KENT COUNTY is among the sixteen English counties that sent settlers to Jamestown in 1607. The largest county in England—with the English Channel at one end and the outskirts of London on the other—it is a crossroads of travel and commerce.

For over 400 years, Kent has been called “The Garden of England” because of its rolling hills, rich farmland, beautiful orchards, and grazing sheep. Hops, used in flavoring beer, are a traditional crop, and picturesque oast houses (buildings used for drying hops) dot the landscape.

The Thames and Medway rivers, which flow through Kent, have played an important role in the county’s history and industry. Many warships were built at the Royal Dockyard in Chatham.

Over the years, coal mining, papermaking, and woolen-cloth making have given way to high-tech industries, including biosciences and aviation. Tourism is also a large industry; visitors flock to sites such as the historic cathedral town of Canterbury and the White Cliffs of Dover, a natural wonder.