Two Wiltshire Manors and their Markets

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Abstract
The accounts of the Glastonbury Abbey manors of Longbridge Deverill and Monkton Deverill provide unusually detailed information of the places where, and the persons with whom, the manors traded. Most of their grain went to markets within ten miles, though more distant markets were used more in years when grain fetched higher prices. Livestock was purchased at fairs further away than most of the grain markets. The majority of wool buyers came from towns within about twenty miles of the manors. Lengthy journeys were sometimes necessary to fetch items like millstones. Much of the manors' trading was informal, and with their own tenants.

WITHIN what geographical range did medieval English manors buy their necessities and sell their produce? The evidence is fragmentary and often contradictory. Many years ago Norman Gras drew attention to the long-distance grain trade suggested by the carrying-services listed in the surveys of manors belonging to the abbeys of Ramsey and Bury St Edmunds, and Professor Miller's study of the Ely estates revealed an even more comprehensive network of *averagia* and *summagia* linking the bishop's manors to London, to regional centres like Cambridge, Norwich and Bury St Edmunds, and to King's Lynn, the great entrepôt from which grain was shipped to London or to northern ports like Newcastle and Berwick.[1] Gras also noticed in the early bishopric of Winchester pipe rolls the records of the bishop's manors in the Thames valley and the Chilterns sending hundreds of quarters of grain each year to his manor-cum-palace at Southwark, which then sold the bulk of what it had received – presumably to the Londoners across the river.[2] A mid-1250s survey of most of the Winchester manors prescribes the obligations of their customary tenants to carry the lord's corn and malt, or drive his livestock, to a variety of destinations: some tenants had to go only to the four nearest markets, others to any markets within the county, whereas others must go to Winchester itself or to London.[3] The custumals certainly suggest an extensive long-distance trade in grain, not only to London but also to major regional centres. Some elements of this trade were indeed in place before the earliest of the manorial accounts, as the arrangements for provisioning Henry II's Irish campaigns testify; other elements persisted after the last series of manorial accounts fell silent, as the accounts of the Peterborough Abbey officials confirm.[4] Among other commodities, there is ample evidence of a long-distance trade in livestock, to towns such as Gloucester as well as to London, and of heroic journeys to fetch millstones from the ports, and one hardly needs to comment on the travels of English and Welsh wool to the collecting points at Boston, London or Southampton before shipment to Flanders or even the Mediterranean.[5]

Yet the long-distance traffic may have been only a minor aspect of grain marketing, and may not have been the major characteristic of the livestock trade or even of the wool trade. London held under 2

[1] N S B Gras, *The Evolution of the English Corn Market*, Cambridge, Mass., 1926, p 21; E Miller, *The Abbey and Bishopric of Ely*, Cambridge, 1951, p 85. Professor Miller kindly supplied me with additional information.

[2] Gras, *loc cit.*

[3] BL, MS Egerton 2418.

[4] Pipe Roll 17 Henry II, pp 84, 88–9, 113, 131; D L Farmer, 'Some Price Fluctuations in Angevin England', *Econ Hist Rev*, 2nd ser, IX, 1956, pp 34–40; J Greatrex, (ed), *Account Rolls of the Obedientiaries of Peterborough*, Northampton Record Society XXXIII, 1984, pp 165, 179, 193.

[5] H P R Finberg, 'An early reference to the Welsh cattle trade', *Ag Hist Rev* 2, 1954, pp 12–13; Merton College Muniments 4496 (for millstones carted from Southampton to Oxford); R A Donkin, *The Cistercians*, Toronto, 1978, pp 144–54.

per cent of England's population, and there were only a few regional centres which could not be fed from their immediate hinterlands. By 1220 the trade Gras reported had ceased: Southwark – at least according to the surviving Winchester pipe rolls – never again sold off surplus grain despatched by the bishop's manors up the Thames. The city of Winchester itself, according to the evidence presented in its civic court, normally got its corn from less than seven miles away – despite the carrying services available on the bishop's manors all over Hampshire.[6] David Postles has concluded that 'carrying services were essentially local in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries'.[7] Most of the non-resident traders appearing before Exeter's courts lived within five miles of the city; early fourteenth-century Colchester, in a countryside of woodland, marsh and soil fit mainly for rye, obtained its wheat from 'villages up to about eight miles away by road'.[8] As Dr Britnell has demonstrated, the thirteenth century saw a remarkable multiplication of markets in most parts of England.[9] Some of these served as collecting points for supplying cities – as Henley and Marlow did for London, and Sherston and Hawkesbury for Bristol – but most were centres of consumption by the artisans and craftsmen who settled in the new market towns and villages.[10] More markets, surely, shortened the distance produce need travel from manor to customer; on the other hand, the almost-universal adoption of the horse to haul carts brought more distant markets within range.[11] Even within the manorial community there were many who had to buy food, sometimes under the duress of the lord (like the bishop of Winchester's customary tenants on his manors near Taunton), but more often because they held no land, or held too little to support their families. Did the demesnes sell their surpluses to distant markets or to buyers close at hand?

In fact, the manorial accounts, surviving in their thousands and so informative on many aspects of the medieval economy, are usually reticent on what happened to the marketable harvest surpluses. It may even be hard to tell what was marketed and what was not. Accounting practices allowed the reeve or bailiff to claim fair market value for the corn, malt and livestock supplied to the lord's household, and often one cannot be sure which 'sales' were of this fictitious nature. Some accounts describe other transactions as made *in foro* or *in nundinis*, but without naming the market or the fair; others state the place, but do not say whether the deal occurred in the town's market, or at its annual fair, or was entirely private and informal. It is rare, though, for a *compotus* to give any information at all about the purchaser or the destination to which produce was carried or driven. There are a few well-known exceptions: Professor Harvey has shown how the Merton College manor of Cuxham, whose tenants had sworn in 1279 that they were not obliged by manorial custom to carry to any destination except Wallingford, Henley and the neighbouring manor of Ibstone, almost always sent its wheat the nine miles or so over the Chiltern escarpment to Henley, the great inland port where much of London's grain was bulked before shipment down the Thames.[12] In contrast, Merton's manor of

[6] D Keene, *Survey of Medieval Winchester*, Oxford, 1985, p 270.
[7] D Postles, 'Customary carrying services', *Jnl Transport Hist.* 3rd series 5 (No 2), 1984, p 15.
[8] M Kowaleski, 'Local Markets and Merchants in late Fourteenth-Century Exeter', unpublished PhD thesis, Univ of Toronto, 1982, p 329; R H Britnell, *Growth and decline in Colchester, 1300–1525*, Cambridge, 1986, p 44.
[9] R H Britnell, 'The proliferation of markets in England, 1200–1349', *Econ Hist Rev*, 2nd ser, XXXIV, 1981, pp 209–21.
[10] Gras, *op cit*, p 165; A Harding, (ed), *Roll of the Shropshire Eyre of 1256*, Selden Society 96, 1980, pp 161–2; R H Hilton, 'Medieval Market Towns', *PP* 109, 1985, pp 7–11.
[11] J Langdon, *Horses, Oxen and Technological Innovation*, Cambridge, 1986, p 96.
[12] P D A Harvey, (ed), *Manorial Records of Cuxham, Oxfordshire, c.1200–1349*, London, 1976, p 607 and *passim*.

Holywell had an obvious market hard by, among the bakers and brewers of Oxford, and it almost never sent its produce to a more distant market. The reeve of Combe (Hants) in the summer of 1307 made seventeen journeys to the markets of Newbury and Andover (respectively eight and ten miles away) to sell the manor's grain; Kennet (Cambs) in the 1270s sent wheat and large quantities of barley to Bury St Edmunds, ten miles distant.[13] In 1352/3 the bishop of Winchester's Wiltshire manors carted large amounts of wheat to Southampton for sale (at a high price) to the king.[14] But the bailiff of the small Essex manor of Langenhoe sold its surplus almost entirely to the people of Colchester four miles away, and Westminster's manor of Birdbrook, too far away to play any regular part in supplying the abbey's own needs, sold its produce in Richard II's reign to its tenants and villagers and to the people of the hamlets and small towns nearby on the border of Essex and Suffolk.[15]

I

In most cases these glimpses of a variety of marketing patterns span only a few years. The most continuous and comprehensive records of manorial trade may well be those in the *compoti* of Longbridge Deverill and Monkton Deverill ('East Monkton') in south-west Wiltshire. Both manors belonged to Glastonbury abbey, and their revenues were assigned to the abbey chamberlain.[16] They were too far from Glastonbury to be a convenient source of the monks' grain and malt. The chamberlain therefore ran them for the maximum cash income they would yield, and kept them in hand long after Glastonbury and other estates had leased out virtually all their other manors. For some fifty years before the Black Death the manorial accounts frequently state the destinations to which the Deverills sent their grain, and occasionally name the buyers; for a shorter period the *compoti* also name the buyers of wool, and intermittently over a much longer period they record the fairs at which the manors bought and sold livestock and the places where they obtained hay and similar needs.

The manors lie about two miles apart in the upper Wylye valley, which is narrow and steep-sided between the downs at Monkton Deverill but more open at Longbridge Deverill. Direct journeys between the Deverills and any of their markets except Warminster necessitated climbing over the 500-foot contour; journeys over downland to the southern markets were more strenuous than to those in the west. The modern landscape is largely man-made: Longleat Park occupies much of the area between Horningsham, Corsley, Warminster and Longbridge Deverill, while the Stourhead estate lies between Mere and Kilmington. The present roads in many cases do not follow the tracks likely to have been used in the past; consequently, Figure 1 does not attempt to show either, and all distances cited here are 'as the crow flies'. By Longbridge Deverill the River Wylye now flows with width and depth enough to carry the small barges often used for medieval grain cargoes, but the level has been raised artificially, and the manorial accounts contain no sign that the river was ever used for transport. The old forest of Selwood and other woods, which supplied the Deverills with fencing and hurdles, survive only patchily, and the hardwood trees of the past have largely given way to alien conifers, particularly to the north of Penselwood. The Stourhead

[13] M Chibnall, (ed), *Select Documents of the English Lands of the Abbey of Bec*, Camden Society, 3rd ser, LXXIII, 1951, pp 157–8; PRO, SC6/768/5, 6.

[14] Hampshire Record Office, Eccles. 2/159363.

[15] R H Britnell, 'Production for the market on a small fourteenth-century estate', *Econ Hist Rev*, 2nd ser, XIX, 1966, pp 381–3; Westminster Abbey Muniments 25472–25492.

[16] The MSS are the property of the Marquess of Bath at Longleat House, Wilts. I relied exclusively on the admirable microfilms made of them by Cedric Chivers Ltd, of Bath, but used cautiously the dates assigned to the documents in the accompanying Index. In subsequent footnotes the prefix L indicates a Longleat Ms.

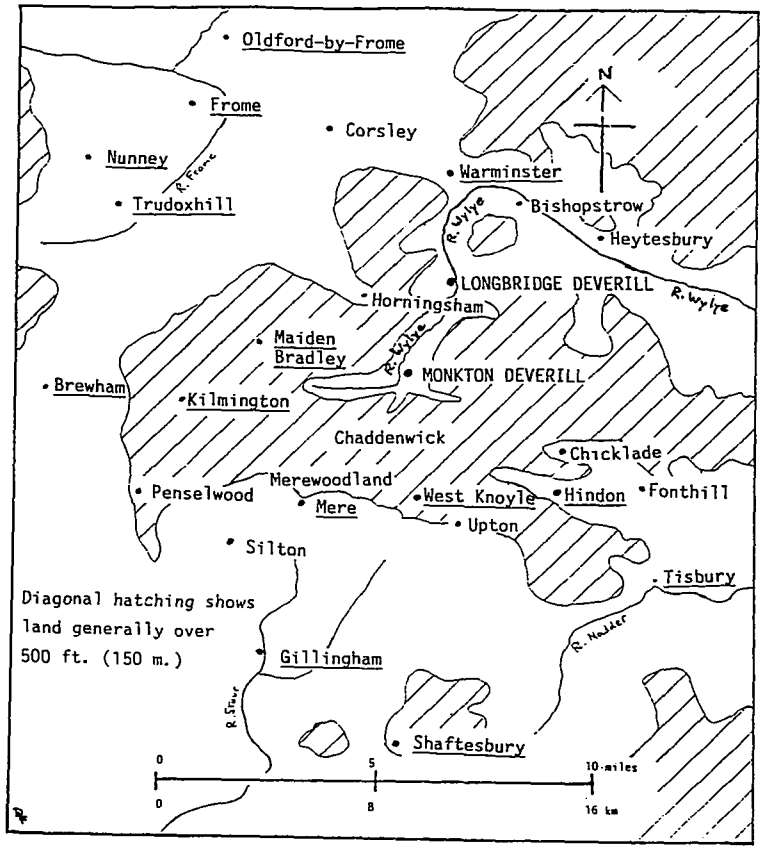

FIGURE 1
The Nearer Markets of Longbridge Deverill and Monkton Deverill (places to which the customary tenants delivered grain are underlined).

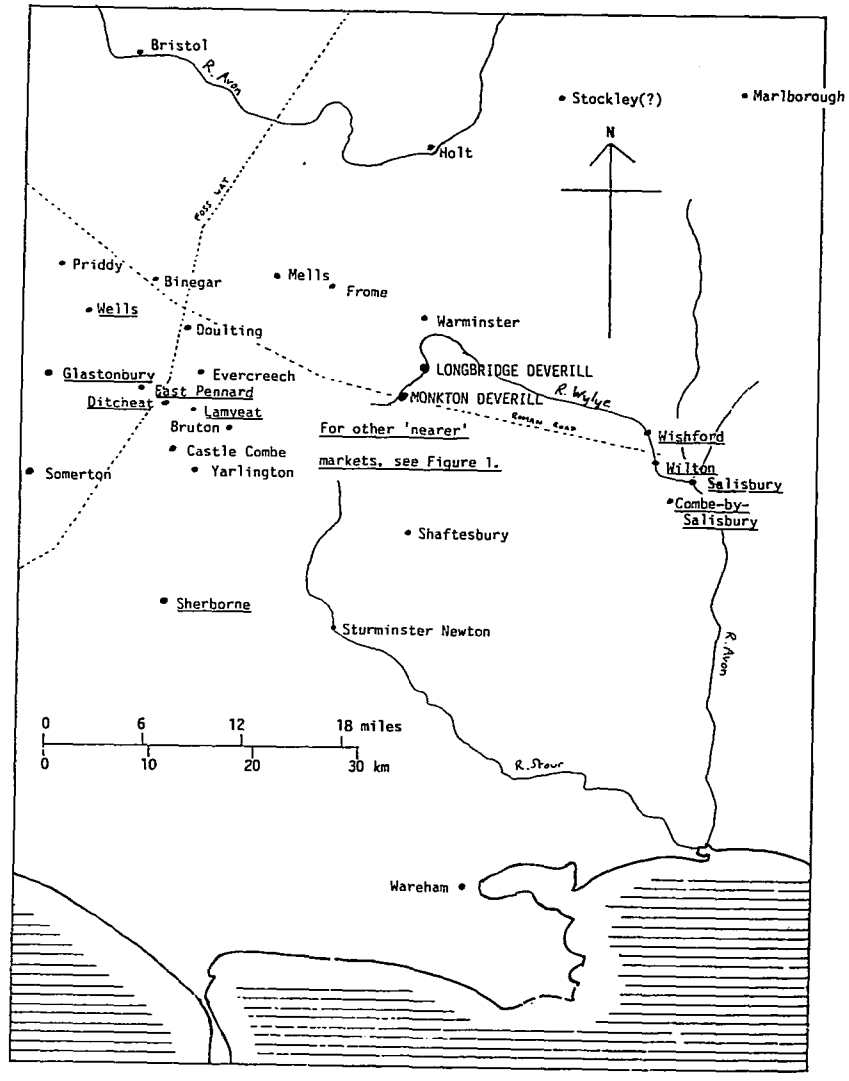

FIGURE 2
Other Places with which Longbridge Deverill and Monkton Deverill traded ('more distant' places to which the customary tenants delivered grain are underlined).

gardens and the Longleat Safari Park now accommodate other imported flora and fauna.

The only surviving custumal for the Deverills dates from the second quarter of the thirteenth century.[17] The typical virgater, Ralph son of Maud, then had to carry on the abbot's command to Ditcheat, Cranmore, Wilton or elsewhere within fifteen leagues; at other times the chamberlain might require him to carry to Glastonbury, but not *de jure*; the chamberlain had to provide what was necessary for him and his horses. The virgater must carry the monks' cloths either from Winchester fair to Longbridge Deverill, or from Longbridge to Glastonbury (again with his expenses *ad custum camerarii*); he could not be obliged to carry the lord's wool or cheese further than fifteen leagues. This distance, nominally 22½ miles, brought Glastonbury, Wells and Salisbury within range. Six other virgaters at Longbridge Deverill held by the same service. They were more fortunate than the virgaters on the nearby manor of Bishopstrow, a property of Lacock abbey; according to the *c.*1260 custumal, these might have to carry to Canford, Southampton or Bristol.[18]

By the end of the thirteenth century, the practice at the Deverills had changed a little. Though the manors' *compoti* lack 'works accounts', they record payments to those who carried or carted the demesne grain for delivery elsewhere. The custom of the manor now prescribed a small payment, scaled according to the distance and the type of grain carried, for the tenants who performed the carrying services. The accounts do not say so, but these payments were probably for expenses, rather than as wages. For many of the years between 1296/7 and 1345/6 the *compoti* record only how much was taken to the distant markets and how much to the nearer ones, without naming them. For some years, one has to deduce from the payments whether the grain was taken *ad fora remota* – at the rate of 1*d* per qr for wheat or barley – or *ad fora propinquiora*, less than seven leagues away, at ½*d* per qr. About half the accounts, however, name some or all of the destinations to which the tenants carried the lord's crop. In sum, the evidence shows how the reeves of Longbridge Deverill and Monkton Deverill used the carrying services to deliver grain to a variety of markets within a radius of some twenty miles – reaching Salisbury in the east and Glastonbury in the west – or, less commonly, to take it to the homes of buyers who had bargained for it privately with the chamberlain or other official.

The markets most commonly served were the near ones, *infra septem leucas*, within about 10½ miles, probably the maximum distance the villager could travel out with his load and return home the same day. In twelve of the years in this period, tenants carried grain to the cloth town of Frome (with markets twice a week), and equally often to the hamlet of Trudoxhill (where there appears to have been no chartered market at all). As Table 2 shows, Shaftesbury, Nunney and Hindon were each named as destinations in ten of the years.[19] Despite a few anomalies – Shaftesbury was a short haul from Monkton Deverill, but a long journey from Longbridge, and the Monkton reeve once

[17] C J Elton, (ed), *Rentalia et Custumaria Michaelis de Ambresbury 1235–1252 et Rogeri de Ford 1252–1261, Abbatum Monasterii Beatae Mariae Glastoniae . . .*, Somerset Record Society V, Taunton 1891, p 136. When preparing his masterly study of the Glastonbury estates, Dr Keil examined only a sample of the Deverill accounts; their number made 'selection imperative' (I J E Keil, 'The Estates of the Abbey of Glastonbury in the Later Middle Ages', unpublished PhD thesis, University of Bristol, 1964, p 12). No extent for either Deverill manor survives in the collection of Glastonbury extents in the British Library (MS Egerton 3321).

[18] W G Clark-Maxwell, 'The Customs of Four Manors of the Abbey of Lacock', *Wilts Arch & Nat Hist Magazine*, XXXII, 1902, p 321.

[19] Shaftesbury is usually cited in the documents by its old form of *Shas'ton* or *Shes'ton*. When I first reported on this material (at the Medieval Workshop at the University of British Columbia in November 1986) I incorrectly took these forms to refer to Sherston, in north Wiltshire.

TABLE 1
Grain carried to Markets from Longbridge Deverill and Monkton Deverill

Account Year[1]	*Wheat price per qr*[2]	*Sources*[3]	*Total Grain sales*	*Carried to nearer markets*[4]	*Carried to more distant markets*[4]
1296/7	4*s* 10*d*	L	105q 7½b	29q	21q
1297/8	5*s* 2*d*	L	59q 7½b		
1298/9	4*s* 7*d*	L	145q 5b	24q	
1299/1300	3*s* 10*d*	L	41q 0½b		
1300/1	6*s*	L	108q	10q	11q
1301/2	4*s* 4*d*	L	114q 5b		
1302/3					
1303/4	2*s* 11*d*	L, M	231q 3½b	48q 7b	12q
1304/5	6*s*	L	95q 5½b	56q 1b	
1305/6	5*s* 3*d*	L, M	261q 4½b	210q	12q
1306/7	4*s* 4*d*	M	91q 5¼b	79q	
1307/8	5*s* 6*d*	L, M	148q 6b	11q 4b	15q
1308/9	7*s* 8*d*	L	140q 2¾b		12q 6b
1309/10	6*s* 8*d*	L, M	225q 0½b	11q	58q 5b
1310/1	7*s* 8*d*	L, M	286q 1¼b	3q 7b	30q
1311/2	4*s* 4*d*	M	60q		34q
1312/3	4*s* 8*d*	L, M	201q 3¼b	18q	24q
1313/4	4*s* 6*d*	M	99q 6½b	28q 5b	
1314/5	5*s* 2*d*	M	84q 6b	59q 6b	
1315/6	9*s*	L, M	137q 0¾b	79q 1b	12q
1316/7	13*s* 4*d*	L, M	143q 6½b	24q	
1317/8	9*s*	L, M	121q 7b	4q	8q
1318/9	3*s* 8*d*	L, M	220q 4b	10q	92q
1319/20	6*s* 8*d*	M	72q 5½b		
1320/1	5*s* 8*d*	M	64q	10q	10q
1321/2	10*s* 2*d*	L, M	165q 7¼b		
1322/3	8*s*	L, M	195q 6b		
1323/4	6*s* 6*d*	L	90q 6b	16q	
1324/5	5*s* 8*d*	M	81q 5¾b		
1325/6	4*s* 8*d*	M	107q 6½b		
1326/7	4*s* 4*d*	M	110q 4½b		
1327/8	6*s*	L	92q 1½b		
1328/9	7*s* 4*d*	L, M	119q 1½b		
1329/30	7*s*	L, M	227q 2¾b		8q 4b
1330/1	9*s*	L, M	242q 3¾b		
1331/2	9*s*	L, M	321q 5¾b	4q	88q
1332/3	7*s* 4*d*	L, M	256q 0½b		137q 7b
1333/4	5*s* 6*d*	L, M	343q 3¾b	191q 6b	45q
1334/5	6*s* 4*d*	M	89q 1¼b		12q
1335/6	5*s* 1*d*	L, M	223q 2¾b	42q	38q
1336/7	5*s* 2*d*	M	172q 7b	14q	32q
1337/8	5*s* 4*d*	L, M	271q 3½b	124q	12q
1338/9	5*s* 4*d*	L, M	389q 0¼b	272q	
1339/40	9*s*	L	132q 3½b	75q	12q
1340/1	5*s* 10*d*	L, M	268q 2½b	131q 6b	4q
1341/2	6*s*	L	145q 1¾b	97q	
1342/3	4*s*	L, M	269q 2¼b	93q	
1343/4	6*s* 8*d*	L, M	226q 1½b	186q 4b	26q
1344/5	4*s* 4*d*	M	97q 4b		
1345/6	4*s* 8*d*	L, M	198q	103q	10q
Totals			8099q0½b	2066q 7b	777q 6b
Percentages:			100	25.5	9.6

Notes
[1] From Michaelmas to Michaelmas.
[2] Mean of selling prices recorded on both manors (if available).
[3] L = Longbridge Deverill; M = Monkton Deverill.
[4] Distances are measured 'as the crow flies' from a point mid-way between Longbridge Deverill and Monkton Deverill; see Figure 1.

TABLE 2

Markets to which the Deverills' customary tenants carried grain

Nearer Markets			*More Distant Markets*		
Destination	*Mean Distance (miles)*	*Number of years when journeys recorded*	*Destination*	*Mean Distance (miles)*	*Number of years when journeys recorded*
Frome	8	12	Oldford-by-Frome	8½	1
Trudoxhill	8	12	Glastonbury‡	19½	9
Hindon	5	10	Salisbury	18½	5
Shaftesbury*	10	10	Wells	20	4
Nunney	9	10	East Pennard‡	17	3
Mere	4	6	Combe-by-Salisbury	17½	3
Maiden Bradley	3½	5	Lamyeat	13	2
Warminster	4	3	Wishford	13½	2
West Knoyle	4	2	Sherborne	20	2
Brewham†	9	1	Ditcheat‡	15	1
Kilmington	6	1	Stockley (?)	18	1
Gillingham†	8½	1	Wilton	15½	1
Tisbury	7½	1			

NOTES

* From Longbridge Deverill, Shaftesbury was reckoned as 'more distant'; most journeys, though, were from Monkton Deverill.

† These journeys, despite the modest distances, were paid for at the higher rate; most of these anomalies are in the Monkton Deverill account for 1343/4 (L10714).

‡ Some of these may have been fictional sales, recording transfers to the abbey or to other Glastonbury manors.

or twice claimed unsuccessfully that journeys from his manor to Frome merited the higher payment – one can reconstruct a fairly accurate picture of the distribution between near and distant markets. The identifiable journeys took 2066qr 7b of grain (or 72 per cent of the total thus transported) to the markets usually regarded as nearer, and 777qr 6b to those held more distant.

Higher prices justified more costly carriage, and a more distant market sometimes promised a better price. In the years when the mean price of wheat sold by those manors was 6*s* or more per qr, the tenants took 42 per cent to the further markets, but only 19 per cent when wheat fetched less than 6*s*. An auditor's note in the margin of the 1315/16 account warned the Longbridge Deverill reeve against carrying grain to various markets unless to get a 'better sale'.[20] The correlation between higher prices and haulage to more distant markets is probably the only one that can be demonstrated confidently. The famine and mortality of the 1310s had no obvious effect, though for a dozen years the quantities sold were less than before or subsequently, and the accounts for this period record carrying services only rarely. From the early 1330s, though, the Deverills sold large amounts of grain in almost every year, and the customary tenants had to transport much more than in recent decades, occasionally over 200qr a year. The evidence is not detailed enough to allow one to examine these temporal changes more fully, or to reveal different policies in the marketing of the cheaper grains (wheat being much the largest component of the trade).

II

Though most of the grain thus carried was taken to markets, the tenants delivered some consignments to buyers who had purchased privately from the chamberlain or his reeve, thus by-passing the formal market: in 1339/40, for example, the men

[20] L10688.

of Longbridge Deverill carried 12qr of wheat to the house of John Hychcok at Wells.[21] Sometimes the cash delivery paragraphs of the *compoti* name other buyers, to whom the tenants did *not* transport their purchases: in 1338/9 Thomas the Baker bought 20qr of wheat (and at the end of the account year still owed £1 of the purchase price of £5); next year, William of Dunkerton bought 24qr of barley and 12qr of oats from Longbridge Deverill, as well as more than 4½ sacks of wool.[22] These may have been 'farm-gate' sales, negotiated directly between the reeve and the buyer; on other occasions, though, letters or warrants from Glastonbury authorized the reeve to hand over grain to someone who had made his bargain with the abbey chamberlain and brought his carts to collect his purchases.

As far as one can tell, the Deverills did not use their demesne carts to deliver corn to markets or to private customers. Probably most – and possibly all – the grain sold, but not carried away by the tenants, was handed over to buyers who themselves fetched it from the granaries. Very occasionally a single buyer is named: in 1327/8 Monkton Deverill sold all its surplus grain *in grosso* to Robert Bronekyng, the manor's own reeve, and obviously an entrepreneur as well.[23] William of Dunkerton was certainly a dealer in grain; perhaps John Hychcok and even William the Baker were as well. No account ever names a fair as the destination of Deverill grain; the tenants' journeys were always to a market or a private customer, or, rarely, to the abbey or another of its manors.

The Deverills also sold grain to their own tenants. Of the 36qr 4½b of wheat sold by Longbridge in 1328/9, 30qr 7b were recorded as *vendebantur villanis domini*. Next year, out of a total income of £31 9*s* 6¼*d* from grain sales, £18 10*s* came specifically from grain sold to the tenantry. In 1331/2 the Longbridge tenants bought at least 20qr of the 62qr 1b of barley the manor sold.[24] Monkton Deverill in 1328/9 sold 28qr of wheat and 5½qr of barley to the lord's villeins, and in 1331/2 received £3 from barley sold to the tenantry.[25] As it is rare for any purchaser to be named, these few specific sales to the villagers may well point to a normal and extensive trade between lord and peasant. If most of the other buyers who fetched grain directly from the manor were also local men, the proportion of the saleable surplus sold to buyers more than seven leagues away may have totalled little more than the 9.6 per cent which Table 1 lists as carried to the distant markets by the tenants. William of Dunkerton, wool merchant as well as corn dealer, may well have served a more distant market, and one cannot exclude the possibility that Robert Bronekyng and even some of the lord's tenants who bought grain would also take it to sell at a remote market; but it seems probable that by far the greater part of the Deverill corn was consumed locally.

Just before the Black Death the accounts suddenly fall silent on grain marketing. The Monkton Deverill *compotus* for 1345/6 listed payments to tenants who carried grain to Shaftesbury, Frome and Trudoxhill, but these entries were then crossed out and nothing like them was ever recorded subsequently.[26] Though demesne cultivation continued and the manors stayed in hand until the late fifteenth century (apart from an interruption at Monkton Deverill from 1428 to 1450), the accounts give no clues to how and where the corn was marketed. So early an end is unfortunate, as it prevents any study of the effects of the Black Death on the Deverills' grain marketing practices.

[21] L9632.
[22] L10594, L9632.
[23] L10616.
[24] L8080, L8081, L8083.
[25] L9728, L0730.
[26] L9734.

III

Prominent earlier, by the fifteenth century sheep farming dominated the Deverill economy. The accounts record where the manors bought and sold some of their livestock. Whereas almost all the surplus stock went to the St Luke's fair at Hindon, the Deverills made their purchases at a wide variety of fairs, as well as in private transactions which by-passed such formal occasions. At least a few of the purchases were from their own tenants or other smallholders nearby, as well as from clergy who had received tithe lambs. The reeve and shepherd normally drove the animals to the fair, perhaps relishing an expenses-paid jaunt, or perhaps because many of the other villagers were at Hindon for their own purposes. In 1324/5, however, Monkton Deverill paid 3*d* to villagers who drove 3 oxen and 34 wethers *ad Nundinas et ad mercatas* for sale.[27]

Before the Black Death, the Deverill accounts mention the purchase of oxen at Shaftesbury in 1310/11, at Binegar and Bruton in 1331/2, and at Frome, Nunney and Bishopstrow in 1332/3; in none of these cases are we told whether it was at a market or at a fair that the transaction took place. But the manors bought 3 horses specifically at Binegar fair in 1340/1, 3 oxen at Priddy fair in 1354/5, and an ox at Hindon fair in 1434/5. Longbridge Deverill sold a palfrey at Salisbury fair in 1361/2. The bailiff and reeve of Monkton Deverill in 1472/3 spent 8*d* fruitlessly trying to sell a horse at Shaftesbury fair, and then spent a further 5*d* in expenses before selling the animal at Warminster fair for 11*s* 8*d*.[28] Longbridge Deverill bought horses at *Charthugh* (probably near Holt) in 1438/9, and both plough-horses and oxen at Glastonbury in 1454/5.

It was to buy sheep and lambs, though, that the manorial officials travelled most widely: to Castle Cary fair in 1418/19, 1424/5 and 1457/8, and in other years to Somerton fair and Binegar fair, and to Evercreech, Sturminster Newton, Shaftesbury, Maiden Bradley, Yarlington and Warminster (some of these last may have been markets rather than fairs). Sheep were both bought and sold at Hindon fair, and in a few years Longbridge Deverill also sold pigs there. There was also some very local trading, with tithe lambs bought, or bought back, from the vicar of Longbridge Deverill parsonage in four years in the 1460s, and from the rector of Corsley in two years in that decade. Other lambs were bought in the hamlet of Horningsham in 1457/8, and from the villager Stephen Botell of Monkton Deverill in 1464/5.

The Deverill reeves and shepherds, despite such local purchases, seem to have bought most of their animals at the well-established country fairs, often in places more distant than the markets to which the tenants carried grain. Even so, of the fairs mentioned above, only Somerton was further away than the 'fifteen leagues' the Glastonbury custumal had envisaged as the limit of carrying services, and then by only a mile or two. The officials of other manors often travelled much further in search of livestock: the bailiff of the Merton College manor of Elham (near the south coast of Kent) sometimes went to the Cotswold fairs at Winchcombe and Chipping Campden to buy horses. The obedientaries of Durham cathedral priory bought stock as far away as Ripon, Penrith, Kendal and Tweedside; those of Peterborough abbey bought 23 oxen at Coventry fair in 1505/6.[29] These country fairs retained their vitality in the south even when the great Winchester fair was little more than a memory. At the beginning of the fourteenth century, Longbridge Deverill had paid the Glastonbury chamberlain's expenses while attending Win-

[27] L9727.
[28] L9803.
[29] C M Fraser, 'The pattern of trade in the north-east of England, 1265–1350', *Northern Hist* IV, 1969, pp 49–50; Greatrex, (ed), *Account Rolls . . . of Peterborough*, p 195.

chester fair with his party – 36*s* 2¾*d* and 3qr 1b of wheat in 1304/5, for example.[30] But from the 1310s he seldom went there, and the tenants obliged to help carry his purchases back from Winchester to Longbridge, or from Longbridge to Glastonbury, thereafter had that duty commuted for cash. The chamberlain still visited Salisbury fair most years in the fourteenth century, and frequently in the fifteenth century as well. As Salisbury had developed as a great centre of the cloth trade, there was no need for the chamberlain to go further.[31]

Marketing the Deverills' wool appears to have been independent of the fairs, at least in the period spanned by the accounts. In some of the early years the fleeces were sent to the chamberlain at Glastonbury, and one cannot tell how he disposed of them. In the first half of the fourteenth century, however, the buyers usually came to Longbridge Deverill to inspect the fleeces from both manors, to strike their bargains and to carry away their purchases. In 1301/2 it was a burgess of Bristol who bought the wool crop; in 1303/4 and 1307/8 it was Robert Cnowel or Knowel of Salisbury (who sold the manor a millstone in 1309/10). In 1310/11 the wool buyer was Stephen Russel of Winchester; in 1320/1 it was a Marlborough man, and in 1322/3 two men from Wells. In 1328/9 and again in 1332/3 the fleeces were bought by Thomas le Lange and John le Whyte, burgesses of Salisbury; in 1330/1 four merchants of Salisbury bought them. In 1340/1 the purchasers were Richard *Le Deyar* of Leigh, and William le Palmer; in 1341/2 John Pew and Richard Weston, both from Frome, bought the Deverill clip. After a long silence the accounts name two more buyers: John Lane of Glastonbury in 1452/3 and John Sheoler of Wells in 1454/5. In other years the purchasers dealt directly with the chamberlain, making their payments to him and merely collecting from Longbridge the wool for which they had contracted. Most of the buyers one can identify came from within the fifteen-league radius.

The purchases of deadstock also help to delineate the Deverills' marketing area. They fetched iron (or possibly horse-shoes) from Salisbury in 1303/4, and from Southampton in 1305/6 and 1306/7. They bought tar (for treating sheep scab) at Salisbury, Hindon and Shaftesbury, and laths at Shaftesbury and Gillingham. Millstones usually came from *La Penne*, and at least once each from Wareham, Fonthill and Salisbury. Hurdles for penning the flocks were fetched from as far as Gillingham, as well as from Chaddenwick, Silton and, most often, *Merewodelond*. Fencing (*claustura*) came most commonly from West Knoyle, occasionally from Chaddenwick, Chicklade and Selwood. The large flocks raised on downland needed more hay than the manors' limited meadows could supply; this was often fetched from as far away as Gillingham. Longbridge Deverill brought 13 cartloads of hay from Glastonbury itself in 1304/5, and Monkton Deverill 7 loads from there in 1352/3. The Deverills also bought it at West Knoyle, Evercreech, Frome and (very frequently) Mere. Straw for the oxen was once bought at Heytesbury. Building stone came from Doulting, Mere, Fonthill and Tisbury, tiles from Frome and Upton, lime from Frome and Mells.

IV

Intermittently covering a couple of centuries, the accounts show the two manors trading actively within a range of about ten miles, going fairly often the twenty miles to Salisbury or Glastonbury, and venturing further afield – for millstones or Spanish iron – only on rare occasions. There is no information on grain marketing after 1345/6, but for other commodities

[30] L9638.
[31] *Victoria County History of Wiltshire*, vol iv, p 124.

the places visited seem much the same in the mid-fifteenth century as before the Black Death.

Dare one assume that the Deverills' pattern of trading was typical? Unfortunately, this would be rash. Longbridge Deverill and Monkton Deverill were more remote than most from their parent monastery, which relied upon nearer manors for most of its supplies.[32] The Deverills could not use the River Wylye to carry produce downstream cheaply to Wilton and Salisbury. They were almost equidistant from several towns of middling size – Frome, Shaftesbury and Gillingham – and equidistant also from what were probably the more substantial markets of Salisbury, Glastonbury and Wells. They therefore lacked a single dominant market or obvious route of trade, such as Holywell and Cuxham had, or even a medley of prospering local centres of consumption like the textile villages around Birdbrook. If, as has been suggested, much of the grain trade around the Deverills was very limited, the corn marketing areas of most manors may have been even more restricted. On the other hand, the Deverill officials did not travel as far as some reeves did to find the livestock they needed.

Yet one may offer a few tentative observations and conclusions. Despite the Deverills' isolation, most of the grain trade was local – possibly some 90 per cent of it was 'within seven leagues'. By the fourteenth century, if not before, fairs were unimportant in marketing grain.[33] While the Deverills bought stock from fairs up to or a little beyond the fifteen-league range, most of what they sold went to the nearby outlet at Hindon. Save for the unnamed 'merchant of Bristol', the wool buyers were 'up country' dealers based in the smaller cities and towns, as likely to supply local weavers as they were to sell to exporting wool merchants. Millstones, building materials and sometimes even hay might require long journeys by the demesne carts. Above all, the *compoti* of Longbridge Deverill and Monkton Deverill testify to the flexibility of medieval marketing arrangements, and to the ingenuity and enterprise of those who bought and sold the produce of the countryside.

[32] See the Table of Sources in I Keil, 'The Granger of Glastonbury Abbey, 1361–62', *Somerset & Dorset Notes & Queries*, XXVIII, 1968, pp 87–8.

[33] While one should not take the international cloth fairs, such as those of St Ives and Winchester, as in any way typical of the country fairs, it is worth noting that Dr Moore cites very few examples of grain dealers or transactions at the fairs she studied (E W Moore, *The Fairs of Medieval England*, Toronto, 1985).