

Storied Ground

People have always attached meaning to the landscape that surrounds them. In *Storied ground* Paul Readman uncovers why landscape matters so much to the English people, exploring its particular importance in shaping English national identity amid the transformations of modernity. The book takes us from the white cliffs of Dover to the fells of the Lake District; from the streetscapes of industrial Manchester to the heart of London. This panoramic journey reveals the significance, not only of the physical characteristics of landscapes, but also of the sense of the past, collective memories and cultural traditions that give these places their meaning. Between the late eighteenth and early twentieth centuries, Englishness extended far beyond the pastoral idyll of chocolate-box thatched cottages, waving fields of corn and quaint country churches. It was found in diverse locations – urban as well as rural, north as well as south – and it took strikingly diverse forms.

Paul Readman is Professor of Modern British History at King's College London. He is author of *Land and nation in England: Patriotism, national identity and the politics of land* (2008). His other publications include, as co-editor, *The land question in Britain, 1750–1950* (2010), *Borderlands in world history, 1700–1914* (2014) and *Walking histories, 1800–1914* (2016), as well as many articles and essays. As a keen walker and perpetual tourist, he has a longstanding interest in the diverse ways that human experience shapes, and is shaped by, landscape and place. *Storied ground* explores these questions against the backdrop of ideas about history, national identity and the environment.

Storied Ground

Landscape and the Shaping of English National Identity

Paul Readman

King's College London



CAMBRIDGE
UNIVERSITY PRESS

Cambridge University Press
978-1-108-42473-8 — Storied Ground
Paul Readman
Frontmatter
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CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY PRESS

University Printing House, Cambridge CB2 8BS, United Kingdom
One Liberty Plaza, 20th Floor, New York, NY 10006, USA
477 Williamstown Road, Port Melbourne, VIC 3207, Australia
314-321, 3rd Floor, Plot 3, Splendor Forum, Jasola District Centre,
New Delhi – 110025, India
79 Anson Road, #06-04/06, Singapore 079906

Cambridge University Press is part of the University of Cambridge.

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www.cambridge.org

Information on this title: www.cambridge.org/9781108424738

DOI: 10.1017/9781108344043

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First published 2018

Printed in the United Kingdom by TJ International Ltd. Padstow, Cornwall

A catalogue record for this publication is available from the British Library.

ISBN 978-1-108-42473-8 Hardback

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Cambridge University Press
978-1-108-42473-8 — Storied Ground
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For Martha Vandrei

CONTENTS

List of Figures page viii
Acknowledgements xiii

Introduction 1

Part I Borders 23

1 The Cliffs of Dover 25
2 The Northumbrian Borderland 52

Part II Preservation 91

3 The Lake District 93
4 The New Forest 154

Part III Beyond the South Country 193

5 Manchester: Shock Landscape? 195
6 The Thames 250

Conclusion 300

Select Bibliography 311
Index 320

FIGURES

1	W. Westall, <i>Dover, from the beach</i> , engraved by E. Francis, c. 1830. Photo courtesy of The Print Collector/Print Collector/Getty Images.	page 30
2	J. M. W. Turner, <i>Straits of Dover</i> , engraved by William Miller, 1828. Photo courtesy of Culture Club/Getty Images.	32
3	J. M. W. Turner, <i>Dover from Shakespeare's Cliff</i> , in <i>Picturesque views on the southern coast of England, from Drawings made principally by J. M. W. Turner, and engraved by W. B. Cooke, George Cooke, and other eminent engravers</i> (London, 1826). Reproduced by kind permission of the Syndics of Cambridge University Library: LE.2.39.	35
4	Albert Henry Payne, <i>Dover, c. 1850: a view from Shakespeare's Cliff</i> . Engraving. Photo courtesy of Science and Society Picture Library/Getty Images.	41
5	<i>An advertisement on Dover Cliffs</i> , from Clarence Moran, <i>The business of advertising</i> (London, 1905). Reproduced by kind permission of the Syndics of Cambridge University Library: misc.7.90.1529.	46
6	Photograph of a small burn, with Simonside in the distance: Coquetdale, Northumberland, c. 1910. Northumberland Archives: NRO 01449/537.	53
7	John Greig, <i>Warkworth Castle, Northumberland</i> . Engraving, from Sir Walter Scott, <i>The border</i>	

ix / List of Figures

- antiquities of England and Scotland*, 2 vols. (London, 1814), Vol. II. Photo courtesy of Print Collector/Getty Images. 57
- 8 J. M. W. Turner, *Norham Castle on the River Tweed*, c.1822–3. Watercolour on paper. Reproduced in W.G. Rawlinson and A. J. Finberg, *The water-colours of J. M. W. Turner* (London, 1909). Photo by Print Collector/Getty Images. 73
- 9 Postcard view of Beaufront Castle, Corbridge, Northumberland. Northumberland Record Office (n.d., early twentieth century). Northumberland Archives: NRO 05176/6. 80
- 10 *Alnwick Castle, seat of the duke of Northumberland, circa 1783*. Engraving by William Watts after Lord Duncannon. From William Watts, *The seats of the nobility and gentry* (London, 1779–86). Photo courtesy of Hulton Archive/Getty Images. 81
- 11 Photograph of Ford Castle, c. 1900. Northumberland Archives: SANT/PHO/ALB/12/40. 83
- 12 Roger Fenton, *Derwentwater, looking to Borrowdale*. Photograph, 1860. Photo courtesy of Science and Society Picture Library/Getty Images. 94
- 13 Joseph Farington, *East side of Derwentwater, looking towards Lowdore Waterfall*. Engraving, from Thomas Hartwell Horne, *The Lakes delineated* (London, 1816). Reproduced by kind permission of the Syndics of Cambridge University Library: Ll.10.44. 100
- 14 Joseph Farington, *Ullswater and Liulph's Tower*. Engraving, from Thomas Hartwell Horne, *The Lakes delineated* (London, 1816). Reproduced by kind permission of the Syndics of Cambridge University Library: Ll.10.44. 103
- 15 “‘Owner up’ in the Lake District”, *Punch*, 4 September 1886. Reproduced by kind permission of the Syndics of Cambridge University Library: L992.b.177. 120
- 16 Frontispiece to W. G. Collingwood, *Thorstein of the Mere* (London, 1895). Reproduced by kind permission of the Syndics of Cambridge University Library: Misc.5.89.49. 139

x / List of Figures

- | | | |
|----|--|-----|
| 17 | <i>New Forest: A country scene.</i> Photograph by J. G. Short of Lyndhurst, late nineteenth century. Courtesy of the New Forest Ninth Centenary Trust, Christopher Tower New Forest Reference Library, Hampshire Record Office: 20M92/2/Z34. | 156 |
| 18 | <i>The Lury family at Rufus Stone.</i> Photograph by Adams and Stillard, 1879. Hampshire Record Office: 105M93/3/15. | 157 |
| 19 | <i>Beaulieu: Chapter House arches, Beaulieu Abbey.</i> Photograph by William Barfoot of Totton, late nineteenth century. Courtesy of the Beaulieu Estate Archive. Hampshire Record Office: HPP33/034. | 169 |
| 20 | <i>King and queen oaks, Bolderwood.</i> Photograph c. 1895 by James Coventry of Burgate Manor and deposited in Hampshire Record Office by the late Philip Allison. Hampshire Record Office: 33M84/16/1. | 170 |
| 21 | The Knightwood Oak. Photo courtesy of Hulton Archive/Getty Images. | 176 |
| 22 | <i>New Forest: Forest scene.</i> Photograph possibly by J. G. Short of Lyndhurst, late nineteenth century. Courtesy of Hampshire Cultural Trust. Hampshire Record Office: HPP39/011. | 179 |
| 23 | <i>View of Market Street.</i> Engraving, from <i>Cornish's stranger's guide to Manchester and Salford</i> (Manchester, 1857). British Library, London, UK/ Bridgeman Images. | 212 |
| 24 | James Harwood, <i>New Jerusalem Church</i> , engraved by R. Wallis, from W. H. Pyne, <i>Lancashire illustrated, in a series of views</i> (London, 1829–31). Reproduced by kind permission of the Syndics of Cambridge University Library: Eb.9.28. | 214 |
| 25 | <i>Victoria Bridge, Manchester.</i> Engraving, from George Measom, <i>The official illustrated guide to the North-Western Railway</i> (London, 1859). Reproduced by kind permission of the Syndics of Cambridge University Library: 1859.7.324. | 216 |
| 26 | The Free Trade Hall, Manchester, from <i>Our own country</i> (London, 1898). Photo courtesy of Universal History Archive/Universal Images Group via Getty Images. | 224 |

xi / List of Figures

- 27 *Messrs. Watts's new warehouse, Manchester, Illustrated London News*, 6 December 1856. Reproduced by kind permission of the Syndics of Cambridge University Library: NPR.C.3.13. 225
- 28 Manchester Town Hall, from *Sights and scenes in England and Wales* (London, [c. 1899]). Photo courtesy of The Print Collector/Getty Images. 229
- 29 Samuel L. Coulthurst, *Rover's Return*. Photograph, from *Manchester Faces and Places*, 1893. British Library, London, UK/Bridgeman Images. 240
- 30 Adolphe Valette, *India House, Manchester*, 1912. Oil on jute. Manchester Art Gallery, UK/Bridgeman Images. 246
- 31 Frontispiece from H. Skrine, *A general account of all the rivers of note in Great Britain* (London, 1801). Reproduced by kind permission of the Syndics of Cambridge University Library: Ll.34.16. 251
- 32 J. M. W. Turner, *The Thames from Richmond Terrace*, 1836. Watercolour on paper, Walker Art Gallery, Liverpool. 258
- 33 Lucien Davis, *At Boulter's Lock, Maidenhead, on the way to Henley Regatta, Illustrated London News*, 3 July 1886. Photo courtesy of Hulton Archive/Getty Images. 268
- 34 Helen Allingham, *On Ide Hill*, 1900. Watercolour on paper, from Helen Allingham and Marcus B. Huish, *Happy England* (London, 1904). Reproduced by kind permission of the Syndics of Cambridge University Library: 404.c.90.4. 273
- 35 George Price Boyce, *The Mill on the Thames at Mapledurham, Oxfordshire*, 1860. Watercolour and bodycolour on paper, © The Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge. 275
- 36 *Captain Jinks (of the 'Selfish') and his friends enjoying themselves on the river, Punch*, 21 August 1869. Reproduced by kind permission of the Syndics of Cambridge University Library: L992.b.177. 285
- 37 George Vicat Cole, *Iffley Mill*, 1884. Oil on canvas. Towneley Hall Art Gallery and Museum, Burnley, Lancashire/Bridgeman Images. 293

xii / List of Figures

38	George Vicat Cole, <i>View of the Thames at Greenwich</i> , 1890. Oil on canvas, private collection. Photograph © Christie’s Images/Bridgeman Images.	294
39	George Vicat Cole, <i>The pool of London</i> , 1888. Oil on canvas. © Tate, London, 2017.	295
40	William Lionel Wyllie, <i>Toil, glitter, grime and wealth on a flowing tide</i> , 1883. Oil on canvas. © Tate, London, 2017.	296

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This book has taken a long time to complete. The origins of some of the research presented here lie in my 2002 Ph.D. dissertation, which was supervised by Jon Parry and examined by David Cannadine and Peter Mandler. In various ways, these three scholars have had a major influence on my thinking; my debt to them is deep. I have, of course, other debts to acknowledge and many of them are associated with King's College London, which has been my academic home for more than fifteen years. I'm particularly grateful to the college for the award of research leave in the academic years 2012/13 and 2013/14, at the end of my term as Head of the Department of History. Without this leave, I might never have finished this book. But without the advice, encouragement and friendship of my departmental colleagues at King's I might never have attempted it at all. One conversation in the late afternoon of Monday 4 June 2007 was especially consequential. As it happened, this conversation was a formal one – my annual appraisal by a senior colleague. On this occasion my interlocutor was David Carpenter, a medievalist, and to him I presented a dilemma: should I write a book about the politics of late Victorian and Edwardian patriotism, or should I embark on a study of landscape and national identity in English culture, over a much longer chronological period? These were the two ideas for projects I had at the time; I could see the pros and cons of each; I was torn between them. David, however, had no doubt that the book on landscape was the one to write, and his enthusiastic conviction put an end to my dithering; my gratefulness to him for this intervention has only increased over time.

xiv / Acknowledgements

Other departmental colleagues at King's, too, were a great source of advice, wisdom and moral support. I'd particularly like to thank Marie Berry, Jim Bjork, Arthur Burns, Laura Clayton, David Edgerton, Alana Harris, Ian McBride, Niall O'Flaherty, Simon Sleight, Sarah Stockwell, Adam Sutcliffe, Richard Vinen and Abigail Woods; but really I could name the whole department. Indeed, I am lucky to be a member of a department that combines a high degree of intellectual seriousness with a deep-rooted commitment to convivial collegiality: evening forays with Ian, Niall, Marie and others to such important enablers of scholarship as the Seven Stars on Carey Street and the Harp on Chandos Place were and remain a great solace to me.

King's students as well as King's staff have helped me with this book, many of the ideas herein being shaped in seminar discussions associated with a long-running master's-level course on 'Patriotism and national identities in Britain', and – more recently – a final-year undergraduate Thematic Special Subject on 'Nations'. My thanks, also, go to my current and former Ph.D. students, who have done so much to widen the range of my historical knowledge, and enrich my understanding – not least via the meetings and other activities of the Modern British History Reading Group. I am certain that I have learnt more from them than they have from me.

Beyond the Department of History, but still within King's, I'd like to thank Clare Brant, David Green, Sonia Massai, Clare Pettitt, Max Saunders and Keith White (whose copy of John Urry's *The tourist gaze* is still in my possession: sorry Keith!). I am also very appreciative of my colleagues in the Arts and Humanities Faculty Office: combining a vice-decanal role with completing a major project presents some challenges, and I give heartfelt thanks to Ian Barrett, Russell Goulbourne, Nicola Rankin, Katrin Tiedau and the other current and former denizens of Room 2.19 of the Virginia Woolf Building for putting up with my book-induced lapses and distractedness over the past few years. Still further up the King's administrative hierarchy, I'm enormously grateful to Chris Mottershead, who found just the right words at just the right time to spur me on towards the finish line.

Outwith King's, but still within the wider University of London (reports of its death remain exaggerated), I gained much from my involvement in the Modern British History seminar at the Institute of Historical Research, and indeed some of the research for this book was presented at that forum. Further afield (though also during her

xv / Acknowledgements

time at King's), Ludmilla Jordanova helped me in many ways: with this project, with my work, and indeed with much else besides. So too did my old friend William Mulligan; in a variety of congenial contexts in Dublin, Glasgow, London and Berlin I have been enlightened and enriched by his conversation, and sustained by his camaraderie. I must also thank Rona Cran and Martin Spychal for sybaritic nocturnal escapades; the occasional company of their marvellous cats; and life-enhancing exchanges about history, literature, films and music (including some memorable debates about the artistic merits of Bob Dylan and the Beach Boys). In a similar vein, I thank Julie Hipperson and Dan Browne for their conversation, revelry and enthusiasm for gastronomic adventure – and for persuading me that there are some shreds of silver lining in the cloud that is the Hipster takeover of large parts of central London.

I owe much to Mark Freeman, from whom I have learnt a great deal – and not just about history – over the course of many years. Mark's generosity of spirit, sense of the absurd and enthusiasm for wholesome non-academic pursuits are a shining example to a profession that can sometimes take itself far too seriously. Mark, moreover, was one of a number of people who worked closely with me on 'The redress of the past: Historical pageants in Britain, 1905–2016', an Arts and Humanities Research Council-funded project (AH/K0003887/1) that overlapped with the later stages of my work on this book. Historical pageantry is a different subject from landscape, but the two projects address cognate themes, and my debt to the 'Redress of the past' team is profound. For their winning combination of scholarly rigour, professionalism and *joie de vivre* I thank Angela Bartie, Paul Caton, Ginestra Ferraro, Luis Figueira, Linda Fleming, Mark Freeman (again), Tom Hulme, Alex Hutton, David Little, Geoffroy Noël, Charlotte Tupman, Paul Vetch and Miguel Vieira.

Many other people helped in different ways. For pointers, references and support of various kinds I am grateful to: Sally Alexander, Ben Anderson, Elizabeth Baigent, Nicola Bishop, Rob Colls, Ben Cowell, Matthew Cragoe, Melanie Hall, Tony Howe, Michael Hulme, Ann Poulson, Roland Quinault, Kathryn Rix, Kristina Spohr, Astrid Swenson, Tony Taylor, James Thompson, Robert Whelan and William Whyte. My friend and academic collaborator Chad Bryant of the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill has been a particular source of insight and stimulating discussion, especially on

xvi / Acknowledgements

wider methodological issues. Indeed, in recent years I've spent a good deal of time in the chipmunk-enhanced campus of Chapel Hill, working on projects that – while quite separate from the present one – helped shape some of the thinking behind it: aside from Chad, my thanks also to his UNC colleagues, especially Lloyd Kramer, Susan Pennybacker and Cynthia Radding.

A version of Chapter 1 was first published in the journal *History*, 99 (2014) as “‘The cliffs are not cliffs’: The cliffs of Dover and national identities in Britain, c. 1750–1914”; I am grateful to John Wiley & Sons Ltd and the Historical Association for permission to reproduce this material. I wish also to acknowledge the following people and institutions for permission to reproduce images to which they hold the copyright: Beaulieu Estate Archive; Bridgeman Images; British Library; Cambridge University Library; Christie's Images; Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge; Getty Images; Hampshire Cultural Trust; Hampshire Record Office; Manchester Art Gallery; National Museums Liverpool; New Forest Ninth Centenary Trust; Northumberland Archives; Towneley Hall Art Gallery & Museum, Burnley.

This book was commissioned by Michael Watson of Cambridge University Press, and I am most grateful to him for his encouragement and patience over the course of the project's long gestation. Michael's advice over the years did much to influence the overall shape of the book. Indeed, his periodic enquiries as to how the project was going served as useful reminders that I had obligations to scholarship as well as to university administration, thereby reinforcing the wise counsel Ian McBride had given me soon after I arrived at King's (delivered while dodging buses on the Aldwych, en route to lunch): always – always – ‘make time for research’. Also at Cambridge University Press, Melissa Shivers and Lisa Carter provided invaluable help with the publication process, and Robert Whitelock did much to spot and eliminate mistakes at copy-editing stage. I was lucky, too, that the Press sent the draft typescript to excellent readers. Indeed, the final stages of writing were given a great boost by the enormously useful, generous and learned comments of these two anonymous reviewers. Their input saved me from a number of errors and omissions, and helped strengthen the arguments and claims that I make in the book. The mistakes and weaknesses that remain are my responsibility alone.

Nearly all of this book was written in my office in King's College London, but nearly all of the research behind it was done in

xvii / Acknowledgements

libraries and archives, and to these institutions and their staff I owe an enormous debt of gratitude: the British Library; Cambridge University Library; the Bodleian Library; Senate House Library, London; the Maughan Library, King's College London; Hampshire Record Office; Northumberland Archives; Surrey History Centre; Cumbria Archive Service; National Trust Archives; Westminster City Archives. The business of doing research and writing using the resources of these places was further eased through grants to defray various expenses, and I am most grateful to King's College London and the Isobel Thornley Bequest to the University of London for their generosity in making such funding available to me.

Not all my debts are to universities, libraries, archives and academic friends and colleagues, of course. My parents Anita and Peter and my brothers Ben and Dan continue to take a kindly interest in what I do, and have offered much encouragement over the years. So too has Sue Drew ('Auntie Sue'), whose home in Sheffield has been the scene of much stress-relieving lounging around, conversation and drinking of gins and tonic, as well as a base for revivifying excursions into the Peak District (a landscape that, perhaps unforgivably, does not feature in this book).

My greatest debt of all is to Martha Vandrei, whose love and intellectual comradeship have shaped this project in innumerable ways. Martha kept me going, kept the demons at bay when things got tough, and brought me fully to appreciate – not least by the example of her own work – that historians of real merit are always good *writers*: history, as somebody once said, is a literary art. But history is also a discipline that should take its practitioners away from writing-desk and library from time to time – especially when it comes to a subject like mine here. Martha encouraged me to put this point of view into practice, accompanying me in on-foot explorations of a great many English landscapes over the last few years. Some of these landscapes feature in this book; others do not. But wherever we went – whether down the Thames from Richmond to Wandsworth or along the gritstone crags of Stanage Edge – our walks and talks helped me work out what it was I wanted to say. I can only hope that my efforts to say it do justice to the dedication.