40; Thomas Gascoigne, *Loci et Libro Veritatum*, ed. J. E. T. Rogers (Oxford, 1881), pp.xlvi, 191.
- 68.*Political Poems II*, p.230.
- 69.J. Stow, *Annales, or a generall chronicle of England* (1631), p.389.
- 70.Virgoe, *Ancient Indictments*, pp.223, 225-6, 227-8, 233-4, 239.
- 71.Griffiths, *Henry VI*, pp.633, 660; CFR, 1437-45, p.241.
- 72.E368/222 *Adhuc precepta Michaelmas* 28H6.
- 73.KB9/267,m.71; KB27/765 *rex side m*.23v.
- 74.CC1R, 1441-47, pp.440-41; CC1R, 1447-54, pp.54,68.
- 75.Griffiths, *Henry VI*, pp.630-1.
- 76.CPR, 1441-46, p.372; E368/222 *Adhuc communia Easter* 28H6.
- 77.J. Stow, *Annales, or a generall chronicle of England* (1631), p.389; Robin Jeffs, 'The Poynings-Percy Dispute', *BIHR*, XXXIV, (1961), pp.148-64.
- 78.Virgoe, *Ancient Indictments*, pp.224, 239-40.
- 79.*Ibid.*, p.223.
- 80.For example, CC1R, 1441-47, pp.440-1.
- 81.CPR, 1441-46, pp.422, 472; CPR, 1446-52, pp.382, 590; Edward Hasted, *The History and Topographical Survey of the county of Kent*, III, (Reprint of 2nd ed., 1972), p.129.
- 82.Virgoe, *Ancient Indictments*, pp.227-8.

83. *Ibid.*, p.234.
84. *Ibid.*, p.235.
85. *Ibid.*, pp.240-1.
86. F. R. H. Du Boulay, *The Lordship of Canterbury* (London, 1966), pp.272-3, 400.
87. Virgoe, *Ancient Indictments*, p.236.
88. *Ibid.*, pp.236-7.
89. J. Stow, *The Chronicles of England, from Brute unto this present yeare of Christ, 1580* (1580), pp.654-5.
90. N. Brooks, 'The organization and achievements of the peasants of Kent and Essex in 1381', in *Studies in Medieval History Presented to R. H. C. Davis*, eds. Henry Mayr-Harting and R. I. Moore (London, 1985), p.260.
91. Griffiths, *Henry VI*, p.633.
92. *Ibid.*, pp.633, 634.
93. See chapter 1, p.23. The expression 'kynges taker' is found, for example, in an indictment of 1444, KB9/246,m.27.
94. C1/17/418.
95. Wedgwood, *Register*, pp.97ff..
96. R. Virgoe, 'The murder of James Andrew: Suffolk faction in the 1430s', *Proceedings of the Suffolk Institute of Archaeology and History*, XXXIV, (1980), p.263.
97. *Ibid.*, pp.263-8.
98. For details of York's extensive lands see Joel T. Rosenthal, 'The estates and finances of Richard, duke of York (1411-1460)', in *Studies in Medieval and Renaissance History*, II, (ed.) William M. Bowsky (University of Nebraska Press, 1965), pp.115-204.
99. Wedgwood, *Biographies*, pp.880-1.
100. *Ibid.*, pp.452-3.
101. *Ibid.*, p.895.
102. KB9/267,m.25; KB27/767 rex side m.7; KB27/792 rex side m.2; KB27/793 rex side m.6; KB27/795 rex side mm.8, 8/2; KB27/798 rex side mm.9, 26; it is a reiterated charge with various dates being offered from the 1430s and early 1440s.
103. KB27/795 rex side m.8.

- 104.KB27/767 rex side m.7; KB27/798 rex side m.26; KB27/795 rex side m.8v.
- 105.KB27/793 rex side m.6; KB27/798 rex side m.9; KB27/758 rex side m.9; KB27/759 rex side m.33; KB27/762 rex side mm. 1v, 29; KB27/763 rex side m.21; KB27/767 rex side m.7; KB9/267,mm.25, 64a; KB9/272,mm.2-5. Goddard Johnson, 'Extract from the Books of the Corporation of Norwich, relative to the injuries done to the city by Sir Thomas Tudenham and others; the offence given to Alice, countess of Suffolk; and the real History of Gladman's Insurrection', *Norfolk Archaeology*, I, (1847), pp.294-9.
- 106.PL, II, p.137.
- 107.A. R. Smith, 'Aspects of the Career of Sir John Fastolf (1380-1459)' (Oxford D.Phil. thesis 1982), pp.127, 142; *Catalogue of Ancient Deeds*, I, (London, 1890), p.74.
- 108.P. C. Maddern, 'Violence, Crime and Public Disorder in East Anglia, 1422-1442' (Oxford D.Phil. thesis 1984), p.176.
- 109.KB27/795 rex side mm.8, 8v.
- 110.KB27/767 rex side m.7; KB27/798 rex side m.26.
- 111.KB27/762 rex side m.29; KB27/763 rex side m.21; PL, II, pp.127-30.
- 112.C. L. Kingsford, *Prejudice and Promise in Fifteenth Century England* (London, reprint 1962), pp.78-106.
- 113.*Ibid.*, pp.94-6.
- 114.For a survey of the Anglo-French diplomacy of the 1440s, see Griffiths, *Henry VI*, chapters 17 & 18.
- 115.R. H. Robbins, *Historical Poems of the XIVth and XVth Centuries* (New York, 1959), p.204.
- 116.*Political Poems* II, pp.222, 224; Suffolk is referred to in this way because his badge was an ape's clog, just as Talbot's was a dog.
- 117.R. H. Robbins, *Historical Poems of the XIVth and XVth Centuries* (New York, 1959), p.183.
- 118.For these matters in greater detail, see E. F. Jacob, *The Fifteenth Century 1399-1485* (Oxford, 1961), pp.475-81; Griffiths, *Henry VI*, chapters 17 & 18.
- 119.*Rotuli Parliamentorum* V, p.178.
- 120.H. Ellis (ed.), *Original Letters*, I, 2nd series (London, 1827), pp.108-9.
- 121.KB9/256,m.13.

122.Davies Chron., p.62.

123.J. Enoch Powell and Keith Wallis, *The House of Lords in the Middle Ages* (London, 1968), pp.481-2.

124.Anon., *A Compleat History of Suffolk* (1730), p.258.

125.B. Wolfe, *Henry VI* (London, 1981), p.108.

126.Griffiths, *Henry VI*, pp.673-6.

127.R. Allen Brown, H. M. Colvin, A. J. Taylor (eds.), *The History of the King's Works, vol.I: The Middle Ages* (London,1963), pp.281-2.

Chapter Three: Before the Storm,

1449-1450 (to May 1450)

I

During 1449-1450 Henry VI's chickens came home to roost. These years saw, in France and at home, the outcome of years of cumulative mismanagement so disastrous that the people of whole regions of England were finally provoked into a demonstration of protest and hostility.

To begin with, the government's financial difficulties came to an impasse.¹ Throughout the 1440s parliament had not reacted generously to the government's requests for money. When grants were made they could not be exploited to the full; the number of towns and communities who pleaded poverty and an inability to pay the required tenth and fifteenth in 1446 led to a further reduction of the yield from this tax beyond previous abatements. From now on the income from this tax was reduced by some £6,000. The revenue was further undercut by numbers of individual exemptions that were quite likely to have been made by the king in his characteristic openhandedness to people with government connections. The customs on foreign trade were the other form of parliamentary taxation; the rate of poundage charged on imports and exports of general merchandise was increased in 1440, but two years later this higher rate was abandoned. Indeed, for the 1440s as a whole it has been calculated that revenue from the customs was less than it had been during the two preceding decades.² And all the while the king had the heavy expenses of the maintenance of garrisons in France and

the sending out of more troops and supplies to cope with, along with the costly business of the collection and transportation to England of his new queen. It is just possible that MPs, for all their grumbling about the king's subjects being unable to bear the burden of repeated taxation, might have granted the government's requests for money more freely had they been more fully informed of the seriousness of the English position in France. However, when parliament convened for its first session at Westminster in February 1449 (with some lords instructed to stay away and keep guard on the troublesome Scottish border),³ it was as loath as ever to meet Henry's demands for taxation. Much of the explanation for this may lie with the fact that for a generation Englishmen had become accustomed to expect that the war in France should be largely paid for from French resources. So the Commons granted no more than a half of a tenth and fifteenth to be paid in two parts at Martinmas of 1449 and 1450, and they took the unusual step of obliging the king to cancel those assignments on it which he had already made in anticipation of the income of the subsidy. Thus the provision of Normandy at this crucial time suffered because the Commons could not trust those who were in favour around the king to make proper use of the taxation of the people of the realm.

Parliament had its own financial worries that spring concerning the health of the country's most important exported manufacture, woollen cloth. In March it complained about the official exclusion of English cloth from one of its major European markets in Holland, Brabant and Flanders and asked for reprisals to be taken.⁴ It was decided that goods from these countries should not

be allowed into England unless the matter was resolved before the end of the forthcoming September. As it happened no redress was to be forthcoming and so the retaliatory action was to continue into 1450. The official closing of this market to English cloth is the probable explanation behind the figures for the denizen export of cloth from London during the late 1440s which dropped from 8,827 cloths for ten months of the year Michaelmas 1446 to Michaelmas 1447 down to a mere 4,413 in the period 1447-8, rising to only about 6,000 annually during the following two years.⁵ In 1449 there was also a collapse of the Hanseatic exports from England for reasons which will be discussed presently. During 1449 feelings in England naturally ran high against the subjects of the duke of Burgundy. In June the king was to issue a writ to the mayor and sheriffs of London ordering the issuing of proclamations in the capital prohibiting the spate of molestations of this foreign group, citizens having been provoked by stories that the duke was going to attack Calais.⁶

Meanwhile, as parliament discussed the cloth export business, developments were taking place in France. On 24 March 1449 an English mercenary, a François de Surienne, a knight of the Garter and royal pensioner, took the Breton town of Fougères in a surprise attack and in contravention of the existing Anglo-French truce.⁷ The dukes of Suffolk and Somerset, as recent research has revealed, were both at work behind the scenes of this incident. The taking of Fougères was by no means the first, but it was perhaps the most provoking of several infractions of the truce that the duke of Somerset, now the king's lieutenant in France

following York's transferal to Ireland, appeared to tolerate. It is traditionally cited as the incident which provoked Charles VII's invasion of Normandy that summer. It would appear that the attack was a reckless move by Suffolk to try to regain some of the public stature which he had so signally lost in his connection with the cession of Maine. But apparently altogether more disturbing to Charles VII was a wider issue of an alleged English plot to remove the duke of Brittany and his brother from their allegiance to the king of France, an allegiance the English now claimed was owed to them. For prior to the capture of Fougères Suffolk had covered himself technically from the accusation of breaking the truce with France. He had done this in 1448 when, as the Anglo-French truce was once again renewed, he had taken the inconspicuous but certainly not innocuous measure of listing the duke of Brittany amongst the English allies instead of amongst the French allies. This of course meant that Charles VII was excluded from any interference in the relations of Brittany and England since these were now supposedly the relations of liegeman to overlord.⁸ The French themselves claimed later that they had not regarded the Fougères incident as being nearly as crucial to the re-opening of hostilities as the English diplomatic schemes to alienate the duke of Brittany and his brother from their allegiance to their overlord, the king of France.⁹ Nonetheless, the attack on Fougères provided the French with a useful pretext both to perpetuate further infractions of the truce that spring and to draw closer to the Bretons again, since, with the English taking only half-hearted steps to restore the town to Brittany, Charles VII made an alliance with Duke Francis to help him to regain it.

Normandy that spring was in a very uncertain state, stricken with financial and military problems and quite unprepared for the re-opening of full scale hostilities which the English leaders seemed prepared to risk. Edmund Beaufort, duke of Somerset, had not been a happy choice in some respects as lieutenant-general in France, although as the most important English landowner in France and a man who had spent much of his career there, his appointment in December 1446 to replace an inept military leader had seemed a natural choice. His popularity among the English notables in Normandy had not increased when, following the long delayed cession of Maine in 1448, he had been recompensed for his losses there with lands in the bailliages of Caen and Cotentin whilst they demanded compensation for their own losses in Maine to no avail.¹⁰ The months of refusal to surrender Le Mans and the bitterness which followed the cession of Maine illuminate the mood of grim determination among the English in Normandy and northern France to hold on to the lands and property for which they had fought.

By May 1449 parliament would have been aware of the ill-timed action of Surienne, yet any apprehension on this score may have paled beside the shocking news that arrived just before parliament was prorogued for Whitsun on 30 May. Reports came in of the capture by English privateers in the Channel on 23 May of the annual convoy known as the Bay Fleet of Hansard shipping as it was on its return journey north from buying salt and other goods in the great salt works of Bourgneuf Bay, just south of the mouth of the Loire.¹¹ One hundred and ten ships were taken in this spectacular coup and were driven off the high seas to the Isle

of Wight. Fifty of them belonged to merchants of the Hanse, the remaining sixty belonged to Flemings and Dutchmen who had joined the protection of the convoy. Unlike those of the Hanse, the Flemish and Dutch ships were later released with their cargoes by their captors. As an unprovoked peace time attack on maritime trade that had all the appearances of an act of gratuitous greed, the event had no parallel in the entire fifteenth century. As their captor, Robert Winnington, enthusiastically described it,

'ye sawe never suche a syght of schyppys take in to Englund this c. wynter . . . for I der well sey that I have her at this tyme all the cheff schyppys of Duchelond, Holond, Selond, and Flaundrys'.¹²

According to the report of a Prussian agent in London, the Kentish rebels marched up to London in 1450 calling for the restoration of Hanseatic trade and for the punishment of the pirates involved.¹³ There is no corroboration of this report, but it is known that the rebels were to call for the downfall of those men who were behind the incident, because the Bay Fleet capture was engineered - and this was about the most disgraceful aspect of the entire affair - by some of the most influential men in the realm.

Relations between England and the Hanse had been fraught and difficult for years, more especially between England and the Prussian branch of the Hanse with whom England had long been agitating for parity between the English merchants in Danzig and the privileged Hansards of London. Up until the late 1430s England had emerged more or less in the stronger position from her various offensives against the Hansards, but from the 1440s onwards the strength of the English position deteriorated badly. Much of the responsibility for this decay can be put upon the issuing in

1442 of an act of parliament for the keeping of the seas that did away with the previous restrictions regarding safe conducts and truce on the high seas and in effect replaced them with what was an organized system of privateering. The ordinance provided that English shipping was to be policed and protected from attack by a fleet of 28 ships. This fleet was given a more or less free hand to make capture at sea and the masters and owners of the ships were offered the incentive of generous terms in the sharing out of the captured goods and cargoes. It was this fleet that captured the Hanseatic convoy. Since the boats were provided by powerful individuals closely connected with certain members of the king's council, men such as William, Lord Bonville, Sir Philip Courtenay, John Howard, John Church and Hugh Taverner, the act effectively authorized some of the highest men in the land to draw income from the profits of privateering.¹⁴

The leader of the English privateers who captured the Bay Fleet in 1450, Robert Winnington, had been employed by the king in 1449, 'to do us service in the see, for the clensing of the same and rebukyng of the robbeurs, and pirates therof'.¹⁵ Some of the boats of his fleet belonged to Thomas Daniel, noted in the previous chapter as one of the more hated members of Henry VI's court circle during the 1440s.¹⁶ It would seem likely from the rashness of the action that Winnington was not acting in his own capacity but as Daniel's lieutenant and agent. Indeed, he knew his need for friends in high places, and upon making the capture he wrote to another member of Daniel's circle, John Trevilian telling him of what had happened and seeking his support. Word soon got about that lords of the king's council were implicated in the raid. The

Hanse merchants in London and Londoners themselves placed the blame for involvement with all Suffolk's clique and especially with John Trevilian, Thomas Daniel and Lord Saye.

Prior to the capture customs officials in England had been trying in 1449 to collect from merchants of the Hanse the newly raised subsidy of tonnage and poundage from which they were supposed to be exempt. At their refusal to pay their goods had been sequestrated and this had caused the Hanse to answer in kind.¹⁷ The capture is seen now, as no doubt it was by many then, as perhaps one of the most glaring symptoms of the demoralized state into which the Lancastrian government had fallen by the late 1440s. It also goes a good way, although previous uncompromising and obstructive negotiating by the English played its part, towards explaining why Hanse exports of cloth from England dropped by more than a half between 1446-8 and 1448-50.¹⁸

On 16 June parliament re-assembled at Winchester and sat until 16 July. It is perhaps a measure of the domestic instability felt at the time that in a debate in council during this parliament concerning the problem of how to supply the French possessions sufficiently with men and ordnance the lords first of all discussed measures for dealing with disorder at home. It was proposed that commissions of oyer and terminer should be appointed to establish better order before anything could be done.¹⁹ The Isle of Wight, only just to the south of where they sat in Winchester, offered an example of such lack of order. There John Newport, a former steward of the duke of York, who also went under the self-aggrandizing titles of Newport the Gallant or Newport the

Rich, so terrorized the inhabitants of the island and practised such piracy that the people were deserting for the mainland, leaving the island without proper defence.²⁰ In this parliament Henry managed to extract only a further half of a tenth and a fifteenth to be paid in two instalments by the Martinmas of 1449 and 1451.²¹ The wool subsidy was renewed but most of its income was assigned to the defence of Calais and maintenance of fortifications, and authorization was given to officials to investigate and make sure that the money was spent according to parliament's decrees.²² At the time of the dissolution of this parliament the king's current charges and debts were running, it was said, at the level of £372,000.²³

It is likely that MPs left Winchester that July bitter about the financial incompetence of the government. Their bitterness can only have increased when sometime in early August the news filtered through that on 31 July Charles VII had abrogated the truce and was once more officially at war with the English. Nonetheless, few of them would have foreseen at that point just how catastrophic a change this was going to bring about in northern France, and for good. Months of negotiations had gone on since Surienne's attack in March, but neither the French nor the Bretons had been able to obtain any satisfactory reparations from the English who were taking the intractable line that the duke of Brittany was England's liegeman. By July Charles VII was not only in the right temper for war, but he was equipped for it militarily, having used the time since the 1444 truce to reorganize his army. Not only did he have more men than the English but he had a good supply of artillery which he was to use to good effect. He

also had the advantage of being on the attack, with a manoeuvrable field army, against the garrison-bound English troops. Moreover, unlike in any previous campaign, ample financial supplies were assured by the French royal banker, Jacques Coeur. That August Charles' soldiery swept into Normandy: a dozen or so castles and towns were all regained by the French in just over a month.²⁴ Autumn with its likelihood of less clement weather saw no slowing of the French advance. On 12 September Coutances capitulated to Duke Francis' army, three days later St. Lo fell; throughout the month more and more castles and towns were regained, concluding on 29 September with Carentan. Many fortresses surrendered without a fight, some betrayed by the French inhabitants or naturalized British soldiers. The French enjoyed telling the malicious and highly improbable story that the castle of Essay had been taken when the duke of Alencon heard that the English garrison of the town and castle were out fishing a pond some distance from the town and took them prisoner on their day off.²⁵

The difficulty was that Somerset was short of men and many of them were ill-disciplined. To put an army of sufficient size in the field would have meant the use of garrison troops and the opening up of garrison positions to attack. At about this time an anonymous soldier in France vented his feelings against Somerset in a series of rhetorical questions (the document remained amongst those of Sir John Fastolf's secretary, William Worcester).²⁶ Had Somerset been bribed to take Fougères? And why with English soldiery plundering the countryside for food and turning the population against them did he not pay his officers and soldiers properly? Moreover, why did he not

see to the repair of the fortifications of towns and castles and to their proper supply with artillery and provisions? The matter of compensating those who had lost their property in Maine had still not been attended to: was it because he had pocketed the proceeds?

With soldiers straggling into Rouen telling of yet another garrison defeated by the French, the news from across the Channel gave Henry every cause for alarm. Early in September he ordered a commission of array for Hampshire and the setting up of beacons in the usual places there; preparations were put under way for sending reinforcements to Normandy from Portsmouth; and later in the month he was sending commissioners about the counties to raise loans for the maintenance of the war.²⁷ But all this was rather too little and too late.

A sense of impending disaster began to disturb the departments of state. That September Bishop Lumley quit his position as treasurer to be replaced by James Fiennes, Lord Saye and Sele. On 11 October the French took Gavray, and by 16 October Charles VII was at the gates of Rouen to confront Somerset's army. After a short and, as some see it, token engagement, Somerset was persuaded by the archbishop and citizens to negotiate with the French, and on 29 October the capital of Lancastrian France surrendered. October was nearly out and still the relieving army had not been sent out from England. Following Bishop Lumley's example, Adam Moleyns, the keeper of the privy seal, asked to be allowed to retreat from office but, with tragic consequences for himself, he was not allowed to do so immediately.

On 5 November, as parliament was assembling for the new session to begin the next day, Fougères, where Surienne's force had occupied

the citadel for over seven months, finally surrendered to Duke Francis.²⁸ On 10 November Charles VII (and with him his banker Jacques Coeur) entered Rouen with all the trappings of sumptuous propaganda. Talbot the veteran English soldier was there, a cheerless onlooker to a bright pageant of horses decked in velvet and mechanized symbolic devices set up in the canopied streets: here an *Agnus Dei* running drink by its horns, and there a winged stag wearing a crown on its neck which knelt as Charles passed by.²⁹

With the English hold in Normandy disintegrating as they sat talking in Westminster, the Commons might have been expected to make some immediate provision for the defence of Normandy and relief of the garrisons there. Indeed, this was the intention of the new parliament, reassembling as it was so soon after the ending of the previous one in July. Yet this parliament, which was to last through from November to June 1450, and which has been described as 'one of the most dramatic and contentious of the whole medieval period', was also remarkable for its parsimony and financial inaction.³⁰ Normandy was slipping out of English hands but the Commons would not accept any proposals for further direct taxation. They had already made a grant that year and it would be collected over the next two years. They were agreeable to discussing other means of raising money, but these discussions produced no grants of money for the war that year.

Arising out of the defeats in France an incident took place during the parliament that November which in its way was to spell the turning of the tide against Suffolk.³¹ Despite the duke's dominance of the council there were yet a small number of its

members who were willing to voice their indignation at the catalogue of disasters going on in France. Among these was Ralph, Lord Cromwell, a longstanding royal councillor and servant who had resigned as treasurer in 1443. It was therefore most ominous that a lawless esquire of the household, known to have been patronized by Suffolk, William Tailboys, should make an attempt to assassinate him.³² On 28 November with extraordinary brazenness Tailboys attacked Cromwell outside the Star Chamber in the palace of Westminster itself. Tailboys had been perpetrating outrages throughout the 1440s under the protection of his patrons Suffolk and Viscount Beaumont but this particularly vicious incident was to stand out in his career not only for its unpleasantness but for its important repercussions. Because of it Cromwell, who believed Suffolk to be the instigator behind the outrage, became completely hardened in his antipathy towards him and was soon to encourage the Commons in their bid to impeach him.

By November 1449 the preparations for the sending of troops over to Normandy by a fleet from Portsmouth were slightly further ahead. Shipping was being arrested for this purpose in the ports of London, East Anglia, Lincolnshire and the North-East, and soldiers were being mustered in readiness at Portsmouth.³³ Sir Thomas Kyriell was assigned to the command of this army of some four and a half thousand men and in November-December up to £9,000 was assigned for the payment of wages.³⁴ Yet November went by and still the troops were in Portsmouth waiting in a dangerous state of unemployment. During December as the French pushed on through Upper Normandy the government was on a desperate hunt for money. It was unable to make any adequate supply of cash to Somerset

whose soldiers were already in a demoralized state.

It was not until early in the new year that Bishop Moleyns was sent down to Portsmouth to take to the force awaiting shipment to Normandy the first, long overdue, instalment of their wages. Accusations were subsequently made that he withheld some of this money from the troops.³⁵ In all events, his escort could not save him from a mob of furious sailors and soldiers, said to number over 300 men, who on 9 January dragged him out of his lodgings to a field and killed him. According to one source, a confession was extracted from him before his death in which he made charges not only against himself but also against Suffolk and other 'traitors' of the Crown.³⁶ Chroniclers agree that Moleyns died 'for hys covetyssse'.³⁷ More especially, he was hated as one of the best known figures of Suffolk's faction at whose door the responsibility was being laid for the chain of defeats in France over the past six months.³⁸ Harfleur had fallen nine days previously; the Channel was now the border with enemy France. Invasion, it seemed, could come at any time.

II

In such an atmosphere of uncertainty about defence, trouble was also beginning early in the year further along the Channel coast in Kent where in the last week of January 1450 there was an attempted uprising. This rising led by a Thomas Cheyne came to nothing, but it was a demonstration which revived the notion, put into effect in 1381, of addressing complaints to the king by raising the south-eastern counties into a mass demonstration converging

upon London.³⁹ On Saturday 24 January rebels gathered in the villages of the stretch of countryside which lies between Sandwich and Dover, making up the extreme south-eastern corner of Kent. They had a list of those whom they wanted to see beheaded (heartened possibly by the example of the troops at Portsmouth). The list comprised William Aiscough, bishop of Salisbury, William, duke of Suffolk, James, Lord Saye, and the abbot of Gloucester. The rebels hoped to draw upon support from Kent, Essex, Hertfordshire, Surrey, Sussex and the city of London.⁴⁰ The rebels' targets further extended to religious houses. They had in mind particular valuables which they wanted to take from the prior of Christ Church, Canterbury.⁴¹

They marshalled themselves into some kind of military array, appointing captains to order their ranks. These leaders hid their identities behind names such as 'King of the Fairies', 'Queen of the Fairies' and 'Robin Hood'.⁴² Thomas Cheyne, the captain in chief, went under the name of 'the hermit Blewbeard'. Several of the leaders involved were perhaps not local to east Kent. Cheyne was a labourer from Newington by Southwark in Surrey, another ringleader was, significantly, a soldier from Warwickshire, and another was a yeoman from Cheshire, although they were at the head of a gathering of men from this hinterland of Sandwich and Dover, from villages such as Temple Ewell, River, Eastry and Northbourne, as well as from Sandwich itself.

Having congregated and made their plans on the Saturday, the rebels took action the following Monday, 26 January. Some 200 or so rose up in rebellion at Eastry under Cheyne that day, the numbers joining him later on in the week allegedly swelling into the

thousands. What the men actually did is unclear, but word went about that besides attacking local religious houses Cheyne intended taking the castle at Dover.⁴³ However, it was at Canterbury, perhaps en route to London, that the rebellion ended and where the anti-clerical element in the rising was manifested in an attack on St. Radegund's abbey hospice just outside the city walls on Canterbury's northern boundary. This was the town house of the abbey of St. Radegund at Bradsole near Dover, situated close to the villages of Temple Ewell and River from which some of these rioters came. It may well have been they who inspired the assault on this particular building as a means of attacking their own local religious house.⁴⁴

Cheyne was captured with the aid of some of the citizens of Canterbury on Saturday 31 January, just a week after the rising had begun.⁴⁵ The government's response was prompt. On 2 February a commission led by the earl of Wiltshire was sent into Kent with the task of dealing with the offences recently committed there, and so by the end of the first week of February proceedings were in progress at Greenwich and Canterbury to charge the ringleaders with treason. Cheyne was sent to Westminster to be judged and was subsequently hanged, drawn and quartered at Tyburn, west of the city walls.⁴⁶ His head was sent to London Bridge and his quarters were distributed between London, Norwich and two of the Cinque Ports; although not without some difficulty, since no one was willing for fear of their lives to take on themselves the job of transporting the dismembered corpse to its several destinations.⁴⁷ Such, evidently, was the general pitch of support felt for the uprising in the South-East.

Cheyne was apparently the only figure from the disturbances in eastern Kent to be executed. But during the brief period of his rising another man had been executed in the suburbs of London for his alleged intentions towards prominent courtiers. In the very last days of January, before Cheyne's rising had been quelled, there had been the threat of an uprising at Westminster led by a yeoman of the town, Nicholas Jakes, described by one contemporary author as a servant of one of the duke of Gloucester's squires, Bassingbourne.⁴⁸ Chroniclers describe Jakes as being executed for treasonable language, since^c_λ his conspiracy was detected before it could develop into action. A jury assembling on Friday 30 January presented that Jakes and others had been plotting to behead the bishop of Salisbury, lords Saye and Dudley and the abbot of Gloucester, and to take the government of the country upon themselves that very day. This plotting had, allegedly, gone on the previous day, 29 January, the day on which the impeached duke of Suffolk was committed to the Tower. Found guilty of these high ambitions, Jakes was hanged and quartered at Tyburn. His quarters were sent to Chichester, Rochester, Colchester and Portsmouth - this last not being a surprising choice.

It is possible that it was this very action which provoked the renewed disturbances which then broke out in Hampshire on 1 February. At Bishop's Waltham, nine and a half miles south-east of Winchester, an ex-soldier marshalled an army together appointing captains and officers, flying a red flag of defiance and threatening war against the king. According to later indictments these were the same troops as those which had recently turned upon

Adam Moleyns and murdered him.⁴⁹ It is this incident which is behind the cryptic statement in one chronicle, 'And in the same day [9 March] was broughte from Portesmouthe to London a man called Holand, a Sowdiour, for setting up of a baner at Portesmouthe'.⁵⁰

Although Cheyne and Jakes were both agitating during the last week of January there is no evidence to suggest that they were in collusion. It appears that Jakes and his men of Westminster were simply other subjects of the king experiencing in Middlesex the same bitter rancour against the king's advisers as was being felt by men in east Kent. Ferment was perhaps to be expected at Westminster at this time, moreover, since the second session of parliament had begun there on 22 January with the Commons seeking vengeance upon the duke of Suffolk.

III

The timing of the next outbreak of trouble in Kent following Cheyne's attempted rising was in response to a further, and, in this case, final, development in Suffolk's doings. The duke, evidently foreseeing a confrontation and under the strong impression that 'odious and horrible langage' about him had reached alarming proportions, used the very first day of the new session to ask the king if he could offer a statement to parliament. He was willing, he said, to answer whatever accusations might be made against him. The Commons for their part felt that the vigorous rumours going about concerning him were in themselves sufficient ground for having the duke arrested and put to law. The lords, however, rejected such reasoning and so prompted the Commons into a more formal series of

accusations presented on 28 January before the chancellor and a group of lords. It was of course the issue of the war on which they wanted to make him answerable. The duke they said was intending to aid their enemy France by surrendering Wallingford castle (of which he was constable) to Charles VII, a treasonable charge which had Suffolk placed in the Tower on 29 January.⁵¹ Two days later the long serving chancellor, Archbishop Stafford, resigned. He may have felt it proper that in a month which had seen the murder of the keeper of the privy seal and the arrest of Suffolk he, as their associate and part of their collapsing regime, should also go. Certainly in retrospect and probably at the time he was popularly regarded as corrupt, as one of those preventing freedom of speech to preachers and trying to circumscribe criticism of the court:

'Trowthe in no wise he wille not teche;
He is the devels sheparde'.⁵²

London and the southern counties were in a state of tension that February and March, so much so that further uprising was feared. On 14 February yet another man was arrested for treasonable language against the king, a William Raulyns of London, a woolpacker turned soldier.⁵³ As a soldier it is possible that he was either like those fomenting rebellion in Hampshire at the beginning of the month, a man cheated of employment, or perhaps he had recently returned from Normandy. The troops streaming back across the Channel were certainly heightening the unrest in the South-East, coming as they did 'in greet mysery and poverté' so that 'many of them drewe to theft and misrule and noyed sore the cominalte of þis land'.⁵⁴ They were an element likely to express

themselves forcibly about the government which had put them where they were.

On 20 February the king sent out an order to the sheriffs of London and Middlesex, Kent, Surrey and Sussex to make proclamation against the carrying of arms in their counties. Those going against the proclamation were to be arrested and imprisoned.⁵⁵

In the meantime the more Suffolk came under attack the better the populace were liking it. By late February or March the chanting in the streets seems to have become positively gleeful.

‘Now is tyme of Lent, the Fox is in the Towre;
Therefore sende hym Salesbury to be his confessoure,
Many mo ther bene, and we kowde hem knowe;
But wonne most begynne the daunce, and all come arowe’.⁵⁶

‘Fox’ here being, of course, Suffolk, and ‘Salesbury’ being Bishop Aiscough, the bishop of Salisbury, popularly regarded, as we have seen in the previous chapter, as one of the duke of Suffolk’s closest allies.

Contributing to the excitement of the people in the streets was the Commons’ decision in parliament to try to obtain Suffolk’s impeachment; they now saw their chance to have him dislodged from power. The Tailboys incident of the previous November ensured that they had the weight of Lord Cromwell’s encouragement behind them, and he may have helped to draw up the lists of charges made against his fellow royal councillor. With French raiding parties taking men for ransom from the Norfolk coast and disporting themselves on Caister Sands, parliament cast two groups of accusations against the duke on 7 February and 9 March to do with alleged treachery in negotiations with France and embezzlement of royal funds and the perversion of justice at home.⁵⁷ He had

plotted, they said, in July 1447 with the French for an invasion of England and the replacing of Henry VI by Suffolk's own son, John, whose queen was to be Margaret Beaufort, of royal descent; he had independently promised the delivery of Maine to the French without consultation with the other English ambassadors; he had revealed confidential matters of the council and of the English defences to the enemy; he had controlled the appointment of sheriffs for many years; he was responsible for great extortions and murders; owing to his great might homicides, rioters and notorious misdoers had been upheld in their flagrant disregard of the law. On the first group of charges, largely to do with Suffolk's foreign dealings, the king found no case against him. On the second group, recognizing the temper of the Commons, he exercised his prerogative to save his favoured minister and on 17 March declared him banished from his realms as from 1 May, imposing a five year exile upon him.⁵⁸

That evening as Suffolk fled the capital for his manor of Eastthorp in Suffolk a crowd of angry Londoners gave chase and managed to set upon some of his party, although the duke himself got clear.⁵⁹ East Anglia was in an unsettled way itself with the French worrying away at the Norfolk coast. Only the day before Suffolk's departure from London a commission had been appointed to set up watches and wards and erect beacons on the coasts there in tardy response to the situation.⁶⁰

There is no suggestion that Suffolk's disappearance from London defused the atmosphere there in any way. On 21 March, four days after he had quit the capital, a John Frammesley, or Ramsey, a London wine merchant, called by one chronicler 'an olde poure man' went about the streets of Dowgate ward chanting, 'By this toun, by

this toun, for this array the kyng shall lose his Croune'.⁶¹ For this his head joined Jakes' and Cheyne's on London Bridge, and just as Jakes' and likewise Cheyne's quarters had been used as warning messages to towns in Kent, Essex, Sussex, Hampshire and Norfolk, so Frammesley's own, dispatched to Winchester, Newbury, Coventry and Stamford, went out to quell possible disaffection in the cloth towns of central England.⁶²

It is a measure of the unusually menacing mood about in the south of England that parliament left Westminster on 30 March for Leicester, a centre of the king's hereditary lands. On his way northward Henry was met in Stony Stratford by a Yorkshire shipman who threshed the earth of the road before him with a flail, saying that this was how the duke of York should deal with the traitors. For this he was led off to Northampton castle, later to be hanged, drawn and quartered, Thomas Daniel taking charge of this matter.⁶³ That April the abandoned capital seethed dangerously with popular ferment. Church doors everywhere were posted with schedules and bills freely advertising opinions on the maladies of the realm, so much so that the sheriffs were asked to put a stop to it.⁶⁴

The fading of Suffolk's regime over the winter and spring of 1449-50 can be traced too in the movement of individual fortunes reflecting this realignment of political power. For example, Thomas Kemp, nephew of the archbishop of York, had been provided in 1448 to the see of London but remained unconsecrated probably because he lacked Suffolk's favour. However, with events proceeding as they were in parliament early in 1450, Kemp was given on 4 February licence to accept provision.⁶⁵ Likewise with Sir John Fastolf, disapproved of by



Suffolk, whose official employment increased quite suddenly from November 1449 onwards and through 1450. He even took up duties briefly as a royal councillor from April 1450 to January 1451,⁶⁶ whilst up in Essex he was able after three years of its forcible disseisin to retrieve his manor of Dedham in the spring of 1450 merely through the duke's political decline.⁶⁷ The Commons, too, were emboldened to petition at Leicester in the spring of 1450 for an Act of Resumption. They pointed out how deeply the king was in debt and asked him (albeit with a list of exemptions) to take back and resume all land and property which he had granted since the first day of his reign (1 September 1422). Henry ostensibly agreed to this but qualified his assent by reserving the right to add any provisos of exemptions he thought were necessary; so although this act was passed on 6 May 1450 it became in effect almost powerless owing to 186 provisos which Henry then appended to it before parliament was dissolved in early June. Nor would a copy of the act reach the exchequer until October of that year, so that the exchequer did not begin to send out writs to the sheriffs to order local inquiries concerning holders of crown lands until the spring of 1451.⁶⁸

The months of 1449 to the May of 1450, then, were exciting and disturbing ones. The slipping away of England's French possessions and the disarray of the country's important trade with the Low Countries was having lively repercussions at home. The Commons in parliament saw this as a time when the government should be made answerable for events abroad, and besides toppling Henry's chief minister, the duke of Suffolk, they had hopes of changing the outlay of the king's patronage. Moreover, the murder

of another chief minister, the bishop of Chichester, by troops, and abortive risings in southern England showed that the commons of the realm, too, were seeking to make their voice heard in events. But it was not until June 1450 that they found a proper mouthpiece in the form of a regional uprising.

1. For this paragraph see R. A. Griffiths, *Henry VI*, chapter 15.
2. As quoted by Griffiths, *Henry VI*, p.379.
3. *PPC*, 1443-61, pp.65-6.
4. E. Power and M. M. Postan, *Studies in English Trade in the Fifteenth Century* (London, 1933), p.27.
5. *Ibid.*, p.28.
6. *PPC*, 1443-61, pp.74-5.
7. For this incident: A. Bossuat, *Perrinet et Francois de Surienes, agents de l'Angleterre* (Paris, 1936), chapters X-XIII; M. G. A. Vale, *Charles VII* (London, 1974), pp.116-8; J. Ferguson, *English Diplomacy 1422-1461* (Oxford, 1972), pp.30-2.
8. Griffiths, *Henry VI*, pp.510-3; M. H. Keen, *England in the Later Middle Ages* (London, 1973), pp.401-3.
9. M. G. A. Vale, *Charles VII* (London, 1974), p.116.
10. C. T. Allmand, 'The Lancastrian Land Settlement in Normandy 1417-50', *Econ.H.R.*, 2nd ser., XXI (1968), p.479.
11. A. R. Bridbury, *England and the Salt trade in the Later Middle Ages* (Oxford, 1955), pp.76-8, 80-1, 90.
12. *PL* II, p.105.
13. E. Power and M. M. Postan, *Studies in English Trade in the Fifteenth Century* (London, 1933), p.129.
14. *Ibid.*, p.126.
15. Stevenson I, p.489. In May payment was made to Gervase Clifton and Alexander Eden for doing similar work, F. Devon (ed.), *Issues of the Exchequer* (Record Commission, 1837), p.463.
16. Power and Postan, p.128.
17. J. Ferguson, *English Diplomacy 1422-1461* (Oxford, 1972), pp.100-1. For a complaint by Hanse merchants concerning the undue levying of the subsidy at Sandwich, see C1/19/386.
18. Power and Postan, p.401.
19. A. R. Myers, 'A Parliamentary Debate of the mid-fifteenth century', *BJRL* XXII (1938) p.403.
20. *Rotuli Parliamentorum* V, pp.204-5.
21. R. Virgoe, 'The Parliamentary Subsidy of 1450', *BIHR* LV (1982), p.128.

- 22.Griffiths, *Henry VI*, p.380.
- 23.*Ibid.*, p.377.
- 24.W. and E. L. C. P. Hardy (eds.), *Recueil des croniques et anchiennes istories de la Grant Bretaigne par Jehan de Waurin V* (RS, 1891), p.126ff.
- 25.J. Stevenson (ed.), *Narratives of the expulsion of the English from Normandy 1449-1450* (RS, 1863), p.272.
- 26.Stevenson II, pt.II, pp.718-22; Griffiths, *Henry VI*, p.514.
- 27.CPR, 1446-52, pp.297-9, 316-7.
- 28.Griffiths, *Henry VI*, p.511.
- 29.J. Stevenson (ed.), *Narratives of the Expulsion of the English from Normandy 1449-50* (RS, 1863), pp.309-20.
- 30.R. Virgoe, 'The Parliamentary Subsidy of 1450', *BIHR* LV (1982), p.125.
- 31.See Griffiths, *Henry VI*, pp.286-8.
- 32.*Ibid.*, pp.580-1.
- 33.CPR, 1446-52, pp.317-8.
- 34.Griffiths, *Henry VI*, p.519.
- 35.Davies' *Chron.*, p.64.
- 36.Benet's *Chron.*, p.196.
- 37.Gregory's *Chron.*, p.189; Davies' *Chron.*, p.64.
- 38.In March 1450 a John Asteley, esq., who had gone down to Portsmouth with the bishop to ensure the safe conduct of the money, was rewarded for what had turned out to be such an uncongenial task with the not ungenerous sum of £6 13s. 4d., E403/778,m.13.
- 39.The main sources for Cheyne's rising are: KB27/755 rex side m.4; /756 rex side m.2; /786 rex side m.2v; /790 rex side m.1v, 45; KB9/263,mm.56, 57, 58; PPC, 1443-61, pp.107-9; C. L. Kingsford, 'An Historical Collection of the Fifteenth Century', *EHR* XXIX (1914), pp.513-5; Benet's *Chron.*, p.197. Other chroniclers make passing references to this rising as the rising of the hermit Bluebeard, servant of the queen of the fairies, although Bale identifies the leader as the queen of the fairies himself, Bale's *Chron.*, p.127. The *Great Chron.*, p.181 and *Brut*, p.516, would seem to place the rising out of its true sequence, identifying it as one of the protests against Suffolk's release from custody in March 1450.
- 40.KB27/755 rex side m.4; /756 rex side m.2; KB9/263,mm.56, 57, 58.

- 41.KB27/786 rex side m.2v; /790 rex side m.1v. The rebels name a chair of silver and gold worth £100 which they would have liked to have carried off. This is very likely to have been the chair given to the priory by Cardinal Beaufort in the late 1440s which had involved the cost of £12 in transporting it from Winchester to Canterbury, C. Eveleigh Woodruff, 'Notes on the Inner Life and Domestic Economy of the Priory of Christ Church, Canterbury, in the Fifteenth Century', *Arch. Cant.*, LIII (1940), p.9.
- 42.KB9/263,mm.56, 57, 58; KB27/755 rex side m.4.
- 43.*Ibid.*
- 44.CCR, 1427-1516, p.123. It is recorded in a cartulary in Bodleian Ms. Rawl. B 336 that St. Radegund's abbey at Bradsole was given land at Froxpole just outside the northern wall of the city of Canterbury at some date around 1230. I am most grateful to Margaret Sparks of Canterbury for this information: she and the late James Hobbs located and traced the history of this hospice which survives now only in the name of St. Radegund's street.
- 45.CCR, 1427-1516, p.123; *Benet's Chron.*, p.197; HMC IX (1883), p.140.
- 46.*Benet's Chron.*, p.197; C. L. Kingsford, 'An Historical Collection of the Fifteenth Century', *EHR*, XXIX (1914), pp.514-5.
- 47.PPC, 1443-61, pp.107-9; this evidence is confused as to whether Cheyne's head went to Canterbury or to London, first saying one, then the other. A chronicle source reports that Cheyne's head went to London Bridge, C. L. Kingsford, 'An Historical Collection of the Fifteenth Century', *EHR* XXIX (1914), pp.514-5.
- 48.KB27/755 rex side m.3; KB9/263,m.64; KB29/81 Hilary term m.12; HMC IX pt.1 (1883), p.140; Kingsford, *EHR* XXIX (1914), p.514. Jakes is probably the anonymous person alluded to as 'a man [who] was jugged and hanged and drawn for woordes that he said against the rule of the lordes', *Bale's Chron.*, p.128. Similarly in *Benet's Chron.*, p.197.
- 49.KB27/774 rex side m.29. (KB9/109,mm.16, 25, are poorly legible.)
- 50.Kingsford, *EHR* XXIX (1914), p.515.
- 51.*Rotuli Parliamentorum* V, p.177.
- 52.*Political Poems* II, p.231.
- 53.KB29/81 Hilary term m.12.
- 54.*Bale's Chron.*, p.128.
- 55.T. Rymer (ed.), *Foedera, Conventiones, Literae* . . . XI (London,1710), p.262.
- 56.*Political Poems* II, p.224.

57. *PL II*, p.136. *Rotuli Parliamentorum V*, pp.177-82.
58. *Rotuli Parliamentorum V*, p.183.
59. *Stevenson II*, p.767; *Bale's Chron.*, pp.128-9; *Benet's Chron.*, p.198; *Kingsford*, *EHR XXIX* (1914), p.515; *EHL*, p.344.
60. *CPR*, 1446-52, p.378.
61. *KB9/73, m.1*; *CPR*, 1446-52, p.320; *PPC*, 1443-61, pp.107-9; *Kingsford*, *EHR XXIX* (1914), p.515; *Bale's Chron.*, p.129.
62. *KB9/73, m.1*.
63. *EHL*, p.371.
64. *T. Rymer (ed.), Foedera, Conventiones, Literae . . . XI* (London, 1710), p.268.
65. *P. A. Johnson, 'The Political Career of Richard, duke of York, to 1456'* (Oxford D. Phil. thesis 1981), pp.131-2.
66. *A. R. Smith, 'Aspects of the Career of Sir John Fastolf (1380-1459)'* (Oxford D. Phil. thesis 1982), pp.120-2.
67. *Ibid.*, p.126.
68. *Rotuli Parliamentorum V*, pp.183-99; *B. P. Wolffe, 'Acts of Resumption in the Lancastrian parliaments, 1399-1456'*, *EHR LXXIII* (1958), pp.598-9, 601.

I

It was the circumstances of the duke of Suffolk's death, which occurred in the vicinity of Kent whilst he was travelling out of the country into exile, which caused such alarm in the county as to turn discontent into open action.¹

On 1 May the ship transporting Suffolk across the Channel from Ipswich was intercepted by a ship called the 'Nicholas of the Tower'. The unknown master of this ship had Suffolk taken aboard and, according to report, gave him some form of trial before having him beheaded the following day, 2 May, in a small boat in Dover Road.² The duke's head was stuck on a pole and his body was flung up the high strand with the pebbles on Dover Beach. Who masterminded the plot is unknown. It certainly occurred to some that the shipmen could have been acting at the instigation of one of Suffolk's influential enemies, and by the seventeenth century an edition of Stow would provide the intriguing information that the duke of Exeter owned the ship in question.³ By whoever's design, the action caused the frightening rumour to go about Kent that the king intended to take retribution by turning the county into a wild forest, a threat believed to have been made by the King's treasurer, Lord Saye, a former sheriff of Kent.⁴ This fear appears to have been the spark which set alight the already evident discontent in Kent and drew the county together into rebellion. What is more, the news of Suffolk's death was coming not long after news that the army which had eventually set off in March under Sir Thomas Kyriell had met a terrible defeat in battle at

Formigny north-west of Bayeux on 15 April where the French had used cannon fire against the English archers to devastating effect. The small force had set off with all the signs of being a half-hearted affair. Only one other knight, the traditional captains of English armies, could be troubled to accompany Kyriell, and insufficient numbers of men at arms could be found to bring up the proper ratio with archers.⁵ Rumour had it that 4,000 English had been lost in the fight.⁶ These men would have been seen as the victims of Suffolk's treacherous dealings with the French. The war was in effect drawing to a close in northern France. The French had recovered Normandy: their next move could well be over the Channel to England. On 21 April Queenborough on the Isle of Sheppey beside Kent's north coast had had to resist an enemy raid, and had only just succeeded in doing so.⁷

Rebellion was under way by at least the second half of May.⁸ From 18 May onwards (for many months to come as it turned out) no consistories were held in the diocese of Rochester because of the serious insurrection in Kent.⁹ It is perhaps no coincidence that it was on 18, 19, and 20 May that Rochester held its annual three day fair, attracting in crowds from all over Kent and beyond, and providing natural means for the fast distribution of news and opinions over a whole region. It is noteworthy that in the following year this privilege of holding a fair would be resumed by the Crown and the fair abolished.¹⁰ Other towns with fairs which fell during the period of the rebellion were, for example, Heathfield in Sussex on 15-17 June and Sevenoaks in Kent on 29 June.¹¹ Obviously, news of insurrection or the plotting of

insurgents could be disseminated in an informal way by traders and fairgoers, but just exactly how hundreds of men were marshalled in planned fashion from communities over a wide county is unknown. Nor is it known just where in the county the rising had its inception. There must have been a good deal of reading and riding: this was after all an age of growing literacy. Nearly every rebel leader of the period had his scribe or secretary and a messenger service. Thomas Cheyne, the leader of the rising in eastern Kent in January 1450 had had a scrivener amongst his supporters and had sent messengers about the county.¹² The rebels of May 1450 had at least one secretary, Henry Wilkhous, a notary from Dartford.¹³ William Petur, a notary from Strood, may well have been another such secretary. He was an associate of Wilkhous and would seek a pardon after the rebellion.¹⁴ Judging by the later pardons, the hundred and parish appear to have been the units of organisation of the rebels. Indeed, such hints of evidence as there are, suggest that the usual system of muster may have been the way in which the scribes and messengers mobilized the parishes, with parishioners summoned by the ringing of the bells and gathering in churches or churchyards to discuss what action to take.¹⁵ In the organization of a Sussex rising in the August of 1450 it is known that messengers sent from scribes went to various constables and instructed them to bring all the 'defencible' men within their jurisdiction to a given meeting point at a given day.¹⁶ In the rising of the spring of 1450 the rebels of different parishes - once they had decided to join the demonstration - may have then gathered at their local hundred meeting place.

Earlier in May Suffolk's body had been taken to St. Martin's, Dover, where masses had been said for the duke. Now late in May the corpse was carried in procession through eastern and northern Kent via Canterbury and Rochester, stopping at Canterbury on 22 May where a service in the cathedral brought in 40s. in offerings. But outside Canterbury the sight of the funeral cortege acted, contrary to all intention, as a catalyst to revolt in the areas through which it passed.¹⁷ Already satirical verses were going about making mock lamentation of Suffolk's death: 'For Jake Napes Sowle, *Placebo* and *Dirige*'.¹⁸

'Monkes, chanons, and prestis, with al ye clergy,
 prayeth for hym that he may com to blys,
 And that nevar such Anothar come aftar this!
 His interfectures blessid mot they be'.

The duke's mourners, singing here the service for the dead, formed a catalogue of those most despised men of his circle. It is a poem which shows a clear knowledge of who precisely were the most objectionable individuals at court. A clutch of bishops are named, including Hereford, Chester and Salisbury, and also certain courtiers such as Daniel, Trevilian, Hungerford, Say, Slegge, Hoo, Hampton and Tuddenham. The rhymer saw these men as now being at the end of their time of influence,

'*In memoria eterna,*' seyth Mayster Thomas Kent,
 now schall owre treson be cornicled for evar;
 patar nostar, seyde mayster Gerveyse,¹⁹ we be all
 shent,
 for so fals A company in england was nevar'.

So if there was fear going about Kent that May there was also a strong sense of rejoicing in Suffolk's death and the possibility it brought of a change for the better in 'this Ioyfull tyme'.

Such political poetry or doggerel as remains from this period is now a close gauge of how events were popularly viewed there and then. In some cases this can be detected month by month, since these unliterary productions came out in quick succession, soon to be superseded, and so the progress of the duke of Suffolk can be charted from the Tower to his funeral service. Whether or not they were an appeal to popular opinion rather than its expression it is hard to say.²⁰ Certainly this was a recognised way of moving opinion. Much of the rising of 1431 was, as we have seen, built upon a wide-reaching campaign of bill-sticking through the southern Midlands and West Country.²¹ It was a device used, too, more parochially in local differences. In 1424 William Aslak during the session of the county court at Norwich put about 'certeyns Engliche billes rymed in partye' threatening judge William Paston on gates around the city.²² All that can be said with much certainty for 1450 is that such rhymes about Suffolk and his circle would be on doors and windows around the South-East for passers-by to read and that some men and women may have been singing or dancing to these refrains.²³

The inflammatory preaching of friars, the popular itinerant preachers, had played its part in moving opinion before the outbreak of the Great Revolt of 1381 and other earlier risings. And it was to be heard again after 1450, as, for example, in August 1452 when a Dominican friar from Stamford allegedly excited his congregation in Boston to support the duke of York.²⁴ Whether such preaching affected the events of 1450 it is not easy to say. The royal pardon obtained by a Franciscan in May 1451 for his adherence to Cade,

however, suggests that preaching may have played some part in stirring the insurgents of 1450.²⁵

It seems likely that by early June insurgents would have been gathering themselves together, probably at hundred meeting places such as Somerden Green in Chiddingstone in the hundred of Somerden, Calehill Heath north-west of Ashford in the hundred of Calehill, and on Blackheath in the hundred of Blackheath in Kent's far north-western corner.²⁶ They had elected themselves a leader: Jack Cade was being designated as 'the Capitayne of the oste'.²⁷ Just who this Cade was is uncertain. At one stage the government believed him to be called John Mortimer which was one of the names he assumed - John Amendalle was another.²⁸ That they took the Mortimer connection seriously almost certainly means that during the course of the rising at least the king and his ministers chose to believe that the duke of York with his Mortimer ancestry (and since Gloucester's death the king's heir) was involved in some way in the revolt. And although the rebels themselves would explicitly deny it, a rumour did go about during the rising that the insurgents were intending to do away with Henry's favourites and with the king himself so that they might replace him with the duke of York.²⁹ Certainly the king and his advisers believed Cade to have come from Ireland, the home of some Mortimer lands and the country in which York was then posted as the king's lieutenant. Chroniclers shared this notion.³⁰ Speculation led to various tales circulating about Cade. One suggestion was that he was a physician, John Aylemere, married to a squire's daughter from Tandridge, Surrey, remembered as decking himself out in scarlet.³¹ There was another story that he was a sorcerer of the black arts, capable of

summoning up the Devil in animal guise, and that during 1449, whilst living in Sussex in the household of Sir Thomas Dacre, he had murdered a pregnant woman and had had to flee the country. To top it all, he was also alleged to be an ex-partisan of the French.³² At least a portion of this may have been true. At any rate, between December 1448 and December 1449 a John Cade, yeoman, of Hurstpierpoint in mid-Sussex, did abjure the realm, the escheator for Surrey and Sussex taking 20s. from the profits of Cade's horse, gown and bed.³³ The manor of Hurstpierpoint was held at this date by Sir Thomas Dacre.³⁴ He was son of Lord Dacre of the North but he himself made his links among the most prominent families of the South-East. Indeed, his son-in-law was the very Sir Richard Fiennes, future first Lord Dacre of the South, whose uncle was the notorious Lord Saye and whose cousin's husband was William Crowmer, sheriff of Kent in 1450.³⁵ From this it seems reasonable to infer that if the Hurstpierpoint Cade was the rebel captain he received no backing or support from Sir Thomas after he had fled his employ in 1449.

Kent did not rise that late spring of 1450 with one accord. When on 8 June Cade advanced on the western suburbs of Canterbury, with what one citizen there at the time estimated to be a host of 4,000 men; they waited three hours in the great field which then existed between St. Michael's Harbledown and St. Dunstan's in the hope of some positive response from the city. Finally they gave up and took the road to London.³⁶ Warily towns near the coast, Lydd, Rye and Romney, sent out lookouts on horseback to Ashford and Appleford to report back on the progress of the captain and

his army.³⁷ Cade was sending out written appeals for support, but places such as these held back from giving him their whole-hearted backing, although quite possibly in these three mentioned instances the reason may have been the quite legitimate one of fear of French attack. After all, Winchelsea not far away on the Sussex coast had been attacked by the French the previous year.³⁸

Insurgents from different parts of Kent were moving in separate groups. On the day that men from eastern Kent were gathered outside Canterbury, men from districts nearer London had already reached Middlesex. At Westminster John Sawyer, a fruiterer alias yeoman from St. Mary Cray in north-western Kent, led a gang in an attack on a royal servant, Thomas Walter, and carried him off hostage to Staines and then through the woods and villages of Middlesex for the next six days until he paid a ransom of £10.³⁹ During this time the whole county must have been buzzing with rumours about the size of Cade's advancing army.

The grievances and fears behind the uprising were drawn up into written bills of complaint at varying stages of the revolt: three different petitions from the rising remain today. The bill with the most strongly Kentish concerns may date from the earlier stages of events, its purpose being to galvanize the men of Kent into action. Not only were the compilers of this bill disturbed about the rumour that Kent should be destroyed by royal power and made into a wild forest, but they wanted something done about the inconvenience and nuisance caused to the tax collectors in Kent by the requirement that they sue out writs of exemption for the barons of the Cinque Ports, (the Cinque Ports having to provide properly manned vessels were exempt from subsidies but the people of Kent

thought that the ports should claim such exemption at their own cost). Another issue was the way in which the officials of the court of Dover outstepped their jurisdiction; others, the rigging of the elections of the knights of the shire in Kent and the need for the holding of the sessions of the peace in two separate ends of the county so as to save the inordinately long journeys some men were obliged at present to make.⁴⁰ Alongside these county issues they were complaining that the king should restore to himself the Crown revenues he had granted away, that his natural councillors among the aristocracy should be restored to their proper ascendancy in the king's council, and that enquiry should be made throughout the land to find out who the traitors were who caused the French possessions to be lost so that they might be punished without pardon. The remaining complaints concerned the extortions and grave abuses of office of royal household men and their colleagues holding positions in the county administration. Such grievances were comprehensive enough in scope to affect at some level every man and woman in the county.

News of serious trouble in Kent was sent up to Leicester where parliament was in session. On 6 June parliament was adjourned, the Commons having granted a subsidy on income in a much delayed response to the Crown's financial needs.⁴¹ On the day of the adjournment the duke of Buckingham and the earls of Oxford, Devon and Arundel were commissioned by the king to go 'against the traitors and rebels in Kent and to punish and arrest the same'.⁴² Soon afterwards the king himself set off southwards for London and four days later was in Buckinghamshire at Newport Pagnell

where he strengthened the force moving against the rebels by commissioning Viscount Beaumont and Lords Lovel, Scales, Rivers and Dudley to share in the task.⁴³

This commission came too late to nip the rising in the bud. Kentishmen were already well on the road to London and by 11 June they were encamped on Blackheath, a fine natural vantage point south of the river looking down at the capital.⁴⁴ There they secured their site with stakes and ditches and Cade sent a written order to the Italian merchants in London to supply him with certain specified quantities of arms and money; if they failed him in this, he added, they would forfeit their heads.⁴⁵ Whether rebels from eastern Surrey and Sussex were here at this encampment it is not possible to say.⁴⁶ We have a vivid picture of a visit made to the rebel army recorded in a letter written in 1465 to John Paston by John Payn in which he recalls what was a very perilous escapade made at his master Sir John Fastolf's instruction. Payn had been told to take a man and two of Fastolf's best horses to go to the commons and obtain a copy of their articles of petition.⁴⁷ His report conveys the impression of a force marshalled and disciplined in military manner, but edgy and aggressive. Straightaway upon his arrival there he was apprehended in a manner such as to make him decide to dismiss his companion and both their horses for their better safety. As an unknown intruder he was led before Cade the captain of the host and when it was spotted that he was one of Fastolf's men he was taken to the four parts of the field led by a herald of the duke of Exeter still in his livery, (who appears to have been pressed into the rebels' service), and announced as a spy, out to assess their manpower and

weaponry. Payn as a servant of Fastolf, whom the rebel host regarded as responsible in part for the loss of Maine and Normandy and who had, moreover, incurred the hostility of the host's warrior-hero, Lord Talbot, was, in the light of this connection, declared a traitor. He would have been executed there and then had not Robert Poynings, sword bearer and carver to Cade, with other of Payn's friends, argued against it.

The petition which Payn took away is very likely to have been the same copy as that which still exists among the manuscripts of Magdalen College, Oxford.⁴⁸ By now the concern of the rising was with wider than merely Kentish troubles: the rebels were seeking to attract support from the whole of the South-East and perhaps too from highly placed men. So this petition was couched in the language of petitioners and reasonable men, not rebels. Its concerns were with the relationship of the king to his commons and the manner in which this relationship had been destroyed by the circle of 'false traytours'. Traitors who should have suffered from the recent act of resumption but had not done so; who had prevented access to the king's presence except by the use of bribes; and who had corrupted the law to their own profit, falsely declaring innocent men traitors just in order to take their forfeited goods. Couldn't the king see how he was suffering from this false counsel?

'For his lordez ern lost, his marchundize is lost, his comyns destroyed, the see is lost, ffraunse his lost, hymself so pore that he may not [pay] for his mete nor drynk; he oweth more than evur dyd kynge in Ingland'.⁴⁹

Londoners were unhappily placed during these developments of the second week of June. They had as much to fear from the royalist

nobles and their armed retainers as from the rebels marching upon them from the south.⁵⁰ The Common Council of the city took various precautions: the gates of the city were to be fortified and to be guarded twenty four hours a day; the armed retainers of the nobles were to be admitted to the city only on specific errands and were not to be quartered there; and armourers were not to sell their goods outside the city.⁵¹ The reason for this last injunction was obvious, and indeed two days after it on 10 June the Court of Aldermen heard that men had been seen travelling by barge downriver towards Gravesend with bundles of arms, no doubt to supply the insurgents.⁵² Londoners could also fear the outbreak of mob violence within their own walls. As far as is known the civic community was not troubled by extreme divisions within itself but hatred of Suffolk and what he represented had been as widespread here as elsewhere.

The first sign of the king's return to the vicinity of London was the arrival of the duke of Buckingham and Lord Rivers with a large armed company, and by 13 June Henry was staying at St. John's Priory, Clerkenwell.⁵³ This was the day on which the Court of Aldermen appointed a London merchant and a common councilman to act as captains of two barges which the city had provided in order to make sure that food supplies got through to London and also defended the city by water against the rebels and their craft.⁵⁴ On 15 June the king sent messengers over the river to Blackheath to order the Kentishmen to disband. Later the same day the earl of Northumberland, Lord Scales and Lord Lisle rode over to the heath with an armed company, perhaps with the idea of forcibly

dispersing the Kentishmen. It may well be that seeing the size of the rebel camp they decided not to act without reinforcements to their numbers. The king had thought to go himself the following day accompanied by magnates and an armed force to see the rebels off (perhaps he had in mind the stories of how the young Richard II had courageously ridden out to meet the rebellious peasantry in 1381), but he was persuaded to adopt another plan. Instead, a prestigious delegation was sent, several of whose major members could be regarded as interested parties to the well-being of the county of Kent: the archbishops of Canterbury and York, the duke of Buckingham, the bishop of Winchester and Viscount Beaumont. Archbishop Stafford was the county's largest landowner; Cardinal Kemp, himself born at Wye in Kent, was a former bishop of Rochester, of Chichester and of London; Buckingham was another important landowner in Kent; the bishop of Winchester came from a near neighbouring diocese, and Viscount Beaumont was the constable of England.⁵⁵ Their mission, apparently, was to persuade Cade of the wisdom of withdrawing all his men from the heath and returning home with a royal pardon. In this they failed, but they were able to discover more about the insurgents' real motives for their action, and they returned to the king with a bill of petition from them.

The petition which the royal delegation took away may well have been the third of the three extant versions of the 'rebels' petitions, entitled 'These ben þe desires of the trewe comyns of your soueraign lord þe Kyng'.⁵⁶ The brevity of this document gives it an urgency greater than that of the two earlier petitions which may have gone out to make converts and which had had a more

discursive tone. First the captain assured Henry of his concern for his welfare and the welfare of all his true lords spiritual and temporal, and then went on to suggest that Henry take back all his demesnes so that he might reign like a 'Kyng Riall'. The king's true commons also asked that he might rid himself of all the false progeny and affinity of the duke of Suffolk 'the whiche ben opynly knowyn traitours' and that he should punish them. In their place he should bring the dukes of York, Exeter, Buckingham and Norfolk. The commons desired, too, the punishment of the murderers of the duke of Gloucester and of those who had contrived and imagined the deaths of the duke of Exeter, of the bishop of Winchester, the duke of Somerset and the duke of Warwick (the suggestion here that these last four deaths might have been sought after is extraordinary). The same traitors who perpetrated these crimes were also responsible for the loss of France, that is to say, Normandy, Gascony, Guienne, Anjou and Maine). The commons of Kent here again made mention of their particular grievance of the abuse by county officials of the writs sealed under the green wax of the exchequer. And the document ended with three other Kentish grievances: purveyance, the troublesome statute of labourers, and Kent's 'grete extorcioners', named here as Slegge, Crowmer, Isle and East.

Henry's response was to go in force against the Kentishmen. On the morning of Thursday 18 June he arrived at Blackheath from Clerkenwell with an impressive array of military strength which included, besides numerous lords and their retainers, carts of guns for firing lead and stone.⁵⁷ He found the heath empty. Cade and his

men, who had had no positive response to their petition and who had perhaps heard word of the king's intention to go against them with arms, had gone away in the darkness of the previous night.⁵⁸ There was little point in the king and his large force chasing a disbanding party of rebels, so as the king moved down to Greenwich a smaller posse was sent into Kent to see them off led by Sir Humphrey and William Stafford. As it happened Sir Humphrey was no friend of Suffolk himself, having suffered from his associates.⁵⁹ It would appear that they took on this task too lightly and did not expect any offensive from this retreating army, because when later that same day they encountered some of the rebels near Sevenoaks (perhaps Cade's men had been making for Lord Saye's seat at Knole) both the Staffords and some 40 of their men were killed in an ensuing fight.⁶⁰

On the same day, 18 June, as jurors alleged the following autumn, lords Dudley and Rivers, Sir Thomas Stanley and Thomas Daniel rode into north-western Kent with a force said to number over 2,000, alluded to later by local Kentishmen as 'the Chessher men'.⁶¹ They first headed to the south of the main Deptford-Dartford road to Foots Cray and then to St. Mary Cray where they stole 18 horses; then they turned south down the Darent valley in the general direction of Sevenoaks, stopping at Eynsford to beat up badly and rob at least one individual and going a few more miles further south to the archbishop of Canterbury's park at Otford where they took 16 horses. Not much further along their route they came to Chipstead where they stole silver spoons and linen sheets from one man, merchandise of saffron, pepper and spices from another, and cash from them both.⁶² The following day they were at Sevenoaks

robbing and intimidating there, and on 20 June at Tonbridge.⁶³ This episode with its rapacious violence throws extraordinary light on the king's adherents. Their intention was apparently mere indiscriminate terrorization. After the events of these few days the aspect of the rising changed. They appear to have given a new resolve to the men of Kent and emboldened others to rally to them. It may well have been at this point that the men of Essex, East Surrey and East Sussex began to join the rising.⁶⁴

Another even more important development of these few days was that on Friday 19 June some of the retainers of the king and of his lords quartered at Blackheath began to agree among themselves that Cade had a genuine cause, and to threaten that unless the king did execution upon the 'traitors' about him they themselves would go over to Cade's side. They named among these traitors Lord Saye, the bishop of Salisbury, Lord Dudley, the abbot of Gloucester, Thomas Daniel and John Trevilian. This was the grim news that the duke of Buckingham took to the king at Greenwich.⁶⁵ Clearly he could not rely on the assembled forces to support him. Henry was left with little choice: he had the duke of Exeter detain James Fiennes, Lord Saye, the lord treasurer and until recently the king's chamberlain, and place him in the Tower, probably privately viewing this ostensibly concessionary gesture as a measure to preserve his minister. Moreover he made proclamation that all traitors should be taken wherever they might be found. So it was as well for Thomas Daniel that he was away from the capital in Kent in the company of an armed troop. Yet the king was not abandoning his friends; on 20 June he went over the river from Greenwich back to Westminster

and that night summoned Saye in secret from his confinement. His intention was in all likelihood to provide him with some means of escape, but the duke of Exeter as constable of the Tower would not co-operate with the king and refused to release his prisoner.⁶⁶

The events of the last few days were revealing to Henry uncertain loyalties in unexpected places, and by 23 June the decision appears to have been taken that he should leave London again.⁶⁷ It had been decided, much to the discomfiture of the mayor and aldermen, to garrison the Tower well and to let the city look to its own devices in the event of any trouble from insurgents.⁶⁸ Meanwhile as Henry was retreating from his capital, so across the Channel the English surrendered possession of Caen on 24 June, continuing a line of defeats which all spectators could see had not much longer to run. The king left London on 25 June, going first to Berkhamsted castle in Hertfordshire and from there to Kenilworth in Warwickshire, a hundred miles or so from London, the safest hereditary castle of his family.⁶⁹ With him went courtiers, lords, justices and government personnel. This action naturally aroused considerable dismay and rancour amongst the citizens of London: the atmosphere in the capital was one of great apprehension.⁷⁰ In such circumstances they had every reason to fear that the men of Kent would re-assemble and take the road back to London. This was just what occurred. On 27 June the Common Council was sending out spies to discover which route Cade was taking, and these returned to report that he was coming straight towards the city. London Bridge, the only bridge crossing of the Thames to the city, and therefore a main route for traffic and trade, was drawn up. It was not to resume its normal operation

until the second half of July.⁷¹

Troubles were arising in other parts of the south of England. On 29 June William Aiscough, bishop of Salisbury, was murdered by rebels at Edington in Wiltshire as he fled London. It was probably on this day that Cade and his men began arriving back on Blackheath.⁷² They came as a military force: later that summer a royal writ to the exchequer would allude to Cade as having made insurrection 'with gret Power of Men of Armes and Archiers Arraised'.⁷³ They came, at least some of them, on horseback.⁷⁴ Cade may have been the captain in chief of this host, but he created other captains to order the ranks of his men. One such under-captain may have been Michael Skellys, a leech or treacler from Scarborough - that is, if we are to believe him when in 1453 at Norwich, arrested and brought before an alderman and a JP, he boasted that he had been an under-captain to John Cade on Blackheath.⁷⁵ Of Cade he claimed, 'Y was of his counsell and knewe his secretnes'. If this was the case, Cade tolerated men of dubious reputation among his henchmen. Skellys had been imprisoned in Winchester gaol in 1447 on charges of thefts committed at Beverley in Yorkshire the previous year.⁷⁶

It may have been during this second encampment on the heath that the town of Lydd on the Kent coast sent an entire porpoise up to Cade. This was a highly complimentary gesture. Porpoise - this one almost the value of a brace of swans - was the food of aristocrats, something which in certain parts of the country lords chose to reserve to themselves among their demesne possessions.⁷⁷ Later in the 1450s Rye would present Lord Fauconberg with porpoise,

although he was apportioned only a piece of this delicacy.⁷⁸

In London further precautions were being taken against the host's imminent attempt at entry. Four citizens were chosen in every ward to help their aldermen. These aldermen were now empowered to inflict summary punishment upon anyone who did not do their share in the vigil rota, and it was arranged that men from wards in the inner part of the city should help relieve those outer wards which were burdened with the responsibility of guarding the city gates.⁷⁹ South of the river in Southwark John Fastolf had garrisoned his property with former soldiers out of Normandy and stocked it with weapons in readiness for Cade's advance.⁸⁰

On 1 or 2 July, as the duke of Somerset was taking his leave of Normandy and setting sail for Calais, Cade led his men down into closer proximity to the city and into more congenial accommodation at Southwark. There they took up lodgings in inns and hostelries and quite possibly in private houses too.⁸¹ Cade took up his lodgings in the tavern of the White Hart.⁸² The mayor was refusing to permit him or any of his men into London, and not without reason.⁸³ John Payn believed that had he not gone before Cade the commons would have burned down Fastolf's house. Fastolf himself had fled to the Tower. Even so Payn suffered the despoiling of his own gown and brigandine.⁸⁴

It was probably after the revolt of the retainers in London on 19 June, which had led to the arrest of Lord Saye, and amongst growing signs of government inability to handle the situation, that Cade had sent messengers into Essex to widen the area of his support. On Friday 26 June, the day after the king had retreated from London, there had come the first show of response from

Colchester with a rising in the town, orchestrated by a certain John Gibbes, gentleman, sent down by Cade for that purpose - or so it would be alleged a couple of years later in 1453.⁸⁵ Gibbes, it would be said, had remained in the town for several days, doubtless arguing the rebels' cause to the inhabitants and infecting them with his enthusiasm. Since the second uprising at Colchester was on 1 July, five days after the initial demonstration, it seems possible that Gibbes was instructed to wait until Cade's army had reached the southern outskirts of London before setting off.⁸⁶ There were, too, other Essex men already gathered on the eastern outskirts of London at Mile End. For villages throughout southern and central Essex were now afoot: this was the alarming news which John Hillesdon, a yeoman of the Crown, had taken to the king at Berkhamsted before Henry had left there on 1 July for Kenilworth, and which had caused the king to employ him as a spy to live in London and keep an eye on what was going on in Essex.⁸⁷ So, as Cade had entered Southwark, Essex men had been coming into the eastern suburbs of London and pitching camp on the field at Mile End.⁸⁸ It would be these Essex men, from parishes such as East Ham, Barking, Dagenham and Brentwood, similarly roused by Cade's lieutenants,⁸⁹ whom the Colchester group set out to join.⁹⁰ Numbers snowballed as the body of Essex insurgents passed through settlements on the main road to London. On 2 July they were joined by men from the parish of St. Mary Matfelon outside Aldgate, one of the cloth manufacturing districts of London and a place of somewhat insalubrious reputation.⁹¹

In the meantime south of the city walls Cade was finding

difficulties in keeping order among so many men and holding to the ostensible purpose of the rising - that of petition and reform. On 30 June he had had one of his under-captains, Parys, executed at Blackheath for disciplinary reasons.⁹² To emphasize that theirs was a demonstration of loyal subjects Cade proclaimed his ordinances in the name of the king.⁹³ Yet even on the very day on which he was executing Parys for breaking one of these ordinances some of his followers were down in Southwark on the look-out for plunder. Ralph Harries, a London skinner, with a gang of some 40 others attacked and took captive a man there whom they accused of being a servant of Lord Saye and therefore regarded as necessarily a traitor.⁹⁴ They held him to ransom for a sizeable £20. On the same day Lawrence Hope, a yeoman from Molasshe in Kent, and another gang robbed a Southwark man (of no obvious significance) of two horses worth 100s. and a bag of money.⁹⁵

On 3 July with London almost in a state of siege, flanked to the south by Cade's army in Southwark and to the east by his followers recently arrived out of Essex, a county now engendering its own captains, a commission of oyer and terminer got under way at the Guildhall.⁹⁶ The commission had been appointed by Henry on 1 July to examine all treasons, felonies and insurrections in London and the suburbs and was presumably intended by him to be a conciliatory gesture to help the authorities left with the task of keeping order in the city.⁹⁷ It turned out to be rather different in nature than that, however, since in the afternoon of that same day on which proceedings began something went amiss with the city defences on the bridge. After some fighting, Cade cut the ropes of the drawbridge on the bridge's southern end so that it might not

be drawn up again and accepted the keys of the gate which blocked his path beyond the drawbridge, having first threatened to fire the whole bridge (which would have meant the city too). He was then free to lead his men across into the city.⁹⁸ At St. Magnus' church and at Leadenhall he proclaimed that the punishment for anyone found robbing in the city would be death.⁹⁹ Cade had had problems disciplining his followers earlier, as has been seen, but now the success of having forced their way into the city intoxicated them, and they entered, as one London chronicler later observed, as men half out of their wits.¹⁰⁰ They turned upon the house of alderman Malpas, the 'Green Gate' in Lime Street,¹⁰¹ and despoiled it, carrying off quantities of valuables, household goods and merchandise such as woollen cloth, tin, wood, madder and alum.¹⁰² The name is known of at least one of these looters, a Thomas Walker, a soldier who had recently come out of Normandy. He came out onto the street his arms full of cloth and three silver dishes only to have them stolen in turn from the woman to whom he gave them for safe-keeping.¹⁰³ Philip Malpas was an unpopular figure. He had been at one time sheriff and MP for London, but on 26 June he had been demoted from his office as alderman of Lime Street ward, a position he held by virtue of a royal command which had overridden the court of aldermen's rejection of him.¹⁰⁴

Cade retired over the bridge back to his lodgings for the night, but in the morning of Saturday 4 July he was in the city again. Through the influence of his presence and that of his followers the Guildhall sessions turned into a commission to indict and condemn traitors and extortioners. Some of the eleven judges

named in the commission of 1 July had made themselves scarce upon the entry of the rebel army, but Thomas, Lord Scales, Thomas Charlton the mayor and six other justices remained to preside over the proceedings. Amongst those indicted in their absence were Thomas Kent, clerk to the Council, the under-constable of England and also the acting keeper of the privy seal after Moleyns' death until 1 February, when Andrew Holes took over.¹⁰⁵ Another was Edward Grimston, treasurer of the chamber and keeper of the king's jewels. Both of these men were accused of having plotted in London in the parish of St. Sepulchre on 20 July 1447 to overthrow the king and replace him by John, son of the duke of Suffolk, to whom they had planned to marry Margaret, daughter of the duke of Somerset. This was the repetition of a charge which had been levelled against the duke of Suffolk.¹⁰⁶ Mention was also made in the indictments of the way in which the duke of Suffolk and 'several other enemies and traitors of the king' had accepted from the king goods, castles, lordships, manors and other commodities pertaining to the Crown and had sought to expel Henry from his realm of England and France. Others indicted at this hearing, and they may have totalled up to ten persons, were John Say, John Trevilian and Thomas Daniel, the notorious courtiers described in chapter two above.¹⁰⁷ These men were not on hand to receive their allotted punishment, but Lord Saye, the treasurer, was. He was brought out of the Tower, where Henry had sent him 15 days previously, (perhaps Lord Scales felt unequal to the outcry of the mob if he failed to release his prisoner), and taken to the Guildhall. There he was charged with various treasons including being party to the death of the duke of Gloucester. Then he was taken to the Standard in the

Cheap and beheaded.¹⁰⁸ Saye met with this act of vengeance not merely as a treasurer to a corrupt and incompetent regime and as one of Suffolk's allies, but also as a previous sheriff of Kent and constable of Dover castle. Also to be executed that day was another figure of public odium among the men of Kent: William Crowmer, sheriff of Kent that year and son-in-law to Lord Saye. During the morning, whilst the session was in progress at the Guildhall, Cade had ridden at the head of his foot army across the bridge from Southwark bedecked in improvised regalia, stripped from one of the slain Staffords, of a blue velvet coat furred with sable, a drawn sword in his hand and another sword borne before him like an aristocrat. He progressed to St. Paul's before returning to Southwark.¹⁰⁹

In the afternoon Cade again rode into the city, drank at a tavern in the Cheap, then moved on towards the east of the city, first collecting Crowmer from the Fleet prison. How Crowmer found himself there is unknown. He was taken outside the city walls to the men at Mile End where Cade had him beheaded.¹¹⁰ On his return into London Cade waited at the Standard in the Cheap where Lord Saye was brought from the Guildhall and there saw him not only beheaded but despoiled and publicly degraded by having his naked corpse dragged by a horse through the streets.¹¹¹

Hawarden, a common thief and murderer who had lived for a long while in the shelter of the sanctuary of St. Martin le Grand, also fell victim to this general purging and was beheaded that day.¹¹² Another victim was William Bailly who was executed along with Crowmer at Mile End, presumably as a measure to satisfy the

Essex followers.¹¹³ Who he was is unknown, but he was evidently of significance to the men gathered at Mile End. This was the case with the man executed the following day under Cade's auspices. There had been looting and violence in Colchester before the rebels took the road to Mile End. Their main victim had been Thomas Mayn, servant of John Hampton, an unpopular royal official who since 1447 had enjoyed the profits of the office of constable of Colchester castle.¹¹⁴ The rebels had stolen goods and written deeds from Hampton and carried Mayn off to their leader in Southwark where Cade now, on Sunday 5 July, gave his assent to Mayn's execution.¹¹⁵

Alongside these killings in London a deal of further looting went on. A certain John Gest, a citizen and gentleman of London, whom Cade regarded as a traitor and extortioner, entertained Cade to a meal, doubtless in the hope of averting Malpas' fate, but he too was plundered.¹¹⁶ At the house of John Judde a gang of Cade's men threatened his wife that unless she paid them a ransom 'they should leave no peny worth good in the house', so she was forced to a fine in order that her house should not be despoiled. Judde was picked on as an act of revenge because he and Richard Horne had been sent out of London with barges to ensure the city's food supply and defence.¹¹⁷ Main mover behind the attacks on Judde and Horne was a Lawrence Stockwood, a London salter, who called them traitors and incited others to do the same and declared that they should hang. Stockwood was created an 'alderman' by Cade, and he with Simon Shipton, John Billyngdon, John Frenssh and Henry Capron were identified as captains among the rebel host during this misrule in London. They were described as 'the greatest

rulers that were about the traitour John Cade in ransoming of their neighbours'.¹¹⁸ Another Horne, alderman Robert Horne, a target of the rebels probably on account of his resistance to their entry into the city in his capacity as alderman of Bridge ward, had also to reach into his purse to evade the anger of the mob.¹¹⁹

Looting by Cade's men was not confined to the city alone. On 4 July a gang whose composition suggests that Cade's followers from the different counties were mixing well among themselves, took the initiative, or perhaps were instructed, to strike southwards from Southwark further into Surrey instead of going with the main numbers into London. The gang comprised a husbandman from Goodhurst and a parish clerk from Cranbrook, both in Kent, a yeoman from Fulscot in Berkshire and another yeoman from Walden in Essex.¹²⁰ They made their way to Beddington, just north of Croydon, where they broke into and robbed the house of Nicholas Carew, a Surrey JP, three times sheriff of Surrey and Sussex during the 1440s, the last of these terms being 1448-9, and a man of close connections with the Fiennes family.¹²¹

By Sunday 5 July Cade's men had been loose in the city for two days, during which time there had been uncontrolled pillaging and the execution of at least five men there and in the suburbs. Not surprisingly there was now a body of citizens who wanted Cade and his men out, a body which may have exceeded in size the large number who had not wanted him in in the first place.¹²² The obvious thing to do was to wait until the rebels were in their Southwark lodgings for the night, attack those of Cade's men who were holding the bridge and then bar the bridge against

their re-entry. Cade, however, got wind of this development and mustered all his men late that evening in Southwark calling them to make an armed assault on the city because he had heard that the mayor and aldermen were trying to lock them out.¹²³ To swell the ranks of his attacking force he opened the Marshalsea prison in Southwark so that its inmates might assist him.¹²⁴ An armed confrontation was more or less inevitable with Cade's men massed on the Southwark bank and the Londoners and royal troops from the Tower led by Lord Scales, the veteran royal captain Matthew Gough, and several aldermen, gathered on the bridge.

Fighting began some time around 9 o'clock in the evening and did not end until daybreak.¹²⁵ The battle was perhaps a surprisingly long drawn out affair considering how well stocked the Tower had been with rebawkins, serpentines, stones, lead, bows, arrows and other arms upon Henry's withdrawal from London, and which ordnance was now put to use.¹²⁶ The Londoners had got as far as closing the gates of the bridge but they could not keep Cade's men off its southernmost section. Failing to force his way forward across the bridge, Cade eventually set this drawbridge section of it alight. It had been a hard fought struggle, however, before this happened. As the sun rose over the Thames that Monday morning the bridge must have been a dismal sight, charred and smoking with dead bodies strewn about it and floating in the river below. We know no names or precise numbers of those who died among Cade's ranks, but among the several hundred casualties there were from the Londoners' side an alderman, John Sutton, and also Matthew Gough, the celebrated soldier so feared and hated among the French that he had been burnt in effigy by the local inhabitants

as he had left Perche in 1449.¹²⁷ For many Londoners the main memory of the rising must have been of its pillaging and slaughter. One London note of the revolt, jotted as marginalia at the top of a document, records only the horrible conflict of the rebels and the beheading of Lord Saye and of Crowmer, the plundering of Alderman Malpas and the killing of Matthew Gough, Alderman John Sutton, and William and Humphrey Stafford (although these last two had been killed, of course, out near Sevenoaks).¹²⁸

In the morning after the battle a truce of a few hours' duration was agreed upon with either side promising to keep to their respective sides of the bridge. This time was used by the representatives of the government still in the capital to negotiate with the insurgents about a general withdrawal. It was a matter of importance to the city and to the government authorities to make full use of the opportunity since the movement still had plenty of life left in it. That very day followers of Cade in Essex were making some sort of demonstration out in Blackmore, south-west of Chelmsford, rousing more men to rise up and support Cade's followers at Mile End.¹²⁹ There were too still rumblings of support for Cade in Suffolk.¹³⁰

The outcome of the negotiations held in St. Margaret's church, Southwark, between Cade and the archbishops of Canterbury and York and the bishop of Winchester was that on that day and on the following day, Tuesday 7 July, a general pardon was offered to Cade and his followers without payment.¹³¹ The pardon extended to all transgressions committed prior to 8 July 1450 and guaranteed that anyone holding such a pardon would go unmolested by the king's

justices, escheators, sheriffs, coroners or bailiffs.¹³² Cade was enrolled under the date of 6 July on the pardon roll begun that day. This roll, over the following day, ran to many hundreds of names. Cade was named as John Mortimer whom, the pardon stated, was granted a general pardon at the request of the queen.¹³³ The public disclosure shortly afterwards that this was not his true name led to the pardon being declared invalid.¹³⁴ And indeed, Cade acted as a man who did not trust his pardon. With a small band of followers and a good portion of booty he made off for northern Kent.

On 9 July, with his army of supporters now straggling home in a not always well-conducted fashion along the roads into Surrey,¹³⁵ Sussex, Kent and Essex, Cade passed through Dartford en route to Rochester, from where, perhaps hoping for a strong position from which to hold out, he made an attack on Queenborough castle.¹³⁶ This attempt of Cade's failed, whilst earning the castle's captain, Sir Roger Chamberlain, a reward for his successful defence of it. He would also be rewarded for the capture of some of Cade's henchmen, one of whom went by the name of 'the Captain's butcher'.¹³⁷ But Cade was conspicuously still on the offensive. Since 7 July a hard core of his followers who had refused to disperse quietly had been agitating at Blackheath, Rochester and near Gravesend at Singlewell where Robert Poynings made some kind of demonstration on 9 July.¹³⁸ On 10 July a Faversham soapmaker, Robert Spenser, was one of the main figures in a demonstration of support for Cade which took place at Rochester. He was later hanged and quartered for this action.¹³⁹ That day the exchequer issued a writ declaring Cade to be a traitor who 'laboureth now

of newe to assemble the Kings people againe', putting a reward of 1,000 marks on his head and broadcasting tales of his past history of necromancy, murder and allegiance to the French: 500 marks were offered to anyone bringing in one of Cade's chief councillors, and ten marks were offered for the taking of any of his followers. In his turn Cade was reputed to be saying that the royal pardons were invalid without the authority of parliament.¹⁴⁰

The authorities were in pursuit in earnest. From his position in Rochester Cade in full flight doubled back through the Weald into Sussex, perhaps, if he was from Hurstpierpoint, fleeing for refuge to the landscape whose byways and backlanes he knew best. According to one tradition he fled in disguise.¹⁴¹ He left behind him in Kent some of his closest followers to continue his fight. One source (of autumn 1450) reports that on 11 July a posse of men lead by Alexander Iden, the man who had replaced Crowmer as sheriff of Kent, caught up with Cade's secretary, Henry Wilkhous, in the parish of Little Chart, north-west of Ashford, arresting Wilkhous and despoiling him of his purse and other valuables.¹⁴² Another source (of the summer of 1451) reports that on the following day, 12 July, Wilkhous was at Langley, just south-east of Maidstone and some ten miles or so to the west of Little Chart, gathering some 40 men who rallied round declaring that they could call upon the support of 4,000 armed men to join Cade's cause.¹⁴³ Whether or not either of these conflicting accounts is accurate, both suggest the picture of Iden harrying Cade's supporters westwards across Kent towards the Sussex border. And indeed, on 12 July he finally caught up with Cade himself down in

Sussex at Heathfield, badly injuring him as he captured him.¹⁴⁴

It was also on 12 July that William Appulthefeld and Robert Shamell arrived in Rochester having been sent down by the treasury to collect together and take back all Cade's loot.¹⁴⁵ Sir Thomas Tyrell and Richard Waller who had been nominated as two of the four treasurers of the recently granted subsidy were likewise sent down to Rochester to receive these goods and monies and to use them for the capture of Cade's adherents.¹⁴⁶ They were not the only people with an interest in these goods. Even whilst some of them were being stored in Rochester by Stephen Knight, the escheator for Kent, his premises were broken into by a Rochester barber and some of the valuables stolen.¹⁴⁷ John Kemp, the chancellor, was also sent to Rochester to try to calm the atmosphere there and to help with the retrieval of the goods.¹⁴⁸

By the time Iden had brought Cade back to London the rebel captain had died from his injuries. The corpse was taken to Southwark where the wife of the innkeeper of the White Hart identified that it was indeed that of Cade. It then underwent a ritual beheading at Newgate a few days later, the head being placed aloft over the scene of the rising's most violent episode, on London Bridge.¹⁴⁹ The remainder of the body was then dragged over the bridge from Southwark through London to Newgate where it was quartered. On 17 July the mayor and sheriffs of Norwich were sent a quarter to place on their city gate in a way which strongly suggests that there had been some sympathy for the rising there.¹⁵⁰ Blackheath, Salisbury and Gloucester were the other three places chosen for the displaying of such warnings.¹⁵¹

On 21 July an indenture was delivered into the exchequer

itemizing the goods, jewels and money taken off Cade and his followers in Kent on their retreat from Southwark: silver dishes and spoons, purses, girdles, a gold salver garnished with sapphires and pearls, silver pots, silver salt cellars, precious stones, cups, collars - over 115 items in all, in addition to a massive £105 15s. in ready money. Yet this was by no means all the rebels' takings.¹⁵² It is telling evidence as to what the rising had turned into inside the city walls and in Southwark too. Most of these valuables look to have come from the robbing of private houses such as that of Philip Malpas, where the duke of York had been storing some of his possessions, but the presence here of a golden chalice and paten and a paxbred of silver and gilt suggests that churches were pillaged too. During the next month the citizens of Rochester were granted £40 from Cade's goods at Rochester for the mending of their Eastgate, and in July Iden collected his 1,000 marks reward from the profits of the sale of the goods. Those who had been robbed had to go to the exchequer and there all they received was first preference in buying back their belongings for somewhat less than they were worth.¹⁵³

1. R. Virgoe, 'The Death of William de la Pole, Duke of Suffolk', *BJRL* XLVII (1965), pp.489-502. For two letters reporting this incident on 5 and 6 May, see *PL* II, pp.146-8.
2. 'The Nicholas of the Tower' was associated with Bristol. In January 1450 a dispute brought before the exchequer concerning a Bristol merchant exporting uncustomed cloth in her suggests that up until quite close to the timing of the duke's capture her activities had been of an unremarkable kind, E207/16/4.
3. J. Stow, *Annales, or a generall chronicle of England* (1631), p.388a. No mention is made of this in Stow's edition of his *Chronicles* in 1580.
4. *Ibid.*, p.389a.
5. M. R. Powicke, 'Lancastrian Captains', in *Essays in Medieval History presented to Bertie Wilkinson* (Toronto, 1969), p.382.
6. Stevenson II, pt.II, p.767; I do not suggest that this was the actual figure.
7. *Bale's Chron.*, p.129.
8. Griffiths, *Henry VI*, chapter 21, 'Cade's Rebellion, 1450', pp.610-65, is an excellent, and the best, account of the rebellion. I am very much indebted to it.
9. Kent Archive Office DRb/Pa; Davies Chron., p.64.
10. E101/330/7.
11. *VCH Sussex* IX, p.201; D. Clarke and A. Stoyel, *Otford in Kent: A History* (Otford and District Historical Society, 1975), p.70.
12. KB29/81 Easter term m.19; KB27/786 rex side m.2v.
13. Virgoe, *Ancient Indictments*, pp.236, 255-6.
14. *CPR* 1446-52, p.339. He had been involved in the theft of a church document together with Henry Wilkhous and the vicars of Dartford and Westerham in December 1443, KB9/245,m.89.
15. For the parish as a convenient framework for corporate action, see R. H. Hilton, *A Medieval Society* (Cambridge, 1983), p.149. The ringing of bells to gather parishioners is mentioned in an account of an array at Boston, Lincolnshire, in 1449, KB9/265,m.83.
16. KB9/122,mm.48, 55; KB27/766 rex side m.33; /770 rex side mm.33, 48.
17. W. G. Searle (ed.), *The Chronicle of John Stone monk of Christ Church 1415-1471* (Cambridge Antiquarian Society, 1902), p.49. Library of the Dean and Chapter, Canterbury, Sacrist roll 37. Curiously, during excavations of the market place at Dover in 1810 near St. Peter's church a chalk coffin was discovered containing only a head. This was

incorrectly thought to be that of Suffolk. C. R. Haines, *Dover Priory: A History of the Priory of St. Mary the Virgin, and St. Martin of the New Work* (Cambridge, 1930), p.286 n.2.

18. Printed in F. J. Furnivall (ed.), *Political, Religious and Love Poems* (Early English Text Society, 1866), pp.6-11; also in *Historical Memoranda in the Handwriting of John Stowe* (Camden Soc., new ser., XXVIII, 1880), p.99-103. Both these use a text from Ms. Lambeth 306, fol. 51. All the following quotations are from this text. The same poem but in a shorter version and with slight variants appears in BL Ms. Cott. Vesp. B xvi fol.I and is edited in T. Wright (ed.), *Political Poems and Songs*, II (RS, 1861), pp.232-4 and in R. H. Robbins, *Historical Poems of the XIVth and XVth Centuries* (New York, 1959), pp.187-9. This latter version reads 'this pascall tyme' for the Lambeth text's 'this Ioyfull tyme', so putting the dating of the poem firmly in the month of May and certainly no later: since that year Easter fell on 5 April making 3 May already the fourth Sunday after Easter.
19. Presumably John Gerveys of Bury St. Edmunds, a gentleman of ill-repute, outlawed during the 1430s for his activities, CPR 1436-41, pp.358-9, 389; he would be sought again for arrest in the mid-1450s, CPR 1452-61, pp.225, 344.
20. Charles Ross, 'Rumour, Propaganda and Popular Opinion during the Wars of the Roses', in R. A. Griffiths (ed.), *Patronage, the Crown and the Provinces in Later Medieval England* (Gloucester, 1981), p.16. In this quotation Ross is expressing the opinion of V. J. Scattergood, *Politics and Poetry in the Fifteenth Century* (London, 1971).
21. PPC 1430-36, pp.99-100.
22. PL II, p.13.
23. The suggestion of dancing is, for example, offered in a line such as 'But wonne most begynne the daunce, and alle come arowe', *Political Poems* II, p.224.
24. KB9/65A,m.1.
25. CPR 1446-52, p.426.
26. J. K. Wallenberg, *The Place-names of Kent* (Uppsala, 1934), pp.1, 77, 387.
27. HMC V (1876), p.520 (Lydd corporation archives).
28. It was the discovery shortly after 6 July that this was not his true name that led to his pardon being declared invalid, *Short English Chron.*, p.68. Even subsequent to this discovery a writ of 12 July was still calling him 'a certain man calling himself John Mortymer', E101/336/5. That he called himself John Amendalle is recorded in *Davies Chron.*, p.64.
29. The rebels themselves would protest their innocence of this slander,

- claiming it to be mere defamation to turn the king against them, HMC VIII (1881), p.267.
30. J. Stow, *The Chronicles of England* (1580), p.662; *Short English Chron.*, p.66; *Davies Chron.*, p.64; E403/779,m.9.
 31. *EHL*, p.365.
 32. *Litterae Cantuarienses III* (RS, 1889), pp.207-9; J. Stow, *The Chronicles of England* (1580), pp.662-3.
 33. E136/212/11,m.7.
 34. *VCH Sussex VII*, p.175. Inexplicably he is described as Thomas Dacre of Bailey Park, Heathfield, by W. D. Cooper in 'Participation of Sussex in Cade's rising 1450', *Sussex Archaeological Collections*, XVIII (1866), p.18. I find no other reference to support this. *VCH Sussex I*, p.513 apparently follows Cooper.
 35. *CPR 1452-61*, p.460; Griffiths, *Henry VI*, pp.339-40.
 36. W. G. Searle (ed.), *The Chronicle of John Stone monk of Christ Church 1415-1471* (Cambridge Antiquarian Society, 1902), p.49.
 37. HMC V (1876), p.520 (Lydd corporation archives); *ibid.*, p.490 (Rye corporation archives); *ibid.*, p.543 (New Romney corporation archives).
 38. *Ibid.*, p.520; W. D. Cooper, 'Notices of Winchelsea in and after the Fifteenth Century', *Sussex Archaeological Collections*, VIII (1856), p.207.
 39. KB27/762 rex side m.8v.
 40. J. Stow, *The Chronicles of England* (1580), p.656.
 41. R. Virgoe, 'The Parliamentary Subsidy of 1450', *BIHR LV* (1982), p.125.
 42. *CPR 1446-52*, p.385.
 43. *Ibid.*, p.385.
 44. *Gough*, p.153; *Benet's Chron.*, p.198; *Bale's Chron.*, p.129 gives the date of the assembling on Blackheath as 12 June. For the written command from Cade to the Italians, see *Stow, Chronicles*, p.653.
 45. *Gregory's Chron.*, p.190; *Gough*, p.153; *Bale's Chron.*, pp.129-30; *Great Chron. of London*, p.181.
 46. This was the opinion of the Tudor historian, Hall. His work can be valuable as it includes a strong oral tradition with independent material not derived from other chronicles. Edward Hall, *The Union of the two noble and illustre famelies of Lancastre and Yorke* (1550), fol. lxxvii v.
 47. *PL II*, pp.153-6.

48. Magdalen College Ms. Misc. 306, printed in HMC VIII (1881), pp.266-7.
49. *Ibid.*, p.267.
50. From Stafford over 70 yeomen were on their way to London to join the duke of Buckingham, K. B. McFarlane, 'The Wars of the Roses', *Proceedings of the British Academy*, L (1964), p.91; C. Rawcliffe, *The Staffords, Earls of Stafford and Dukes of Buckingham 1394-1521* (Cambridge, 1978), pp.47, 77.
51. Caroline Barron, 'The Government of London and its relations with the Crown, 1400-1450' (London Ph.D. thesis, 1970), pp.484-5. Chapter IX of Dr. Barron's thesis, 'London and the revolt of Jack Cade in 1450', pp.479-540 is such a comprehensive account of events that I have used it extensively for this part of the story.
52. Barron, thesis, p.485.
53. Bale's Chron., p.129; Stevenson II, pt.II, p.767; Benet's Chron., p.198; EHL, pp.371-2; Great Chron., p.181, to the contrary, says that the king lodged in the Tower.
54. Barron, thesis, p.486.
55. Bale's Chron., pp.129-30; Gregory's Chron., p.190; Benet's Chron., pp.198-9; English Chron., p.65; Griffiths, Henry VI, p.611.
56. EHL, pp.360-2; Stow, Chronicles, pp.656-8.
57. E28/80/65 giving the date as 20 June which looks like a slip here. In 1459 the king granted a pardon for debt to a William Stanley of Hooton, Cheshire, esq., 'who took the field with the king against the traitor, Cade of Kent', CPR 1452-61, p.570.
58. Bale's Chron., pp.130-1; Gough, p.154; Benet's Chron., p.199; Gregory's Chron., p.191; Short English Chron., p.67; PPC 1443-61, p.94.
59. Through his court connections Sir Robert Harcourt, who had slain Sir Humphrey's son, was able to get the king to stay the proceedings which had been initiated against him for this murder, B. Wolffe, *Henry VI* (London, 1981), pp.120-1.
60. Benet's Chron., p.199; Short English Chron., p.67; Gregory's Chron., p.191; Bale's Chron., p.131; Davies Chron., p.66; Gough, p.154.
61. C1/19/501.
62. Virgoe, *Ancient Indictments*, pp.223, 232, 241, 241-2, 243; KB27/765 rex side m.26; KB9/266,m.84; Dudley was pardoned for all this a couple of years later.
63. Virgoe, *Ancient Indictments*, pp.224-5, 232.
64. Edward Hall, *The Union of the two noble and illustre famelies of*

Lancastre and Yorke (1550), fol.lxxvii v.

65. *Short English Chron.*, p.67; *Bale's Chron.*, pp.131-2; *Gough*, p.154; *Benet's Chron.*, p.199; *Brut*, p.517; *Great Chron.*, p.182.
66. *Benet's Chron.*, p.199.
67. Griffiths, *Henry VI*, p.613.
68. On 30 June he had ordered his treasurer, now Lord Beauchamp, to release £100 to pay for all provisions necessary for the safeguarding of the Tower of London, E404/66,m.186.
69. *Short English Chron.*, p.67; *Gough*, p.154; *Benet's Chron.*, p.199; *Brut*, p.518.
70. It was the custom of the Mercers' Company to hold a feast on 25 June, but that year festivities were felt to be out of order and the Mercers merely attended to business, Barron, thesis, p.493.
71. There were no Bridge house receipts from 28 June until 18 July, Barron thesis, p.499.
72. There is some difference of opinion amongst the chroniclers over which day the rebels returned to the heath. *Benet's Chron.*, p.199, gives 29 June, as does *Great Chron.*, p.182. *Gough*, p.154 gives 30 June, as does *Bale's Chron.*, p.132 if one reads 'the Satirday folowyng' as 27 June; *Gregory's Chron.*, p.191 gives the date as 1 July.
73. T. Rymer (ed.), *Foedera, Conventiones, Literae* . . . XI (1710), p.275.
74. E28/80/73.
75. KB27/778 rex side m.26.
76. KB9/257,m.70; KB9/997,m.31.
77. HMC V, p.520; *ibid.*, p.521 (for price of swans); R. R. Davies, *Lordship and Society in the March of Wales 1282-1400* (Oxford, 1978), p.107.
78. HMC V, p.491.
79. Barron, thesis, pp.500-1.
80. PL II, pp.154-5.
81. *Benet's Chron.*, p.200; *Gregory's Chron.*, p.191; *Bale's Chron.*, p.132; *Gough*, p.154. That private houses were billeted is hinted at by the fact that amongst the 62 men known to be from Southwark who obtained a royal pardon when the revolt was over, two yeomen and two husbandmen took the unusual step of including their wives' names alongside their own, and, moreover, by the fact that two widows and a wife of the town had pardons made out in their own names, among the very few women to do so, CPR 1446-52, pp.351, 352, 366, 370. There is also a list of names on the pardon of no given location which includes the names of 105

- women and which could well be from Southwark, *ibid.*, pp.357-8.
82. Gregory's *Chron.*, p.191; *English Chron.*, p.66; *PL II*, p.155.
 83. Gough, pp.154-5; *Great Chron.*, p.183; *Benet's Chron.*, p.200.
 84. *PL II*, pp.153-6.
 85. KB9/271,m.46; /26/1,m.1; /273,m.86; KB27/770 rex side m.31v; /774 rex side m.9.
 86. KB9/26,mm.16, 17; /279,mm.5, 92; KB27/778 rex side mm.8, 43.
 87. E404/67/170.
 88. Gough, p.155; *Benet's Chron.*, p.200 says that 6,000 Essex men went to Mile End; J. Stow, *The Chronicles of England* (1580), p.659; *Great Chron.*, p.183.
 89. *Bale's Chron.*, p.132 describes them as 'a greet ffelawship out of Essex ordeined by the seid capitaigne'.
 90. *CPR* 1446-52, pp.350, 343, 355.
 91. KB9/270A,m.45; Barron, thesis, p.506; weavers from this parish are mentioned, for example, in KB9/958,mm.27, 28; /249,m.52; /996,m.49; /259,m.4; and a fuller in /996,m.9.
 92. Gough *London 10*, p.154, n.2; *Great Chron.*, p.182.
 93. *Great Chron.*, p.182.
 94. KB9/266,m.66; regarding Harries, see Barron, thesis, p.501.
 95. KB9/275,m.136. Hope is not explicitly named as a follower of Cade, as Harries is, but the probability that he was is very strong.
 96. William Tyrell, junior, of Rawreth was later to be indicted, and acquitted, on the charge of having set himself up to be a captain in Essex and of having made an uprising at Stratford Langthorn on the main London to Colchester road on 3 July 1450, KB9/273,m.26; KB27/772 rex side m.31v.
 97. *CPR* 1446-52, p.388; Barron, thesis, pp.504-5.
 98. *Great Chron.*, p.183; Gregory's *Chron.*, p.191; W. G. Searle (ed.), *Chronicle of John Stone monk of Christ Church, Canterbury* (Cambridge Antiquarian Society, 1902), p.50; Barron, thesis, pp.510-1.
 99. *Bale's Chron.*, p.133; *Great Chron.*, p.184; Gough *London 10*, p.155.
 100. Gregory's *Chron.*, p.191.
 101. Barron, thesis, p.519.

102. *Gregory's Chron.*, pp.191-2; *Bale's Chron.*, p.133.
- 103.C1/19/30.
- 104.Griffiths, *Henry VI*, p.626.
- 105.E28/80/19, 21.
- 106.KB9/265,mm.120, 121, 144, 145.
- 107.Barron, thesis, p.515.
- 108.*Gregory's Chron.*, pp.192-3; *Great Chron.*, p.184.
- 109.*Bale's Chron.*, p.133; *Davies Chron.*, p.66.
- 110.At an inquest held on 8 February 1451 before the sheriffs of London a jury declared that Crowmer died on 3 July 1450, and not on 4 July, as most chroniclers infer, E199/20/16 Middlesex and London.
- 111.*Bale's Chron.*, p.133; *Gough London 10*, p.156; *Benet's Chron.*, pp.200-1.
- 112.*Benet's Chron.*, p.201; *Gregory's Chron.*, p.193.
- 113.*Bale's Chron.*, p.133; *Gough London 10*, p.155.
- 114.CPR 1446-52, p.33.
- 115.KB9/26/1,m.16; *Gregory's Chron.*, p.193; *Bale's Chron.*, p.133; *Benet's Chron.*, p.201 (where the chronicler confuses Mayn with his master, Hampton, and calls Mayn himself keeper of Colchester castle).
- 116.*Bale's Chron.*, p.132; *Great Chron.*, p.184; *Gough London 10*, p.156; see Barron, thesis, pp.519-20.
- 117.C1/19/134.
- 118.*Ibid.*
- 119.Barron, thesis, pp.507-8.
- 120.KB9/273,m.89; KB27/789 rex side m.31. That they were based in Southwark with the rest of Cade's men and were not a roving band who had left the uprising and gone their own way is suggested by the fact that they were received back from their expedition on 6 July in Southwark.
- 121.Griffiths, *Henry VI*, p.340; Wedgwood, *Biographies*, pp.155-6.
- 122.See Barron, thesis, p.509.
- 123.*Gough London 10*, p.156.
- 124.*Gregory's Chron.*, p.193.
- 125.Not all the chronicles agree upon the duration of the fight although

there is a complete consensus about its intensity and destructiveness. *Bale's Chron.*, pp.133-4 says it continued until 4 of the bell; *Benet's Chron.*, p.201 says the battle began at about 10 o'clock and continued until 8 o'clock in the morning; *Gregory's Chron.*, p.193 agrees with this account; *Gough London 10*, p.156, says it went on from about 9 o'clock until 8 o'clock in the morning.

- 126.*PPC VI*, p.94. In a commission of 5 August 1450 the constable of the Tower was to be instructed to inquire in London and Middlesex concerning all the arms which had been taken from the Tower by lieges from the city and county, presumably on this above-mentioned occasion, *CPR 1446-52*, p.388.
- 127.*Gregory's Chron.*, p.193; *Bale's Chron.*, p.134; *Benet's Chron.*, p.201. A. D. Carr, 'Welshmen and the Hundred Years War', *Welsh History Review*, IV (1968), pp.39-41.
- 128.*Muniments of the Dean and Chapter of Westminster Abbey*, Ms.12239.
- 129.*KB9/26*, m.2; */270A*, m.62; *KB27/769 rex side m.8*; */798 rex side m.30*.
- 130.*KB9/118*, m.6; */271*, m.67. For a discussion of these indictments of 1453, see chapter 6 below.
- 131.*Benet's Chron.*, p.201; *Gregory's Chron.*, p.193.
- 132.*Kent Archives Office Fa/23* (pardon to the inhabitants of Faversham). *HMC V* (1876), p.455 (copy of the king's proclamation of pardon held by the dean and chapter at Canterbury cathedral).
- 133.*CPR 1446-52*, p.338.
- 134.*Short English Chron.*, p.68. Yet even subsequent to this discovery a writ of 12 July was still calling him 'a certain man calling himself John Mortymer', *E101/336*, m.5.
- 135.Three Sussex men robbed a house at Walkhampstead near Godstone, Surrey, of clothes, arms and money on the road home to East Grinstead and Mayfield, *KB9/271*, m.96; */270A*, m.8.
- 136.*Rotuli Parliamentorum V*, p.224.
- 137.*E404/66/202*.
- 138.*Virgoe, Ancient Indictments*, p.257, a rising against the king at Blackheath and Rochester on 7 and 8 July. *Ibid.*, pp.252-3, a rising at Rochester on 9 July. *KB27/789 rex side m.2v*, the demonstration at Singlewell.
- 139.*KB27/759 rex side m.5*; *KB29/82*, m.15.
- 140.*Gregory's Chron.*, p.194; J. Brigstocke Sheppard (ed.), *Litterae Cantuariensis III* (RS, 1889), pp.207-9; J. Stow, *The Chronicles of England* (1580), pp.662-3; *Short English Chron.*, p.68, which mistakenly dates the writ to 12 July.

141. Edward Hall, *The Union of the two noble and illustre famelies of Lancastre and Yorke* (1550), fol.lxxix.
142. Virgoe, *Ancient Indictments*, p.236. Iden was found not guilty upon this charge.
143. *Ibid.*, pp.255-6.
144. See Griffiths, *Henry VI*, p.653 n.45, for the chronicle variants of the place where Cade was finally apprehended. The Christ Church chronicle reports that Cade was killed on 12 July in the county of Sussex in the parish of 'Hethfeld', W. G. Searle (ed.), *The Chronicle of John Stone monk of Christ Church 1415-1471* (Cambridge Antiquarian Society, 1902), p.50. For the extraordinary fascination the actual place of Cade's capture, whether it was Heathfield, Kent, or Hothfield, Sussex, held for local historians and antiquarians of the last century, see R. Furley, *A History of the Weald of Kent II*, pt.II (London, 1874), pp.386-98, where over nine authorities on the subject are cited.
145. E403/779/8; E28/80/70, 74, 84.
146. R. Virgoe, 'The Parliamentary Subsidy of 1450', *BIHR* LV (1982), pp.130-1.
147. KB27/783 rex side m.1v; this incident gives the date of the incident as 3 July 1450, an error which can be accounted for by faulty memory, since the indictment was presented in 1457.
148. E404/67/16.
149. Gregory's *Chron.*, p.194
150. KB27/758 rex side m.9.
151. PPC 1443-61, p.107; Gough *London 10*, p.157 has the idea that Cade's quarters were distributed in Kent. This may be in error for the quarters of some of his followers which certainly were.
152. E101/336/5 and E357/40 which differs slightly in its inventory. John Payn is an example of someone whose stolen valuables are not included in this list, *PL I*(1872), p.134.
153. PPC 1443-61, p.101; E28/80/71, 84.

Chapter five: Cade's followers and troubles in the
rest of the country during the summer of 1450

I

With the death of Cade in the middle week of July the central events of the rising of 1450 were over, although activities associated with it would continue sporadically for years. This, then, seems an appropriate point at which to consider just who these rebels were who had followed Cade and who had shared those grievances for which he had been spokesman.

Until quite recently a picture of the participants, their origins and occupations, has been constructed quite simply by abstracting information from the long list enrolled among the patent rolls of some 3,300 names, many of them accompanied by occupations and place of origin, of those persons who received a pardon on 6 and 7 July at Southwark. However, in 1981 Professor Griffiths established without any doubt that the roll was no mere list of rebels and that the document requires a much more subtle interpretation.¹ He drew attention to the way in which these numerous pardons with their promises that the recipients should thereby gain immunity from any future actions of royal officials of any kind had the effect of a great screen coming down over the details of the insurgents from these south-eastern counties. An offer of a pardon such as this, available to anyone, free of payment, was, quite naturally, taken advantage of by men other than the rebels themselves, bearing in mind the complete uncertainty

which then hung in the air as to whether future proceedings would go against the rebels or against those of whom the rebels complained. No one knew in the first week of July just how the tide of events would swing.

Thus the notorious Robert Est, the gentleman from Maidstone named in one of the rebel petitions as a great oppressor in Kent, is to be found on the pardon roll. Likewise with William Isle, named alongside Est as another of the four great oppressors.² There too is John Watte of Sandhurst, the corrupt bailiff of the late William Crowmer.³ A similar character was John Ram of Halstow, under-steward to Lord Cromwell's steward, Richard Bruyn, in his lordship of Hoo, Bruyn being 'a great supporter and maintainer of the said John'. Yet Ram too is on the pardon roll.⁴ Katharine de la Pole, abbess of St. Mary's, Barking, in Essex, as sister of the murdered duke of Suffolk is likely to be on the pardon roll only as a measure of defence against the possibility of some anti-Suffolk backlash occurring in the courts after the rebellion. Such was the intensity of the odium connected with that name that men were apparently made fearful by their association with her. Four of the five men named on the roll from Barking and at least four of the eight men coming from unnamed locations within Becontree hundred turn out to be her tenants.⁵

Names such as those of Est, Isle and the abbess, however, stick out conspicuously amidst a sea of unknowns: numerous hundred constables and incomplete lists of village and town inhabitants. It would seem entirely plausible to suspect that these names could represent those cautious and law-abiding people who did not rise behind Cade but took the precaution of having their hundred

protected in this way by the representation of the constables and or a few other inhabitants. The city of Canterbury offers an example of such play-safe tactics. Twenty-nine people, at least three of whom were gentlemen, are named on the pardon roll from the city. They are wine, paper and livestock merchants, former and future members of parliament and mayors: a close-knit group from the city's ruling faction marrying one another's widows and taking up offices from each other.⁶ In January 1450 their city had vigorously withstood the insurgents who had risen up in the villages of the countryside between Sandwich and Dover under the leadership of Thomas Cheyne, the hermit Bluebeard, and, indeed, had helped in Cheyne's capture. The city had been equally resistant to Cade himself six months later when on 8 June Cade had advanced on the western suburbs of Canterbury. Come November 1450 the royal exchequer would be found issuing a £10 reward to ten Canterbury men for their great labour and costs in taking and bringing unto the king's presence one Simon Scryven of the parish of Herne who had been active in stirring up insurrection and rebellion. Four of these ten zealous Canterbury citizens are to be found on the July pardon roll; Simon Scryven the rebel is not.⁷ Evidently then, the men on the pardon roll for Canterbury are there as representatives of their community, not as any kind of rebels, as men of substance who could command respect.

Scrutiny of the names on the pardon roll is a most interesting exercise, but since it can contribute little to the question in hand here as to who the rebels actually were I have discussed it in an appendix where the matter can be given fuller

treatment.⁸ Rejecting, however, the list as direct evidence for the participants in the rising means that extremely little evidence of any kind remains to help answer the question. Only for the counties of Suffolk, Essex and Wiltshire do various indictments exist, brought against alleged insurgents during the years that followed (as far as is known at present). No indictments remain for insurgents from Kent, Sussex, Surrey or Middlesex. This, after all, was the purpose of the pardon.

Perhaps the best evidence as to what manner of insurgents these were lies in the petitions mentioned in the previous chapter of which of which there appear to have been three different versions.⁹ In these documents the insurgents describe themselves as 'the Commons of Kent' and their grievances cover a comprehensive range of issues affecting a range of economic groups within the county. Purveyance was a matter of grievance to any size of landholder. Complaint on behalf of 'simple and poor people that use not hunting' (that is, were not 40/- freeholders) suffering false indictments means that the less well off were being represented, but certainly not them alone. The complaint about the lack of free election in the choosing of the knights of the shire is a grievance which suggests that 40/- freeholders were involved too, since after 1430 the right to vote in these elections was confined to those freeholders having land worth at least 40/- a year.¹⁰ The Statute of Labourers was a grievance which also affected the better off as rich landowners sued lesser ones in competition for labour. Whoever drew up the complaints understood about anomalies in the system of tax collection in Kent; about the way in which sheriffs, undersheriffs and bailiffs might line their own

pockets in the name of the exchequer using summonses under its green wax seals; about special jurisdictions in Kent such as the court of Dover; about the selling by the knights of the shire of the office of collector, and the farming of offices by sheriffs and undersheriffs. This suggests that whoever the joiners-in and hangers-on may have been, there were informed and lettered men acting at the centre of events during the rising of 1450 - possibly past minor office holders and administrators themselves.

The petition produced by Cade's followers, a copy of which two of John Fastolf's men retrieved for him from Blackheath during June 1450, combines tones of anger and restraint.¹¹ This fluently, if very inelegantly, written copy recites the evil consequences of the presence of a circle of 'false traytours' around the king and its pernicious effects at national and county level in condemnations which are trenchant but not indiscriminate. The petitioners do not blame all lords, all gentlemen, all lawyers nor all clergy, but only such as might be found guilty by due process of law - something these men claim to have been denied at the hands of corrupt county officials. They press the point that this is a peaceful demonstration of responsible petitioners. The evil councillors 'call us risers and treyturs and the kynges enymys, but we schalle be ffounde his trew lege mene and his best freendus'.¹² And again, 'we wulle that all men know that we wulle neythur robbe nor stele but these fawtes amendid we schall go hoom'.¹³ These sound the sentiments of men rather loth to rise. But on the other hand they are risers who once roused could organize a county-wide and wider than county demonstration and

offer a coherent programme of proposed reform.

We are not, then, dealing here with peasants. The drafters of these petitions and those acting at the centre of events were neither poor, illiterate nor uninformed - rather, we are probably dealing with that sub-gentry class of yeomen and husbandmen and well-to-do artisans discussed in chapter one: that modestly landed, literate and litigious group whose main ambition was to establish and consolidate a family holding for their heirs, men who knew the value of law and order at county or national level.

Their literacy meant that their concern with national and local politics could be endlessly discussed. As C. L. Kingsford has pointed out, 'The Paston Letters have been too often quoted as if they were a unique phenomenon instead of a happy survival'.¹⁴ All over the South-East, then, during the ill-governed years before 1450 these men and their wives would be writing to one another gossip laden letters about the latest scandals of Robert Est in Kent or Thomas Tuddenham in Norfolk.

At least one member of the gentry played a role in the rising too. Cade's carver and sword bearer, as we saw in the previous chapter, was a Sussex gentleman, Robert Poynings, son of Lord Poynings. Robert may well have joined the rising as the best available vehicle for pursuing a quarrel with his step-brother, William Crowmer, rather than through any commitment to reform. It was during the rising that his servants made a raid on Crowmer's property in London and restored to Poynings goods he claimed as his own.¹⁵

Another gentleman, John Gibbes, is an interesting figure, although nothing absolutely conclusive can be said about his

involvement in the rising. He was a gentleman from London involved in Kentish society during the 1440s. In the pardon roll of 1450 he designated himself, or was designated, as coming from Great Chart, a village just west of Ashford.¹⁶ His involvement in this locality had been of the most active kind to do with a longstanding dispute over property.¹⁷ In October 1446 he had allegedly led a gang of over a dozen men who had struck east to the coast and made forcible entry into a manor of some 283 acres of land in the parish of Capel-le-Ferne and into another 60 acres in the next parish of Folkestone, land all claimed by one man, Robert Brandrede.¹⁸ They had successfully kept Brandrede out of the property until the following spring. The incident itself is not particularly significant; its interest lies in seeing Gibbes the London gentleman being able to employ and organize men of a lower social station (husbandmen, labourers, a tailor, an apple seller), whom he had recruited not only from the immediate vicinity of Great Chart and Ashford but also from further afield, from places like Stonden, Tenterden and Leeds, the last some 14 miles away to the west. In 1450 he allegedly acted as a kind of recruiting officer for Cade, being sent down into Essex to raise insurgents there. Whether he was active before this in arousing the men of his district of Kent is unknown, although Great Chart, conveniently enough, was itself a hundred meeting-place.¹⁹ What is related is that he was received in Colchester as Cade's messenger and representative and that he instigated in some degree the rising which allegedly took place there on 1 July 1450.²⁰ There is no known reason why this alleged activity of his during the

rebellion should be untrue, but it must be cautioned that all the evidence for it comes from proceedings in February and June 1453 from juries keen to attack York's supporters. The evidence is inconclusive. But later, in November 1471, he would be one of those who received a general pardon for insurrections in Surrey and Kent before the previous July.²¹

Also allegedly rising up at Colchester on 1 July 1450 besides Gibbes were two other gentlemen, a William Frere of Little Clacton, a village 11 miles south-east of Colchester, and William Lecche of Colchester, merchant, MP for the town 1449-50 and bailiff of Colchester in 1450.²² Both men were subsequently pardoned. Indicted alongside them were 89 other men of the town, almost everyone of them an artisan.

The participation of gentry in the rising remains unclear, although there are one or two very suggestive pieces of evidence; the very many gentlemen who appear on the pardon roll offering, unfortunately, no evidence for participation one way or another.

II

It is very hard to say either just what numbers of people took to the road and joined Cade's army on its route to London, or to say just how much normal life was affected in the counties of the South-East as a consequence of this exodus. Undoubtedly there were some wives of insurgent yeomen and smallholders, kept busy enough in normal circumstances at their dressingboards and kneading troughs and in their dairies and poultry yards, who felt

acutely the inconvenience of being shorthanded that June as the meadow grass was ripening for mowing and the recently calved cows were giving their heaviest milk yields.²³

The few hundred and manorial court records from the South-East remaining for 1450 indicate that the routine of court attendance carried on. So, in north-western Kent a court was held on 29 May at Northfleet despite the fact that settlements to the east of the county were already astir, and that its own inhabitants may well have shortly joined their ranks.²⁴ On 29 June, by which time rumour had had time to spread that Colchester was stirring in support of Cade, a manorial court was held at Maldon on the Blackwater estuary. The court records kept unswervingly to local troubles: John Fretherich's great sow was wandering about destroying neighbour's gardens; John Gate, junior, (who would shortly appear on Cade's pardon roll) had attacked a female servant in the town; the wife of Thomas Estwode (he would also be on the roll) was illegally regrating ale.²⁵ Likewise on 28 May and 30 June in the middle of Essex at Pleshey the locals carried on holding their views of frankpledge for High Easter, Hatfield Peverel and Mashbury, worrying about their aletasters, fierce dogs and overgrown hedges.²⁶ These were villages lying immediately west of the parish of Great Waltham which would be mentioned on the pardon roll. On 7 July as pardons were being issued in Southwark and the rebels were dispersing from London, up at Saffron Walden in northern Essex the view of frankpledge was deliberating over the nuisance caused by the dead pig someone had put in the water at Stonebridge at the end of the town by the windmill.²⁷ Courts also continued to be held on some of the archbishop of Canterbury's Kentish estates,

such as those held on 1 and 22 June at Aldington, south-west of Ashford, and on 2 June at Lyminge, north-west of Folkestone.²⁸ Whilst down in Sussex on 3 June a manor court was held at Laughton, half a dozen miles east of Lewes.²⁹ The few surviving accounts of bailiffs and reeves for the summer of 1450 give a similar impression of an untroubled season.³⁰

The paucity of evidence, it should be said, cannot be put down to any widespread destruction of manorial rolls such as that which characterized the Great Revolt of 1381. Cade's rising was a demonstration about national and county issues, not the action of a peasant-class chafing under the restraints of a manorial system. If it did disrupt the activities of local court stewards or rent collectors, that was not its aim. The only major attacks by tenants upon their landlord's records during 1450 were those upon the muniments of the bishop of Salisbury, described in the next section of this chapter.

Yet such stray bits of evidence as there are for the continuation of courts and the normal functioning of officials should not deceive us: the South-East and East Anglia were in a state of real turmoil during and after the rising. Those households which were considered to have connections with the wrong people were terrorized and plundered. John Fastolf's man, John Payn of Peckham, wrote of this time,

'And in Kent there as my wyfe dwellyd, they toke away all oure godes mevabyll that we had, and there wolde have hongyd my wyfe and v. of my chyl dren, and lefte her no more gode but her kyrtyll and her smook'.³¹

During June there was trouble in the south-western corner of

Kent around Edenbridge where 'certain persons naming themselves soldiers' took advantage of the disruption of the revolt to loot and rob.³² Nicholas Bore, whose name appears on the pardon roll, had his home broken into at Brasted, Kent, on 6 July and £12 of his money stolen by a tanner from neighbouring Sundridge.³³

Thomas Gascoigne, a contemporary observer, was to note the despoiling of rectors and vicars in Kent at this time.³⁴ William Marryng, the parson of the parish church of Mereworth, Kent, fled his parish 'by cause of the Insurreccion that was in Kent', forgetting all his normal business and concerns in 'the trouble & fere that he was put in at that tyme'.³⁵ Marryng had every reason to fear the temper of the insurgents, since the lord of the manor who held the advowson at Mereworth had been no less a figure than James Fiennes, Lord Saye. Marryng was also a disreputable figure in his own right who in 1447 had stolen from one of his own parishioners in Mereworth.³⁶

During such a time as this it was important to be on good terms with one's neighbours. Even notorious feuds might be temporarily shelved as either party feared that the other would use the uprising as a smoke-screen for even more violent actions. Walter Langley a justice from east Kent who was suing against a John Fyneux had arbitrators brought in to settle the suit 'during the great trouble in Kent' and they, mindful of 'diverse inconveniences that might fall during the said trouble', advised Langley to come to some agreement with Fyneux. Langley saw the sense of the measure and reluctantly agreed to make a settlement of 40 marks to have peace with Fyneux although he thought that by rights he should not pay him a penny and fully intended to

get it back when the troubles were over.³⁷

One of the 'diverse inconveniences' to fall during the said trouble fell upon Henry Weston, the chaplain at Otford in Kent. He had entrusted his life savings to the keeping of John Somerton, an Eynsford tailor: £22 in gold coins, five and a half nobles of silver and 6 silver spoons, all kept together in a little coffer. Weston, however, was not a pleasant character to deal with. On one occasion three years previously he had assaulted and raped an Eynsford woman, and it may well be that Somerton himself had a grudge against him. At all events, when the Cheshire troops went plundering through Eynsford on 18 June Somerton apparently felt this to be a splendid cover for his own profit or perhaps revenge. So that when Weston later came to collect his little coffer the £22 had gone and there was John Somerton loquacious on the subject of the iniquities of the Cheshiremen.³⁸

One would have thought that with the county administration under such public attack that certain of the more notorious figures in Kent would have kept their activities rather more guarded than was their custom during these months, but apparently not. So just as in February 1450, with Suffolk's career under parliamentary scrutiny, John Alpheigh, undersheriff to Crowmer, extorted money at Chiddingstone, so he was to be found stealing livestock that August with Crowmer murdered only a few weeks previously.³⁹ Robert Est, the keeper of Maidstone gaol, likewise carried on in his usual manner. He would refuse to give up one of his prisoners to the justices assigned to deliver the prison at Maidstone in September 1450, pretending that his prisoner was no longer there, for which

deception, needless to say, he extorted a monetary reward from his prisoner.⁴⁰

III

The chroniclers' preoccupation with the events in London has obscured just how widespread disturbances were in the provinces during 1450. During July, for example, there were troubles not only in Kent, Sussex and Essex but also in Suffolk, Gloucestershire, Wiltshire, Hampshire, Dorset and Somerset. The duration of these disturbances differed from London's experience: the rising affected the immediate vicinity of the capital from June into the first week of July, but for some counties their disturbances both began earlier and continued later. In some places such as Kent and Sussex there was activity through the autumn and Christmas into the following year.

It looks as if disaffection was present in Suffolk very early on in 1450. During late January to the beginning of March as parliament mooted the fate of the duke of Suffolk, there were individuals moving about Suffolk inciting rebellion amongst its inhabitants. It is likely that the men of this county would have listened with some sympathy or interest to a scheme which would bring about the downfall of the duke's regime. A commission sitting at Ipswich on 26 and 27 March heard accusations from local jurors against two beggars, both former yeomen, one from Yorkshire, the other from Lincolnshire, who, it was alleged, fomented rebellion against the king in Suffolk at the end of January. They met in secret it was said and conspired to replace the king with the

duke of York. By early March they were at Ipswich and there on 3 March they made a gathering which plotted to use a force which would overthrow the king gathered in from as far afield as Ireland, Wales, England and Scotland, including the aid of James earl of Douglas. The duke of York would be brought back from Ireland with a great force to take up his new royal duties in England.⁴¹

However fanciful the details, this is clear evidence of some kind of muttering and conspiring going on in Suffolk in the early part of the year. The difficulty with most of the remaining evidence for troubles in Suffolk that year, however, is that, unlike in the case of the itinerant beggars, it comes from hearings held in February 1453 which appear very much like fabrications with which to incriminate associates of the duke of York and the duke of Norfolk. With men such as Gilbert Debenham, Edward Grimston and John Ulveston among the jurors who presented these indictments the likelihood of an accurate account appears faint.⁴² What they would assert was that on 6 March 1450 a plot was hatched at Bury St. Edmunds to overthrow the king and make the duke of York their king and governor. Twenty men were named but the leading instigators were given as William Oldhall of Hunnesdon, kt., William Assheton of Earls Soham, kt., Hugo Assheton of Framlingham and John Framlingham, esq., of Debenham. They, allegedly, composed ballads and rhymes telling how the king by the counsel of the duke of Suffolk, the bishop of Salisbury, the bishop of Chichester and Lord Saye (this is just a list of those courtiers killed in 1450) had sold the realm of England and France and that soon the king of France would be monarch in England.⁴³ These compositions were then

stuck up on windows and doors throughout Bury St. Edmunds for all to read. And, the allegations continued, these men sent these communications more widely out into other counties, especially into Sussex and Kent, in order to raise the people there to rebellion. On 12 April John Cade, allegedly, was created captain at Bury before going to assemble at Blackheath with other rebels. On 26 May letters were sent from Bury to the men of Kent to incite them to rise and letters were also sent to the duke of York in Ireland asking him to depose Henry and to remove his councillors. On 10 June there was allegedly a rising at East Bergholt.⁴⁴ Then on 7 July, the day the pardons were issued in London to Cade's followers and others, there was supposedly a rising in support of Cade at Hadleigh down in the southern part of the county, not far east of Sudbury.⁴⁵ The men concerned, the indictment related, went together down to join Cade at Blackheath.

It was at about this time, they said, during the early part of July, that at Melton, on the river Deben, a mile north-east of Woodbridge, the vicar was attacked and robbed.⁴⁶ The 8 July saw another insurrection at Hadleigh in support of Cade.⁴⁷ On 10 July an unfortunate William Buxton was imprisoned and tortured by the commons of Kent, Essex and Suffolk at Stratford in Suffolk and was threatened with being taken off to their master Cade to be killed.⁴⁸

According to these indictments the troubles in Suffolk carried on well into the autumn and winter of 1450. Assaults and thefts were committed at Hadleigh in September by men who had allegedly risen up behind Cade during July.⁴⁹ William Dunton of Hadleigh, merchant alias gentleman, was assaulted and lost a box of charters

and seals worth £20.⁵⁰ Another man had weapons stolen. Moreover, the rising resulted, it was said, in a protracted breakdown in law and order: after the spring of 1450 William Barre and others from Framlingham, Hadleigh, Ipswich and Debenham rode about for two years in an armed multitude so that no official of the king could arrest them.⁵¹

Using external evidence, one thing the jurors of 1453 can be picked up on in the presentation of this detailed and most interesting evidence is their dating - although this arguably was merely the result of defective memories. It is not impossible, but it seems unlikely, that men would be rising up in Suffolk to join Cade or threatening to take prisoners to him after the issuing of the pardons and the dispersal - with Cade in the van - of the rebels from London. There is not, however, clear external evidence with which flatly to contradict the notion of Bury St. Edmunds as the very seat and origin of the rising with its poster campaign, election of Cade and letter sending to Sussex and Kent. All that can be said is that the indictment savours very strongly of an attack on York's East Anglian affinity. Even so, if these are fabrications, some of them at least can be shown to be fabrications built with some plausibility upon a background of troubles which certainly did go on in Suffolk that year. The town of Hadleigh, mentioned by the jurors as the scene of risings in support of Cade on 7 and 8 July and of lootings by his followers in September, is conspicuously the one Suffolk town to appear on the pardon roll of July 1450.⁵² And with its location in southern Suffolk not far from the Essex border it is by no means

improbable that some of its inhabitants may have ridden down to London to support the rising. Fifteen individuals are named on the pardon roll from Hadleigh, the cloth industry being well represented among them: four fullers, three weavers and a mercer. Whether this suggests some particular disaffection among the clothworkers in Hadleigh or merely reflects the town's involvement in the trade it is hard to say. The 1440s, it must be said, were not the heyday of the Suffolk cloth trade. The prosperity from the industry as symbolized by the church at Lavenham and its 141 foot tower belonged to the 1480s.⁵³

And if Hadleigh's presence on the pardon roll suggests that the stories from the jurors in 1453 may be based on some truth, corroboration of the attack on the vicar of Melton is even firmer. The vicar later petitioned Chancery about this outrage, telling how 'in the grete trobull' tyme' he was attacked by night by a large gang of parishioners, 'disciples and of the affynyte of the grete traytor John Cade' who would have had his head off had he not fled.⁵⁴ Cheated of their purpose, they ransacked his house and stable and awaited his return so that he dared not go home and keep his cure.

A state of widespread unrest and lawlessness in Suffolk that season was also evidenced in an attack on 20 June - the day after Lord Saye had been put in the Tower - by a gang of Beccles men upon the property and tenants of the abbot of Bury St. Edmunds at Beccles. This was up in east Suffolk, as Beccles lies on the river Waveney, eight and a half miles west of Lowestoft, suggesting that the breadth of the county may have been infected with trouble. The majority of the 27 men named in the subsequent

indictment for this attack (presented at Henhowe in January 1451) were either designated husbandmen (12) or yeomen (5). The remainder were tradesmen: a merchant, a spicer, two mercers, a candlemaker, a cordwainer, a roper, a barker, a hosier and a butcher.⁵⁵ What lay behind the attack is not altogether clear, although an old and powerful house such as Bury St. Edmunds was almost permanently locked in struggles with its tenants over privileges and rights.⁵⁶ Moreover, this had been a Lollard district, a tradition which could well have kept alive. In April 1430 six suspected heretics from Beccles had appeared before the bishop and been punished.⁵⁷ The interest the incident affords here is as a gauge of the unsettled state of the county during Cade's rising, independent of the evidence of 1453. It also, of course, makes more suggestive the allegations of trouble at Bury St. Edmunds itself.

Other independent evidence besides the vicar of Melton's petition is to be found in chancery records. There William Bedston from Brampton, Suffolk, complained how 'in the moost trouble[st] [se]ason and tyme of that greet Traitour John Cade late Riser in Kent' a local squire had with great force and violence entered upon the lands which he, William, had lately bought.⁵⁷

The suggestion of the 1453 evidence that this unsettled state did not melt away at the end of July with the carting of one of Cade's quarters through Suffolk on its way to Norwich appears to have been true. On 1 August a commission of oyer and terminer was issued to go up into Norfolk and Suffolk to deal with all trespasses and insurrections recently committed there.⁵⁸ But on 4 August at the village of Alderton, Suffolk, set among the flat

fields which lie between the North Sea and the estuary of the Deben, John Squyer, the village parson and former chaplain to the duke of Suffolk, was murdered by his own parishioners and by men from the neighbouring villages of Ramsholt and Sutton. A gang of them broke into the rectory, dragged the parson out onto the road and beheaded him with a sword.⁵⁹ One of those later indicted for this outrage was a gentleman, Alan Martyn of nearby Bawdsey. He obtained a pardon in March 1452 on the grounds that this had merely been a malicious indictment, but since he was in need of another pardon for other unstated trespasses in May 1455 one wonders whether he might not have had something to do with the Alderton murder.⁶⁰

So there is no doubt that Suffolk was involved in Cade's rising. For some people in the south of the county this may have been as direct an involvement as riding all the way to London to join the insurgents there. But it is likely that, for most, their action took the form of violent attacks within the county on followers of the duke of Suffolk or upon old enemies. What must remain uncertain is how much Bury St. Edmunds was involved with the inception of the revolt.

Among the counties to experience these satellite troubles during the summer Wiltshire stands out as that which saw the most orchestrated and sustained attacks on people and property.⁶¹ The reason for this is likely to have been, in part, that West Wiltshire and the area around Salisbury together formed one of the most intensive cloth producing districts in England, and as a consequence was one of the parts of the country to experience most keenly the depression in the industry. It is striking how many

of those indicted for the risings here were men connected with the textile trade. Another factor was that this was the diocese of the bishop of Salisbury, one of the most hated men in Suffolk's group, whose destruction Cheyne's and Jakes' followers had called for in the previous January.⁶² In view of what was shortly to happen the atmosphere at this time must have been rife with animosity against such figures. Aiscough must surely have been aware that June as he travelled across the country in flight from London that his life was at risk even away from the capital.

On 20 June a cask and a half of his red wine was taken at Potterne (south of Devizes) by Philip Baynard, a gentleman and sheriff of the county and a group of other men,⁶³ and on 28 June a valuable horse belonging to the bishop was stolen at Imber.⁶⁴ More ominously, an attack was also made on 28 June by a gang from Warminster and Maiden Bradley upon the bishop's baggage train as it preceded him along his route to the safe keeping of his castle at Sherborne. The attackers entered the house of the substantial merchant at Maiden Bradley in whose custody it was being kept that night, broke up the bishop's chariot and carried off large quantities of valuables, including, according to different indictments, one far more extravagant in its claims than the other, vestments, church books, silver vessels and even Aiscough's pearl encrusted mitre and his silver and golden crozier along with an enormous sum of £3,000 in cash.⁶⁵ If this figure is a true one then it does suggest that suspicions of peculation among the high offices was entirely justified in the bishop's case. There is some

suggestion that the looters stayed around the village the following day, stealing money, books and other goods from the inhabitants there.⁶⁶

At Maiden Bradley Aiscough's baggage train had been almost at the Dorset border; the bishop himself was following at a distance of some a dozen miles or so, so that on the day after the attack, 29 June, the feast of Saints Peter and Paul, he was further back on the road at Edington. It was when he was celebrating the feast day mass there in the house of the Bonhommes that a large armed mob converged on the village, coming in from the surrounding districts, from places such as Trowbridge and Westbury to the west, Market Lavington to the east and Heytesbury to the south. This gathering of at least a hundred and perhaps several hundred insurgents entered the church of the monastery proclaiming Aiscough to be a public traitor to the king. Although a clerical recorder of this incident, Thomas Gascoigne, tells that Aiscough's murderers' major grievance was that the bishop was forever with the king and never in his diocese.⁶⁷ He was dragged from the altar out to a nearby hill and there barbarously killed with boar spears, cudgels and staffs in an ugly outbreak of violence reminiscent of the murder of Adam Moleyns, bishop of Chichester, at Portsmouth six months earlier.⁶⁸ The mob then turned upon the house of the rector at Edington and plundered horses, harness and money.⁶⁹ The monastery buildings themselves were attacked and damaged to some serious extent. Two full years later in June 1452 the rector and brethren of the monastery would be able to petition successfully to be excused collecting tenths because 'they have sustained of late intolerable

damages through the sons of perdition who . . . breaking down the houses and building of the monastery, took and carried away the goods and jewels of the petitioners'.⁷⁰ It is possible that the rector in 1452 was somewhat cynically turning the events of 1450 to good use, but there is every reason to believe that the initial attack was very savage and damaging to the monastery.

Whilst the mob was murdering and stealing at Edington there were troubles away to the south-east of the county in Salisbury itself. This was perhaps to be expected. Salisbury was a city with recent and conspicuous Lollard connections and an apparently longstanding grudge between some of its citizens and the cathedral. It was here that London Lollards had sent their bills and posters for distribution in March 1431, and here that a rising had taken place in the May of that year, allegedly with the intention, amongst other things, to attack the cathedral.⁷¹ The sharp example made of the ringleaders at that time, led as they were out of the city from Fisherton to the gallows at Bemerton, a village to the west of Salisbury, there to be hanged, drawn and quartered, may have left a legacy of bitterness. Evidently many inhabitants felt that they still had a score to settle with the cathedral, which by now housed the tomb of Walter, Lord Hungerford, the man who had headed the team of justices responsible for the sentences passed on the Lollards of 1431.⁷² Here in 1450 William Wodeward, a brewer, acted as captain to a crowd of insurgents from the city, many of them artisans and small tradesmen - butchers, carpenters, coopers and weavers - although there were at least two gentlemen in their ranks.⁷³ Wodeward was organized enough to have

his own clerk and letter carrier. The subsequent indictments estimated that over three hundred men rose up in Salisbury that Monday and further alleged that these rioters were confident that there were 10,000 men of their own mind willing to join their cause. It appears to have been primarily an anti-clerical demonstration; the rebels were alleged to have wanted to destroy all ecclesiastical houses in the county, and to have exacted sums of money from canons of the cathedral and sought the death of the dean of St. Mary's. The two esquires in the Salisbury mob went out south of the city to Harnham hill the following day to incite men there to rise up with them against the late bishop.⁷⁴ With the long hours of sunlight which June affords, a group, now also including some locals from Westharnham, were able to take themselves off that day from Harnham to Woodford north of the city where Aiscough owned a manor and there plundered lead from the manor house roof, swans and their young from the manor pond and a flock of 300 hundred sheep worth 40 marks from the manor farm.⁷⁵

These looters must have been aware that Aiscough had been killed the previous day, but apparently the news had not yet reached some corners of the county, since that day, 30 June, a clerk up in Meysey Hampton in Gloucestershire, just over the far northern border of Wiltshire, allegedly conspired for Aiscough's death along with a group of others.⁷⁶

Throughout that week Monday's butchering continued to release into the open pent up feelings of hatred and anger in Wiltshire - nor, as has already been seen in the case of Salisbury, was this simply against Aiscough alone. On Wednesday 1 July there was an attack on the houses of three canons in Salisbury.⁷⁷ On Thursday

there was an affray of some kind at Tilshead on Salisbury Plain between Edington and Salisbury by a couple of labourers, one of whom had apparently travelled there from Harnham via Woodford.⁷⁸ On the Saturday (as Cade's followers were looting and executing in London) there were renewed disturbances in Salisbury by some of Monday's rioters. The bishop's palace was attacked and broken into and from it taken the late bishop's charters, registers, court rolls and all the written material that could be found that was connected either with him, with Gilbert Kymer the dean, or with the cathedral. This was all carried off to a field outside the city and cut up and burnt, no doubt with considerable relish.⁷⁹

The following Monday, 6 June, as Cade was negotiating a settlement in Southwark, the demonstrations against Aiscough began to tail off. That day more of his manors, on this occasion at Potterne and Ramsbury, were attacked and their muniments stolen,⁸⁰ but the next outbreak of trouble was not until 12 July at Devizes when an armed gang allegedly rode about inciting others to rise against the ecclesiastical orders and temporal lords of the county; one of the gang, a husbandman from Draycote, even carried an axe ready for the beheading of appropriate victims.⁸¹ On 20 July a similar sort of disorder occurred at Wilton, just west of Salisbury.⁸² The movement towards more general lawlessness was further exhibited in a riotous assembly to ambush and kill Philip Baynard, the sheriff of Wiltshire, on 29 July, and by an ambush on 31 July on an individual at Biddestone by men exciting others to rise and riot.⁸³

However, just over the border in Dorset at Aiscough's manor of

Sherborne the news of the bishop's death was the signal for much looting and rioting by his tenants. Here insurrection carried on for months to follow, transferring itself to an old quarrel with the monks of the abbey there.⁸⁴ The episode reportedly ended in an atmosphere of contrition with the collection of a fine from every adult of the town, the people believing that otherwise the king would reap retribution from the whole shire.⁸⁵

Disorders in Hampshire broke out just a few days later than those in Wiltshire, beginning on Saturday 4 July with an anti-clerical rising at Crawley by a gang of men, apparently largely from Newbury in Berkshire, who continued their disturbance by striking southwards even further from their home town and making a mob visitation upon the abbey of Hyde near Winchester in the south-western corner of the county. They threatened the abbot with mutilation and with the destruction of his house and extracted from him the very considerable sum of £100.⁸⁶ The following day saw an even more violent demonstration on the Isle of Wight. There a certain Robert Spycer, a spicer from Newport, set himself up as captain of an angry mob who turned upon Robert Russell, a close counsellor of the late Adam Moleyns, bishop of Chichester, and beheaded him.⁸⁷ Perhaps it was the news of the murder of Aiscough that previous Monday which sparked off this new act of hatred against Moleyns and his kind, demonstrating very clearly that bitterness against the king's ministers was as strong as ever in the region.

In this disturbed atmosphere old animosities flared up into open violence, such as the anti-alien rising which took place at Romsey that July. For years Genoese and other Italian merchants

had imported unfinished Netherlands' cloth through Southampton and had sent it out to Hampshire villages where labour was particularly cheap in order to re-export the finished cloths to the Mediterranean.⁸⁸ Romsey, a village five miles from Southampton, was the centre for this finishing industry and its men evidently held a grudge against their foreign employers. So in 1450 they decided to take advantage of the atmosphere of lawlessness and violence to march upon Southampton and wreak revenge on their Italian masters. The steward of Southampton's book recorded that a group of them 'camme to Towne for to have robberyd the lumbardes'.⁸⁹ However, the mayor and citizens of Southampton protected their Italian colony, defending the city with patrols along the streets and walls for three days and with townsmen guarding the Galley Quay. Finally, the sheriff and 13 other men from Southampton escorted the ringleaders to Winchester gaol.

On 21 July at Wells in Somerset Bishop Beckington, who had had a lot to do with French negotiations during the 1440s, met with local disturbances on such a scale that he called in Lord Bonville to help him control the situation. At one point clerks guarded the cathedral day and night for four days, and then Welshmen were hired for the cathedral's defence. The rumour some time that summer that a large French fleet had come into Southampton must have added considerably to the trouble at Wells and throughout southern England.⁹⁰

Other riots and disturbances took place at about this time elsewhere in the country, although many are obscure and lacking in any clear chronology. It may have been at about the same time as

the sheriff of Wiltshire was attacked that July that an attack was made upon the sheriff of Worcestershire at Tewkesbury.⁹¹ At this time too other absentee court bishops were victimized as they fled the dangers of court to their neglected bishoprics. At Winchester Bishop Waynflete's palace was sacked; in the Midlands Bishop William Booth of Lichfield was besieged in his palace; in East Anglia Bishop Lyhert of Norwich was threatened by an angry mob; and in Gloucester Abbot Boulers' manor of Wyreyard was sacked and plundered.⁹² Both Lyhert, who had been promoted to his bishopric at Suffolk's wish, and Boulers had gone on embassies to negotiate with the French and were members of that court group associated with Suffolk's regime. This was the season when all his associates were suffering. His steward, Sir John Hampden, was killed in Flint castle and his secretary was arrested.⁹³

In Wiltshire the trouble that had looked as if it were quietening down at the end of July revived in August. On 1 August Robert Godfray, the labourer from Westharnham who had gone with others and stolen goods from Bishop Aiscough's manor at Woodford in July, took himself off once more, this time to Little Woodford and again carried off lead and other valuables from the bishop's property.⁹⁴ This kind of activity may then have quietened down for a while, but on 20 August there was renewed disturbance with a riot to despoil the parish church at Bradenstoke.⁹⁵ Then on 28 August trouble flared up again at Edington, probably in quite a dramatic fashion judging from the unusually large number of 22 individuals indicted for the offence. What exactly the purpose was of the rising is not clear - the indictment speaks of congregating to kill the true lieges of the king and the procuring and

exciting of many true lieges to rise, phrases which amount more or less to a set form of words. It is, however, interesting to see that this demonstration, exactly two months after the first attack on Aiscough's chariot and baggage, drew on the same supporters as had run riot there then in Maiden Bradley and Edington. According to the record of the indictments, 16 of the 22 men who rose up at Edington on 28 August had previously congregated there two months before and taken part either in the looting of the monastery and murder of the bishop or plundered his luggage at Maiden Bradley. None of them, it should be further noted, were Edington men, but tailors, weavers, husbandmen and barbers from such places as Westbury, Heightsbury, Potterne, Imber and Maiden Bradley.⁹⁶ Evidently these risings far from being local and uncoordinated must have been carefully organized affairs bringing in people from a wide area and capable of being repeated at another date. This kind of organization may have been part of the function of the men from Salisbury riding about the county that summer inciting rebellion.⁹⁷

On 19 August James Gresham had written to John Paston that it was reported that there were nine or ten thousand men who had risen in rebellion in Wiltshire, but he thought this unlikely for there had been little more talk of it.⁹⁸ The number is rather improbable, but the evidence does suggest that during the August of 1450 the focus of insurrection perhaps moved from the South-East to southern England. What is more, there is even some suggestion that some of Cade's followers may have made their way there. In a later year a London dyer was to tell the tale of how well into

that August whilst he was down in Dorset at Wimborne he had encountered a merchant riding along the road who had greeted him with the enquiry, 'What news of Normandy?' (doubtless a common enough question during that summer). The dyer had replied that the whole country had been lost. 'And so will England be' the stranger had rejoined. However, he knew of one who could govern better than the present king, and he had gone on to persuade the dyer to ride along with him and join a fellowship of Cade's followers who met up that day at Cranborne, some ten miles away to the north near the Hampshire border. There the dyer had sworn loyalty to their plans and opinions. What gives credence to this story is that the merchant riding to Cranborne that day was a former soldier from Normandy, Thomas Odiham, who came from Hadleigh, the west Suffolk cloth town which may well have supported Cade's rising the previous month.⁹⁹

Cade's revolt, then, was not restricted to the South-East alone, the area to which the chroniclers have largely confined our attention. Courtiers - the 'false traitors' of the rebels' petitions - and their associates were attacked throughout southern England. By early July the authorities may have managed to quell the rebel force which had been ejected from the capital, but they were unable to counter the offshoots of the rising which were springing up all around the country throughout the remainder of the summer.

1. See Griffiths, *Henry VI*, pp.619-23. I have not counted the names, but take this figure from B. Wolffe, *Henry VI* (London, 1981), p.233, n.43.
2. *CPR* 1446-52, pp.343, 356.
3. *Ibid.*, p.341: here he is actually named as coming from Hawkhurst.
4. *Ibid.*, pp.352, 370; Virgoe, *Ancient Indictments*, pp.226, 227, 229, 230.
5. *CPR* 1446-52, p.355; Essex Record Office (Chelmsford) T/A 206/1.
6. HMC IX report (1883), p.140, where Simon Morley and William Bryan (*CPR* 1446-52, pp.338, 362) are mentioned. Charles Cotton, (ed.), 'Churchwardens' Accounts of the Parish of St. Andrew, Canterbury Part I: 1485-1509', *Arch. Cant.*, XXXII (1917), pp.191-2; the John Fremingham and John Swann both mentioned here are on the pardon roll, *CPR* 1446-52, pp.338, 354.
7. E404/67/94; *CPR* 1446-52, pp.338, 344, 350, 351, 354, 362, 373.
8. See Appendix B below.
9. BL Cotton Roll ii 23 (printed in Kingsford, *EHL*, pp.360-2); Lambeth Ms. 306 (printed in J. Gairdner (ed.), *Three Fifteenth Century Chronicles*, (Camden Society, New Series, XXVIII, 1880), pp.94-9; Magdalen College, Oxford, Ms. Misc. 306 (printed in HMC VIII report (1881), pp.266-7); J. Stow, *The Chronicles of England* (1580), pp.654-7; BL Cotton Roll iv 50 (printed here as appendix A).
10. B. Wolffe, *Henry VI* (London, 1981), p.217.
11. Magdalen College, Oxford, Ms. Misc. 306.
12. *Ibid.*
13. *Ibid.*
14. Kingsford, *EHL*, pp.10-1.
15. Robin Jeffs, 'The Poynings-Percy Dispute: an Example of the Interplay of Open Strife and Legal Action in the Fifteenth Century', *BIHR* XXXIV (1961), pp.148-164.
16. *CPR* 1446-52, pp.347, 366.
17. *CC1R* 1435-41, p.408; *CC1R* 1441-47, pp.374-5.
18. KB9/996, m.27.
19. Great Chart was the hundred meeting-place for the half hundred of Great Chart: J. K. Wallenberg, *The Place-names of Kent* (Uppsala 1934), p.403.

- 20.KB9/26,m.17; /273,m.86; /279,m.92; KB27/778 rex side m.8.
- 21.CPR 1467-77, p.302.
- 22.KB9/26,mm.16, 17; Wedgwood, *Biographies*, p.532.
- 23.In the Christ Church estates - and doubtless elsewhere too - regular milking began on the feast of St. George (23 April), R. A. L. Smith, *Canterbury Cathedral Priory* (Cambridge, 1969 reprint of 1943 original), p.159.
- 24.Lambeth Palace Library E.D. 766; Thomas Flucke and Simon Letot mentioned on this roll are both named on the pardon list, CPR 1446-52, p.345.
- 25.Essex Record Office D/B 3/3/30.
- 26.DL 30/71/877.
- 27.Essex Record Office D/DBy M5.
- 28.Lambeth Palace Library E.D. 136, 617.
- 29.BL Add. Roll 32004.
- 30.For example, the beadle and rent collector at the Christ Church manor of Eastry appear to have collected a wide range of rents throughout the year, Lambeth Palace Library E.D. 416; similarly at Mayfield, Sussex, the beadle, the farmer of the rectory and the parker appear to have had no difficulty collecting money rents and renders in kind during 1450, *ibid.*, 715, 716, 717. Other examples of non-committal accounts for this year are those of the chamberlain at Ringmere, Sussex, *ibid.*, 941; the farmer's account for Bishop's Marsh in Cliffe on the north Kent coast, *ibid.*, 269; the reeve's account for Reculver on the north Kent coast just east of Herne Bay, *ibid.*, 926; the reeve's account at Burwash, north-east of Heathfield in Sussex, East Sussex Record Office Ashburnham 200A; the beadle's account for the manor of Chiddingfold some miles south of Heathfield, BL Add. Roll 31416; the reeve's account for Bibleham in Mayfield, again in the Sussex Weald, BL Add. Roll 31188; the ministers' accounts for Seaford, Pevensey and Willingdon in Sussex, DL 29/442/7122; the collector and farmer at Feering, just off the main road between Chelmsford and Colchester, SC 6/842/3; the farmer's account at Felsted, south-west of Braintree, SC 6/842/9; the farmer's accounts for Molash rectory and Chilham, south-west of Canterbury, SC 6/888/12; ministers' accounts for Leigh and Gomshall to the east and west of Dorking in Surrey, SC 6/959/24; and ministers' accounts for Maldon, Ultings in Danbury, East Ware grange, Midlands, Shopland, Holland, Crenday and the manor of Canewdon in south-east Essex, SC 6/848/16.
- 31.PL, I, p.134.
- 32.CPR 1446-52, p.387.

33.KB9/269,m.64.

34.J. E. T. Rogers (ed.), *Thomas Gascoigne, Loci et Libro Veritatum* (Oxford,1881), p.42.

35.C1/16/230. This is an undated petition. Since it addresses the chancellor as archbishop of Canterbury it presumably refers either to John Kemp or Thomas Bourchier, and so dates from either January 1452 to April 1454 or from March 1455 to October 1456, the periods when they in turn held both offices. The latter period is more likely as we know who Marryng's predecessor was at Mereworth and he was not there in 1452-3, CPR 1446-52, p.550; CPR 1452-61, p.155. There is just a possibility that the petition refers to risings in 1451 or 1452 but it is doubtful if these would be alluded to as 'the Insurreccion that was in Kent' with its suggestion of a single main event. Also telling against any dating later than 1450 is that of course later than that the advowson was no longer in Fiennes' hands. Edward, lord of Bergevenny received it in March 1451, CPR 1452-61, p.107.

36.CC1R 1441-47, pp.440-1; Virgoe, *Ancient Indictments*, p.225.

37.C1/18/129c.

38.C1/19/501; Virgoe, *Ancient Indictments*, p.242.

39.Virgoe, *Ancient Indictments*, pp.223-4, 225, 227-8, 242.

40.*Ibid.*, p.231.

41.KB9/265,mm.12-29; CPR 1446-52, p.378, there was a third man who was summoned before the commission who apparently never appeared before it.

42.Winifred I. Haward, 'Gilbert Debenham: A Medieval Rascal in Real Life', *History*, XIII (1929), pp.300-14. Edward Grimston was one of those tried before the commission which sat in London during the rising of 1450.

43.KB9/118/1,m.30; /271,m.117; KB27/770 rex side m.3; /776 rex side mm.2, 2v, 27; /797 rex side m.7.

44.*Ibid.*; the indictments merely say 'Bergholt' and I have taken this to be the Suffolk Bergholt, East Bergholt on the river Stour 9 miles south-west of Ipswich. There is of course also a West Bergholt in north-east Essex on the river Colne 3 miles north-west of Colchester.

45.KB9/118,m.6.

46.KB9/118, m.32. The indictment names the village as 'Multon by Dallyng' which I have taken to be Melton.

47.KB9/271,m.67; KB27/770 rex side m.27.

- 48.KB9/118,m.27.
- 49.KB9/271,m.67; /272,m.12; KB27/770 rex side m.27.
- 50.Dunton's description as a merchant alias gentleman comes from another source: E159/225 *Brevia directa baronibus Michaelmas*.
- 51.KB27/797 rex side m.7; KB9/118/1,m.29.
- 52.CPR 1446-52, pp.343, 356, 359.
- 53.H. C. Malden, 'Lavenham Church Tower', *Proceedings of the Suffolk Institute of Archaeology and History*, IX (1897), pp.370-2.
- 54.C1/19/388a; Kingsford, *Prejudice and Promise*, p.49. The date of the petition given as Thursday next after the feast of St. Peter the Apostle 1450 could well be the night of Thursday 2 July/morning of 3 July if the feast is taken as SS. Peter and Paul. The indictment (KB9/118/1,m.32) would agree with this if it were assumed that the Translation of Thomas Martyr mentioned there (7 July) was an error for the Translation of Thomas Apostle (3 July).
- 55.KB27/765 rex side m.6v.
- 56.M. D. Lobel, *The Borough of Bury St. Edmund's: A Study in the Government and Development of a Monastic Town* (Oxford, 1935), p.123.
- 57.Edwin Welch, 'Some Suffolk Lollards', *Proceedings of the Suffolk Institute of Archaeology and History*, XXIX (1963), pp.154-65; Norman Tanner (ed.), *Heresy Trials in the Diocese of Norwich, 1428-31* (Camden Soc., 4th ser., XX, 1977), pp.84-9, 107-38, 194-5; J. A. F. Thomson, *The Later Lollards 1414-1520* (Oxford 1965), pp.123-4.
- 58.CPR 1446-52, p.388.
- 59.C1/19/144; Kingsford, *Prejudice and Promise*, p.49; CPR 1446-52, p.528; KB27/764 rex side m.2; /769 rex side m.17v; /792 rex side m.5v; KB9/118/1,m.49.
- 60.CPR 1446-52, p.528; CPR 1452-61, p.239.
- 61.Benet's chronicle records for 1450 that it was the counties of Kent, Essex and Wiltshire which rose, *Benet's Chron.*, p.202.
- 62.A more detailed account of the disturbances in Wiltshire during 1450 is to be found in J. N. Hare, 'Lords and Tenants in Wiltshire c.1380-c.1520 with special reference to Regional and Seigneurial Variations' (University of London Ph.D. 1976), pp.297-337; also in his article, J. N. Hare, 'The Wiltshire Risings of 1450: Political and Economic Discontents in Mid-Fifteenth Century England', *Southern History*, IV (1982), pp. 13-31.

- 63.KB9/134/1,m.22.
- 64.KB9/134/1,m.37.
- 65.KB9/133,mm.19, 30; /134/1,mm.9, 15, 20; /134/2,mm.79, 80. The confusion arising around these various indictments of 1451 and 1452 concerning the date of the looting - as to whether it took place on 28 or 29 June - is discussed by J. N. Hare, thesis, pp.297-300.
- 66.One of the despoilers of the bishop's goods, a Richard Page of Warminster, gentleman, was charged by two men from Maiden Bradley with stealing their goods and money that Monday, 29 June, KB9/134/2,mm.79, 80.
- 67.J. E. T. Rogers (ed.), *Thomas Gascoigne, Loci et Libro Veritatum* (Oxford,1881), pp.158-9.
- 68.KB9/133,mm.7, 8, 9, 10, 14, 20, 40; /134/1,mm.6, 7, 26; /105/1,m.4. Two different numbers of insurgents are offered by subsequent indictments, 40 and 600; but since 74 are named in the indictments, the true figure must stand at well over 40 and perhaps rather fewer than 600, J. N. Hare, thesis, p.301.
- 69.KB9/133,m.6; /134/1,mm.2, 4, 14, 32, 33.
- 70.CPR 1446-52, p.560. The house already enjoyed a longstanding exemption from paying tenths, VCH Wiltshire, III, p.322.
- 71.KB9/225,m.21; /227/2,mm.1B, 2, 23.
- 72.Nikolaus Pevsner, *The Buildings of England: Wiltshire* (London,1975), p.417.
- 73.KB9/133,mm.2, 3.
- 74.*Ibid.*, m.24.
- 75.*Ibid.*, m.11; KB9/134/2,m.117.
- 76.KB27/770 rex side m.29; KB9/271,m.53.
- 77.KB9/133,m.27.
- 78.*Ibid.*,m.17.
- 79.*Ibid.*,m.32.
- 80.*Ibid.*,m.36.
- 81.*Ibid.*,m.15.
- 82.*Ibid.*,m.34.
- 83.*Ibid.*,mm.12, 23. Incidentally, Baynard had had his own differences

with the rector and brothers at Edington that previous autumn in his capacity as tax collector, which had led him to distrain temporarily on 300 of their sheep, E159/226 *Communia* Easter Term.

84.EHL, pp.346-9.

85.Gregory's *Chron.*, pp.194-5.

86.KB9/109,m.12 (badly preserved, so see also KB27/771 rex side mm.21, 23). The abbot had sustained malicious damage to his property earlier when in 1440/1 a tailor from Pewsey in Wiltshire had fired some of the abbot's buildings in Pewsey, *Calendarium Inquisitionum ad quod damnum*, Henry VI Anno 19: the document itself, OBS1/364, cannot be traced at the Public Record Office.

87.KB9/109,mm.9, 20 (again, badly preserved, so see KB27/763 rex side m.7v). It is possible that the John Boney, John Mewe, Richard Coupelond and William Skynner named among the 18 names still legible on these indictments were involved in some way with the murder of Adam Moleyns in January 1450, since they are explicitly excluded from the pardons later given out to the inhabitants of the Isle of Wight in 1451, a pardon denied only to those who were pirates, slayers or privy to the death of Adam Moleyns or who had been indicted for the crime, CPR 1446-52, pp.420-1, 470-1.

88.O. Coleman (ed.), *The Brokage Book of Southampton, 1443-4*, (Southampton Record Society series, IV, 1960), pp.xxv-xxvi.

89.A. A. Ruddock, *Italian Merchants and Shipping in Southampton 1270-1600* (Southampton, 1951), pp.166-7.

90.HMC, *Report on the Manuscripts of the Dean and Chapter of Wells*, II (1914), pp.77-8.

91.EHL, p.366. It is not known who the sheriff was in the summer of 1450, merely that his undersheriff was a Thomas Huggefurd, and that the murdered sheriff was replaced on 19 August by John Broun, *PRO Lists and Indexes*, IX (HMSO, 1898), p.158.

92.Griffiths, *Henry VI*, p.645.

93.EHL, p.366; Kingsford, *Prejudice and Promise*, p.49.

94.KB9/133,m.15. The Woodfords, now comprising three villages, Upper, Middle and Lower Woodford, set beside meanders of the Avon, were in the fifteenth century two manors of Great and Little Woodford.

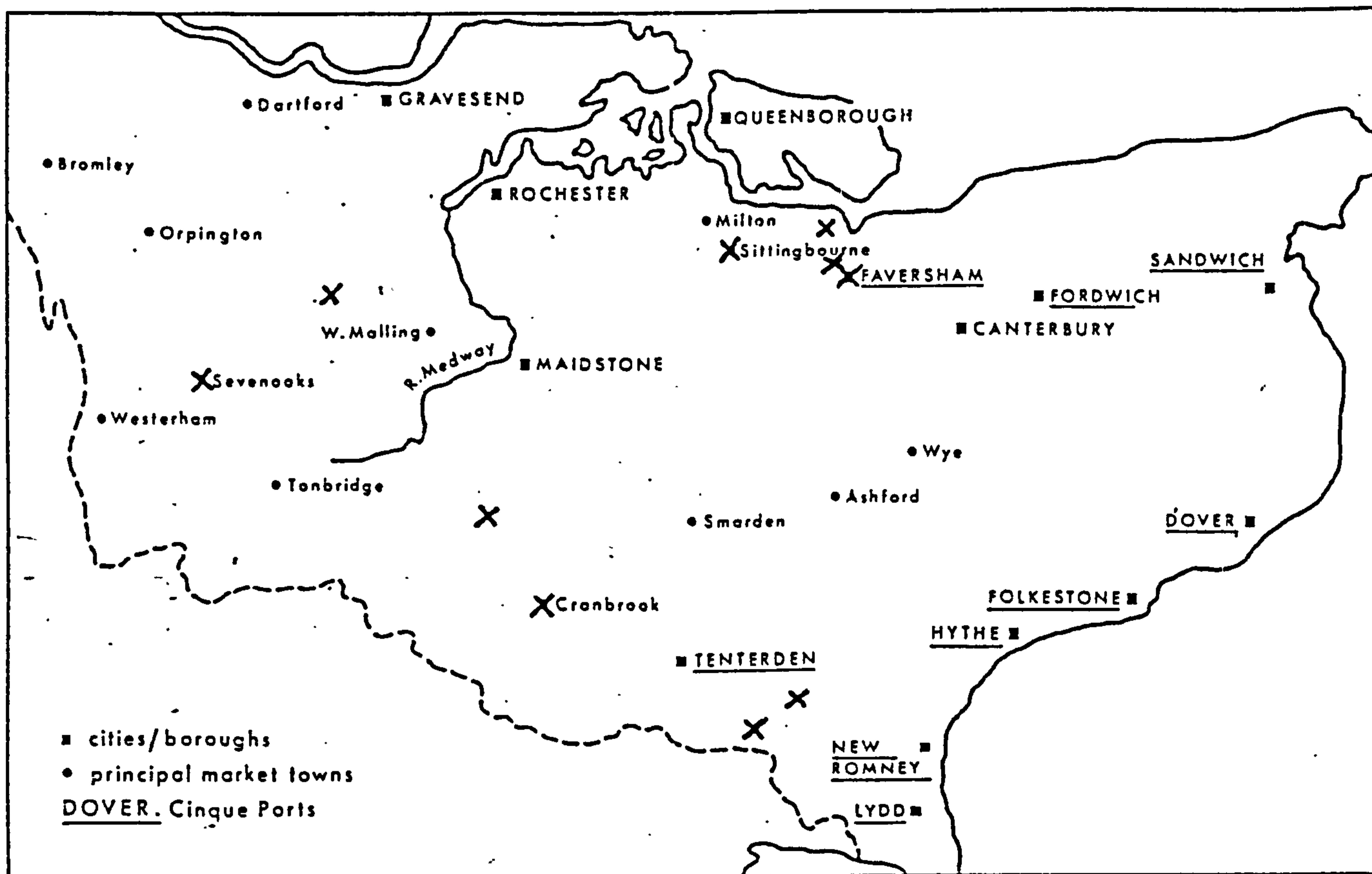
95.KB9/133,m.35.

96.*Ibid.*,m.37; KB27/770 rex side m.20v.

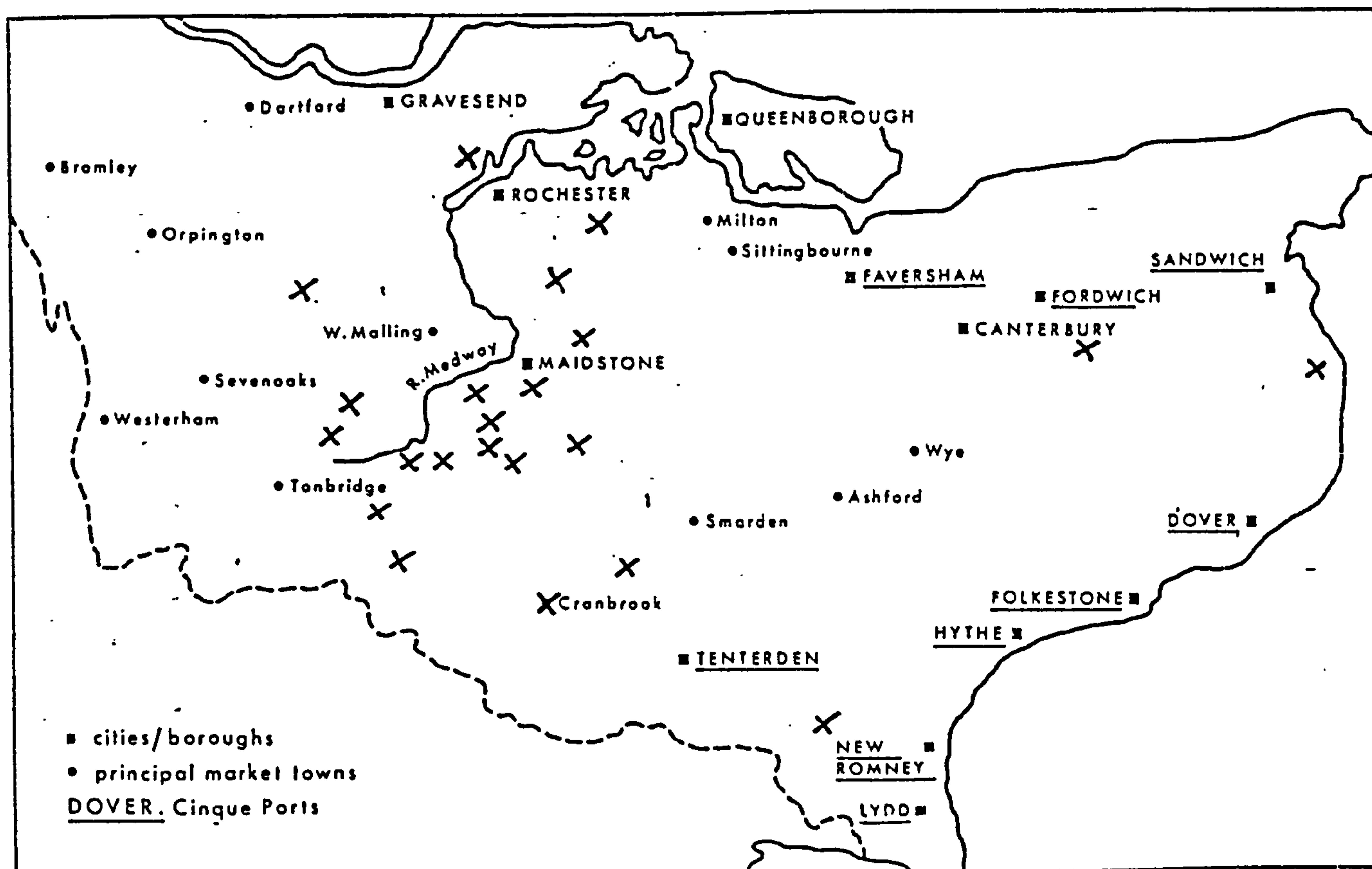
97.KB9/133,m.2.

98.PL, II, p.162.

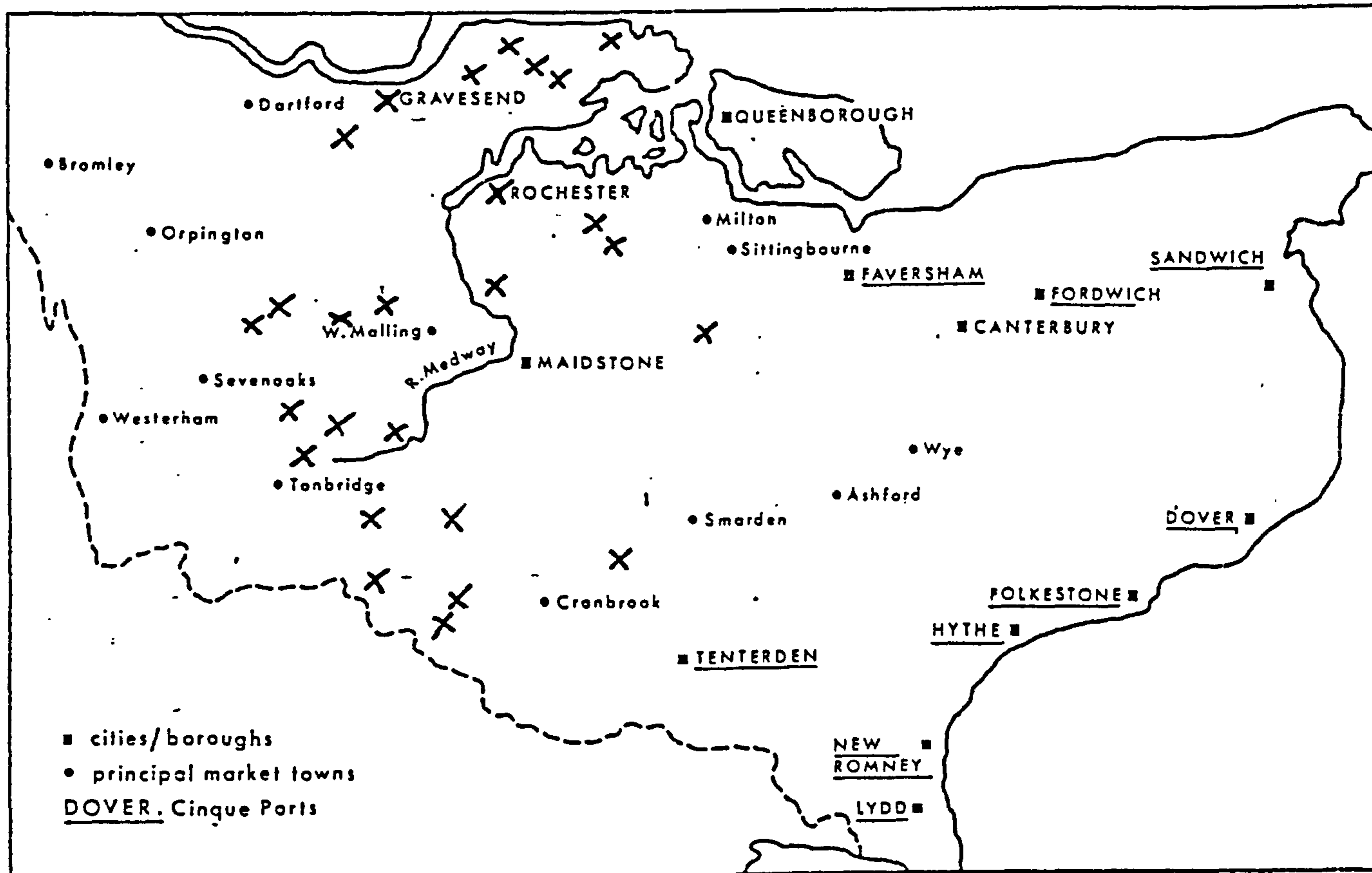
99.KB27/759 rex side m.6v; CPR 1446-52, pp.343, 356, 359; KB9/271,m.67;
KB9/118/1,m.6.



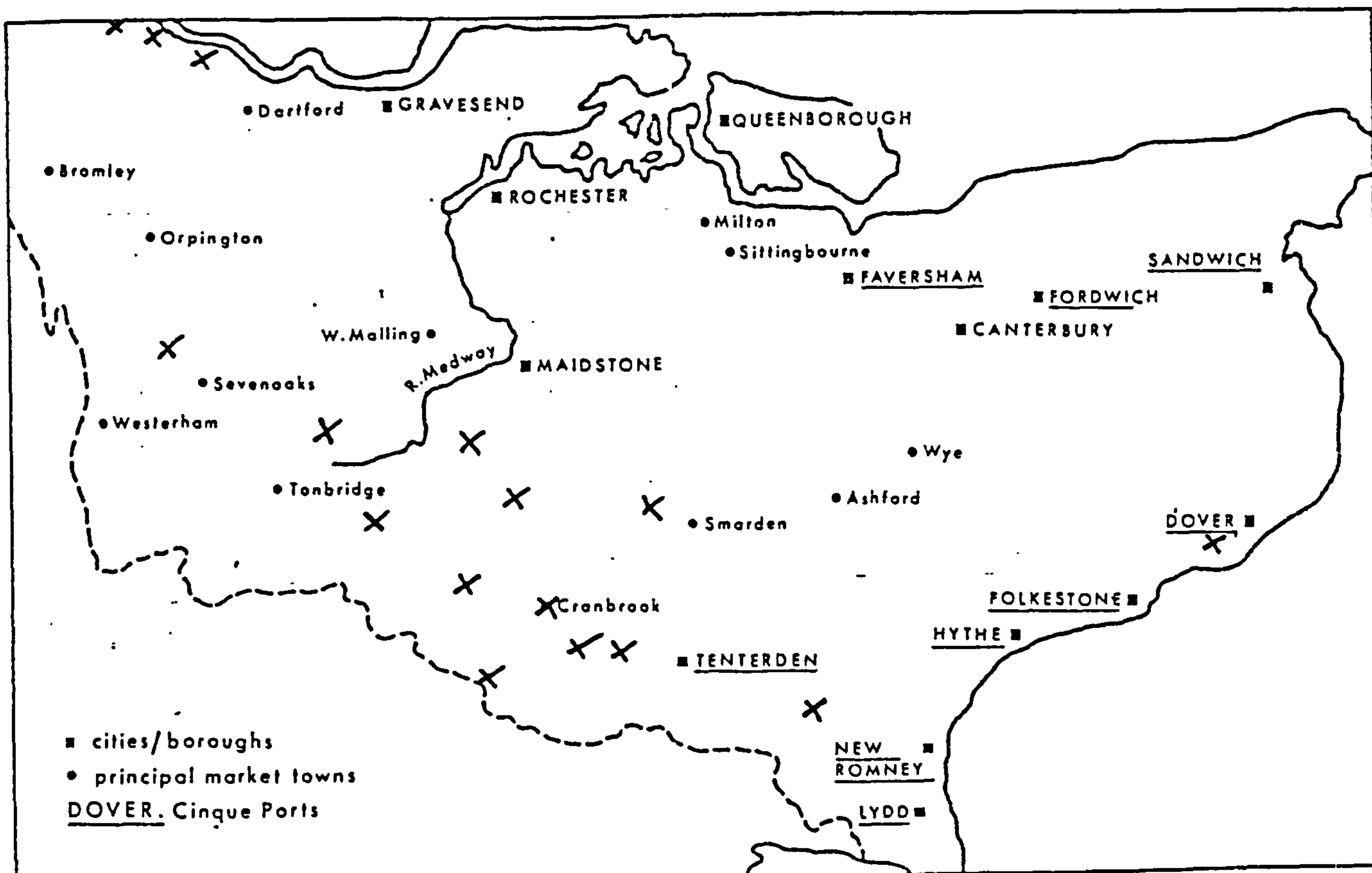
X Kentish Locations involved in Parmynter's Rising August 1450



X Kentish Locations involved in Hasilden's Rising April 1451



X Kentish Locations involved in Wilkyn's Rising May 1452



X Kentish Locations involved in Percy's Rising April 1456

Chapter Six: Subsequent Uprisings during

Henry VI's Reign

I

On 1 August 1450, as the duke of Somerset in retreat from Normandy passed through London with his defeated troops, the king ordained a commission of oyer and terminer to go into Kent to make enquiry into all miscarriages of justice, extortions, trespasses and oppressions. Unlike the commission of 1 July, set up during the rebellion to investigate all treasons, Lollardies and insurrections in London, this Kentish commission was not intended as a punitive measure, solely to bring order to a disaffected area. It was a genuinely conciliatory gesture by Henry to the rebels which sought to investigate the corrupt local government of which they complained. It represented the government's one positive concession to the rebels' demands.¹ The commission was headed by the archbishops of York and Canterbury and the bishop of Winchester (negotiators with Cade over his pardon) and Humphrey, duke of Buckingham, none of whom were royal household figures or supporters of the duke of Suffolk.

Presentments were made to this Kentish commission at Rochester from 20-22 August, at Maidstone from 16-19 September, at Canterbury from 22-24 September and at Dartford on 22 October.² Thirty-two men named on the July pardon roll participated in the juries which made presentments before this commission.³ As it emerged the jurors did not treat simply of the major culprits alone, but dealt with the alleged offences of some 72 men and women, ranging from knights and county officials to humble clerks and husbandmen.

Robert Est, 'the great extortioner', as one of the rebels' petitions described him,⁴ had the distinction of being charged by various juries on 11 different counts. Seven indictments were made against Lord Dudley, and four against both Thomas Daniel and Thomas Stanley. It is quite possible that almost 30 other supporters of the duke of Suffolk's regime may have been indicted before the commission during the late summer or autumn.⁵ The impression that the surviving indictments give is of the releasing of long pent up grudges and injuries nursed over several years, concerned with a range of offences from the extortionate practices of Kent's own sheriffs and under-sheriffs down to unpunished crimes by ordinary men of the county. Some of those indicted were not found guilty by the court, some were fined, and for others such as Dudley, Daniel and Stanley the verdicts are unknown. How much of a triumph for their cause Cade's followers felt these hearings to be it is hard to guess, but the evidence would suggest that they were not wholly satisfied.

The commission, indeed, carried on its activities against a background of riots and assemblies, for, as was noted in the previous chapter, the ending of Cade's revolt left the South-East in a continuing state of turmoil. In future Cade's name and his title of 'Captain of Kent' were to be catchwords amongst insurgents. Not only was his cause not dead but some would even assert that Cade himself was still alive. Most of the risings and demonstrations that took place in the South-East during the following two years and beyond were to be expressions of frustration specifically concerned with aspects of Cade's revolt. Men were angry at how few of their grievances had been met and at

how little the parliamentary Commons of 1450 had been allowed to achieve in the way of the resumption of Crown lands, because, of course, if effective, the act would have withdrawn favours and status from Suffolk's affinity. Moreover, they were to feel cheated and bitter over the matter of the pardons and the king's harsh dealings with insurgents.

One source suggests that the continuing disasters in France were popularly regarded as a vindication of the rebels' complaints. A poem, probably of the later part of 1450, harped on the theme of the loss of France, blaming it upon the likes of Daniel and Trevelian for their exclusion from influence of the good soldiers among the king's traditional noble councillors:

`Therefore [what] the commyns saith is both trew an
kynde
Bothe in Southesex and in Kent'.⁶

As early as August 1450, just after the commission began its first hearings in Rochester, and as troubles continued in Wiltshire, Dorset and Suffolk, William Parmynter, a smith from Faversham, came forward calling himself the second captain of Kent. He was fomenting trouble in north-central Kent earlier in the month,⁷ but his uprising, which took place on 31 August, covered a broad band of country running roughly east-west across the north and the middle of Kent from Teynham, Faversham, Canterbury and Ospringe westwards along to Marden, Sevenoaks, Otford, Hawkhurst and Appledore.⁸ Support for his rising was later to extend across the Weald to Mountfield in Sussex and down through Hailsham, Willingdon, Jevington, to the coast at Eastbourne where there was a rising on 16 September.⁹

That Parmynter commanded a sizeable following is suggested by the number of localities from the two counties involved in the rising, showing clearly just how widespread disaffection continued to be. The names are known of only 16 of Parmynter's alleged Kentish followers: four husbandmen; three labourers; four yeomen; two tailors; a weaver; a roofer and a baker.¹⁰ Many of these appear in the records as recipients of pardons in the spring of 1451. In Sussex, the dozen men accused (although not all found guilty) of rising as supporters of Parmynter were yeomen, labourers, cobblers, a smith and a butcher.¹¹ Of these the butcher alone was found guilty of treasonably saying that he would like to shoot down the king like a buck.¹² The Sussex men were said to fear that the king wanted to destroy them and their county with force, and they had quite specific grievances concerning the price of renting land.¹³ Only one of them is named in the pardon list of July 1450, a John Sherman of Hailsham, cobbler, but there is good reason to suppose that they all had risen under Cade. As for the Kentish followers, none of their 16 names are to be found on the pardon list, but that they too had supported Cade is very likely. Their leader Parmynter's title of the second captain of Kent, the close timing of the two risings, and their description as Cade's 'late accomplices' make a connection probable.¹⁴

Later, in 1451, when the matter was before the courts, some said that 200 men had risen up behind Parmynter, others guessed at 400, and, they added, Parmynter and his followers were trusting to the backing of 4,000 armed men sharing their views. None of these figures are very helpful. The rebels were accused of levying war against the king and of wishing to destroy and despoil certain

magnates and clergy, purposing to hold possessions in common. The rising provoked these rather formulaic accusations normally cast against Lollards because it had been an opportunity to continue in Kent the destruction and despoiling associated with Cade's rising. Men with grievances lobbied this new captain and his followers, petitioning for the plundering or even murder of certain hated figures. A John Burgh, for instance, was in gaol in Leeds castle by November 1450 for having allegedly told Parmynter and his men that two procurators of the vicar of Charring were fit to die because they 'went with the gentilmen to execute the kynges comyssion'. He suggested the taking of both their goods and their lives. There was another individual, John Knyght, whom Burgh wished that the fellowship might have searched the bottom of his coffers. Furthermore, he regretted how many of his goods the vicar of Charring had taken away to safety, for Burgh would have then fared so much the better in his own takings.¹⁵ This is an extraordinary insight into the atmosphere of retaliation and violence out of which Parmynter's rising had grown.

Whereabouts Parmynter was captured is unknown. He and some half a dozen of his main henchmen were rounded up by a squire of the duke of Somerset with a posse of 24 men on horseback who held them for several weeks before taking half their number off to the safe custody of Windsor castle, the other half of their number journeying on to Winchester castle.¹⁶ Parmynter, inevitably, was eventually sentenced to death.¹⁷

At least one of Parmynter's followers evaded being brought to court by fleeing to that refuge from the arm of the law, the

sanctuary of St. Martin's in London. However, this individual, William Cayme of Sittingbourne, who had been among the rebels supporting Parmynter at Faversham on 31 August and who had also incited people at Canterbury that day, found upon his arrival at St. Martin's that the dean took a dim view of sheltering traitors. He found himself placed in the sanctuary prison. Nonetheless in February 1451 the dean was stoutly to refuse the royal request that he should surrender Cayme up to trial in Rochester. At which Henry, conferring with his councillors, decided not to break the dean's immunities but recommended that Cayme should be kept close from perpetrating other crimes against his person. Soon after, in May 1451, Cayme received the king's pardon.¹⁸

On 12 September 1450, 12 days after Parmynter's rising, there was trouble again in Sevenoaks with gatherings and speeches against the king.¹⁹ At Sevenoaks and in the Weald generally impatience with the government was especially persistent. On 26 September Thomas Michell, a baker from Sevenoaks, gathered with a score of others at Sevenoaks 'to make war and levied such war against the king until 27th January then following'.²⁰ Thomas, indeed, had some cause for grievance, since Lord Dudley and his troops had robbed him of 20 marks during their raid into Kent in June that year.²¹ At Sevenoaks and Cranbrook Parmynter's adherents were still congregating and plotting into late December.²²

Parmynter was not the only captain going about Kent that autumn. A John Smyth also rose up calling himself the captain of Kent and allegedly made a great gathering of people - although whereabouts in the county and at which date exactly is unknown. As we have just seen there was a demand for leaders to organize

gangs of violent looters against those whom they felt had betrayed Cade's cause or against whom there were old grievances. John Smyth was captured sometime before early October 1450 by the duke of Somerset who was going about Kent subduing and punishing would-be insurgents.²³

Political agitation was in some places deteriorating into mere lawlessness. In October 1450 at Penshurst a group of some 100 men from the Sussex and Kentish Weald carried out a massive poaching raid on the park of Humphrey, duke of Buckingham.²⁴ They followed the widespread practice of painting their faces and of wearing long beards for the purpose of anonymity,²⁵ but it was perhaps somewhat tongue in cheek that they hid their identity behind the description 'servants of the queen of the fairies' in a clear echo of Thomas Cheyne, the hermit Bluebeard, who had risen in Kent during the previous January.

In Sussex rioting and lawlessness had resumed immediately after Cade's rebels had dispersed from London with their pardons from 7 July onwards. At Sedlescombe in eastern Sussex, not far from the Kentish border, there was a riot at a lathe court on 14 July led by a Simon Sture, a yeoman and former soldier from nearby Winchelsea, who claimed to be a kinsman of Cade; he appears to have spent much of September and October taking part in similar agitation and in robbing local Sussex clergy.²⁶ Just over a week later on 24 July in the same locality two gentlemen from Ashburnham, John and Richard Assheburneham, with 16 and more husbandmen and artisans to help them, forced their way into Richard Fiennes' manor at Ewhurst and held it for eight days. The action

was lent a certain bravado by the fact that almost a third of this invading group had had their names inscribed on the royal pardon roll only 17 days beforehand.²⁷ Fiennes, as a nephew of Lord Saye and Sele and as a member of a family of prominent court servants, the most powerful family in the South-East, was an obvious target for any kind of attack at this time. The Assheburnehams had long been bitterly contesting the right of the Fiennes to the manor of Ewhurst in court; no doubt this seemed as good a time as any to settle the matter out of court.²⁸

During August events in Sussex took a turn for the worse. At Chichester in the west of the county on 6 August a group of men from villages north of the Downs, from Midhurst, Pulborough, Steyning and Sutton, began to organize an insurrection by exhorting all the true men of the county to gather there at Chichester on the forthcoming 27 August. Written messages were sent about Sussex to this effect.²⁹ There is no exact information as to what this rising was about except for the usual opaque allegations about rising against the king to kill him and his lords in battle with the intention of ruling the realm and holding all things in common, but it does give an interesting insight into how risings were orchestrated. William Howell, a gentleman from Sutton, and others masterminding the event, sent peremptory orders to local constables by letter: 'We will and charge yow that ye apere byfore us at Chichestre upon thoresday next after Seynt Bartolomewes day and brynge with yow all defencyble men withynne yowre office upon payne of deth'.³⁰ Some insurgents made preliminary gatherings at local gathering points such as Bramber, Sutton, Steyning and Fittleworth on the eve of St. Bartholomew's

before taking the road to Chichester, for some of them a 20 mile journey, where the rising took place the following day, 27 August.³¹ The leading agitants received a positive response to their call from a wide area of western Sussex; men converged on Chichester from points as far apart as Selsey in the extreme south and Horsham away up in the north-centre of the county.³² There were all sorts of men too: drapers, barbers, glovers, grooms, husbandmen, clergy, and even a sorcerer, a Henry Whyteberd from Upwaltham, three and a half miles south-west of Petworth.³³ Such a pattern of events is likely to have been typical of many risings of this period. The key lay in having an individual or a group of men to give decided leadership.

For such a reason Cade's name had become a shibboleth among the discontented in eastern Sussex. The continuation of unrest among Cade's former supporters was very marked here. In September they had risen behind William Parmynter, the second captain of Kent, and on 5 October it was one of Cade's followers from Hastings and some fellow townsmen, also likely to have been Cade's followers, who gathered at Hastings agreeing amongst themselves that Henry was not of a sufficiently powerful mind to be king. They wanted a king who knew better how to govern.³⁴ Again, it was probably another of Cade's men who led a demonstration at the sheriff's court at Deerfold, in the parish of Battle, on 14 October.³⁵ Whilst on 23 October rebels rose up at Horsham (including one of the town's notorious thieves who had almost certainly already joined in the rising on St. Bartholomew's day two months earlier)³⁶ wanting to despoil Sussex gentry and to have the heads, so it was

alleged, of some of the gentlemen of the county, especially of those who had been against Cade.³⁷ This was also the alleged aim and intention of a group of rebels who rose up at Hastings on 20 November. They included in their number at least two former supporters of Cade and it is likely that all of them had been fellow insurgents during June and July.³⁸

There were too, plenty of petty local leaders ready to latch on to Cade's notion of a 'captain' and to settle local grievances or inflame old quarrels in this atmosphere of seething unrest. On 25 November 1450 a 'Captain of Burwash' led some sort of a riot in demonstration against the abbot of Robertsbridge's fair whilst it was being held at that village. This may well have been an old argument over the abbot's privileges surfacing again.³⁹

An interesting aspect of the troubles in the county was the way in which they extended into the hundred courts in some places. At the meeting of the hundred of Shiplake on 6 October the tithing men from Waldron, Chiddingly, East Hoathly, Ripe and Laughton, villages and hamlets just west of Hailsham, all asked for a postponement of the payment of their usual common fine until the next meeting of the hundred court. The steward granted his permission to this request (one would like to know with how much grace). But, to all appearances at least, this unconventional action passed off without acrimony and the fines were duly paid at the next hundred court held the following April.⁴⁰ In contrast, in the rolls of the neighbouring hundred court of Battle the same disobedience (which had already been demonstrated at the Easter lawday) was felt to merit some explanation. The tithing men who

came to the court on 9 October 1450 paid no common fines 'propter inobedienciam populi rebellantis contra tales consuetudines usitatos'. They also refused to pay the chevage owed by residents in the tithings who were not tenants of the abbot. In the manorial court of Battle the abbot's beadle was unable either on 9 October or at the two courts held there that November to collect fines or debts on account of the insurrection and disobedience of the people, and he was to continue to have trouble extracting them well into 1451.⁴¹

To look at Essex during this period of July to December 1450 is to see a similar, but not entirely parallel, pattern of plottings, uprisings and lawlessness of a kind which makes rather amusing the detached and cursory notice jotted in the margin of the Oath Book of Colchester under 1449-50: 'In this same year John Cade made an insurrection in Kent'.⁴² Here too during July after the revolt men continued to meet to exchange treasonous opinions about the king and his lords, as happened at Great Tey, not far west of Colchester, on 24 July.⁴³ Yet whilst the commissioners and juries who investigated the events in Kent and Sussex of this period were to use the term 'Lollard' very loosely to mean anyone who dissented in a way unacceptable to the Crown, and therefore applied it to former supporters of Cade, here in Essex there appears to have been an actual Lollard movement based upon religious unorthodoxy and characterized by a strong anti-clericalism.

September saw an outbreak of this religious insurrection in Essex, focused around a yeoman and weaver from Bocking, Robert

Helder. On 5 September he was preaching at Bocking against the necessity of infant baptism and of confession to a priest, which was, he said, merely a device to heighten the priests' power and prestige, and he argued for a fair division of all goods.⁴⁴ Helder was evidently working to inflame already existing local antipathies towards the church and its ministers since four days later at Sible Hedingham he and a large gang of men from Bocking and Sible Hedingham took part in a vicious anti-clerical attack. They broke into the house of John Smyth, rector of the church at Sible Hedingham, killed and beheaded him and looted his belongings, carrying off his horse, saddlery and household effects, much in the manner of the attack on the duke of Suffolk's chaplain at Alderton, Suffolk, the previous month.⁴⁵ In the light of this incident it is rather surprising that Helder was able to obtain a pardon within a couple of years.⁴⁶

On 8 September the earl of Oxford and Viscount Bourghier and a posse of Essex knights and esquires were commissioned to go into Essex to gather up a force of whatever estate, rank and condition to go with them against these insurgents both in Essex and its neighbouring counties to arrest and imprison them.⁴⁷

In the meantime, alongside the bitter anti-clerical activity, former supporters of Cade's revolt were still invoking their leader's name. On 10 September at Colchester, not far away to the east of Sible Hedingham, a baker of the town and a miller from West Bergholt with some 50 or so others gathered and declared that Cade was alive yet and that they continued to support his ideas.⁴⁸ Some of their number led by a Colchester brickmaker, Richard Tailor, ran riot and robbed goods, including a hefty sum

of 100 shillings in cash, from the parson of St. Leonard's, Colchester. Taillor was imprisoned by the town bailiffs, but, in a town with a populace as insubordinate as Colchester's then was, it is not surprising to hear that some of his fellow insurgents in Cade's cause (who had like Taillor gone on the long trek down to Mile End in July) broke into the gaol a few days later and released him.⁴⁹

On 11 and 12 September a very large demonstration of men from the surrounding districts rose up at Horndon in southern Essex claiming that Cade was still alive.⁵⁰ Then on 14 September Cade's supporters in Colchester and West Bergholt staged yet another rising this time on Bergholt Heath.⁵¹ The following day a large gang of them accomplished the break-in at Colchester gaol. The month drew to a close with an insurrection at Ardleigh, just north-east of Colchester, on 21 September.⁵²

As for Norfolk and Suffolk, there were, as was suggested in the previous chapter, disturbances there too in the aftermath of Cade's rising, the murder on 4 August of Suffolk's chaplain at Alderton being the single most significant incident. Nonetheless, much of the evidence for the extent of this disturbance is drawn merely by inference from the amount of law enforcement that these two counties were thought to need during the late summer and autumn. On 1 August, the same day on which the commission of oyer and terminer was set up to go into Kent, a similar commission was also appointed to ride up into Norfolk and Suffolk. It was led by the bishop of Ely, the duke of Norfolk and the earl of Oxford who were accompanied by Sir John Fastolf, Sir Andrew Ogard

and Sir John Hevenyngham.⁵³ Also included were men who had sat on the London commission set up on 1 July: Thomas Scales, John Prisot, William Yelverton and John Markham. There was a good deal of thankfulness up in Norfolk when the word got round that such a commission had been appointed, for the county was restive that August with a renewed desire to see the punishment of de la Pole adherents. A threat was in the air that the county would rise up if some amends were not made.⁵⁴ Thomas Daniel of Castle Rising in Norfolk, summoned to appear before the king that Michaelmas term (October to early November), defaulted. Quite rightly, he did not trust himself to the roads at that time 'owing to the evil disposition of the king's lieges then rebelling within the realm'.⁵⁵

Another suggestion of the troubled state of Norfolk and Suffolk at the time was the employment of lords of local influence that August to suppress disturbances, men such as the notorious Lord Moleyns who 'hadde sore be laboured in his cuntre to peas and stille the poeple there to restreyngne them from rysyng'.⁵⁶ Moleyns was in the king's protection: that September Henry specifically asked that legal proceedings against him by John Paston for his armed break-in at Gresham in January 1450 should be suspended.⁵⁷ On 1 November a commission of oyer and terminer was set up to go to Norwich in particular.⁵⁸ There was a good deal of judicial work going on in East Anglia that winter with hearings at Swaffham on 17 September and at Norwich on 22 September, 16 November and 15 December when the sitting lasted seven days. The August commission continued its hearings through the winter into the spring of 1451 at Lynn, Norwich and, in May, at Walsingham.⁵⁹

London and Middlesex were also in an unsettled state. On 7 September a gang of some 25 men broke into the house of John Trevilian at Cranford in Middlesex, taking goods valued at £40.⁶⁰ And indeed, news of the capital's troubled atmosphere had reached the Mediterranean. The Venetian senate expressed its concern that October for the safety of their visiting galleys since the city of London and the whole island were understood to be in great combustion.⁶¹

As for the king during the later part of 1450, he was at Westminster from 31 July to 8 October. He then spent the remainder of the month itinerating from Essex to western Surrey, from thence to Hampshire and back to his palace at Sheen in Surrey, so skirting the more troublesome areas of the south.⁶² From 5 November with the new parliament about to open, he returned to Westminster where he stayed for the rest of the year. Well might the parliament summoned that September to assemble in November have on its agenda not only the problems of the defence of the realm, the keeping of the sea and the support of Gascony, but also the question of dealing with the continuing riots and insurrections at home.

II

The gatherings of Cade's die-hards in Kent, Sussex and Essex during August and September 1450 with their hectoring leaders and unruly supporters drawn from nearby localities offer an interesting contrast to the movement of men about East Anglia during the

second week of November. Then whole platoons of some communities were mobilised not upon their own initiative but at the bidding of their overlord, the duke of York. York, recently and unexpectedly returned from his post in Ireland early in September was seeking to bolster his position in the parliament which had commenced at Westminster on 6 November. During the following week he raised retinues from towns and villages from a wide stretch of country: from Caxton and Wendy to Newmarket and Isleham in Cambridgeshire; from Grantham and Stamford in Lincolnshire; from Fotheringhay just in Northamptonshire south of Stamford; and from Thaxted in northern Essex from where the inhabitants marched down the county through Chelmsford.⁶³ The orchestrated movement of retinues such as this, a significant phenomenon in the 1450s, throws into clear focus the fact that not all gatherings of the inhabitants of townships were 'popular uprisings'. The 52 men named as congregating at Grantham, for example, were tanners, butchers, millers, cooks, weavers, glovers and the like.⁶⁴

York, who had not been involved during the years immediately preceeding 1450 in the diplomatic and military failures in France, and who was clearly not an associate of Suffolk, was one of the few magnates to command the respect of the common people. Just as the mantle of Suffolk appeared to be falling upon Somerset,⁶⁵ so York was being regarded in a similar light to that of the late 'Good Duke Humphrey', a true born aristocrat not permitted to carry his proper weight in the council. Just how far York was directly implicated in Cade's rising is the most intriguing question raised by the story of 1450. There is no direct evidence from the participants themselves beyond their call that Henry should take

about him the 'high and mighty Prince the Duke of York, late exiled from the king's presence by the motion and stirring of the traitorous Duke of Suffolk and his affinity', but they applied this plea too to the dukes of Exeter, Buckingham and Norfolk.⁶⁶ Yet the authorities were highly suspicious of some connection between the revolt of 1450 and the duke. During the rising the king and his ministers believed Cade to be called Mortimer and even after they had been disabused of this notion they still regarded the leader's assumption of such a name as highly significant. This accounts for the government's nervousness and agitation upon York's arrival in England in September 1450 and explains why Reginald Bouchers, the abbot of Gloucester, now bishop-elect of Hereford, and John, Lord Dudley, should have committed themselves to York's safekeeping at this time.⁶⁷ In 1456 Henry VI would write to the king of Scotland that ever since the time Jack Cade or Mortimer raised insurrection everything had been in turmoil willed by the duke of York of Mortimer descent.⁶⁸ Tudor historians made this contemporary suspicion into a matter of fact. It was easily done. By 1580 Stow would introduce the subject of the revolt,

'In the moneth of May the commons of Kent in great numbers assembled, having to their Captaine Jacke Cade, who named himselfe Mortimer, cosin to the Duke of Yorke, or as he was named of some John Amendall.'

It was not a far step to Stow's seventeenth century. edition which ran,

'The death of the Duke of Suffolke brought not the Realme in quiet, for those that favoured the Duke of Yorke, and wished the crowne upon his head, procured a commotion in Kent.'⁶⁹

Whilst earlier than Stow William Darell, chaplain to Queen Elizabeth,



in his history of Dover castle, stated baldly that Cade's rebellion had been stirred up by the duke of York and his adherents, and Edward Hall told his readers with cunning logic that the rising had begun in Kent just in order that suspicion might be deflected from the duke.⁷⁰

Evidence from the events of the rising itself in 1450, whilst suggestive, is inconclusive - evidence such as, for example, that in July 1450 men from York's town of Newbury rose up and went into Hampshire,⁷¹ or that he kept his horses at Tonbridge in the Weald of Kent.⁷² No more decisive as evidence is the increasing association with York's name among insurgents who rose up subsequently to 1450,⁷³ particularly in south-western Kent, since - and this is what gives the matter its great ambivalence - on his return to England in the autumn of 1450 York took on himself the role of petitioner and reformer formerly assumed by Cade. It was York now who in September 1450 presented the king with two bills of complaint. One admittedly was a protestation of his own innocence of allegations of treason, but the other was a list of those things he wanted attended to in parliament. Setting himself forth as the upholder of justice, he complained of the failure to bring due justice to those persons who had been indicted by the recent commissions of oyer and terminer in August.⁷⁴

The nearest suggestion of a popular initiative to back the duke was the activities of a group of men from Navestock, north-west of Brentwood in Essex, who rode about the county at the end of November proclaiming that shortly they should have a new king.⁷⁵ No one but York could really be meant by this. The name of one of this group appears on the pardon list of 7 July, so

it is possible that they were all earlier followers of Cade who now saw their hope for reform to lie with the duke of York.

In returning to East Anglia and Northamptonshire that autumn before the new parliament opened in early November, York had placed himself in a region whose population was not only favourable to him as their landlord in many instances, but also deeply hostile to the associates of the late duke of Suffolk there. The duke of Norfolk was married to York's niece and as York's ally had met him in October at Bury St. Edmunds to agree as to who should stand as knights of the shire for Norfolk in the forthcoming parliament. It was York's hope to have men of his mind returned not only for Norfolk but also for Suffolk, Northamptonshire and Oxfordshire. In this they were only partially successful.⁷⁶ So obvious was it that York had come to redress the balance of power in East Anglia that Tuddenham and Heydon, two of the most infamous of the Suffolk's affinity, had attempted reconciliation with him. A clerk employed by Justice Yelverton - himself no member of the Suffolk group - suggested to his correspondent at this time that the town of Swaffham should use York's visit there as a public demonstration against the likes of Tuddenham and Heydon. They should present York with a bill concerning these oppressors and there should be shouting in the streets by all the inhabitants asking that York do 'sharp executyon' upon them: the same procedure should be followed in Norwich.⁷⁷

So with East Anglia released into a state of public outcry against its oppressors through York's return, the duke went down

to the new parliament accompanied by the duke of Norfolk and a strong retinue. London was in an ill-governed state, still unsettled from July's revolt and now having to cope with the presence of redundant soldiery out of France and magnate retinues up from the provinces. The duke of Somerset, seen as responsible for the French debacle, became now a major victim of looters and rioters. In London he had to be sent to the Tower for his own safety, whilst up in Suffolk his property at Sudbury was ransacked on 1 December.⁷⁸ On 18 December parliament was prorogued until 20 January.

III

If up in Essex men such as John Artour of Great Waltham, his name safely on the pardon roll, spent a pleasant enough winter 1450-51, convivially whiling away the long evenings in by the fire playing at 'the Glove and the Penyprikke', in Kent men, pardoned and unpardoned, had a more anxious season.⁷⁹ Still disturbed and insubordinate, the county lived in fear of reprisals. And indeed, by December 1450 Henry had evidently judged that the time for inquiries into grievances was over. On 14 December - perhaps to counter the popular image growing of the duke - he appointed York to head a commission of oyer and terminer to do justice on those rebels and traitors who had risen in Kent and Sussex since 8 July 1450.⁸⁰ There is no evidence, however, that York ever sat on this commission.

Such was the atmosphere in Kent at the end of January 1451

that a gentleman from Staplehurst, Stephen Christmas, (who had, it is interesting to note, served York in Ireland), went with others about villages of central Kent, Tenterden, Staplehurst, Leeds and Harrietsham, publishing the news that Henry intended to ride upon Kent with a great posse of Lancashire and Cheshire men to lay waste the county.⁸¹ On 28 January, as such rumours circulated, the king embarked on the first judicial progress of his reign in the company of some of his most distinguished subjects, with the dukes of Somerset and Exeter heading an entourage of several thousand men, the intention being to show the men of Kent just how the king dealt with traitors and rebels. The terms of reference of this commission, appointed on 27 January, had been to deal with all those offences committed in Kent since the pardon of 7 July 1450 which were not being attended to by the commissioners assigned on 1 August.⁸² This of course meant the troubles associated with Parmynter's risings on 31 August and all the other disturbances in the Weald and elsewhere during the later part of 1450. Essentially, though, what the commission was about was a punitive show of strength only thinly veiled by the trappings of legal procedure. These commissioners in practice did not make too nice a distinction between those who had risen after 8 July and those, supposedly now immune, who had risen before. In judicial sessions visited upon towns such as Canterbury, Rochester and Faversham that February the commission hanged some 30 Kentishmen whom it found guilty of having risen with Cade or of having declared their disdain for the king and their preference for the duke of York.⁸³ As the villagers of northern Kent saw the shocking sight of carts going laden from the gallows along the wintry

roads to exhibit their ghastly cargoes on London Bridge they dubbed the royal progress 'the harvest of heads'.

At the end of February as Henry made his way back to London through northern Kent a host of unpunished misdoers - 3,000 it was said - awaited him on Blackheath to plead for his mercy.⁸⁴ Some of these had been Parmynter's men.⁸⁵ Henry must have felt a keen satisfaction at this public humiliation of former rebels as he rode past men prostrating themselves before him naked to the waist and with cords tied around their necks. Later, in April, some pardons were issued to these men, an April complacently described in one royal patent letter as a 'time of indulgences and remissions'.⁸⁶

Tenterden was one of the villages where there had been disturbances in January due to the rumours about the king's alleged intention to lay the county waste with Lancashire and Cheshire men.⁸⁷ On 8 February Thomas Gribell, John Frank, John atte Wode and William Roger, all yeomen and husbandmen from Tenterden, were judged on charges of high treason and hanged before the commission at Canterbury. They left behind them in the familiar landscape of the eastern Weald carefully accumulated farmsteads, livestock and fields of arable and pasture land all to be dismembered by opportunist neighbours and the royal escheator. Thomas Gribell was a yeoman of some standing: with a messuage and 100 acres of land worth 53s.4d. a year stocked with livestock and goods worth £21 25s.6d., he must have been one of the more prosperous farmers in his community.⁸⁸ The other three men were rather more modest scale farmers with 30, 22 and 16 acres

respectively, but all were men with roots and responsibilities who in normal circumstances would have spent the 8th of February foddering their cattle, horses and pigs and keeping an eye on lambing ewes. Not one individual from Tenterden had their name placed on the pardon roll of 7 July 1450 and the exact details of the charges these men were found guilty of is unknown, but they were among that 'harvest' who were made a ferocious example of as traitors to the Crown.

These show trials had precisely the kind of terrorizing effect they were intended to produce. On 9 February, the day after the Canterbury hangings, men were agitating at Maidstone and Birling, a village just to its north-west, trying to stir up the populace to ride to Canterbury to force the king to grant them letters of pardon, and to tell him that there were 5,000 men armed and at the ready in Maidstone if he refused their request.⁸⁹

If in the provinces the king was reasserting his authority with a vengeance, in parliament, which resumed its session on 20 January until it was prorogued again on 29 March, a certain amount of pressure was applied to him. With Oldhall, York's close henchman as speaker, and York and his sympathisers much in evidence, the Commons introduced a bill demanding the dismissal for life of certain named individuals from the king's entourage. This list, which ran to some 29 names, included the widowed duchess of Suffolk, Edmund duke of Somerset, William Booth, bishop of Coventry and Lichfield, Reginald Boulers, abbot of St. Peter's, Gloucester, Edward Grimston, Thomas Daniel, John Trevilian, John Say and Stephen Slegge.⁹⁰ The bill sought to have these people removed from the king for the term of their lives and they were not to come

within 12 miles of Henry ever again. It is perhaps a sign of how volatile he felt the situation to be that Henry was even willing to contemplate some compromise on this matter. He agreed that these persons should go from his presence for the space of a year, except any who were lords and except also 'certein persones which shall be right fewe in nombre the which have be accustomed contynuelly to waite uppon his persone'.⁹¹ And so Henry took much of the bite from the bill. During this same parliament he also had to deal with another Commons petition for resumption, similar to that of the previous year. Indeed, it was the petition which had already been accepted at Leicester in the spring of 1450, but now strengthened by various careful revisions. For example, it was suggested that a committee should be appointed to supervise all the king's future grants. This idea was rejected, but Henry accepted the petition and by the time parliament dissolved at the end of May he had added only 43 provisos of exemption, far fewer than had been the case the previous year. This act was of positive effect and represented something of a triumph for the Commons.⁹²

IV

The judicial progress of February 1451 was a frightening and chastening experience of royal vengeance for Kent. Yet in a spirit of reckless defiance on 24 March at Solestreet, midway between Canterbury and Ashford, men allegedly met together and agreed, with the sound of men on the defensive, that Cade was still their

captain and leader, that he was still alive, that he was of the blood of Mortimer and that the kingdom belonged by right to him and not to Henry. 93

Despite such shows of bravado the atmosphere that spring was one of great mistrust and apprehension. After their months of ascendancy Cade's followers were now living under the fear of potentially county-wide witch-hunts and hangings. In April 1451 at Nonington, just south-west of Eastry, close by the seat of the local knight and justice of the peace, Walter Langley, a public figure of not altogether wholesome reputation, a gentleman of the village, John Chamberleyn, rode about the district announcing to his fellow parishioners as they worked in their fields that Langley intended to indict him and 4,000 men of eastern Kent. If Langley had his way, he told them, the king would get them all up to London and hang the lot of them, giving dramatic emphasis to this piece of news by turning to his horrified listeners as they stood at their ploughs and declaring, 'Thee he will hang ! And thee he will hang!'.⁹⁴

In such an atmosphere it is not perhaps surprising that later that same April there were disturbances in Kent and Sussex as widespread and intense as any under Parmynter's captaincy, some occurring in the very hundred of Eastry where John Chamberleyn had been spreading alarm. There was, supposedly, a prelude to this disturbance on 17 April when one William Dalby, a gentleman of Brookhampton in Warwickshire and of London, and others said to be of Cade's following, allegedly met in the forest of Worth in northern Sussex, near the Surrey border just east of Crawley. There, it was later claimed, they declared that they would shortly

be delivered from Henry's rule by a certain 'marvellous and terrible man of high birth and of the ancient royal race' carrying on his arms a red lion and a white lion with an army of 200,000 men gathering from various parts of England.⁹⁵ His subsequent indictment also hinted that Dalby was in contact by letter with an unnamed duke of the realm.⁹⁶ Leaving aside the fact that Cade's expressed intentions had never included Henry's deposition, this whole incident in the forest of Worth with its uncharacteristically fanciful and cryptic language sounds suspiciously like a fabrication with which to implicate York.

It seems far more probable that it was on the following Wednesday and Thursday, 21 and 22 April, that the troubles in Kent and Sussex really recommenced that spring. In essence it was a Wealden rising; the insurgents were, almost certainly, earlier followers of Cade.⁹⁷ They had reason to be dissatisfied with what had been achieved by Cade's revolt, but their discontent may well have been as much economic as political in origin, for these were weaving villages hit by the slump in trade.

On 21 April Kentishmen, some of them from villages and towns of central Kent such as Yalding and East Peckham, gathered at Eastry and Brenchley in the far east and south-west of the county respectively, allegedly planning to do away with the king and the lords spiritual and temporal of the realm. Perhaps they were encouraged by the knowledge that all but one of the lords on the 'hit-list' drawn up at Eastry in January 1450 were now dead. They further intended, it was alleged, to set up a dozen peers from among themselves to rule the country.⁹⁸ Those gathered at

Brenchley also lay in wait, it was said, to attack one of the constables of the hundred of Brenchley.⁹⁹ On the Thursday, as the trouble persisted at Eastry and Brenchley, the risings and gatherings extended northwards through the Kentish Weald and westwards into the Sussex Weald as Kentishmen, notably Stephen Strode of Biddenden and John Herry and John Hale, both of Wingham, crossed the border carrying their reforming enthusiasm.¹⁰⁰ In Kent weavers, husbandmen and labourers from villages on the northern edge of the Weald met that day at Tonbridge.¹⁰¹ Meanwhile in Sussex at Rotherfield and Mayfield the inhabitants were gathering, joined by men who had made the hour or so long journey (if by foot) from Dallington and by others who had travelled in for longer from Beckley, and they allegedly declared that they wanted the heads of certain Sussex gentlemen, especially of those who were against Jack Cade.¹⁰² The Kentishmen also heckled and roused the men of Burwash that day, who gathered in numbers and debated the idea of overthrowing the king and his lords and of installing 12 men from among themselves in their place.¹⁰³ Apart from the Kentish leaders who had moved into the Sussex Weald that Thursday the main ringleader to these demonstrations was a Henry Hasilden, a shingler from Rotherfield. The troubles at Rotherfield continued into the following day¹⁰⁴ and even into the following week at Linton, King's Wood and Cox Heath, villages just south of Maidstone, where men from the surrounding district met to give their assent to Hasilden's proposals.¹⁰⁵

Men such as Hasilden who could engender a desire for radical methods of reform in this way over a wide area of country (some 80 miles in breadth) were obviously to be given short shrift at

law. At an inquest held at Lewes in the first half of May Hasilden was hanged along with a fellow Rotherfield man and the itinerant Kentish agitators, John Herry and John Hale from Wingham.¹⁰⁶ Stephen Strode gained a reprieve by turning king's approver and appealing a whole group of his fellow insurgents.¹⁰⁷

That May as the sheriff rounded up 36 rebels in Sussex,¹⁰⁸ Kent continued in the state of restless distrust of the king and his councillors into which the county had been thrown by February's executions. On the northern coastal marshes of Kent at Cliffe and at Strood and in the parish of Frindsbury rumours were circulated by local husbandmen and a miller that Henry intended to go over to France to bring the king of France back with him to destroy the people of Kent.¹⁰⁹ Similar tension showed itself in the eastern part of the county later in the month with the activities of a Sandwich weaver who rode about through the villages and towns of Sturry, Wingham, Canterbury and Sarre rousing the populace to rise up against the king.¹¹⁰

On 20 May the king responded to this continuing unrest by issuing commissions of oyer and terminer to go into Suffolk, Hampshire, Wiltshire, Surrey, Sussex and Kent.¹¹¹ In Surrey and Sussex the commisssioners were to deal with all treasons and insurrections and the like since the issuing of the pardons, that is, since 8 July 1450; in Kent they were to deal with the troubles arising since the establishment of the previous commission on 27 January 1451.

During June 1451 justices, still acting under the January commission and dealing with Parmynter's supporters of 1450, were in

session at Tonbridge from 26 June to 1 July.¹¹² They also dealt with the more recent troubles associated with Henry Hasilden. On 24 June they hanged a Henry Bedell from Thornham for his part in the risings at Eastry and Brenchley on 21 and 22 April.¹¹³ Other supporters of Hasilden such as Richard Payn of East Peckham in something of a contrast managed to obtain a pardon.¹¹⁴ Whilst at Thornham Henry Bedell's neighbours were to see his 60 acre farm made a gift of by the king: a John Roger was the favoured squire on this occasion.¹¹⁵ Henry may have been made an example of among Hasilden's supporters as a particularly turbulent agitator. The charges against him also included the committing of assault and robbery that April, but, more importantly, as the only man among the 48 or so indicted as followers of Hasilden to have his name written on the pardon roll of 7 July 1450 he was possibly known as a supporter of Cade.¹¹⁶

The session at Tonbridge was the beginning of another judicial progress through the South-East as the king took his justice in person to a particularly recalcitrant area of his kingdom. In July he and the commission headed by the duke of Somerset moved westwards from Tonbridge into Sussex to make inquest into all troubles there since 8 July 1450, sitting first at Lewes and then at Chichester. Here in Sussex too the king exacted an exhibition of subjection from those seeking pardons. Such men were made to prostrate themselves to the ground, stripped to the waist before him in the streets of Chichester. One man who paid this price in personal dignity for a pardon was John Westbourne, a yeoman from Hollington,¹¹⁷ north-west of Hastings, who exemplifies well the mixed roles found among many of the insurgents in the South-East at

this time. He had risen up at the lathe court at Sedlescombe on 14 July 1450 associating with a man who on other occasions that year had allegedly called himself a kinsman of Cade, but in other years Westbourne had sat himself as a juror at inquests upon miscreants.¹¹⁸

Also humbling himself before the king that July at Chichester was William Page, a gentleman from Warminster in Wiltshire, who had taken part in the pillaging of the valuables of William Aiscough, the bishop of Salisbury, at Maiden Bradley in June 1450.¹¹⁹ The king was out to punish not just Surrey and Sussex but also Hampshire and Wiltshire. By 14 July the commission had progressed to Winchester where it sat for four days. There indictments were at last brought against certain individuals charged with the murder of Adam Moleyns, bishop of Chichester, a year and a half previously. One such accused was a sailor from Worthing, another was a soldier, Cuthbert Colvile, who had been retained by the king in November 1449 for half a year's military service abroad.¹²⁰ That Friday, 16 July, as the commission continued its hearings at Winchester men were gathering at Thorpe by Norwich allegedly saying that they wished to do as John Cade, once captain of Kent, had done before; they made out a list of local and national 'traitors' whom they should kill, including Thomas Hoo, Lord Hastings, the former chancellor of Normandy.¹²¹

1451 may well have seen a change in mood among the common people of the South-East: the risings that had taken place since Cade's revolt had all proved ineffectual despite their wide geographical base and the king's offensive against the counties

during the spring and summer of that year left a bitter memory. The records of 1451 tell us largely of the troubles under Hasilden in eastern and central Kent and eastern Sussex, but disruptions may have occurred to the routine of life all over the South-East in the year which followed the summer of 1450. This is hinted at by the case of Street in southern Kent, a few miles inland from Hythe overlooking Romney marsh, where the common fine usually paid in the manorial court went unrendered that year, 'causa insurreccionis populi sive comitatus kanc'.¹²²

Whatever their opinions of Henry had been, and there are numerous indications that the king was unpopular before 1450, especially since the death of Gloucester in 1447,¹²³ Cade and his supporters had been careful not to implicate him in their complaints along with his evil councillors. By 1451, however, Henry was seen as an unpredictable enemy who had literally brought the South-East to its knees. For the time being the region was perhaps subdued; although men might gather that autumn in a Kentish village and say that Henry was not fit to be king, they did not pursue the matter further.¹²⁴

V

We have just seen that men were invoking Cade's name in Norfolk in July 1451. In the spring of 1452, probably in April, a Roger Church, the bailiff of Blofield hundred in Norfolk, met with a gathering of some 15 men in a wood at Postwick, four miles east of Norwich, with a view to stirring up insurrection. Church told his fellowship that he had remembered a good name for their

captain, it should be John Amendalle.¹²⁵ This was, of course, a name by which Cade had been known. If this sounds like the beginnings of a rising by Cade's followers in Norfolk, that was precisely its intention. The gathering at Postwick was a piece of fraud which was acted out in order that one set of Norfolk men might place another into trouble. It throws light on the atmosphere which prevailed in East Anglia at the time. Roger Church, who flaunted the law under Thomas Daniel's protection and who was an associate of men such as Charles Nowell and Robert Dallyng, became chief actor in this charade at the instigation of Robert Ledeham who had assured him of a pardon through the influence of Daniel. And so Church had himself arrested by some of his own associates as a riser and promoter of sedition just so that he might appear before the duke of Norfolk to be judged by law. Once in this position he could offer to turn king's evidence on his accomplices and name a list of innocent men from his neighbourhood - husbandmen, farmers and gentlemen - whom he alleged were involved in this 'rising'. It was a cunning piece of calculation, although it apparently did not succeed. It would not be the last occasion in which Cade's name was taken in vain.

It is likely that the next major popular disturbance to occur in the region which had supported Cade actually came in May 1452 and was in effect an extension and revival of the demonstration of support for the duke of York made at Dartford in the March of that year, although, in this show of strength at Dartford when York demanded the removal of the duke of Somerset from the king's presence, far fewer Kentishmen came to York than he expected -

according to the account of the Davies' chronicle.

The captain of the Kentish risers of May 1452 was one John Wilkyns, a peddler from Stratford-on-Avon. In 1446 Wilkyns had reached such a state of indebtedness to certain citizens and mercers of London, Robert Hallum, Roger Middelmore and Edward Grimston, that he had been obliged to give up to them all his goods and chattels.¹²⁶ It was perhaps this background of grievance against men such as Grimston which fired his concern to see that the issues of 1450 were not forgotten. As with the indictments concerning Parmynter's supporters in 1450, here too a connection with Cade is made explicit. Another recurring element was the localities involved. As with the risings led by Henry Hasilden in April 1451, the areas of Kent participating in the disturbances were the Weald and the villages of central Kent just to the north of the Weald: Cranbrook, Goudhurst, Marden, East Peckham and Yalding. Assembling in these villages from Saturday 6 May until Monday 8 May were men from the north of the county, from Gravesend, Cliffe, Cooling and Rochester as well as the inhabitants of nearer communities such as Wrotham, Mereworth, Hadlow, Horsmonden, Ightham and Shipbourne.¹²⁷ The names are known of over 130 of the men who were charged with rising up behind Wilkyns during these three days, so that the alleged number of 300 insurgents meeting in the villages at this time may well be somewhere near the truth.¹²⁸

The wide geographical span of the rising may well have been achieved by the movement of Wealden men about north-western Kent rousing other men to rise. When on the Sunday royal officials in Aylesford, just north of Maidstone, were seeking Wilkyns they

encountered a group of his supporters there from Goudhurst, Horsmonden and Biddenden, all Wealden villages away to the south. These men refused to co-operate in their search and asserted moreover that Wilkyns came as a friend of the king and not as a traitor.¹²⁹

The insurgents' alleged demands were for an assortment of political and religious reforms. They wanted the petitions sought in the last parliament by them and all Kent put into effect 'even in the unwilling teeth of the king'; they wanted to do away with the power of the bishops; they desired that priests should possess nothing more than a chair and a candlestick for reading; and they, like certain men of Essex late in 1450, asserted that Cade was 'alive and their chief captain in carrying out their decisions'.¹³⁰ Their later indictments described them as 'sons of the devil and lollards', but as important as their religious views was the matter of the petitions put by them in the parliament at Westminster. It was suggested that the earl of March was going to arrive in Kent with a great posse of Welshmen to help them obtain these petitions, and that Lord Cobham and his brother would aid them too.¹³¹ These insurgents were being charged as supporters of York above all else.

Yet that these men were former supporters of Cade is suggested not only by their claim that Cade was still alive, but also by the fact that among these insurgents charged with rising behind Wilkyns, 13 of them had had their names placed on the pardon roll of 7 July 1450. Here then Cade's cause may be seen merging into the Yorkist cause.

The rising came to nothing, but in conjunction with the events at Dartford it was serious enough to merit a swift and strong response. On 11 May, only three days after Wilkyns' men were gathered in Marden, Cranbrook, East Peckham and Yalding, a commission of oyer and terminer headed by the earl of Shrewsbury, John Talbot, veteran campaigner of the war, was set up to go into Kent to investigate all treasons committed in the county since 7 July 1450, that is to say, since the issuing of pardons to Cade's followers.¹³² The following day the justices began their sitting at Dartford and continued their investigations there until 16th May.

A reward of £20 was offered to anyone capturing Wilkyns so that he might be brought to law, a sufficient inducement to make a Thomas Burton, esquire, take himself off on horseback with a company of 24 others to seek him out amongst the wooded slopes and isolated farmsteads of the Weald.¹³³ There by the use of spies and guides Burton took Wilkyns in late May or in the first days of June, and so Wilkyns was conveyed to the Tower of London. On 28 June he was taken by boat downstream to Dartford where he was dragged on a hurdle to the gallows and there hanged, drawn and quartered.¹³⁴ Twenty-eight others are said to have been hanged.¹³⁵ Besides these, a couple of his followers paid fines, a few were found not guilty of the charges against them, and a sizeable proportion of them obtained pardons that June. For half a dozen of them this was their second royal pardon in almost exactly two years.¹³⁶

VI

Kent was in a state of turbulence not to be easily calmed. The men of the county felt that the king had broken faith with them: their grievances had not been remedied; the county was again in the hands of corrupt royal officials. At Harrietsham in mid-Kent, east of Maidstone, a demonstration took place that offers a clear picture of this sense of disillusionment and betrayal among Cade's followers in Kent. On 21 August 1452 Henry Hamon, a sawyer from Headcorn, and William atte Chamber, a fuller from Harrietsham, both of whom had had their names inscribed on the pardon roll of 7 July 1450 and who were likely to have been former supporters of Cade, and Robert Naisshe, a labourer from Frinsted who had supported Wilkyns in the spring of 1452, along with other men of the district met at Harrietsham. They wanted to see the fulfilment of the petitions put forward by the commons of Kent and they proposed that Henry Hamon should carry sealed letters written in invisible ink (to be read by holding them against the fire) from them to the duke of York or the earl of Devon. Besides this they made out a list of those men holding public office in the county whom they thought were working against the good of the people. Included on this list was Alexander Iden, the man who had caught Cade in 1450 and who had replaced the murdered Crowmer as sheriff of Kent. Their intention was, allegedly, to kill these named individuals and to place bills on their corpses explaining that they had been so killed because this was how it was done in the time of Jack Straw - evidence that the

precedent of the 1381 rising was still in everyone's mind. These Harrietsham insurgents were angry because they felt that the Kentish petitioners at the time of Cade's revolt had been deceived by the bishops (these would be the archbishops of Canterbury and York and the bishop of Winchester who had negotiated the pardon with them) and by the king who had put certain persons to death against the promise given in his pardons to them.¹³⁷ As indeed he had.

Two months later at Chelsfield in north-western Kent, south-east of Bromley, a former parson of the parish church there and some others were dreaming of a second Cade's revolt. They allegedly sent an embassy to a certain John Sharp to ask if he would be their governor to raise war against the king and to behead certain magnates such as the archbishop of Canterbury, believing that they could call on the support of some four or five thousand men.¹³⁸ This John Sharp whom the gathering at Chelsfield regarded as well qualified to take on himself Cade's mantle had been one of those men (at least two of whom were hanged) who had risen up in the ward of Baynard's Castle on 6 March 1452 with the intention, it was said, that men from the March of Wales and from Kent should join to dethrone the king, rising again on 20th April at Ludlow.¹³⁹ He was quite obviously an adherent of the duke of York. The indictments for these two spring risings had been presented during August and Sharp may still have been in the Marshalsea prison or just released from it when he received this embassy.

The Chelsfield plans of October 1452 were apparently nothing more than indiscreet plotting, but in a matter of months the same Chelsfield priest, one Robert Colynson, had managed to create quite

a stir in the king's council by rather more subtle means than those proposed in October. He publicized in various parish churches that he had been confessor to the Kentish leader, John Wilkyns, hearing his confession that June in Dartford as he lay tied to a hurdle on his way to be hanged, and that Wilkyns had disclosed to him at that time information seriously implicating Ralph, Lord Cromwell, as a traitor to the king.¹⁴⁰

In reply to this slander Cromwell was to produce witnesses to say that Wilkyns had spoken to no confessor on his journey out from Dartford parish church to the gallows, that he had made his confession to a priest on the boat coming down to Dartford from the Tower; Cromwell asserted that the claims being made were 'fals, untrewe and oonly proceded of malice and of fals groundes and ymaginacions'. He made out a strong case, not only pointing out his own long history of loyal service to the Crown, but also revealing Colynson's disreputable past, his expulsion from Cambridge for an unpriestly life and seditious sermons, his association with Sharp and his womanizing, fraud and evil living throughout many different parts of the country. Cromwell was cleared of any taint of guilt, but the fact that he had had to make a very long and elaborate defence before the king and his council in reply to the charges of a notorious troublemaker is an extraordinary incident, lighting up the kind of enmities at work among the king's council, now becoming more and more in evidence.

Early in 1453 Robert Poynings, the Sussex gentleman who had been Cade's carver and sword-bearer, began kindling support for a new demonstration in the South-East. On 2 January he made a

gathering in Southwark of 'much sympell and noghtie pepill'. These people are likely to have been previous supporters of Cade since some of them had been outlawed for treason.¹⁴¹ The canvassing of Cade's insurgents continued on 28 January at Westerham in Kent, west of Sevenoaks, where Poynings met with Thomas Bigg, a yeoman from Lambeth who had been one of Cade's petty captains, and some 30 other individuals.¹⁴² The letter writing which had characterized Cade's campaigning for support was evident on this occasion, for a few weeks later, in February 1453, Poynings sent out letters to two men in Sussex, men who had been indicted of high treason by the commission taken to Chichester. One of them was Robert Poyntell, a husbandman from Sutton, Sussex, who had been one of the ringleaders of the rising at Chichester in August 1450.¹⁴³ These two men responded by answering Poynings' summons to Southwark, meeting him there on 28 February, where, and this is interesting to note, they received money from Poynings. Poynings thanked them for their goodwill and asked that they might continue in it and be ready to come to him at such time as he should alert them. Not only, then, did the rebels of 1450 remember each other but they were in contact and even allegiance to one another.

Another of Cade's former under-captains harking back to the causes of 1450 during 1453 was Michael Skellys, the Scarborough leech. He had now taken up residence in Southwark in the Marshalsea prison. In October 1453 Skellys was charged with expressing his regret during August that the captain of Kent had not reigned and of having declared that under Cade's reign it would have been a merry realm, for the king was but a sheep who had lost all that his father had won: he should have died at

birth. Moreover, the leech was charged with conspiring with a fellow prisoner to rectify this unfortunate state of affairs by killing Henry through magic and necromancy. These two conspirators also allegedly sought the heads of John Kemp, the archbishop of Canterbury and chancellor, of the duke of Somerset and of the duke of Buckingham in payment for the taking of Cade's head.¹⁴⁴

VII

There remains one other rising in Kent during the 1450s that should be mentioned. This is the rising led by John Percy, a tailor from Erith in north-western Kent who called himself John Mortymer in direct imitation of Cade, which took place in the Weald over five days, Monday to Friday, during the last week of April 1456 at the villages of Hawkhurst and Rolvenden, Kent, and at Lamberhurst (which was then in Sussex). This was no small disturbance. For what went on that week a man was hanged and over a hundred villagers from the Weald were fined, the great majority of these being from Hawkhurst and Rolvenden. Their alleged aims were to make some very drastic reforms among the county clergy, killing the pluralists and mutilating the rest, killing the lords and gentlemen of Kent and of all the realm and electing 12 peers from among their own number to govern and rule the county and to implement all the articles put forward by Jack Cade. Finally they asserted that Cade, alias Mortymer, was still alive and that their leader John Percy, alias John Mortimer, was John Mortimer, alias Cade.¹⁴⁵

Although three of the Hawkhurst insurgents went about the county inciting others to rise, this would seem to have been a strongly localized disturbance.¹⁴⁶ It included a few men from Robertsbridge, Wadhurst, Linton, East Peckham, Goodhurst and Pluckley, but the great majority came from the villages of Hawkhurst and Rolvenden themselves - although less so from Lamberhurst, the third village in which the risings took place. This apparent solidarity among the men of the two communities may actually quite belie the facts. Percy would seem to have been an insistent captain: 47 of the 126 men later indicted for supporting him were reckoned by the presenting jury to have done so under Percy's threat, compulsion and force and not of their own free will.¹⁴⁷ William Sandherst of Lamberhurst, a former constable of the hundred of Brenchley, was bold enough to resist this general press-ganging and so the mob (including in its own number men supposedly there under duress) turned upon his house and sought William out, so it was alleged, to kill him.¹⁴⁸ If the allegation is true that a large proportion of men did rise only under threat and force - and the possibility that this was merely a device to evade punishment is weakened by the fact that these men were fined just as others were - then a new and subtler light is cast upon the popularity of ostensibly 'popular' insurrections. The crucial nature of the leadership of such demonstrations which was observed before is here given an interesting twist, so that some of these risings could have been more like the aristocratic mustering of retinues by a few individuals, who substituted force for bonds of lordship, than the spontaneous movement of large bodies of men.

Occurring in the last week of April, this Wealden rising came

just a week before the outbreak of anti-alien rioting in London.¹⁴⁹ The two incidents do seem to be separate despite what appears to have been a common connection with the cloth export business. The riots in London were largely of mercers' men angry at what they saw as the unequal trading with the Lombards and other Italians of good English cloth for bits of trinkets and trash; the exchange was seen as a drain on the country's bullion. In the Weald, as has been seen, Percy's followers were asking for wild and unlikely reforms as well as for the settlement of Cade's petition, although the men who were agitating in this way did, in considerable proportion, come from the cloth business. Over 29% of those indicted for supporting Percy were active as tailors, weavers, fullers or clothiers. So when, during May, the sub-
escheator of Kent went to Hawkhurst extorting fines from Percy's followers, or, failing that, goods and chattels (quite illegally, since no charges had yet been made) what he came away with was quantities of woollen and linen cloth.¹⁵⁰

VII

Looking at these risings which took place in Kent in the months and years immediately after Cade's rising in 1450, from Parmynter's rising in August of that year to John Percy's in the last week of April 1456, there appears to be a common thread to connect them. They were all in some way demonstrating an allegiance to Cade. The insurgents were variously described as Cade's 'former accomplices', they were alleged to have declared on

more than one occasion that Cade was still alive and to have called for the implementation of the articles which he had presented to the king. Moreover, there is a geographical coherence about the area in which the several risings occurred: along the north coast from Faversham up to Woolwich, up the Medway valley, and, overwhelmingly, in the Weald and its immediate periphery. A certain interlinking of persons between the different Wealden risings further suggests some adherence to a common ideal. For instance, Robert Nowell, a labourer from Cranbrook, was indicted twice, for supporting Hasilden in April 1451 and John Percy in 1456.¹⁵¹ Robert Naisshe, a labourer from Frinsted, who had supported Wilkyns in May 1452, was also one of those protesting at Harrietsham in the August of that year that the king and his bishops had gone back on their agreement of 1450.¹⁵²

As for the occupations of the insurgents of these several risings, what is known of those who supported Parmynter has already been mentioned - an assortment of trades. In the fuller lists for the other risings the preponderance of artisans is striking: carpenters, smiths, fletchers, bakers and workers in the cloth industry, who in the case of Percy's rising made up over a quarter of all those indicted. The yeomen and husbandmen are far less in evidence, making up a quarter of those indicted for following Wilkyns, 20% of those similarly indicted for following Hasilden, and as few as 12% in the case of Percy's revolt.

This reflects the more industrial nature of the area from which most of these troubles arose. As the first chapter earlier pointed out, the narrow, wooded valleys of the Weald sustained a mixed agricultural and industrial economy, a combination of cloth

producing villages, clearings of iron and charcoal works in the woodland, and isolated pastoral farms. It was an area of a quite distinct character, peculiarly subversive and independent of mind. It was here that Lollardy found one of its main strongholds in Kent. It looks indeed as if some of Cade's followers may possibly have been Wealden Lollards. John Glover of Wittersham who made a public abjuration in 1431 on the charge of having associated with other heretics and having been present at the reading of reprobate books, appears on Cade's pardon roll. The same applies to Thomas Harry of Halden, imprisoned in Newgate in 1438 on suspicion of heresy.¹⁵³ Judging by the villages involved, Tenterden and Cranbrook in particular, it would seem very probable that this Lollard element was to be found in most of the Wealden risings of the 1450s, an association which could perhaps account for the vehemently anti-clerical strain of most of the post-Cade risings. With its tradition of religious unorthodoxy and its precarious economic fortunes fluctuating with the cloth industry, the Weald was undoubtedly the most precipitant region of a more than usually rousable county.

Of the 17 men who are known to have been followers of Parmynter (although this must represent a small proportion of the entire number) not one appears on the 1450 pardon roll; of the 57 indicted for being involved in the risings associated with Hasilden only one appears on the roll; of the 127 indicted for supporting Wilkyns only 13 are named on the pardon roll; whilst a mere two persons among the a 126 indicted for supporting Percy are on the roll. This suggests that a good many of Cade's men

for some reason failed to obtain a pardon at all, a suggestion strengthened by the events at Maidstone and Birling on 9 February 1451, the day after a series of men had been hanged at Canterbury, when men tried to stir up the populace to ride to Canterbury to force the king to grant them letters of pardon.¹⁵⁴

The pardon roll, I suggest, not only included non-rebels, but failed to include many rebels. Apart from the demand for pardons at Maidstone and Birling in 1451, this is a contention which rests on a belief that there was a considerable overlap between the personnel of all these risings between 1450-6. And the evidence for that is the repeated description of such insurgents as Cade's followers, the use of names associated with Cade by the new captains, and also the geographical coherence of these risings, almost all of them occurring in villages and towns of the Weald and of mid-northern Kent.

1. CPR 1446-52, p.388. Included in this commission was William Wangford a Kentish justice. He may be the same William Wangford who had been expelled from Stone castle and manor in 1447 by John Trevilian, Virgoe, *Ancient Indictments*, pp.221-2.
2. Virgoe, *Ancient Indictments*, pp.215-6.
3. *Ibid.*, pp.220-43. This file (KB9/46) covers the inquests held in 1450 in Kent by the commission of 1 August 1450. None of the jurors for the six hundreds of Wingham, Calehill and Chart, Westgate, Larkfield, Maidstone or Tonbridge can be found named on the pardon roll. However, at least one person from each of the three juries for the hundred of Hoo, Axton and the body of Kent (which gathered at Dartford in October) can be identified on the roll. The number rises to three in the case of the single jury for the hundreds of Codsheath, Brasted and Wrotham, four for Shamwell hundred, five in the case of the city of Rochester, six for the joint hundreds of Chateham and Gillingham, and a remarkable 11 for the hundred of Teynham: a total of 32 men. CPR 1446-52, pp.338-74.
4. See the last section of chapter 2 above, and also for Daniel and Say.
5. Virgoe, *Ancient Incictments*, p.216, n.2.
6. *Political Poems*, II, pp.221-3.
7. KB27/790 rex side m.4v; CPR 1446-52, p.469.
8. KB27/790 rex side m.4v, 44, 47v; KB27/770 rex side m.38; KB27/759 rex side m.2; Virgoe, *Ancient Indictments*, pp.253-4; KB9/270A,m.56; C237/42,mm.4, 6, 7, 14; CPR 1446-52, pp.423, 424, 453, 460-1, 469, 497.
9. KB9/122,m.40; KB27/766 rex side m.28.
10. As n.8 above.
11. KB9/122,mm.27, 40; KB27/766 rex side m.28.
12. KB9/122,m.40.
13. KB9/122,m.27.
14. KB27/759 rex side m.2.
15. C244/64/242.
16. E404/67/180.
17. KB29/82,m.15.
18. A. J. Kempe, *Historical Notices of the Collegiate Church of St. Martin-Le-Grand* (London, 1825), pp.136-7; CPR 1446-52, p.424.
19. KB27/790 rex side m.45.
20. CPR 1446-52, pp.460-1.
21. KB9/266,m.84; KB27/765 rex side m.26; Virgoe, *Ancient Indictments*, p.232.

22. CPR 1446-52, p.453.
23. PPC, VI, p.101.
24. Virgoe, *Ancient Indictments*, pp.254-5; KB27/790 rex side m.44v.
25. For example, the English *Faulx-Visaiges* of Normandy in the 1440s, mentioned in J. Stevenson (ed.), *Narratives of the Expulsion of the English from Normandy 1449-50* (RS, 1863), pp.255-6.
26. KB9/122,m.62; KB27/770 rex side m.30v.
27. KB9/265,m.147; CPR 1446-52, pp.353, 359.
28. East Sussex Record Office, Battle Abbey Estate Ms.2711.
29. KB9/122,m.7; KB27/765 rex side m.21; KB27/766 rex side m.33; KB27/770 rex side m.48.
30. KB9/122,m.55; KB27/766 rex side m.33; KB27/770 rex side mm.33, 48.
31. KB9/122,mm.48, 51; KB27/766 rex side m.33; KB27/770 rex side mm.9v, 48; KB27/775 rex side m.3; CPR 1446-52, p.472.
32. KB9/122,mm.7, 24, 48; KB27/765 rex side m.21.
33. The sorcerer and a husbandman from Upwaltham, one of the ringleaders from Sutton, and the rector from Selsey were subsequently pardoned, KB27/765 rex side mm.21, 21v; KB27/775 rex side m.3.
34. A John Clypsam, carpenter, of Hastings is named both in the pardon list of Cade's followers, CPR 1446-52, p.361, and in the indictment for plotting against the king on 5 October, KB9/122,m.15.
35. A Richard Wellys, carpenter, of Warbleton is named in the pardon list, CPR 1446-52, p.359, and a Richard Wellys of the parish of Warbleton, millward, is named in an indictment for the demonstration on 14 October, KB9/122,m.61.
36. Indictments for the events of 26 and 27 August name a John Herkyn of Horsham, husbandman, KB9/122,m.48 and KB27/766 rex side m.38, and indictments for the events of 23 October name a John Herkyn of Horsham, dyer, KB9/122,m.16 and KB27/766 rex side m.38; a John Herkyn of Horsham, dyer, is also described as a notorious thief and accused of various thefts, housebreaking and assault over a period 1439-45, KB9/248,m.46.
37. KB9/122,m.16; KB27/766 rex side m.38.
38. KB9/122,m.21; KB27/781 rex side m.33v, both of which concern the rebels at Hastings on 20 November, name a William Mason, mason, and an Osbert Watte, husbandman, of that town; both of them are to be found on the pardon list, CPR 1446-52, p.361.
39. KB9/122,m.26.
40. BL Additional Roll 32473.

41. East Sussex Record Office XA3/2,287; Eleanor Searle, *Lordship and Community: Battle Abbey and its Banlieu 1066-1538* (Toronto, 1974), pp.398-9.
42. W. Gurney Benham (ed.), *The Oath Book or Red Parchment Book of Colchester* (Colchester, 1907), p.118.
43. KB9/268,m.19; KB27/769 rex side m.28.
44. KB9/268,m.41.
45. KB9/268,mm.40A, 41; KB27/770 rex side m.34; KB9/26/1,m.35.
46. C67/40,m.34.
47. CPR 1446-52, p.431.
48. KB27/765 rex side m.1.
49. KB9/268,m.41A; KB9/26,mm.16, 17; CPR 1446-52, pp.415, 503; KB27/772 rex side m.6.
50. KB9/268,mm.32, 34; KB27/773 rex side m.5.
51. KB9/26,mm.12, 15.
52. KB9/268,m.41A.
53. CPR 1446-52, p.388.
54. PL, II, p.168.
55. CPR 1446-52, pp.413, 468.
56. PL, II, p.161.
57. PL, II, pp.171-2.
58. CPR 1446-52, p.432.
59. PL, II, p.145. This gives the Norwich hearing as the Tuesday after St. Mathias' day, in the 29th year of Henry VI (2 March 1451). In context this is an obvious misreading for 'St. Mattheus' whose feast falls on 21 September. There is also mention elsewhere of the duke of Norfolk being at Norwich on 15 September ready to sit upon the oyer and terminer commission, *ibid.*, p.171.
60. KB9/265,m.56.
61. Rawdon Brown (ed.), *Calendar of State Papers and Manuscripts, relating to English Affairs, existing in the Archives and Collections of Venice and in other libraries of Northern Italy*, I (London, 1864), p.74.
62. B. Wolffe, *Henry VI*, p.368.
63. KB9/7/1,m.10; KB9/65,mm.19, 36, 38, 41, 42; KB9/278,m.51; KB9/94/1,m.5; KB9/26/1,m.28.
64. KB9/65A,m.19.

65. A local thief who was among York's retinue at Grantham demonstrated his loyalty by stealing valuables from the duke of Somerset at Grantham later that November, KB9/65A,m.26.
66. Stow, *Annales* (1631), pp.389b-390a.
67. Griffiths, *Henry VI*, pp.686-7; *Benet's Chron.*, p.202.
68. Rymer, *Foedera*, XI, p.383.
69. Stow, *Chronicles* (1580), p.652; Stow, *Annales* (1631), p.388a.
70. William Darell, *The History of Dover Castle* (trans. Alexander Campbell, London, 1786), p.55; Hall, *Chronicle*, p.lxxvii.
71. See chapter 5, section III.
72. K. B. McFarlane, *England in the Fifteenth Century* (London, 1981), p.235,n.9.
73. Some of those who rose as York's adherents after 1450 are known to have been insurgents in 1450. For example, men accused of attacking the vicar of Melton, Suffolk, in July 1450 would also be accused of rising in support of York in February 1452, KB9/118,mm.32, 33; C67/40,m.1; C1/19/388A.
74. R. A. Griffiths, 'Duke Richard of York's intentions in 1450 and the origins of the Wars of the Roses', *Journal of Medieval History*, I (1975), pp.187-209.
75. KB9/26/1,m.14; Francis at Bury, yeoman, of Navestock, who was named on this indictment had earlier had his name written on the pardon roll of 7 July, CPR 1446-52, p.373.
76. Griffiths, *Henry VI*, p.689.
77. *Ibid.*, p.690.
78. KB27/796 rex side m.10v; KB27/798 rex side m.8.
79. CPR 1446-52, p.371; Essex Record Office D/D Tu 243,m.24. This was a game played with dice.
80. CPR 1446-52, p.435.
81. KB9/267,m.93; CPR 1446-52, p.264.
82. CPR 1446-52, p.453-4.
83. EHL, p.372; *Benet's Chron.*, p.204; *Gregory's Chron.*, pp.196-7.
84. *Benet's Chron.*, p.204.
85. CPR 1446-52, pp.453-4.
86. *Ibid.*, pp.453-4, 460-1.
87. KB9/267,m.93.

88. E357/42 Kent & Middlesex: Lands, tenements, goods and chattels of traitors, outlaws, felons and fugitives.
89. CPR 1446-52, p.505.
90. *Rotuli Parliamentorum*, V, pp.216-7.
91. *Ibid.*
92. B. P. Wolffe, 'Acts of resumption in the Lancastrian parliaments 1399-1456', *EHR* LXXIII (1958), pp.604-5.
93. Virgoe, *Ancient Indictments*, pp.244-5.
94. C1/18/126-129B. The document can be dated to 1451 from internal evidence: it has to be between 1450-1453 when Kemp was chancellor and has to have a Passion Sunday which falls in April. 1451 is the only year of the four to fill both requirements.
95. *VCH Sussex*, I, p.513; KB9/122,m.23.
96. This would have been the duke of York. Dalby declared that the battle between the 'marvellous man' and Henry would take place on Houndslow Heath, and there was a demonstration of York's supporters there in February 1452, KB27/777 rex side m.7.
97. For example, Henry Bedell of Thornham, William Bachelor of Detling and John Martyn of Dallington, indicted for rising at Rotherfield on this occasion, had their names inscribed on the pardon roll of 7 July 1450, CPR 1446-52, p.352.
98. Virgoe, *Ancient Indictments*, pp.245-6, 247, 252. The request for 12 peers is one that recurs in a rising of 1456; it is an idea drawn from popular metrical verse, see n.137 below.
99. Virgoe, *Ancient Indictments*, p.250.
100. KB27/762 rex side m.25; KB27/760 rex side m.1.
101. Virgoe, *Ancient Indictments*, p.251.
102. KB9/122,mm.46, 52.
103. KB27/769 rex side m.43; KB27/760 rex side m.1.
104. KB9/122,m.44.
105. Virgoe, *Ancient Indictments*, pp.244,249.
106. KB27/760 rex side m.1. The sale of Hasilden's forfeited goods and chattels fetched a modest 26s.8d., E136/212/12.
107. KB29/82,m.17.
108. E404/68/137.
109. Virgoe, *Ancient Indictments*, p.246.

110. *Ibid.*, pp.248-9.
111. CPR 1446-52, p.477.
112. Virgoe, *Ancient Indictments*, p.216.
113. *Ibid.*, p.247; E357/42 Kent & Middlesex: Land, tenements, goods and chattels of traitors, outlaws, felons and fugitives.
114. KB27/788 rex side m.27v.
115. E357/42 Kent (this is the source that reports him as having 60 acres of land); E379/174 Kent (reads 40 acres).
116. CPR 1446-52, p.374.
117. CPR 1446-52, p.508.
118. KB9/122,m.62; KB9/255/1,m.6.
119. CPR 1446-52, p.508; KB/9/133,m.19; KB9/134/1,m.15; KB9/134/2,mm.79, 80; KB9/133,m.30.
120. KB9/109,mm.16, 25; E403/777,m.4.
121. KB9/85/1,m.6.
122. Library of the Dean and Chapter, Canterbury, Sacrist roll 38.
123. See chapter two above, section V.
124. KB9/271,m.9.
125. C1/19/487. *PL*, I, pp.113-5; *PL*, II, pp.263-4, 266, 267, 270-2, 274, 312.
126. CC1R 1447-54, pp.103-4.
127. Virgoe, *Ancient Indictments*, pp.257-65, duplicated in KB9/955,m.8, KB9/275,m.7, KB9/273,m.11, KB9/271,m.60.
128. Numbers cannot be too precise, as some names appear in several indictments carrying slight variations of place or employment that suggest they might well be the same person. The total figure includes 10 who rose at Aylesford on the Sunday, KB9/955/2,m.14, KB9/268,m.132.
129. KB9/955/2,m.14; KB9/268,m.132.
130. Virgoe, *Ancient Indictments*, p.258.
131. *Ibid.*, p.259.
132. CPR 1446-52, p.577.
133. E404/68/133.
134. CPR 1452-61, pp.93-102.
135. Virgoe, *Ancient Indictments*, p.219.

136. 38 men were pardoned on 17, 18 and 21 June 1452, CPR 1446-52, pp.553-4; the London vintner who joined the rising also obtained a pardon subsequently, KB27/788, rex side m.29.
137. KB9/955/2,m.2.
138. KB9/273,m.134. 'Jack Sharp' had been the nickname assumed by the Lollard leader William Mandeville, hanged in 1431.
139. KB9/270,m.34.
140. CPR 1452-61, pp.93-102.
141. KB27/789 rex side m.4v; *Rotuli Parliamentorum*, V, p.396.
142. *Ibid.*
143. KB27/789 rex side mm.4, 4v; *Rotuli Parliamentorum*, V, p.396; KB9/122,m.7; KB27/765 rex side m.21v.
144. KB9/273,m.103.
145. KB9/49,mm.4, 5, 6, 10, 11, 13, 14, 15, 16; KB9/288,mm.58, 59; KB9/289,m.88; KB27/787 rex side m.6; KB27/788 rex side m.19. It is interesting to see popular verse acting here as an inspiration for political action. The 'dusypers' or 'douzeperes' were Charlemagne's 12 paladins. Spelt in a great variety of ways, they are to be found frequently in Middle English texts, many of them metrical romances, which deal with the 'Matter of France', that is, romances telling stories of Charlemagne and those which take the name of single knights such as *Sir Ferumbras* or *Sir Otuel*. I am grateful to Susan Hitch for this information.
146. KB9/288,mm.58, 59.
147. KB9/49,mm.4, 11. The total given here of 126 has been calculated by conflating all variant readings of any given name, for example, John Basden of Hawkhurst, tailor, is taken to be the same person as John Basden of Hawkhurst, yeoman, - so the number represents only the absolute minimum of persons. The real total might be one or two more.
148. KB9/49,m.13; KB9/289,m.88.
149. R. Flenley, 'London and Foreign Merchants in the Reign of Henry VI', *EHR* XXV (1910), pp.650-2.
150. KB9/49,mm.7, 12.
151. Virgœ, *Ancient Indictments*, p.251; KB9/49,mm.14, 15.
152. KB9/955/2,mm.2, 14.
153. J. A. F. Thomson, *The Later Lollards, 1414-1520* (Oxford, 1965), pp.176, 178; CCLR 1435-41, pp.197-8; CPR 1446-52, p.361.
154. CPR 1446-52, p.505.

Chapter Seven: Epilogue: the Last Decade of the Reign

By 1460 the Kentish yeoman twanging his jew's harp as he plodded up the furrow behind his plough may have thought back to the rising of 1450 and wondered at the way in which most of its issues had been lost from sight.¹

York had indeed, as the rebels had requested, come back to court and played a full role as the king's adviser and heir. But as the 1450s progressed any hopes which the South-East may have had in the duke as champion for reform must have faded as the struggle played out between himself and the king became a purely dynastic one. The insurgents' cry that the king should live of his own was answered by the Act of Resumption of 1451 which went some way towards regaining some of the Crown's possessions, although it was weakened by exceptions for Henry's favourites. As for grievances such as purveyance and the corruption of county administration, it is very hard to say whether these matters grew either better or worse in the years after 1450. The collectors of the fifteenth in Kent continued to have to sue out the writ of *Quorum nomina* for the exemption of the barons of the Cinque Ports. Nor was any inquest made upon those who had caused the loss of France so that they might be dealt with at law as traitors. The French remained a threat to the south and east coasts, making occasional attacks upon them: Harwich was harried several times during the first half of the 1450s.² The Statute of Labourers too, continued unrepealed.

In one small regard the rebels' complaints were answered - in

the matter of the inconvenience of the journeying involved across Kent to obtain justice at the sessions. But this took some fifty years or more to come and would not have been appreciated by the Kentish yeoman of 1460. In 1496 standard weights and measures were directed to be deposited in certain cities and towns. For Kent the towns of Maidstone and Rochester were the places selected. This appears to be the first time that Maidstone was chosen to supersede Rochester or Canterbury.³ Then, in the same reign at the beginning of the sixteenth century, it was provided that the shire court for Sussex should be held alternately at Chichester and Lewes, rather than only at Chichester.⁴ This change came to Kent sometime after this, so that by the time of Willaim Lambarde, who published his *Perambulation of Kent* in 1576, the division of the Quarter Sessions between Canterbury and Maidstone was a well-established practice.

The last of the requests made by the captain of the great assembly in Kent had been for something to be done about 'the great extortioners', Slegge, Crowmer, Isle and Est. Crowmer of course was murdered during the troubles in London, along with his father-in-law, Lord Saye. Among the three surviving, Stephen Slegge, despite being one of Lord Saye's closest associates and a lawbreaker of the first order, apparently went quite unpunished. With regard to the charges made against him in Kent at the end of 1450 in the immediate aftermath of the revolt, he was either declared not guilty or the indictments of him insufficient.⁶ At another inquest held at Canterbury in April 1452 he was charged with violent break-ins and thefts from the property of Lord Abergavenny in

1449. Although this resulted in Slegge going up to Westminster, rendering himself prisoner of the Marshalsea and then being granted bail, he was in the end found not guilty.⁷ He survived until 1460, so outliving his old associates James Fiennes and William Crowmer by ten years.⁸

William Isle's career subsequent to the revolt was rather more chequered than Slegge's. He made an apparent recovery, but then fell foul of the new Yorkist regime. His public denouncement by Cade's followers in 1450 may possibly have led to the hiatus of three years from December 1450 to July 1453 in his county career as a JP. In 1453 he was again being employed as a justice, however, and then went on to act annually either as JP or on commissions of array throughout the remainder of the 1450s.⁹ But with the coming of Edward IV to the throne his fortunes changed dramatically. In December 1461 a commission was appointed to enquire into the extortions and oppressions committed in Kent by Isle and five others from his home district of Sundridge, just west of Sevenoaks near the Surrey border.¹⁰ Another such commission followed in July 1463, extending its ambit to misdeeds committed in Kent, Surrey and Middlesex.¹¹ Even before this second commission had been appointed, Isle's fall from protection and favour was being exploited by men of the district. Their actions, which had the vehemence of a long held grievance that at last sees its chance, pre-empted any legal proceedings which might have been brought against this 'great extortioner'. That June of 1463 Isle's manor of Sundridge had been broken into and 10 cattle stolen;¹² in August it was 22 oxen; in September it was 20.¹³ These men - labourers, husbandmen, yeomen, tanners and a couple of gentlemen, from Sundridge

and neighbouring Bierling, Brasted, Chevening, Chelsfield and Hever - were not to be cheated of the satisfaction of settling their own score with Isle. On 23 September they ganged up together in the parish of Chelsfield, to the north of Sundridge and for two days actively resisted the progress of William Pecche, kt., and others sent to take and arrest trouble makers in the district.¹⁴ Their score was finally settled a couple of months later during the night of 14 December. As Isle lay sleeping in the vicarage at Freningham (where he was perhaps taking refuge?) his persecutors broke in and killed him in brutal fashion. It was something of a notorious incident. Four months later, in April 1464, Clement Paston knew his correspondent would be interested to know that 'the Kyng hathe ben in Kent and ther ben endityd many for Isleis dethe'. Over a score of men were indicted for the crime.¹⁵

Robert Est, the gentleman notorious for his custody of Maidstone gaol, and the third of the surviving 'great extortioners', apparently came to no great harm for all his unpopularity during 1450. As noted above in chapter five, the uprising of his county left him unchastened and in September 1450 he was carrying on in his accustomed manner, denying knowledge of the existence of his own prisoners and extorting money from them for this dissemblance.¹⁶ He pleaded not guilty to the numerous specific charges made against him in the autumn of 1450 and is not recorded as paying any fines for them, whilst under the general charge of being a common extortioner and oppressor he was let off *sine die* by the court.¹⁷ He appears to have resumed the life of a county official, being appointed in July 1453 on to a

commission to arrest shipping and sailors.¹⁸ Likewise, his employment as a receiver to the archbishop of Canterbury was taken up once again 1454-6.¹⁹ It is even possible that by the end of the century his own townsmen in Maidstone may have remembered him more than for anything else as the co-founder of their gild of Corpus Christi.²⁰

As for those courtiers lampooned in popular verse and denounced in parliament in 1450, of whom Say, Trevilian and Daniel were perhaps the most notorious, the great majority of them survived and thrived during the 1450s and then went on to serve Edward IV. John Say, indeed, got clean away to become a Knight of the Bath under the new king. Say, who had been so active as a JP, commissioner and MP in Hertfordshire and East Anglia during the 1440s, and who had been serving as sheriff for Norfolk and Suffolk during 1450 - a clear sign of being amongst Suffolk's coterie - , suffered little through the Act of Resumption passed at Leicester in the June of that year. He surrendered no more than an annuity of £9 2s. 6d. and lost the keepership of the privy palace of Westminster but was able to retain grants worth £65 8s.4d. ²¹ As has been seen, he was amongst those who (in their absence) were indicted of treasons by Cade's followers at the Guildhall in London that same June, and was named among the undesirables around the king on the Commons' bill in January 1451. But he survived: in reply to parliament Henry made exception of those who were accustomed to wait upon him and so shielded his household men in this way. A commission of spring 1451 acquitted Say of the treason charges. With the murder of William Tresham in September 1450 Say had taken up Tresham's office of chancellor of

the Duchy of Lancaster and was to continue in it until 1471.²² In September 1452 the keepership of the privy palace at Westminster was restored to him. In 1453-4 he was knight of the shire for Hertfordshire and went on to enjoy an active parliamentary career, sitting for Hertfordshire (bar one occasion) during 1455-6, 1463-5, 1467, 1472-5 and 1478. He may also have been elected to the parliaments of 1460 and 1461 but the Hertfordshire returns are not extant.

His formula for survival would seem to have been to have established a close position of trust as a royal servant (for in April 1454, soon after the beginning of York's protectorate, he became a member of the royal council) and to have had connections with the Bourghiers, connections which helped bridge his Lancastrian past over into a career as a servant of Edward IV. It is thought that he owed his elevation to the office of undertreasurer of the exchequer in 1455-6 to this Bourghier tie, an office he would hold again in 1461-4 and 1475-8.²³ Indeed, as was just indicated, his was rather more than mere survival. An acknowledgement of the regard Edward IV had for him came in 1465 when on the eve of her coronation he preceded Edward's queen through the city as a newly created Knight of the Bath. There is some clue as to what Say thought about all this. After his death his effigy would depict him wearing his Yorkist collar of suns and roses and his will would have prayers requested for the prosperous estate of Edward IV, but also too for the soul of Henry VI 'in whos service I was brought up and preferred'.²⁴

John Trevilian, the 'Cornish chough', was one man who did feel

some of the effect of the largely ineffective Act of Resumption in 1450. All he salvaged from his collection of royal grants and favours was his office of usher of the chamber with its salary of £25 a year from Helston, the issues of Cornwall and from Restormel park and Fowey fishery.²⁵ Like Say, his removal from the king's presence was petitioned for during the parliament of the winter of 1450-1, and indeed in April 1451 parliament had ordered his indictment by a commission. But this kind of persecution did not come from those with real power and patronage. So by March 1452 the king, his crisis of 1449-50 over, could regrant Trevilian, his yeoman of the Crown, 6d. a day out of Cornwall to be backdated to 1447. Back came, too, in March 1453 his old office of keeper of the armoury in the Tower, a month after he had received a special pardon from Henry VI. He resumed an active role in Cornish affairs during the 1450s, serving as JP and on commissions there. Attainted by Edward IV's parliament he was nonetheless pardoned in June 1462, and despite a new commission being issued for his arrest in May 1463 he was pardoned once more in 1468, and indeed would be again after the Readeption.²⁶ Although he did not prosper under Edward IV in quite as conspicuous a way as Sir John Say, his success was to have sustained his career through the vagaries of the 1460s and to have survived into his own seventies.

Thomas Daniel, King's Remembrancer and squire of the body, likewise lived to old age. All the commotion of 1450-1 - the Act of Resumption, the popular uprising, the poems, the petitions of mutinous troops, the denunciation of parliament - apparently deflected off to leave him unscathed. Despite the commission set up in

October 1451 to indict him for treason and felony he got away with a pardon.²⁷ He retained his constablenesship of Castle Rising and he continued to exercise a malevolent influence upon life in East Anglia. In the early 1450s, just as if it were still the 1440s, Sir John Fastolf could make no headway when he attempted to sue Daniel for slanderous language in response to Daniel's claim to be Fastolf's heir to his lands in Suffolk and Norfolk. Serving the Lancastrian regime through the 1450s, Daniel's transition, however, into the reign of Edward may have been less easy than Say's. He fought at Towton in March 1461 and suffered attainder. He may have had to keep fairly mobile and by the later part of 1464 he had made his way westwards to the Lancastrian outpost of Harlech castle. However, if East Anglia thought it had finally rid itself of Daniel its relief was short lived, for following the castle's surrender in 1468 Daniel was in 1469 to return to Norfolk commissions and to resume his place on the bench there.²⁸ Whatever his role in the Readeption, he received a general pardon in 1472 and in the parliament which followed his attainder was reversed. In 1475 at the age of 60 he was again made yeoman of the Crown with 6d. a day for his fee. It is likely that he lived until 1482.

It must have seemed to the campaigners and insurgents of 1450 that there was no getting done with the men of Suffolk's old affinity. John Ulveston was granted a pardon in 1455 and that same year John Heydon reappeared on the bench (an indictment for treason in March 1451 notwithstanding). Even faced with another indictment in 1461, along with Thomas Tuddenham, Heydon managed to slip away again with a general pardon in 1462.²⁹

Only Thomas Tuddenham perhaps, of all the major culprits of the Suffolk regime, came to what might popularly have been regarded as a proper end, although it took a decade in the coming. In July 1451 he had been pardoned all offences but for a sum of £200 which he owed the king and in 1453 was elected as MP for Norfolk.³⁰ His major opponent in East Anglia, the duke of Norfolk, however, intervened to see that he was not returned again in 1455, writing to the undersheriff that the shire should have a free election so that neither Tuddenham nor any of the duke of Suffolk's former affinity should be elected. But in 1458 Tuddenham was made keeper of the king's wardrobe and treasurer of the household. It was only with the advent of Edward IV that his career came to an end. His arrest was ordered in April 1461. False rumours went about that he had had a pardon; Heydon apparently did, but not Tuddenham, and in February 1462 he, along with Tyrell and John Montgomery, was beheaded on Tower Hill.³¹

1460 was too early a date for the Kentish yeoman to have seen the final outcome of several of the issues and personalities with whom he had been concerned in 1450, but the decade of the 1450s cannot have given him much hope that the rising he had followed behind Cade had had any material effect on national life. All one can say perhaps is that by their conduct during the years 1450-52 the Kentishmen reinforced their reputation of being a promising people for further rebellions. The earl of Warwick sought support in the county at the end of the decade, Lord Fauconberg would do so in 1471, and in 1497 the Cornishmen made their way hopefully into Kent, their rising collapsing only when they perceived their error.

1. Two jew's harps of medieval date have been found in the fields at Otford, one of wrought iron, the other of bronze. In the Middle Ages ploughmen were recommended to sing to their oxen to obtain the best results. Dennis Clarke and Anthony Stoyel, *Otford in Kent: A History* (Otford and District Historical Society, 1975), p.58.
2. Essex Record Office (Colchester) D/B 4/38/8; CPR 1446-52, pp.528-9.
3. R.Furley, *A History of the Weald of Kent*, II, pt.I, (London, 1874), p.419.
4. *Ibid.*, p.420.
5. Felix Hull, *Guide to the Kent County Archives Office* (Maidstone, 1958), p.1.
6. Virgoe, *Ancient Indictments*, pp.225, 233-4, 239.
7. KB9/267,m.71; KB27/765 rex side m.23v. I say 'thefts' in 1449 since although the indictment actually states one break-in to be in October 1449 and the other to be in September 1448, the latter follows so closely the former in all its details that I assume the clerk dealing with a date very early on in the regnal year (4 September) has inadvertently put '27 Henry VI' for '28 Henry VI', and intends both months for the same calendar year of 1449.
8. CFR 1452-61, p.282.
9. CPR 1452-61, pp.168, 311, 401, 406, 408, 558, 561, 563, 668.
10. CPR 1461-67, p.133.
11. *Ibid.*, p.301.
12. KB9/50,m.20.
13. KB9/50,mm.21, 22.
14. KB9/50,m.26.
15. PL, IV, p.101; KB9/50,mm.27, 34, 35, 36, 38, 53, 54.
16. Virgoe, *Ancient Indictments*, p.231.
17. *Ibid.*, p.224.
18. CPR 1452-61, p.123.
19. F. R. H. Du Boulay, *The Lordship of Canterbury* (London, 1966), pp.272-3, 400.
20. CPR 1441-46, p.361.

- 21.J. S. Roskell, *Parliament and Politics in Late Medieval England*, II, (London, 1981), p.158.
- 22.*Ibid.*, p.159.
- 23.*Ibid.*, pp.153, 161.
- 24.*Ibid.*, p.170.
- 25.Wedgwood, *Biographies*, p.873. J. P. Collier (ed.), *Trevelyan Papers*, pt.1 (Camden Soc., O.S., LXVII, 1857), pp.43-5, 46-7.
- 26.Wedgwood, *Biographies*, p.874.
- 27.*Ibid.*, pp.254-5.
- 28.*Ibid.*, p.895.
- 29.*Ibid.*, pp.452-3.
- 30.*Ibid.*, pp.880-1.
- 31.*Ibid.*, pp.880-1.

Ms. BL Cott. roll IV.50 is a previously unmentioned and unpublished version of the rebels' bill of complaints of 1450. It carries almost identical wording as Stow's version which appears in his *Chronicles of England* (1580) - just occasionally a word or phrase is absent from one or the other. Since Stow does not attempt to render the precise fifteenth century spelling, these minor differences could be accounted for by a careful but not exact copying on his part of the Cottonian roll. However, there is one feature which may suggest that this is not the document copied by Stow: the articles, numbered by him, 1 to 15, appear in a different order in the Cottonian roll. On two occasions the roll has two articles where Stow has simply one (his nos. 5 & 11). Stow's no. 6, were he following the roll precisely, should be his no. 7 (and his no. 7, no. 6), whilst Stow's no. 12 is the penultimate article from this roll so that it has fallen back by two items from the arrangement here. The last item is the same in both.

The document is in a fifteenth century hand written on paper measuring about 14" x 6".

BL Cott. roll IV.50

The compleyntys & causes of the assemble on blake hethe

Fyrst hit is opynly noysyd that Kent shuld be dystroyd wt aryall power & made a wylde fforest for þe dethe of the duke of Suffolk of wyche the cōes there was nevyr dede doer

Itm þt þe kyng is steryd & mevyd to lyve only on his comyms & op' men to have the revenues of the crown whyche harth causyd

porete in his excellence & grete paiements of þe peple nou late to the kyng ^þgūtyd in his parlements

Itm þt þe lordys of his ryall blode beyn put from his dayly p'sence & op' mene psones of lower nature exaltyd & made cheyff of p'vy cōsell the whiche stoppyth materys of wronge done in his realme fro his excellent audiens & may not be redressyd as lawe wull but yf brybys & gyftys be messenger to the handys of þe seide cōsell

Itm þe peple of his realme be not payd of dettys owyng for þe stuff & p^vyance takyn to þe use of þe kyng to þe undoyng of þe seyde peple

Itm his menyall men of housold & op' psonys askyn dayly godys & londys of peple enpechyd or endytyd of treson þe wyche þe kyng ^þgūtyd a non or theiso endangeryd be cōvycte þe wyche causith the resseyvo^s þ' of to enforge labo^rs applied to þe dethe of peple be sotell menes for coveityse of the seyde ^þgūte

It' þe peple so enpechid & attachid thawgh hit be undrwe may not be cōmittyd to þe lawe for here delyv'aunce but holde styll in p'son to here utteryst undoyng for coveytyse of good

Itm hit is notyd be the comyne voyse þt þe kyngis landys in Frānce beyn alyenyd & put a wey fro þe croune & his lordys & peple þ' dystroyed be untrewes menys of treson of wyche nou hit is desyryd enquiryes to be made thorows all þe realme hou & be whom and yf suche traito^rs may be founde gylty than to have executiō of lawe wt oute eny p^d[on] in example

Itm thou div'se of þe peple have nev' so gret ryght to here lond yet be untrew claym enfeffemēts be made to div'se astats & gentils in maintenance so þt the trewe ounere of hit dare [tear in paper] pseu his ryght

Itm þe collecto^rs of þe xv peny in kent beyn gretly vexid &

hurt in paying gret somes of money in þe Eschekyr to sewe out
a wryt callyd quor' nōia for þe allowance of Barons of the
portes whiche nou is desyvyd þt here aseyr in re[paper worn
away] of the seid Collectōs þe barons aforeseyd may seve hit out
for here ease at here ovyn coste.

Itm þe Sherevys & undirsherevys lete to ferme here offices &
bayly wykys takyng gret sevrete þ' fore þe wyche causith extorcons
to be done to the peple.

Itm simple peple þt usith not huntynge be gretly oppressyd be
endytelements faynede & done be the sayde undyrsherewys & baylyes &
op' of here assent to cause here fees encrease for payement of
þe seyde ferme.

Itm they retōne in names of enquestys be wrytyng in to
div'se courtes of þe kynges not Somenyd ne warnyd where thorou
the peple lese dayly gret sōmes of money or þe value to here
undoynge.

Itm they make leve of am'ciements callyd the grene wexe in
more sōmes of money than can be founde dewe of record in þe
kyngis bokys

Itm þe peple may not have fre eleccōn in chesyng knyghtys of
þe Shyre but lres be sent fro div'se astates to þe gret reulers
there þe whyche embrase here tenntes & op' peple to chese op'
psonys than hem lykyth

Itm þ' as knyghtys of þe Shyre shold chese the kyngis
collectos indeferently wt oute eny brybys takyng nou late thei
have notyd certayn psones in feynyng to be collectos where upon
some have made fyne wt hem to be dyschargyd & so the collectos
offices is bought & solde extorcionysly as hem lust

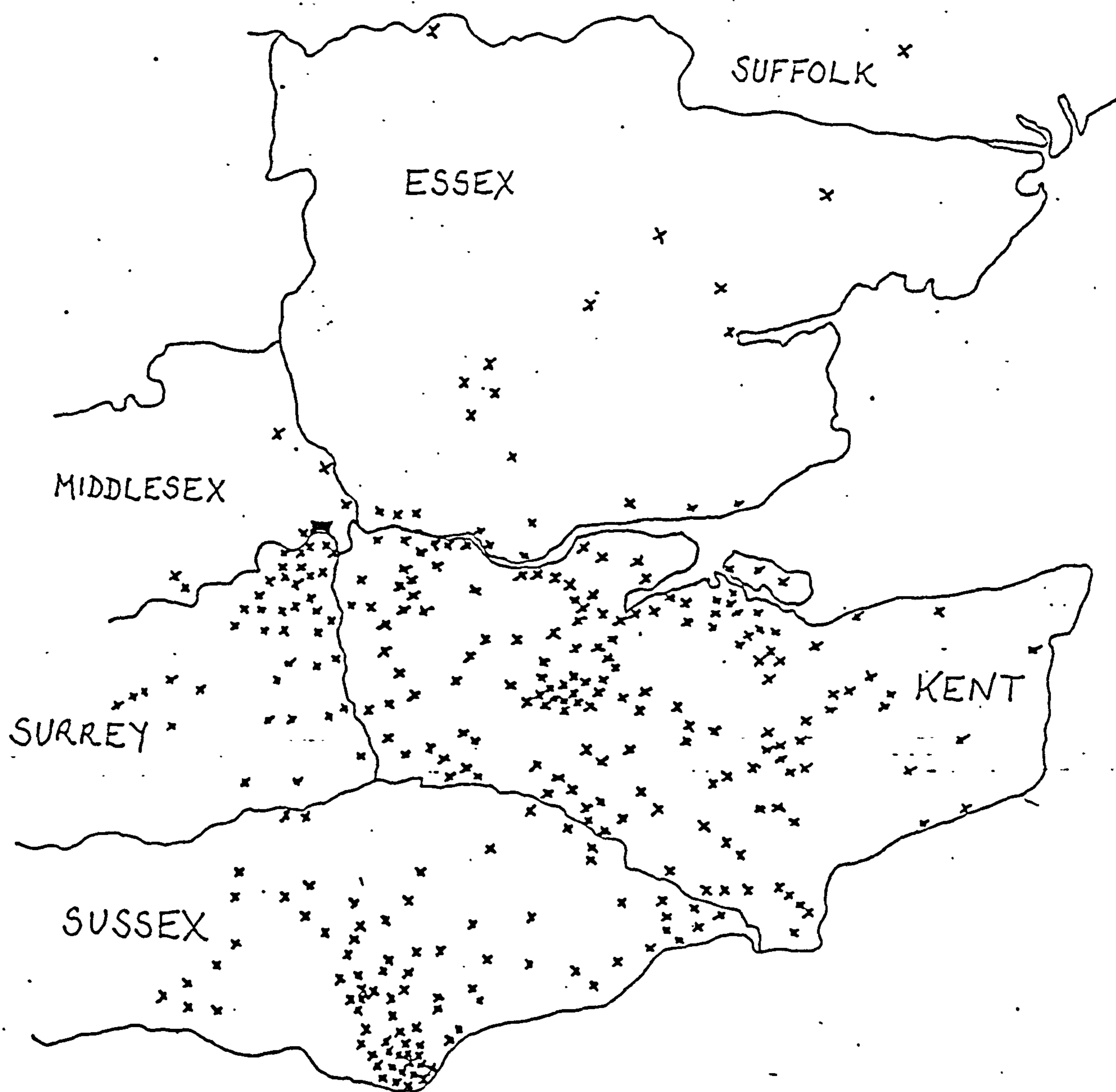
Itm þe ministres of þt Courte of dovyr in kent vexe & areste

the peple there thorou all þe Shyre oute of castelwarde passyng here boundys usede of olde tyme & take gret fees of þe peple at here lust extorcionysly to gret hurt of hem.

Itm þe peple be sore vexid in costys & labo^r callyd to the cessions of pees apperyng fro þe ferthest parts of the West in to þe East þe wyche causyth v day jornay to some peple wherefore ^on part to apere in oon place & anop' part in a nob' place of the Shyre in relevyng of þe vexacōn of the peple.

^they desyre that apparance to be devydyd in two ptyes of wyche

The Distribution of Places on the Pardon roll of
6 and 7 July 1450



Appendix B: The composition of the pardon
roll of July 1450¹

As was pointed out in chapter 5 above, the pardon roll is no mere list of rebels from Cade's revolt. What it is is a list of those men - and a small number of women - who early in the July of 1450, for whatever reason, wished to have in their hands a free royal pardon in which the king promised every recipient that he or she was excused all transgressions they might have committed prior to 8 July 1450 and guaranteed that they would go unmolested by his justices, escheators, sheriffs, coroners or bailiffs. It comprises a complex mixture of individuals who fall into three broad categories. There are those who clearly did not rise (these are in the minority). There are those who are there apparently as representatives of their communities and who may or may not personally have involved themselves in the rising but whose communities perhaps were implicated in it in some way, if only by living in the vicinity of the rebels' routes. Then there are those who quite probably are actual rebels.

Such a mixture means, of course, that nothing hard and fast can be said about the geographical distribution of the rebels. One can speak only about the geographical distribution of those on the roll - but that in itself is worth noting. In broad terms, the bulk (65%) of the 3,000 or so names appear to have come from almost the entire length and breadth of Kent; from eastern and mid-Sussex (14%); from eastern Surrey, particularly from the north-eastern corner nearest to London (12%); and from all along the Essex bank of the Thames estuary, and from a band of Essex running south-west to north-east across the county (8%).² That is to say, these names come from along the main lines of

communication between London and the coastal ports of the South-East. Joining dots on the sketch map down through Essex, beginning with Hadleigh in Suffolk, just to the west of Ipswich, and finishing in the eastern suburbs of London, produces the lines of the old Roman roads, Essex's main arteries of communication, converging upon Chelmsford from Braintree and from Colchester to travel down through Brentwood to London. In Kent the dots describe the main London to Dover road which passed through the northern and most populous section of the county, through Greenwich, Gravesend, Faversham and Canterbury. The middle of the county was served by the Greenwich, Maidstone, Ashford route down to Folkestone in Kent and Rye in Sussex. The villagers of the Weald of Kent were likely to have travelled to the capital on the main road which went out to the coast from London through Sevenoaks, Wadhurst, Battle and Hastings. The men of mid-Sussex and Surrey may well have moved along the main Greenwich to Lewes road.³

Only a score or so of names appear on the pardon list from areas beyond the South-East - a scattering of men from 15 other counties. Richard Goldyng, a Shrewsbury yeoman, took out a pardon for himself and for all his fellow townsmen, and the two Cornishmen included in their pardon all the inhabitants of their home county, but the remainder are named merely as individuals.⁴ They are a miscellaneous group: their mix includes a Leicestershire knight, three gentleman from Herefordshire, Cornwall and Oxfordshire respectively, a York merchant, a Bristol chapman, a Hertfordshire miller, a Bedfordshire clerk, a Derbyshire mason and a Cambridgeshire butcher. These were men who were perhaps in the vicinity of London during the weeks of the revolt and who

willingly or unwillingly became caught up in its events. At least two of them were among the prisoners in the Marshalsea in Southwark which Cade had opened on the night of the battle on the bridge. These were the Cornishmen, a gentleman and a yeoman, whom the King's Bench that year had ordered the sheriff of Cornwall to bring before it within 15 days of Easter to answer for diverse transgressions.⁵ Besides these, two others had earlier criminal records: Thomas Boll, the clerk from Temysford in Bedfordshire had raped a female servant at Hakeney in 1436 and stolen goods from her,⁶ whilst Richard Goldyng of Shrewsbury had stolen from a religious house near Tonbridge in Kent in 1448 (although he is described as a yeoman in 1450 and as a soldier in 1448).⁷ Not all of these geographical erratics need, however, have been press-ganged into the events of the rising. It is very suggestive that the yeoman and the butcher from Cambridgeshire both came from Babraham where Edmund Beaufort, duke of Somerset, a figure associated with losses in France, had been given the manor in 1444. They may well have been his tenants.⁸

To return to the names from the South-East, released prisoners may be found here too, but from the Fleet prison in London with its moated site in the ward of Farringdon Without. John Mars, a gentleman from Rickling in Essex had been in debt in 1448, had been outlawed in 1449, and had come to the King's Bench on 30 June 1450 and been committed - with the city then under siege - to the Fleet.⁹ Another inmate with John Mars would have been John Cutler, a husbandman from Detling in Kent. He had been committed to the Fleet prison in October 1449 in considerable debt to William Isle, the one-time sheriff of Kent. A Richard Cutler, husbandman, from Detling appears on the pardon roll and is likely to be the same man or a kinsman.¹⁰

It may (or it may not) say something for the workings of the law in mid-fifteenth century England that from this sample of several hundreds of individuals, which Professor Griffiths has described as 'a cross-section of society in the south-east of England',¹¹ only a few dozen had a criminal record dating from the previous dozen years. This figure only just exceeds the number of people on the roll who were victims of major crimes during the period. To name some examples of crime in the South-East, Walter Brenchesle of Benenden had been part of a gang who in 1446 had allegedly killed a man in his home village; William Pilcher and John Pery, both of Chatham, had been fined for having together assaulted a man in Clerkenwell in 1443; Richard Nicoll, a tinker from Rochester, had attacked the the city bailiff in court in 1445.¹² During the dozen years prior to 1450 some 10 cases of theft, 7 cases of assault and 3 cases of murder are to be found amongst the King's Bench indictments allegedly committed by men who are named on the pardon roll.¹³ Other miscellaneous offences range from poaching to the selling of worthless charcoal.

Apart from the bulk of names, which as we have seen are designated as coming from the South-East and the score which did not, there are 62 names occurring throughout the roll which are given no place of origin. Just one or two of them are given their occupation, such as, for example, 'Robert Perry, trumpet', a man who perhaps had been of service to Cade during the encampment on Blackheath.¹⁴ To omit the place of origin from only 62 people from all the hundreds suing for pardons would seem to be a small percentage of error. No clue is given as to how exactly any of the names were given in, but, since a few names occur in triplicate with slight variations of spelling, perhaps some

individuals obtained pardons not only for themselves but for friends at the same time and some persons had more than one friend doing this for them.

There is a more intriguing group of names of no given place of origin which totals 339. There are not, as the last group of 62 were, a scattering of oversights, but are written out in a single list as coming from the same place. The very frequent occurrence of the same surnames (sometimes up to six of the same name) strengthens this impression. Of these 339, 114 are, most unusually, women.¹⁵ Since only ten names in all on the roll are designated as coming from London it might seem obvious to suggest that the 339 come from there. This is not necessarily the case: Londoners did not see themselves as conniving with the revolt. Indeed, when it was all over the Court of Aldermen held an enquiry and decided that Cade's army had been allowed into the city by an accident. No commission of oyer and terminer was sent into London after the events of the rising, unlike the experience of every other affected area.¹⁶ It is more likely that this long list is of the inhabitants of Greenwich or Southwark who may have fed and accommodated the rebels. This would help account for the appearance here of women on the pardon roll.

As for the form in which the pardons were taken out, all but seven, that is to say, almost 9/10ths of all the numerous hundreds of Kent, are to be found represented in some manner on the pardon roll. Several are represented by no more than one individual seeking a pardon for himself alone, such as the weaver from Brookland who is the only man named from Aloesbridge Hundred on Walland marsh. It is far more typical, however, that a hundred is represented by two constables who accept a pardon for themselves and all other men of their hundred, besides whom there may be

named some half a dozen individuals from villages or towns of the hundred who accept a pardon for themselves and for all the other men of their respective parishes. Nearly a third of all the Kentish hundreds follow this pattern. 22 of the 33 Sussex hundreds named follow this pattern, although several of these have the hundred represented merely by the two constables alone without any further names. For some reason the men of the six Surrey and the 12 Essex hundreds on the roll are represented in a less systematic way: the lists of names for certain towns are, erratically, quite fulsome, as in the cases of Charlwood, Southwark, Croydon, Merton and Streatham in Surrey and Great Waltham and Maldon in Essex - although here the hundred constables are often absent.

To return to the question of who these names are, in chapter 5 above I name some of the most conspicuous examples of individuals who were not rebels on the roll, names indeed of some of the very men Cade's followers were out to condemn.¹⁷ But, besides the infamous, their relatives and associates, there are on the pardon roll more examples of unlikely (although not, of course, impossible) rebels amongst the respectable and locally well esteemed. Sir John Cheyne, kt., of Eastchurch on the Isle of Sheppey was a royal serjeant-in-arms by 1445, MP for Kent in 1449, and would be sheriff of Kent in 1454-55.¹⁸ The mayor of Faversham, John Seyncler, is there too. He helped in the capture of Cade only a few days after the pardons were issued. So are former officials of the archbishop of Canterbury.¹⁹ From Essex there is on the pardon roll Robert Darcy, esq., whose father had been keeper of writs and rolls at the court of Common Pleas and one of the county's most prominent JPs.²⁰ Robert Darcy, the younger,

himself followed such a public career and would be a member of the commission appointed in September 1450 to arrest and imprison all traitors and rebels in Essex. He went on to undertake frequent duties as a JP throughout the 1450s and was later to be knighted.²¹ Another JP from Essex on the roll is William Tyrell, the younger, esq., also destined to become a knight and often appointed onto the same commissions as Robert Darcy. He too would be on the commission to go into Essex in September 1450, and made an equally unlikely rebel, more especially since he and his brother, Sir Thomas, helped to capture rebels in Kent early in 1450 and after Cade's revolt did the same in Essex.²² Matthew Hay, named alongside William Tyrell on the pardon roll, had served on commissions in Essex. In January 1450 he had been appointed as justice to deliver the gaol of Colchester castle, and in 1451 he would serve on the commission led by the duke of Norfolk to investigate Lollards and heretics in Essex. His active service on commissions of all kinds in Essex was to extend throughout the 1450s and 1460s.²³ Among the men from Sussex Bartholomew Bolney of West Firle and Bolney stands out as an implausible rebel; a yeoman-farmer of property, he had sat on a couple of commissions in Sussex during the 1440s, in May 1451 he would sit on a commission to investigate all treasons and offences in his native county since Cade's revolt, and he would go on to serve on numerous commissions throughout the 1450s, acting regularly as Justice of the Peace. Moreover, he was employed as steward both by the abbot of Battle and the archbishop of Canterbury.²⁴

Thomas Tebbe, a yeoman from Brenchley, Kent, and William Sandherst, a yeoman from Lamberhurst on the Sussex border, who in 1451 was to be one of the constables of the hundred of Brenchley, are two associates who appear on the pardon roll and

who yet pursued active hostilities against the insurgents of their district of the Weald throughout the 1450s.²⁵ In April 1451 during troubles associated with the local Sussex leader Henry Hasilden, a gang of artisans from Brenchley, East Peckham and Yalding lay in wait to attack them.²⁶ In 1456 followers of a Kentish captain rising up at Lamberhurst broke into William Sandherst's house and attacked him because he did not want to join their cause.²⁷ Then the tables turned and in 1458 Tebbe led a large gang attack upon a local rebel, Stephen Christmas (the gentleman from Staplehurst who had excited men in the Weald in January 1451 with rumours about the king's plan to invade Kent with northern soldiery). In 1459 Sandherst was party to another such attack on Christmas. Two more gang ambushes set upon Christmas led by Tebbe's associates in 1460 and 1461.²⁸ There could scarcely be a clearer example of two men on the pardon roll who wanted nothing to do with the insurgents of their area and who were in turn victims and victimizers of such rebels elements.

Although it is quite possible in this way to find individuals who were quite obviously not followers of Cade on this list, this answers for only a handful of the 3,300. In chapter 5 Canterbury was cited as an example of a city which chose to take out a pardon for its population, the names from there having been included on the roll as representatives not as rebels. The fact that 15 names from Cade's pardon roll are to be found turning up yet again among the 81 names on the pardon issued after the failure of Fauconberg's rising in Kent in 1471 certainly leaves room for the possibility that there were others besides citizens of Canterbury acting in a merely representative role.²⁹ Moreover, looking at the 1450 roll, MPs, mayors, constables, parkers, farmers, tax

collectors, church wardens and tithing men are to be discovered throughout the hundreds. Of course it would be over-simplifying the case to suggest that men in positions of responsibility could not have been rebels, but there is evidence that communities did produce their natural representatives to add weight to their corporate pardon amidst names of less account. At the queen's manor of Great Waltham in Essex of the 29 men who were named as chief pledges at the view of frankpledge which was held for the manor on 28 May 1450, 15 subsequently appear on the pardon roll amongst the total of 61 from Great Waltham.³⁰

Lastly, some names appear on the pardon roll for no more complicated a reason than that these are the names of rebels. This is not mere common sense. There is the fact that several of the men on the roll were later involved in subsequent uprisings in the South-East. These were Kentishmen such as Henry Bedill, a husbandman from Thornham, and Robert Heynes of Bearsted who both went on to join a series of Kentish uprisings in April 1451.³¹ In May 1452 John Newman of Halstow supported a newly arisen captain of Kent.³² In August 1452 Henry Hamon, a sawyer from Headcorn, and William atte Chamber, a fuller from Harrietsham, complained with all the vigour of personal injury that the king and his bishops had rescinded on their promises to Cade's followers.³³ In April 1456 John Badisden and Henry Pelham of Hawkhurst supported the rising of John Percy.³⁴ In Sussex, too, men on the pardon roll are to be found rising up in the September, October and November of 1450.³⁵

This was a rising concerned with specific grievances and perhaps none more so than the loss of France, the fear of imminent attack and the troubles of foreign piracy. Ill-government could be endured for years, but not when it endangered the defence of a

whole region of England. Nicholas Gate, a roper from Milton on the northern coast of Kent is named on the pardon roll. He owned no more than a messuage and a bit of land in his town and a few acres in nearby Borden.³⁶ If he lacked the wherewithall to have much business in the courts or to excite the greed of county officials he was no doubt as anxious as anyone to keep what property he had out of the hands of the French. Thomas Man and John Crowelynke, both named on the pardon roll, who held neighbouring crofts, Salmonnescrofte and Sampsonescrofte, down at Seaford in Sussex, are other examples of men whose near neighbours held land *super litus maris* - bordering upon the seashore itself.³⁷ John Cokke is a shipman from Milton named on the pardon roll. No great property owner, he possessed very few acres of land, some portable stalls in Milton market-place (perhaps for the sale of fish) and held three messuages. His only other main asset was his boats and their tackle.³⁸ From Milton he sailed up Milton Creek and around the Isle of Sheppey into one of the most pirate infested stretches of shipping around the coast of England, the opening of the Thames into the North Sea making a splendid natural bottleneck for marauders. Perhaps it is significant that no fewer than 10 other shipmen from Milton are named on the pardon roll besides John Cokke.³⁹

1. Two articles on this subject appeared during the last century by the same author, W. D. Cooper, 'John Cade's Followers in Kent', *Arch. Cant.*, VII (1868) and 'Participation of Sussex in Cade's Rising, 1450', *Sussex Archaeological Collections*, XVIII (1866). Cooper's work has been more or less completely superseded by the section in Griffiths, *Henry VI*, pp.619-23, which provides the best account of the rebel host.
2. I take these percentages from Griffiths, *Henry VI*, p.622.
3. On the subject of medieval roads, see B. P. Hindle, 'The road network of medieval England and Wales', *Journal of Historical Geography*, II (1976), pp.207-21.
4. Their names are as follows (in alphabetical order by county/country):

Bedfordshire	- Thomas Boll, clerk, of Tempsford	CPR 1446-52, p.366
	Thomas Hamlyn, husbandman, of Pulloxhill	"" p.353
Berkshire	- Thomas Hakkere, yeoman, of Maidenhead	"" p.355
Cambridgeshire	- Henry Fraunces, yeoman, of Babraham	"" p.351
	John Glover, butcher, of Babraham	"" " "
Cornwall	- John Bainton, gent., of Flexbury [manor]	"" p.370
	William Bainton, yeoman, of Burn alias of Flexbury, bailiff	"" p.370
Derbyshire	- William Crauford, mason, of Higham	"" p.359
Devon	- John Merymouth, fuller, of Honiton	"" p.342
Hampshire	- John Russell, mariner	"" p.354
Herefordshire	- John Holmiton, gent., of Holme Lacy	"" p.351
Hertfordshire	- John Mayster, miller, of Cheshunt	"" p.370
Ireland	- John Hereford of Kilkenny	"" p.359
Leicestershire	- William Trussell, kt., of Elmesthorpe	"" pp.355,356
Oxfordshire	- Richard Bowle, yeoman, of Banbury	"" pp.366,367
	Thomas Stone, gent., of Oxford	"" p.345
Shropshire	- Richard Goldyng, yeoman, of Shrewsbury	"" p.361
Somerset	- Peter Hereford of Bristol	"" p.359
	William Savage, chapman, of Bristol	"" " "
Yorkshire	- William Snawedon, merchant, of York	"" p.354
5. KB27/755 rex side m.13v; CPR 1446-52, p.370.
6. KB9/255/2,m.44; CPR 1446-52, p.366.
7. KB9/273,m.8; CPR 1446-52, p.361.
8. CPR 1446-52, p.351.

9. C88/134/127; CPR 1446-52, p.340.
10. C88/134/207; CPR 1446-52, p.355.
11. Griffiths, *Henry VI*, p.621.
12. KB9/254,m.53; /250,m.100; /251,m.123.
13. The 10 cases of theft: KB9/234,m.18; /242,m.7; /248,m.59; /233m.96; /997,m.52; /256,m.95; /245,m.89; /253,m.51 (*bis*); /255/2,m.44. The 7 cases of assault: KB9/250,m.100; /253,m.38; /240,m.49; /251,m.123; /1050,m.130; /235,mm.7,9. The 3 cases of murder: KB9/229/1,m.24; /229/3,m.29; /254,m.53. To give some idea of the incidence of recorded crime, during the 10 years 1440-9 there was an annual average of 8 indictments from the county of Kent among the term indictments of the King's Bench.
14. CPR 1446-52, p.361.
15. *Ibid.*, pp.357-8.
16. Barron, thesis, pp.538-9.
17. For further examples, see Griffiths, *Henry VI*, pp.619-23.
18. CPR 1446-52, p.339; Griffiths, *Henry VI*, p.620.
19. Griffiths, *Henry VI*, pp.620, 621.
20. *Ibid.*, pp.672, 703; CPR 1436-41, pp.471, 532-3; CPR 1446-52, p.22.
21. CPR 1446-52, pp.348, 431, 477; CPR 1452-61, pp.490, 558, 665; CPR 1461-67, p.564.
22. CPR 1441-46, p.470; CPR 1446-52, pp.338, 431, 440, 443; CPR 1452-61, pp.299, 665; CPR 1467-77, p.211; E403/784,m.14; E404/67,m.20. For the way in which Willaim was accused as a follower of Cade, see chapter 6 above.
23. CPR 1446-52, pp.136, 338, 433, 440; CPR 1452-61, pp.220, 222, 299, 347, 406, 558, 665; CPR 1461-67, pp.278, 564.
24. Griffiths, *Henry VI*, pp.622, 656; and, for example, CPR 1441-46, p.479; CPR 1446-52, pp.88, 478, 540, 595; CPR 1452-61, p.679.
25. CPR 1446-52, pp.364, 373.
26. Virgoe, *Ancient Indictments*, p.250.
27. KB9/289,m.88; KB27/788 rex side m.19.
28. KB9/298,m.79.
29. CPR 1467-77, pp.300-2. On the subject of Fauconberg's rising, see C. Richmond, 'Fauconberg's Kentish rising of May 1471', *EHR* LXXXV (1970), pp.673-92.
30. Essex Record Office D/D Tu 243,m.23; CPR 1446-52, pp.370, 371.

- 31.CPR 1446-52, pp.350, 374; Virgoe, *Ancient Indictments*, pp.244, 247, 249.
- 32.CPR 1446-52, p.374; KB9/273,m.11.
- 33.CPR 1446-52, pp.342, 372; KB9/955/2,m.2.
- 34.CPR 1446-52, p.353; KB9/49,mm.5, 6, 10, 13, 14, 15; /284,m.42; /288,mm.58, 59.
- 35.CPR 1446-52, pp.356, 361; KB9/122,mm.15, 21, 40.
- 36.'Milton Wills', *Arch. Cant.* XLV (1933), p.18.
- 37.DL 29/442/7122; CPR 1446-52, p.360.
- 38.'Milton Wills', *Arch. Cant.* XLIV (1932), pp.98-9.
- 39.CPR 1446-52, pp.365, 369.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

A Original Authorities: Unpublished

Public Record Office, London.

All references in footnotes, unless otherwise stated, are from the P.R.O., Chancery Lane, London.

C1 (Early Chancery Proceedings)
C67 (Pardon rolls)
C237 (Bails on special pardons)
C244 (Corpus cum Causa)
DL28 (Duchy of Lancaster - various accounts)
DL29 (Duchy of Lancaster - ministers' accounts)
DL30 (Duchy of Lancaster - court rolls)
E28 (Council and privy seal - ancient deeds)
E40 (Ancient deeds)
E101 (Accounts various)
E136 (K.R. Escheators' accounts)
E159 (K.R. Memoranda roll)
E199 (Sheriffs' Accounts)
E207 (King's Remembrancer Bille)
E357 (L.T.R. Escheators' Accounts)
E368 (L.T.R. Memoranda Roll)
E379 (Enrolled Sheriffs Accounts)
E403 (Issue Roll)
E404 (Warrants for Issue)
KB9 (Ancient indictments)
KB27 (Plea rolls)
KB29 (Controlment rolls)
SC6 (Original ministers' Accounts)

British Library, London

Additional rolls
Cotton roll IV
Additional MS 14, 848

Canterbury Cathedral, MSS of the Dean and Chapter

Sacrist rolls 37-8

East Sussex Record Office, Lewes

Ashburnham MS
Battle Abbey Estate MS
XA 3/2, 15

Essex Record Office, Chelmsford

D/B 3/3/28-30 Maldon Borough Records
D/D Tu 243 Great Waltham court rolls

D/DBy M5	Walden court rolls
D/DM M33	Writele court rolls
D/DP M255	Moulsham court rolls
D/DWg M18	Navestock court rolls
T/A 206/1	Barking Abbey Rental

Essex Record Office, Colchester

D/B 4/38/8 Harwich Borough rolls

Kent Record Office, Maidstone

PRC 17/5
 PRC 32/2
 Fa/Z3
 Sa/AC1

Lambeth Palace Library

Estate Documents

Suffolk Record Office, Ipswich

C8/1/1-2 Ipswich sessions rolls

Westminster Abbey, MSS of the Dean and Chapter

MS 12239

B Original Authorities: Published

Amundesham, J., *Annales monasterii S. Albani*, ed. H. T. Riley (2 vols., RS, 1870-71)

Babington, C. (ed.), *The Repressor of Over much Blaming of the clergy* (2 vols., RS, 1860)

Basin, T., *Histoire des règnes de Charles VII et de Louis XI*, ed. J. E. J. Quicherat (4 vols., Paris, 1855-59)

Basin, T., *Histoire de Charles VII*, ed. C. Samaran (2 vols., Paris, 1933, 1944)

Blacman, J., *Henry the Sixth*, ed. M. R. James (Cambridge, 1919)

Blondell, R., *De reductione Normanniae*, in J. Stevenson (ed.), *Narratives of the expulsion of the English from Normandy* (RS, 1863), pp. 23-238

Brie, F. W. D. (ed.), *The Brut, or the Chronicles of England*, vol. II (EETS, CXXXVI, 1908)

Brown, R. (ed.), *Calendar of State Papers and Manuscripts, Venice*, vol. I (1864)

Calendar of Ancient deeds

Calendar of Charter rolls

Calendar of Close rolls

Calendar of Fine rolls

Calendar of Patent rolls

Chrimes, S. B. and Brown, A. L. (eds.), *Select documents of English constitutional history, 1307-1485* (1961)

Chronicles of the White rose of York, The (1845)

Clough, M. (ed.), *The book of Bartholomew Bolney* (Sussex record soc., LXIII, 1964)

Collier, J. P. (ed.), *Trevilian papers, part 1* (Camden soc., old ser., LXVII, 1857)

Davies, J. S. (ed.), *An English Chronicle of the reigns of Richard II, Henry IV, Henry V, and Henry VI* (Camden soc., old ser., LXIV, 1856)

Davis, N. (ed.), *Paston letters and Papers of the Fifteenth century* (2 vols., Oxford, 1971-76)

Douët d'Arcoq, L. (ed.), *La chronique d'Enguerran de Monstrelet . . . 1400-1444* (6 vols., Paris, 1857-62)

Ellis, H. (ed.), *Original letters illustrative of English history*, 1st ser. (3 vols., 1825); 2nd ser. (4 vols., 1827); 3rd ser. (4 vols., 1846)

D'Escouchy, M., *Chronique*, ed. G. du Fresne de Beaucourt (3 vols., Paris, 1863-64)

Fabyan, R., *The new chronicles of England and France*, ed. H. Ellis (1811).

Fleming, J. H. (ed.), *England under the Lancastrians* (1921)

Flenley, R. (ed.), *Six town Chronicles* (Oxford, 1911)

Furnivall, F. J. (ed.), *Political, religious, and love poems* (EETS, old ser., XV, 1866)

Gairdner, J. (ed.), *The Historical Collections of a citizen of London in the Fifteenth century* (Camden soc., new ser., XVII, 1876)

Gairdner, J. (ed.), *Three Fifteenth-century chronicles* (Camden soc., 3rd ser., XXVIII, 1880)

Gairdner, J. (ed.), *The Paston letters* (6 vols., Library ed.,

- Gascoigne, T., *Loci e libro veritatum*, ed. J. E. T. Rogers (Oxford, 1881)
- Genet, J.-Ph. (ed.), *Four English Political Tracts of the later middle ages* (Camden soc., 4th ser., XVIII, 1977)
- Hall E., *The union of the two noble and illustre famelies of Lancastre and Yorke* (1550)
- Halliwell, J. O. (ed.), *A Chronicle of the first Thirteen Years of the reign of King Edward the fourth by John Warkworth* (Camden soc., old ser., X, 1839)
- Hardyng, J., *Chronicle*, ed. H. Ellis (1812)
- Harriss, G. L. and M. A. (eds.), 'John Benet's chronicle for the years 1400 to 1462', in *Camden miscellany*, XXIV (Camden soc., 4th ser., IX, 1972), 151-252
- Harrod, H. D., 'A defence of the liberties of Chester, 1450', *Archaeologia*, LVII (1900), 71-86
- Hingeston, F. C. (ed.), *John Capgrave, Liber de illustribus Henricis* (RS, 1858)
- Historical manuscripts commission*, vols. IV (1874); V (1876); VI (1877); VIII (1881); IX (1883); IX part 2 (1884); XIV part 3 (1894)
- Holinshed, R., *Chronicles of England, Scotland and Ireland*, ed. H. Ellis (6 vols., 1807-08)
- Kingsford, C. L. (ed.), *The Chronicles of London* (1905)
- Kingsford, C. L. (ed.), *Survey of London by John Stow* (2 vols., Oxford, 1908)
- Kingsford, C. L., 'An Historical Collection of the Fifteenth century', *EHR*, XXIX (1914), 505-15
- Le Bouvier, G., 'Recouvrement de Normandie', in J. Stevenson (ed.), *Narratives of the expulsion of the English from Normandy* (RS, 1863), pp. 245-376
- MacCracken, H. N. (ed.), *The minor poems of John Lydgate*, part 2 (EETS, 192, 1934)
- Myers, A. R., 'A parliamentary debate of the mid-fifteenth century', *BJRL*, XXII (1938), 388-404
- Myers, A. R. (ed.), *English Historical Documents*, vol. IV: 1327-1485 (1969)
- Myers, A. R., 'A parliamentary debate of 1449', *BIHR*, LI (1978), 78-83
- Nichols, J. G. (ed.), *The chronicle of the Grey friars of London*

- (Camden soc., old ser., LIII, 1852)
- Nicolas, N. H. (ed.), *Proceedings and Ordinances of the Privy council of England* (7 vols., RC, 1834-37)
- Nicolas, N. H. and Tyrell, E. (eds.), *A Chronicle of London, 1189-1483* (1827)
- Riley, H. T. (ed.), *Ingulph's chronicle of the abbey of Croyland* (1854)
- Riley, H. T. (ed.), *Registrum abbatiae Johannis Whethamstede* (2 vols., RS, 1872-73)
- Robbins, R. H. (ed.), *Historical poems of the XIVth and XVth centuries* (New York, 1959)
- Rotuli parliamentorum* (7 vols., 1832)
- Rymer, T. (ed.), *Foedera, conventiones, literae . . .* (3rd ed., 10 vols., The Hague, 1739-45)
- Salter, H. E. (ed.), *Registrum cancellarii Oxon.*, vol. I (Oxford, 1930)
- Sharpe, R. R. (ed.), *Calendar of the Letter-books preserved among the archives of the corporation of the city of London: letter-book K* (1911)
- Sheppard, J. (ed.), *Litterae Cantuarienses*, vol. III (RS, 1889)
- Shirley, J. (ed.), *A Parisian Journal, 1405-1449* (Oxford, 1968)
- Stevenson, J. (ed.), *Narratives of the Expulsion of the English from Normandy* (RS, 1863)
- Stevenson, J. (ed.), *Letters and Papers illustrative of the wars of the English in France during the reign of Henry the sixth, etc.* (2 vols. in 3, RS, 1861-64)
- Stow, J., *The chronicles of England* (1580)
- Stow, J., *Annales, or a generall chronicle of England* (1631)
- Thomas, A. H. and Thornley, I. D. (eds.), *The Great Chronicle of London* (1938)
- Virgoe, R., 'Some Ancient Indictments in the King's Bench referring to Kent, 1450-1452', in F. R. H. Du Boulay (ed.), *Kent records: Documents Illustrative of Mediaeval Kentish Society* (Kent Record Soc., 1964), pp. 214-65
- Warner, G. (ed.), *The Libelle of Englysche polycye* (Oxford, 1926)
- Waurin, J. de, *Recueil des Croniques et Anchiennes Istories de la Grant Bretaigne*, ed. W. and E. L. C. P. Hardy (5 vols., RS, 1864-91)
- Wright, T. (ed.), *A Collection of Political Poems and Songs*

C Secondary Authorities

Allmand, C. T., 'The Anglo-French negotiations, 1439', *BIHR*, XL (1967), 1-33

Allmand, C. T., 'The Lancastrian Land Settlement in Normandy, 1417-50', *EconHR*, 2nd ser., XXI (1968), 461-79

Armstrong, C. A. J., *England, France and Burgundy in the Fifteenth century* (London, 1983)

Aston, M. E., *Lollards and Reformers: Images and Literacy in Late Medieval Religion* (London, 1984)

Bagley, J. J., *Margaret of Anjou, Queen of England* (n. d. [1948])

Bean, J. M. W., *The Estates of the Percy Family, 1416-1537* (Oxford, 1958)

Bellamy, J. G., *The Law of Treason in England in the Later Middle Ages* (Cambridge, 1970)

Bellamy, J. G., *Crime and Public Order in England in the Later Middle Ages* (1973)

Bennett, H. S., *The Pastons and their England* (Cambridge, 1951)

Bennett, H. S., *Six Mediaeval Men and Women* (Cambridge, 1955)

Blatcher, M., *The Court of King's Bench, 1450-1550* (1978)

Bossuat, A., *Perrinet Gressart et François de Surienne, agents d'Angleterre* (Paris, 1936)

Brown, A., 'London and North-west Kent in the Later Middle Ages: the Development of a Land Market', *Arch. Cant.*, XCII (1976), 145-55

Brown, A. L., 'The King's Councillors in Fifteenth-Century England', *TRHS*, 5th ser., XIX (1969), 95-118

Carpenter, C., 'The Beauchamp affinity: a Study of Bastard Feudalism at work', *EHR*, XCV (1980), 515-32

Carr, A. D., 'Welshmen and the Hundred Years War', *Welsh History Review*, IV (1968)

Carus-Wilson, E. M., *Medieval Merchant Venturers* (3rd ed., 1967)

Carus-Wilson, E. M. and Coleman, O. (eds.), *England's Export Trade, 1275-1547* (Oxford, 1963)

Chrimes, S. B., *English Constitutional Ideas in the Fifteenth Century* (Cambridge, 1936)

- Chrimes, S. B., *Henry VII* (1972)
- Chrimes, S. B., Ross, C. D., and Griffiths, R. A. (eds.), *Fifteenth-century England, 1399-1509* (Manchester, 1972)
- Colvin, H. M. (ed.), *The History of the King's Works: the Middle Ages* (2 vols., 1 box, 1963)
- Cooper, W. D., 'Participation of Sussex in Cade's rising, 1450', *Sussex archaeological collections*, XVIII (1866), 19-36
- Cooper, W. D., 'John Cade's followers in Kent', *Arch. Cant.*, VII (1868), 233-71
- Davies, R. R., *Lordship and Society in the March of Wales, 1282-1400* (Oxford, 1978)
- Davis, J. F., 'Lollard Survival and the Textile Industry in the South-East of England', *Studies in church history*, III (1960), 191-201
- Dickinson, J. G., *The Congress of Arras, 1435* (Oxford, 1955)
- Dobson, R. B. (ed.), *The Church, Politics and Patronage in the Fifteenth Century* (Gloucester, 1984)
- Du Boulay, F. R. H., 'The Pagham estates of the archbishopric of Canterbury during the fifteenth century', *History*, new ser., XXXVIII (1953), 201-18
- Du Boulay, F. R. H., 'A Rentier Economy in the Later Middle Ages: the Archbishopric of Canterbury', *EconHR*, 2nd ser., XVI (1963-64), 427-38
- Du Boulay, F. R. H., 'Who was farming the English demesnes at the end of the Middle Ages?', *EconHR*, 2nd ser., XVII (1964-65), 443-55
- Du Boulay, F. R. H., *The Lordship of Canterbury* (1966)
- Du Boulay, F. R. H., *An Age of Ambition* (1970)
- Dulley, A. J. F., 'Four Kent towns at the end of the Middle Ages', *Arch. Cant.*, LXXXI (1966), 95-108
- Edwards, J. G., 'The Huntingdonshire Parliamentary Election of 1450', in T. A. Sandquist and M. R. Powicke (eds.), *Essays in Mediaeval History presented to Bertie Wilkinson* (Toronto, 1969), pp. 383-95
- Edwards, J. G., *The Second Century of the English Parliament* (Oxford, 1979)
- Ferguson, J., *English Diplomacy, 1422-1461* (Oxford, 1972)
- Flenley, R., 'London and Foreign Merchants in the Reign of Henry VI', *EHR*, XXV (1910), 644-55
- Gairdner, J., 'Jack Cade's rebellion', *Fortnightly review*, old

- Giraud, F. F., 'Faversham: Regulations for the Town Porters', *Arch. Cant.*, XX (1893), 219-21
- Giuseppi, M. S., 'Alien Merchants in England in the Fifteenth Century', *TRHS*, new ser., IX (1895), 75-98
- Gray, H. L., 'Incomes from Land in England in 1436', *EHR*, XLIX (1934), 607-39
- Greenstreet, J., 'Jack Cade's rebellion', *The Antiquarian Magazine and Bibliographer*, II (1883), 165-71
- Griffiths, R. A., 'Gruffydd ap Nicholas and the Fall of the House of Lancaster', *WHR*, II (1965), 213-31
- Griffiths, R. A., 'The trial of Eleanor Cobham: an episode in the fall of Duke Humphrey of Gloucester', *BJRL*, LI (1968-69), 381-99
- Griffiths, R. A., 'Duke Richard of York's intentions in 1450 and the Origins of the Wars of the Roses', *JMH*, I (1975), 187-209
- Griffiths, R. A., *Patronage, the Crown and the Provinces in Later Medieval England* (Gloucester, 1981)
- Griffiths, R. A., *The Reign of Henry VI: The Exercise of Royal Authority, 1422-1461* (London, 1981)
- Griffiths, R. A. and Sherborne J. (eds.), *Kings and Nobles in the Later Middle Ages: A tribute to Charles Ross* (Gloucester, 1986)
- Harding, A., *The Law Courts of Medieval England* (1973)
- Harriss, G. L., 'The struggle for Calais: an Aspect of the Rivalry between Lancaster and York', *EHR*, LXXV (1960), 30-53
- Harriss, G. L., 'Cardinal Beaufort - patriot or usurer', *TRHS*, 5th ser., XX (1970), 129-48
- Hasted, G., *The Historical and Topographical Survey of the County of Kent* (new ed., 12 vols., Wakefield, 1972; original ed., 12 vols., Canterbury, 1797-1801)
- Hastings, M., *The Court of Common Pleas in Fifteenth-century England* (Ithaca, N.Y., 1947)
- Hatcher, J., *Rural Economy and Society in the Duchy of Cornwall, 1300-1500* (Cambridge, 1970)
- Harvey, B., *Westminster Abbey and its estates in the Middle Ages* (Oxford, 1977)
- Jacob, E. F., *The Fifteenth century, 1399-1485* (Oxford, 1961)
- Jacob, E. F., *Essays in Later Medieval History* (Manchester,

- Jeffs, R. M., 'The Poynings-Percy dispute: an Example of the Interplay of Open Strife and Legal Action in the Fifteenth Century', *BIHR*, XXXIV (1961), 148-64
- Johnston, C. E., 'Sir William Oldhall', *EHR*, XXV (1910), 715-22
- Judd, A., *The Life of Thomas Bekynton* (Chichester, 1961)
- Keen, M. H., and Daniel, M. J., 'English diplomacy and the sack of Fougères in 1449', *History*, LIX (1974), 375-91
- Kingsford, C. L., *English Historical Literature in the Fifteenth Century* (Oxford, 1913)
- Kingsford, C. L., *Prejudice and Promise in Fifteenth-century England* (Oxford, 1925)
- Kirby, J. L., 'The issues of the Lancastrian exchequer and Lord Cromwell's estimates of 1433', *BIHR*, XXIV (1951), 121-51
- Knecht, R. J., 'The Episcopate and the Wars of the Roses', *UBHJ*, VI (1957-58), 108-31
- Knoop, D. and Jones, G. P., 'The Building of Eton College, 1442-1460', *Transactions quatuor coronati lodge*, XLVI (1933), 70-114
- Kriehn, G., *The English Rising in 1450* (Strassburg, 1892)
- Lander, J. R., 'Henry VI and the Duke of York's second protectorate, 1455 to 1456', *BJRL*, XLIII (1960), 46-69
- Lander, J. R., *The Wars of the Roses* (1965)
- Lander, J. R., *Conflict and Stability in Fifteenth-century England* (1st ed., 1969; 3rd ed., 1977)
- Lander, J. R., *Crown and Nobility, 1450-1509* (1976)
- Lewis, P. S., *Later Medieval France* (1968)
- List of Sheriffs for England and Wales* (PRO, Lists and indexes, IX, 1898)
- Lloyd, T. H., *The English Wool Trade in the Middle Ages* (Cambridge, 1977)
- Lyle, H. M., *The Rebellion of Jack Cade, 1450* (Historical association, 1950)
- McFarlane, K. B., *England in the Fifteenth Century: Collected Essays* (London, 1981)
- McFarlane, K. B., *Lancastrian Kings and Lollard Knights* (Oxford, 1972)
- McFarlane, K. B., *The Nobility of Later Medieval England*

(Oxford, 1973)

- McKenna, J. W., 'Piety and Propaganda: the cult of King Henry VI', in B. Rowland (ed.), *Chaucer and middle English studies in honour of R. H. Robbins* (1974), pp. 72-88
- Meekings, C. A. F., 'Thomas Kerver's case, 1444', *EHR*, XC (1975), 331-46
- Oman, C., *The Great Revolt of 1381* (2nd ed., Oxford, 1969)
- Orridge, B. B. *Illustrations of Jack Cade's Rebellion* (1869)
- Owst, G. R., *Preaching in Medieval England* (Cambridge, 1926)
- Postan, M. M., 'The Costs of the Hundred Years' War', *Past and Present*, XXVII (1964), 34-53
- Postan, M. M., *Mediaeval Trade and Finance* (Cambridge, 1973)
- Powell, J. E. and Wallis, K., *The House of Lords in the Middle Ages* (1968)
- Power, E. and Postan, M. M. (eds.), *Studies in English Trade in the Fifteenth Century* (1933)
- Powicke, F. M. and Fryde, E. B. (eds.), *The Handbook of British Chronology* (2nd ed., 1961)
- Ramsay, J. H., *Lancaster and York* (2 vols., 1892)
- Rawcliffe, C., *The Staffords, Earls of Stafford and Dukes of Buckingham, 1394-1521* (Cambridge, 1978)
- Reeves, A. C., 'William Booth, Bishop of Coventry and Lichfield (1447-52)', *Midland hist.*, III (1974-75), 11-29
- Richmond, C. F., 'The Keeping of the Seas during the Hundred Years' war, 1422-1440', *History*, XLIX (1964), 283-98
- Richmond, C. F., 'English Naval Power in the Fifteenth Century', *History*, LII (1967), 1-15
- Roake, M. and Whyman, J. (eds.), *Essays in Kentish History* (1973)
- Rosenthal, J. T., 'The Estates and Finances of Richard, Duke of York (1411-60)' in *Studies in mediaeval and renaissance history*, II, ed. W. M. Bowsky (Lincoln, Nebraska, 1965), 115-204
- Roskell, J. S., *Parliament and Politics in late Mediaeval England* (2 vols., London, 1981)
- Ross, C. D., *Edward IV* (1974)
- Ross, C. D., (ed.), *Patronage, Pedigree and Power in Later Medieval England* (Gloucester, 1979)
- Ross, C. D. and Pugh, T. B., 'The English Baronage and the Income

- tax of 1436', *BIHR*, XXV (1953), 1-28
- Ruddock, A. A., *Italian Merchants and Shipping in Southampton, 1270-1600* (Southampton, 1951)
- Scattergood, V. J., *Politics and Poetry in the Fifteenth Century* (1972)
- Scofield, C. L., *The Life and Reign of Edward the fourth* (2 vols., 1923)
- Searle, E., *Lordship and Community* (Toronto, 1974)
- Storey, R. L., *The End of the House of Lancaster* (1966)
- Thielemans, M.-R., *Bourgogne et Angleterre: Relations Politiques et Economiques entre les Pays-Bas Bourguignons et l'Angleterre, 1435-1467* (Brussels, 1966)
- Thomson, J. A. F., 'A Lollard Rising in Kent: 1431 or 1438?', *BIHR*, XXXVII (1964), 100-2
- Thomson, J. A. F., *The Later Lollards, 1414-1520* (Oxford, 1965)
- Thrupp, S. L., *The Merchant Class of Medieval London* (Chicago, 1948; reprinted Ann Arbor, 1962)
- Vale, M. G. A., *Charles VII* (1974)
- Vallance, A., 'A Curious Case at Cranbrook in 1437', *Arch. Cant.*, XLIII (1931), 173-86
- Vaughan, R., *Philip the Good* (1970)
- Vickers, K. H., *Humphrey, Duke of Gloucester* (1907)
- Virgoe, R., 'The Death of William de la Pole, Duke of Suffolk', *BJRL*, XLVII (1964-65), 489-502
- Virgoe, R., 'The Composition of the King's Council, 1437-61', *BIHR*, XLIII (1970), 134-60
- Virgoe, R., 'William Tailboys and Lord Cromwell: Crime and Politics in Lancastrian England', *BJRL*, LV (1973), 459-82
- Virgoe, R., 'The Cambridgeshire Election of 1439', *BIHR*, XLVI (1973), 95-101
- Virgoe, R., 'The Murder of James Andrew: Suffolk faction in the 1430s's, *Proceedings of the Suffolk Institute of Archaeology*, XXXIV (1980), 263-68
- Virgoe, R., 'Three Suffolk Parliamentary Elections in the mid-Fifteenth century', *BIHR*, XXXIX (1966), 185-96
- Wallenberg, J. K., *The Place-names of Kent* (Uppsala, 1934)
- Wedgwood, J. C., *History of Parliament: Biographies of the Members of the Commons House, 1439-1509* (1936)

Wedgwood, J. C., *History of Parliament: Register of the Ministers and of the Members of both Houses, 1439-1509* (1938)

Wilkinson, B., *Constitutional History of England in the Fifteenth Century, 1399-1485* (1964)

D Unpublished Theses

Barron, C. M., 'The Government of London and its Relations with the Crown, 1400-1450' (London PhD thesis, 1970)

Blatcher, M., 'The Working of the Court of King's Bench in the Fifteenth Century' (London PhD thesis, 1936)

Johnson, P. A., 'The Political Career of Richard, Duke of York, to 1456' (Oxford DPhil thesis, 1981)

Maddern, P. C., 'Violence, Crime and Public Disorder in East Anglia, 1422-1442' (Oxford DPhil thesis, 1984)

Smith, A. R., 'Aspects of the Career of Sir John Fastolf (1380-1459)' (Oxford DPhil thesis, 1982)

