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THE MAJOR KENTISH TOWNS IN THE RELIGIOUS CENSUS OF 1851

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There has only ever been one attempt to acquire statistics on the nation's religious allegiances, and it was generally regretted by contemporaries. It has over the last thirty years been more appreciated by ecclesiastical and social historians, even though the detailed evidence that it provides has not always been judiciously interpreted.¹ The returns for Kent² have been commented on in relation to statistics for the South of England as a whole³ and those for the rural parts of the county have been used to measure the strength of non-conformity there as opposed to that in some other agricultural communities.⁴ There has, however, been no full analysis of the

¹ The best introduction is D.M. Thompson, 'The Religious Census of 1851', in (Ed.) R. Lawton, *The Census and Social Structure*, London 1978, 241-86. See also K.S. Inglis, 'Patterns of Religious Worship in 1851', *Journal of Ecclesiastical History*, xi (1960), 74-86, a pioneering study that needs to be treated with caution; the more balanced D.M. Thompson, 'The 1851 Religious Census: Problems and Possibilities', *Victorian Studies*, xi (1967), 87-97, based on a detailed study of Leicestershire returns; and W.S.F. Pickering, 'The 1851 Religious Census: A Useless Experiment?', *British Journal of Sociology*, xviii (1967), 382-407. The census is set in the wider context of other religious statistics in W.N. Yates, 'Urban Church Attendance and the Use of Statistical Evidence', *Studies in Church History*, xvi (1979), 389-400.

² The original returns are in the Public Record Office, HO 129/49-74, but there are microfilm copies of these returns in the County Local History Library, Springfield, Maidstone.

³ See B.I. Coleman, 'Southern England in the Census of Religious Worship, 1851', *Southern History*, v (1983), 154-88, though this is based entirely on the sometimes inaccurate printed summaries of the returns in *Parliamentary Papers 1852-3*, lxxxix: Census 1851.

⁴ See A. Everitt, *The Pattern of Rural Dissent: the Nineteenth Century*, Leicester 1972, especially pp. 55-62 and the related tables. Professor Everitt certainly overestimates the strength of dissent in the Kentish towns, and possibly in the rural areas as well, since he bases his analysis solely on the numbers of buildings and sittings, disregarding the figures for attendances which were often strikingly different.

returns for the major urban communities in the county, and this is provided in the present paper.

Non-metropolitan Kent had by the middle of the nineteenth century ten towns with a population in excess of ten thousand. These were the cathedral cities of Canterbury and Rochester, the county town of Maidstone, the dockyard towns of Chatham and Sheerness, and five popular watering-places: Dover, Gravesend, Margate, Ramsgate and Tunbridge Wells. The pattern of religious allegiances in these ten towns partly confirmed the general picture for the county as a whole, whilst at the same time showing in some towns, especially Sheerness, a marked divergence from this general picture. A summary of the returns for each town is given in an appendix to this paper.

Looked at nationally, the religious census of 1851 showed two significant trends. One, that was particularly worrying to the Church of England, was that it confirmed statistically the popular impression that in many parts of England and Wales more people worshipped in dissenting chapels of one sort or another than in their parish churches. The other, which worried all religious leaders, was the clear evidence that absenteeism from religious worship was not just the result of inadequate accommodation but of deliberate choice. In nearly every sizeable community there were more sittings available than were actually being sat in and very few churches or chapels were full at any services. The way in which the statistics were compiled prevents an accurate estimate being made of the number of regular churchgoers, but most commentators, both contemporary and later, have concluded that only about half the population of England and Wales attended any religious service on the census Sunday, 30 March, 1851, though the figure was somewhat higher in Scotland, and this does not allow for possible exaggeration by ministers and others making the returns.

Mid-Victorian Christianity was divided into a large number of sects. Basically, however, there were four major religious groupings in England. The first was the Church of England. The second was what is generally labelled 'Old Dissent'. This consisted of those religious groups that sprang directly from the Reformation itself or the failure of the Church of England to contain its Puritan activists: the Independents or Congregationalists, the various groups of Baptists, the Presbyterians and the Society of Friends. Also included in 'Old Dissent' were those former Independent, Baptist or Presbyterian chapels that had become either Calvinist or Unitarian. The third group, by contrast, is labelled 'New Dissent'. This consisted of those who seceded from the Church of England as a result of the eighteenth-century evangelical revival: the Methodists, fragmented

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by schism into several groups by 1851, and the Countess of Huntingdon's Connexion. The final group consists of those who fall into none of the previous categories: the Roman Catholics, the Catholic Apostolic or Irvingite Church, the Latter Day Saints and the Jews, the only non-Christian sect represented in the 1851 census.

Kent, like every other southern English county apart from Cornwall, was a predominantly Anglican county. All forms of dissent were weak, though the 'old' was stronger than the 'new'. Apart from the followers of William Huntington at Cranbrook, no other religious group, even the Roman Catholics, was particularly numerous in any

TABLE I; SITTINGS AND ATTENDANCES BY RELIGIOUS GROUP, 1851

<i>Town</i>		<i>Church of England</i>	<i>Old Dissent</i>	<i>New Dissent</i>	<i>Others</i>
Canterbury	S	65.6	13.2	16.2	5.0
	A	60.5	19.1	18.8	1.6
Chatham	S	52.5	23.5	20.5	3.5
	A	46.5	25.7	23.1	4.7
Dover	S	59.5	26.6	9.5	4.4
	A	64.5	17.5	11.8	6.2
Gravesend	S	45.7	33.3	16.9	4.1
	A	54.6	27.9	15.6	1.9
Maidstone	S	55.5	25.3	17.6	1.6
	A	65.4	18.6	15.6	0.4
Margate	S	46.9	19.7	30.2	3.2
	A	46.7	23.2	29.1	1.0
Ramsgate	S	54.0	23.5	9.0	13.5
	A	52.7	23.7	11.6	12.0
Rochester	S	69.1	16.5	12.8	1.6
	A	69.2	14.0	15.8	1.0
Sheerness	S	43.5	20.6	25.6	10.3
	A	37.6	22.2	26.8	13.4
Tunbridge Wells	S	56.7	23.7	14.8	4.8
	A	55.9	23.1	18.4	2.6

part of the county. In the ten major towns this general picture was confirmed, as shown in Table I, which indicates in percentage terms the number of both sittings⁵ and attendances for each of the four religious groups.

The Church of England provided an absolute majority of both sittings and attendances in six out of ten of these towns, though the figures for Tunbridge Wells have had to be estimated since no return exists for one of the town's three Anglican churches. The Church of England was clearly out-numbered by dissenters in Sheerness, and more marginally so in Chatham and Margate. In all three cases the reason for this is clearly the strength of 'new dissent', which in each town accounted for more than a fifth of both sittings and attendances. In both Sheerness and Ramsgate a significant number of people worshipped in churches that belonged to neither the Church of England nor any of the major groups of Protestant dissenters.

CHURCH OF ENGLAND

The most strongly Anglican towns in Kent were the two cathedral cities (Canterbury and Rochester), Dover and Maidstone. At Canterbury, with a large number of smallish parish churches, the best Anglican attendances were at the cathedral. At Rochester, however, the cathedral had the smallest of the four Anglican congregations in the city. The poor showing of the Church of England at both Margate and Sheerness may have been partly related to the relatively small number of Anglican sittings in both towns, though it should be noted that not one of these Anglican churches was actually filled to capacity on the census Sunday. What the census figures show clearly is that for both the Church of England and for most non-Anglican bodies as well, much of the additional church accommodation provided since 1800 was aimed at potential rather than actual congregations. In many towns the newer Anglican churches were less well attended than the older parish churches criticised by many contemporaries for their lack of comfort and inferior seating arrangements. The figures also reveal that, where a detailed breakdown is available, the Church of England provided as high a proportion of free to rented sittings as most branches of dissent, as shown in Table II.

In many towns the proportion of free to rented sittings in Anglican places of worship was considerably higher than in non-conformist

⁵ The number of sittings includes additional standing room for those places of worship for which this was also given.

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TABLE II: PERCENTAGE OF FREE AND RENTED SITTINGS, 1851

Town	<i>Church of England</i>		<i>Non-Anglican Churches</i>	
	F	R	F	R
Canterbury	35.4	64.6	34.4	65.6
Chatham	51.4	48.6	34.1	65.9
Dover	65.5	34.5	31.3	68.7
Gravesend	66.7	33.3	37.5	62.5
Maidstone	51.3	48.7	24.2	75.8
Margate	56.9	43.1	31.8	68.2
Ramsgate	48.2	51.8	50.4	49.6
Rochester	38.3	61.7	37.4	62.6
Sheerness	55.9	44.1	34.7	65.3
Tunbridge Wells	63.5	36.5	43.9	56.1

ones, many of which were dependent on pew rents to pay for their ministers or the debts on the buildings.⁶ The non-Anglican figures for Ramsgate were distorted by the high number of free sittings in the undenominational Broad Street Chapel.

The Anglican clergy had every reason to be pleased with the urban returns for Kent. They showed that they were more than holding their own, despite competition from several non-Anglican bodies, in most of the larger centres of population in the county as well as, and in some cases better than, in the rural areas. The pressure for free seats, so that the poor would not be excluded from Anglican worship, had clearly been successful in Kent. Only in Canterbury and Rochester, where there were no post-medieval Anglican churches, apart from rebuildings, were the number of free sittings substantially lower than those which were appropriated or rented. The census was taken at too early a date to show the full impact of the Evangelical and Tractarian movements on Anglican congregations. Only one church, St. John's at Gravesend, had a regular early celebration of the Holy Communion in 1851, which attracted a congregation of four on 30 March.

'OLD DISSENT'

Of the various divisions of 'old dissent' only the Independents and Baptists were represented in each of the ten largest towns in Kent. Most Baptist congregations in Kent were 'Particular' rather than

⁶ This point is considered in greater detail in W.N. Yates, 'The Religious Life of Victorian Leeds', in (Ed.) D. Fraser, *A History of Modern Leeds*, Manchester 1980, 259.

'General'. In addition to these two major religious groups, there were Unitarian congregations in Canterbury, Chatham, Dover and Maidstone and Quaker meetings in Canterbury, Dover, Maidstone, Margate and Rochester. There were Calvinist chapels in Margate and Ramsgate and a small congregation of French Protestants worshipping in the cathedral undercroft at Canterbury. The percentage breakdown of 'old dissent' in each town is given in Table III, showing both sittings and attendances.

TABLE III: PERCENTAGE BREAKDOWN OF 'OLD DISSENT', 1851

<i>Town</i>		<i>Independents</i>	<i>Baptists</i>	<i>Unitarians</i>	<i>Quakers</i>	<i>Others</i>
Canterbury	S	42.6	34.1	13.1	8.2	2.0
	A	55.3	34.5	8.5	0.8	0.9
Chatham	S	50.7	38.4	10.9	-	-
	A	53.9	40.3	5.8	-	-
Dover	S	45.0	32.3	16.7	6.0	-
	A	39.9	46.2	12.9	1.0	-
Gravesend	S	60.3	39.7	-	-	-
	A	52.7	47.3	-	-	-
Maidstone	S	26.4	49.0	15.1	9.5	-
	A	26.8	63.8	7.2	2.2	-
Margate	S	26.4	52.0	-	6.6	15.0
	A	34.1	58.2	-	0.4	7.3
Ramsgate	S	44.0	17.4	-	-	38.6
	A	52.4	13.2	-	-	34.4
Rochester	S	40.3	23.9	-	35.8	-
	A	84.7	5.0	-	10.3	-
Sheerness	S	74.8	25.2	-	-	-
	A	77.6	22.4	-	-	-
Tunbridge Wells	S	71.0	29.0	-	-	-
	A	41.6	58.4	-	-	-

The discrepancies between sittings and attendances for particular religious groups is very marked in several towns, and is probably a commentary on the effectiveness of individual preachers in filling

their chapels. The numerical decline of attendances in chapels that had become Unitarian, and in the membership of the Society of Friends, is also very clearly revealed. At Margate the Calvinists were formerly Independents, whereas at Ramsgate they were formerly Baptists; by adding them to their respective former allegiances one achieves a more even balance between the two main branches of 'old dissent' in these two towns.

'NEW DISSENT'

The Wesleyan Methodists had at least one place of worship in each of the ten largest towns in Kent and were the only branch of 'new dissent' in both Dover and Rochester. In the rural areas, however, they had fairly strong competition from both the Primitive Methodists and the Bible Christians. Neither of these were strong in the towns. The Primitive Methodists had chapels at Canterbury, Chatham, Gravesend, Maidstone, Ramsgate and Sheerness, but the Bible Christians were only represented at Chatham and Sheerness. Both sects tended to appeal to working-class worshippers so their strength in the two dockyard towns is not surprising. In Chatham the Wesleyan Methodist Association, a union formed in 1835 between the Leeds Protestant Methodists and the Warrenites, also had two chapels, another indication of the town's radical leanings as far as non-conformity was concerned. The only real challenge to Wesleyan Methodism as the dominant force within 'new dissent' in the towns, came from the Countess of Huntingdon's connexion, which had flourishing chapels in Canterbury, Maidstone, Margate and Tunbridge Wells. The Connexion was Calvinist in doctrine, but attracted largely middle class support and was the most quasi-Anglican of the major non-conformist bodies. Table IV shows the respective strengths of the various branches of 'new dissent' in those towns in which more than one sect was represented:

TABLE IV: PERCENTAGE BREAKDOWN OF 'NEW DISSENT', 1851

<i>Town</i>	<i>Wesleyan Methodists</i>	<i>Primitive Methodists</i>	<i>Bible Christians</i>	<i>Wesleyan Association</i>	<i>Countess of Huntingdon</i>
Canterbury	S 58.7	26.7	-	-	14.6
	A 64.5	12.8	-	-	22.7
Chatham	S 48.9	4.0	30.8	16.3	-
	A 63.5	3.4	21.9	11.2	-

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<i>Town</i>	<i>Wesleyan Methodists</i>	<i>Primitive Methodists</i>	<i>Bible Christians</i>	<i>Wesleyan Association</i>	<i>Countess of Huntingdon</i>
Gravesend	S 69.4	30.6	—	—	—
	A 77.0	23.0	—	—	—
Maidstone	S 56.9	10.5	—	—	32.6
	A 43.7	5.8	—	—	50.5
Margate	S 66.5	—	—	—	33.5
	A 54.2	—	—	—	45.8
Ramsgate	S 79.9	20.1	—	—	—
	A 80.0	20.0	—	—	—
Sheerness	S 70.3	13.5	16.2	—	—
	A 74.7	14.0	11.3	—	—
Tunbridge Wells	S 60.4	—	—	—	39.6
	A 62.0	—	—	—	38.0

The strength of the more conservative religious groupings within 'new dissent' and the comparable weakness of the more radical ones complement an exactly similar pattern within 'old dissent'. In religious terms Kent was a deeply conservative county in 1851, and this conservatism was, to some extent, even stronger in the towns than it was in the rural areas.

OTHER RELIGIOUS GROUPS

Apart from in Ramsgate and Sheerness, the numbers of people attending places of worship belonging neither to the Church of England nor to the principal groups of Protestant dissenters, were minimal. There were, however, a total of 23 such places of worship in the major Kentish towns, broken down as follows:

<i>Religious Group</i>	<i>Places of Worship</i>	<i>Sittings</i>	<i>Attendances</i>
Roman Catholics	8	2490	2320
Jews	5	345	345
Udenominational	4	1050	982
Latter Day Saints	2	350	454
Catholic Apostolic	2	288	197
Swedenborgians	1	70	70
Christian Israelites	1	50	16

Roman Catholicism was particularly weak in Kent, partly because there had been relatively little recusancy in the county in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, and partly because there had been no large-scale Irish immigration in the 1830s and 1840s. Nevertheless, one of the Roman Catholic churches, St. Augustine's at Ramsgate, was one of the finest new churches in Kent in 1851. It was described in the returns as 'a true Catholic Church with a chancel and rood screen, stalls for the singing clerks, a Lady Chapel and a Chapel of St. Lawrence'. Other Roman Catholic churches were more modest but, with one exception, provided adequate accommodation for the small number of Roman Catholics in the county. At Margate it was noted that the chapel had been 'erected principally for the benefit of the visitors'. Only at Sheerness was comment made to the effect that 'there are many more Catholics here but no chapel accommodation for them'.

THE CENSUS RETURNS

The main information given in the census returns was the details of accommodation for worship and the number of worshippers. The forms for the census made provision for ministers and others to return both the actual congregations at each service on Sunday, 30 March, 1851⁷ and the average per Sunday over the preceding twelve months. In some cases both sets of figures were given, in other cases only one set. There is no doubt that in some cases the figures were mere guesses, but others were clearly extremely accurate. At Holy Trinity, Gravesend, 'the number of attendants at Church on March 30 was taken by enumeration', and at St. Lawrence, Ramsgate, the incumbent stated 'I have endeavoured to make out my list at Church as correct as possible by having the people counted during divine service'. A few churches commented on discrepancies between their attendances on 30 March and their higher average attendances by blaming the lower attendance on congregational illness or poor weather conditions. A number of churches in the resort towns also pointed out that their congregations were much larger in the summer months. There was, however, a considerable distrust of the methods employed for conducting the census, especially among the Anglican clergy, a number of whose returns are deliberately vague. The incumbent of Christ Church, Ramsgate, thought that people should

⁷ Except in the case of the Jews where morning and afternoon figures are for Saturday, 29 March, and evening ones for Friday, 28 March.

have been employed 'to count the public as they left the different places of worship', and that any census based on returns made by the churches themselves was 'wholly valueless'.

Whilst the census returns give a very good picture of the relative strengths of individual religious groupings within a particular community, it is very dangerous to use them to calculate exactly what percentage were churchgoers, since such figures can only be based on an estimate of the proportions of congregations attending once or more than once each Sunday. Where such calculations have been made⁸ church attendance in Kent has been estimated at between 43.0 per cent of the population in Hoo and 76.4 per cent in Thanet, with figures of between 50 per cent and 60 per cent in most of the urban communities. Such estimates, however, must be treated with extreme caution. The incumbent of St. Margaret, Rochester, pointed out that 'many families who attend this Church in the morning go to the Cathedral in the afternoon or to evening services in other Churches'. Some urban churches clearly attracted congregations from the surrounding rural areas,⁹ a point made by the Rochester Independents and the Providence Baptist Chapel in Maidstone where 'morning and afternoon the congregation are principally from the surrounding villages', whilst 'evening generally made up of the inhabitants of the town'. Indeed transference between religious groups was not unknown, with people worshipping in Anglican churches in the morning and at non-Anglican chapels in the afternoon or evening.

Two major conclusions can be drawn from the returns of the 1851 religious census for the major Kentish towns. The first is that the general level of attendance of these towns was reasonably high, compared with the national average, though not so high as to fill the available accommodation in most places of worship. The second is that the Anglican domination of religious life of mid-Victorian Kent was as considerable in the towns as in other parts of the county. Even where the dissenting groups were numerically fairly strong, it was the more conservative and quasi-Anglican ones that were strongest. Religious radicalism in mid-Victorian Kent was extremely weak virtually everywhere, apart from in Chatham.

⁸ See B.I. Coleman, *op. cit.*, 183-4.

⁹ This was also the case in the market and resort towns of south-east Hampshire and the Isle of Wight, see W.N. Yates, 'Victorian Church Attendance: The Local Evidence', in (Eds.) J. Webb, W.N. Yates and S.E. Peacock, *Hampshire Studies*, Portsmouth 1981, 226.

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APPENDIX: SUMMARY OF THE 1851 RELIGIOUS CENSUS RETURNS
FOR THE TEN LARGEST TOWNS IN NON-METROPOLITAN KENT

The returns are summarised according to the following formula:

- (1) Name of Church or Chapel (date of foundation or rebuilding, if known and later than 1600).
- (2) Sittings (S): Total number of sittings (number of free sittings) + standing room, non-Anglican places of worship only.
- (3) Attendances (A): Figures given in most cases for each main service (M = Morning, A = Afternoon, E = Evening). Total number of attendances on 30 March (average attendances, if different) + total number of Sunday Scholars on 30 March (average number, if different).
- (4) Additional remarks, if relevant, have been included as footnotes.

CANTERBURY

Church of England

Cathedral ¹⁰	S : not given A : M 500, A 700
All Saints	S : not given A : M 100
Holy Cross ¹¹	S : 530 (224) A : A 203 + 38
St. Alphege	S : 1400 A : M (100+30), E (400)
St. Andrew ¹²	S : 252 (20) A : M 110+ 36

¹⁰ 'The Congregation at the Cathedral is not a fixed Congregation, and cannot be exactly averaged'.

¹¹ The parishes of Holy Cross and St. Peter were held in plurality, divine service taking place once on Sunday in each Church, 'alternately . . . morning and afternoon'. The average attendances were 300 at Holy Cross and 200 at St. Peter's.

¹² Of the 417 sittings at St. Margaret's it was stated in the return 'all free, but some are appropriated, indeed the great majority are so supposed. The Parish Church has been closed for many months, at present undergoing restoration. Average congregation morning and afternoon when open from 250 to 300'. Morning service on the census Sunday was held at St. Mary Bredman and the afternoon service at St. Andrew's.

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St. Dunstan	S : 330 (90) A : M 260 + 88, A 436 + 86
St. George	S : 400 (50) A : M 260 (300) + 65, A 340 (350)
St. Margaret ¹²	S : 417 A : M 156 + 21, A 220 + 23
St. Martin	S : 172 (40) A : M 150 + 16, A 100 (120) + 16
St. Mary Bredin	S : 310 (120) A : M 213 + 53, E 237
St. Mary Bredman ¹²	S : 220 (none) A : A 95 + 37
St. Mary Magdalene	S : 230 (30) A : A 160 (200) + 71 (60)
St. Mildred	S : not given A : M 100
St. Paul	S : 500 (220) A : M 105 + 120, A 280 + 220, E 300
St. Peter ¹¹	S : 455 (238) A : M 152 + 36
St. Stephen	S : 356 (298) A : M 110 (125) + 88 (90), A 170 (230) + 89 (95)
<i>'Old Dissent'</i>	
French Protestants	S : 30 (all) A : A 21 (16)
Independents (1696)	S : 650 (100) A : M 400 + 137, A 100, E 600
Unitarian Baptists	S : 200 (50) A : M 64 (62) + 18 (16), A NIL + 18 (16), E 90 (100)
Particular Baptists, King Street (1823)	S : 350 (100) A : M 180 + 100, A 109 + 86, E 210

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Particular Baptists, Zoar (1845)	S : 120 (all) + 50 A : M 47, E 39
Society of Friends	S : 125 A : M9, A9
<i>'New Dissent'</i>	
Wesleyan Methodists (1811)	S : 1100 (180) A : M 418 + 92, A 82, E 828
Primitive Methodists (1839)	S : 500 (100) A : M 62 + 26, A 62 + 31, E 100 (200)
Countess of Huntingdon's Connexion (1797)	S : 275 (80) A : M 200 + 80, E 220
<i>Others</i>	
Roman Catholics	S : 500 (all) A : M 120
Synagogue (1848)	S : 53 (40) + 20 A : M 30 (35), A 20, E 26 (28)
CHATHAM	
<i>Church of England</i> St. Bartholomew	S : 258 (170) A : M 139 (150), E 200
St. Mary	S : 1000 (200) A : M 600, A 200, E 800
St. John (1821)	S : 1650 (1100) A : M 350 + 200, A 200, E 300 (400) + 70
Christ Church (1842)	S : 460 (376) A : M 100 + 75, E 140 + 30
Holy Trinity (1848)	S : 954 (374) A : M 413 (450) + 156, E 425 (600) + 120
Dockyard Chapel (1808)	S : not given A : M (1100 + 80), A (200 + 80)

Garrison Chapel	S : not given A : M (600), A (600)
<i>'Old Dissent'</i>	
Independents, Ebenezer (1810)	S : 1100 (150) A : M 775 (800) + 70, A 138 (100), E 797 (900) + 64
Independents, Chatham Hill (1812)	S : 120 (all) A : M NIL + 60, A NIL + 73, E 32
Independents, Slyhates Hill (1818)	S : not given A : M NIL + 45, A NIL + 85, E 25
General Baptists (1821)	S : 700 (200) A : M 450 + 40, A NIL + 60, E 680
Particular Baptists (1843)	S : 208 (64) + 80-100 A : M 117 (180) + 58 (50), E 163 + 30
Unitarians (1802)	S : 286 (123) A : M 82 (79) + 12 (8), A NIL + 49 (54), E 85 (76)
<i>'New Dissent'</i>	
Wesleyan Methodists, Manor Street (1788)	S : 480 (80) A : M 356 + 90, A 175 + 120, E 394
Wesleyan Methodists, Salem (1822)	S : 160 (none) A : M 60 + 40, A NIL + 90, E 70
Wesleyan Methodists, Ordnance Place (1822)	S : 150 (100) A : M (23 + 105), A (NIL + 145), E (48)
Wesleyan Methodists, Bethany (1850)	S : 320 (134) + 80-90 A : M 110 (170) + 111 (150), A NIL + 139 (150), E 185 (170)
Wesleyan Methodist Association, Middle Street (1835)	S : 219 (81) A : M 70 + 25, A 14, E 58
Wesleyan Methodist Association, Chatham Brook (1846)	S : 150 (all) A : M NIL + 60, A NIL + 130, E 40

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Primitive Methodists (1849)	S : 90 (30) A : M 34 + 25, E 47 + 16
Bible Christians, Bethesda (1821)	S : 160 (40) A : M32 + 26, A NIL + 26, E 40 + 7
Bible Christians, Union Street (1829)	S : 392 (66) + 30 A : M 114 + 48, A 47 + 64, E 172
Bible Christians, Luton (1834)	S : 100 (all) + 20 A : M NIL + 60, A NIL + 80, E 62

Others

Roman Catholics (1800)	S : 150 (none) + 50 A : M 250, A 200, E 100
Swedenborgians (1801)	S : 70 (all) A : M 20, A NIL + 10, E 40
Catholic Apostolic (1836)	S : 120 (all) A : M 40, E 60

DOVER

Church of England
Buckland¹³

Buckland ¹³	S : 193 (98) A : M 200 (150) + 50 (30), A 200 (150) + 50 (30)
St. James ¹⁴	S : 770 (all) A : not given
St. Mary ¹⁵	S : 1750 (1300) A : M 900 (1100) + 120, A 250 (300) + 120, E 1100 (1300)
Charlton ^o	S : 300 (all) A : M 220 (240) + 38 (40), A 160 (260) + 33 (40)

¹³ 'The Church is about to be enlarged so as to afford accommodation to about 400, at present forms occupy the aisles'.

¹⁴ The church was 'described as 'full' in the morning, and 'nearly full' in the afternoon.

¹⁵ 'The Congregation at the Evening Service . . . is distinct from those at the other periods of the day, to the extent of about two thirds of the number'.

Holy Trinity (1835) ¹⁶	S : 1550 (942) A : M 490 + 75, A 251 + 100, E 420
Christ Church (1844) ¹⁷	S : 1448 (702) A : M 976 + 125, A 393 + 109, E 628
St. John ¹⁸	S : 700 (220) A : M 450 + 110, E 700
<i>'Old Dissent'</i>	
Independents, Zion (1705)	S : 600 (150) A : M 165 (220) + 40, E 225 (250)
Independents, Russell Street (1839)	S : 570 (64) + about 100 A : M 120 (160) + 84 (70), A NIL + 117 (82), E 192 (180)
Independents, Ark Room (1847)	S : 80 (65) A : M 45, E 60
Particular Baptists (1823)	S : 500 (100) A : M 185 (220) + 48 (50), A 60 (70), E 319 (350)
General Baptists (1840)	S : 389 + 81 A : M 210 (260) + 84 (80), A 100, E 208
Unitarians (1643)	S : 500 A : M (118 + 120)
Society of Friends (1802)	S : 180 A : M 18, A 10

¹⁶ 'The Congregations at Dover fluctuate in point of numbers, as doubtless is the case at other Watering places . . . in the Summer months they are much larger than at present'.

¹⁷ 'Total Sittings includes a new gallery, just erected, but not opened'.

¹⁸ 'St. John's was originally built as a Dissenting place of worship. After some years it was licensed for an evening service by the late Archbishop [Howley] of Canterbury until Trinity Church was lighted with gas. It was then opened by a Dissenter under the patronage of a Lady who made the place free for sailors, but this proved a failure. Twenty individuals composed the congregation when the present Incumbent, a minister of the Church of England, entered upon the duties in March 1846. Since which time he has enlarged the Chapel to nearly double its former size. The congregation has increased to 700, principally sea-faring men and their families'.

'New Dissent'

Wesleyan Methodists, Snargate Street (1834)	S : 600 (250) A : M 350 + 150, A 50, E 500
Wesleyan Methodists, Centenary (1839)	S : 404 (170) A : M 182 (180) + 140, A 85 (50), E 160 (200)
Wesleyan Methodists, Tower Street (1849)	S : 65 (all) A : M (NIL + 55), A (NIL + 55), E (45)

Others

Roman Catholics ¹⁹	S : 300 A : M (400), A (140)
Synagogue (1835)	S : 39 (30) + 10 A : M 60, E 60
Latter Day Saints ²⁰	S : not given A : M 70, A 80, E 130

GRAVESEND

Church of England

Milton	S : 340 (36) A : M 240 (300) + 58 (56), A 180 (150) + 41 (30)
St. George (1733)	S : 860 (400) A : M 465 + 150, A 190 + 18, E 560 + 55
St. John (1834)	S : 1200 (all) A : M 304 + 60, A 175 + 60, E 500

¹⁹ The morning attendances were divided between services at 9 a.m. and 10.30 a.m.

²⁰ The following note from the registrar is attached to the Dover returns: 'Charlton Primitive Methodist, Bridge Street, is nothing but an out-door gatherings of Mormons, which in truth ought to be put down by the police. With respect to the other returns required, I beg to say that every possible pains was taken at the time of taking the census to obtain the required information from the parties qualified to give it. Therefore unless you can arm me with authority to enforce the filling up of the returns, it will not only be unpleasant but ridiculous in me to apply to the same parties again for information which has already been refused. I therefore respectfully decline to do so and it is not in my power to supply the particulars from my own knowledge'.

Holy Trinity (1845) ²¹	S : 950 (600) A : M 598 + 74, E 644 + 42
<i>'Old Dissent'</i>	
Independents (1838)	S : 1101 (428) + 370 A : M (500) + 190, E (500)
General Baptists (1843)	S : 800 (350) A : M 225 (325) + 162 (200), A NIL + 200, E 360 (400)
Particular Baptists (1847)	S : 170 (80) A : M 120 (200)
<i>'New Dissent'</i>	
Wesleyan Methodists (1812) ²²	S : 860 (230) A : M 405 (480) + 76 (90), A 72, E 420 (500)
Primitive Methodists	S : 180 (80) + 200 A : M 50 (150) + 90, E 150
<i>Others</i>	
Roman Catholics (1843)	S : 250 A : M 140
Christian Israelites	S : about 50 A : M 16 (16-20)
MAIDSTONE	
<i>Church of England</i>	
All Saints	S : 2270 (770) A : M 2000, A 1800
Holy Trinity (1828) ²³	S : 1840 (1103) A : M 1159 + 376, A 237 + 351, E 1043

²¹ 'The average attendance is estimated at a higher number, the congregation being largely increased in the Summer months by the Visitors to Gravesend'.

²² 'The Congregation was considerably affected on the day in question by the prevalence of the influenza. The afternoon service is conducted by a Local Preacher in the vestry for the benefit of servants and others'.

²³ The total average attendances, including Sunday Scholars, were M 1650. A 620, E 1135.

St. Peter (1840) ²⁴	S : 676 (220) A : not given
St. Stephen (1841) ²⁵	S : 576 (426) A : M 85 (150) + 88 (40), A 148 (250) + 88 (56)
St. Faith (1849) ²⁶	S : 250 (all) A : A 155 + 15
St. Philip (1850) ²⁶	S : 200 (all) A : M (30), A (150), E (200)
<i>'Old Dissent'</i>	
Independents (1822)	S : 700 (200) A : M 247 + 130, A 53, E 264
General Baptists, Providence (1820)	S : 300 (50) + 70 A : M 139 + 27, A 87 + 27, E 234
General Baptists, King Street (1822)	S : 500 (100) A : M 280 (300) + 73 (150), E 300 (370)
Particular Baptists (1834)	S : 427 (75) A : M 123 + 69, A 72 + 76, E 148
Presbyterians or Unitarians (1736)	S : 400 (150) A : M 90 (100) + 48 (55), E 50 (70)
Society of Friends (1811)	S : about 250 A : M 37, A 20
<i>'New Dissent'</i>	
Wesleyan Methodists (1823)	S : 1046 (236) A : M 334 (400) + 154 (155), A 77 (70), E 387 (500)
Primitive Methodists (1832)	S : 192 (62) A : M 20 + 33, A 17 + 33, E 22

²⁴ The Church was described as 'nearly full' both morning and evening.

²⁵ 'March 30 being a wet day, the number of attendants at church was smaller than usual'.

²⁶ Both temporary mission churches.

Countess of Huntingdon's
Connexion (1831) S : 600 (none)
 A : M 350 + 150, A 450 + 150

Others

Undenominational,
Town Mission S : 70 (all)
 A : E 20

Undenominational,
Tabernacle S : 60 (all) + 40
 A : M 12, E 30

MARGATE

Church of England

St. John S : 1250 (650)
 A : M 922, A 788

Holy Trinity (1829) S : 2000 (1200)
 A : M 576 (1000)
 + 125 (100), A 491 (809) + 114
 (100), E 561 (842)

'Old Dissent'

Independents (1845) S : 360 (60)
 A : M 168 + 86, A NIL + 112, E 240

General Baptists (1815) S : 710 (90)
 A : M 264 (330) + 171 (150), A 88
 (60) + 162 (150), E 348 (440)

Society of Friends (1709) S : 90
 A : M 8

Independent Calvinists S : 175 (all) + 30
 A : M 47 (60), E 82 (90)

'New Dissent'

Wesleyan Methodists,
Hawley Square (1811) S : 1200 (400)
 A : M 467 (520), A 117 (80), E 422
 (650)

Wesleyan Methodists
Garlinge (1828) S : 150 (84)
 A : M NIL + 31, A 66 + 30, E 54

Wesleyan Methodists,
Northdown S : 40 (all)
 A : E 22

THE KENTISH TOWNS IN THE RELIGIOUS CENSUS OF 1851

Countess of Huntingdon's Connexion (1801)	S : 650 (100) + 50 A : M 400 + 120, E 500
<i>Others</i>	
Roman Catholics (1802)	S : 150 + 55-70 A : M 52, E 23
RAMSGATE	
<i>Church of England</i> St. Lawrence	S : 800 (300) A : M 347 + 117, A 331 + 118
St. Mary (1791)	S : 1400 (200) A : (600)
St. George (1827)	S : 2000 (1200) A : (1500)
Holy Trinity (1845)	S : 700 (300) A : M 500, A 240
Christ Church (1847)	S : 1056 (390) A : M (500 + 300), A (250 + 250), E (600-700)
<i>'Old Dissent'</i>	
Independents (1838) ²⁷	S : 1140 (240) A : M 552 + 217, E 600
General Baptists (1724)	S : 150 (all) A : M 16, A 30
Calvinist Baptists (1840) ²⁸	S : 800 (300) + 200 A : M 194 (400) + 110 (150), A 104 (250), E 490 (700)
Particular Baptists (1843)	S : 300 (100) A : M100, A 50, E 150

²⁷ 'Ramsgate being a watering place, six months in the year the chapel is quite full. The evening being wet the congregation was lessened in consequence'.

²⁸ 'Ramsgate being a watering place, there is a larger influx of visitors in the town in the Summer months, [so] that congregations are more numerous than at this season of the year'.

'New Dissent'

Wesleyan Methodists, St. Lawrence	S : 125 (100) A : M 40 + 50, E 70
Wesleyan Methodists, Bethel (1810)	S : 670 (220) A : M 270 + 180, A 74, E 340
Primitive Methodists (1829)	S : 160 (90) + 40 A : M 50 + 23, A 60 + 23, E 100

Others

Roman Catholics (1850)	S : 500 A : M128 + 23, A 140 + 14
Synagogue (1833) ²⁹	S : 100 (all) A : M 45 (30), A 20, E 30
Undenominational, Broad Street (1837)	S : 700 (all) A : M 250 (700), A NIL + 50, E 500 (700)
Undenominational, Sailors' Room (1837)	S : 180 (all) A : A 120 (140)

ROCHESTER

Church of England

Cathedral	S : 450 A : M 210 (220), A 312 (400)
St. Margaret ³⁰	S : 1475 (551) A : M 734 + 120, A 426 + 109
St. Nicholas	S : 839 (231) A : M 530 + 193, E 510 + 104
Strood (1814) ³¹	S : 750 (390) A : M 281 (320) + 136 (140), E 274

²⁹ 'This Synagogue has been erected and is maintained at the entire expense of Sir Moses and Lady Montefiore'.

³⁰ 'The afternoon congregation . . . being chiefly composed of servants and working people, is of a different class from that of the morning'.

³¹ 'The incumbent commented on the return 'I think it right to state that the Parish of Strood has been subjected to many years of spiritual neglect'.

THE KENTISH TOWNS IN THE RELIGIOUS CENSUS OF 1851

'Old Dissent'

Independents (1781) S : 236 (58) + 102
 A : M 250 (200) + 59 (60), A NIL
 + 66 (85), E 300

Particular Baptists S : about 200 (all)
 (1848) A : M 20, E 20

Society of Friends S : above 300
 A : M 47, A 35

'New Dissent'

Wesleyan Methodists S : 650 (150)
 (1810) A : M 300, A 150, E 450

Others

Synagogue S : 84 (30)
 A : M 24 (20), E 30

SHEERNESS

Church of England
 Dockyard Chapel (1828) S : 1440
 A : M 450 (500), A 196 (200)

Holy Trinity (1836) S : 1074 (600)
 A : M 279 + 116, E 700 + 116

'Old Dissent'

Independents (1787) S : 700 (108) + about 190
 A : M 321 + 249, E 283

General Baptists (1813) S : 200 (30)
 A : M about 60 + 20, A about 30, E
 about 120 + 16

Particular Baptists S : not given
 A : M 20, E 16

'New Dissent'

Wesleyan Methodists,
 Salem S : 900 (250)
 A : M 300 (280) + 160 (150), E 450
 (500)

Wesleyan Methodists,
 Wesley (1841) S : 140 (80)
 A : A 40 (45), E 30 (20)

N. YATES

Primitive Methodists
(1828) S : 200 (24)
A : M 60 (70), A 35, E 90

Bible Christians (1821) S : 200 (50) + 40
A : M 50, E 100

Others

Roman Catholics (1820)³² S : 120 (80) + 70
A : M 240 + 40, E 50 + 60

Synagogue (1810) S : 39 (4)
A : NIL

Catholic Apostolic (1845) S : 168 (all)
A : M 52 (70), E 45 (70)

Latter Day Saints S : 200 (all)
A : M 50, A 30, E 94

TUNBRIDGE WELLS

Church of England

King Charles (1684) S : 1400 (1100)
A : M about 800 (750), A 300

Holy Trinity (1829)³³ No return

Christ Church (1841) S : 885 (350)
A : M 450 + 50, A 120, E 450

'Old Dissent'

Independents,
Mount Sion (1720) S : 450
A : M (50)

Independents,
New Chapel (1848) S : 703 (393)
A : M 281 (311) + 111, E 275 (325)

General Baptists S : 120
A : M 120, A 20, E 120

³² The morning congregation was divided between two services.

³³ The church was known to have had 1600 sittings in 1851, and I have estimated the likely total Sunday attendance at 2000. Comparable estimates have been made of the number of sittings, where these were not disclosed in the returns, for a total of eight churches in Canterbury, Chatham, Dover and Sheerness, for the statistical purposes required in Tables I-IV.

