THE CLERGY AND ALLEGIANCE AT THE OUTBREAK OF THE ENGLISH CIVIL WARS: THE CASE OF JOHN MARSTON OF CANTERBURY.

In *The Community of Kent and the Great Rebellion, 1640-1660* published in 1966 Alan Everitt argued that 'it is easy to exaggerate the extent to which provincial people were generally conscious of the political problems of the period'.[1] Subsequent research on a large number of counties has led to the conclusion that it is also possible to underestimate it. Everitt's emphasis on the insularity of provincial society was initially adopted enthusiastically as a model for studies of other counties during the civil wars, including Cheshire and Sussex.[2] It was not until the 1980s that any direct challenge to Everitt's general thesis was made in the work of Clive Holmes on Lincolnshire and Ann Hughes on Warwickshire. During the same decade historians of the early Stuart period were also developing a more sophisticated understanding of the complexities of news circulation both in print and by word of mouth. In a seminal article Richard Cust argued that people in the localities were well informed about the news from a number of sources well before the civil war broke out.[3] These historians thus rejected Everitt's model of a 'one-class society,' in which the concerns of all the inhabitants of the counties were subsumed in those of the gentry. Yet even before the revisionists had challenged Everitt's work, an alternative view of early Stuart Kent had been developed. In 1948 Peter Laslett had characterised the intellectual milieu of the Kent gentry as cosmopolitan and had traced their intellectual links to the continent and to a national political culture. Peter Clark's study of pre-civil war Kent, published a decade after *The Community of Kent and the Great Rebellion,* emphasised the central role played by Kent in key national religious, political and social developments from the Reformation to the civil war.[4] More recently the insights of these two historians and of the revisionists have been applied to Kent to argue that the wider population there were engaged with political events during the civil wars and that parliamentarian sentiment in the county was much stronger than had previously been recognised.[5]

Everitt's book was mainly concerned with the gentry and one crucial revision of his work on Kent arises from a consideration of the clergy, which provides us with a very different perspective. The clergy were drawn into national debates at a very early stage as members of a national institution, which had come under extensive criticism from the start of the Long Parliament and which would largely be dismantled by 1646. They also played a central role in the circulation of political news and

information, as they were expected to read central directives and to administer oaths of loyalty to their congregations during the 1640s. Yet the political influence of the provincial clergy during the civil wars has been very little studied in comparison with that of the gentry. Research has focussed on the sermons of the period and there has been little reconstruction of other ways in which clerics sought to persuade their parishioners to support king or parliament.[6] The case of John Marston, the rector of St Mary Magdalen Canterbury, whose criticisms of parliament were delivered out of the pulpit and were compounded by his unauthorised reading of printed royalist manifestoes in his church at the height of the propaganda war between the two sides, exemplifies some of these issues. It also illustrates the political engagement of the population of Canterbury as inhabitants of a regional capital with good trading connections both to London and its local economic hinterland. The quarter sessions for east Kent were also held in Canterbury, which was a parliamentary borough represented by two MPs in the seventeenth century as well as the administrative centre of the diocese of Canterbury. Communications between the metropolis and Canterbury, which are some 60 miles in distance, were thus varied, frequent and well established.

On 28 July 1642, the House of Lords ejected John Marston from his clerical livings for having spoken 'scandalous' words against parliament.[7] As both sides tried to control the flow and spin of news, the circulation of information and its interpretation became crucial to the conflict and at the centre of Marston's story lay the contest for allegiance. Historians have long recognised the importance of printed propaganda in moulding and limiting the terms of debate during the English Civil Wars. Alongside print, the oral dissemination of news also played an important role in reinforcing religious and political divisions.[8] Scholars have recently explored the skills of reading and hearing in the early modern period, but a history of the reception of news and propaganda by readers and listeners in the 1640s has yet to be written.[9] Marston's activities split his congregation so badly that his opponents and supporters could 'hardlye looke on[e] upon another in Charitie' and this suggests some lines of enquiry specifically into the role of the clergy as mediators in the reception of information about central politics by the laity.[10]

Superficially, Marston's ejection might seem to have little importance beyond the boundaries of the parish. It was only a small part of a greater purge in the 1640s and 1650s, when nearly 3,000 sequestrations of Welsh and English ministers took place for their alleged moral, religious and political failings.[11] In December 1640 the House of Commons ordered its members to report on the state of preaching in their counties. The most

detailed responses to survive are a puritan survey of the parishes of Herefordshire and a series of parish petitions against individual clerics sent to the MP for Kent, Sir Edward Dering.[12] This information, along with reports from other counties, was considered by a select committee set up to consider ways of replacing 'scandalous' ministers and chaired by Dering. The committee heard accusations of insufficiency, immorality or the over zealous implementation of the religious policies of Charles I's 'Personal Rule'. Instances of excessive royalism would later be added to these allegations.[13] The charges levelled against 'malignant' or royalist clerics demonstrate the importance attached during the civil wars to the role of the clergy as setters of local opinion. In this respect Marston's case is of considerable significance: not only was he the first minister from Kent to be removed by Parliament, but his ejection illustrates the formation of civil war allegiances not just in the parish, but more widely in Canterbury and Kent as well.[14]

The local and national responses to Marston and the controversies that he generated can be reconstructed in remarkable detail. The survival of letters and petitions signed not just by Marston and his critics, but also by his supporters reveals how the majority of householders in the parish divided over his actions in the months prior to the outbreak of civil war. These sources can be contextualised by the rare survival of the poll tax returns for Canterbury as well as the signatures of nearly 200 of the inhabitants on a pro-parliament petition from Kent drawn up in April 1642. The poll tax records cover the county of the city of Canterbury consisting of six wards and thirteen parishes and contain the identifiable names of 1334 householders living there in February 1642. The tax was a graduated levy raised on all eligible adults aged 16 or above. Using multipliers of both 4.25 and 4.5 the number of people living in those households was between 5,700 and 6,000. Those in receipt of poor relief did not pay the poll tax, however, and the parishes in the suburbs of Canterbury, where many of the poor congregated, were not included on the returns. The total population of the city was thus closer to the estimates of between c. 7,000 to c. 8,500 for 1676 made by Duncan Harrington and based on the Compton Census returns.[15] In 1642 the parish of St Mary Magdalen had 82 households, which paid the poll tax and contained 219 adults aged sixteen or more. Six households belonged to members of the French speaking Walloon community in Canterbury, none of whom took part in these disputes. This is in keeping with the desire of the stranger community in the city to avoid engagement with the civil war politics of their English neighbours. The heads of 51 households and 26 other adults would be involved in petitioning the House of Lords for or against Marston during June and July in 1642.[16]

Together these documents show that the parliamentarian elite in the parish pressed swiftly and successfully for Marston's removal despite support for him from many of the less wealthy parishioners. As we shall see, the events which took place in the parish of St Mary Magdalen between May and July 1642 illustrate the availability of propaganda and news in Canterbury and some of the local reactions to it. They also demonstrate the conspicuous control that the clergy could exercise over the circulation and more especially the interpretation of this information. The promotion of petitions in the parish and the city also reveals the political engagement of certain sections of the city's population. Before examining these issues, though, it is first necessary briefly to consider Marston's career and character, not only because he had a track record of controversial behaviour, but also because he has been confused with the poet and dramatist John Marston, who was ordained in 1609, served a cure in Hampshire and died in 1634.[17]

John Marston of Canterbury graduated in 1630 as Bachelor of Arts at Magdalen College, Oxford, and was presented by the king as rector of St Mary Magdalen in 1631. In 1637 he was also instituted as vicar of the Canterbury parish of St Mary Bredin.[18] In February 1640 he was cited before the Archdeacon's court in Canterbury for defamation by a parishioner of St Mary Bredin, the widow Elizabeth Best, who accused him of falsely and maliciously claiming to have slept with her a 'thousand times' and saying 'she was and is a whore'.[19] The case was referred to the ecclesiastical court of high commission in London, which heard cases of 'great & enormious Crimes, obstinencies & Offences'. In June 1640 the court committed Marston to the Fleet prison, where he remained for three months.[20] He was now charged with forcing the chastity of Elizabeth Best by pursuing her into her own bed chamber and committing adultery with her on several occasions. When she refused to see him, he dramatically threatened to commit suicide in her parlour.[21] Further charges alleged that he lived a 'filthy, adulterous, lustfull and incontinent' life and was a frequenter of taverns and 'drinkinge howses', especially at night. Late one night, whilst drunk, he had allegedly shouted outside the house of Elizabeth Best's widowed neighbour Mrs Dunkyn 'there lyes that Jade Dunkyn', with other 'wicked and opprobrious termes'. At another time he stood at Elizabeth Best's gate shouting that she was in bed with two 'whoremasters', but he would spoil their sport, because he was armed with a pistol. Not only had he tried to molest Best's eldest daughter, but he had tried to persuade Best herself that it was no sin to sleep with him, because she was 'a single woman'. The case was still

being considered by the court in late November 1640 when the Long Parliament had assembled.[22]

Marston, a married man, admitted that he had committed adultery in an undated, florid letter to the Dean of Canterbury, Isaac Bargrave. He asked Bargrave to hear him and Elizabeth Best privately together in order to establish 'her guilt as well as mine' and acknowledged that he had committed an 'eminent wickedness'. Yet it was simply a 'fraylty', while he considered that committing perjury and lying would be a 'presumptuous sinn'.[23] In 1643 John White, who replaced Dering as chairman of the committee for 'scandalous' ministers, published his account of the first 100 clergy ejected from their livings by the committee under the title *The First Century of Scandalous, Malignant Priests*. Marston was not included in this tally, of course, because he had been removed by the House of Lords. Yet many of the accusations catalogued in White's work similarly concerned sexual impropriety and drunkenness. The first case against a minister from Sussex included charges of homosexuality and bestiality, and the accusation that he was an excessive drinker. The final case involved an Essex vicar accused of compromising the chastity of the widows in his parish. [24] Historians have approached such accounts with a degree of scepticism, yet the charges against Marston were not conjured from thin air in order to reinforce the case against him as a supporter of the king. They had been thoroughly investigated by the Laudian church authorities in the most prominent of the ecclesiastical courts. As archbishop, William Laud had been particularly concerned to discipline ministers, who were 'disorderly in life' and had in 1636 instructed his registrar, William Somner, to inform him about such cases in the diocese of Canterbury. In reply Somner had sent Laud the names of thirteen men in and around Canterbury, whose main offences included 'playing the goodfellow' in taverns and drunkenness. The list included the ministers of seven of the thirteen parishes within the jurisdiction of the city of Canterbury.[25] This suggests that drunkenness amongst the parish clergy there was perceived as a particular problem by the diocesan authorities. Moreover, Marston's clear admission of adultery and his previous attempt to defame Elizabeth Best both strongly suggest that it would be erring on the side of caution to dismiss any accusations of sexual incontinence out of hand.

During his imprisonment the profits from Marston's livings were sequestered and used to pay for the services of a curate named John Terry. When the court of high commission was abolished by the Long Parliament in July 1641, Marston overturned the order of sequestration, had John Terry removed from the cure and returned to his ministry during

March the following year.[26] Before doing so he preached on Sunday 6th February 1642 'before many of the worthy members of the Honourable House of Commons' at St Margaret's in Westminster, the parish church used by MPs. His sermon was later printed at the 'importunity of many' of the congregation, although there is nothing in the text to tell us who invited him to preach at such a prestigious venue and before such notable auditors.[27] It is possible that Marston had simply achieved symbolic status amongst the members of parliament as a victim of the court of high commission. This alone may have given him an entrée to the national political stage as a preacher to the Commons and as a participant in the printed debates of the day. Sermons delivered to the Long Parliament were often the occasion for political commentary by preachers, but Marston was careful to avoid commenting too closely on current events and he referred only generally to the woes and calamities suffered by the English, alluding vaguely to 'approaching evills'.[28] He did, however, remind his congregation that the recent 'Bishops' War' between England and Scotland was evidence of the judgement of God 'upon us', and insisted that now God was punishing the English with 'hombred divisions, our foes being chiefely those of our owne household'. He also commended 'this blest' Parliament for acting like a college of physicians to the state in trying to cure its distempers, but warned that by putting too much confidence in man the nation had neglected God. Curiously, given his own brushes with the various church courts, he also referred in passing to King David's adultery with Bathsheba as 'a sin of the bed'.[29]

Marston's praise for Parliament should not surprise us too much at this stage as he had clearly suited his sermon to his audience of MPs. Moreover, the Long Parliament's early reforms received widespread support both in London and in the provinces, and Marston was fitting his sermon to a particular strain of acclaim for reform. The king had accepted some restraints on his powers in 1641, including the introduction of the triennial act and the declaration that ship money was illegal. The councils in the North and in Wales as well as the courts of star chamber and of high commission had been abolished. Marston must surely have been extremely grateful for the removal of the latter court. Yet enthusiasm for reforms was also waning in some quarters as Parliament debated measures to abolish bishops and pressed forward with the execution of the Earl of Strafford in May 1641. The Grand Remonstrance of December 1641 against Charles I's rule provoked further splits in the opposition to the crown both within and outside parliament. By the turn of the year Charles I was desperately trying to neutralise his political opponents. Most disastrously, he failed to arrest Lord Kimbolton (the future Earl of Manchester and Parliamentarian general) and five members of the House

of Commons, including John Pym and John Hampden, on charges of treason in early January 1642.[30] In the ensuing political turmoil Charles and his family fled the capital in fear for their lives and stayed initially at Hampton Court. On 13th February Charles I was briefly in Canterbury, where he was joined by the Queen en route to Holland. During their brief visit the royal couple heard a sermon in the cathedral in support of the divine right of bishops and against parliament's attempts to abolish episcopacy.[31] After leaving Kent the king began his journey north to set up his headquarters in York by the middle of March. When Marston preached in the first week of February, the extent of the political divisions between king and parliament were, therefore, becoming increasingly apparent.

This is what is known of Marston's life before the summer of 1642. By the time that he had returned to Canterbury fears of a civil war in England were widespread and he was now more forthright. John Francklyn, a draper, later deposed before the House of Lords that one evening in the first week of May he had spoken to Marston in the cathedral precincts, and asked him if he had heard the good news contained in 'a booke printed bye order of parlament' that the English had beaten the Irish rebels three times. Francklyn's comment is a good illustration of the intersection between printed news and its oral dissemination. We do not know if Francklyn had read the book himself, but he knew of its existence and contents, and was eager to discuss them publicly in the cathedral precincts. Canterbury was regarded as a centre for the circulation of news at this time. In 1642 the Canterbury foot post left for London twice a week and a carrier left once a week bound for Southwark. The post men and the carriers were likely sources of gossip and news, as well as the bearers of written and printed information. It was via such means that the gentleman Henry Oxinden of nearby Barham would have received personal letters as well as printed pamphlets, speeches and newsletters purchased for him by friends and relatives in London. A cousin in London thus assured Oxinden in the summer of 1642 that Canterbury could also furnish him with more reports.[32]

In response to Francklyn Marston heatedly replied that parliament put out 'flames' of news to cheat men of their money, a clear reference to the recent spate of heavy parliamentarian levies, which raised more in revenue than had Charles I's unpopular taxation of the 1630s.[33] This included the 1641 poll tax, which had raised £632 5s. from Canterbury by February 1642, and a tax to raise £400,000 for the defence of the realm and the suppression of the Irish rebellion. The first half of Canterbury's contribution of £818 14s. 9d. towards the latter was to be collected by

20th May 1642. Cash was also being solicited by parliament under the act for both a contribution and loan towards the relief of the king's 'distressed subjects' in Ireland, and donations for this were to be gathered by churchwardens by 1st June 1642.[34] That Marston had complained about the burden of parliamentary taxation was corroborated by one of his parishioners, the grocer Thomas Bridge, who passed him and Francklyn as they were talking about Ireland. Francklyn also deposed that when they reached the gate to the dark entry by the dean's house, Marston threatened to 'stabbe the heartes bloude' of anyone who spoke against the recent petition from Kent promoted by Sir Edward Dering, who had now abandoned his earlier enthusiasms for reform and had been disabled in February from sitting in the Commons for publishing his speeches in the House.[35] Ominously, Marston added that blood would be shed in England before midsummer's day. In his deposition, Francklyn drily observed that he believed that Marston was a 'little' distempered with drink.[36]

Dering's petition has become famous as *the* 'Kentish Petition', but in fact it was only one of a series of petitions from the county. It was addressed to parliament from 'the Gentry, Ministers and Commonalty of Kent' and had been drawn up at the county assizes held at Maidstone in March. It was endorsed by a group of Kent gentry, including Dering, before being circulated for subscription in the county. In his account of Kent during the civil wars, Alan Everitt misleadingly described the 'Kentish Petition' as reflecting the essentially localist, moderate and 'mildly royalist' opinions of the 'county community', by which he meant the county gentry. [37] Parliament, however, recognised it for what it was - an extremely royalist document. Superficially, the petition called for reconciliation between king and parliament, but it did so on wholly royalist terms, whilst simultaneously accusing parliament of contravening the 'precious liberties of the subject'. It also attacked parliament's puritan supporters as depravers of religion and denounced the 'schismatical and seditious sermons' of the parliamentarian clergy.[38] The members of the House of Commons did not regard it as a mild document; they ordered the hangman to burn copies of it and imprisoned its leading promoters, while Dering was threatened with impeachment. Dering in particular was seen as a turncoat for having abandoned his earlier support both for the puritan clergy in Kent and for the reform of episcopacy.[39] Marston's hostility towards anyone opposing this petition would have been seen as clear evidence of his support for the king's cause.

Dering's 'Kentish Petition' purported to represent the views of the whole county, but a counter-petition from Kent in favour of parliament's

policies was drawn up in April. Its chief promoter was Thomas Blount, a Kent justice of the peace, and it was presented to parliament in early May. It specifically rejected Dering's petition and commended parliament for its care and labours, both in the advancement of the 'true, reformed religion' and for the 'honor and welfare' of the king and his kingdoms. It emphasised in particular parliament's resolution of 9th April 1642 to reform the government and liturgy of the church in consultation with 'godly and learned divines' and to establish 'learned and preaching' ministers throughout the kingdom. The resolution was the origin of the Westminster Assembly of Divines, which met from 1643 to discuss reform of Church liturgy and government. Some of the petitioners, but by no means all, had previously signed a 'root and branch' petition from Kent to abolish episcopacy, which had been condensed to less than a quarter of its original length and emasculated by Dering before he had presented it to the House of Commons in January 1641. Dering later stated that he had considered the petition to be a 'parat' or copy of the London 'root and branch' petition and in self-congratulatory mode added that he had 'taught it a new and more modest language'.[40]

Blount's petition was said to have been signed within weeks by 6,000 people in Kent and, unlike Dering's petition, the original signatures have survived on the copy now in the House of Lords archives. The petitioners came from key towns in Kent including Canterbury, Rochester, and the Cinque Ports, as well as various parishes, including Chatham, Dartford, Maidstone, Goudhurst and Woodchurch, where the laity had already written to Sir Edward Dering or petitioned the House of Commons against their minister. Canterbury and its surrounding area provided 185 signatories led by the mayor, Clyve Carter, and eleven of the city's twelve aldermen, and these local petitioners were the most likely targets of Marston's hostile comments. [41] Specifically, the petition had strong support in the parish of St Mary Magdalen, where at least eighteen men signed it, thirteen of whom later signed a petition against Marston, which was presented to the House of Lords on Monday 27th June 1642.[42] The example of the two county petitions circulating in Kent in March and April 1642 may well have encouraged Marston's critics to draw up their own parish petition against him. It remains an open question, though, why they chose to petition the Lords rather than the Commons. The work of the committee for 'scandalous ministers' had been laboriously slow, which may have been one reason why Marston's critics had turned to the upper House. Another reason may have lain in the fact William Laud, the Archbishop of Canterbury, was currently in the Tower of London awaiting the outcome of treason charges made against him by the House of Commons. The petitioners may have hoped that as Laud was a

disgraced member of their own House, the Lords would take especial notice of the disorders at the heart of his own diocese.

The June petitioners complained about Marston's 'scandalous course of life and beeinge ill affected to the proceedings of the High Court of Parliament'. They rehearsed the reasons for Marston's appearance before the court of high commission and claimed that if the court had continued in existence a little longer, then he would have been removed from his ministry for adultery. The petition alleged that on his return to the parish Marston had not only failed to reform his immoral behaviour, but had also opposed the proceedings of parliament. He had spoken out several times to make 'devision and distraccon' between the king's subjects and to persuade people to have an 'evill opinion' of the parliament. The petitioners claimed that they had been driven to attend other parish churches because of Marston's pronouncements. They asked the House of Lords to replace him with an honest, capable man so that they could return to their parish church to hear services and receive the sacraments with 'quiett minds'.[43] Marston may have felt particularly safe in making anti-parliamentarian comments in Canterbury at this time, because the cathedral was a centre of royalist preaching and sentiment throughout 1642. In January the sub-dean Thomas Paske had preached that 'all were revolted from the King, and must come as Benhadad's servants did with ropes about their necks'. He was reported in the House of Commons for this sermon, but no further action was then taken against him.[44]

Marston could hardly have been unaware of the existence of the petition against him and on Sunday 26th June, the day before it was presented, he deliberately challenged the parliamentarians in his congregation by reading a royal pamphlet aloud 'without any order or warrant' in church.[45] The pamphlet can be identified as *His Majesties Answer to a Printed Book entitled A Remonstrance or The Declaration of the Lords and Commons assembled in Parliament May the 26 1642*. This was a lengthy repudiation by Charles I of parliament's charge that he wanted to start a civil war. It contained an explanation of why he had refused his consent in March to the militia bill, which placed the nomination of the county Lords Lieutenant under Parliament's control. The king believed that this placed an armed force in the hands of men who wanted to destroy the monarchy. He went on to attack Sir John Hotham for refusing to surrender the military arsenal at Hull to him in April and accused parliament of undermining the principle of property, because he had the same title to the town of Hull and its magazine as his subjects had to their lands and money. The king made the further alarming claims that the members of parliament intended to depose him, to alter the government

of the state and the church, and become 'perpetual dictators over the king and people'. Charles ended the pamphlet with his pledge that those who obeyed parliament's militia ordinance would immediately be treated as seditious enemies of his 'sovereign power'.[46]

Marston was in defiant mood and when he had finished reading this nineteen page pamphlet, he told the congregation that he knew that some of them might question his authority to read the book to them, but he would answer that objection 'well enough'. The clergy had traditionally been called upon to read official crown documents from the pulpit, which was one of the most effective ways of ensuring that a majority of the population would hear them. Crucially, it was also designed to ensure that those who could not read would know about royal policies. There were no specific instructions for the reading of *His Majesties Answer to a Printed Book*, but other royalist pamphlets did contain directions to the clergy to read them to their congregations. This included *The King's Answer to the Parliament's Petition*, which at the king's 'expresse pleasure' was to be read in all churches and chapels in England and Wales. In late July groups of armed men in royalist areas in the Midlands challenged parliamentarian ministers to read it by force.[47] Royal proclamations were also traditionally distributed via the county sheriffs to be read aloud and then publicly displayed. The House of Commons officially copied this form of publication on 6th June 1642, when it ordered that printed copies of its public orders and declarations should be distributed by the sheriffs to all constables, headboroughs or tithingmen to be read in the presence of the inhabitants of each town or parish.[48] It was specifically in response to this order that Marston then called on the parish constable to read out a 'roll' of papers from parliament to his congregation. There is nothing in the surviving evidence to tell us what the papers contained, but Marston explained that it 'will cost you five or six houres time to heare them'. He advised anyone who wanted to leave that they could do so, and then he challenged those who remained to place their hands on their hearts, take up their bibles and find a justification for taking up arms against the king.[49]

Two days later ten parishioners wrote to the lawyer Thomas Denne to complain about this verbal challenge and Marston's attempts to influence how the two sets of documents were heard by his parishioners. Denne was resident in Canterbury in St Alphege's parish, but the letter was addressed to him at his legal chambers in the Inner Temple in London. He had been retained as counsel to the city corporation since 1617, when he was also made a freeman. In 1624 he had been elected MP for Canterbury and from 1630 he had been a Kent justice of the peace. He continued to

serve the city under successive parliamentarian regimes and in 1643 he was chosen as recorder for Canterbury. During the 1640s and early 1650s he acted as chairman of the parliamentary committee for assessment in the city. Although Denne has been characterised as a puritan and a republican, it is more likely that he was a committed city administrator.[50] The letter reminded Denne of Marston's 'former lewd and malignant practises', of which he had sufficient 'information & proofe'. The use of the words 'lewd' and 'malignant' strongly suggest that Denne had already been informed of the petition against the minister, which focussed on Marston's immorality and his anti-parliamentarianism. Now the letter described Marston's provocative actions on Sunday 26 June and pointedly complained that far from taking five or six hours to read the papers from parliament, it had taken the constable a mere ninety minutes to get through them! The signatories were largely householders, who had also previously signalled their support for parliament by signing Blount's petition. [51] Eight of them were heads of a household, including the alderman, William Bridge, and the two church wardens, John Croft and Richard Harrison. Eight of them had signed Blount's parliamentarian petition and nine had signed the petition against Marston, the only exception being William Lythall, who would soon switch sides to support him.[52]

The petition against Marston had been signed by a larger group of 29 men, eighteen of whom had been heads of a household at the time of the poll tax.[53] The social hierarchy was clearly reflected in the order in which they placed their names in one of three distinct columns on the petition (see Figure 1). The first to sign was probably Thomas Denne esquire, the youngest son of the lawyer, who signed at the top of the left hand column. He was followed by both of the aldermen living in the parish, William Whiting, a woollen draper and William Bridge, a grocer, and by William Reeve, gentleman. The two churchwardens, Richard Harrison and John Croft, signed together at the top of a third column on the right hand side of the petition. John Denne esquire, the lawyer's eldest son, squeezed his signature above those of the churchwardens, in a clear demonstration of his social superiority.[54] In the summer of 1642 this group included the core supporters of parliament in the parish. Thirteen of the signatories had previously signed Blount's pro-parliament petition including the churchwarden, Richard Harrison, the two aldermen, Bridge and Whiting, and the latter's son, William Whiting junior, also a woollen draper. In January 1649 William and Thomas Bridge would both sign a petition to the House of Commons from Kent calling for the trial of Charles I along with John Nutt, the MP for Canterbury demonstrating their support for Parliament throughout the civil wars and trial of the king.[55] Amongst the

sixteen men who had not signed Blount's petition was Thomas Bridge, William's son, who had made the deposition on 24th June along with John Francklyn about Marston's outburst against parliament in early May.[56]

The impression that Marston's opponents were amongst the more substantial residents of the parish is reinforced by the fact that the two aldermen, Whiting and Bridge, had both served as mayor in 1625 and 1636 respectively, while Reeve, Bridge and William Whiting junior would all later serve as mayor. Bridge in particular would be notorious while mayor for trying to suppress the anti-parliamentarian riots in Canterbury at Christmas in 1647, while Reeve was elected in 1649 after the execution of the king, and Whiting was elected in 1651.[57] Furthermore, fourteen of the signatories paid the poll tax at the higher rates. As aldermen, Whiting and Bridge each paid £5, the attorney John Collbrand paid £3, and Thomas and John Denne each paid £1. A further eight men paid 5sh. each, John Grant the innkeeper had paid 12d. as a resident of neighbouring St George's parish, and four others paid the basic rate of 6d. per head. The remaining eleven men, who were not individually named on the poll tax, were probably also rated at 6d. each, and may have been apprentices or in the case of Thomas Bridge, a son resident in his father's household. Such dependents might have signed the petition to oblige the head of their household or they may have held their own views. There were other strong family and household connections amongst these petitioners. The joiner John Tucker and the tailor Thomas Simpson, for example, were father and son-in-law. The chandler, Thomas Gibson, had been apprenticed to William Bridge, while William Taylor was living in the household of Bridget and Dorothy Denne, the youngest sisters of the Denne brothers.[58]

Further evidence of the social and economic status of this group is provided by the fact that only three of them made a mark instead of signing the petition (see Fig. 1). This is not always evidence of an inability to write, but the fact that 26 men were able to sign indicates that Marston's opponents were amongst the more literate members of his congregation. Full literacy was associated with the elite and middling social groups, but rates of literacy are notoriously hard to gauge accurately in this period. David Cressy has estimated that at the time of the civil war 70% of men and 90% of women were unable to sign their names and could thus be regarded as illiterate.[59] This though, is a rather blunt measure of illiteracy and more recently it has been argued that an inability to write did not prevent an individual from being able to read. Historians have become increasingly sensitive to the great range of writing and reading abilities displayed by people at the time, as well as

the importance of the oral dissemination of information. We are no closer, however, to calculating the exact percentage of men and women who were able to read and write competently, and even further from calculating the percentage of those who could read but not write. We can, though, be confident that even if the three men who made a mark could not read, they would have had access to the contents of this petition, if not as readers then because it was usual for someone to read documents to those who could not.[60]

At the end of July a rival petition in support of Marston was presented to the House of Lords from the parish bearing 48 signatures. His supporters were not oblivious to Marston's scandalous behaviour, but they claimed to be fully satisfied by the punishments he had already faced of imprisonment and loss of earnings. They maintained that since his return Marston had been diligent in praying, administering the sacrament and preaching. They asked that his ministry should be continued, despite the earlier petition to the contrary, which they alleged was subscribed only by a few 'apprentice boyes, Journeymen Taylers' and some others, who rarely or never went to church. The accusation that only social inferiors had signed the opposing petition was a typical slur used to discredit rival groups throughout the period, but as we have seen, this was certainly not the case. Three of the petitioners against Marston were freemen tailors, Stephen Ashernden, John Croft and Thomas Simpson, whileThomas Long was also a tailor.[61] Some of the other signatories, who were not householders, may have been apprentices, but in general Marston's enemies were clearly more socially influential in the city than his supporters. Both factions contained very similar numbers of freemen, at least 17 in the case of Marston's critics and at least 19 in the case of his supporters, but it was the former group which contained the highest number of men who were actively involved in elite city government in the 1640s.[62] The identification of freemen is not as straightforward as the identification of petitioners, but the survival of the poll tax has aided the assumptions made about an individual's freeman status here.[63]

The most prominent men to sign the July petition were James Wilsford, esquire, Mainwaring Hammond, gentleman, and the woollendraper Leonard Lovelace, gentleman. Of these three, only Lovelace was involved with city government having been sworn as a common councillor in 1638.[64] 34 of the signatories were heads of a household, nearly double the number who had signed the earlier petition against Marston, but they were by no means as wealthy as his adversaries. There was a considerable difference in the economic status of the two groups, since the highest rate of poll tax known to be paid by any of Marston's

supporters was £1 paid by James Wilsford. A further five of his supporters, including Lovelace, paid 5s., three paid 2s. and 25 paid 6d. each. Thirteen of Marston's supporters were not listed by name on the poll tax return, but would have probably been rated at 6d., while the gentleman Mainwaring Hammond undoubtedly paid more, but did not pay the poll tax in Canterbury. There are also some striking gender differences, as Marston's supporters included six widows, two of whom were heads of a household, yet no women had signed the earlier petition against him. [65] There may have been a deliberate policy on the part of Marston's enemies to exclude women, because female support was often derided at the time as having little political weight. 23 or nearly half of Marston's supporters also made a mark rather than signed and this group included the six women and seventeen men. It is also significant that the names of the majority of those who made a mark are to be found in two columns on the margins of the petition, which suggests that they were approached to endorse the petition only after their social superiors had done so (See Fig. 2). There is also evidence of strong family ties amongst this group of petitioners, as the surnames Brett, Bullock, Mar[r]able, and Pilkington were shared by two signatories in each case, although the exact relationship between them is not clear. John Lambard and William Lamport may also have been related, while the coopers Nicholas and Moses Best were father and son.[66] It is unclear if they were related to Thomas Best, who made his mark on the petition against Marston. Family and other social ties did not, of course, inevitably dictate how individuals reacted to the disputes of the 1640s. Leonard Lovelace had been apprenticed to alderman Whiting, he had become a freeman in 1632 and had married Whiting's daughter Martha in the same year. Now the two men found themselves in opposing camps over the actions of their minister, while Martha's death in 1640 may also have weakened the ties between the two men.[67]

Finally, there was a clear political division between the two groups of petitioners as only five of Marston's supporters had earlier signed Blount's pro-parliament petition, including William Lythall, who had also signed the letter to Thomas Denne against Marston on 28 June.[68] It is plausible that they had experienced a change of mind as some civil war allegiances were notoriously fluid. Alternatively, they may never have supported Parliament, but had signed Blount's parliamentarian petition out of peer pressure. There is some doubt about whether a sixth man, Abraham Edmonds, endorsed both petitions, as someone of this name signed Blount's petition, but made a mark on the petition supporting Marston, raising obvious doubts about identity. Some of Marston's supporters may have been royalists of varying hues, but their lower social

standing makes it difficult to trace a consistent pattern of allegiance. In 1651, in the aftermath of the Second Civil War in Kent, Mainwaring Hammond compounded with the parliamentary committee as a delinquent for the sum of £80, suggesting he was consistently anti-parliament in the 1640s. William Lythall was also most likely the baker of the same name, who was arrested during the anti-parliamentarian riots at Christmas 1647. The rioters were prosecuted at the Canterbury quarter sessions at a hearing presided over by the mayor William Bridge, the city recorder Thomas Denne, and the aldermen John Lade, Daniel Masterson, Clive Carter and John Pollen, the last of whom had been responsible as sheriff for the collection of the poll tax in 1642.[69]

Marston's opponents did, however, contain a committed core of parliamentarian supporters, but this should not lead to the assumption that they were also puritans. They complained to the House of Lords about Marston's scandalous behaviour and his anti-parliamentarianism, but they did not mention his religious views. There is no evidence of grass roots puritanism in the parish of St Mary Magdalen, and the predominance of the patronage of the king, the archbishop and the dean and chapter over parish appointments in Canterbury meant that there were very few genuinely puritan ministers in Canterbury. Edward Aldey of Saint Andrews was probably the only long term incumbent in the city to be regarded as a puritan at the time.[70] Even John Terry, who had briefly replaced Marston, does not appear to have been a puritan.[71] Furthermore, Marston's supporters did not mention the religious stance of his critics and if they had been puritans this surely would have been spun against them as a group of dangerous, religious schismatics. Only William Reeve's will, drawn up in 1651, reveals any clear leanings towards parliamentarian godliness. He left £5 each to his 'pastor Mr John Player', who had helped to form a congregational church in Canterbury in 1646-7, and to his 'loving ffreind Master Thomas Ventris', the curate of St Margaret's Canterbury since May 1642, who was to preach his funeral sermon.[72] Player had refused to read the *Book of Sports* to his congregation at Kennington in 1633 and his case was cited against Laud at his trial while Ventris was ejected at the Restoration and was later licensed as a congregational minister in 1672.[73] As such men flocked to take up posts in Canterbury from the mid-1640s onwards, the city took on more of a 'puritan' character in terms of preaching and religious observance.

As a group, Marston's opponents were politically, socially and economically more influential than his supporters and it is this, rather than overt puritanism, which provides the key to their actions. They

counted not only elite members of the parish amongst their numbers, but of the city as well. The aldermen Bridge and Whiting in particular would have shared the concerns of many town governors about Charles I's policies in the 1630s. After the 1635 ship money writ for £500 had been issued for Canterbury, like many other authorities the mayor and common council had complained to the privy council that they were charged for ship money 'far beyond their abilities' and twice as much as other inhabitants of Kent. As a result the amount imposed on the city fell to £300 in 1636.[74] In February 1637 Bridge, as mayor, had paid £280 of ship money from Canterbury to Sir William Russell, the treasurer of the navy and was thus well aware of the burden that it represented.[75] Moreover, as aldermen in a cathedral city, Bridge and Whiting would also have been engaged in the jurisdictional disputes that frequently arose between the secular and ecclesiastical authorities. In 1636 Archbishop Laud had challenged the city's jurisdiction with a writ of *quo warranto* and in March and April 1642 the town councillors had planned to petition parliament to settle the privileges, liberties and extent of 'the county of this city'. They specifically wished to remedy the jurisdictional encroachments of the cathedral and the former friaries and priories, which they said were claimed as fully as in the 'tyme of popery'.[76]

There was a rapid response to the complaints against Marston and in mid-July he was taken into custody by parliament and two weeks later, on 28 July 1642, he was brought before the bar of the House of Lords accused of speaking 'scandalous' words against Parliament, which he denied. On the same day the petition in his support was delivered to the Lords, but the upper house resolved that Marston should be ejected and that he should not be allowed to hold any further office in the church or state. He was to be imprisoned at Westminster and, when the House thought fit, he would be released on surety for his future good behaviour.[77] From prison Marston attempted to accelerate his release by writing to Lord Kimbolton, the speaker of the House of Lords and the peer accused of treason by Charles I in January 1642. His undated letter has erroneously been attributed to John Marston the poet, who died in 1634, but Albert Tricomi has definitively shown that it was written by John Marston of Canterbury in the summer of 1642. The letter was probably written before Marston's censure in the Lords, as he makes no reference to it. In his typically florid and enigmatic style, he explained that he was now 'conseduc[e]d' from his former temper and wished to serve both Kimbolton and parliament in a matter of no little concern. He did not divulge what this might be, but asked Kimbolton to send a messenger to him, who could ensure that his role in this revelation would be kept secret. Marston urged the peer to act swiftly, for he could not judge when

it would be too late to impart his news. Marston may have picked up some anti-parliamentarian gossip in the prison, but the nature of the information remains unclear. He ended by assuring Kimbolton that he would in future be a 'faithfull servant' to him and to parliament.[78]

Kimbolton's response to the letter is unknown, but Marston later tried another route of ingratiation. Just over a week after his ejection from his livings, he penned a grovelling petition to the Lords asking them to mitigate his punishment, which he claimed would otherwise reduce his family to utter ruin and inexpressible calamities. He apologised fulsomely for any rash words or actions caused by his 'seduced iudgm[en]t, or troubled brayne'. Now, having been touched by great remorse, Marston implored forgiveness and vowed that he would use all public and possible ways to be constant in the service of the House. He asked to be freed, having been imprisoned for nearly three weeks and he prayed for the prosperity both of the Lords and of parliament.[79] A few weeks later he was released and headed for his alma mater, Oxford, which was soon to become the royalist headquarters after the indecisive battle of Edgehill in October 1642.

Marston's story resurfaces once again in his petition of September 1653 to the Council of State, in which he explained that through lack both of judgement and 'heavenly illumination' he had supported the royalist cause by remaining at Oxford. Gradually, though, he saw the light and surrendered to parliament in December 1643. Marston later became minister at Henbury in Gloucestershire, having successfully satisfied his scruples about taking the engagement, the oath of loyalty to the Commonwealth regime imposed in 1649 after the execution of Charles I. He also made the fantastical claim that he would have raised a troop of horse to combat the invading Scots at the battle of Worcester in 1651, had Cromwell not defeated them so swiftly. He maintained that following the agitation of a few people he had been ejected from Henbury by the parliamentary committee for plundered ministers, because he had been disqualified from any church office by the Lords in 1642. He insisted, however, that this act of severity had not diminished his affection for the present government.[80] This time his pleas for restitution were successful and in November 1653 the commissioners of the great seal granted Marston the vicarage of Standish in Gloucestershire on the recommendation of members of the county committee, various ministers and the parishioners. He probably died soon afterwards, as a successor was admitted to the living in the following year.[81] Marston's political allegiance was, as we have seen though, entirely unreliable. He may have had some inclination towards royalism, but he was never prepared to

support the crown at the expense of his own safety, while his proffered support for parliament was always pragmatic rather than principled.

How far Marston persuaded any of his parishioners to support the crown in the summer of 1642 is unknowable. Most probably his anti-parliamentarian stance served to strengthen and to define existing prejudices. It is clear that Marston's moral character had already come under scrutiny long before he was charged with speaking out against Parliament. The divisions amongst his parishioners were based on existing fault lines between those who were scandalised by their minister's failings and those who believed that he had atoned for them. His critics in the parish thus emphasised his evill reputation and behaviour, as well as his ill affection to parliament, in order to ensure his removal. The House of Lords chose, though, to focus solely on Marston's scandalous attacks on Parliament. During the paper war of 1642, parliament could ill afford the mobilisation of potential royalist supporters by their ministers, especially when the king was actively recruiting soldiers to his cause. The parish church was seen as a crucial point of contact between central politics and people in the provinces. It provided an arena in which the majority of the adult population and the illiterate could hear staged readings of printed royalist and parliamentarian pamphlets, orders and declarations.

Marston's decision to preface the official reading of the 'roll' of papers from parliament by the constable with his admitted unauthorised reading of the king's *Answer to a Printed Book*, along with his invitation to parishioners to leave before they could hear the constable and his challenge to find a justification for rebellion in the Bible, all illustrate the type of manipulation the clergy could bring to bear on the laity's reception of such information. His opponents were thus particularly aggrieved that he had 'discouraged' his congregation from hearing 'those things read w[hi]ch came from the Parliament'. John White's committee heard many similar cases including that of William Evans of Suffolk, who instead of a sermon on the Lord's day read the same royalist pamphlet to his congregation as Marston had to his flock, and Edward Alston of Essex, who read out declarations from the king, but refused to read those from parliament.[82] The charges against Marston were therefore by no means unique, but the extensive documentation surrounding his case is unusual and allows a detailed reconstruction of the context in which the charges against him were made.

Despite Everitt's suggestion that people outside London were not aware of the political problems of the period, Marston's case also illustrates the

access to news that people outside London might have and which would have allowed them to judge the merits of the two causes. Information was available outside the churches as well as within them, of course, all the more so in an important urban centre such as Canterbury, where the circulation of political news from the capital and the subscription of county petitions further served to politicise the inhabitants of the city. Yet the clergy were uniquely placed to comment on the news both within and outside the pulpit. Marston's case demonstrates that the clergy could play a significant role not only in relaying information, but also by intervening in the reception and interpretation of news and propaganda. His rapid ejection from his livings by the House of Lords demonstrates not only the great importance that was attached to the political influence of the clergy at the time, it also illuminates the engagement of his parishioners from the disenfranchised widows to some of Canterbury's most notable civic leaders with the politics of the English Civil Wars.

Appendix I Signatories to the Letter dated 28 June to Thomas Denne Esq.[83]

Richard Beacham	
Wm Bridge	alderman
John Croft	churchwarden
Richard fforstall	
Richard Harrison	churchwarden
William Lythall	
John Lewknor	
John Philcox	
Thomas Simpson	
Andrew Treadcraft	

Appendix II – Signatories to the petition against John Marston delivered to the House of Lords on 27 June 1642.[84] Freemen are indicated by the letter f, householders at the time of the poll tax are indicated by the letter h, signatories to Blount's pro-parliament petition of April 1642 are indicated by the letter p.

William Alexander			
Stephen Ashernden	f		p
Richard Beacham	f	h	p
Thomas Best his marke			
Thomas Bridge	f		
Wm Bridge Alderman	f	h	p
Georg Carlton	f		
Jo: Collbrand junior		h	
John Croft churchwarden	f	h	
John Denne Esquire		h	
Tho: Denne Esquire		h	
Richard fforstall		h	p
John ffry			p
Thomas Gibson	f	h	p
John Grant	f	h	
Richard Harrison churchwarden	f	h	p
Edward Iffry [?]			
John Lewknor			
Thomas Long his mark	f	h	
George Oacke [?]			

John Philcox	f	h	p
William Reeve gentleman	f	h	
Thomas Simpson	f		p
Willi: Taylor			
John Thatcher his marke		h	
Andrew Treadcraft	f	h	p
John Tucker	f	h	p
William Whiting Alderman	f	h	p
William Whiting Junior	f	h	p

Appendix III – Signatories to the petition in favour of Marston delivered to Parliament 28th July 1642.[85] Freemen are indicated by the letter f, householders at the time of the poll tax are indicated by the letter h, signatories to Blount's pro-parliament petition of April 1642 are indicated by the letter p.

Thomas Argalles			
The marke of James Badcock	f	h	
William Baker	f	h	
Edward Barrett	f	h	
William Bennetts marke		h	
Moses Best	f		p
The marke of Nicholas Best	f	h	
John Brett			
The marke of Nicholas Brett		h	
Richard Bromley		h	
The marke of Richard Bullocke	f		
Thomas Bullocke	f	h	
Mathew Burnley	f	h	
The marke of Elizabeth			
Carleton widow			
The marke of Margaret			
Chandler widow		h	
The marke of Trustram Downer		h	
The marke of Abraham Edmonds			p [signs][86]
The marke of Elizabeth			
Eggleston widow			
Richard Fenn			p
The marke of widow Foster			
The marke of Nicholas Fowler		h	
Ffrances ffranklin			
John Halden		h	
Mainwaring Hammond Gentleman			

Robart Harnby	f	h	p
The marke of James Harnet			
The marke of Thomas Hildersonne	f	h	
Nichi NI Justice	f	h	
John Lambard		h	
The marke of William Lampart			
Noah Leeds	f	h	
Leonard Lovelace Gentleman	f	h	
John Lun	f	h	p
William Lythall	f	h	p
The marke of Anne			
Marable widow			
Richard Marable	f	h	
Clement Pilkington		h	
The marke of Thomas Pilkington		h	
The marke of Anne		h	
Sedger widow			
Thomas Short		h	
The marke of Laurence Stephens	f	h	
Thomas Tatnall		h	
The marke of Daniel Wakelen	f	h	
The marke of William Warren		h	
The marke of Timothy White		h	
James Wilsford Esquire		h	
Tristrim Wilson	f	h	
John [?]			

[1] A. Everitt, *The Community of Kent and the Great Rebellion, 1640-1660* (Leicester, 1966), p. 121. I am grateful to Lorraine Flisher, Valerie Newill, Mary Jane Pamphilion and Stephen Rowlstone for their research assistance on the Canterbury 1641 Poll Tax Project, of which this study forms a part. I am also grateful to Penelope Corfield, Richard Eales and Stephen Hipkin for their comments on earlier drafts of this article.

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[3] C. Holmes, 'The County Community in Stuart Historiography', *Journal of British Studies*, Vol. 19, (1979/80) and *idem, Seventeenth Century Lincolnshire* (Lincoln, 1980); A. Hughes, *Politics, Society and Civil War in Warwickshire, 1620-1660* (Cambridge, 1987); R. Cust, `News and Politics in Early Seventeenth-Century England', *Past and Present*, No. 112 (1986).

[4] P. Laslett, 'The Gentry of Kent in 1640', *Cambridge Historical Journal* Vol. 9 (1948); Clark, P. *English Provincial Society from the Reformation to the Revolution: Religion, Politics and Society in Kent, 1500-1640* (Hassocks, 1977).

[5] J. Eales, 'Kent and the English Civil Wars, 1640-1660' in F. Lansberry (ed.), *Government and Politics in Kent, 1640-1914*, Kent History Project, Vol. 7 (Woodbridge, 2001); J. Eales, 'So many sects

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[6] J. Eales, 'Provincial preaching and allegiance in the first English civil war, 1640-6', in T. Cogswell, R. Cust and P. Lake (eds), *Politics, Religion and Popularity* (Cambridge, 2002), and W. Sheils, 'Provincial Preaching on the eve of the Civil War: some West Riding Fast Sermons', in A. Fletcher and P. Roberts eds., *Religion, Culture and Society in Early Modern Britain* (Cambridge, 1994). An innovative approach is taken by Lloyd Bowen in 'Proclaiming the King's Word: Royalism, Print and the Clergy, 1639-1642' (forthcoming). I am grateful to him for allowing me to see a copy of this article in advance of publication.
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[8] For the circulation of printed news see Joel Raymond, *Pamphlets and Pamphleteering in Early Modern Britain* (Cambridge, 2003) and Jason Peacey, *Politicians and Pamphleteers: Propaganda During the English Civil Wars and Interregnum* (Ashgate, 2004) and for oral circulation of information see A. Fox, *Oral and Literate Culture in England 1500-1700* (Oxford, 2000).
[9] K. Sharpe, *The Politics of Reading in Early Modern* England (New Haven, 2000); Andrew Cambers, *Godly Reading: Print, Manuscript and Puritanism in England, 1580-1720* (Cambridge, 2011); Arnold Hunt, *The Art of Hearing: English Preachers and Their Audiences, 1590-1640* (Cambridge, 2010).
[10] House of Lords (hereafter HL) PO/JO/10/1/126. 27 June 1642, Annex 1, letter from William Bridge and others, dated 28 June 1642.
[11] I. Green, 'The Persecution of 'Scandalous' and 'Malignant' Parish Clergy During the English Civil War', English Historical Review, 94 (1979), pp. 507-31.
[12] *Commons Journals*, hereafter *CJ*, Vol. 2, p. 54; Corpus Christi, Oxford, Ms. 206; L. B. Larking ed., *Proceedings, Principally in the County of Kent, in Connection with the Parliaments Called in 1640 and Especially with the Committee of Religion Appointed in that Year*, Camden Society, vol. 80, (London ,1862); for an overview of the ejections see Matthews ed., *Walker Revised*.
[13] Green, 'The Persecution of 'Scandalous' and 'Malignant' Parish Clergy'.
[14] W. A. Shaw, *A History of the English Church, 1640-1660*, Vol. 2 (1900), p. 299; for the ejections in Kent more generally see A. G. Matthews ed., *Walker Revised: Being a Revision of John Walker's Sufferings of the Clergy during the Grand Rebellion, 1642-1660* (Oxford, 1988), pp. 209-228.
[15] D. Harrington, *Kent Hearth Tax Assessment Lady Day 1664* (London, 2000), pp. 450-1.
[16] For the poll tax returns see British Library (hereafter BL), Harleian Roll T1; for the county petition see HL/PO/JO/10/1/121, 5 May 1642, petition from Kent.
[17] For the poet see *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* under John Marston.
[18] Matthews ed., *Walker Revised*, p. 222; Edward Hasted, *The History and Topographical Survey of the County of Kent*, Volume XI (Canterbury, 1800), p. 244.
[19] HL/PO/JO/10/1/130., 6 August 1642, petition from John Marston; Canterbury Cathedral Archives (hereafter CCA)-DCb-PRC/18/26/153.
[20] National Archives (hereafter NA) SP16/350/82; *Calendar of State Papers Domestic, 1640* , p. 422; HL/PO/JO/10/1/1/130. 28th July 1642, petition from parishioners of St Mary Magdalen.
[21] NA SP?16/468/133
[22] NA SP16/461/97; *CSPD 1640-1*, pp. 386, 390, 393, 395, 398, 400.
[23] NA SP16/468/134.
[24] John White, *The First Century of Scandalous, Malignant Priests* (London, 1643), pp. 1, 50-1.
[25] NA SP16/330/16, 17.
[26] HL/PO/JO/10/1/126. 27 June 1642, petition from parishioners of St Mary Magdalen..
[27] John Marston, *A Sermon Preached at St Margarets in Westminster, on Sunday the sixt of February, last* (1642). A. G. Matthews erroneously states that this sermon was preached in 1643, Matthews ed., *Walker Revised*, p. 222.
[28] There is a considerable literature on the sermons to the Long Parliament, see for example, H. Trevor-Roper, 'The Fast Sermons of the Long Parliament', in H. Trevor-Roper ed., *Religion, Reformation and Social Change* (19 72); J. Wilson, *Pulpit in Parliament: Puritanism during the English Civil Wars, 1640*-1648 (1969); T. Liu, *Discord in Zion: The Puritan Divines and the Puritan Revolution, 1640-1660* (1973).
[29] Marston, *A Sermon Preached at St Margarets in Westminster, on Sunday the sixt of February, last*, passim.
[30] Jacqueline Eales, *Puritans and Roundheads: the Harleys of Brampton Bryan and the Outbreak of the English Civil War* (Cambridge, 1990), pp. 100-122.
[31] NA SP16/489/25, 27; R. Culmer, *Cathedrall Newes from Canterbury* (1644), p. 10.

[32] John Taylor, *A Brief Director for those that would send their Letters to any parts of England …. (1642);* D. Gardiner, *The Oxinden Letters, 1607-1642* (London, 1933), pp. 271, 285, 286, 292, 301. For Oxinden see Sheila Hingley, 'The Oxindens, Warlys and Elham Parish Library: a Family Library and its Place in Print Culture in East Kent', Ph. D. Thesis , University of Kent (2004).
[33] HL/PO/JO/10/1/126. 27 June 1642, Annexe 3, deposition of John Francklyn.
[34] For the poll tax see M. Jurkowski, C. L. Smith, D. Crook eds., *Lay Taxes in England and Wales, 1188*-1688 (1998); Statutes *of the Realm*, vol. 5 (1819), 16 Car. I cap. 30 and 16 Car. I, cap. 32.
[35] *CJ* Vol. 2. p. 411; for Dering see *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography.*
[36] HL/PO/JO/10/1/126. 27 June 1642, Annexe 2, deposition of Thomas Bridge, 24 June 1642, Annexe 3 deposition of John Francklyn, see also *LJ*, Vol. 5, p. 243.
[37] For the petition see T. P. S. Woods, *Prelude to Civil War, 1642: Mr Justice Malet and the Kentish Petitions* (Salisbury, 1980); Everitt, *The Community of Kent and the Great Rebellion, 1640-1660*, p. 96.
[38] *The Petition of the Gentry, Ministers and Commonalty of Kent. Agreed upon at the Generall Assizes … March 28 1642* (London, 1642).
[39] Woods, *Prelude to Civil War, 1642*, pp. 66, 72-5, 82-5.
[40] Larking ed., *Proceedings, Principally in the County of Kent*, pp. 26-38.
[41] *Ibid*., pp. 226-8, 235-6, 142-5, 202-5, 122-3; HL/PO/JO/10/1/121, 5 May 1642, petition from Kent.
[42] HL/PO/JO/10/1/126, 27 June 1642, petition from parishioners of St Mary Magdalen.
[43] HL/PO/JO/10/1/126. 27 June 1642, petition from parishioners of St Mary Magdalen.
[44] R. Culmer, *Cathedrall Newes from Canterbury* (1644), pp. 10-12; Eales, 'Provincial Preaching and allegiance in the First English Civil War', p. 204.
[45] HL/PO/JO/10/1/126. 27 June 1642, Annex 1, letter from William Bridge and others, 28 June 1642.
[46] E. Husbands, ed., *An Exact Collection of all Remonstrances, Declarations, Votes, Orders, Ordinances, Proclamations, Petitions, Messages, Answers and Other remarkable Passages between the King's Most Excellent Majesty and His High Court of Parliament* (1643), pp. 281-299.
[47] Eales, *Puritans and Roundheads*, p. 157; Husbands, ed., *An Exact Collection* p. 473.
[48] Husbands, ed., *An Exact Collection* pp. 338-9.
[49] HL/PO/JO/10/1/126. 27 June 1642, Annexe 1, letter from William Bridge and others, dated 28 June 1642.
[50] A. Thrush and J. P. Ferris, eds., *The History of Parliament: The House of Commons, 1604-1629*, vol. 4 (Cambridge, 2010), pp. 44-5. I am grateful to the editor Dr Andrew Thrush for allowing me to consult his entry on Denne before publication.
[51] HL/PO/JO/10/1/126. 27 June 1642, Annexe 1, letter from William Bridge and others, dated 28 June 1642; HL/PO/JO/10/1/121. 5 May 1642, petition from Kent. For the names of the signatories to the letter see below Appendix I.
[52] HL/PO/JO/10/1/126. 27 June 1642, petition from parishioners of St Mary Magdalen.
[53] BL Harleian Roll T1. For the names of the petitioners see below Appendix II.
[54] HL/PO/JO/10/1/126. 27 June 1642, petition from parishioners of St Mary Magdalen.
[55] Bodleian Library, Tanner Mss. 57b., see also Rawlinson Mss. A298.
[56] *LJ*, Vol. 5, pp. 245.
[57] William Somner, *The Antiquities of Canterbury*, Second edition revised and enlarged by Nicolas Battely (1703), p. 184; for Bridge as mayor in 1647 see A. B. *A Letter from a Gentleman in Kent Giving Satisfaction to a Friend in London* (1648) p. 3 and Anon, *Canterbury Christmas: or a True Relation of the Insurrection in Canterbury on Christmas Day Last. Written by a Citizen There* (1648).
[58] J. M. Cowper, *The Roll of the Freemen of City of Canterbury* (Canterbury, 1903), 152, 193; BL, Harleian Roll T1.
[59] D. Cressy, *Literacy and the Social Order: Reading and Writing in Tudor and Suart England* (Cambridge, 1980), p. 176.
[60] Adam Fox, *Oral and Literate Culture in England, 1500-1700* (Oxford, 2000); Margaret W. Ferguson, *Dido's Daughters: Literacy, Gender and Empire in Early Modern England and France* (Chicago, 2003).
[61] Cowper ed., *The Roll of the Freemen of the City of Canterbury* , 169, 113, 152; CCA\DCb\JX\11\16 f.45r.
[62] See below appendices 2 and 3.
[63] Freemen have been identified using Cowper ed., *The Roll of the Freemen of the City of Canterbury*.
[64] HL/PO/JO/10/1/1/130. 28th July 1642, petition from parishioners of St Mary Magdalen; CCA/cc/Supplementary Mss/21/9 p. 127. For the names of the petitioners see below Appendix III.
[65] BL, Harleian Roll T1.
[66] Cowper ed., *The Roll of the Freemen of the City of Canterbury*, 8.

[67] *Ibid*., 211; J. M. Cowper, ed., *The Names of Them that were Chrystened, Marryed and Buryed in the Pryshe of Saynt Mary Magdalene in Canterbury. 1559-1800* (Canterbury, 1890), pp. 65, 106.
[68] HL/PO/JO/10/1/121. 5 May 1642, petition from Kent; HL/PO/JO/10/1/126. 27 June 1642, Annexe 1. letter from William Bridge and others, 28 June 1642.
[69] *Calendar of the Proceedings of the Committee for Compounding etc 1643-1660*, Volume 1, (London, 1889), p. 458; CCA/CC/J/Q447i; BL., Harleian Roll T1.
[70] Aldey was described as a 'puritan' divine by Sir James Oxinden in December 1641 Dorothy Gardiner, ed, *The Oxinden Letters, 1607-1642* (London, 1933), p. 265.
[71] For Terry's will see NA Probate 11/212 ff. 6v-7r.
[72] NA Probate/11/227 ff. 29r-30r; for the wills of Thomas Bridge, John Grant, Richard Harrison, John Philcox, William Whiting the elder and William Whiting the younger see Centre for Kentish Studies hereafter CKS PRC32/53/179, NA Probate/11/285 ff. 24r-v, PRC16/274/H/9 and NA Probate/11/227 ff. 97r-98v, NA Probate/11/195 f. 407r and NA Probate/11/255 ff. 20v-22r. The younger William Whiting left £3 to Mr Francis Taylor the elder to preach at his funeral.. Amongst Marston's supporters see the wills of James Badcock, Nicholas Justice and Noah Leeds, CKS PRC16/242/465, NA Probate/11/269 ff. 205v-206, NA probate/11/244 f. 34v.
[73] A. G. Matthews, *Calamy Revised being a Revision of Edmund Calamy's Account of the Ministers and Others Ejected and Silenced, 1660-2*, (Oxford, 1988), pp. 392, 502. For Ventris see also www.theclergydatabase.org.uk Person ID. 45073.
[74] NA SP16/342/73; M. D. Gordon, 'The Collection of Ship Money in the Reign of Charles I', *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*, 3rd Series, Vol. 4 (1910), p. 158.
[75] NA SP16/346/43.
[76] CCA/CC/AC4 f. 122r, f. 159r. See also Robert Bedard, 'The Privileges of Christchurch Canterbury: Archbishop Sheldon's Enquiries of 1671', *Archaeologia Cantiana*, Vol. LXXXVII, (1972), pp. 81-100.
[77] *LJ*, Vol. 5, p. 243.
[78] Albert H. Tricomi, 'The Provenance of John Marston's letter to Lord Kimbolton', *Papers of the Bibliographical Society of America* , 72 (1978), pp. 213-219 where a transcript of the letter can be found. I am indebted to Professor Tricomi for supplying me with an offprint of his article and to Mr John Wilson for supplying me with a copy of the manuscript letter. The original letter was on loan to the Public Record Office along with other papers in the Manchester collection belonging to Lord Kimbolton until 1970, when it was auctioned to a private owner. A facsimile also exists at the Folger Library in Washington and in the House of Lords Record Office.
[79] HL/PO/JO/10/1/130. 6 August 1642, petition from John Marston.
[80] NA, SP 18/40 f. 269.
[81] BL Add. Mss. 36792 f. 77r; Matthews, *Walker Revised*, p. 176.
[82] House of Lords (hereafter HL) PO/JO/10/1/126. 27 June 1642, Annex 1, letter from William Bridge and others, dated 28 June 1642; White, *First Century*, pp. 22, 24-5.
[83] HL/PO/JO/10/1/126. 27 June 1642, Annex 1, letter from William Bridge and others, dated 28 June 1642.
[84] HL/PO/JO/10/1/126. 27 June 1642, petition from parishioners of St Mary Magdalen.
[85] HL/PO/JO/10/1/1/130. 28th July 1642, petition from parishioners of St Mary Magdalen.
[86] The fact that Edmonds made a mark on the parish petition and signed Blount's petition raises obvious doubts about whether this is the same man.