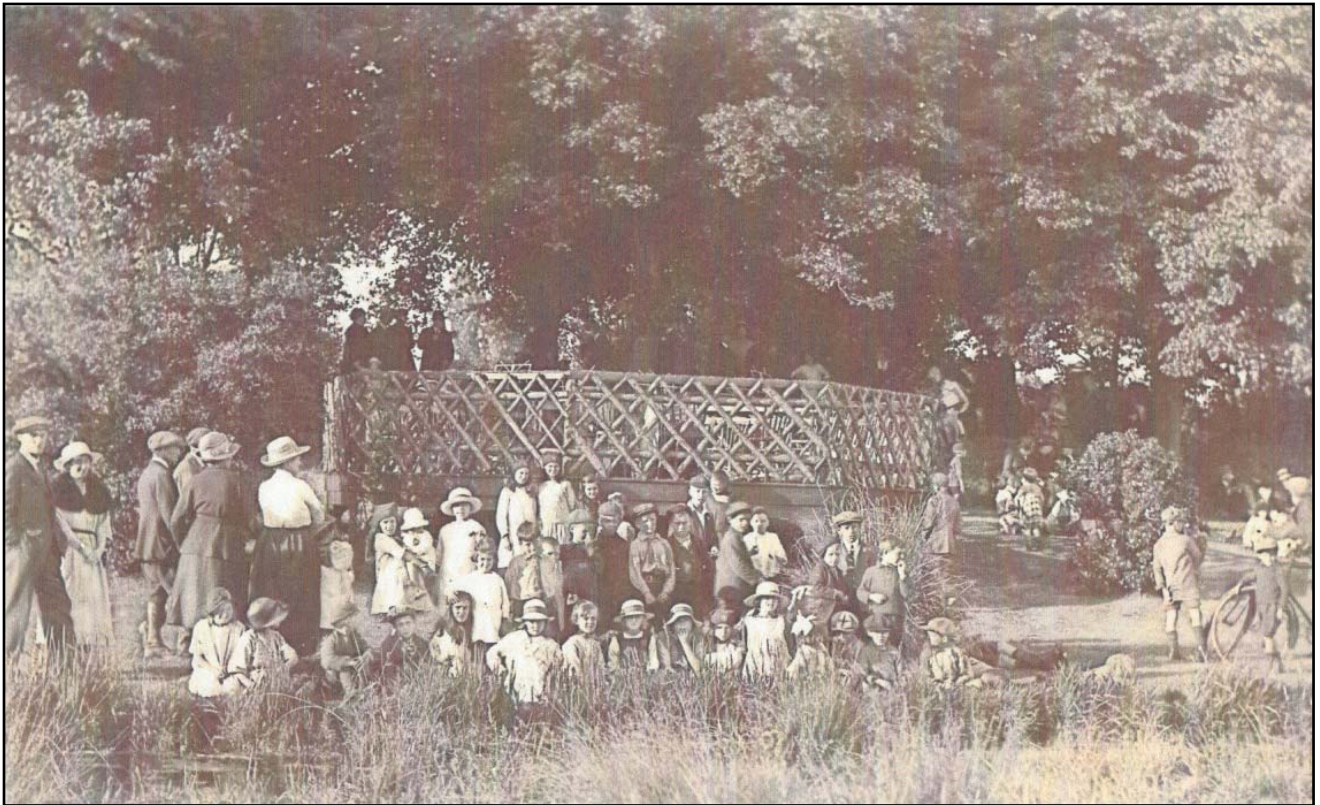


The Kent Compendium of Historic Parks and Gardens for Dover



The Butts, Rope Walk, Mill Wall and the Bulwark, Sandwich



September 2017

The Butts, Rope Walk, Mill Wall and the Bulwark, Sandwich

TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

SUMMARY OF HISTORIC INTEREST

CHRONOLOGY OF THE HISTORIC DEVELOPMENT

SITE DESCRIPTION

LIST OF FIGURES

FIGURE 1: Boundary map

FIGURE 2: Aerial Photograph (2013)

FIGURE 3: Williams Boys map of Sandwich 1792

FIGURE 4: Andrews, Dury and Herberts map of Sandwich, 1769

FIGURE 5: Ordnance Survey 1st edition 25" map (1862 -1875)

FIGURE 6: The Rope Walk showing bandstand 1924-1947 (courtesy Sandwich Archives)

FIGURE 7 Rope Walk Bandstand 1924-1947

FIGURE 8: Victorian children playing on The Butts (taken from history board on The Butts, undated).

FIGURE 9: Rope Walk 2017

FIGURE 10: The Bulwark path with the fence of the Salutation Garden to the left and dry moat to the right, facing towards the quay. (2017)

FIGURE 11: View of the recreation ground to the left with the town ditch and the Butts path on the right. Looking north. (2017)

FIGURE 12: The rustic bridge from Mill Wall. (2017)

Acknowledgements

To the staff at the East Kent Archival Centre and Sandwich Town Archival Centre for their help with this report.

INTRODUCTION

This site description and accompanying dossier have been prepared by the Kent Gardens Trust as part of its wider review of ***The Kent Compendium of Historic Parks and Gardens***. This part of the review was carried out for Dover District Council (DDC) from 2015-2017 and covers sites within the Dover local authority area. The reports detail the historic nature, content, current state and significance of the sites currently identified in the ***Kent Compendium of Historic Parks and Gardens*** for the Dover local authority area along with others identified by DDC.

Dover District Heritage Strategy.

The Dover District Heritage Strategy 2013 (DDHS) seeks to ensure that heritage plays a clear role in shaping any future regeneration, development and management decisions. To achieve this aim the DDHS contains a series of recommendations intended to promote and enhance the protection and enjoyment of the Districts heritage assets. A heritage asset is defined as a “building, monument, site, place, area or landscape identified as having a degree of significance meriting consideration in planning decisions, because of its heritage interest. Heritage asset includes designated heritage assets and assets identified by the local planning authority (including local listing)”¹.

The review carried out by the Kent Gardens Trust supports the following DDHS recommendations:

- *Recommendation 9: Systems should be put in place to ensure that historic environment information and advice is readily accessible to local communities to help them shape the places in which they live.*
- *Recommendation 14: a Local List of Heritage Assets should be developed...gardens identified within the Kent Gardens Compendium and any enhancement of the Compendium should be included in the Local List.*
- *Recommendation 23: Opportunities should be sought and support given to local communities, groups and individuals in researching their past, develop projects with them that identify, enhance understanding of the Districts heritage assets and involve them in condition assessment, monitoring, management, promotion and interpretation of the assets:*

How was the review carried out?

The review has been undertaken using Historic England’s criteria for identifying the significance of local heritage assets to provide a consistent approach². A template for the reports was developed by DDC, building on the experience of previous work by the Kent Gardens Trust. The heritage values of the historic

¹ National Planning Policy Framework 2012

² Historic England “Conservation Principles: Policy and Guidance” 2008

park or garden subject to the report are defined within the Statement of Significance.

The extent of the area identified represents the current surviving area of the designed landscape, the boundary line generally reflecting the maximum extent of the historic gardens or parkland (although there are exceptions such as where land has been irreversibly lost to development). The boundary line takes no account of current ownership.

How will the reports be used?

- a) The revised list of sites has the potential to support development of a Local List³ of Heritage Assets in Dover, should the Council progress with the recommendation in the DDHS in the future. The list of sites researched and evaluated in this review would be subject to consultation as part of any Local List development and is therefore not intended to be final.
- b) In response to recommendation 9 of the DDHS, the reports will be made publically available both on the DDC website and to the Historic Environment Record held by Kent County Council.
- c) The reports will help to inform future funding applications for historic spaces by the identification of significance.
- d) The review will help to inform future policy making, conservation and/or any development of sites, and contribute to the understanding, and where possible enjoyment, of these heritage assets by the identification of the significance of key historic character, features and association including that of setting and viewpoints.

Further information is available from the contacts listed below. The partnership would like to thank the volunteers and owners who have participated in this project and given so much of their time, effort and hospitality to complete this challenging and rewarding task.

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White Cliffs Business Park
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CT16 3PJ
www.dover.gov.uk

Kent County Council
Heritage Conservation
Invicta House
County Hall
Maidstone
ME14 1XX
www.kent.gov.uk

Kent Gardens Trust
www.kentgardenstrust.org.uk

³ Historic England "Local Heritage Listing": Historic England Advice Note 7 2016

**KENT THE BUTTS, ROPE WALK, MILL WALL AND THE BULWARK
SANDWICH
DOVER**

TR 327 581

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

EVIDENTIAL

The ramparts have been scrutinised by many archaeologists who date them to the second half of the C13. They are of archaeological interest because they are the most complete and therefore the best example of earth ramparts surviving in England today.

HISTORICAL

The existence of the remains of the Bulwark shows that significant money and effort was put into the defence of the town during the C14 and C15 centuries. Sandwich can therefore be linked to important national and international events that occurred during that period.

C18 century travellers describe the earth walls in their travelogues as being of significant interest.

The walks have been named because they refer to the history of Sandwich: the Rope Walk because it was here it was supposed that rope was laid and made; The Butts because it is thought that here archers practiced their skills; and Mill Wall because it was here the town mill stood.

AESTHETIC

The ramparts were made into public walks in the mid C19. They thus provide an excellent example of an existing landscape setting being made into a public facility, in this case, a pleasant walk around the town, in the period when the formation of public parks was at its height. The OS Maps and town general purpose committee minutes show that the recreation ground was also established for the public use at this time.

There are many mature trees along the walks. The upkeep of limes and poplars are mentioned several times in the towns' general purpose committee meetings during the early C20 and these trees are in evidence at the time of this report.

The ramparts make Sandwich a popular destination for visitors and they are included in many walking itineraries.

COMMUNAL

The ramparts are important communal areas that are accessible all year round for the public to enjoy. The fact they are elevated affords the public with views into the town and also across the countryside. The town is linked together by the footpaths that lead on and off the ramparts making it accessible from all directions.

The recreation ground has a new skate park and children's playground as well as a cricket club with a pavilion.

The town drain that runs along the west side of the rampart attracts wildlife and is used by local people for fishing.

SUMMARY OF HISTORIC INTEREST

The Butts, Rope Walk, Mill Wall and the Bulwark make up more than two thirds of the town walls that surround Sandwich. As such, they form the major part of the most complete example of medieval earth ramparts that have survived in England to the date of this report. From the mid C19, they have been managed to provide public walks and open space.

CHRONOLOGY OF HISTORIC INTEREST

Sandwich, which is mentioned in the Domesday Book as a Cinque Port, emerged as an important centre for trade and military operations during the early medieval period. Its position on the English Channel with a large natural harbour gave it access to Europe and the rest of the world while a network of roads going inland meant that goods could easily be transported from the port to larger towns.

This strategic position gave the town two important advantages: it was acknowledged by the king as an important place for the royal navy, and it had a deep sea fishing fleet. These two factors gave the town enormous negotiating powers with both the church and the crown and its resultant prosperity was reflected in the growth of the town to a population of around 2000 by the end of the C11. The importance of the town's location also meant that, in the first half of the C14, Sandwich acquired defensible walls. Archaeological evidence shows that the development of these walls was carried out in several phases. The stretches of rampart on the west side of the town, away from the waterfront, now known as The Butts and Rope Walk, were probably built at an earlier date than the ramparts to the east, now known as Mill Wall and the Bulwark.

Also in the early C14, a royal castle was built on the east side of Mill Wall supposedly to muster troops on their way to France. It no longer stands, but there is substantial archaeological evidence of its existence. In the Calendar of Patent Rolls (CPR) of 1385, masons, carpenters and other workmen were called to work on Sandwich Castle.

There were four main gates into the town: Sandown Gate to the east, New Gate to the south, Woodnesborough Gate to the west and Canterbury Gate to the

north. These were demolished in the C19 and very little remains of them. The Sandwich historian, William Boys (1735-1803), describes and illustrates them in his book 'The History of Sandwich' published in 1792. Due to the destruction of the Sandwich Year Books dating before 1430, it is difficult to pinpoint the exact date they were built.

William Boys' map of Sandwich, dated 1787, gives a detailed description of the town. The Butts and Mill Wall are named on this map but not Rope Walk or The Bulwark although the ramparts are clearly drawn.

The Butts is said to have been so called, because of its use for archery practice in Medieval times when there were laws that made all Englishmen aged between 15-60 carry bows and arrows. In the Calendar of Patent Rolls of 1360 during the Hundred Years War it says that 80 archers and the strongest and bravest men of the country were to be selected and duly furnished with arms, armour, bows and arrows and brought to Sandwich. Butts were usually located on the outskirts of villages and towns, on flat areas of land up to 200m long. Here in Sandwich, the Butts field was situated on the town side of the rampart. Being approximately 200m long, however, this field could in principle have been used for archery practice although there is no record of this specifically happening.

Rope Walk is so named because reputedly it was used to lay the ropes for the rigging of sailing ships. There was ship building in Sandwich in the first half of the C18 and before Sandwich ceased to be a port, fleets were anchored here. The fact that the Walk is 375m long and the average length of rope was 305m, supports the theory of its use for this purpose. On the north side of the walk there is a drainage ditch and on the south side a wet moat. These provided an important new element in the land drainage system at the time of their construction. Archaeologists think that Rope Walk and The Butts were constructed in the second half of the C13 and have very similar profiles when looked at in sections (Clarke and Pearson 2010). They also think that the shallow moat that runs on the west side of The Butts must have had the same effect on drainage as the moat on the south side of Rope Walk.

There are references in the CPR of murage grants (tolls for the building or repair of the town wall) being given in 1385 and again in 1386. These presumably relate to the fortifying of the town from the east to defend against invasion by the French, and it is thought that Mill Wall was constructed in this period. Excavations also show that this section was constructed at a later date than The Butts and Rope Walk; Mill Wall is also much steeper and higher than the other fortifications.

Mill Wall is so called because of the wind powered corn mills that stood on it. These can be seen on the Andrews, Dury and Herbert map of Sandwich dated 1769. The main mill was described as the Town Mill. This burned down in 1895.

On the north-east corner of the town wall is the Bulwark. In the Year Book of 1451, it was described as a two-storey wall for guns. Year Books during the C15 show that money was regularly spent on its up keep and its armaments This part

of the rampart differs from the others being enclosed by yellow buff bricks (HER No 35 NW 689).

A mention of the walls is made in 'The Itinerary of John Leland In and About the Years 1535-54'. Leland comments that Sandwich was 'meatly welle walled' at the points 'wher the town standeth most in jeopardy of enemies' and was 'dichid and muddied wauled' in the 'residue of the town'

The 1522 Year Book describes how the fortifications were used for pasture and grazing animals. This was deemed to be an offence but apparently the practice continued.

During the late C14 and C15, Sandwich continued to be a thriving town. By the mid C16, however, the port of Sandwich started to decline. Michael Zell and Dorothy Gardiner, two C20 historians who researched Sandwich's Medieval period, attributed this to the silting up of the harbour and the monopolies that were now given to London merchants and the East India Company taking trade away from Sandwich.

In the C18, travellers give descriptions of the walls: Edward Hasted described them as ramparts and ditches, and T Fisher in 'Kentish Travellers Companion', 1794, described them as being made by throwing up earth. Later, in 1818, L Fussell in his book 'Journey Round the Coast of Kent' comments that the walls round Sandwich were mouldering in decay and that the town was ditched with muddied walls.

The first description of the ramparts being used as public amenities comes in 1864 in William Miller's book 'Jottings of Kent'. Miller comments on the ancient walls being converted into a pleasing walk. The cast iron bollards (dated 1860 AD), which stand at some of the entrances to the walks on the ramparts, presumably formed part of these improvements (KCC monument report) and the ramparts must have become formally pedestrianised during this time. The OS map of 1862 -75 names The Butts, Rope Walk, Mill Wall and The Bulwark. Photographs taken in the early C20 show the pathway on Rope Walk with trees planted on both sides.

The minutes of the General Purpose Committee, between 1910 and 1949, give an over view of what the ramparts were like during the early C20. Tree planting and care was regularly discussed. In April 1921, it was recommended that the poplar trees on The Butts be lopped and the grass on Rope Walk be mown. In February 1928, there was a recommendation that a row of limes be planted between the path and the ditch on The Butts, 30 feet apart and 6 feet from the footpath. There is also a recommendation that the dead trees on The Butts and Rope Walk be removed and replaced with standard limes. In 1924 and 1936, there were concerns about boys interfering with the two walnut trees at the entrance of Mill Wall on New Street; it was minuted that they should be reprimanded by the mayor. General repair work on the ramparts was regularly discussed and the use of the dykes, that had up to that point been used as town drains, was prohibited as a modern sewage system had been put in place.

A bandstand committee was formed in 1924 and it was recommended that a bandstand be situated on a platform in the centre of Rope Walk. It was to be octagonal in form and without a roof, with lattice fencing around it. A dozen seats were to be put on Rope Walk at the cost of £2.15s a piece. Later in 1930, applications were made from the Chislet Band and The Salvation Army to play there. It is minuted that the bandstand was demolished in 1947 because it was in a bad state. In 1939 the minutes show that a fair was to be held on The Butts for the benefit of The Nursing Association. Indeed local people can remember fairs being held on the site up until the 1950s.

In 1928, land to the west of The Butts was converted into a recreation ground. The land was privately owned and was donated by the owner on condition that the town council laid it out for football, cricket and lawn tennis in perpetuity. A playing field sub-committee was set up in September 1929 for its organisation. In 1937, an area of the ground was designated as a cricket club and money was donated for a "movable" cricket pavilion.

During WW2, there were requests for the land east of The Butts to be used to store barrels, and as a brining plant for the war effort. In March 1941, it was resolved that the playing fields and any other unoccupied land belonging to the corporation fit for cultivation, be made into allotments.

In 1972, Sandwich Council became part of Dover District Authority and funds were made available for a new cricket pavilion and play area for children on the recreation ground.

SITE DESCRIPTION

LOCATION, AREA, BOUNDARIES, LANDFORM, SETTING, ENTRANCES AND APPROACHES

The ramparts form a 1.6km footpath, in the shape of a U, beginning with the entrance to The Butts on Strand Street, and encircling the town to the west, south and east, ending at the entrance to the Bulwark on The Quay.

The Butts runs for 525m along the west side of the town from its entrance on Strand Street at the site of the former Canterbury Gate to the north, southwards to the entrance on Moat Sole. 75m south of the Strand Street entrance there are eight C19 cast iron bollards. The Butts is bounded to the west by the town ditch and the recreation ground to which it is connected by two small footbridges over the ditch

The recreation ground, 3ha in extent, is shaped like an anvil with its longest side to the west abutting the railway line. Its north and south boundaries are bounded by depots. At the southern end of the recreation ground is a children's play area and a skate park, and on the north side is the cricket pavilion and cricket pitch.

There is access to The Butts from its eastern, town, side, from what is now (2017) the CO-OP supermarket car park. This measures 200m in length where it abuts The Butts footpath and 50m on the town side, and was the site of The

Butts field. The car park is bounded by the gardens and houses of Tannery Lane to the north, and Moat Sole to the south, with the supermarket standing to the east. Elsewhere, the eastern side of The Butts is bounded by private houses and their gardens.

Rope Walk lies to the south of the town and is 375m long. It has two main entrances: one to the west off Moat Sole, where the Woodnesborough Gate stood (opposite the entrance to The Butts), the other to the east opposite the entrance to Mill Wall in New Street. The entrance on Moat Sole is marked by C19 bollards. There is also a small footpath, named Fellowship Walk, 50m east of the entrance in Moat Sole, which leads off the path towards the town car park.

Rope Walk is bounded to the south by the town ditch. The northern boundary on the town side consists of, to the west, the end of the gardens from the houses in Whitefriars Meadow and Moat Sole, and to the east, a drainage ditch connecting to a culvert.

The Mill Wall has two main entrances: that to the east of New Street (opposite the entrance to Rope Walk), where New Gate stood. On the south of the entrance there are mid C19 railings on the bridge over part of the town drain. The other entrance is to the north-east in Sandown Road where Sandown Gate once stood (opposite the entrance to the Bulwark). Here there are seven C19 bollards. In total, the path is 425m in length, leading initially 200m eastwards from the New Street entrance, before dog-legging to continue north-eastwards for 425m to Sandown Road. There are two entrances from the town side, one off Mill Wall Place, and one off Knightrider Street. The path is bounded on the town side by housing and the town bowling club. An electricity sub-station stands south of the walk, just to the east of the New Street entrance. On the south-east side, it is bounded by a field that was the site of the Castle.

The Mill Wall rampart is very steep. Two footbridges bridge the dry moat to the south, the one opposite Knightrider Street entrance being of wooden lattice work structure as described in the General Purpose Committee minutes in February 1928 as a rustic bridge. The other footbridge is 50m to the east of the New Street entrance. Both lead south away from the rampart to St Georges Road. There are many mature trees on both sides of the path and in the moat, some of which are yew and copper beech.

The entrance to the southern end of The Bulwark stands on Sandown Road (opposite the entrance to Mill Wall). From here, the Bulwark leads north for 75m before leading westward for a further 125m to its entrance on The Quay. Both entrances are marked by C19 bollards.

The Bulwark thus forms a 200m footpath along the top of the north-east corner of the raised bank of the ramparts, above the exposed brickwork that would have formed the two-storey wall for guns. To its north, it is bounded by the grass field beside the River Stour and to the east by the dry moat. The moat is now grassed over and houses an enclosed children's play area. The west and south side of the path is bounded by the fence of the 2.5ha Salutation gardens (registered

grade II). Edwin Lutyens (1869-1944) designed The Salutation house and its accompanying gardens, in 1912.

Gardens and Pleasure Grounds

The ramparts are formed by earthen banks of soil with a central tarmac path running along the entire length of the them. Along the south side of Rope Walk and the east side of the Butts runs the town drain. The drain had been dredged to make it a town feature for wildlife and fishing. Lime and poplar trees are planted along the sides of the paths to form avenues and there are also mature trees dotted along the side of the stream. On the south side of Rope Walk there is formal planting in the form of several square beds at regular intervals which consist of roses and crab apple trees. The Bulwark is a managed area for recreation with the topography of the dry moat forming gentle slopes of mown grass. The Mill Wall contrasts with the other ramparts, its very steep sides giving it a dramatic and sublime atmosphere. The mature yews and other trees and shrubs are a sanctuary for wildlife. All the walks have mature trees growing alongside them which include yew, limes, holly and chestnut trees. At the Sandown entrance to the Buwark are two large wingnut trees.

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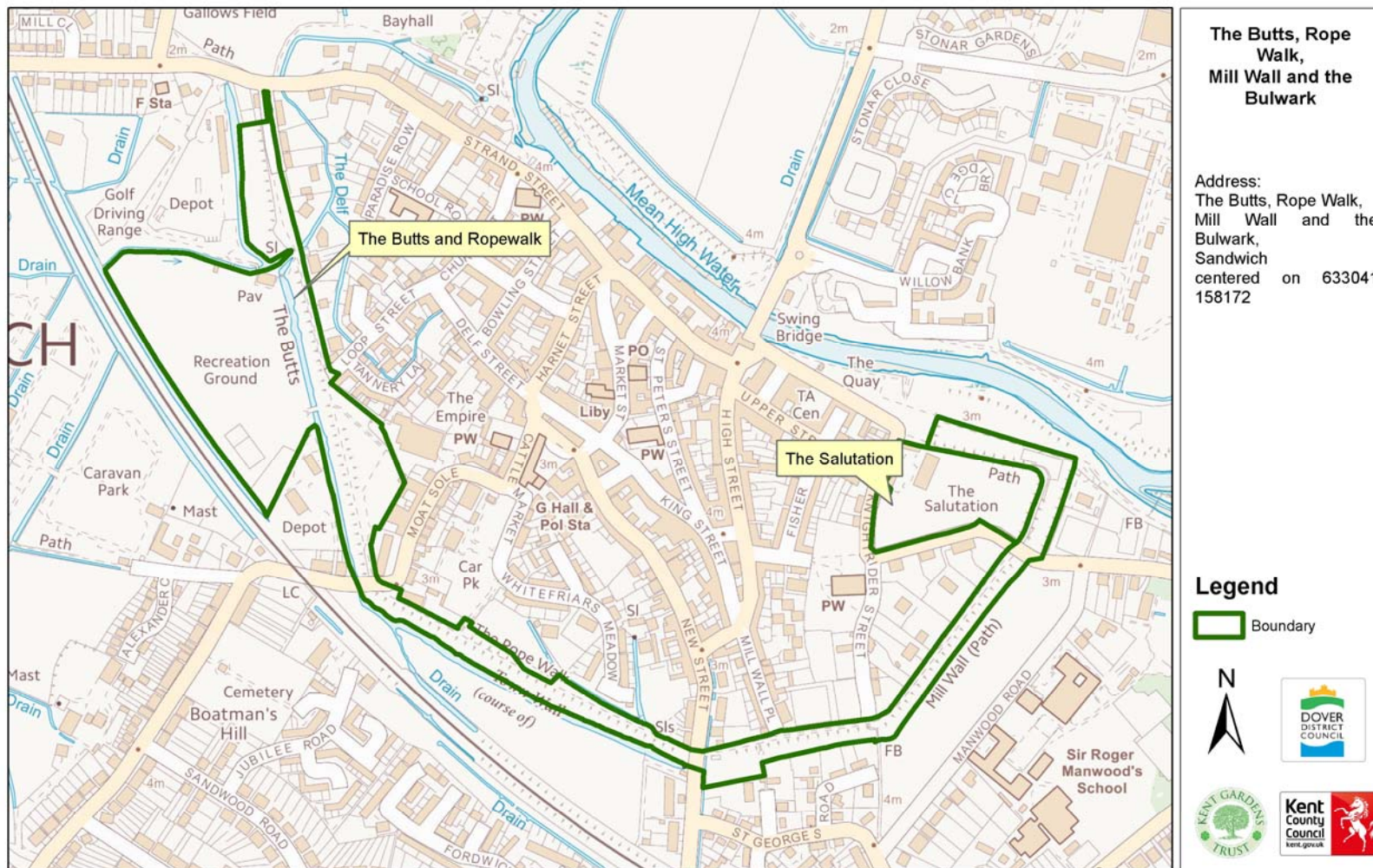
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Fig. 1 Boundary map and key features



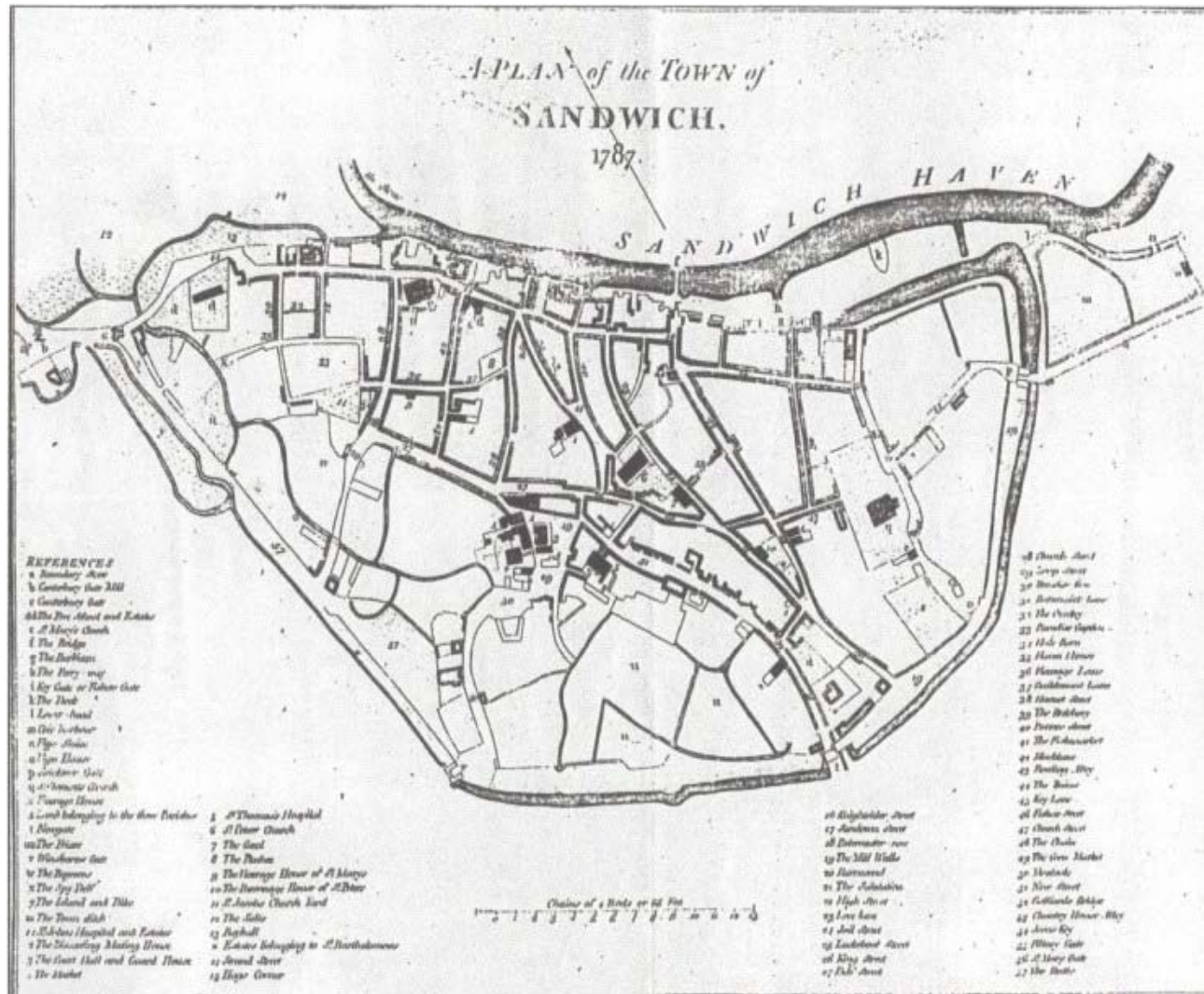
Kent Compendium of Historic Parks & Gardens – 2015-2017 review of Dover District

Fig.. 2 Aerial photograph (2012)



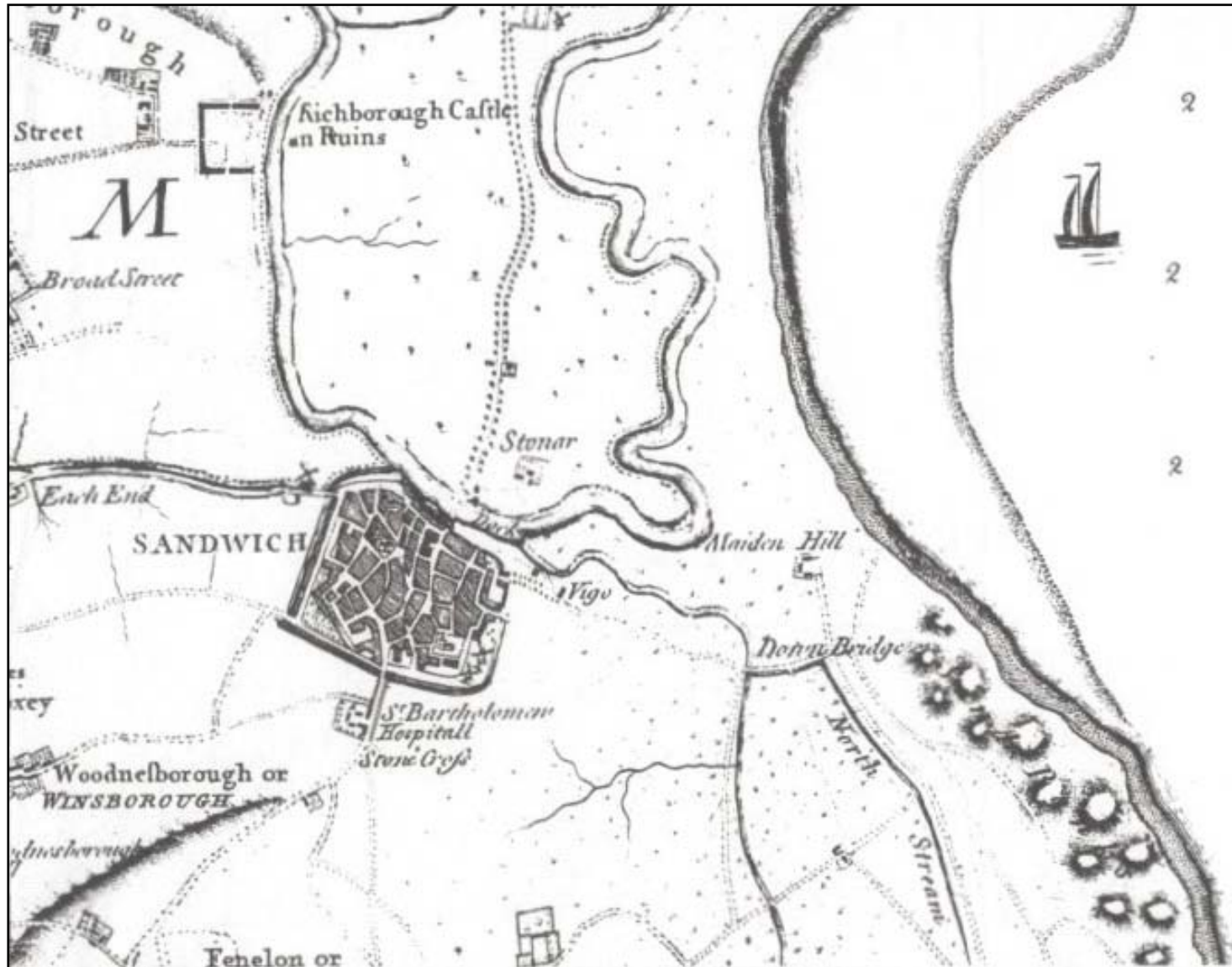
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Fig. 3 Williams Boys map of Sandwich 1792



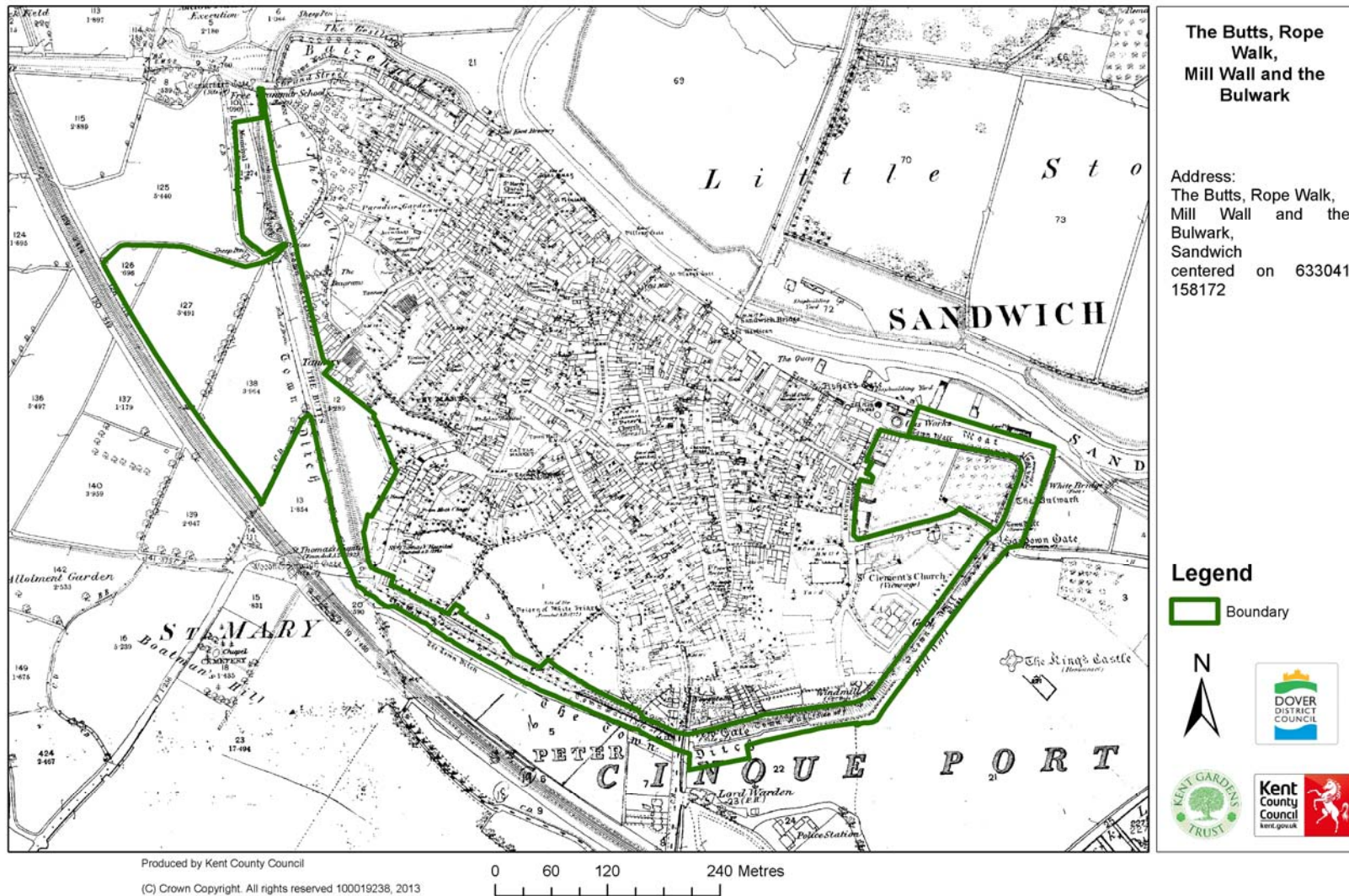
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Fig. 4 Andrews, Dury and Herberts map of Sandwich, 1769



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Fig. 5 Ordnance Survey 1st edition 25" map (1862 -1875)



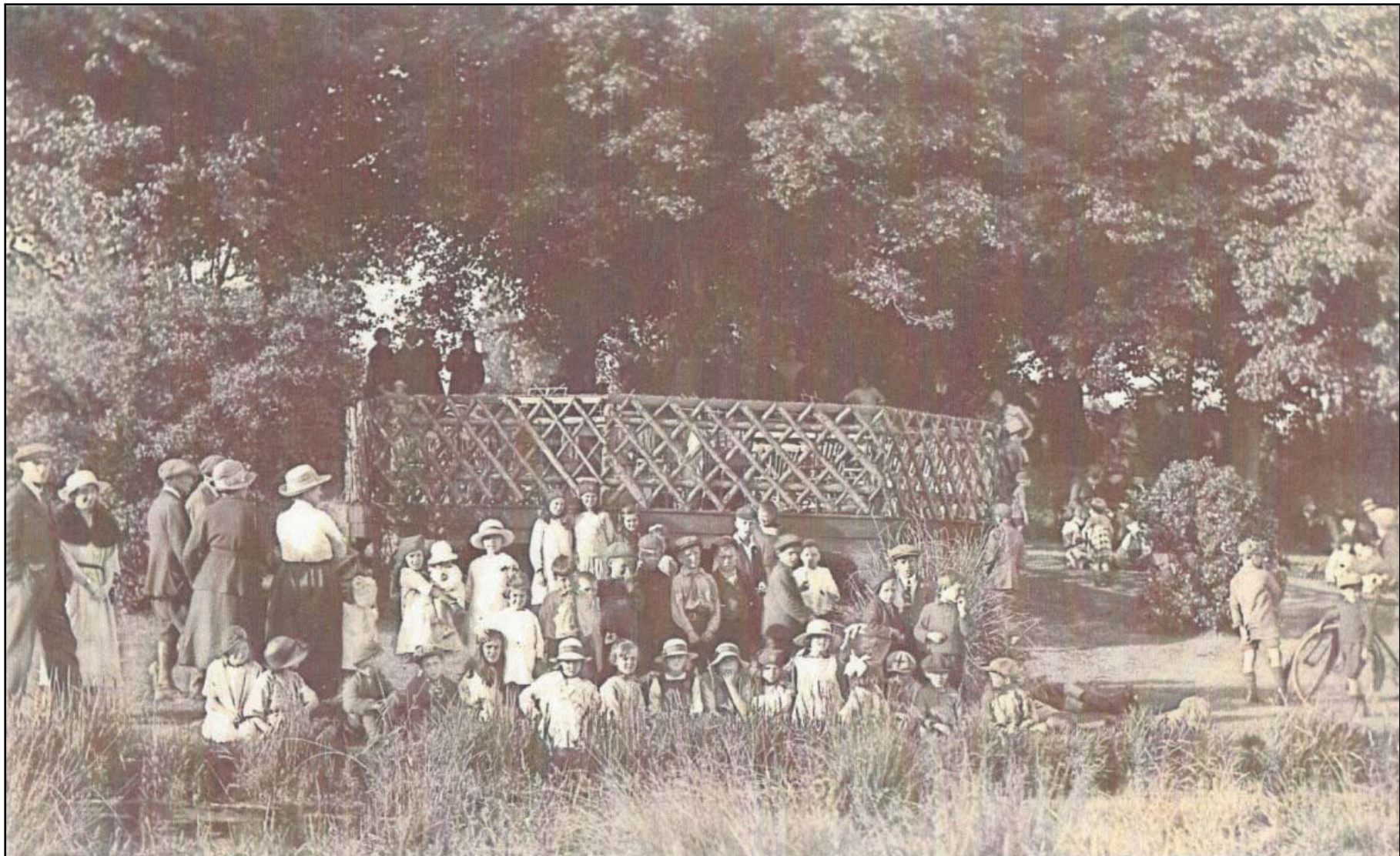
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Fig. 6 The Rope Walk showing bandstand 1924-1947 (courtesy Sandwich Archives)



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Fig. 7 Rope Walk Bandstand 1924-1947



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Fig. 8 Victorian children playing on The Butts (taken from history board on The Butts, undated).



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Fig. 9 Rope Walk 2017



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Fig. 10 The Bulwark path with the fence of the Salutation Garden to the left and dry moat to the right, facing towards the quay. (2017)



Kent Compendium of Historic Parks & Gardens – 2015-2017 review of Dover District

Fig. 11 : View of the recreation ground to the left with the town ditch and the Butts path on the right. Looking north. (2017)



Kent Compendium of Historic Parks & Gardens – 2015-2017 review of Dover District

Fig. 12 The rustic bridge from Mill Wall. (2017)

