

The Marketing of Corn in the First Half of the Eighteenth Century: North-East Kent¹

By DENNIS BAKER

I

THE home market was at least six times as valuable as the overseas market during the first half of the eighteenth century. The ratio could have been much higher and one contemporary estimate even puts it at 32 to 1. Throughout the early modern period the vast bulk of this traffic concerned agricultural produce, for in 1750 England was still a predominantly agricultural economy.²

Marketing, nevertheless, remains one of the most neglected aspects of agricultural history.³ There is a dearth of suitable source material. We know much about the management of crops and livestock in the field, little about their journey beyond the farm gate. A thorough exploration of the various outlets leading from farm to consumer is a rare venture. More frequently we seek shelter in some terminological cul-de-sac like 'commercialized agriculture' or 'farming for the market'. Admittedly, in some regions the market outlets were few or fraught with hazards; such, for instance, was the difficult position of those who farmed the Midland clays, ill-drained and intractable. But others, more fortunately placed, could choose from a wide range of marketing possibilities; this held true, for example, over much of the eastern and home counties.

The farmers of north-east Kent possessed a number of competitive advantages, but none more valuable than proximity to the markets both local and in London. This fertile belt of Kent stretches from Rainham in the west to the eastern extremities of Thanet, a distance of about 35 miles; it averages 8 miles or more in width. The region incorporates nearly half of the county's coastline.

¹ I wish to express my thanks to Dr Joan Thirsk, Professor G. E. Mingay, and Professor A. H. John, who kindly read an earlier version of this article and made valuable suggestions.

² R. B. Westerfield, *Middlemen in English Business, particularly between 1660 and 1760*, Transactions Connecticut Academy of Arts and Sciences, xix, Connecticut, 1915, p. 123; T. S. Ashton, *An Economic History of England: The 18th Century*, London, 1955, p. 63; Phyllis Deane, *The First Industrial Revolution*, Cambridge, 1965, pp. 13-14.

³ A noteworthy exception is Professor Alan Everitt's pioneering study, 'The Marketing of Agricultural Produce', in Joan Thirsk, ed., *The Agrarian History of England and Wales, 1500-1640*, Cambridge, 1967, iv, pp. 466-592.

Possessed of a rich variety of highly productive cornlands, hop gardens, woodlands, orchards, market gardens, and pastures, the region was the source of an equally rich and varied supply of farm products to the local and metropolitan markets. The sales of wheat, barley—with its derivative malt—hops, and fruit undoubtedly accounted for the largest proportion of the agricultural sector's income, but the markets for vegetables, seeds, flowers, and fruit trees, livestock products, and timber each made some unknown, but in all probability quite substantial, contribution to the wealth of the region. Even oats and hay played a small but essential role in the market economy, at least locally.

Canterbury, Kent's largest town, was the regional 'capital', with a population which grew from 7,000 in 1670 to 9,000 in 1770. Besides the usual trade groups concerned with the provision of food, clothing, and household necessities, its population included foreign textile (silk) weavers, military personnel, clergy, and hop-planters. Among the wealthier citizens were many "gentlemen of fortune" and "genteel families." Prosperity rested primarily on the city's dual role as a centre of conspicuous consumption and the chief commercial and marketing centre for the eastern half of Kent.¹

The Canterbury food market was the most important of a number of local markets in the region: Sittingbourne, Milton, Faversham, Whitstable, Herne, Margate, Ramsgate, and Sandwich put together, consumed perhaps twice as much as Canterbury. Each of these smaller towns competed with each other and with Canterbury for the local farm products. On, or just beyond, the periphery, burgeoning naval stations at Sheerness, Chatham, Dover, and Deal were dependent on the region for at least some of their victuals. But beyond them all and, in a real sense, competing with them all, lay the London food market, so important in the early commercialization of agriculture in north-east Kent.² The population of London had risen from 400,000 in 1650 to 575,000 by the end of the century and to 675,000 in 1750, representing a notable increased demand for foodstuffs. The steady expansion of the metropolitan market "necessarily caused great changes in the methods used on farms over a wider and wider area, in the commercial organization of the food market, and in the transport of food."³

¹ C. W. Chalklin, *Seventeenth Century Kent: A Social and Economic History*, London, 1965, p. 31; E. Hasted, *The History and Topographical Survey of the County of Kent*, 2nd edn, Canterbury, 1798, XI, p. 101.

² See F. J. Fisher, 'The Development of the London Food Market, 1540-1640', *Econ. Hist. Rev.*, v, 1935, p. 56, and Chalklin, *op. cit.*, pp. 2-3 and ch. XI *passim*. For some cautionary words on the dangers of overstating London's role, see A. Everitt, *Agric. Hist. Rev.*, XIV, pt I, 1966, p. 67, and 'The Peers and the Provinces', *Agric. Hist. Rev.*, XVI, pt I, 1968, p. 66.

³ E. A. Wrigley, 'A Simple Model of London's Importance in Changing English Society and Economy, 1650-1750', *Past and Present*, 37, July 1967, pp. 44, 58.

II

The north-east region of Kent, comprising some eighty or ninety parishes, was primarily arable, wheat, beans, and barley being the leading crops.¹ Wheat accounted for two-fifths of the growing crop acreage. The average (median) sown area of wheat per farm was 35 acres. The predominant position of this crop in Kent was established at least as early as the thirteenth century when it was a major crop on most of the Kentish manors of Canterbury Cathedral Priory, an importance which reflected both its commercial value and its adaptability to a variety of soils. Beans occupied one-fifth of the cropped areas, the average sown area being over 20 acres. In the thirteenth century beans were grown in Kent on the heavier soils—the claylands and marshes. But the extensive cultivation of beans as a row crop on the light calcareous soils of Thanet in the early eighteenth century was something new and revolutionary—“a very late and modern improvement.” Peas and beans taken together accounted for over a quarter of the sown acres, several varieties of each crop being cultivated. Marshall, who was unusually critical of some features of Thanet husbandry, believed that “in the management of pulse, as a fallow crop, the Isle of Thanet farmers may claim great merit.” John Banister, the Horton Kirby farmer, was full of praise for the Kentish method of bean cultivation on the rich loams of the Faversham district.²

Barley occupied rather more than one-tenth of the cropped acreage, but this underestimates its local importance, for the bulk of the crop was concentrated in an area east of Canterbury and especially in the Isle of Thanet. The pattern of distribution differed little from that which obtained in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries when “the presence of soils suitable for barley-growing in close proximity to Canterbury was fortunate, since the Priory used large quantities of the grain for brewing and for payment to its servants.” Even today, in contrast to wheat, the growing of barley is very markedly localized on the chalky and sandy loams of east Kent including Thanet. Thanet barley has maintained a high reputation in England.³

Oats were the least important of the cereal crops and were found only on the poor or less tractable soils. On the poorest chalklands the hardy Devonshire Black Oats were commonly sown. In Thanet “Oats is grain of which we have

¹ The following summary of arable production is based on an analysis of probate inventories in the Kent Archives Office (henceforth K.A.O.).

² Ann Smith, ‘Regional Differences in Crop Production in Mediaeval Kent’, *Archaeologia Cantiana*, LXXVIII, 1963, pp. 152–3; A. D. Hall and E. J. Russell, *The Agriculture and Soils of Kent, Surrey, and Sussex*, HMSO, 1911, p. 140; J. Lewis, *The History of the Isle of Tenet*, 2nd edn, Margate, 1736, p. 13; W. Marshall, *Rural Economy of the Southern Counties*, London, 1798, II, p. 37; J. Banister, *A Synopsis of Husbandry*, 1799, pp. 27–8.

³ Ann Smith, *op. cit.*, p. 153; L. D. Stamp, ed., *The Report of the Land Utilization Survey of Britain*, pt 85—Kent, 1943, p. 578; V.C.H. Kent, I, p. 458.

very little, our farmers generally thinking their land too good for them." Tares were "seldom sown on the best land, on account of its running too much to straw." But occasionally tares were sown with oats. Adam Ruck was growing 23 acres of this mixture on his farm at Hartlip in 1749, providing a balanced 'horse-meat' when supplemented with beans.¹

The method of marketing agricultural products, and consequently the organization by which the producer was linked with the consumer, varied according to the product. Perishable goods like milk, eggs, and fresh vegetables were produced in close proximity to the consumers, towns being supplied by the immediate neighbourhood. This direct method of supply involved only a simple organization. Milk, for instance, was rarely transported more than ten miles and the individual producer was normally in direct touch with the individual consumer. There were few opportunities for middlemen.²

In contrast, the methods and organization involved in marketing corn were indirect, complex, and involved a high level of competition and speculation. Corn—a collective term used here in the eighteenth-century sense to include wheat, barley, malt, oats, beans, and peas—can be handled easily in bulk, is durable in storage, and can be graded and standardized. Supply is liable to severe fluctuations while demand tends to be inelastic. These qualities make corn "especially subject to speculation, and occasion a class of specialized, speculative traders in corn." The English corn market was an ideal 'forcing bed' for the growth of the middleman. Wherever market opportunities existed, the farmer—having first reserved sufficient corn for his household's consumption—"turned the surplus into the hands of the middlemen, on its way to consumers who were not producers and who resided principally in the cities and larger towns, or abroad."³

John Boys wrote, in the 1790's, that "the *chief* part of the agricultural commerce of this county is that of exporting corn to the London Markets." [My italics.] This was almost certainly an exaggeration, although the London market was undoubtedly still an important outlet for Kent's produce in the late eighteenth century. It has been estimated that by the end of the seventeenth century the corn trade of London comprised 80 per cent of the total trade of the country. This figure is probably too large, but whatever the *actual* proportion, there seems little doubt that Kent, especially the north-east region, played a prominent part in this activity. From 1 October 1657 to 25 June 1658, London received 786 coastal shipments of corn. Five Kent ports headed the list: Faversham (157), Sandwich (110), Margate (94), Milton (94), and Rochester (58).

¹ John Boys, *A General View of the Agriculture of Kent*, London, 1796, p. 89; Lewis, *op. cit.* p. 15; Boys, *op. cit.*, p. 94; K.A.O., PRC 11/83/63.

² W. Moffit, *England on the Eve of the Industrial Revolution*, London, 1925, pp. 69-70.

³ Westerfield, *op. cit.*, pp. 130-1.

The four leading English ports sending corn coastwise to London lay along the edge of the north-east region of Kent and between them they accounted for 455 shipments or nearly three-fifths of London's coastwise trade in corn. In 1699–1700 Faversham sent 312 shipments (29,714 qrs.), Sandwich 220 shipments (34,184 qrs.), and Milton 115 shipments (10,571 qrs.) of corn to London. However, not all 647 shipments originated in the four places actually stated in the Port Books. The Customs port of Faversham, as defined by an Exchequer Commission of 1676, included a considerable portion of the north-east coast: not only Faversham itself but Whitstable, Herne, and Reculver were included. Of these, Reculver was insignificant. Unfortunately, the Faversham port books rarely distinguish between the trade of these various places. However, despite all the documentary difficulties, "it is at least certain that the port of Faversham, in the technical sense of the word, was by no means identical with the town and harbour of the same name; it included three ports in the topographical sense of the term—Faversham, Whitstable and Herne." The Sandwich port books similarly related not merely to the port of Sandwich but also to Margate, Broadstairs, and Ramsgate, which were not recognized as fully fledged ports by the Customs Commissioners. Milton continued to keep its own set of port books, recording the trade of Conyer, Upchurch, Rainham, and Otterham in addition to its own. Finally, the port books have a serious limitation in the eighteenth century. From 1702, Customs officers were no longer required to record the coastwise trade from north Kent to London, except in coal and wool.¹

Kentish corn bound for the capital, to supply the London food market or the fast-growing export market, was carried up the Thames in the coastal craft of Faversham, Milton, Whitstable, Herne, and the Thanet ports. It was in these estuary ports, particularly at Faversham, that the Kentish hoy was born. Hoys—"among the most interesting of all coastal craft"—had to be "sturdy enough to weather the oft-times foul weathers of Sea-Reach" and "shallow enough to creep up above Queenhithe;" they also had to be "fast enough to make regular passages." The cutter-rigged Faversham hoys were "the race-horses of the port." The slower brigs and other square-riggers operated in the coal trade from Wales and the north and the Baltic timber and iron trades but were unsuitable for the scheduled London runs. In the 1580's Faversham already possessed sixteen hoys, six of which sailed regularly to London with corn. By the early seventeenth century there were eight Faversham corn-hoys, 20 to 30 tons apiece, on the London route. The hoys of the early eighteenth century followed the same cutter-rigged design but were 'decked-in'—an obvious improvement

¹ Boys, *op. cit.*, p. 172; N. S. B. Gras, *The Evolution of the English Corn Market*, Cambridge, Mass., 1926, pp. 74, 106; Chalklin, *op. cit.*, p. 183; D. C. Coleman, *The Economy of Kent under the Later Stuarts*, University of London Ph.D. thesis, 1951, p. 129; J. H. Andrews, 'The Trade of the Port of Faversham, 1650–1750', *Arch. Cant.*, LXIX, 1956, pp. 125–6, and 'The Thanet Seaports, 1650–1750', *Arch. Cant.* LXVI, 1954, p. 37; 1 Anne, c. 26; Andrews, 'Trade of Faversham', *loc. cit.*, p. 126.

on the earlier open hold. They were also larger than their predecessors, reaching 60 tons by the 1720's.¹

Until 1750 London's two great corn marts were Bear Key and Queenhithe. The latter was the chief market for the malt of the upper Thames valley. Bear Key was probably the greatest corn market in Europe, to which "comes all the vast quantity of corn that is brought into the city by sea, from the counties which lie commodious for that carriage." It was sold on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays. By the 1720's the Kentish hoys were sailing to Bear Key according to an advertised schedule, and they frequently carried passengers as well as corn and other freight. In 1726 the *Richard and Elizabeth* sailed from Whitstable every Saturday bound for London and loaded with goods and passengers. Two years later, Henry Hall of Maidstone moved his hoy business to Faversham in order to carry corn, hops, other goods, and passengers to London on alternate Fridays. Hall remained in Faversham for eight years before moving to Crown Key, Sittingbourne, a wharf which, throughout the eighteenth century, was "of great use to this part of the country for the exporting of corn and wood, and re-landing the several commodities from London and elsewhere." Henry's brother George took over the Faversham branch of the family business with "a very good hoy" providing a reliable service "according to the usual prices." In 1728, Mark Pearce moved from Faversham to Herne and carried "Hops, corn, goods and passengers" to London fortnightly. William Turner sailed a hoy from Herne at this time and when he died in 1736, his brother Francis took over "the hoy and business" which included the carriage of corn to London. The Kentish hoy business consisted of a growing number of small family concerns with sons, brothers, and even widows inheriting vessels and "good will." The hoy was usually the family's most valuable possession. When William Phillpot, a Seasalter hoyman, died in 1742, his total personal wealth was stated to be £305 os. 6d. which included £200 for "the Hoyer." Isaac Jones, a prominent Faversham hoyman, "left off his business" before the corn harvest of 1748. He "assigned his business to Henry Southouse," presumably because he had no close relatives or none willing to take over the business. Jones was anxious that his old clients, including "gentlemen, farmers, hop-planters, and shop-keepers," should transfer their custom to his successor.²

The various corn crops provided the hoymen with their chief bulk cargoes which they transported to London throughout the year, according to the state

¹ Richard Hugh-Perks, 'The Hoys and After', *Faversham Magazine*, 1, no. 4, 1968, pp. 9-10; *Kentish Post* (henceforth KP), 17 September 1729; 22 November 1729; 4 August 1731; 3 November 1736.

² D. Defoe, *A Tour Thro' the Whole Island of Great Britain*, 2nd edn, London, 1738, II, p. 174; KP, 3 September 1726; 3 April 1728; Hasted, *History of Kent*, VI, p. 151; KP, 8 May 1736; 21 August 1728; 24 January 1736; K.A.O., PRC 11/82/75; KP, 13 July, 20 July 1748.

of the market. John Hopson's 50-ton Faversham-built vessel, carrying "two suits of sails and in good repair," was aptly described as "A Bear-Key hoy" in 1746. The smallest hoys were around 40 tons unladen, with cargo space for 160 or 180 quarters of corn. Such was the vessel which Robert Downe of Faversham offered for sale in 1732. Typical of the larger coastal hoys was the 60-ton *William and Mary* built at Milton in 1728 with a capacity of "400 quarters of corn under deck." Smaller hoys than these were still to be found in English ports. A 20-ton hoy built in the west of England and launched in 1725 was owned by Joseph Wiles of Faversham in 1733 and was berthed at Swan Key along Faversham creek. Hoys larger than 60 tons were employed as sea-going vessels on the cross-channel routes and to Spain and Portugal and were suitably armed for that purpose. The 65-ton Margate hoy, *Ceres*, described as "a prime sailor," was employed "in the corn trade" in 1748. She carried "four swivel guns and some small arms," no doubt essential equipment to ward off attacks by smugglers and pirates. The previous year a similar vessel "laden with corn" for export had been left unattended at Hythe, whereupon it received the attentions of "persons unknown" who, under cover of darkness, made off with the four swivel guns and forced an entry into the holds and a nearby warehouse.¹

A growing intensive spirit of competition among the various family firms characterized the Kentish hoy business in this period. Some hoymen would offer what purported to be a superior service. Others would devote their energies to the spreading of rumours, aimed at discrediting their competitors. There was keen competition for passengers who, more often than not, "were forced to accommodate themselves wherever they could." The newly built *William and Mary* of Sandwich was quite exceptional. She possessed "a spacious cabin, with a stow, and all conveniences more than are common in such vessels, purely for the accommodation of passengers."² Francis Turner conducted a successful carrying business between Herne and London. It was the normal practice for hoymen to use the local inns as information and collecting centres. The Canterbury inns were in the most favoured position to attract the custom of the neighbourhood, not only to their own victualling business but also to the various trades in which some of their customers engaged.³ In 1738,

¹ *KP*, 4 June 1746; 2 December 1732; 22 November 1729; 2 September 1747; 9 May 1733; 3 December 1748; 14 February 1747.

² Hugh-Perks, *op. cit.*, p. 10; *KP*, 22 November 1729.

³ Some of Canterbury's inns can lay claim to a medieval foundation. Until it was destroyed by German bombs in 1942, The Fountain was reckoned to be the oldest hostelry extant in England. "The inns of England," wrote the Holy Roman Emperor's Ambassador in 1299, "are the best in Europe, those of Canterbury are the best in England, and the Fountain, where I am now lodged as handsomely as I were in the King's Palace, the best in Canterbury." In the eighteenth century The Fountain was described as "one of the most commodious Inns in the City."—D. C. Maynard, *The Old Inns of Kent*, London, 1925, pp. 87–9, and *KP*, 6 February 1760.

each Wednesday, Turner or his agent were at The Rose in St George's Street, ready to meet customers wishing to make arrangements for carriage of goods or passenger bookings. The goods to be carried to London were "taken in" at The Rose and road transport arranged from there to the quayside at Herne. A packet-wagon left the inn on alternate Fridays taking the passengers and less bulky commodities. On the intervening Fridays it made the reverse trip with passengers and goods from London. Turner made special arrangements for farmers who lived at a distance and wished to send corn to the London market. It was only necessary for them to bring their sacks of corn as far as Canterbury. For a small charge Turner did the rest. His wagons carried wheat and beans from the warehouses of Canterbury inns to the quayside at Herne for 12d. per quarter and barley and oats for 9d. This was a valuable, though rather expensive, land-sea service. Not surprisingly, his business prospered and the following year he moved his agency to the larger Bull's Head Inn in Burgate Street where he transacted business personally on alternate Wednesdays and Saturdays. Edward West, the landlord of The Bull's Head, represented Turner's interests at all other times. There is no doubt that Turner was a shrewd and successful businessman who aroused envy among his competitors. Some of the more unscrupulous of these began to spread the story around that he was careless and inefficient and Turner was obliged to insert the following notice in the *Kentish Post* on 15 November 1740: "Whereas false and malicious reports have lately been industriously spread about this place and in the country by persons designing their own interest in the ruin of my credit, and hindring me of my bread, I thought proper to publish this advertisement, declaring to all who will be so kind to employ me, that they may depend on my utmost care and faithful discharge in the trust they repose in Their humble servant, Francis Turner, Hoyman at Hearn."¹

Whitstable, the nearest harbour to Canterbury, was the main outlet for the city's trade with London. Although Whitstable was described in 1673 as "the best port town (next to Faversham) for Canterbury," it was not until the eighteenth century that it became really important and, from Canterbury's point of view, of greater consequence than Faversham.² Goods for London were frequently stored at Canterbury or Whitstable inns before being taken to the hoys at the quayside. The farmers of the district scrutinized the Bear Key prices printed regularly in the *Kentish Post* and, when they judged the time propitious, gave instructions for their corn to be moved from store to hoy without delay.³ At Whitstable, the chief waterside depot for farm crops was the inn

¹ *KP*, 15 February 1738; 31 March 1739; 15 November 1740.

² R. Blome, *Britannia or a Geographical Description of the Kingdoms of England, Scotland, and Ireland*, 1673, p. 131; Andrews, 'Trade of Faversham', *loc. cit.*, p. 130.

³ Every week the *Kentish Post* published an *Extract of a Letter from London* which quoted ruling market prices for a number of agricultural products. For example, the current 'corn' prices in late

known as The Sign of the Ship. Not only was it an "old accustomed alehouse" but also it had ample warehouse facilities—"a good yard and stables" together with "a convenient lodge" for the storage of farm produce bound "for the hoys." The Ship, in 1736, was one of the many licensed houses owned by Nicholas Durant, a Canterbury brewer. By 1785 the inn was in the possession of another Canterbury brewer, John Cantis, who had purchased it for £428 and had changed the name from The Ship to The Bear and Key. No doubt the choice of new inn-sign was related to the commercial activities in London of some of its best customers.¹

John Wells of Whitstable purchased a new hoy in 1746. Named appropriately the *Canterbury*, she was specially designed for the London trade "and nothing of the kind will exceed her, in good accommodations for goods and passengers." Sailings to London were scheduled for every other Saturday "if the weather will permit." Two years later the *Canterbury* was sold to Stephen Mathews who informed likely clients that he would "take particular care of such goods as he shall be favour'd with." Wells offered a further service: he stood prepared "to receive and pay money at London himself." In accepting receipts and making disbursements for others, Mathews was acting as a financial intermediary at a time when banking facilities were inadequate to cope with the growing number of business transactions as markets and middlemen proliferated. In Canterbury Mathews arranged to meet customers at his house in St George's or at the Rose Inn just along the street if they preferred to do business over a pot of the local brew. When in London, Mathews put up at the inn which all the merchant seamen from the estuary ports frequented, The Kentish Hoy which stood in Harp Lane, just off Thames Street and near to Bear Key. Richard Jones, the landlord of The Kentish Hoy during the 1730's, said he relied chiefly on the Kentish trade for business. Not far away were two other inns which catered for coastal traders and travellers, The Old Bear and Key in Thames Street, and The Bear and Wheatsheaf which stood "over against the corn-market" and where "gentlemen and passengers may depend upon the best accommodation for lodging, wine, beer, and other necessaries."²

In the case of one notable firm, banking functions eventually gained the ascendancy over trading activities. The Tappendens of Milton and Sittingbourne possessed a well-established hoy business at Crown Key by 1680, carry-

July and early August 1726 were: Wheat 16s. to 25s. per qr.; Brown Malt 12s. to 21s.; Pale Malt 12s. to 22s.; Barley 9s. to 14s.; Oats 8s. to 11s.; Beans 10s. to 14s.; Peas 16s. to 27s.; Rye 12s. to 15s. Farmers were informed at this time that "some fine Wheat" was selling for "28s. per qr." and "very fine" for as much as 30s., and "Very fine brown Malt 23s., very fine pale 24s."—See KP, 30 July, 3 August 1726. These prices will be discussed more fully in a later article.

¹ KP, 22 May 1736; R. H. Goodsall, *Whitstable, Seasalter and Swalecliffe*, Canterbury, 1938, pp. 115, 119, 120.

² KP, 15 November 1746; 8 October 1748; 12 July 1740; 20 June 1741.

ing bulky goods to other parts of Kent (brushwood, for example, was carried to the Isle of Grain to reinforce the sea-wall), grain and hops to London, and imported commodities such as deals and pantiles from London to Crown Key. But besides transporting goods, the Tappendens were transmitting cash to London for well-to-do clients. In November 1679, for instance, Richard Tappenden paid £100 to Mr Knight of London, on behalf of Lord Teynham. In June 1684, when Lord Teynham was staying in London, his steward at Linsted Lodge entrusted Tappenden with the sum of £141 10s. "to carrie to my Lord in money." When his father died in 1694, John Tappenden assumed responsibility for directing the family business. By 1700, a wider range of goods was being carried in the Tappenden hoys, a credit policy operated, loans-at-interest were made, and the earlier service of transmitting cash in settlement of clients' accounts in London and elsewhere continued. Richard Tappenden was known as a 'mariner' at the time of his death in 1694, and his son John was similarly described on the occasion of his marriage the previous year. Yet within a quarter of a century John Tappenden, man of means, became a 'gentleman'. During the 1720's the Tappendens established themselves as hoymen in Faversham. The attractions of Faversham as a growing commercial port with a flourishing "London trade," together with the fact that John had three sons for whom he wished to make provision, are the likely explanations for the geographical shift. The Crown Key side of the business continued to expand; in 1733 it appears to have been taken over by John Page, a substantial Milton hoyman. However, by this time the family was firmly established in the larger, presumably more profitable, Port of Faversham. James Tappenden, "hoyman of Faversham," supervised the firm during the 1730's and 1740's. The commercial and financial standing of the Tappendens enabled this enterprising family, in 1789, to found the Faversham Bank. However, like many other banks which mushroomed in this period, it failed at the end of the Napoleonic Wars: in 1814 "the Bank of Tappenden and Co., stopped payment to the great loss of many inhabitants and others." Nevertheless, the growth of an eighteenth-century country bank out of a seventeenth-century hoyman's business is not without significance. The Bank of the Black Ox at Llandoverly and the Bank of the Black Sheep at Aberystwyth developed out of the activities of Welsh drovers and the herding of stores from the west country.¹ Tappenden's Faversham Bank was their counterpart in south-east England, growing out of the activities of Kentish hoymen and the carriage of grain and hops to London.

The keen competitive spirit evident in the Kentish hoy business brought benefits to the growers. Farmers found it an easy matter to obtain "good usage"

¹ K.A.O., U498/A2, A3; K.A.O., PRC 17/78; K.A.O., PRC 32/59; K.A.O., U593/A2, A3; K.A.O., PRC 17/94; K.A.O., PRC 32/62; F. F. Giraud and C. E. Donne, *Guide to Faversham*, Faversham, 1876, pp. 40-1; T. S. Ashton, *The Industrial Revolution*, London, 1948, p. 102.

and to be "faithfully served" in the carriage of their corn to London, particularly if they remained aware of the facilities available by reading the advertisements in the *Kentish Post*. An extraordinary degree of common interest and mutual dependence existed among farmers and hoymen as groups in spite of the competition between individual firms. This is clearly illustrated by an episode in 1732. Kentish corn unloaded at Bear Key was purchased by a galaxy of corn dealers, wholesale and retail, as well as millers, mealmen, flourmen, maltsters, brewers, and distillers, many of whom were engaged in "dealings" or speculative activities alongside their basic trades.¹ These various buyers of corn and corn products at Bear Key had long been responsible for the payment of certain market dues. In 1732 the buyers, flouting authority, attempted to shift these charges on to the sellers. The farmers and hoymen of Kent would have none of it and quickly took steps to clarify and strengthen their position. In Thanet, farmers and hoymen held a joint meeting on 9 February, resolving to petition the Lord Mayor and Common Council of the City of London. They subsequently received the firm support of farmers and hoymen in other districts. Faversham's response was particularly prompt and forthright. This is not surprising. Five years earlier—on 21 June 1727—a number of yeomen in the district had founded a Farmers' Club, the first in England. The organization of the Faversham Farmers' Club would have provided a valuable means of coordinating local opinion. The feeling of the Faversham men carried considerable weight, since club members, hoymen as well as farmers, also tended to be closely involved in borough affairs and, at the time of the dispute, John Law, a founder-member, was Mayor of Faversham. A substantial local hoyman, Isaac Jones, was elected to membership of the Farmers' Club in 1729 and the Mayoralty in 1735. In early March, the men of Milton and Sittingbourne joined the furor, expressing their indignation at "a combination enter'd into by the distillers and others [buyers of corn at Bear-Key]," believing it to be "too great a concern to us by reason of its consequences, not to be opposed."²

We hear no more of this "warm dispute" and must assume that the farmers and hoymen presented their petition and won the day. However, the whole affair is one of great significance for three reasons. In the first place, it shows that no matter how keenly or surreptitiously the hoymen competed with each other, when they faced a common threat they combined speedily and effectively for the benefit of the whole group. We see here an early example of a vigorous confrontation of interests between two organized commercial factions.

Secondly, the Kent participants in this affair were able to demonstrate the measure of their unity and determination through the medium of the local

¹ Westerfield, *Middlemen in English Business*, ch. II, *passim*.

² *KP*, 12, 16, 26 February 1732; P. G. Selby, *The Faversham Farmers' Club and its Members*, Faversham, 1927, pp. 1, 14, 26; *KP*, 4 March 1732.

press. To be effective, instant action was essential. The *Kentish Post* provided the necessary publicity for the cause, whereby others, once aware of the crisis, were able to lend support to the initiators in Thanet.

Finally, it is clear that the hoymen as a group were already powerful and influential in Kent and London. This makes sense only if they are seen as something more than employees whose sole business was transportation. Such a view will also enable us to appreciate why farmers and hoymen were meeting on equal terms and why there was such a large measure of affinity and unity of purpose apparent in their speech and actions. The truth is that the hoymen were *factors*. As corn-factors they accepted commissions from farmers to sell at Bear Key where their status was well established before 1730. The local gentry and tenant-farmers were the principals of the hoymen. The factors were employed on the consignment plan, the corn consigned to them being sold at Bear Key for the most favourable price, which in turn depended on the quality of the product and the state of the market. The hoymen-factors of Kent received their consignments at Canterbury or one of the coastal ports, carried the corn to Bear Key, arranged for its unloading on the quayside, and then sold to the highest bidder.

Freight charges, by coastal hoy on the route from north-east Kent to London, were comparatively low. In the case of wheat, freightage and factorage together amounted to only 5 or 6 per cent of the selling price at Bear Key, and in years of high prices were as little as 3 per cent. For oats, these costs represented around 8 per cent (falling at times to 6 per cent), and for beans, a fairly steady 10 per cent of the selling price. The carriage, handling, and selling of his grain crops on this water route, incurred, for the farmer, the low cost of 1½d. per ton-mile. The comparable figure for road (wagon) costs within the region, under favourable operating conditions, was of the order of 7½d. Water transport possessed a cost-advantage over land transport in the ratio of one to five.¹ Average costs of carriage, for the country as a whole, during the first half of the eighteenth century, were probably 2½d. and 1s. per ton-mile, for 'improved' rivers, and roads respectively.² These figures also suggest that the cost of transporting goods by water was a mere fifth of land-carriage costs. The somewhat lower rates per ton-mile in the calculations for Kent, may indicate greater than usual mechanical/operating efficiency.

Wheat was "chiefly sold to the millers, and at times of exportation to shipping factors; the barley to maltsters and distillers; the oats are chiefly sold to what are called jobbers or dealers; to them also is sold a material part of the beans; the tick beans, a material part of them, are sold to the shipping factors for the West India plantations; the white pease are sold for the use of the Navy, and to per-

¹ K.A.O., U593 A2; *KP*, 15 February 1738.

² H. J. Dyos and D. H. Aldcroft, *British Transport*, Leicester, 1969, p. 40.

sons who make a trade of splitting them, and furnish the corn chandlers with them for general consumption."¹

Some factors were known to deal on their own account, as merchants or jobbers, but on the whole they abstained from such dealings since they considered that "the business of a corn factor is perfectly distinct from that of a corn merchant, because a person who receives consignments, and deals at the same time on his own account, may not always be inclined to serve his employers with that impartiality he otherwise would do."² Although the Kentish hoymen were already combining the functions of "ship-master, super cargo, and factor" there is no evidence that they speculated as jobbers in this period. They seemed content to dispose of their consignments at a good price for ready cash and return promptly to their home ports to make settlement with their principals.³ In 1729, Robert Sharewood of Faversham was sailing to London on alternate Fridays. He set sail for home on the following Thursdays and offered immediate settlement with the farmers. He "proposed pay-day on Saturdays or any other day the week ensuing."⁴

Factors and dealers "carried on their business at Bear Quay, exposed to the weather, and other inconveniences" until 1750 when, seeking improved working conditions, they erected the Corn Exchange on a newly acquired site in Mark Lane.⁵ By this time it was established practice to bring only samples to the market instead of whole loads of corn, leaving the actual deliveries to take place at other times by mutual arrangement. This method of selling rationalized carriage arrangements and led to economies of scale. It also effected a change in the appearance of markets, as Defoe observed in 1738: "Instead of the vast number of horses and wagons of corn on market days there were crowds of farmers, with their samples, and buyers such as mealmen, millers, corn-buyers, brewers, etc., thronging the market; and on the days between the markets the farmers carried their corn to the hoys and received their pay."⁶

The sample-selling vogue was almost certainly the reason why the Corn Exchange in Mark Lane could be "erected in a confined space and on a limited scale." This private property was divided into eighty shares which were held by dealers and factors, including Kentish hoymen. The proprietors elected a management committee of three, entrusting to them "the uncontrolled disposal of all the stands on which the samples of corn are exposed to sale, and

¹ *Reports from the Committees of the House of Commons, 1774-1802*, ix, p. 146.

² *Ibid.*, p. 144.

³ One of the advantages enjoyed by Thanet farmers was "the Privilege of sending their Corn by Water to London Market, where they have ready Money for their Commodity."—Lewis, *op. cit.*, p. 24. Mr Charles Pratt, a mealman from Tottenham Mills, stated: "Wheat by the Kentish hoymen, is paid for by us in a week in which it is bought" in contrast to wheat from other areas which "is bought at one month's credit."—*Rep. Com. HC.*, ix, p. 158.

⁴ *KP*, 27 August 1729.

⁵ *Rep. Com. HC.*, ix, p. 144.

⁶ D. Defoe, *Complete English Tradesman*, 4th edn, 1738, II, pp. 265-6.

which are limited to the numbers of 72, 64 of them being leased to factors or dealers, and the remaining eight appropriated to the use of the Kentish hoy-men." The proprietors would allow no more stands to be built. When existing stands became vacant they were relet, although "there is some reason to suspect partiality in the manner of transferring and leasing the stands." Sometimes interlopers tried to transact business, using samples they hawked around in their pockets. Occasionally, more desperate measures were attempted as on the occasion when a stand was brought into the building and then turned out "by force" whereupon the stand "was brought in again and chained to the pillars." This led to "a considerable dispute" and ended with the Committee leasing one of the existing stands to the dissidents. Although the Mark Lane Exchange was nominally 'open' it is all too clear that, in practice, control rested with a small influential group. By the end of the century the London corn trade at Mark Lane was the monopoly of fourteen factors. The day of the 'regulated public Corn Market' had long since passed. The hoymen of Kent, trading principally in the corn of the county's north-east region, played a significant role in this transformation.¹

III

Local dealings in corn had reached sizeable proportions. Although it is impossible to establish exactly the size of this trade, the main lines of activity are clear. Private bargaining between individuals characterized the trade; the 'regulated' or 'open' market was insignificant. Wheat and barley were the chief crops featuring in local transactions. Millers and maltsters were the main industrial buyers and they, in turn, sold their processed products to bakers and brewers. Oats, rye, tares, beans, and peas were relatively unimportant as local 'cash' crops, being used mainly on the farms where they were grown. By the early seventeenth century corn was already one of the principal groups of English farm products being handled in the 'private' sector, the others being sheep and wool. At this time "it was gentlemen, yeomen, brewers, maltsters, millers, and the like" who were engaged in such activity, negotiating and reaching agreement in numerous farmhouses, mills, barns, warehouses, corn-chambers, and inns.² This style of trading was rapidly increasing at this time and it seems certain that the metamorphosis was virtually complete by about 1700.

Marshall said that Kentish wheat which was not sent to the London market was sold to country millers. In normal times a miller would expect to hold a stock of wheat sufficient for eight to ten weeks' grinding. A feature of the Dane John Mill at Canterbury was the large granary adjoining the windmill. The work of a windmiller was very irregular, due to the vagaries of the weather. In

¹ *Rep. Com. HC.*, ix, pp. 144, 145, 154.

² Everitt, 'Marketing of Agricultural Produce', *loc. cit.*, pp. 543, 545, 553, 559.

calm periods lack of wind might hold up grinding for several days. Then the breeze would get up and the miller would set his sails for work for "his whole being is attuned to the breezes, and if the wind shifts when he is sleeping, it wakes him up." If the wind stayed favourable he would work through the night and all the next day to reduce the backlog of customers' work as well as grind some of the wheat from his own stock.¹

In 1695 there were 23 working windmills in Kent and 13 of these were situated in the north-east region. By 1736 the county possessed 51 windmills, 16 of them in the north-east with another dozen or so lying just to the south of the region, on the dip-slope of the Downs. By 1769 the number of windmills in Kent stood at 95.² Most of these early structures were post mills.³ A map dated 1719 was specially designed to show the sites of the 10 post mills standing in the Isle of Thanet at that time. A few years later another map showed 12 such mills spread over the same area.⁴ How much wheat could these mills grind in a given period? This is a difficult question to answer accurately. I have been unable to trace any figures relating to early eighteenth-century post mills. One thing is certain—wide variations in 'throughput' would be experienced from day to day and week to week according to weather conditions. In the late nineteenth century, the owner of a smock mill at Petham, near Canterbury, said he could grind as many as 50 quarters of corn in one night if the wind kept up. Friston Mill at Saxmundham was the largest and most powerful post mill still active in 1949. On 17 October that year the miller, Mr Reynold Wright, ground 80 quarters of grist—about 3½ tons! He had set her in full sail running on into the late evening "just to see what she could do when she was set in a good wind." However impressive, these results must be off-set by the calm, non-productive days in summer. Such 'records' are of limited use for our purpose.⁵ In 1798 the owners of 25 windmills in Buckinghamshire estimated—for 'census' purposes—that they could grind between them an average of 400 quarters of wheat per week. Actual figures for each mill would vary from 2 quarters to 30 quarters according to the time of year.⁶ An average *per capita* throughput of 16 quarters per week is probably not too high for the Thanet mills in the first half of the century, especially when we consider that early eighteenth-century *water-mills* claimed a much higher throughput. In 1733 William Lamper

¹ Marshall, *op. cit.*, I, p. 122; *Rep. Com. HC.*, IX, p. 153; *KP*, 30 August 1729; R. Thurston Hopkins, *Old Watermills and Windmills*, London, 1930, p. 33.

² William Coles Finch, *Watermills and Windmills: A Historical Survey of their Rise, Decline and Fall as Portrayed by those of Kent*, London, 1933, pp. 135-7.

³ "Here the whole upper part of the mill revolves to face the wind on a central post, which rests on, and is braced to, crossed beams of great strength, kept off the ground by low plinths of brick and stone."—Hopkins, *op. cit.*, p. 17.

⁴ J. Harris, *History of Kent*, 1719, map facing p. 313; Lewis, *op. cit.*, map facing p. 2.

⁵ Finch, *op. cit.*, p. 77; Stanley Freese, *Windmills and Millwrighting*, London, 1957, p. 112.

⁶ I owe this reference to the kindness of Dr P. S. Bagwell; Freese, *op. cit.*, pp. 110-11.

claimed that his watermill at Dover "will grind 60 quarters of wheat a week." A mill on the River Len near Maidstone was supposed to have a weekly throughput of 90 quarters of wheat.¹ It seems reasonable to assume that the dozen post mills in Thanet would be able to grind between them half of the estimate for Bucks., viz. 200 quarters per week.

Of course, the windmills in Buckinghamshire at the end of the century may have been larger than the Thanet mills in the first half of the century. But there is no way of being certain about this. On the other hand, there are good reasons for thinking that the Thanet and other coastal windmills in Kent were becoming more efficient during the early part of the century. In the first place, Thanet was "very bleak and open, especially toward the sea-side where there are very few hedges or trees."² It was not uncommon at this time for Kentish windmills to be moved from one part of a village to another or even into an adjoining parish to take fullest advantage of the prevailing sou'westerlies from a more exposed position. A large, new smock mill at Whitstable was offered for sale in 1746 and prospective purchasers were informed that if they "liked the mill and not its situation it shall be removed to any place at a very reasonable charge."³ Secondly, many Kentish windmills were being refitted with high-quality French 'buhr' stones.⁴ A post mill erected at Ringleton in the parish of Woodnesborough in 1735 was "rebuilt with French stones" in 1742. This mill, a particularly fine specimen, possessed "a round house and good conveniences for dressing of flour." In 1818 the mill was moved to a new site, half a mile distant, at Mount Ephraim, where it was still active in the 1930's.⁵

The installation of French millstones together with site adjustments in a situation already generally exposed would have tended to raise the productivity of Thanet windmills before 1750. Also, it seems probable that the maps of this period show only the largest and most important windmills. Possibly, too, there were a few active watermills. Taking all these factors into account, if we say that Thanet millers were processing 200 quarters of wheat into flour each week we are almost certainly underestimating the true milling capacity of the district. Even at this (low) rate of throughput the Thanet mills would have been able to grind, in 18 weeks, a volume of wheat equivalent to the total *annual* exports from Thanet to London.⁶ In other words the wheat which left the Thanet ports for the capital each year would, if marketed locally, have kept the local millers

¹ KP, 10 March 1733; 21 March 1747.

² Lewis, *op. cit.*, p. 11.

³ KP, 6 September 1746.

⁴ The 'buhr', a very hard silicate found in the Seine Valley, produced the finest millstone for grinding wheat.—Hopkins, *op. cit.*, pp. 12, 48.

⁵ KP, 15 January 1743; Finch *op. cit.*, pp. 154, 307.

⁶ In the period for which records survive (1650–1701) the average annual export of wheat from Thanet ports was 3,500 quarters. This volume was probably maintained in the first half of the eighteenth century.—Andrews, 'Thanet Seaports', *loc. cit.*, p. 41.

employed for little more than four months. The value of local markets in relation to the London market was, therefore, in the ratio of 3 to 1, in a district where we might least expect it. If this is a reasonable estimate for the north-east corner of the county, we can be certain that the ratio would have been higher in most of the other regions of Kent.

The chief function of the miller was the processing of corn (mainly wheat) into meal and flour. He was "essentially a manufacturer who served the corn owners by grinding their corn when brought to his mill." However, during the early eighteenth century, millers frequently engaged in the occupations of mealman, flourman, and corn merchant. This may have represented a large-scale revival of old practices which had been successfully prohibited by seventeenth-century governments. By regular purchases of grain from local sources a miller could avoid the worst excesses of underemployment which he would experience if he relied solely on grinding for corn-owners on a commission basis. After grinding, he would seek out the best markets for his meal and flour. The integration of several related activities—corn buying, grinding, dealing in meal and flour wholesale and retail—gave the miller "a much better control of the flour and meal market and consequently of prices."

Millers, said Defoe, "have cut out the mealmen in the country; and whereas they formerly only ground the corn for the mealmen, they now scorn that trade, buy the corn and grind it for themselves; so the baker goes to the miller for his meal, and the miller goes to the market for the corn."¹

William Colley owned at least two mills in 1751, one at Tonge and the other at Herne. The post mill at Herne was situated on Beacon Hill and was described as "a very good windmill" which was "convenient for carriage to London." A mill had stood on this site since the early sixteenth century. By 1750 it was equipped with French stones and horse-driven "flour tackle" and produced high-quality flour "fit for the London trade." William Colley purchased his grain locally from farmers and dealers. Neighbouring yeomen like Mathew Stephens of Chislet, growing 35 acres of wheat in 1753, would welcome the opportunity for a 'farm-gate' sale or at least a deal which involved minimal transport costs. George Schooler who kept The Mermaid in Canterbury was a friend of Colley's. He was in a good position to arrange deals between local growers and the miller at Herne. Trading in corn was an important by-employment of some Canterbury innkeepers, providing for them an additional source of income. Ralph Claringbole who kept The Castle in Butchery Lane during the late 1720's, and Edward Howland who came from Dover to take over The Bull's Head in Burgate Street in 1728, were both active in the corn trade. Claringbole was a local agent for Whitstable hoymen. These two innkeepers probably knew as much about corn-dealing as the drink business. The Castle

¹ Westerfield, *op. cit.*, pp. 167-9; Defoe, *Com. Eng. Tr.*, II, pp. 178-9.

and The Bull's Head both possessed ample facilities for "stowage of corn." Some of this corn was still sold in the 'open' market at the end of Butchery Lane but the greater part was privately dealt in. Inns such as the Mermaid, Castle, and Bull's Head in Canterbury, The Ship at Whitstable, The George at Sittingbourne and The Bear at Faversham became well known locally as 'exchanges' where farmers, millers, and other dealers could meet and transact their business.¹

We cannot possibly say how much meal and flour was being sent to London from Kentish mills. Those mills on coastal sites, such as Herne, were probably heavily involved in this trade. There is some evidence that London middlemen were investing in mill properties in Kent. Mr Thomas Shelmarline, the owner of a Maidstone waterside mill and granary in 1747, was described as a "meal-factor and baker in East Smithfield London." It seems likely that sacks of flour were dispatched from this mill to London regularly through the year. Shelmarline's business activities probably involved, in one way or another, corn-buying, grinding, wholesale and retail dealing in flour and meal, and the baking and retailing to the consumer of the final product. Altogether this would have been a complex and tightly integrated business organization.²

Not all coastal mills marketed their products in London. Local markets might offer comparative cost advantages. The output of the large smock mill at Whitstable was probably sold locally; the windmill was owned by a Canterbury tradesman, John Philpot, who was described as a "mealman and grocer." He would have retailed flour and meal in his grocer's shop in Burgate Street but, in addition, he probably did a wholesale business with local bakers. When he decided to sell the Whitstable mill in 1746 he envisaged that "a miller or a baker" would purchase it. This clearly suggests that local bakers were reaching back along the distribution chain and, like millers and other middlemen, were engaged in the complex business of integrating their enterprises. "It was quite common," says Westerfield, "for bakers in country places to buy corn and have it ground on hire or at mills of their own, thus combining the functions of corn miller, mealman, and baker." Their activities illustrated a feature common to all middlemen in the early eighteenth-century corn business—"to function in several capacities and break down the ordinary demarcations that in public estimation and policy were supposed to put and keep each man in one trade only."³

A London baker who moved to Canterbury, in the winter of 1736, was clearly aiming to break into the local aristocratic market: "Eustace Amos (from Mr. Tomlin's His Majesty's Baker, near St. James, London) gives notice, that he shall open a baker's shop next Friday near the Two Bells in St. George's

¹ KP, 26 January 1751; Finch, *op. cit.*, pp. 221-2; K.A.O., PRC 11/83/142; KP, 26 January 1751; 3 September 1726; 3 April 1738; 11, 15 March 1732.

² KP, 21 March 1747. ³ Westerfield, *op. cit.*, p. 175.

Canterbury, where he will make and sell all sorts of bread, after the London manner, as household bread, second bread, French rolls, halfpenny rolls, and halfpenny loaves, and will bake all necessary things for dinners, as well as all sorts of cakes or pastry." He concludes on a challenging note: "He will also sell the best Hertfordshire white flower from London."

Around Ware was a great milling district in Hertfordshire, which produced very high-quality flour. Much of this was sent by barge to London. Amos, with his metropolitan connections, would not find it difficult to arrange a supply of this white flour to be sent from London to Canterbury, by hoy and road carrier. We know his policy aroused the ire of the old-established Canterbury bakers who had long used the locally milled product. Four of these bakers—John Talphitt, William Reynolds, Valentine Cantis, and Hercules Hills—put out a smart rejoinder in the local paper, announcing that they too would sell "the very best Hertfordshire Whites at 1s. 2d the Gallon or 2d the Pound." We are left to speculate how much alum found its way into their Kentish flour that year!¹

The market for Kentish barley, according to Marshall, lay "chiefly or wholly within the neighbourhood of its growth." The main buyers were local maltsters. During the period for which records of Kent's coastal trade are available, the second half of the seventeenth century, Thanet exported annually to other English ports only 500 quarters of barley compared with 7,000 quarters of malt. This clearly suggests that the bulk of the barley crop was malted locally and not in London. It is impossible to say how much of the total malt product was used by the local brewing industry but in a growing city like Canterbury and in ports such as Faversham, Sandwich, Dover, Deal, and Margate there were expanding local markets for beer as well as opportunities for supplying beer for victualling ships.²

Malt is an intermediate product standing between barley and beer. It also happens that malting was the most profitable use to which barley could be put. It was natural therefore that farmers "encouraged by brewers anxious to maximise the efficiency of their raw materials" should turn their attention to barley's malting qualities. It was just as certain that some barley-growers would become maltsters. Of course many farmers dabbled in domestic brewing and hence malting. A "malt-mill" is commonly found in farmers' inventories alongside brewing utensils. But some farmers went further and not only malted their home-grown barley but also purchased malting barley from neighbouring farmers and marketed the industrial product, locally or in London. Some of

¹ *KP*, 24 January, 28 February 1736; the most conclusive evidence about food adulteration in the mid-eighteenth century is that there was "a widespread and reckless use of alum in flour to make bread white."—D. Davies, *A History of Shopping*, London, 1966, p. 207.

² Marshall, *op. cit.*, I, p. 124; Andrews, 'Thanet Seaports', *loc. cit.*, p. 41; E. Melling, 'Aspects of Agriculture and Industry', *Kentish Sources III*, Maidstone, 1961, p. 120.

these maltster-farmers gave up farming and became pure maltsters, but I believe the evidence points largely to the continuance of the two employments side by side. In any event, malting would not occupy a man fully throughout the year since, for technical reasons, the best season for malting was during the cooler months from October to May. In 1760 Austen Pain of Nonington was described as a 'maltster', but it is clear that he was still engaged in arable farming and pig-keeping. John Collard, a yeoman in the parish of Herne, was working three farms until his death in 1758. In spite of his large-scale and varied farming activities—he was one of the wealthiest farmers in the district—Collard engaged in the malting business. He possessed a "malthouse," the contents of which included two malt-mills, three malt-shovels and a store of malt "dry'd and undry'd" valued at £162 15s. od. He also owned an "oust" and a "grinding house." Ultimately it may have been the milling business which proved the most profitable part of the enterprise for by the early nineteenth century the Collard family were owners of Chislet windmill.¹

Sometimes we find a malting business being undertaken alongside apparently unrelated occupations. Westerfield mentions three maltsters of Thame who were also a bricklayer, a shoemaker, and a butcher respectively. Solomon Ferrier of Strand Street, Sandwich, described himself as a "maltster and draper" in 1741. He advertised the fact that he "buyeth wooll" but perhaps it was too obvious for remark that he also bought barley.²

Sandwich, in close proximity to the Thanet barley grounds, possessed the largest concentration of maltsters in the county. In the sixteenth century most of the malt shipped from Kent to London came from Sandwich and its environs. In the late seventeenth century Baskerville observed that the main industrial activity of the port was "the trade of malting," while Dr Richard Pococke, who visited Sandwich in 1754, believed that the main supports of the town's economy were "an export of malt and an import of wine and other foreign commodities for the use of Canterbury and other neighbouring towns." Vessels from Milford Haven regularly brought "fine Welch coals" to Sandwich for the use of the local maltsters. The collier masters sold their consignments within eight or ten days of berthing.³

In Canterbury and Faversham there appear to have been few 'pure' maltsters. It was the local brewers and hop-planters who bought the local barleys for conversion into malt. It is hardly surprising to find the malting business combined with brewing since this gave the brewer greater control over the supply

¹ P. Mathias, *The Brewing Industry in England, 1700-1830*, Cambridge, 1959, pp. 403, 406; K.A.O., PRC 11/84/91, 11/84/56; Finch, *op. cit.*, p. 187.

² Westerfield, *op. cit.*, p. 172; KP, 1 July 1741.

³ Fisher, 'London Food Market', p. 56; 'Thomas Baskerville's Journeys in England', HMC, XIII, ii, p. 279; J. J. Cartwright, ed., 'The Travels Through England of Dr Richard Pococke', *Camden Soc. Pubs.*, XLIV, 1888-9, p. 89; KP, 26 June, 7 August 1745.

and price of one of his raw materials and is a simple example of integration backwards.¹ In 1733 Samuel Shepherd, a leading Faversham brewer, manufactured "superfine Pale Malt" and "Brown Malt" which he sold wholesale and retail.² Nicholas Durant was one of several Common Brewers in Canterbury in the 1730's. In addition to his Castle Street brewery he owned several oast houses, a malthouse, and a number of public houses in the city of Canterbury and neighbouring towns. Such a business involved an investment of four to five thousand pounds. Rev. Samuel Fremoult of St Mildred's parish possessed oast houses and accepted hops for contract-drying. He was also a brewer and for a while was in partnership with a Mr Hubbard. Messrs Fremoult and Hubbard possessed a brewery, two malthouses, and several public houses including The Mitre in the High Street and The Half Moon in the Butter Market. Rev. Samuel Fremoult appears to have been active in Canterbury as a hop-dryer, maltster, and brewer from the 1730's until 1760. The provision of such bodily comfort might seem an unusual by-employment for one concerned in spiritual welfare!³

Frequently, malting was combined with hop-drying. Sometimes, of course, a brewer would undertake both these activities alongside his main enterprise in order to gain greater control over his raw materials and enjoy the economies of scale. Samuel Fremoult's business was in this category and it was true of other Common Brewers in Canterbury and Faversham. Nevertheless there were hop-growers like Joseph Greenland who were maltsters but not brewers. Greenland described himself as a "maltster and hop-planter." He lived in the Riding-gate suburb of Canterbury during the 1730's. He owned hop-gardens and ten "cockle and charcoal" oast houses. Besides drying his own hops he undertook contract-drying for other growers—a common feature of the industry at this time, at least in Canterbury. Greenland even offered his customers a choice of oast! On the malting side he claimed to manufacture brown and pale malt "in the same manner as at Hertfordshire." He sold the product wholesale and retail along with dried hops. There is no indication that he was growing his own barley. Farmers in the district would find Greenland a good customer for their best malting barley.⁴

Many local inns performed a vital 'exchange' function for buyers and sellers

¹ "Of those who were engaged in private marketing, none held a more powerful position than maltsters and brewers. As manufacturers, they were concerned to obtain regular supplies of grain at fixed and certain prices. . . . As local capitalists, moreover, brewers and maltsters often became the moneylenders of the rural community, and sometimes obtained a powerful hold over feckless tradesmen or husbandmen."—Everitt, 'Marketing of Agricultural Produce', *loc. cit.*, p. 556.

² Samuel Shepherd, of the famous Faversham brewing family, was a member of Faversham Farmers' Club. He was also Mayor of the Borough in 1733, an office which he held again in 1755.—Selby, *Faversham Farmers' Club*, p. 26.

³ KP, 17 January 1733; 23 June 1739; 18 March 1738; 1 August 1744; 30 January, 16 August 1760.

⁴ KP, 4 December 1731; 15 July 1732; 22 June 1736; 28 June 1740. In the first half of the eighteenth century there was a premium on top-grade Hertfordshire barleys and malts. There are good reasons for thinking that charcoal-fired hop oasts in Canterbury could dry malt as successfully as the

of barley and malt as for other farm products. William Friend, a maltster of Deal, had business relationships with innkeepers in five different towns: at The Butcher's Arms in Canterbury, The Saracen's Head in Dover, The Bell in Sandwich, The Rose in Elham, and The King's Arms in Deal. Each of these inns had a local reputation as a mart for corn and corn products.¹

Our knowledge of local trade in beans, peas, oats, rye, and tares is very limited but such evidence as there is seems to indicate that the farmers regarded these crops as mainly 'consumption' crops for their livestock rather than as 'cash' crops to be marketed. Most of the beans grown were 'Common Ticks' and used as fodder for horses and pigs. Various strains of grey peas were used for fattening hogs. Oats were regarded almost exclusively as horse-feed. Tares and rye were fed to work horses as 'soiling' or 'green forage' in the stables during the summer months. This view needs to be qualified slightly for peas and beans grown in the Sittingbourne and Faversham districts, where exports to London were of some significance. In the second half of the seventeenth century average annual exports of corn and corn products from Faversham amounted to 15,000 quarters of which peas and beans accounted for 2,000 quarters. 'Garden beans' were always at a premium in the London market; they were grown on Kent farms.²

John Prall, a yeoman of Murston, was a wealthy arable farmer. In 1748 he was growing 72 acres of wheat and 46 acres of barley as 'cash' crops. His 6 acres of oats were obviously intended as fodder for his twelve horses which also received clover hay and possibly some beans. But since he grew the same acreage of beans as barley (46) he clearly intended to market much of the crop. Prall bred and fattened pigs and possessed two hog pounds. There were, on the farm, three in-pig sows and twenty-seven stores in various stages of growth. His six brine tubs and 64 score pounds of pork valued at £37 indicate clearly the purpose of the pig enterprise. The 'tail' barley and much of the yield of his 17 acres of peas would no doubt go to fatten the stores.³

malt kilns of Hertfordshire. Cf. "The tapering flues of the malt kilns at the end of the maltings gave as characteristic an appearance to the little Hertfordshire malting towns as did the oasts to a Kentish hop-village. Their general similarity reflected a similarity of function."—Mathias, *Brewing Industry*, p. 411. Whether the pale and brown malts of Canterbury were as good as Hertfordshire malts is another matter. It would depend not only on the methods and skill used in drying but also on the malting quality of the barley used. When the best Thanet barleys were malted in Canterbury, there was probably little difference between the Hertfordshire and Kent products.

¹ KP, 19 February 1729; 18 February 1730. Cf. "By James I's reign such inns were acquiring a reputation as marts for particular kinds of product, and were visited year after year by the same clientèle. The George at Milton Regis in Kent was a barley-mart, where merchants, maltmen, and yeomen from Faversham, Ospringe, Margate, Borden, Sittingbourne, and other places sold their goods."—Everitt, 'Marketing of Agricultural Produce', *loc. cit.*, p. 560.

² Boys, *op. cit.*, pp. 85, 90; Marshall, *op. cit.*, I, pp. 126, 138; Andrews, 'Trade of Faversham', *loc. cit.*, p. 128.

³ K.A.O., PRC 27/43/150.

Thomas Bax, a yeoman of Eastchurch on the Isle of Sheppey, grew mainly wheat on his heavy clayland farm. In December 1757, 52 acres had been sown down to winter wheat. That autumn he had sent $12\frac{1}{2}$ quarters of wheat and $7\frac{1}{2}$ quarters of beans to London for which he had received £32 10s. There remained in his barns 80 quarters of wheat and 40 quarters of beans, presumably to be marketed later in the winter or in the opening months of 1758. There is no suggestion that he intended marketing the oats (24 qrs.) or peas (18 qrs.). Since he possessed nine working horses the oats would not leave the farm premises, except in small quantities to local farmer-purchasers. The presence of hog troughs and brine tubs on the farm suggests hand-feeding of pigs for pork production for the household. Since he appeared to grow no barley, this left him with only peas as a suitable concentrate for the pigs.¹

In so far as they entered the markets at all, the buying and selling of these crops were characterized by numerous, local, small-scale transactions. The larger shipments of beans to London were a noticeable exception but these did not affect the whole region. Innkeepers probably handled most of the local trade in peas, beans, and oats. In the first place they would need a regular and adequate supply of hay, oats, and beans for the succession of horses stabled on their premises. This would be particularly true of the larger coaching inns like The Ship at Faversham and The Fountain in Canterbury.

But the smaller inns played their part too. As early as 1686, the inns of Sittingbourne and Milton, astride the Old Dover Road, could accommodate altogether 135 travellers and 200 horses: those of Faversham, some seven miles distant and nine miles from Canterbury, 81 men and 131 horses. In Canterbury itself, as many as 236 guests could be accommodated in the numerous inns, whose stables at the same time, provided shelter, bedding, and fodder for some 467 horses.² Innkeepers were somewhat reluctant to furnish full details of the capacities of their establishments in the inquiries of 1756. Nevertheless, "A List of the *Spare Beds & Stable Room*" [my italics] for the Sittingbourne, Milton, Faversham, and Canterbury areas, returned to the Excise Commissioners by the local Supervisor, shows as many as 810 beds and stabling for 804 horses. In Sandwich and its rural environs, in the same year, 43 inns and alehouses were recorded, in Margate 28, and in Ramsgate 21. The Sandwich inns possessed between them spare accommodation for at least 68 men and stabling for an additional 133 horses, Margate accommodated 65 men and 62 horses, and Ramsgate 34 men and 56 horses.³ Wayfarers boosted the local food markets: their horses, the sales of straw and feed. Through inevitable contacts with local farmers some of the innkeepers would build up

¹ K.A.O., PRC 11/84/71.

² I am indebted to John Chartres of Leeds University for the reference to P.R.O., WO 30/48.

³ P.R.O., WO 30/49.

stocks surplus to their requirements. These surpluses were then offered for sale in small lots, the innkeeper assuming the role of corn chandler. The following advertisement appeared in the *Kentish Post* on 26 November 1729: "This is to give notice to gentlemen and others, that Philip Driver at The Two Bells in St. George's Canterbury, sells, by retail, all sorts of oats, beans, peas, barley, and clover seed, at reasonable rates." This may help to explain an apparent absence of corn chandlers among Canterbury shopkeepers.

William Friend, the Deal maltster, imported "seed" oats, and peas from Wales into Sandwich. In the early spring of 1730 he offered for sale 100 quarters of "Black Oats" and 50 quarters of "Gray Pease." He left "samples of the said corn" with various innkeepers in Sandwich, Elham, Dover, Deal, and Canterbury.

A Dover merchant, who, in the 1730's, imported Spanish and Portuguese wines and "Norwegian goods" and exported corn, also handled imports of "Black Oats," "Small Gray Pease," and "Poor-land Gray Pease" all "for seed."¹

IV

A broad conclusion emerges from this regional marketing survey. In the local markets and in London, strict lines of demarcation in the marketing system were being eroded. The marketing organization grew in complexity with the proliferation of middlemen who were integrating successive (or parallel) manufacturing and distributive processes under one management. Integration was taking place throughout the chain of distribution as forward, backward, and horizontal linkages were fashioned. Mealmen and flourmen reached backwards into processing and became mill owners and millers. Similarly, the millers, no longer content to grind corn for others, also looked backwards; they sought out the wheat farms and bought in their own supplies. In droves brewers moved into the malting business. Farmers with sufficient capital moved forward into commercial milling and malting. Millers, moving in the same direction, entered the meal and flour trades and the baking business. Coastal and inland carriers became merchants and factors. Factors moved across into jobbing and hop-planters into malting. On every side, local and metropolitan commercial permutations were growing. With each move greater control of the product brought lower unit handling costs. This encouraged or forced others to integrate for the first time or more extensively as competition became increasingly severe. In a developing economy, it is not unusual for "the diversification of business activities" to reflect to some extent "the endeavour of the established firms to limit the prospects of new competing firms."² Against

¹ KP, 18 February 1730; 1 May 1736.

² P. T. Bauer and B. S. Yamey, *The Economics of Under-developed Countries*, Cambridge, 1957, pp. 36-7.

a background of generally low prices, middlemen proliferated their activities in an effort to maintain or maximize incomes. These cost-reducing integrations can be seen as the commercial counterpart of farmers' cost-reducing innovations on the light and medium soils. The closer integration of arable and livestock husbandry was matched by the closer integration of processing and marketing functions. Farmers appear as the co-beneficiaries of changes taking place in the distributive sector (via lower marketing costs) in the same way that middlemen were sharing in the profitable changes taking place in the farming sector (via larger outputs handled in the markets). Cost-conscious light-land farmers could not have taken a larger share of the market without a corresponding growth in the efficiency of the marketing sector. This dual-sectoral advance which is apparent in north-east Kent exemplifies the changes taking place in the whole of the light-land, market-oriented sector.¹

'Access to the market' takes on new meaning as we become aware of the wide range of marketing possibilities confronting the farmer. Much more significant than trying to establish the relative importance of the London and local markets is knowledge that they were *both* essential to the prosperity of farming districts lying within the metropolitan market area. Farmers would avail themselves of all the marketing outlets at one time or another, throughout the year. Weather and price situations would be matters for earnest discussion in the local inns; products would be dispatched according to individual and group assessments. Thus, the strong winds which kept the hoys in port would turn the sails of the post mills with a fury. At times when the malthouses of the London brewers overflowed with prime Hertfordshire barley the victualling brewers of Canterbury were secure in the knowledge that the malt from the oasts of local hop-growers was of similar high quality. Wagon loads of Thanet barley would move over the little bridge at Sarre on their way to the buyers in Canterbury, as favourable market news spread from brewery to inns and from innkeepers to farmers. But once the "letter from London" in the *Kentish Post* gave a hint of a shortage of barley in the capital, some of the crop would move coastwards to the waiting hoys and then to Bear Key "if the weather will permit."

¹ For a discussion of the agricultural adjustments, see E. L. Jones, 'Agriculture and Economic Growth in England, 1660-1750: Agricultural Change', *Jnl Econ. Hist.*, xxv, 1965.