

The AGRICULTURAL HISTORY REVIEW



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*

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Work in Progress

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The East Anglian Agrarian Riots of 1822

By PAUL MUSKETT

YEARS like 1816, 1830-32, 1835-36 were exceptional only in the amount of violence that took place. No year in the first half of the nineteenth century was a quiet year in the east. Every year was violent, and the amount of violence that took place was very great indeed.¹ A J Peacock provides a necessary corrective to the sentimental picture of the agricultural labourer stoically enduring his lot until driven to the point of desperate revolt, but in emphasizing the general level of violence there is a danger that the particular features of agrarian riots, as opposed to other forms of rural protest, are obscured. Distinctions have to be made between the various forms of violence and care taken when attempting to correlate them.

Food riots, machine breaking and the protests over tithes, wages and the Poor Laws were all public activities; the participants believed they were acting in a just cause, and sometimes deliberately introduced an element of spectacle. One group of machine breakers in 1822 was accompanied by a small band, and when they found a machine near Attleborough removed it to the town centre before breaking it up. In a later incident a machine was loaded on to its carriage and then dragged triumphantly from Winfarthing to Shelfanger where it was sunk in 14 feet of water.²

Other types of social protest, such as arson, poaching, sheep stealing and cattle maiming, need to be looked at with circumspection. The great outburst of incendiarism

in 1843-45 when 250 fires were reported in Norfolk and Suffolk, had some of the features of a concerted campaign of intimidation, but an examination of those brought before the Suffolk assizes shows that personal revenge, exhibitionism and juvenile vandalism lay behind the fire raising as much as any desire for social justice. It should be noted that culprits in these categories were more likely to be caught, and that the fires provided a pretext for bringing in the village ne'er-do-wells. Convictions were often obtained on circumstantial evidence, and great exertions in extinguishing a blaze was looked on as highly suspicious.³ The upsurge of incendiarism in the years of the major riots cannot be discounted, but the reservations over the motives of the arsonists have to be kept in mind. Poaching also presents problems as 'an index of growing poverty and social tension'.⁴ The Game Laws were resented, and their maintenance by the squires and parsons on the magisterial bench must have furthered a sense of injustice, but the Laws also created the poachers' market, by prohibiting the sale of birds shot with proper authorization. Poaching was not simply a matter of finding meat for the pot, it was a business enterprise carried out by large armed gangs, ready to maim and murder to avoid capture and protect their catches.

There was a correlation between poacher and arsonist in 1843-45, but a connection between open protest and clandestine practices cannot be presumed, except in so far as

¹ A J Peacock, 'Village Radicalism in East Anglia', in J P Dunbabin (ed), *Rural Discontent in Nineteenth Century Britain*, 1975, p 39.

² *Norwich Mercury* (NM), 9 March 1822; *Bury Gazette* (BG), 25 September 1822.

³ D Jones, *Crime, Protest, Community and Police in Nineteenth Century Britain*, 1982, p 46.

⁴ E J Hobsbawm and G Rudé, *Captain Swing*, 1970, pp 359-60.

they are responses to poverty, unemployment and exploitation. The 1822 disturbances differed from those of 1816 and 1830 in being more concentrated geographically, and less diffuse in their objectives.

The 1816 risings had assumed three main forms; traditional food riots at Brandon, Downham Market, Littleport and Ely; machine breaking in Suffolk and Essex; and incendiarism to the south and east of Bury. There were also wages riots at Swaffham Bulbeck and Wattisham, attacks on overseers at Ramsay and Warboys and a number of riotous assemblies in the Norfolk Fens. At Bury the machine breakers' target was a spinning jenny and in Ipswich the trials of rioters were the catalyst for violent protests over the Corn Laws.⁵

II

The Board of Agriculture's report on conditions in 1816 presented a sombre picture of the situation in East Anglia. Tenants were quitting their holdings in the face of high rents, mortgages and loans which could not be met as grain prices dropped.⁶ Diversification and the intensive application of new techniques were eventually to enable producers to take advantage of urban expansion and industrial growth, but in the immediate post-war years only those with adequate capital could afford to take the long-term view. Most farmers thought in terms of rate and tax reductions, a moratorium on rents, increased protection against imports, and cutting of labour costs.

Moves towards retrenchment coincided with the return of men from the war and the rise in the labour force resulting from population increase. Witnesses to the Board drew attention to the plight of the labourers on parish relief and anticipated the troubles, but the actual locations of the riots did not

conform to a pattern of deprivation and seems to have owed more to established precedents. Norwich, Ipswich, Bury and Colchester had a long history of food riots, and close examination of the coincident troubles in the surrounding villages shows that the agricultural labourers were taking independent action.⁷

The most distinctive characteristic of the riots in Suffolk and Essex was the destruction of machinery, and threshing machines were the targets of incendiary attacks at Cockfield and Clare. Threshing machines had been in use since 1786, and as early as 1800 the *Norwich Mercury* was recommending their adoption as a means of preventing waste, reducing labour and checking fraud. Machines did not come into general use in East Anglia until after 1805, when a transportable model, worked by one or two horses, was developed and the smaller farmers could either invest in one or hire it. There were entrepreneurs who leased machines on a fairly large scale, and men who would spend a lifetime's savings on a single machine which they would rely on as a source of income when they were past being able to perform heavier work.⁸

The machines could be operated by women and children, and so saved on wages, but they were first brought into use to compensate for a labour shortage, and the direct financial advantage over hand threshing was slight. A letter to the *Norwich Mercury* questioned the continued use of the machines at a time of high unemployment, and claimed that 'corn may be thrashed as cheap by hand as by machine'. James Buck thought that 'the threshing machine ought not to be found in populous places amidst a numerous poor'.⁹

⁵A J Peacock, *Bread or Blood*, 1965, pp 69-82. *Norfolk Chronicle* (NC), 18, 25 May 1816; NM 20 January, 3 August 1816; *Suffolk Chronicle* (SC), 27 April 1816; NM 4 March 1815. *Suffolk RO* (SRO), HA 247/5/48.

⁶G E Mingay (ed), *The Agricultural State of the Kingdom, 1816*, 1970, pp 190-2, 197, 301, 325.

⁷Outwell, *Cambridge Chronicle* (CC), 31 August 1793; Home Office (HO), 42/35 25 July 1795; Halstead, *Cambridge Intelligencer* (CI), 15 August 1795; Ramsay, HO 42/35 25 July; Wisbech, HO 42/35 3 August; Stowmarket, *Bury Post* (BP), 25 July 1795; Melton, SRO HA 365/2 5 December 1792; Clare, *London Gazette*, 15 November 1800; Great Bardfield, *London Gazette*, 8 July 1800, HO 42/50, Swaffham Bulbeck, HO 42/51 24 September 1800.

⁸NM 18 October 1800; Hobsbawm & Rudé, op cit, pp 359-63; SC 27 April 1816; NM 10 August 1816; NC 20 July 1816.

⁹NM 15 June 1816; *Agricultural State of the Kingdom*, p 193.

Despite the doubts and the riots, machines were kept on, the farmers believing it was essential to put their grain on sale before the markets became satiated.

Small owners and occupiers on the heavy clay loams of the Norfolk-Suffolk border, especially those in the Waveney valley, were under particular pressure. The soil needed deep ploughing and good drainage if it was to produce competitive yields, and this meant capital investment. Landowners and farmers persisted with improvements, but when grain prices fell to their lowest level so far in 1821 even the most optimistic lost heart. Average prices can be misleading, for the price varied markedly according to quality and area. In November 1821 wheat was on sale at Woodbridge, Sudbury and Ipswich at between 51/- and 56/- a quarter, while at Stowmarket it ranged from 30/- to 60/-. These figures are of limited use, since there might well have been no buyers for the poorer quality grains.¹⁰

The labourers derived small benefit from falling grain prices, since whatever form of wage subsidy was adopted the supplement was tied to the price of bread. Scales of relief tended to be revised in accordance with the growing inability or unwillingness of the ratepayer to contribute. J H Rodwell and Robert Harvey, witnesses before the 1821 Select Committee on Agricultural Distress, both owned land on the Norfolk-Suffolk border. According to Harvey 'In four parishes in which I am concerned, take nine out of ten occupiers of land, they have very much reduced their number of labourers'. He preferred taking on extra men to paying higher rates, but he paid them only 1/9d a day, 3d less than the average for 1800-14. The custom of providing beer had been ended 'in conformity with the general practice of the neighbourhood'. Discharged farm workers were 'on the roads or found occasional employment as roundsmen. We have a description that some are dreadfully

distressed, men labouring for ninepence or a shilling a day'. Rodwell spoke of 'a great number of hands, in consequence of the times, thrown out of employment and maintained by the parish at a very small pittance indeed'. There were 480 in the local workhouse: ten years earlier there had been 200.¹¹

III

Overt protests after 1816 were few, but there was a fierce gleaning dispute in 1820 between the poor of Hoxne and Eye hundreds, both areas much involved in the 1822 troubles, and in Loddon there was a riot directed against the overseers and churchwardens. This happened soon after the introduction of new scales of relief for men working on the roads, which gave married men with three children 1/4d a day and single men 10d.¹²

The total crime figures were rising steeply: committals for Suffolk rose by 73.3 per cent in the five years 1815-20, and the increase for Norfolk was 106.5 per cent over the same period. The Norfolk magistrates were considering the organization of 'an establishment that will give vigour and effect to the exertions of the magistrates in preventing robberies, burglaries, larcenies, poaching, and felonies of various description'.¹³ The visiting justices at Wymondham, Swaffham and Aylsham bridewells recommended the early installation of tread-wheels to deter crime. The Swaffham magistrates lamented the delays that had already occurred,

as they are every day more convinced of the evils arising from the want of employment. The prison is no longer a place of terror, and in consequence of it (and owing greatly to this cause as the visitors think,) the number is every year increasing: there are now no fewer than eighty three prisoners, notwithstanding the operation of the last Vagrant Act very few vagrants are among the number.

Prisoners were packed three and four to a cell, and there was no way they could be

¹⁰ BG 14 November, 19 December 1821.

¹¹ *Report of the Select Committee on Agricultural Distress*, 1821, pp 33-42, 82-7.

¹² NM 3 September 1820; NM 3 February 1821; NC 3 March 1821.

¹³ *Report of the Select Committee on Criminal Committals*, 1827, p 62; BG 19 December 1822.

classified according to Home Office recommendations.¹⁴

In February 1822 it was asserted in the Commons that Bury gaol housed 200 prisoners, 'and of these sixty were confined for poaching, and it was a fact that some committed the offence in open day for the purpose of being sent to prison'. John Orridge, the governor, disputed this, but by his own account there were 151 prisoners and 41 convicted under the Game Laws. There were 78 committals for poaching in 1822, and the case would seem to be made for using these offences as a guide to social discontent.¹⁵

A difficulty is that there is no correlation between the villages where poachers were active and the villages involved in the 1822 riots. Costessy had a notorious gang of poachers, housebreakers and poultry thieves, it was within the main Norfolk riot area, but played no part in the troubles.¹⁶ The poachers would naturally be most active on the larger estates where the owners could afford to preserve the woodland and pay the wages of keepers, and much of the land in south-west Norfolk was owned by small farmers. Nevertheless, some poaching incidents suggest a growing sense of bitterness in the countryside. A spring gun was fixed to fire across the drive at Costessy Park, and guns were fired in the vicinity to try and lure the keepers to the spot. At Culford, on the estate of Lord Cornwallis, one keeper was shot and five beaten with flails in an affray with 16 poachers. William Bilson of Great Saxham owed his life to a flash in the pan, and later in the year there were shooting episodes involving poachers at Cavenham and Mildenhall. It may be significant that in February 1823 three men from Kenninghall and three from East Harling, both riotous villages, were responsible for breaking the

arms of two keepers, the jaw of another, and both thighs of a fourth in a fight at Shropham. A month later a servant of Mr Smith of Frenze Hall, Thelverton, was badly beaten by poachers; Frenze lies a mile from Diss. Open protest had failed, and it is possible that poaching was seen as an alternative. Whether rioters were penalized by their employers cannot be known, but two of the Foxhall rioters were later arrested for poultry and pig stealing, and James Gayfor, acquitted of sending a threatening letter, was taken in for possession of stolen pigs.¹⁷

John Orridge attributed the record number of committals for poaching in 1822 to 'the want of employment and the inadequacy of the price of labour'.¹⁸ This verdict was seconded by Joseph Crannis, committed twice to Bury gaol. Left alone in the reception room for half an hour, he had time to draw three pheasants on the wall and to write a poem.

I am a carpenter by trade, I never was incroaching,
I had no work no money, which made me go a poaching.

Three hen pheasants I had got, and homeward I was making,

Two fellows stop'd me in the road, so poor Joe was taken,

Then to the Justice they did bring me, with him I could not prevail,

For my mittimus he did sign, and sent me off to gaol.
The pheasants I should have caught, I have now left for store,

And this summer if they have luck, they'll breed plenty more,

And as soon as ever the next season do come in,
If I am alive and not confined I shall be ready to begin,

And if that I am taken again the money I will pay,
For I shall never stand for money, while pheasants look so gay.¹⁹

Crannis defies categorization as down-trodden labourer, rural criminal or social protester.

¹⁴Norfolk Archives Office (NAO) C 54/3 Quarter Sessions Minute Book, January 1820–December 1823, pp 125–33.

¹⁵BP 27 February 1822; *Select Committee on Criminal Committals*, 1827, p 41.

¹⁶NM 5 January 1822.

¹⁷NC 19 January 1822; NM 2 February 1822; SROI, HA 24/50/19/44 (2).

¹⁸*Select Committee on Criminal Committals*, 1827, p 41.

¹⁹BG 3 April 1822.

IV

The last months of 1821 and the opening of the new year was a period of great hardship for the labourers. The harvest had been interrupted by heavy rains, and had not provided a period of continuous employment for whole families. They relied on this to bring in the income needed for rents, new boots and other clothing, and items such as tea, tobacco, coals, candles and soap. Wheat was spoilt by the wet, but the farmers brought it to market 'regardless of condition'. Threshing machines were blamed for causing a glut, as well as denying work to the labourers. Prospects of alternative employment were curtailed by a prolonged period of rain and gales in November and December, the sodden state of the ground preventing sowing or 'fallowing the land at the proper season'.²⁰

Despite the obvious distress, the high crime rate and the precedents of 1816, there was no anticipation of a second rising. Incendiary fires were reported at Buxhall, Great Finningham, Ipswich and Nettlestead in January, but these were too dispersed to amount to a campaign.²¹

Twenty machines were demolished in Norfolk on 4 and 5 March but the precise location of every incident is not recorded. Those that can be identified were: Wymondham (2) Attleborough (2) Shropham (3 threshers, 1 drill) Snetterton (2) Blo Norton (thresher and drill) New Buckenham, Hapton, Winfarthing and Morley St Botolph. The total of 52 machines broken in Norfolk and Suffolk compares with a total of 30 given for the two counties during the Swing riots (Hobsbawm and Rudé, *Captain Swing*, p 305).

The first machine breaking incidents occurred in Norfolk and Suffolk on 13 and 16 February to the north and Diss and around Eye. At first the labourers were content simply to stop the threshing machines from

TABLE I
Machine Breaking Incidents, 1822

Date	Location
13/14 February	Burston, Gissing, Shimpling (N)
16 February	Eye
18 February	Eye (seed drill), Winfarthing
19 February	Eye. Occold (2), Tivetshall
28 February	Winfarthing, Threshing machine and dressing machine
4/5 March	Winfarthing, Attleborough, Shropham, Snetterton, Old Buckenham, Wymondham, Morley St Botolph, New Buckenham, Hapton, Blo Norton
4 March	Cratfield
5 March	Laxfield (5)
5-15 March	Southolt
21 March	Bungay
3 April	Woodton, Ditchingham, Poringland
14-17 April	Wrentham, Henstead, chaffcutter
1 July	Burgate
5 July	Beddingfield
17 August	Weeley (Essex)
11 September	Foxhall
13 September	Norton
18 September	Attleborough
19 September	Winfarthing
21 December	Mendham

being used, but once it became apparent the farmers were not going to desist voluntarily, the action became more militant. At the second Winfarthing riot the protesters broke through a cordon of constables and farmers, and seizing Richard Dogget's machine.

They proceeded to demolish the obnoxious engine. A desperate attack commenced with bludgeons and all kinds of weapons. One gentleman was felled from his horse, and several more who were well mounted were compelled to retreat in all directions amidst a heavy discharge of stones and other missiles.²²

Magistrates enrolled special constables and enlisted the aid of the local gentry to help bring in suspects. When a body of rioters was brought into Diss there was a major

²⁰ BG 3 October 1821; *Ipswich Journal (IJ)*, 8 December 1821, 15 January 1822; NM 5, 26 January 1822.

²¹ SC 5, 19 January 1822; *IJ* 5 January 1822; NM 5 January 1822.

²² BP 27 February 1822; NM 9 March 1822; BP 13 March 1822.

disturbance in the town itself. Fearing further unrest the justices applied to the Home Office for a directive to be sent to the Secretary at War requiring him to order some regular troops into the area. Thirty men of the 16th Dragoons arrived on 8 March, three days after the worst of the riots.²³

These began on 2 March, and it was reckoned that 20 threshing machines were broken, dismantled, or stopped from operating in Guilt Cross and Diss hundreds.²⁴

The Suffolk and Norfolk yeomanry were called out, and though there had been concern over 'procuring proper persons to act' against the rioters, John Surtees of Banham managed to recruit 250 mounted special constables.²⁵ In Suffolk a second outbreak at Laxfield was rapidly brought under control by 'the firm and conciliatory measures adopted by the inhabitants . . . Several landlords have written to their tenants requesting them to decline the use of threshing machines on their respective lands.'²⁶ A willingness to adopt this stratagem might have terminated the riots throughout the border region, but the authorities were alarmed and tended to think more in terms of repression than concession. Colonel Ray, commander of the Eye yeomanry, described the disturbed area as fast approaching the state of our Irish neighbours, and indeed, if an immediate check is not put to the proceedings of the evil disposed in this district, I fear the contagion will spread and become a most formidable evil. Threatening letters are circulated among us most liberally, and the firebrand, the most formidable of weapons, is the portion of those who persist in the use of threshing machines or anyway are obnoxious to the party.²⁷

By the time Ray reached Diss the area was quieter, but on the afternoon of 5 March 'we were gratified by the arrival of an express

announcing positive information that a mob of 600 strong were at that time on their march to Buckenham Green'. The 600 turned out to be nearer 60, a 'motley crew' who could have been dispersed by a 'sergeant's guard'. Faced with drawn swords and loaded firearms, the rioters tried to escape into the fields, but twenty were arrested and six committed to Norwich Castle.²⁸

When the prisoners came into Norwich a crowd pelted their escort with stones, and were not impressed by the threat of shooting. The Norwich textile workers had reason to sympathize with any protest against mechanization and there were wage riots in the city in the summer. The *Norwich Mercury* dismissed the rioters as 'loose disorderly boys' but the anxiety expressed by Mayor Racham and the other magistrates suggests the situation was more serious.²⁹

A riotous disposition has within a few days manifested itself amongst the peasantry in various towns in Norfolk in this neighbourhood, and still exists in the alleged purpose of destroying threshing machines, and this disposition has produced a feverish temper in the lower classes of the inhabitants of this city.³⁰

There were further riots after the trials when the men convicted of machine breaking were moved off to the bridewells at Swaffham, Wymondham, Walsingham and Aylsham. It had been feared an attempt would be made to rescue the rioters before the trials, and the magistrates formed a special committee for the duration of the emergency. The West Norfolk Militia were mobilized and the Norwich Light Horse Yeomanry stationed in the local barracks.³¹

No rescue bid materialized, and although there were rumours of further gatherings by the labourers it was felt safe to stand down the yeomanry during the second week of March.³² There were numerous incendiary attacks in February and March, and some of

²³ NM 9 March 1822; HO 40/17/133a; HO 40/17/3a; HO 41/6 3, 4, 7 March 1822.

²⁴ NM 9 March 1822; HO 40/17/31 7 March 1822.

²⁵ SRO HA 247/5/85; HO 40/17/3a.

²⁶ SC 16 March 1822.

²⁷ SRO HA 247/5/85.

²⁸ SRO HA 247/5/87; NM 9 March 1822.

²⁹ *Annual Register*, 1822, pp 122-3; *IJ* 9 March 1822; *BP* 13 March 1822.

³⁰ HO 40/17/10.

³¹ *BC* 20 March 1822; HO 41/6 7 March 1822; *NAO C* 54/3 p 136.

³² *IJ* 9 March 1822.

the villages in the main riot areas were affected, including Diss, Attleborough, Botesdale, East Harling and Eye. The main concentration of fires lay to the west of Eye, in villages where there were no reports of machine breaking.³³

The Loddon yeomanry had to be called out on 21 March when parties of labourers assembled at Broome and Ditchingham. A threshing machine was broken in Bungay the same week, but there were no serious outbreaks until 3 April. On that day machines were broken at Ditchingham and Woodton; 20 men were arrested and brought to Bungay, and in anticipation of further disturbances, the magistrates swore in special constables and sent to Norwich for military assistance. These precautions were not totally effective, for the troops were mobbed outside the Three Tuns and the Riot Act had to be read before the crowd would disperse.³⁴

The incidents recorded in the remainder of April seem to have been minor affairs, the work of individuals or small groups. The July cases, however, were full-scale riots; there were no arrests following the outbreak at Burgate, and it needed a full turn out of magistrates, constables and volunteer farmers to check the riot at Bedingfield.³⁵ Sizeable groups were also involved in the September riots. When a posse of dragoons, constables and magistrates went to Winfarthing to arrest the machine breakers, 'a tumultuous mob . . . behaved with brutal violence, and evinced a spirit of daring insubordination'. The Woodbridge yeomanry had to be brought in to deal with the Foxhall rioters, after the constables had been beaten off, and even then the arrests were made in a dawn raid to avoid popular opposition.³⁶ In Loddon hundred, 50 to 60 labourers

visited most of the farms at Norton, Hadiscoe, Aldeby, Thurlton Crofts, Raveningham, Hales Green etc. in Norfolk, for the purpose of ascertaining whether any machines were at work. They however did not offer any violence to the farmers where they called, but contented themselves with impressing all the farming hands as they proceeded on their visits.³⁷

The final episode in the 1822 disturbances was at Mendham on the Waveney, midway between Diss and Bungay. George Rant had his threshing machine 'dismembered' before a posse of peace officers arrived and took 6 supposed ringleaders into custody.³⁸

V

Before the riots the East Anglian press had published letters critical of machinery and had expressed concern for the plight of the agricultural labourers. Once the troubles started the tone of the reports became more hostile. Thrashing machines were 'far from superseding the use of manual labour . . . more instead of fewer hands have been employed where they have been resorted to'. 'Some of the individuals who were apprehended in Norfolk were single men, and constantly earning from 10/- to 12/- a week, wages which at the present moment cannot justify a murmur of complaint.' Machine breaking and arson were 'not unaccompanied by other indications of the most savage ferocity'. Labourers had been stirred up by 'the artful and malignant representatives of political incendiaries'. The *Bury Gazette* quoted with approval an article from the *Sun* suggesting the risings were a conspiracy designed to divert troops from Ireland. All the papers carried the *Norwich Mercury* account of parties of up to 500 labourers marching through the countryside in search of threshing machines and having 'a regular system of organisation between the various villages'.³⁹ Ray mentioned that reports on the size of the mobs were 'much

³³ BG, NM, SC February-April 1822.

³⁴ BG 27 March, 10 April 1822; BP 10, 17 April 1822; NAO C 51/21. For later troubles in the Bungay area, see SRO HA 247/5/91.

³⁵ IJ 14 April 1822; BG 24 April 1822; BP 10, 17 April 1822; SRO HA 24/50/19/44(2); BG 17 July 1822.

³⁶ BG 25 September; IJ 14, 21 September 1822; SRO HA 247/5/101.

³⁷ IJ 21 September 1822.

³⁸ IJ 4 January 1823; SRO HA 24/50/19/44(2).

³⁹ SC 2 March 1822; BG 6 March, 10 April 1822; IJ 9 March 1822; NM 9 March 1822.

exaggerated', and where actual cases were recorded the parties were estimated at between 30 and 60.

The first trials of the rioters were conducted against this background of alarm and indignation. Opening the Norfolk quarter sessions, the chairman reminded the jury of the threat that violent protest posed to agricultural investment, and argued that if machines were harmful to the labourers they must also be harmful to the farmers. 'The wages and comforts of the poor were dependent on a peaceable and sober disposition.'⁴⁰

Thirty-three men were held on charges of rioting and machine breaking, but 6 were sent to the assizes at Thetford: 2 on arson charges, 1 as an evidence against them, and 3 who had been involved in the same machine breaking incident at Winfarthing. Of those tried at the sessions 2 were acquitted, 5 bound over, and the remainder given gaol sentences from 1 week to 1 year, though most of the sentences were for 2, 3 or 6 months. Robert Chatton, identified as the leader of the Shimpling riot, was fined £5, gaoled for a year, and bound over for 2 years on sureties of £200. 'He appeared to be a man who is prosperous in life.' James Sparham, the prosecutor in the Shimpling case, gave the other men good characters, but James Goddard was imprisoned for 12 months for assaulting a magistrate, and James Crick was also awarded 1 year in Norwich Castle. James Caley escaped with a month in Aylsham bridewell: 'He has shown much contrition for his offence and expressed his full contrition of his error by having been employed for the purpose of working a machine since the riot.'⁴¹

Dixon, Ellsey and Coleman, the Winfarthing rioters tried at Thetford, were all given 1 year, and William Baker received 18 months. He had avoided trial for arson by

turning King's evidence, but he was believed to have been the instigator of the Winfarthing troubles.⁴² In his address to the grand jury Baron Richards reminded them of the Pentridge rising, where he had conducted the trial of Jeremy Brandreth. Considering that precedent, the Norfolk rioters were lightly punished, but the two accused of arson were sentenced to death.

Noah Peak and George Fortis had set fire to the property of John Kent, farmer and Poor Law official at Diss. They were both 'principally employed in the roads by the surveyor of Bressingham'. Their motive was that Kent had been 'so hard hearted as to reduce the allowance of the poor'. Peak and Fortis were the only capital convicts at Thetford refused a commutation of sentence.⁴³ Peak was 40, and left a wife and 6 young children. Fortis was 29, married with 4 children. They had both seen military service; Peak with the West Suffolk Militia and the King's Own Regiment of Foot, fighting at the battles of Busaco, Albuero and Waterloo, Fortis with the Royal Staff Corps and also at Waterloo.⁴⁴

There was little consistency in the punishments meted out for machine breaking. Three Laxfield men, initially gaoled for 3 months for malicious trespass, were then brought before Sergeant Firth at Bury assize charged with riotous assembly. John Wink received 2 years, William Riches 18 months and William Forman, 1 year. The heavier sentence for Wink was justified by his being a carpenter, without the same excuse for machine breaking as the farm labourers. The most rigorous sentences imposed by the justices fell on the Woodton and Kirstead rioters. Three men were gaoled for 2 years, 3 for 1 year and the rest for 6 months at Swaffham and Wymondham bridewells. At the summer assizes Cornelius Goose was gaoled for 2 years and James Reeve for 1 year

⁴⁰ NM 9 March 1822.

⁴¹ NAO C 51/21 pp 107-11; NM 9, 16, 23 March 1822. The warrant for Chatton's arrest described him as a labourer: SRO HD 79/AF4/3/1.

⁴² HO 40/17/4; NM 9 March 1822; BP 10 April 1822.

⁴³ NM 6 April 1822.

⁴⁴ NM 20 April 1822.

for having bribed John Rushmer to break the machine at Woodton. Goose was himself a farmer, and Reeve kept the Bird in Hand as Tasburgh; they had approached Rushmer and some others of the rioters when they were working on the road.⁴⁵ Three of those who took part in the September riot at Winfarthing were gaoled for 1 year, 2 for 6 months and 2 for 1 month. By contrast the Foxhall disturbance led to 11 men appearing in court, but only 6 were found guilty and the penalty was a shilling fine and 1 month in gaol.⁴⁶

The Suffolk magistrates were more lenient than their Norfolk counterparts and the justices tended to be less severe than the judges, but an important factor was the precise times at which the different riots took place. If the attacks occurred during a time of general unrest, as in February, March and April 1822, there was a far greater chance of heavier penalties being incurred. The same pattern was apparent in 1815-16. Nine men were given 1 month for breaking 2 threshing machines at Gosbeck in 1815, but once the disturbances became widespread the sentences were increased so that those thought to be the ringleaders were quite likely to be sent away for 18 months or 2 years.⁴⁷

Trials and punishments served 2 purposes, judicial and political, and if a particular offence could be interpreted as part of a wider conspiracy, or as indicative of a spirit of insurrection then examples had to be made. The saddest contrast in 1816 was between the executions at Ely and the Brandon rioters discharged with an admonition at the later Norfolk assizes. There was no great difference in the nature of their offences.⁴⁸

There was no repetition of this in 1822, but the Norwich quarter sessions in January 1831 provided a graphic illustration of the thinking behind the imposition of sentences. One man was transported for 14 years and 7 for 7

years, but otherwise the sentences were mostly between 1 and 9 months. Once the troubles were over the magistrates could return to considering individual cases. In March 1831 John Platten was gaoled for a month for his part in breaking 2 machines, and a month later Robert Randle and John Whittaker were given a fortnight for a similar offence. There is nothing to indicate that he was any less culpable than George Cawson, sent to Australia for 14 years.⁴⁹

In Suffolk there was only the one instance of machine breaking in 1830, but again, one man was transported for 14 years and 7 for 7 years.⁵⁰ The identity of punishment in both counties was unlikely to have been coincidental.

VI

One hundred and twenty-three men appeared before the courts in connection with the agrarian disturbances of 1822. The *Bury Gazette* suggested that 'great spouting radicals' had fomented discontent, but of all those whose occupations were given only 5 were designated as other than labourers; a yeoman, a farmer, an innkeeper, a carpenter and, almost predictably, a shoemaker. The rioters were usually active in their own villages and no evidence was produced of any general conspiracy or 'organized system'. The 1816 and 1830 risings took a variety of forms, but in 1822 the labourers were singleminded in their determination to put a stop to machinery. There was no report of the extortions which were such a feature of earlier riots and only one incident of theft was recorded concurrent with the riots.⁵¹

Very few incendiaries were brought to trial in 1822, but even in the trials that were held the threshing machine question cropped up. At the trials of Charles Stokes and the Jeffries brothers for incendiarism at Eye, a witness claimed that 'William Jeffries

⁴⁵ BG 13 March, 10 April 1822; BP 3, 10 April 1822; NAO C 51/21 pp 117-20; BP 17 April 1822; NM 31 July 1822.

⁴⁶ BG 25 October 1822; NM 26 December 1822.

⁴⁷ NM 8 April 1815, 20 January, 3, 10 August 1816.

⁴⁸ *Bread or Blood*, pp 81-2.

⁴⁹ NC 8, 13 January, 5 March, 5, 9 April 1831.

⁵⁰ John Mead, *Social Protest in Rural Suffolk*, unpubl thesis, Univ Essex, 1978.

⁵¹ BG 13 March 1822.

observed that Mr. Cobbold had got a new threshing machine, and if all would agree like him, it should be broken; also said he should like to have revenge on Mr. Cobbold, and on witness asking him what sort of revenge he should like to have, he answered "set his premises on fire".⁵² Ray believed the users of machinery were the particular targets of fires, but there were other motives. Peak admitted to attempted intimidation of farmers and Poor Law officials; a fire at Thrandeston was thought to be the direct result of the occupier's giving evidence in the Cobbold case, and another farmer suffered a fire while he was away at court giving evidence in an arson case. William Peters was the automatic suspect for a fire at Stonham Aspell because he had been told there would be no more work for him once the threshing was finished. William Aldous was thought to have a grievance against his master, but he seems to have been simple-minded and was convicted on the strength of one of his statements in which he confessed to starting a fire. He was the only Suffolk man accused of arson who was convicted, and the judge refused to support the jury's recommendation for mercy. Aldous was seventeen.⁵³

A spate of fires in the Ipswich area may have been more organized. A broadsheet scattered in the streets called on the people to 'Prepare for the grand mutiny on the Corn Hill. . . and render your assistance round the town to burn the courts, Mr Cobbold's, Mr Edgars, Mr Roe's and Mr Steward's premises down, our party is now five hundred and fifty strong'. Seekamp, the mayor of Ipswich, dismissed the broadsheet as a hoax, but Roe and Cobbold did suffer fires and he had to admit there was a 'spirit of discontent' brought about by 'the almost total want of employment'.⁵⁴

The feelings of the labourers about arson are difficult to determine. If questioned

directly they would express abhorrence, but the lack of prosecutions, and the failure to secure convictions indicates a great unwillingness to assist the authorities in bringing the culprits to justice. On occasions the crowds of onlookers would impede the fire fighters and at Little Thornham the labourers were reported as saying 'They would be glad if half the town or country were burned, as there would be plenty of work'. A meeting at Hoo was supposed to have passed a resolution to the effect that all farmers who persisted in the use of threshing machines should be burnt, along with their property.⁵⁵ The press was careful to mention when villagers helped to deal with fires, almost as if this was something unusual and deserving commendation.

Agrarian incendiarism should not be equated with the more overt forms of protest such as food riots and machine breaking. Spite, revenge and pyromania motivated some of the fires at least; but the correspondence of an increasing number of fires with other signs of discontent cannot be explained by personal malice or mental aberration, and the cases brought before the courts were too few to allow for reasonable generalizations about the incendiaries.

VII

Contemporary commentators noted the specific nature of the riots: threshing machines were 'the only object' and 'the peculiar object of their vengeance'.⁵⁶ This concentration on machinery as the source of provocation diverted attention away from deeper roots of social malaise in the East Anglian countryside. Following the troubles owners and occupiers in Laxfield, Wingfield, Hitcham, Blythburgh, Yoxford, Metfield, and Marlesford agreed to suspend the use of threshing machines for a year.⁵⁷ The virtual absence of machine breaking in Suffolk in 1830 suggests that landlords

⁵² BG 31 July 1822.

⁵³ BG 10 April, 13 November 1822; HO 40/17/114.

⁵⁴ HO 40/17/114; HO 40/17/117; HO 40/17/17a; HO 52/3/42; HO 52/3/77.

⁵⁵ BG 6 March 1822; SC 16 March 1822.

⁵⁶ NM 9 March 1822; HO 40/17/4; SRO HA 247/5/85.

⁵⁷ IJ 14, 21 September 1822; BG 4 September 1822.

continued to discourage their use, but this did not save Suffolk from 'Swing'.

No such self-denying ordinances were reported in Norfolk, and machines were employed in Diss hundred throughout the riots. John Wright, a resident justice in south-west Norfolk, drew the attention of Peel to the fact that 'There is not a single resident gentleman . . . and it is a heavy enclosed country in the hands generally of small proprietors and occupiers, and of course the common people much neglected'.⁵⁸

Thirty-seven villages in the disturbed region of Norfolk had been affected by enclosure since 1800, including Bunwell, the Tivetshalls, Attleborough, Ditchingham, Wymondham, and Diss, but it does not follow that enclosure was a significant issue in the riots. East Anglian agricultural workers did protest against enclosure, but there was only one recorded incident in the area disturbed by machine breaking in 1822.⁵⁹ When enclosure protests were made, they took place in the early stages, when the land was being surveyed, or notices were posted on the church door, not after a lapse of years.

In Suffolk there had been enclosure acts for Rickingham, Walsham-le-Willows, Eye and Stradbroke, all since 1811, but there was again no correlation between enclosure and rioting. Mead found when looking at enclosure awards in Suffolk from 1816 in connection with 'Swing' that, 'no correlation exists between recent enclosure and the incidence of either riots or the complete spectrum of disturbance'.⁶⁰

The absence of major landlords might account for the continued use of threshing machines in Diss and Guilt Cross hundreds, but there is no evidence to support Wright's inference that the presence of the gentry could have stopped the riots from ever occurring. When they had monopolized the

commissions of the peace they made no effort to regulate wages, despite the decline in their real value from 1770 to 1795. It was the gentry who pressed for the establishment of workhouses in Suffolk and Norfolk in the 1760s, advancing as one reason for the new system their being spared association with the lower orders at meetings of the parish vestry.⁶¹

There was no marked distinction between 'closed' and 'open' villages in the distribution of the riots; Ditchingham, Woodton, Kirstead, Bunwell and Wymondham were described as having 'many owners', but Shimpling was controlled by the Duke of Grafton, and the lords of the manor at the Tivetshalls, Winfarthing and Mendham, Bressingham and Shelfanger, were the Earls of Orford and Albemarle and the Duke of Norfolk.⁶²

Arthur Young used the villages of Snetterton, Attleborough and Hingham to provide examples of the inadequate housing provided for farm workers, and the 1821 census supports his choice of south-west Norfolk as the worst part of the county in respect to accommodation. Diss had the worst overcrowding of any hundred in the county, with an average of 1.45 families to every house, as opposed to a county average of 1.22. Over the border, in Hoxne and Hartismere hundreds, the situation was slightly worse; these were the most riot-prone hundreds in Suffolk. Though the population increase in the 'open' villages was significantly higher, as much as 52.9 per cent in ten years at Mendham, they were no more overcrowded than the smaller 'closed' settlements; at Gissing the number of families to a house rose from 1 to 1.64 between 1811 and 1821.⁶³

Promising as the connection seems between overcrowding and an inclination to riot, there are qualifications. Winfarthing, such an active centre, was the least

⁵⁸ HO 40/17/3.

⁵⁹ NM 4 March, 1 April 1822; R Hindry Mason, *History of Norfolk*, 1885, pp 619-21.

⁶⁰ W E Tate, *A Handlist of Suffolk Enclosure Acts and Awards*, 1952, pp 247-63.

⁶¹ Paul Muskett, 'A Picturesque Little Rebellion? The Suffolk Workhouses in 1765', *Bull Soc for Study of Labour History*, 41, p 28.

⁶² *White's Directory of Norfolk*, 1845, pp 414, 700, 720-6, 893.

⁶³ N Riches, *The Agricultural Revolution in Norfolk*, 2nd edn, 1967, pp 143-6; *Census*, 1811, 1821.

overcrowded village in Diss hundred, while Roydon, the worst-off in terms of accommodation, played no part in the disturbances. What can be legitimately argued is that the presence or absence of the gentry made little difference.

Wright also stressed the number of 'inferior meeting houses' in his area, 'the pulpits of which are filled by those illiterate preachers whose doctrines are of the most dangerous tendency, being all predestinarians'.⁶⁴ Methodists and Particular Baptists had made inroads in East Anglia, but there is no evidence to link them to the 1822 protests. Rural anti-clericalism, especially in the light of the tithe riots of 1830, is a more hopeful field of enquiry. Eric Evans calls this period 'the age of the clerical magistrate' and draws attention to the conflict between their magisterial and pastoral roles.

By dispensing such justice as was embodied in the harsh game laws of 1800, 1803 and 1816, the squarsons were cutting themselves off from the interests of the poor, just as their new rectories symbolised the social gulf between them.⁶⁵

Squarsons were certainly active in 1822. Surtees, who had enrolled 250 special constables, was rector of Banham; the 6 magistrates who met at Framlingham to deal with the Laxfield riots were all clergymen; the justice who committed the Wrentham machine breakers was the Reverend Sheriffe. Clergymen were the targets of threatening letters and incendiarism. Betham of Stonham Aspal suffered two fires, William Kirby received a threatening letter and the Reverend Hill had a fire on his property. Given the small number of arson cases brought to trial, clergymen figure very prominently as victims, but in every case they were the owners, not the occupiers, of the property burnt or threatened.⁶⁶ As a

substantial landowning group the clergy were bound to suffer in periods of agrarian unrest, but it was not until 1830 that they can clearly be identified as the object of protest on account of their clerical office.

VIII

Newspaper reports which described the pursuit of rioters in the language of the hunt, and references to the protesting labourers as 'the Enemy' indicate a breakdown of social relationships in the East Anglian countryside, but the same terminology was used during the earlier food riots, and while it is apparent that the social divisions in 1816 and 1822 were wide, comparisons with the outbreaks of 1740, 1765-66 and 1772 do not indicate a significant deterioration.

The difference was that in the later period those in authority were more concerned to explain what was happening, and to try and find some kind of remedy. In the process they exposed the limitations of their imagination. Poverty was recognized as a major contributory factor towards unrest, but it was seen as the inevitable result of the working of economic laws. The failure of magistrates to regulate prices, or to lay down minimum wages, or to ban the more humiliating features of parish relief, were never considered. The fact that some of the rioters were not personally in desperate want was not seen as evidence of a disinterested sense of social justice, but as a manifestation of peculiar wickedness. When it came to providing a solution to the rising crime rate, faith was placed in the efficacy of the tread-wheel, 'the only thing as to the expenditure of the county of which farmers have not complained'.⁶⁷ It is a sad irony that in 1828 a treadmill was set up at Stradbroke for thrashing corn, and the occupiers of land agreed to use this, or hand threshing, so as to keep the labourers in employ.⁶⁸

To explain why some villages rioted while other similar communities in the same

⁶⁴ HO 40/17/31.

⁶⁵ E Evans, 'Some Reasons for the Growth of English Rural Anti-Clericalism, c.1750-c.1850', *Past and Present*, LXVI, 1975, pp 101-3.

⁶⁶ SRO HA 24/50/19/44(2); BG 13 March 1822.

⁶⁷ Select Committee on Criminal Committals, 1827, p 43.

⁶⁸ E Purcehouse, *Waveney Valley Studies*, undated, p 237.

hundred remained quiet, would require access to information on individual characters and the network of social relations within the villages. There were areas which had a riotous tradition, like the Suffolk-Essex border, and around Woodbridge, and it is remarkable how often the same village would be involved in riots at different times. Old Buckenham was the centre for militant protest in 1800, 1822 and 1830, when people from there joined in the riots at Attleburgh. Diss had had bread riots in 1795, but in 1830 while the hundred was very disturbed, the town itself was riot free. Laxfield featured prominently in 1822, and the church bells were rung to celebrate the death of Castle-reagh, yet there is no mention of this 'parish

notorious for political peddling' in previous riots or in 1830, again showing the need for detailed knowledge of particular communities at particular times if a predisposition to riot is to be identified.⁶⁹

Perhaps the summary of the 1822 troubles should be left to Henry Howard, a Mendham labourer, and the only rioter who had his views recorded:

a hardened old fellow, who behaved with great insolence to the magistrate and prosecutor, declaring that he had done nothing but what was proper and justifiable, and that the general sense of the country was in favour of putting a final stop to machinery of every kind.⁷⁰

⁶⁹ BP 21 October 1795, 18 June 1800; BG 11 September 1822; NC 11 December 1830, 8 January 1831.

⁷⁰ *IJ* 4 January 1823.

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Medieval Sheep and Wool Types

By M L RYDER

I

Introduction

IN THE PAPER I wrote twenty years ago on the origins of British breeds of sheep, I attempted to integrate new evidence from archaeology with older documentary evidence.¹ Medieval archaeology was in its infancy, and the bone remains from sheep gave little information. Illustrations in illuminated manuscripts and later paintings gave better evidence than records. But the most striking new and incontrovertible evidence came from within the parchments on which records had been written, viz in the form of remains of wool fibres from the animal whose skin had been used to make the parchment. In the intervening period I have found many more illustrations, but the major advance has been the measurement of the wool in the numerous textile remains from medieval excavations, so that for the first time we know exactly how fine in modern terms wool was in the Middle Ages.

The approach I propose to make in this paper is first to look at modern breeds, and their distribution in the recent past, to see how far their ancestry can be pushed back towards the Middle Ages. Then a brief consideration will be given of the meagre pre-medieval evidence, including the origin of British sheep, and finally the Middle Ages will be covered in greater detail, taking each source of evidence in turn. Although I have used new evidence from wool in textile remains, it has not been possible to relate the findings to medieval cloth descriptions used by economic historians.

It must be stressed at the outset that fleece variations, as with other breed differences, are caused mainly by genetic differences. Since there has been much discussion about the distinction between shortwools and longwools during the Middle Ages one must repeat that they are distinct groups of breeds. This point is emphasized by the fact that each fleece type has a characteristic staple form that arises from the intermingling of varying proportions of different fibre types. Although better nutrition might make a short-woolled fleece grow somewhat longer, it cannot change it into a longwool type.

II

Tracing breeds back to the sixteenth century

Table 1 shows a classification of British breeds based on face colour, the presence or absence of horns, and fleece type. It is a revised version of that given in previous work.² The white-faced, horned, hill group tends to comprise old breeds that are horned in the rams only. The wool is generally coarse but not hairy. The related white-faced short-woolled group has breeds with finer wool than the white-face horn, and those with horns are horned in both sexes. The longwools have a white face and no horns. These were a development of the eighteenth century.

The black-faced, horned group has breeds with longer, hairy fleeces, and horns in both sexes. The black-faced shortwools lack horns, and were mostly developed during the nineteenth century as Down breeds. The figures in this Table indicate the proportion of animals with a certain blood type, and it

¹M L Ryder, 'The History of Sheep Breeds in Britain', *Ag Hist Rev*, 12, 1, 1964, pp 1-12; 12, 2, 1964, pp 65-82.

²Ryder, *op cit*; M L Ryder and S K Stephenson, *Wool Growth*, 1968.

TABLE I
Classification of British Breeds

Wild ancestor	Mouflon*	0.70	short tail
Brown	Soay*	0.96	short tail
Vari-coloured	Orkney†	—	short tail
	Shetland†	0.69	short tail
	St Kilda (Hebridean)	*(4) Black	short tail
	Manx Loghtan	*(4) Brown	short tail
	Jacob	*(4) Piebald	tail not short
<i>White-faced, horned hill</i>			
Herdwick†	0.71		
Cheviot†	0.54	'Green Hill' breeds	
Welsh Mountain†	0.54		
Radnor†	0.47		
<i>Black-faced, horned hill</i>			
		Scottish Blackface*	0.72
		Rough Fell*	0.81
		Swaledale*	0.85
		Dalesbred*	0.63
		Lonk*	0.45
		Derbyshire Gritstone	0.57
<i>White-faced, shortwools</i>			
Kerry Hill	0.42		
Ryeland	0.23		
Whiteface Woodland*	—		
Wiltshire Horn*	0.14		
Dorset Horn*	0.49		
Portland*	—		
Exmoor Horn*	0.65		
Devon Closewool			
<i>Black-faced, shortwools</i>			
		Clun	0.41
		Shropshire	0.25
		Norfolk	1.0
		Suffolk	0.42
		Oxford	0.26
		Southdown	0.44
		Hampshire	0.54
		Dorset Down	0.49
		The Southdown has almost lost its face colour, and like the Ryeland has a woolly face.	
<i>Demi-lustre longwools of medium length</i>			
Romney Marsh	0.53	white-faced polled	
Border Leicester	0.12		
<i>Lustre longwools</i>			
		Teeswater	0.54
		Wensleydale	0.59
		Leicester	0.06
		Lincoln	—
		Cotswold	—
		Dartmoor	0.13
		Devon Longwool	0.13
		South Devon	0.20

heather hills

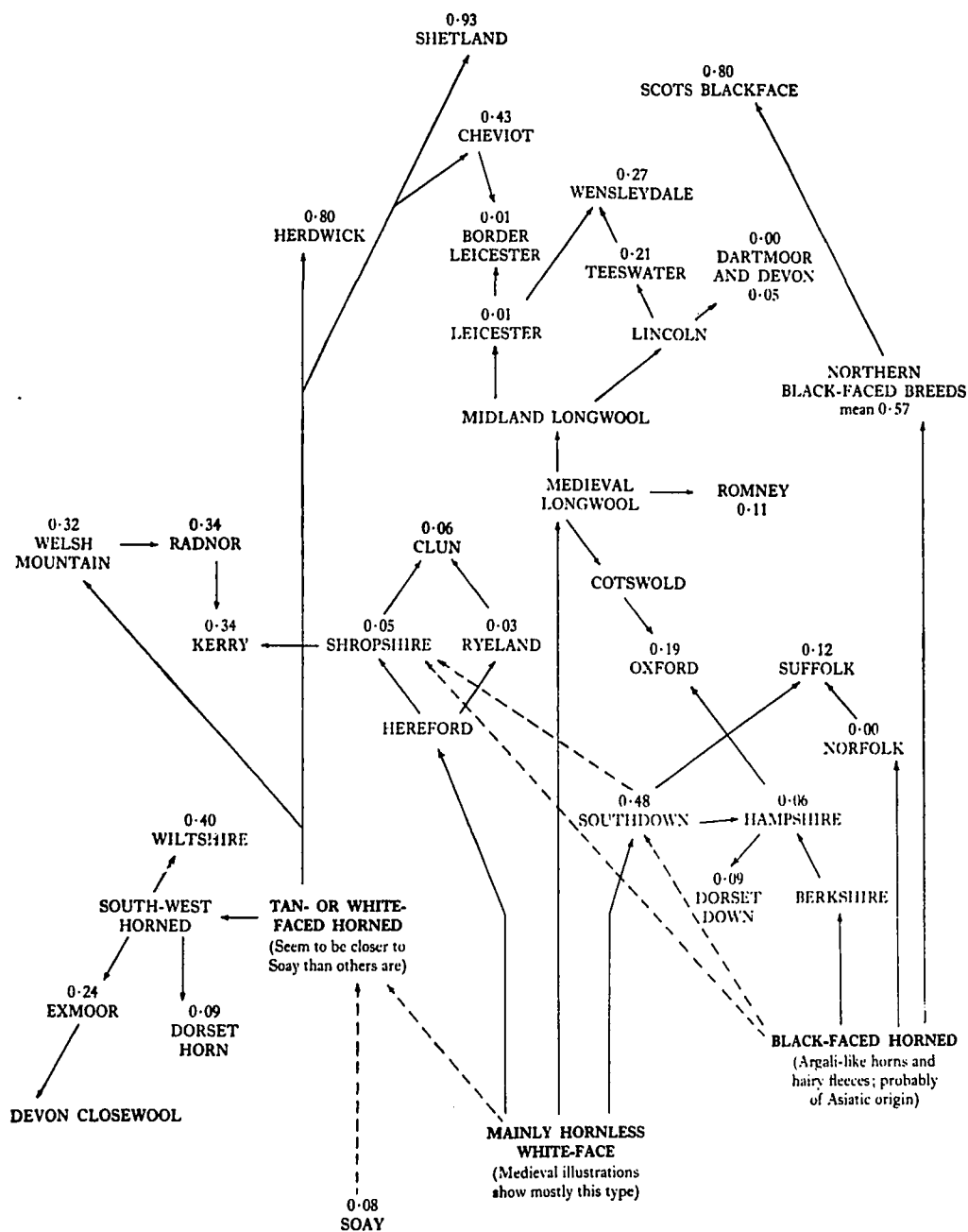
Down breeds

White-faced polled

* both ewes and rams horned † only rams horned (4) = 4 horns

The gene frequencies for high blood potassium shown in this table and those for haemoglobin A¹ shown in Fig 1 provide supporting evidence for the affinities of different breeds. But too much reliance should not be placed on these alone because they are likely to change by selection in different environments. Haemoglobin A gene frequencies are likely to change less, however.

¹ Both from Evans *et al*, *Proc Roy Soc B* 148, 1958, pp 249-62.



The figures indicate gene frequencies of haemoglobin A.

FIGURE I
Probable lines of evolution of British breeds of sheep
(from Ryder, 1964¹)

can be seen that breeds found to be similar on other grounds tend to have similar blood type figures.

Fig 1, also from my 1964 article, shows some of the relationships and lines of evolution of British breeds. The recent stages are based on breed records of the last 200 years, and so are more reliable than the earlier stages for which records do not exist. The lines do not necessarily imply direct links. Three main types of sheep or possible waves of introduction, can be discerned: First, the short-tailed prehistoric type that survives as the small brown Soay, and the vari-coloured Orkney and Shetland; secondly, there is the white-faced polled type, and thirdly, the black-faced horned. The source and evolution of these types will be discussed in greater detail later.

It is possible to plot on a map the distribution of the main types of sheep at the end of the eighteenth century when accurate breed descriptions first begin to appear. (See Fig 2 from my 1964 article which owes much to the summaries of Trow-Smith, to which are added the descriptions of sheep in each county given by such authors as Youatt).³

The white-faced horned type was concentrated in Scotland and western parts of Britain; this type may have been influenced most by the first sheep to arrive in Britain during pre-historic times. The longwools extended across a wide area of the Midlands, and these might derive more or less directly from stock that was introduced about Roman times. The black-faced horned type was found mainly in the east and north of England, whence it was entering Scotland to become the Scottish Blackface.

Finally, two small areas, Hereford and Sussex, were noted for fine wool. In Hereford the sheep in question had been known as the Hereford breed, and this later emerged as the modern Ryeland. In Sussex the fine-woolled breed was the Southdown

which was used in the development of all other Down breeds from the late eighteenth century onwards. The Southdown is still noted for fine wool, although the fleece of course belongs to the British shortwool type and is not as fine as that of the Merino.

It appears to be possible to push back these broad groups to the sixteenth century when they formed regional types that gave rise to the native breeds of each county evident at the end of the eighteenth century.⁴ The emergence of county breeds corresponds to the changes of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries from the largely subsistence farming of the Middle Ages to the commercial agriculture carried out by yeoman farmers.

When uniformity in breed appearance came about is not known, although most medieval illustrations show moderately uniform flocks. Yet during recent visits to the Balkans I have seen flocks containing all possible combinations of face colour, horns and fleece type. Mere segregation of the animals in such a flock could produce several 'breeds', which poses the question of the extent to which some breeds differ only in their superficial appearance.

III

British sheep prior to the Middle Ages

The domestication of sheep did not take place in Britain, and so the first domestic animals were introduced by Neolithic settlers about 4000 BC. The only evidence of these sheep comes from bone remains, and they probably had a coat not very different from that of the wild ancestor, in which bristly fibres, known as kemps, obscure an undercoat of fine wool.

The Bronze Age breed of Europe is thought to be represented by the small, brown Soay sheep that survives in a feral state on St Kilda off north-west Scotland. Evidence for this comes from the similarity of skeletal remains with those of the Soay,

³R Trow-Smith, *A History of British Livestock Husbandry to 1700*, 1957; *A History of British Livestock Husbandry 1700-1900*, 1959; W Youatt, *Sheep*, 1840.

⁴Ryder, *op cit.*,

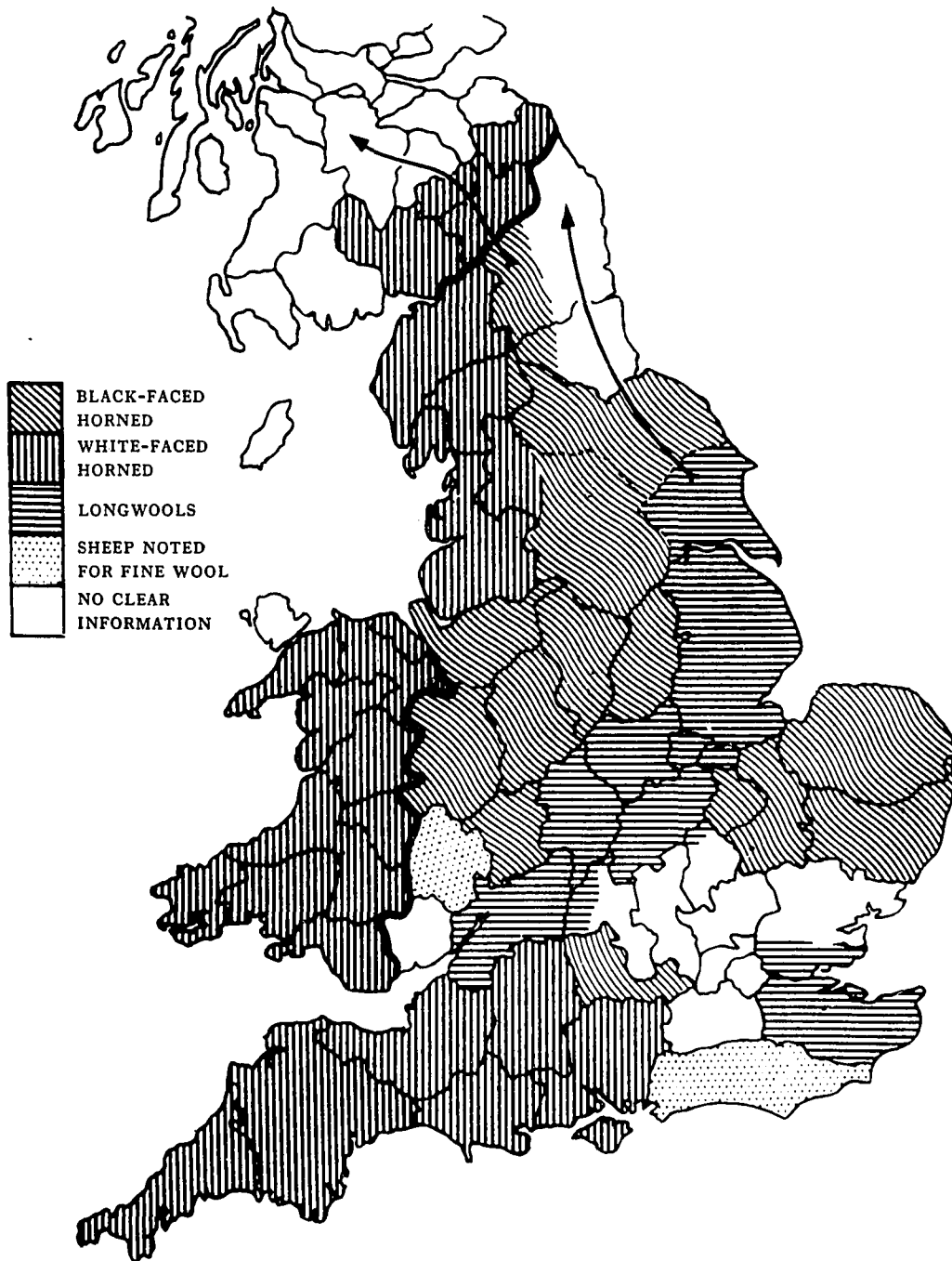


FIGURE 2
Distribution of the breed types about the year 1800
(from Ryder, 1964¹)

and the similarity of wool in Bronze Age cloth with the fleece of the Soay.⁵

The primitive features shared by the Soay with the wild ancestor are a short tail (all modern breeds have a long tail), a coloured fleece in which the belly is white (most modern breeds are completely white), and thirdly an annual moult (the wool of virtually all modern breeds grows continuously). To these major and obvious differences between wild sheep and modern domestic breeds can be added the change from a hairy coat to a woolly fleece, and the wool of the Soay is already much less hairy than the coat of the wild sheep, but there are hairy and woolly types.

The evolution of the fleece is illustrated in Fig 3⁶ which shows histograms of wool fibre diameter distribution in microns (1 micron, $\mu\text{m} = 0.001 \text{ mm}$). The diameter is shown along the horizontal axis, and the number of fibres on the vertical axis. The fibre diameter distribution of the wild sheep is shown at the top, and the big difference in diameter between the coarse outer coat and the fine under wool is very striking. The first evolutionary change after domestication was a narrowing of the outer coat kemp to produce the hairy medium fleece type of the hairy Soay. Further narrowing of these hairy fibres (fine kemp), presumably as a result of selective breeding by man, changed them into the wool fibres of medium diameter found in the woolly Soay.

In evolutionary terms this is a generalized type forming an important link between more primitive hairy fleeces, and the more highly-evolved modern ones. The diameter distributions of surviving breeds have been shown in Fig 3, but all except that of the wild animal at the top have been found in old textiles. The hairy medium and generalized medium types appeared first in the Bronze Age, and were common until after the

Middle Ages. The modern types on the right and at the bottom began to appear in Roman times, and I will say more about these later.

Colour changed next with the appearance of white sheep in the Iron Age. Some white wool came from a Scythian burial mound in central Asia, and is dated 400 BC. But there was in fact a range of colour, black, white, and grey, in addition to the brown of the Soay. Evidence for this again comes from textile remains and surviving breeds.

Among the 57 wool samples from Vindolanda, the Roman site on Hadrian's Wall, only 9 per cent were completely coloured and so were either black or brown indicating a move away from the Bronze Age Soay type; 40 per cent had no pigment and so were white, while as many as 51 per cent had a mixture of coloured and white fibres, being therefore grey (Table 2). A sheep with this range of colours which appears to be a survival of the Iron Age vari-coloured type is the native Orkney breed that remains on the island of North Ronaldsay in the Orkney group. The wild-pattern white belly is rare, and so this marks the Soay as unique amongst domestic sheep.

The change in colour provides the main difference from the Soay, however, since the Iron Age type represented by the Orkney and Shetland breeds still has hairy and woolly fleeces like the Soay. During the

TABLE 2
Extent of Natural Pigmentation
in the Vindolanda Wools (actual number)

	100% pigmented	mixture (‘grey’)	no pigment	total
Hairy	—	—	1	1
Hairy medium	3	11	5	19
Gen. medium	1	12	6	19
Fine, gen. medium	1	3	6	10
Fine	—	2	3	5
Shortwool	—	—	2	2
Medium	—	1	—	1
	9%	51%	40%	

⁵M L Ryder, ‘Changes in the fleece of Sheep following Domestication’, in P J Ucko and G W Dimbleby (eds), *The Domestication and Exploitation of Plants and Animals*, 1969, pp 495–521.

⁶Taken from my *Sheep and Man*, 1983.

CHANGES IN FIBRE DIAMETER DISTRIBUTION DURING FLEECE EVOLUTION

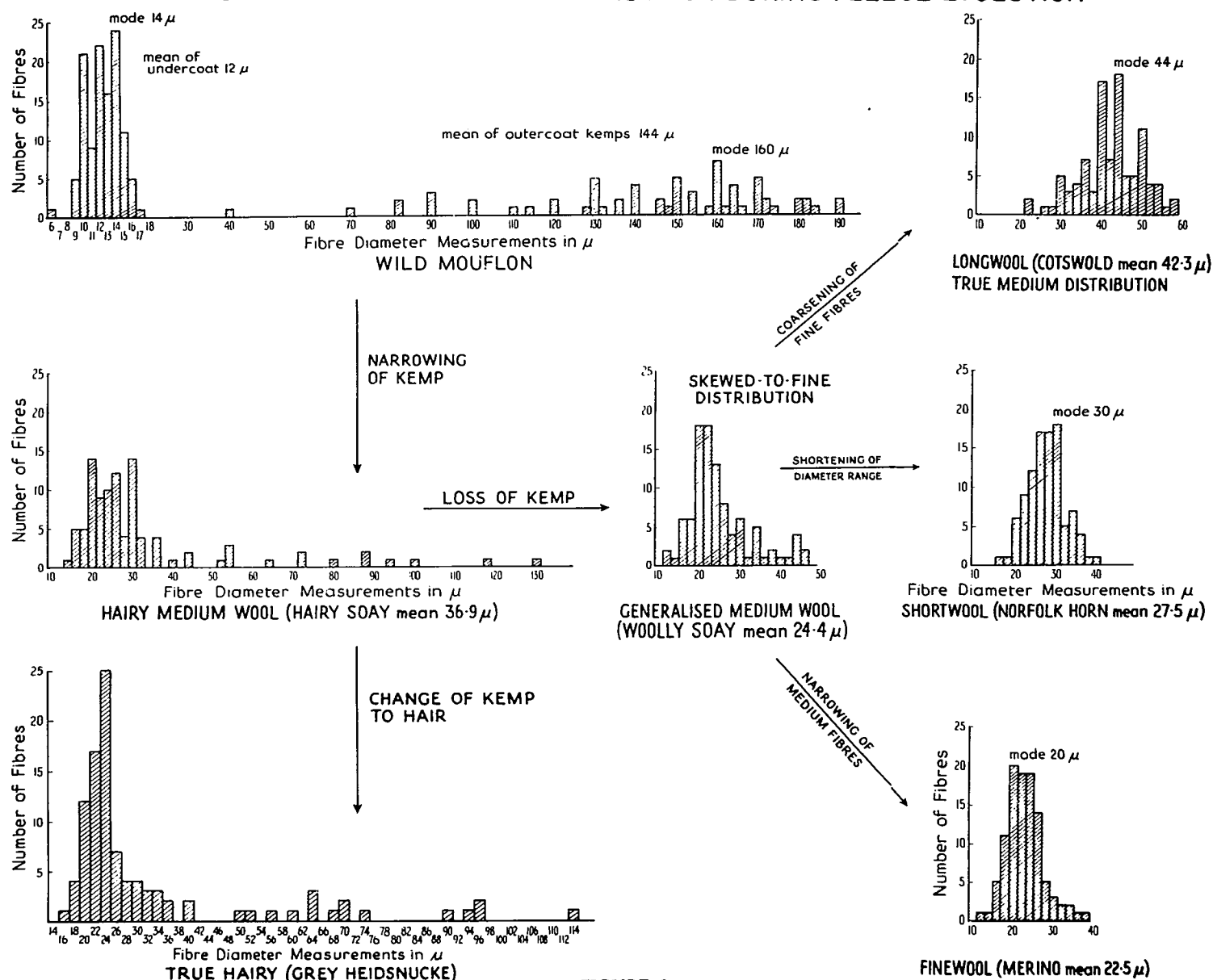


FIGURE 3

Changes in fibre diameter distribution during fleece evolution (from Ryder, 1983⁶ modified from Ryder, 1969⁵)

nineteenth century the Orkney and Shetland breeds formed a single population, but the Shetland has since been bred for white, woolly fleeces, so the Orkney now represents the ancestral type. They also have a tendency to moult so that in the past these breeds were plucked instead of being shorn. These breeds also have a short tail like the Soay, but many of the ewes are polled. The skeleton is otherwise similar to that of the Soay.

Roman textiles from Britain and the Continent show that more changes in the fleece type were taking place at that time (Fig 3). The predominant wool type during the Roman period, in addition to being white, is fine to the naked eye, but microscopic examination reveals that the wool contains medium fibres, and so is of generalized medium type. Hairy medium wools were still common, however, at Vindolanda for instance (Table 2).⁷ The way in which the new types probably evolved by selective breeding is shown in Fig 3.

If the medium fibres had become narrower by selective breeding then the fibre diameter distribution of the true fine type seen in the modern Merino would have been produced (bottom right). The development of the true fine wool began in the Middle East probably soon after 1000 BC,⁸ but the emergence of the Merino as a distinct breed occurred in the late Middle Ages in Spain.

If, on the other hand, the finer fibres had become coarser by breeding, then the true medium wool diameter distribution of the modern longwool would have been obtained (top right). Thirdly, if both changes had taken place together, and the range of fibre diameter become shortened to give a mean between the fine and medium values, the distribution would be comparable with that of the modern shortwool (middle right). Textile remains indicate that a few medium (diameter) wools and short-

wools had developed during Roman times in Britain, but neither became common until after the Middle Ages.⁹

Another line of development involved a change of the short, shedding kemp of the hairy medium wool into long, continuously-growing hairs, to produce the true hairy type of fleece (bottom left). This appeared during the Iron Age, but it was rare until after the Middle Ages, and today wool of this type is used mainly in carpets. Its development appears to have been associated with selective breeding for continuous fleece growth following the invention of sheep shears.

These changes can be considered along with other evidence in terms of breed types (Fig 4). Following the prehistoric types, the next main influx of sheep may have occurred immediately before or during the Roman period. Textile remains show that many Roman sheep were white, and evidence from illustrations and sculptures on the Continent indicates white-faced sheep with a tail of medium length. There were also horned and polled animals which appear to be the rams and ewes of a single type. It is possible that crosses between these sheep and native animals produced a new type that later emerged in breeds such as the Cheviot and Welsh Mountain.

Then, as already indicated, evolution within the Roman type itself could have produced a primitive longwool. It is possible that this was similar to the modern Romney breed, which has a shorter and less lustrous fleece than the true longwools, and I shall say more about this later. The other type that could have developed from the Roman sheep is the shortwool for which I will be reviewing evidence in the Middle Ages. A survivor of this type appears to be the Ryeland breed.

The third main British type is the Black-face horned, and whether or not this evolved locally, or was introduced during Saxon or

⁷M L Ryder, 'Wools from Vindolanda', *Jour Arch Sci*, 8, 1981, pp 99-103.

⁸Ryder, 'Changes in the fleece . . .' op cit.

⁹Ibid.

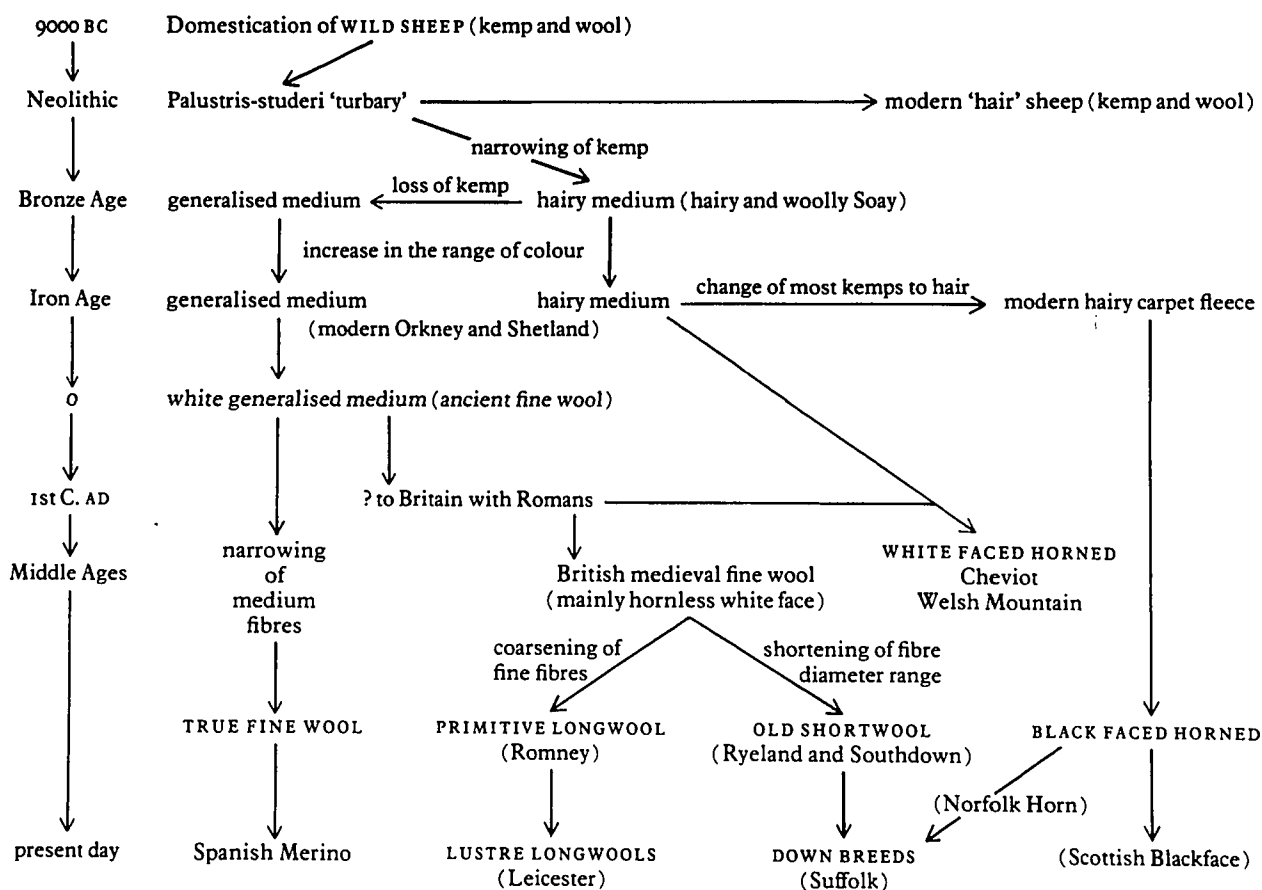


FIGURE 4

Suggested lines of evolution of fleece types and some main breed types (from Ryder, 1983⁶ modified from Ryder, 1969⁵)

Danish times, is not yet clear. An example of this type is the Scottish Blackface.

Sheep were found everywhere in England during Saxon times, as judged by the number of place names that embody a reference to sheep. The Saxon wools I have examined¹⁰ were comparable with those of the Roman period¹¹ (Table 3), ranging from hairy medium wools through the generalized medium type to the true medium fleece, and the Sutton Hoo burial yielded some interesting examples of fine wools.

¹⁰Ibid.

¹¹M L Ryder, 'Wools from Antiquity', *Textile History*, 5, 1974, pp 100-10; 'Wools from Vindolanda', *op cit*.

TABLE 3
Comparison of Roman and Saxon Wools

	Vindolanda	all other Roman (incl Europe)	Saxon (England only)
Hairy	(1)	—	—
Hairy medium	34%(19)	14%(12)	23%(10)
Generalized medium	34%(19)	15%(13)	23%(10)
Fine, generalized medium	18%(10)	39%(34)	30%(13)
True medium	2%(1)	3.5%(3)	5%(2)
Shortwool	4%(2)	1.5%(1)	—
Fine	9%(5)	27%(23)	19%(8)

Many northern areas were occupied by Vikings, and it is possible that the Herdwick breed of the Lake District contains Norse influence. Most of the Norse wools measured were from Scotland,¹² and the general impression is that these are more hairy but have less pigmentation than Roman and Saxon wools. Orkney and Shetland were occupied by Norsemen until the fifteenth century, but although the sheep husbandry of these islands contains considerable Norse influence, the sheep (as already indicated) appear to date back to an earlier period. Even if Norse settlers introduced sheep, they are unlikely to have been very different from those already there.

The area occupied by the Danes before the Norman Conquest roughly coincides with the area in which the black-faced, horned type of sheep emerged into history. This led to the suggestion that this main stock was introduced by the Danes. In the past Denmark had a similar type, like the surviving Heath breed of Germany, and some of the Danish wools from York were of true hairy type. But the Continental Heath sheep appear to have more affinities with the vari-coloured type than with the Scottish Blackface and, as we shall see, there are no illustrations of the black-faced horned type before the eighteenth century, so it could have evolved locally.¹³

Five raw wool staples from Coppergate, York, had no natural pigmentation, but the fibres had soft root ends indicating that this was skin wool pulled from skins after slaughter. One was a true hairy type, two were hairy medium wools, one was a generalized medium fleece, and there was also one shortwool. Nineteen yarns from Pavement, York, examined earlier¹⁴ comprised three true hairy fleeces, seven hairy medium wools, five of generalized medium type, and four of true medium type.

¹² M L Ryder, 'The Evolution of Scottish breeds of Sheep', *Scottish Studies*, 12, 1968, pp 126-67.

¹³ See Ryder, *Sheep and Man*, 1983, p 192.

¹⁴ Ryder, 'Wools from Antiquity', *op cit*.

IV

Medieval sheep (1066-1550)

(a) *evidence from records*

The main function of sheep in the early Middle Ages was to provide milk to make cheese for winter food; wool, manure and meat were by-products in that order of importance. The *Luttrell Psalter* dated 1340 shows some sheep being milked. They appear to have a white face, and only two are horned. Their curls suggest a longwool sheep having wool of medium diameter, but a longwool with such a short fleece today would have been recently shorn.

Records of that date provide no clue as to the size and type of livestock. The similarity in price between rams and ewes in the twelfth century suggests a lack of breeding policy, but there was a difference in price between fine-woolled sheep at 10d each, and coarse-woolled sheep at 6d. This indicates an interest in fine wool, but less than 1 per cent of manors had such a flock.¹⁵

I originally debated whether these coarse-woolled sheep were of true hairy type, and the fine-wools of shortwool type. The new evidence from textiles that I shall be summarizing suggests rather than the coarse ones were hairy medium wools, and the fine ones generalized medium wools. In an illustration in a twelfth century psalter from York, the wool staples have a pointed tip indicating hairiness, but the relatively short length suggests a hairy-medium rather than a true hairy fleece.

Since breeding in isolation and wide out-crosses are regarded by geneticists as two important ways in which breeds originated, the considerable stock movements that took place during the Middle Ages are important. Introductions of new, and possibly better, stock into an area, such as when monasteries were established in the north and west during the twelfth century, constituted one form of selective breeding. But monastic records give no indication of

¹⁵ Trow-Smith, 1957, *op cit*.

selective breeding for wool despite its economic value. They merely list the numbers of animals kept, and the value of their sheep and wool, with hardly anything to show what the animals were like.

In the mid-fifteenth century, 70 per cent of the wool production of Fountains Abbey was of 'optima' quality, and among the poorer qualities, 4 per cent was black. Now medieval illustrations show occasional black sheep. Also listed at Fountains Abbey was 8 per cent 'grisia' wool, which can be translated as grey and brown. An English bestiary of the thirteenth century has a hint that two of the sheep are grey, and one brown. The wool is shown wavy, but it is short, and the only polled adult is suckling a ewe, so it may be that the horned animals are wethers — castrated males — that were used for wool production during the Middle Ages. The records at any rate show that coloured sheep persisted into the Middle Ages, but perhaps not in such great numbers as in earlier times.

Although breeds in the modern sense did not exist, a classification of sheep by fleece type was already in use by wool buyers. During the Middle Ages Britain grew the wool with the finest fibres, and this fetched the highest price since the supply did not meet the demand. Much wool of inferior type was also produced. There was plenty of fine wool on the Continent, and English wool was apparently unique because of its greater length, which enables it to be combed to make worsteds.¹⁶ The question of wool length is a recurring theme in English medieval wool, and although staple length is basically determined by heredity, better nutrition can make the fleece grow longer and therefore heavier, a fact which was known as early as the sixteenth century. Some of the extra length recorded may therefore be due to the richer British pasture acting on a sheep with basically short wool.

The range of fleece weight recorded by Trow-Smith from 1.1 to 2.1 lb, seems to be

too great to be accounted for by pasture differences. More fleece weights quoted by Postles pointed to an average figure about mid-way between these two values.¹⁷ But it does accord with the much-repeated statement of Eileen Power that long wool was produced by a different breed from that which grew short wool.¹⁸ I consider that this statement is only acceptable if the long woolled breed was like the modern Romney.¹⁹ This is a primitive longwool with a fleece no more than about 7 in in length today, whereas the lustre longwools such as the Leicester have curly wool a foot or more in length. There is no conclusive evidence for the existence of lustre longwools during the Middle Ages, and I shall say more later about their origin.

Wool price lists provide the main documentary evidence of sheep type, and one can express the prices cartographically. In the list of 1343 the most highly priced, and presumably therefore the finest wool, came from the Welsh Border. In the list of 1454 the dearest wool came from around Leominster in Herefordshire, and much has been written about the fineness of 'Lemster' wool. It seems likely that Leominster wool was grown by the ancestor of the Ryeland breed.

The Ryeland was known in the past as the Hereford, and this area had a reputation for fine wool at least as late as 1800. But Hereford also grew coarser wool during the Middle Ages that did not fetch such a high price. This breed lacks horns and has a white face like most medieval illustrations.

The next highest priced wools in 1454 were Cotswold and Lincoln wools. This must mean that these were shorter and finer than the fleeces so named today, which are lustre longwools. Canterbury wool from Kent and Sussex was, on the other hand, relatively low in price. The export of 'Canterbury' fleeces from the Midlands in

¹⁷ D Postles, 'Fleece weights and the wool supply, c 1250-c 1350', *Textile History*, 12, 1981, pp 96-103.

¹⁸ E Power, *The Wool Trade in English Medieval History*, Oxford, 1941.

¹⁹ Ryder, 'History of Sheep Breeds', *op cit*.

¹⁶ E Lipson, *A Short History of Wool and its Manufacture*, 1953.

the thirteenth century suggests a link between the Midland longwool and the fore-runner of the modern Romney. The wool elsewhere in Kent and Sussex was of average price, and here the fine-fleeced Southdown breed emerged later.

(b) *evidence from skeletal remains*

Skulls which were excavated at Kirkstall Abbey in the 1950s indicate the presence of polled as well as horned sheep. The first surveys of medieval sheep bones revealed little difference in stature between the animals of earlier periods and surviving Soay and Shetland sheep.²⁰ And more recent measurements have not altered this conclusion.²¹ Noddle, however, found that the length of the neck of the shoulder blade varied between primitive short-tailed breeds, and modern breeds with a long tail, and she found that most shoulder blades from medieval sheep had a neck of intermediate length, with some being of short-tailed type, and some approaching the modern type.

More recent work has confirmed the presence of a sheep that was hornless in both sexes.²² This was identified with the medieval fine wool described by me in 1964,²³ which I now regard as being a generalized medium wool. There was also a type that was horned in the rams only, as well as more than one type horned in both sexes. That is despite the fact that there are hardly any medieval illustrations showing a horned ewe. The three modes of horn inheritance seen today were therefore in existence, but this does not necessarily indicate distinct breeds since they could have been present in an inter-breeding population.

(c) *evidence from wool in cloth remains*

More direct evidence comes from wool in textile remains, but material has been made available for study only from recent excavations in Southampton, Winchester, London, York, Perth, and Aberdeen. The measurements made are difficult to illustrate and summarize (Table 4), but from the overall percentages at the bottom it can be seen that the generalized medium fleece type predominated.²⁴ This is the type that appears fine to the naked eye and it formed over one-third, and there were nearly as many hairy medium wools. Most sites had a few true hairy fleeces, and on nearly half the sites the generalized medium wools were particularly fine.

There were a few true medium wools, that is having the fibre diameter distribution of the modern longwool. But what had been thought to predominate in the Middle Ages, either the shortwool or true fine type, formed overall only 8 per cent and 6 per cent respectively. The fine wools need not have been imported from the Continent since occasional fine fleeces with a symmetrical fibre diameter distribution are found in such primitive breeds as the Orkney. The wool evidence therefore indicates that the predominant sheep type during the Middle Ages was of hairy-medium/generalized-medium type. It was probably comparable with the surviving short-tailed and varicoloured Orkney and Shetland breeds, which we noted in earlier periods, and in which it is mainly the rams that are horned. The bone remains accord with such an animal, but the illustrations show that the tail had already increased in length. Records and textiles confirm the persistence of some coloured sheep, although illustrations tend to indicate only the occasional black animal. Skeletal remains indicate a greater range of horn type than suggested by the illustrations. But such anomalies are probably due to the considerable variation that must have existed

²⁰ M L Ryder, 'The Livestock Remains from four medieval sites in Yorkshire', *Ag Hist Rev*, 9, 1961, pp 105-10.

²¹ B A Noddle, 'A Comparison of the animal bones from eight medieval sites in Southern Britain', in A T Clason (ed), *Archaeozoological Studies*, Amsterdam, 1975.

²² P L Armitage and J A Goodall, 'Medieval horned and polled Sheep: the archaeological and iconographic evidence', *Antiq Jour*, 57, pp 73-89; B A Noddle, 'The Animal Remains', in H Clarke and A Carter, *Excavations in King's Lynn 1963-1970*, 1977, pp 378-400.

²³ Ryder 'History of Sheep Breeds', op cit.

²⁴ Ryder, 'Medieval sheep and their wool types', in D W Crossley (ed), *Medieval Industry*, 1981.

TABLE 4
Summary of Fleece Types in British Medieval Wools

		Hairy	Hairy medium	Generalized medium	Fine generalized medium	True medium	Short	Fine
Winchester	11th cent	14%(1)	57%(4)	29%(2)	—	—	—	—
London, Baynard's Castle	1200	—	25%(2)	63%(5)	—	—	—	12%(1)
York	12th-13th cent	27%(3)	37%(4)	27%(3)	—	9%(1)	—	—
Southampton	13th-14th cent	—	11%(2)	58%(11)	—	5%(1)	5%(1)	21%(4)
Baynard's Castle	14th cent	13%(3)	8%(2)	8%(2)	38%(9)	4%(1)	13%(3)	16%(4)
Baynard's Castle	15th cent	7.5%(2)	11%(3)	15%(4)	18%(5)	11%(3)	30%(8)	7.5%(2)
Yorkshire	15th cent	—	33%(2)	66%(4)	—	—	—	—
Perth	12th-14th cent	19%(17)	44%(39)	18%(16)	6%(5)	8%(7)	5%(4)	—
Aberdeen	13th-14th cent	12.5%(2)	19%(3)	44%(7)	6%(1)	12.5%(2)	—	6%(1)
	overall	13%	30%	26%	10%	7%	8%	6%

among medieval sheep, coupled with some evolution towards modern breeds.

If the actual measurements from Perth and Aberdeen are compared one can see that hairy medium wools were more common at Perth, and generalized medium wools predominated at Aberdeen (Table 5). Only 30 per cent of the Perth wools lacked pigment, another 30 per cent were black or brown, and the remainder were varying shades of grey. Eleven of the sixteen Aberdeen yarns were light grey. This high proportion of coloured wools, and particularly grey fleeces, supports the conclusion from diameter measurements that the Orkney-Shetland type maintained its predominance from the Iron Age into the Middle Ages.

There were four unspun wools from Perth comprising one hairy medium fleece 25 mm (1 in) long, and three hairy fleeces, two of which were 40 mm (1.6 in) long, and the other 60 mm (2.4 in) long. These lengths are the same as found among staples from Baynard's Castle, London, but are shorter than the modern woolly Shetland fleece, and only half the length of hairy Shetland wool.

(d) *evidence from illustrations*

Most medieval paintings show white-faced hornless sheep, with occasional horned

animals that are probably rams. The sheep are invariably shown with short wool, and often appear like the modern Merino, Ryeland or Romney breeds. Although no illustrations of longwoolled sheep have been recorded, some fleeces have short curls like those of a recently-shorn longwool. Likewise no picture of a sheep with a true hairy fleece, or a black face was found before the eighteenth century.

Although I was criticized by Armitage and Goodall for grouping Continental illustrations with English ones,²⁵ I have now recorded 40 illustrations originating in England between the ninth and eighteenth centuries, and they have not greatly altered the original conclusions of my 1964 article. These authors, however, did confirm my suspicion that bestiary illustrations and zodiac signs tend to follow patterns and traditions, and so are less reliable than nativity scenes and depictions of farming operations. Such paintings are a valuable source of historic information regarding such items as clothing, and used with discretion I think they can provide biological evidence, too.

The polled sheep on the brass of an unknown woolman in Northleach church,

²⁵ Armitage and Goodall, *op cit*.

TABLE 5
Wool Fibre Diameter Measurements and Incidence of Hairy and Pigmented Fibres
(the measurements are in microns, ie thousandths of a mm)

Fleece type		No.	overall diam.		Modal diam.		Mean diam.		Medullated (hairy) fibres %		Pigmented fibres %	
			range	range	mean	range	Overall mean	range	mean	range	mean	
Hairy	P	17	12-124	20-30	24.5	33.4-46.8	39.8	1-57%	22%	0-100%	35%	
	A	2	12-128	54&66	60.0	52.6&54.9	53.8	19&31%	25%	7&13%	10%	
Hairy med	P	39	12-100	20-40	26.3	26.4-43.3	34.5	0-51%	17%	0-100%	57%	
	A	3	14-90	24-30	26.6	26.8-32.8	29.6	5-9%	7%	2-10%	5%	
Gen med	P	16	10-60	20-31	24.9	24.4-33.3	29.5	0-10%	4%	1-100%	25%	
	A	7	10-58	20-24	22.6	21.6-30.8	26.7	0-11%	3%	0-21%	6%	
Fine gen medium	P	6	12-52	23-24	23.8	24.2-28.8	26.7	2-20%	4%	0-100%	7%	
	A	1	12-56	—	16	—	23.6±9.6	—	—	—	8%	
True med	P	7	10-66	26-40	32.3	31.0-38.6	33.7	0-65%	15%	0-100%	14%	
	A	2	14-60	30&32	31.0	28.2&32.5	30.4	1&4%	2.5%	0&4%	2%	
Short	P	4	10-50	24-30	27.0	26.0-28.9	27.6	0-46%	22%	0	0	
	A	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	
Fine	P	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	
	A	1	12-36	—	18	—	21.0±4.3	—	0	—	0	

P = Perth A = Aberdeen

P = Perth A = Aberdeen

dated about 1485, has wavy but pointed staples indicating a hairy, or rather a hairy medium, fleece, since it is shorter than the true hairy type. It is well known in wool biology that staples with a pointed tip indicate hairiness, and so I think that Armitage and Goodall were wrong to identify this as longwool. Another polled sheep on the brass of John Taylour (c 1490) has a fleece indicated by wavy lines, which they consider indicate long wool, whereas I have always thought that this common way of depicting wool was too generalized to indicate a particular fleece type. This sheep has a tail of medium length, which Armitage and Goodall consider has been docked. But docking usually results in a short tail, and a tail of medium length results either from breed variation or from a cross between a long-tailed sheep and one with a naturally short tail.

The Bushe brass at Northleach (1526) has several small, horned sheep shown with shorter staples, which therefore appear to be shortwools. The fleece of three of the animals is shown by short flecks which Armitage and

Goodall consider indicates that they have been shorn. The tail length is either long or only of medium length, and whereas one sheep has ram's horns, those in the other animals are smaller and of a different shape, and I agree with the interpretation of Armitage and Goodall that this indicates wethers.

The sheep on the Fortey brasses (c 1450), also at Northleach, are large, polled animals. The wool is shown by short curls like those on a shorn longwool, and is uncannily like that of the modern Cotswold breed. Armitage and Goodall sum up the evidence from the brasses with the statement that although they indicate different types of sheep, they are unlikely to indicate regional variation since they were all made in London.

Since they consider that there is no medieval illustration of horned ewes, it is worthwhile pointing out what appears to be a horned ewe in the late sixteenth-century Bradford Table carpet in the Victoria and Albert Museum. This has a heavily-horned ram, the sex of which is confirmed by the depiction of a scrotum. There are also five

polled ewes, together with a sheep with smaller horns than the ram. Although the detail is insufficient to make one sure that this is not a wether, it was usual to run wethers in separate flocks. Again the animals are white-faced shortwools with a moderately long tail. These illustrations also give husbandry details. The shepherd shown has a pouch and carries a crook, and he runs to throw earth beyond two straying ewes in order to startle them back into the flock.

I conclude with a brief consideration of the post-medieval evolution of the longwool. The modern Cotswold breed may be quite different from the fine-woolled breed so named in the sixteenth century. It is unmistakably of curly lustrous type, but it seems less-highly developed than other lustre longwools. The fleece is only 10 in long, whereas that of the Lincoln breed for example can exceed 13 in.

Bowden thought from the increased supply of long wool during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries that longwoolled sheep were a direct result of improved pasture resulting from the enclosures.²⁶ But we have already seen that there is a limit to the length of wool that can be grown as a result of better nutrition, and in any case the lustre longwool is a different type of sheep. The biologist's interpretation of the historical evidence is therefore that the better pasture allowed larger longwoolled sheep to be kept. Enclosure also allowed the segregation of inferior animals so that selective breeding could take place.

The origin of the lustre longwool is such an intriguing biological problem that it is worthwhile mentioning one or two of the possibilities. One suggestion is that the lustre longwool originated as a mutant in the Romney type. But although a lustre mutant has been observed in the fine-woolled

Merino breed in Australia, the only mutant that has been observed in the Romney, in fact in New Zealand, is a true hairy type known as the N-type or Drysdale. Another suggestion is that it could have originated through the introduction of exotic stock into native British sheep in a complicated genetic change. And this complex biological mystery provides a suitable note on which to end.

Summary

The wool in the earliest textile remains (from the Bronze Age) indicated a fleece type like that of the modern brown Soay sheep (hairy medium, and woolly-generalized medium). By the Iron Age it appears that there were black, white, and grey sheep, in addition to brown fleeces, but they were still of primitive hairy and woolly type. Roman wool remains indicate that the modern true hairy, true medium (longwool), shortwool, and fine types were evolving.

During the Middle Ages the predominant sheep type still appears to have had a hairy medium/generalized medium fleece type, the animals perhaps being comparable with the surviving short-tailed and vari-coloured Orkney and Shetland breeds in which most of the ewes lack horns. Skeletal remains support this conclusion, but virtually no illustrations of short-tailed sheep have been recorded. Records and the wool in cloth remains confirm the persistence of some coloured sheep, although illustrations indicate only the occasional pigmented animal. In most illustrations the only horned sheep appear to be rams (or at least wethers) whereas skeletal evidence suggests two other types in addition, either horned in both sexes, or polled in both sexes. This, and other anomalies in the evidence, can probably be explained by the greater variability of the animals in the past, coupled with evolution towards new types as shown by the medium and shortwool fleece remains.

²⁶ P J Bowden, *The Wool Trade in Tudor and Stuart England*, 1962.

Patterns of Estate Management in East Yorkshire c 1840–c 1880

By BARBARA ENGLISH

I

THE EAST RIDING of Yorkshire in the nineteenth century consisted of some 700,000 acres of farmland;¹ it was predominantly an agricultural county, with few towns and little industrial development.² By 1873 eleven men (with over 10,000 acres each in the county) owned 28 per cent of the land, a further 24 great landowners (3,000–10,000 acres) owned an additional 18 per cent, and 58 lesser landowners (1,000–3,000 acres) held 13 per cent.³ The largest corporate owners in 1873 were the Crown, Emanuel Hospital Westminster, the NE Railway Company, St John's College, Cambridge, and the dean and chapter of York Minster. These individual landowners and corporate owners had a sufficient number of tenants to warrant the employment of a manager, and this paper is concerned with the different patterns of management found in the East Riding in the middle years of the nineteenth century.⁴ Men who managed land were known by

several different names, land agents, land stewards, estate agents, or bailiffs (although estate agents were often property salesmen, and bailiffs were usually of inferior status). No one title became definitive.

Some estates used large firms of agents, based in London, and some employed smaller firms, working from York or Hull, or the market towns of Beverley or Malton. The men at the head of both large and small firms were commonly surveyors, but sometimes solicitors. Occasionally one man, working on his own account, had the oversight of estates belonging to several different owners. Some estates had a full-time resident agent, perhaps living in a purpose-built house with an office, near the centre of the estate. The resident agent could be a trained surveyor, a man who had served his time as a pupil in another estate office, a practical farmer, or a relative, qualified or not. In addition to the previous categories, there was always a small number of landowners who preferred to manage their own estates, with the aid of farm bailiffs.⁵

¹ Actually 706,684; this acreage, taken from the census and the Ordnance Survey, excluded wastes and commons (estimated at 4049 in 1873), woods, rivers, roads, canals, Crown property not let, churchyards, and other unrated property; *Return of Owners of Land, 1872–3*, BPP 1874 [c.1097] LXXII, pt I, pp 9, 11–12, 15.

² 'Altogether an agricultural district'; J Caird, *English Agriculture in 1850–1*, 1852, p 302.

³ *Return of Owners of Land, 1872–3*, BPP 1874 [c.1097] LXXII, pt II, and J Bateman, *The Great Landowners of Great Britain and Ireland*, 1883. I have corrected the obvious faults in the Return, such as the double entry for 'Quintin, St' and 'St Quintin'. The return of 1873, although flawed, provided the first available figures for size and value of landholdings, but in Strickland's survey of 1812 he remarked that there were 9 or 11 great landowners in the East Riding, with rent rolls of about £10,000 each: H E Strickland, *A General View of the Agriculture of the East Riding*, 1812. Although the list of 11 families of 1812 was not the same as the list of 1873, the number remained the same.

⁴ The research on which this paper was founded was financed by the SSRC. I am grateful to my colleagues Jan Crowther, Alan Harris, David Neave, Michael Turner, and John Saville for helpful comments on the paper, and to the archivists of the City of Hull, the University of Hull, Humberside County Record Office, York Minster Library, and the Guildhall, London, for advice on archives in their custody.

⁵ Examples of all these categories will be found below. The literature on land agents includes A M Carr-Saunders and P A Wilson, *The Professions*, 1933, pp 194–208; E Hughes, 'The Eighteenth Century Estate Agent', in H A Cronne, T W Moody, D B Quinn, eds, *Essays in British and Irish History*, 1949, pp 185–99; G E Mingay, 'Estate Management in Eighteenth-Century Kent', *Ag Hist Rev* IV, 1956, pp 108–13; D Spring, 'Agents to the Earls of Durham in the Nineteenth Century', *Durham Univ J* LIV, 1962, pp 104–13; D Spring, *The English Landed Estate in the Nineteenth Century: its Administration*, Baltimore, 1963; F M L Thompson, *English Landed Society in the Nineteenth Century*, 1963; J O Parker, *The Oxley Parker Papers*, Colchester, 1964; W Gavin, *Ninety Years of Family Farming*, 1967; F M L Thompson, *Chartered Surveyors*, 1968; F Hill, 'Squire and Parson in early Victorian Lincolnshire', *History* LVIII, 1973, pp 337–49; P Eden, *Dictionary of Land Surveyors . . . 1550–1850*, Folkestone, 1975–79; P Roebuck, *Constable of Everingham Estate Correspondence 1726–43*, Yorks Arch Soc Record Series CXXXVI, 1976; R J Colyer, 'The Land Agent in Nineteenth-Century Wales', *Welsh Hist Rev* VIII, 1977, pp 401–25; J A F Watson, *Savills. A Family and a Firm 1652–1977*, 1977; G Firth, 'The Roles of a West Riding Land Steward, 1773–1803', *Yorks Arch J* LI, 1979, pp 105–15; E Richards, 'The Land Agent', in G E Mingay, ed, *The Victorian Countryside* 2, 1981, pp 439–55; P Horn, 'An Eighteenth-Century Land Agent: The Career of Nathaniel Kent (1737–1810)', *Ag Hist Rev* XXX, 1982, pp 1–16.

Further research will be needed to see if the generalizations that emerge from this study of East Yorkshire are valid for other parts of England. The first conclusion is concerned with the importance of the firms of land agents, both national and local. The land agent is often thought of as a surrogate landowner, living on the estate as a country gentleman, and closely identified with the interests of his employer, whose deputy he was. But in the last third of the nineteenth century the majority of the estates of more than 1000 acres in East Yorkshire were managed, not by resident land agents, but in other ways, and in particular by firms, either from London or from a provincial office. Most of the firms of agents were founded in the nineteenth century. The partners were usually surveyors; but it was their corporate range of experience in different parts of the country that made them more akin to members of a profession than the comparatively isolated resident agent. So to the extent that firms of agents replaced resident agents in East Yorkshire (see Tables 1 and 2), it might appear that there was a slow movement towards a greater professionalism.

The second conclusion is that the resident agents in East Yorkshire do not appear to be more professionally qualified at the end of the nineteenth century than they were in the

1840s. There were more of them (fewer landowners managed their own estates, so that both firms of agents and resident agent benefited), but the percentage of the county administered by resident land agents rose by less than one per cent between 1873 and 1893. Both the structure of management and the managers themselves continued to represent the personal preference of the landowner. By the end of the nineteenth century most professions had succeeded in establishing a system which excluded outsiders; but land agency remained an open profession: the Land Agents' Society was not formed until 1902, and as late as 1922 the Society itself supported the freedom of the owner to employ whom he chose as his agent (whether qualified or not).⁶

II

The following table illustrates a number of patterns of land agency in the East Riding in the middle years of the nineteenth century; it includes all the estates over 10,000 acres, and samples from smaller and institutional estates. The samples have been chosen, not at random, but because of the availability of their archives.

⁶A M Carr-Saunders and P A Wilson, *The Professions*, 1933, p 207. The Land Agents' Society was re-absorbed into the Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors in 1970.

TABLE I
East Yorkshire Patterns of Estate Management, c 1840-c 1880

Name of family, E Riding acreage and estate	1841	1851	1861	1871
ELEVEN PRINCIPAL LANDOWNERS				
Sykes 34,010 acres Sledmere	land agent 1 resident		land agent 2 resident	land agents 3, 4 5, 6, 7, 6, 8 resident (1869-80)
Londesborough 33,006 acres Londesborough	(estate bought 1851)	no agent*	land agent 1	
Cholmley/Strickland 20,503 acres Howsham, etc	land agent 1 resident	solicitor + Beverley firm of agents	no agent*	no agent*

Table 1 (continued)

Name of family, E Riding acreage and estate	1841	1851	1861	1871
Wenlock 19,453 acres Escrick	land agent 1 resident	→	land agent 2 resident	→
Hotham 18,682 acres South Dalton	land agent 1 resident	→	land agent 2 resident	
Harrison-Broadley 14,877 acres Welton	no agent*	Hull firm of agents	→	
Bethell 13,395 acres Rise	land agent 1 resident	land agent 2 resident	→	land agent 3 resident
Leconfield 13,247 acres Leconfield	London & York firm of agents	→		
Middleton 12,294 acres Birdsall	no agent*	no agent*	land agent 1 resident but in local firm	land agent 2 resident
Downe 11,817 acres Sherburn, etc	no agent*	no agent*	no agent*	no agent*
Constable 10,981 acres Burton Constable	land agent 1 non-resident + solicitor	→	solicitor/cousin + Malton firm of agents	Hull firm of solicitors

SIX LESSER LANDOWNERS

Herries 6858 acres Everingham	land agent 1 resident	land agent 2 resident	land agent 3 resident	→
Yarburgh 5668 acres Heslington	land agent 1 resident	→		
Saltmarshe 2776 acres Saltmarshe	landowner	→		
Sotheron-Estcourt 1896 acres Howden, etc	Howden solicitor	Wiltshire firm of solicitors	→	
Scholfield 1007 acres Sand Hall	landowner	land agent non-resident	→	

FOUR INSTITUTIONS

The Crown 12,230 acres Sunk Island, etc	Commrs of Woods & Forests (London)	London firm of agents for Crown Commrs	→	
Emanuel Hospital Westminster 3179 acres Brandesburton	land agent 1 non-resident	land agent 2 (son of agent 1) non-resident	→	

Table 1 (continued)

Name of family, E Riding acreage and estate	1841	1851	1861	1871
St John's College Cambridge 1996 acres various places	land agent non-resident	senior bursar	→	
Dean and Chapter York 1889 acres various places	chapter clerk/ solicitor non-resident	London firm of agents for Eccl Commrs	chapter clerk/ solicitor non resident	→

Notes: The acreage of the estates is taken from *Return of Owners of Land*, 1873. The table is based on census enumerators' books for 1841, 1851, 1861, and 1871, Yorkshire directories (see note 40) and estate archives.

'no agent*' should perhaps be 'no agent has been traced' as it is not usually possible to make a definite statement that there was no agent. For instance, Lord Middleton had an agent for Nottinghamshire and Lincolnshire c 1860, who may have overseen the East Yorkshire estates; and Lord Downe had an agent, working either from the North Riding or from York, and a firm of solicitors in Snaith managed his lands around Cowick.

The large London-based firms employed in the Riding were Cluttons and Smiths Gore. John Clutton of Cluttons (and later his half-brother and nephew, both called William Clutton) acted for Lord Leconfield, who in 1881 held some 25,000 acres in Yorkshire.⁷ E J Smith of the firm that was to become Smiths Gore was receiver for the Crown estates in the North, and both Clutton and Smith also acted for the Ecclesiastical Commission.

John Clutton (1809–96), whose life almost spanned the century, farmer, land agent, surveyor, co-founder of the Surveyors' Institution and its first president, went into his father's business in Sussex as a land agent and surveyor in 1827, moved to London and began his own practice in 1837, and was still practising in 1893.⁸ Other members of the Clutton family lived and worked in York.⁹ E J Smith (1817–80) joined Clutton's office c 1840, but later became a partner in a separate firm, first with Pickering, then with

his son and son-in-law as Smiths, Gore.¹⁰

Cluttons, as it came to be called, was perhaps the most famous of the large firms, with many thousands of acres to manage. In 1882 John Clutton estimated that he himself managed from 130,000 to 135,000 acres for the Crown and the Ecclesiastical Commission alone: he had no idea how many additional thousands of acres his firm managed for individuals. The firm of E P Squarey, another leading agent, but without such a large practice as that of Clutton, managed a quarter of a million acres in 24 English counties in 1894.¹¹ That total acreage made Squarey's interest greater than that of any single landowner (the man with the most English acres in 1883 was the duke of Northumberland, with 186,397 acres),¹² and Cluttons was a still larger firm. Such firms influenced the management of land by the sheer size of their holdings, and by the

⁷BPP, *RC on the Depressed Condition of Agricultural Interests*, 1881 [c.3096] XVII, p 886. The Leconfield archives are divided between Alnwick Castle, Petworth House, and the Cumbria RO at Carlisle. The archives show Clutton acting for Lord Leconfield from c 1838 to c 1883.

⁸BPP, *RC on the Depressed Condition of Agricultural Interests*, 1882 [c.3309-I] XIV, p 351; TS history, 'Cluttons 1765–1965'; privately printed history, *Cluttons 1765–1965*, ND; obituary in *The Times*, 5 March 1896; F M L Thompson, *Chartered Surveyors*, 1968, pp 132–3, 359–60.

⁹Yorkshire directories (see below, note 40) and Yorks Agric Soc membership lists, included in the Society's journals.

¹⁰Obituaries of E J Smith in *Trans of Surveyors' Institution* XIII, 1880–81, pp 409–18 and in *The Times*, 22 July 1880; G F A Best, *Temporal Pillars*, 1964, p 425.

¹¹BPP, *RC on the Depressed Condition of Agricultural Interests*, 1882 [c.3309-I] XIV, pp 351–3; BPP, *RC on Agricultural Depression*, 1894 [c.7400-II] XVI, pp 203, 439. Squarey in his evidence of 1894 gave a graphic account of the growth of his firm. He had begun as a farmer in 1844 and started the agency in 1852. 'Our business grew wonderfully, from small beginnings at Salisbury; we were taken from the plough tail, to be made land agents. . . . Nothing is too large, nothing is too small for us'. Squarey did not know how much land his firm looked after, but his office subsequently handed in a schedule to the RC.

¹²J Bateman, *The Great Landowners of Great Britain and Ireland*, 1883, p 337.

number of pupils who served articles in their offices, and then took up posts elsewhere in the kingdom.¹³

Below the great London firms in the hierarchy of influence came local firms of agents. They commonly called themselves 'surveyors and land agents' but there was much overlapping, as in the profession generally, between similar occupations. A typical firm was that of Page, in Beverley, established about 1814 and still in existence in 1867.¹⁴ In evidence to the Select Committee on Agricultural Customs of 1847-48, Edward Page said he had surveyed and valued about half the East Riding; between 300,000 and 400,000 acres, he estimated. He was agent for 15,000 or 16,000 acres in 1848, was surveyor to Beverley borough, had with his assistants surveyed all the projected railway line from Hull to York in 1845, and had been employed at times on specific works to improve land of little or no value, which he subsequently let for the owners. As well as his surveying and valuing work, he drew up tenancy agreements for owners whose farms were not in his charge. Page's detailed evidence to the Select Committee showed him answering questions on a wide range of agricultural topics: on tenant right, compensation for improvements, farm size, forms of tenancies, crop rotations, and on techniques such as chalking, manuring, draining, and marling.¹⁵ Page farmed himself; he also bought land and built speculative housing around the new railway station in Beverley. He lived on his farm outside Beverley with offices in the town and his sons worked with him, in the business and on the farm.¹⁶

¹³ Other examples of the vast English acreage controlled by the firms of agents, found in the RC reports of 1881, are Huskinson (80,000 acres), Randell (50,000 acres including Welsh land), Martin (50,000 acres), John Coleman of Derbyshire (more than 40,000 acres), and Beadel (land in every county; no acreage given but he took over £20,000 each year out of Lincolnshire alone).

¹⁴ Hull Record Office, DDHB 38/32; Yorkshire directories, see below, note 40, and East Riding poll books.

¹⁵ BPP, SC on *Agricultural Customs*, 1848 (461) VII, p 143; Humberside County Council Record Office (hereafter HCCRO) DDPY 32/2.

¹⁶ K. Miller, J F Robinson, B English, and I Hall, *Beverley: an Archaeological and Architectural Study*, 1982, p 68.

A similar firm was established by Robert and John Wyse (or Wise), surveyors, land and estate agents, who practised from Malton and Norton from c 1823 to 1892.¹⁷ Robert Wyse (1819-96), already employed by Sir Henry Boynton as non-resident agent for Burton Agnes (9300 acres), was appointed in 1860 to the Burton Constable estates (11,000 acres) in addition.¹⁸ At his death, Robert was described as having 'one of the most extensive practices as a land agent in East Yorkshire',¹⁹ and he also worked in the North Riding. Another family firm was that of Donkin of Westow, land agents c 1823 to c 1860, who looked after the Watt estates at Bishop Burton (4800 acres), the Bower estates at Welham (2000 acres) and carried out work such as surveys, sales and valuations for the dean and chapter of York.²⁰ A member of this family, Edward Donkin, was by 1861 resident agent on Lord Middleton's estate at Birdsall (12,000 acres).²¹ Men such as Page, Wyse and Donkin were also involved in East Riding enclosures as surveyors or commissioners, in tithe awards and in railway surveys. Surveyors in all parts of England profited from this type of work: Clutton's London practice was established on the basis of work for the South Eastern Railways, and E J Smith's obituary in the *Transactions of the Surveyors' Institution* suggested 1835 as a time when tithe commutation, commons enclosure, and railways 'opened a vast field for surveyors'.²²

Firms that managed estates were not always firms of surveyors but sometimes of solicitors. One such firm was based in the small town of Snaith, headed by Edward Clark from c 1845 until the 1890s. Clark acted for many local organizations and

¹⁷ Yorkshire directories, see below, note 40.

¹⁸ HCCRO, DDCC 133/30, 2 April 1860.

¹⁹ Obituary of Robert Wyse in the *Malton Messenger*, 11 January 1896. I am indebted to Dr Alan Harris for this reference.

²⁰ The dean and chapter's acreage fluctuated owing to the activities of the Ecclesiastical Commission, but they may have had as much as 6000 acres in the East Riding before commutation in 1852.

²¹ Census enumerators' books, 1861.

²² *Trans of Surveyors' Institution* XIII, 1880-1, pp 409-18.

individuals, was steward to local manorial courts, and was land agent for several landowners in the area, which was on the borders of the East and West Ridings: Viscount Downe, the Stapletons of Carlton Towers, the Creykes of Rawcliffe and other lesser families.²³ Howden solicitors looked after the affairs of the Sotheron Estcourt family.²⁴ A similar family law firm of Iveson, at Hedon, worked for the Constable family of Burton Constable throughout the century, mainly in legal affairs, but also from time to time as land agent, sometimes in co-operation with other men.²⁵

The estates of the dean and chapter of York were managed for most of the nineteenth century by the chapter clerk, a lawyer. Charles A Thiselton was appointed clerk for life in 1839,²⁶ and in 1873 the clerk, now 83 years old, was joined by his son, who continued to hold the appointment until 1889, when another lawyer became clerk. In the middle years of the century the estates were under the control of the Ecclesiastical Commissioners and their agents, Smiths Gore.²⁷

Some men, while they did not establish firms of agents, looked after several estates: an example was Charles Howard (1778–1854). Originally a tenant farmer of 1000 to 2000 acres at Melbourne and Sutton on Derwent near York, he began his career as agent by acting for his landlord when he was away. He gave up farming himself in 1823, after a series of disastrous years, and thereafter acted as agent to three small estates, all with absentee landlords, and all within 10 miles of Howard's home. He also superintended and advised on many other

estates. He was a writer on agricultural subjects, the first secretary of the Yorkshire Agricultural Society from 1837 to 1843, and gave evidence to two Select Committees in 1836 and 1837.²⁸ His diaries, surviving from 1820 to 1832, give a clear impression of the way in which he spent his days, mainly in an agricultural round, but interspersed with days of shooting and hunting, and outings to Hull or York with his family. Charles Howard did all his own work, had no clerk but wrote his own letters, and at his death the agency died with him.²⁹

The most colourful of the nineteenth-century East Riding agents who acted for several estates was John Singleton (1770–1853), agent to St John's College, Cambridge, Emanuel Hospital, Westminster, and the dean of York.³⁰ He was the son of another John Singleton, who began life as a herdsman, and became in turn the first professional jockey in England, trainer for Lord Rockingham at Newmarket and in the East Riding, and finally a landowner at Great Givendale in East Yorkshire.³¹ John Singleton the son went as a scholar to St John's College, Cambridge: a college which held lands in the next village to Great Givendale.³² By 1806 he was described as a 'local land agent' when he was asked to survey an estate at Brandesburton in East Yorkshire, and then was appointed steward and receiver by the lord mayor and aldermen of London for the same estate, which they administered for Emanuel Hospital, Westminster. Singleton

²³ HCCRO, DDCL.

²⁴ See below, p 46.

²⁵ HCCRO, DDCC.

²⁶ York Minster Library, chapter act book.

²⁷ Following the Cathedrals Act of 1840 (3 & 4 Vict c.113), the Ecclesiastical Commissioners shared control of the estates with the chapter clerk from 1842 to 1852; then returned them to the chapter clerk who managed them to the end of the century and beyond. See G F A Best, *Temporal Pillars*, 1964, and O Chadwick, 'From 1822 until 1916', in G E Aylmer and R Cant, eds, *A History of York Minster*, 1977.

²⁸ BPP, *H of Commons, SC on Agricultural Distress 1836* (79) VIII, pt 1, pp 47–62 and *H of Lords, SC on Agricultural Distress 1837* (464) V, pp 114–21.

²⁹ His papers are at Hull University Library. They include an autobiographical note (DHD 4/27c) and family diaries (DHD 2). He published *A General View of the East Riding of Yorkshire*, in the Library of Useful Knowledge, 1835. He was not a member of the aristocratic Howard family of Castle Howard but a merchant's son.

³⁰ The dean's estates were separate from those of the dean and chapter.

³¹ The history of John Singleton, the jockey, is described at more length in J Fairfax-Blakeborough, *Malton Memories*, 1925, pp 54–5, and other works by the same author.

³² BA 1793, MA 1796; R F Scott, *Admissions to the College of St John the Evangelist*, Cambridge, pt IV, 1931; J A Venn, *Alumni Cantabrigie* pt II, Vol V, 1953, p 522.

acted for the hospital until the 1840s.³³ By 1809, and perhaps earlier, Singleton was also acting as agent for his old college, for in that year St John's gave him a piece of plate for recovering lands for them in Nottinghamshire.³⁴ When the master and senior bursar visited East Yorkshire in 1816 they stayed with Singleton at Great Givendale.³⁵

In addition to his other responsibilities, Singleton was agent to the dean of York, and this may have been his most lucrative post. William Cockburn was made dean of York in 1822, and from an early stage his financial affairs were so intermingled with those of his agent that in 1842 the dean, the Ecclesiastical Commissioners and the court of Chancery found it impossible to disentangle them. Singleton sold leases and reversions of leases for the dean, exchanged land with the dean and lent him large sums of money (for example, £6000 in 1835).³⁶ But it was Singleton's sale of presentments to the dean's churches, 'in queer roadside meetings between curates and the dean's agent' that caused the archbishop of York to dismiss the dean for simony, after a stormy trial at York in 1841.³⁷ After the 1840s Singleton no longer acted as agent for Emanuel Hospital, St John's, or the dean, but as he was in his seventies he might have decided to retire even without the dean's trial. In 1856 he was described as lord of the manor, principal landowner, and lessee of the great tithes of Great Givendale.³⁸

III

The last type of land agency to be considered is that of the full-time resident manager, who worked from an estate office near the great house and spent all his days working for one landowner. Such agents were commonly found on great estates in the East Riding as elsewhere, and it is the image of these, men like Keary of Holkham, Haedy and Prothero of Woburn, Loch of the Sutherland estates, that has come to dominate the idea of the nineteenth-century land agent.³⁹ It is partly a matter of survival of documents: resident agents' papers, if they remained with the estate, as they normally did, are much easier to find than those of the firms of agents. But the full-time resident agent was not always present, even on the greatest estates.

Some idea of the distribution of resident land agents in East Yorkshire can be gained from the census enumerators' books of 1841 to 1871, and from the series of county directories which began in 1823.⁴⁰ Neither is an entirely satisfactory source. 'Land agent' was a separate category in the census returns of 1841 and 1851, but not thereafter, and the category of 'agent' used by both later census returns and many county directories was too vague to be helpful.⁴¹ It is possible to search the census enumerators' books and the directories for the parish in which the great house lay, and the neighbouring parishes, looking for the land agent, and this has been done for the eleven great estates in this survey; but it is not a system on which to build a statistical analysis. James Hall of Scarborough, for instance, not only lived some miles from the Hotham estate for which he was agent, and in the next enumerator's area, but he also described

³³ Guildhall, London, Emanuel Hospital archives, and *Report with Statutes, Ordinances and Laws for Emanuel Hospital, Westminster*, 1844. For an interesting account of the management of another London hospital, see B E S Trueman, 'Corporate Estate Management: Guy's Hospital Agricultural Estates, 1726-1815', *Ag Hist Rev* XXVIII, 1980, pp 31-44.

³⁴ H F Howard, *Finances of St John's College Cambridge 1511-1926*, 1935, pp 337, 447.

³⁵ Note in the master's diary, printed in Howard, *op cit*, p 158.

³⁶ *Cockburn v Singleton*, reported in *The Times*, 12 January 1842.

³⁷ *A Report of the proceedings in the visitatorial court of His Grace the Archbishop of York, which was opened on Monday, the eighteenth day of January . . . 1841, 1841*; O Chadwick, 'From 1822 until 1916', in G E Aylmer and R Cant, eds, *A History of York Minster*, 1977, p 285.

³⁸ J J Sheahan and T Whellan, *History . . . of York . . . and the East Riding of Yorkshire II*, Beverley, 1856, p 562.

³⁹ For Keary see R A C Parker, *Coke of Norfolk*, 1975, and S W Martins, *A Great Estate at Work*, 1980; for Haedy and Prothero, see D Spring, *The English Landed Estate in the Nineteenth Century*, 1963; for Loch, E Richards, *The Leviathan of Wealth*, 1973, and R J Adam, ed, *Sutherland Estate Management*, 2 vols, 1972.

⁴⁰ East Yorkshire directories are listed in the East Yorkshire Local History Society's *Bulletin* 3, April 1977; there were 74 volumes issued by different publishers between 1790 and 1900, although many only covered towns. See also J E Norton, *Guide to . . . Directories* (Royal Historical Society), 1950.

⁴¹ F M L Thompson, *Chartered Surveyors*, 1968, pp 339-40.

TABLE 2
**Families holding over 10,000 acres in the East Riding in 1873,
 and their Method of Management in 1892**

Name	Estate	Acreage 1873	Method of Management 1892
Sykes	Sledmere	34,010	resident land agent (relative)
Londesborough	Londesborough	33,006	resident land agent (brewer)
Cholmley	Howsham & Boynton	20,503	no agent recorded
Wenlock	Escrick	19,453	resident land agent
Hotham	Dalton Holme	18,682	resident land agent
Harrison-Broadley	Welton	14,877	Hull firm of land agents
Bethell	Rise	13,395	resident land agent
Leconfield	Leconfield	13,247	London firm of land agents
Middleton	Birdsall	12,294	resident land agent
Downe	Cowick	11,817	Snaith firm of solicitors
Constable	Burton Constable	10,981	Hull firm of solicitors

Source: Information taken from *Return of Owners of Land, 1873* and *Bulmer's Directory* (1892).

himself not as land agent but as 'farmer'. Many agents, although not all, are listed in *Kelly's Directory* in editions from 1872 onwards under the classification 'land stewards', which recorded both the resident stewards (agents) and their employers.

Kelly's Directory of 1872 listed only 13 agents who lived on the East Yorkshire estates which they administered. Their distribution among the landed families of the county was somewhat unexpected. Of the eleven greatest landowners (all holding over 10,000 acres in the Riding in 1873) only six employed resident agents in 1872; the other five families had different management structures (see Table 1). *Bulmer's Directory* of 1892 shows a similar pattern (see Table 2). The remaining resident agents named in the directories were distributed between landowners of lesser acreages.⁴² Although the great and lesser landowners held between them 60 per cent of the county,⁴³ in 1872 only

25 per cent of the county was managed by resident land agents. In 1879 *Kelly's Directory* listed 15 resident agents in the Riding, and in 1893 there were 18 named; but the percentage of the county managed by resident agents had increased between 1873 and 1893 by less than 1 per cent.

An example of a family which used full-time resident agents comes from the Sykes estate at Sledmere, which with 34,000 acres was the largest estate in the county. Here a succession of agents lived across the park in an eighteenth-century Gothic house called 'Sledmere Castle'. The agent was appointed by the head of the family, and worked for no-one else. During the nineteenth century the Sykes family, unlike many of the other great landowners, never varied from this arrangement. Perhaps because the Sykes family were themselves very interested in agricultural improvement, the agents never established an independent position and came and went (especially in the mid century) in rapid succession. Between 1840 and 1880 there were eight different agents (including one who was dismissed and then reinstated after another had failed).⁴⁴

⁴² Although *Kelly's Directory* of 1872 does not name James Hall as Lord Hotham's agent, it is clear from the archives that he held the office; Lord Hotham's estate is therefore included in the estates with resident land agents. The other resident agents (outside the list of the eleven great landowners) were on the estates of Lord Muncaster at Warton (7994 acres), Col Osbaldeston-Mirford at Hunmanby (7949 acres), Lord Herries at Everingham (6858 acres), Lord Yarburgh at Heslington (5668 acres), Col Preston at Moreby (5142 acres), Watt at Bishop Burton (4798 acres), Strickland Constable at Wassand (3293 acres), and Stourton at Holme on Spalding Moor (3151 acres).

⁴³ See above, page 29.

⁴⁴ Hull University Library (hereafter HUL), DDSY, and B English, 'On the eve of the great depression: the economy of the Sledmere Estate 1869-1878', *Business History* XXIV, 1982, pp 24-47.

The estate of Lord Hotham, some 15 miles away from Sledmere, was also managed by a resident agent, but here a different pattern emerged, that of the hereditary agent. Whereas the Sykes family kept employing new men, the Hotham agents were all members of the Hall family: father, son and grandson in succession for a hundred years. The first Hall to be steward was William, son of a wheelwright; he was a house servant, then house steward and eventually land steward. In 1794 Charles Hotham wrote to William Hall:

I am desir'd by my Father to acquaint you . . . of the satisfaction he feels in committing the care of his estates in Yorkshire to a person who for so many years has occupied the Office of Steward to the family and whose conduct has ever been that of an honest and upright man.⁴⁵

In the year that letter was written William Hall died and was replaced by John his son.⁴⁶ He prospered and bought land and property in Beverley, and (with dowries of £10,000) married both his daughters to members of the Bower family, minor gentry, and country bankers. John Hall's will, proved in 1831, left personal estate of £80,000–£90,000, in addition to government stocks and property.⁴⁷ John's son, James, was even grander. The family lived in a large house surrounded by the moat and park of the former Hotham manor house at Scorbrough; James Hall paid J L Pearson to rebuild the parish church at a cost of £7000; he was Master of the Holderness Hunt for thirty years, and became senior partner in the banking firm of Bower, Hall. James Hall was agent to Lord Hotham from 1831 until 1870. The third baron Hotham eulogized the Halls as 'able and zealous agents (who, having been born and bred in connection with our family, have taken a more than ordinary interest in its

welfare and prosperity)'.⁴⁸ But the fourth baron broke the connection with the Halls, employed a new agent, moved the estate account away from the Hall bank, and pressed James Hall to leave his house and farm. A 'dynasty' of agents also existed at Heslington, where successive members of the Carr family, surveyors, were agents to the Yarburghs; and there was another 'dynasty' at Burton Constable, where men of the family of Iveson, solicitors and sometimes surveyors, acted in turn for the Constable family.

The most outstanding of the East Yorkshire resident agents in the nineteenth century was John Coleman (1830–1888). Son of a member at Lloyds, he was the first pupil to enter the Royal Agricultural College at Cirencester, which was founded in 1846 partly on the initiative of Coleman's uncle, Robert Brown, a local wine merchant. While still a student, aged eighteen, Coleman acted as agent for his uncle; he then moved to Albury Park near Guildford. In 1855 from Deene, Northamptonshire, he won the Royal Agricultural Society's essay prize with a contribution on 'The Causes of Fertility or Barrenness of Soils'. Aged 26 he was made professor of agriculture at Cirencester, where he began a life-long co-operation in agricultural experiments with Augustus Voelcker, professor of agricultural chemistry. He succeeded in running the Home Farm at the college at a profit: a feat not achieved by his successors. In 1863 he left the college, along with most of the other staff,⁴⁹ and he became in 1866 land agent to Lord Wenlock who had an estate of 20,000 acres in East Yorkshire, centred on Escrick. At Escrick Coleman continued his experiments for Voelcker and made many improvements to the estate. He took part in judging at major agricultural shows in England, and judged

⁴⁵ HUL, DDHO 13/11.

⁴⁶ HUL, DDHO 13/11.

⁴⁷ Will at Borthwick Institute, York. I am indebted to Jan Crowther for this and the preceding references. See also HUL, DDHO; and J H Hudson, 'Sporting Scraps and Reminiscences' (notes on local families), Beverley Local History Library, c 1890–1902, unnumbered pages. This last reference was given to me by David Neave.

⁴⁸ HUL, DDHO, 8/63.

⁴⁹ There is no general history of the Royal Agricultural College, and most of the archives disappeared in the course of two world wars, so the exact reason for this exodus remains unclear. See however G H J Watkins, 'The Royal Agricultural College, Cirencester', MED thesis, University of Bristol, 1979.

agricultural machinery at Philadelphia in 1876 and Paris in 1878. He was agricultural editor of *The Field* for twenty-three years, and a regular contributor to agricultural journals. Almost inevitably, he was called to give evidence to Royal Commissions, and was appointed to the duke of Richmond's Commission in 1879 as assistant commissioner for 7 northern counties.⁵⁰

He remained at Escrick until 1885, when he left to go into business on his own account at York, as a land agent in charge of several estates, and farm valuer. He lived only three years after he left Escrick. It is interesting that after so long on great estates, Coleman, one of the outstanding agricultural men of his time, decided that the future lay with a town-based firm rather than the individual post. He died in 1888, leaving £14,600 to his three unmarried daughters. Another John Coleman (perhaps a son or nephew, although the relationship has not been established), after training at Holkham and Woburn, established an agency business in Derbyshire in the last quarter of the century.⁵¹

Some landowners preferred to run their estates themselves with the aid of bailiffs, and Kelly's *Directory* of 1872 (and later editions) gave a list of 'Farm Bailiffs of Gentlemen farming their own land'. There were always landowners who belonged to agricultural societies and farmers' clubs, and took a close interest in the improvement of their estates. Such men were competent to answer the searching questions of central government commissioners on agricultural questions; in the East Riding, for instance, Harrison-Broadley, Lord Herries and Bethell gave

evidence themselves to the Royal Commission of 1867, and Lord Leconfield did so in 1881. The Saltmarshe family ran their own estates for most of the century, collected the rents, kept the accounts, wrote their own letters, and pursued agricultural improvement.⁵² A neighbouring squire, Scholfield, managed his own estate until c 1846 when he (according to his brother) 'at last consented to have an agent . . . a very honest, but not, as the Yankees say, a very smart fellow'.⁵³ The estate letter books of Dunnington Jefferson and his agent, at Thicket Priory, surviving for the 1850s and 1860s, show that the landowner could have had as detailed a knowledge as his agent of his estate and its agricultural needs.⁵⁴

Why did one landowner choose one system of land management in preference to another? The answer must lie in the predilections of the man in control of the estate. A choice could be made because of a recommendation by another landowner: the way in which Sir Clifford Constable of Burton Constable replaced his agent in 1860 was described by one family lawyer to another:

You have probably heard from Mr Leonard, that Sir Hy Boynton has said so much about his Agent, Mr Wise of Malton, that Sir Clifford has determined to see what he can do for him; and that Mr Leonard will be obliged to make way.⁵⁵

Personal recommendation was an important element in the agent's selection, as the landowners were obsessed with the fear that their agents cheated them. The occurrence, throughout the century, of retired army officers and relatives as agents, may have been because such men were thought more trustworthy. It was also safer to trust a firm of several men than an individual, as if one member of a firm defaulted, the others could make good the loss, as Cluttons did in 1894.⁵⁶ Greater reliability may also have

⁵⁰ BPP, RC on Depressed Condition of Agricultural Interests, 1882 [c.3375-V] XV. He also gave evidence to RC or SC in 1867, 1877 and 1886. This account of John Coleman is based on his obituaries in *The Times*, 20 February 1888, in *The Field* of 25 February 1888, in the JRASE 2nd ser XXIV, 1888, pp 688-91, in the *Trans of the Surveyors' Institution* XX, 1887-8, pp 390-1, and on his evidence to the RC. See also J A Scott Watson and M E Hobbs, *Great Farmers*, 1951, pp 286-7. Coleman wrote or edited *A System of Book-keeping for Farmers*, 1862; *The Cattle of Great Britain*, 1875; *The Sheep and Pigs of Great Britain*, 1877, and numerous articles.

⁵¹ The pamphlet on 'Land Tenure: security for capital and increased production', 1873, was written by the other John Coleman, of Park Nook, Derbyshire.

⁵² Saltmarshe archives, in HCCRO DDSA (catalogued), and in Hull Central Library, two boxes (uncatalogued).

⁵³ HCCRO, DDSA 349(f).

⁵⁴ HUL, DDJ 40/4

⁵⁵ HCCRO, DDCC 144/30.

⁵⁶ See below, p 47.

been the reason for employing a solicitor. During the nineteenth century it was often said that many estates were run, and run badly, by lawyers.⁵⁷ Using lawyers as agents was not particularly common in the East Riding, but an interesting reason for their employment generally was recorded by the Royal Commission of 1881. A witness, John Coleman (of Derbyshire), had alleged that many large estates were managed by lawyers, and managed disgracefully, and when Coleman was asked by Earl Spencer if he believed

that landlords when they put their estates in the hands of agents select lawyers entirely by choice, or are they driven to do so in some cases on account of the difficulties about mortgages? —

he answered that: 'I think it is in general a case of necessity.'⁵⁸ Coleman believed that non-resident agents, even those living in London and coming only twice a year to the estates for rent days, could manage estates successfully as long as they were practical farmers.⁵⁹ Established tenant farmers, who had often held the same farm for many years and almost always came from farming backgrounds, did not need constant advice or supervision, and on many estates the contact on rent days between tenant and management was sufficient to enable any necessary changes to be discussed and set in motion. Sir Charles Gore, in charge of the Crown estates, believed the London agent was better than any local agent, because he had business in every part of the country, and was 'rubbing against all the intelligence of the country every hour', a view that might have been regarded with scepticism in other parts of Britain.⁶⁰

IV

The duties of the land agent were repeated in innumerable books of the nineteenth and earlier centuries.⁶¹ Management of the tenants and collection of the rents remained the basis of the agent's duties. For most of the nineteenth century, direct farming on great estates was rare, and almost all the landowners' acres were farmed by tenants. Some estates (such as Sledmere and Birdsall) ran a Home Farm,⁶² and in the 1880s some estates were forced by lack of tenants with capital to take over farms formerly tenanted, but this was a situation to be avoided if at all possible; landlords made great concessions to the tenantry rather than see them leave. If the agent or landowner wished to carry out agricultural experiments, as Coleman did at Escrick, it was possible to find a tenant who would co-operate.⁶³

On occasion the agent would be asked to take a particular piece of land in hand, which might be of low or no value, to improve it. Page described how he was employed by a York banker to do this at Newbald in the 1840s; the improvement costs were £16 an acre, but the land, formerly valueless, was afterwards let at 27s an acre.⁶⁴ But in the vast majority of cases it was not through this kind of activity or through direct farming that agricultural policy was made on the great estates, but through the relationship between management and the tenant. This relationship in East Yorkshire for most of the nineteenth century was governed by the yearly tenancy agreement, often unwritten, reinforced by the custom of the country

⁵⁷ Eg J M Wilson, ed, *The Rural Cyclopaedia* I, Edinburgh, 1851, p 67; J Caird, *English Agriculture in 1850-51*, 1852, pp 27-8, 418; J C Morton, *Cyclopaedia of Agriculture* I, 1863, p 45; F Hill, 'Squire and Parson in early Victorian Lincolnshire', *History* LVIII, 1973, p 337.

⁵⁸ BPP, *RC on Depressed Condition of Agricultural Interests*, 1881 [c.2778-1] XV, p 212.

⁵⁹ The administration of provincial estates by the large London agents is a topic which I hope to explore on another occasion.

⁶⁰ BPP, *RC on Depressed Condition of Agricultural Interests*, 1881 [c.2778-1] XV, p 9.

⁶¹ See, for instance, list in O R McGregor's introduction to Ernle, *English Farming*, 1961.

⁶² For Sledmere, see B English, 'On the eve of the great depression: the economy of the Sledmere Estate 1869-1878', *Business History* XXIV, 1982, pp 24-47.

⁶³ JRASE contains accounts of experiments made by Coleman and a tenant both at the Home Farm and also at Menagerie Farm, Escrick, into clover seed, mangolds, potatoes, etc, in the 1860s.

⁶⁴ BPP, *SC on Agricultural Customs*, 1848 (461) VII, pp 145, 151.

which gave tenants some compensation for unexhausted improvements.⁶⁵

It was through the tenancy agreement, with its covenants to ensure a certain type of farming practice, that the estate showed its ideals of management. The covenants of written agreements can be used by economic historians to illustrate changing patterns of agriculture; but the analysis of East Riding covenants is too long to be undertaken here. The agreement was the path by which alterations could be made, and also the means by which the tenants' unauthorized changes could be resisted. A progressive agent would introduce new improved covenants; his fellow agents might follow his example, for agents seem to have collected the forms of agreement used by all the surrounding landowners.⁶⁶ The agreement would be made after consultation with the landowner and the estate solicitor; once in existence, it was the agent's duty to guard the covenants (they were not always rigidly enforced),⁶⁷ and some estates kept 'cropping books' to make sure the prescribed rotations were followed. There are examples in the Sledmere archives of tenants asking for permission to vary the rotation, and being refused; and St Quintin took a tenant to court in 1871 for breaking the rotation.⁶⁸

⁶⁵ In 1788 the agent to Emanuel Hospital's estates in the East Riding reported that 'the country was unacquainted with leases', *Report with Statutes, Ordinances, and Laws for Emanuel Hospital, Westminster*, 1844, p. 104; land was 'let from year to year', C Howard, *A General View of the agriculture of the East Riding of Yorkshire*, 1835, p. 131; 'from year to year . . . mostly let upon agreements, not leases', G Legard, in BPP, *SC on Agricultural Customs*, 1848 (461) VII, pp. 145, 151; Edward Page told the same SC that a great number of agreements in the Riding were unwritten (op cit, p. 151); in 1882 John Coleman told the RC that there were still 'no leases as a rule', BPP, *RC on Depressed Condition of Agricultural Interests*, 1881 [c.3096] XVII, p. 124; and in 1928 the majority of the East Riding farms were still held on a yearly tenancy, G C A Robertson, 'Farming in Yorkshire', *JRASE LXXXIX*, 1928, p. 65. Some of the corporate bodies used beneficial leases; a particular kind of lease which provided a nominal rent but a cash sum (a 'fine') on renewal. Emanuel Hospital gave up beneficial leases in the eighteenth century; St John's Cambridge in 1851, the dean and chapter of York not until 1870.

⁶⁶ HCCRO, DDCL; Page and Legard's evidence in BPP, *SC on Agricultural Customs*, 1848 (461) VII, pp. 143-52, 417-23.

⁶⁷ Lord Leconfield's evidence in BPP, *RC on Depressed Condition of Agricultural Interests*, 1881 [c.3096] XVII, p. 892.

⁶⁸ HUL, DDSY 101/77, 79, 80; 'Important Trial in Farming; St Quinton v. Lett', York, c. 1871; W Harwood Long, 'Some Farming Customs and Practices in the late 1860s: the Case of St

If a tenant left the farm, it was the agent's duty to find a replacement, often from within the estate, or a recommended man from the same district. It was not until the 1880s that tenants were difficult to find, and for the most part the agent had merely to select the best applicant, finding out if he had sufficient capital, knowledge of farming, and was of good character.

Although in the late eighteenth century the Emanuel Hospital's agent was offered a bribe for renewal of an East Riding lease,⁶⁹ there is no known example from the nineteenth century. Nor is there any trace in the archives of political or religious pressure on tenants; if the agents directed the tenants on these matters, it is not recorded. The Constables of Burton Constable, an old Roman Catholic family, were said to favour their co-religionists as tenants, but they also leased a farm year by year for 150 years to members of the Quaker Stickney family, who improved it as if it were their own freehold, 'no lease ever having been executed, a fact alike honourable to both parties'.⁷⁰ Sir Tatton Sykes II, a High Anglican and ardent church-builder, also helped the Methodists to build chapels in his estate villages.⁷¹

It was the agent's duty to collect the rents and to advise his landowner about rent rises or rebates, about delay in payment or selling up a tenant. It was customary for most of the nineteenth century for tenant farmers to pay the rents personally, at the great house or estate office, at twice-yearly rent days, related to (but not exactly at) Lady Day and Michaelmas. Often there would be a ceremony attached to the payment; it was a time for the tenants to discuss repairs and improvements, to give or receive notice to

Quinton v. Lett', *Ag Hist Rev* XXIII, 1975, pp. 78-83. The family name was actually St Quintin.

⁶⁹ Emanuel Hospital archives, Guildhall, London, 3.11. The lease in question was a beneficial lease for 3 lives.

⁷⁰ G Poulson, *Holderness II*, 1841, p. 369; A M Markham, *Back of Beyond*, Hull, 1979, p. 1.

⁷¹ H Woodcock, *Piety among the Peasantry . . . Primitive Methodism on the Yorkshire Wolds*, c. 1889; B English, 'On the eve of the great depression: the economy of the Sledmere Estate 1869-1878', *Business History* XXIV, 1982, pp. 24-47.

quit, and for the agent to suggest changes. There was a rent or audit dinner on many estates, and the expenses can be found in estate accounts; in 1889–90 Sotheron Escourt gave his tenants champagne, perhaps to encourage them after a time of great agricultural depression. The cottage tenants on this estate could opt for an allowance in lieu of the dinner.⁷² Cottage tenants' rents were often collected separately at central points in the villages. Some of these arrangements were inefficient; for instance, the dean and chapter's rents from one small estate at Topcliffe reached the chapter clerk through five different collectors.⁷³

How much was estate management the policy of the agent and how much that of the owner? This varied considerably, depending on the characters of the men involved. One man might be prepared to leave everything to his agent, while another made all the major decisions himself. Unfortunately the decision-making process is rarely recorded, for it was so often the result of a meeting between the two men; and as most English landowners in the nineteenth century spent a large part of the year in the country, they would meet their agent frequently, even daily. According to Bateman's survey of great landowners of 1883, among 1363 English landowners there were only 32 who did not give an address in the country as their principal residence.⁷⁴ Few took so little interest in the lands on which they lived and over which they rode and shot as the Constables of Burton Constable (Sir Clifford, 1806–70, and his son Sir Frederick, 1828–94). According to Sir Clifford's uncle, who was his first agent, he never listened to business, never answered letters, and was interested only in sport and the money his rents produced. Later in his life, faced with financial difficulties, he made sporadic attempts to control his agents by querying every out payment in the accounts, but he did

not understand matters enough to plug the leaks,⁷⁵ and his agents continued to deceive him. Sir Frederick, too, wrote to his agent in 1885 the same kind of letter his father could have written:

I am much disappointed to find that further reductions in my already diminished Rent Roll are asked for and apparently advised by you as necessary, and I see nothing but ruin staring me in the face. I had far better sell the East Riding Estate altogether than carry it on with great anxiety and as I much fear I am doing at a considerable loss.⁷⁶

Most landowners had far more understanding of their estate affairs than the Constables, and some in East Yorkshire were energetic improvers, breeders of prize animals, active members of agricultural societies and aware of the latest ideas in farming.

On corporate estates it is sometimes easier to see how decisions were made than it is on private estates, as the consultation process was more formal. For instance, on the Emanuel Hospital estates (the archives are particularly good), the agent in 1841 made radical and detailed recommendations for 'the enclosure of the commons, — drainage of the lands, — concentration of the occupations, — apportionment of the tithes, — and a improved mode of cultivation'.⁷⁷ Major decisions were taken, however, only after a committee of the Corporation of London had visited the Yorkshire estate with the agent, which they did in 1841 and at about four-yearly intervals thereafter.⁷⁸ Similar visits were made by the senior bursar, and sometimes the master of St John's College, Cambridge, to their East Yorkshire estates, where, after the departure of John Singleton in 1841, the College employed bailiffs but no agent.⁷⁹ Both Hospital and College lands

⁷² HCCRO, DDSE.

⁷³ York Minster Library, dean and chapter archives, U2/4.

⁷⁴ J Bateman, *The Great Landowners of Great Britain and Ireland*, 1883.

⁷⁵ HCCRO, DDCC.

⁷⁶ HCCRO, loose paper in account book, DDCC(2) box 16.

⁷⁷ Report . . . for Emanuel Hospital, Westminster, 1844, p 106.

⁷⁸ Emanuel Hospital archives, Guildhall, London.

⁷⁹ St John's College Cambridge archives, estate files, no 126; H F Howard, *Finances of St John's College Cambridge 1511–1926*, 1935.

appear to have been well managed.⁸⁰ The dean and chapter of York, on the other hand, with lawyer agents and beneficial leases until 1870, for a large part of the nineteenth century were hardly managing their estates at all.⁸¹

The resident land agent, with a resident owner, such as Sykes, Wenlock or Middleton, was not likely to develop much independence of thought. Archer, the Sledmere agent, wrote in 1879 to Sir Tatton Sykes II:

During the time I was with you, my study was to carry out all your instructions and orders, and I studied your interest in every way, and which by so doing, I got myself a very bad name and was twice threatened (with yourself) to be shot or killed. . . .⁸²

Agents could advise and remonstrate, as Sir Clifford Constable's uncle did; but he was a relation, and other resident agents for the most part regarded themselves as being 'in service' as one of the applicants for the Sledmere post wrote in 1878: a term used of domestic servants.⁸³

The firms of agents were in a much more independent position, seeing their role as one with responsibilities to the tenants as well as the employers.⁸⁴ In 1882 John Clutton, the doyen of his profession, gave a Royal Commission this remarkable statement of his philosophy:

What are your ideas of the duties of the agent to his employer? — To make not the best arrangement as regards the amount of rent, but a fair arrangement so as to get a substantial tenantry, and to keep the estate managed and occupied without change as far as possible. A change of tenants is always accompanied by a vast amount of trouble to an agent, and an agent would never, if he could help it, change a tenant.

What are your duties to the tenantry? — I consider it my duty as agent to be a sort of stakeholder between the two parties. Although I am paid by the landlord I

always have a view to the interests of the tenants. If it were otherwise I should only make the landowners' estates more difficult to manage, and eventually more unprofitable.⁸⁵

As Clutton knew, the whole relationship between landowner, management and tenantry had to be based on reasonableness and trust. The landowners had to trust that their agents were honest: many of them did so to a surprising extent, allowing the accounts to pass for years without audit, and leaving large balances in the agents' hands. Trust, too, was essential between management and tenant in a county where for so much of the century the tenants were on annual agreements. Even in 1880 it was reported to a Royal Commission that 'on the old estates the confidence in fair treatment was so general that tenants often laid out their money on landlords' work without security'.⁸⁶ It was the agent's business to maintain that confidence, and if it once broke down, as it did at Sledmere in 1879, it was difficult to restore.⁸⁷

V

The social background of the agents was very varied, as was inevitable in a barely defined profession which ranged from aristocratic relations to farm bailiffs. John Clutton, son of a surveyor, went to a grammar school which taught him little; of the 20 founders of the Institution of Surveyors in 1868 only one had been to public school, and the greatest common factor between the men was that they came from families of surveyors. Clutton owned to a sense of inferiority when mixing with 'educated men' and sent his sons to Harrow and Marlborough.⁸⁸ John Coleman's father was a member at Lloyds and his uncle a wine

⁸⁰ 'Well-managed' covers such matters as investment in draining, in new buildings, rent rebates in time of distress, the provision of a village school.

⁸¹ Comment based on reading the minutes of chapter, York Minster Library.

⁸² HUL, DDSY 101/77, 10 December 1879.

⁸³ HUL, DDSY 101/77, 6 November 1878.

⁸⁴ E Richards, 'The Land Agent', in G E Mingay, ed, *The Victorian Countryside* 2, 1981, p 445.

⁸⁵ BPP, *RC on Depressed Condition of Agricultural Interests*, 1881 [c.3096] XVII, p 353.

⁸⁶ BPP, *RC on Depressed Condition of Agricultural Interests*, 1881 [c.2778-II] XVI, p 130.

⁸⁷ B English, 'On the eve of the great depression: the economy of the Sledmere Estate 1869-1878', *Business History* XXIV, 1982 pp 24-47.

⁸⁸ TS history, 'Cluttons 1765-1965', p 4; F M L Thompson, *Chartered Surveyors*, 1968, pp 131-3, 234.

merchant; his obituary by Earl Cathcart describes the social skills possessed by this agent 'in the drawing-room of the country house, in the common room of the busy inn, in the trial field, in the crowded show-yard and always . . . the same modest, self-possessed, agreeable, energetic, well-informed man'.⁸⁹ Charles Howard was the son of a Hull merchant, educated (until expelled) at Hull Grammar School.⁹⁰ Farming and surveying backgrounds were more common than commercial origins, but often the social origin of the agents is not known.

Once they had become agents the status the men attained varied widely. Some of the East Riding men were housed and paid no better than a farm bailiff, but some lived the life of a country gentleman. The agents to the Strickland Constables, at Wassand, were housed in one of the estate lodges (which was later the home of an agricultural labourer) and had no living-in servants. The children of the agent there of the 1840s and 1850s were employed as a cooper and a dressmaker. At the other end of the social scale, James Hall of Scarborough employed a butler and two footmen, was famous for his sporting achievements, and through his wealth and connections became a member of the landed gentry. Although the English agent never achieved the same status as those who represented their masters in the Celtic lands, it was still a profession which allowed some men to move up the social scale.⁹¹

The training of agents, where it existed at all, was most usually by serving articles in an estate office.⁹² Although many of the young men who passed through colleges such as Cirencester and Downton became agents,⁹³ the only one identified in East Yorkshire at this period was John Coleman. The only

university graduate found was John Singleton. Many young men were placed in the London firms such as Cluttons or Rawlence and Squarey, paying premiums of £100 to £300 for their articles.⁹⁴ One such was Arthur Arnold, later Radical MP for Salford, who gave evidence to a Royal Commission that he had been 'a pupil, at great cost to myself. . . of one of the largest land agents in the country . . . in Great George Street, and there for some years I had very unusual and extensive opportunities of becoming acquainted with a great number of landed estates throughout the country'.⁹⁵ Local agents, too, trained young men in their firms; a pupil was staying with the Donkins in their East Riding house on the night of the 1851 census, clearly distinguished from the land agents' clerk, also in the house but classified as a servant. H L Chowen, who became agent first to Lord Hotham and then in 1892 to Lord Londesborough, began his professional career in the Sledmere estate office.⁹⁶ Estate offices on famous estates, such as Woburn and Holkham, often took pupils. There were many agents who had not gone through any large office, but had been trained as farmers. Charles Howard was boarded with a succession of farmers to learn how to farm, until he took a tenancy for himself.⁹⁷

There were men who combined land agency with other occupations, the commonest being surveying. Lord Londesborough's agent for his 33,000 acres in the East Riding, the second largest estate in the county, was from c 1860 to c 1892 Col Thomas Young, a brewer, which suggests two additional interests.⁹⁸ Christopher Corner, agent in 1823 to the Barnard estate of Cave Castle (2735 acres later in the century),

⁸⁹ JRASE 2nd ser XXIV, 1888, p 691.

⁹⁰ HUL, DHD 4/27c.

⁹¹ E Richards, 'The Land Agent', in G E Mingay, ed, *The Victorian Countryside* 2, 1981, pp 439-56.

⁹² See, for instance, evidence given in BPP, *H of Lords, SC on the Improvement of Land*, 1873 (326) XVI, pp 6-7.

⁹³ BPP, *RC on Depressed Condition of Agricultural Interests*, 1882 [c.3309-1] XIV.

⁹⁴ F M L Thompson, *Chartered Surveyors*, 1968, p 203.

⁹⁵ BPP, *RC on Depressed Condition of Agricultural Interests*, 1882 [c.3309-1] XIV, p 188. He was a pupil c 1854-63; Great George Street suggests the firm was Rawlence and Squarey.

⁹⁶ Obituary in *Trans of Surveyors' Institution* XXXII, 1899-1900, p 608.

⁹⁷ HUL, DHD 4/27c.

⁹⁸ East Yorkshire directories (see note 40 above). D Neave, *Londesborough, York* 1977, p 56.

was also a shop-keeper in South Cave marketplace.⁹⁹ Several were solicitors. In 1851 the agent to Lord Herries at Everingham was a half-pay army lieutenant aged 60.¹⁰⁰ James Hall, Lord Hotham's agent, was also a banker, farmer and landowner. Finally some landowners employed their own relations (the Constables of Burton Constable; and, at the end of the century, Sir Tatton Sykes II's agent was his sister's son).

Once trained, however sketchily, there was a large number of societies to which agents could belong and through which knowledge could be exchanged: surveyors' clubs, national and local agricultural societies, farmers' clubs and chambers of agriculture. There was also a Yorkshire and North of England Land Agents' and Surveyors' Association, founded in Leeds in 1866, consisting of some 20-30 members mainly from the West Riding but including some from Hull and York.¹⁰¹ Francis Carr, the Yarburgh agent at Heslington, was a founder member and President in 1876. Other East Riding men were Lord Londesborough's agent, one of the Sledmere agents who set up his own practice first in Beverley and then in Hull, and Robert Wyse of Malton. In addition to their contacts with their colleagues through clubs and societies, it is clear from estate correspondence that agents were constantly in touch with other agents on neighbouring estates.

The applications for the Sykes agency in 1878 give an idea of the qualifications men thought suitable to offer.¹⁰² Twenty-five men applied in writing, and others may have applied personally, for one man certainly took the train to the nearest station to Sledmere the day after he had heard of the vacancy. The post was never advertised, but within days of the former agent being

dismissed, it was widely known through other Yorkshire land agents or through men involved in agriculture such as Bailey Denton, the drainage expert, who mentioned the vacancy to an agent he met in London.

Twenty-one of the applicants were practising land agents, or temporarily unemployed land agents. One had only a commercial career, and two had farming experience only (one of these being a Singleton from Great Givendale). The strangest applicant was Alfred Watts, schoolmaster at Garton on the Wolds, on the Sledmere estate. He had already worked for the estate in connection with the cottage tenants and the estate brickyard, and felt that the last agents had been too gentlemanly to be successful. He wrote that he would regard it his duty 'to add to the Income of his Employer by all *legitimate means* and . . . exercise Equal Care and Caution in the Expenditure'.

Only one applicant mentioned his school: Harrow. No-one claimed university or college training, although one Scottish factor had been in the legal profession. Two wrote that they were 'churchmen', and no-one mentioned politics. None of the applications made any reference to terms of employment or salary.¹⁰³ None of the applicants was appointed, for Sykes decided to employ his London accountant (who was a complete failure and was dismissed within a few months).

Contracts between a landowner and his agent seem to have been rare. One, not typical, was made early in the century between two Legard brothers, by which the elder made the younger his agent and leased him the mansion house and all his property in return for an annual sum. This arrangement lasted from 1802 to 1810.¹⁰⁴ When Sir Tatton Sykes dismissed his agent in 1879 he wrote 'to the best of my recollection no agreement

⁹⁹ E Baines, *History, Directory and Gazetteer of the County of York II*, 1823, p. 187.

¹⁰⁰ Census enumerator's return.

¹⁰¹ Pamphlet on the Association (1924) in Royal Inst of Chartered Surveyors, corres. box 25. Minute books used by F M L Thompson, *Chartered Surveyors*, 1968, pp. 240-1, cannot now (1982) be found.

¹⁰² HUL, DDSY 101/77.

¹⁰³ The two most distinguished applicants were Charles Grey, receiver for Greenwich Hospital, who wanted to run the estates from his London office, and Robert E Brown, author of *The Book of the Landed Estate*, 1869.

¹⁰⁴ J D Legard, *The Legards of Anlaby and Ganton*, 1926, p. 124.

about notice to leave was made on either side', which was countered by 'you very likely forget that our arrangement when I engaged with you was six months' notice on either side'.¹⁰⁵ The exchange suggests a verbal agreement only. The Hothams had employed the Halls as their agents without any formal agreement; but in 1870, on the succession of the fourth baron, a new agent was appointed and an agreement was drawn up by a local solicitor.¹⁰⁶

The income of the agents varied widely. The London firms invariably charged their clients a percentage of the rents: in 1881 Cluttons and Smiths Gore, for the Ecclesiastical Commissioners, took 4 per cent on land and 4½ per cent on tithes.¹⁰⁷ The system was criticized by a Royal Commission in 1881 as tending to make the agents more interested in the size of the rent roll than in good farming; but Gore defended the method of payment, which he claimed he would use on estates of his own.¹⁰⁸ Earlier in the century, in 1811, Lady Bessborough strongly recommended 'making the agent's salary a percentage of what he actually pays in to your banker as a clear profit of the estates'.¹⁰⁹ Payment by percentage is the normal way of paying land agents in the 1980s. John Clutton earned £600 in his first year in London (1837); by 1848 he had a net income of £9000 from a gross income of £13,000, figures increased by 1873 to £22,000 for the partnership (of John Clutton and his brother) on a gross income of £46,000.¹¹⁰ These sums are much greater than those of

the full-time agents on even the largest estates, whose income rarely reached £1000 a year. Whereas John Coleman, the outstanding East Riding agent of the period, left only £14,600, the estate of John Clutton (who had inherited £3000 from his father) was proved at £150,000.¹¹¹

The East Yorkshire firms of agents seem to have charged piecework rates: so much a day and expenses, and a percentage on rent collection or sales. John Singleton in 1841 remarked 'I never heard of a land-agent being allowed less than three guineas in my life' (he was trying for a fee of five guineas a day plus expenses of two guineas).¹¹² In 1842 Thomas Donkin charged three guineas a day.¹¹³ In the 1870s the Inclosure Commissioners paid their inspectors, who supervised works under improvement loans, three guineas a day plus expenses.¹¹⁴ The clerk to the dean and chapter of York was paid 5 per cent of the rents he collected, which averaged about £60 a year between 1839 and 1851.¹¹⁵ By a combination of fees and percentages local firms of agents could build up a profitable practice and handle large amounts of money annually; the Hull agent Hebblethwaite, who acted for the Harrison-Broadleys and several other families, had an annual turnover varying from £46,170 in 1856 (the first year for which figures are available) to £156,173 in 1873, the year of highest turnover between 1856 and 1880.¹¹⁶ No resident agent dealt with amounts of that magnitude.

In spite of Lady Bessborough's advice, most resident land agents were given salaries. The Sledmere agent was paid £600 in the middle of the century, raised to £750 about 1879. John Coleman, agent to Lord Wenlock, was paid £500 a year in the 1860s; his predecessor, Jelly, had £300, raised to £350 in

¹⁰⁵ HUL, DDSY 101/77, 10 October 1879.

¹⁰⁶ HUL, DDHO 13/16.

¹⁰⁷ Under his original contract of 1851, Clutton was to be paid 4 per cent on certain categories of rents and 5 per cent on other categories, and on timber sales and manorial dues, the commission to include travelling expenses: *Cluttons: Some Historical Notes*, 1948, pp 147–8.

¹⁰⁸ BPP, RC on *Depressed Condition of Agricultural Interests*, 1881 [c.2778–1] XV, p 11.

¹⁰⁹ E Hughes, 'The Eighteenth-Century Land Agent', in H A Cronne, T W Moody, D B Quinn, eds, *Essays in British and Irish History*, 1949, p 193.

¹¹⁰ *Cluttons: Some Historical Notes*, 1948, p 7; F M L Thompson, *Chartered Surveyors*, 1968, p 133. By comparison the duke of Bedford's agents in 1861 were paid £760, £750 and £800: D Spring, *The English Landed Estate in the Nineteenth Century*, Baltimore 1963.

¹¹¹ Wills at Somerset House.

¹¹² *A Report of the proceedings in the visitatorial court of His Grace the Archbishop of York . . . 1841, 1841*, p 77.

¹¹³ York Minster Library, dean and chapter archives, H 10/2.

¹¹⁴ BPP, *H of Lords, SC on the Improvement of Land*, 1873 (326) XVI, p 7.

¹¹⁵ Church Commissioners archives, Millbank, 8083/1048/52.

¹¹⁶ Hull Record Office, DBHT 3/1–7.

1859. Lord Hotham's agent, James Hall, was paid a constant £380 a year from 1838 to 1870. He claimed annually 10 gns for stamps, but no other expenses. Vessey, who looked after the Emanuel Hospital estates from his home in Lincolnshire, was paid £150 a year and expenses, with additional sums for extra work such as surveys.¹¹⁷ The agent to the Grimston estates in 1830 (who practised from Hull) was paid £80 a year, although Colonel Grimston told the agent when he appointed him that he thought it 'a very large sum', for 'Mr. Collett's charges for the last two years have not amounted to more than Thirty seven pounds per Ann.' including valuing farms and tithes.¹¹⁸ The cut-price Mr Collett worked from an office in Beverley, charging piece rates, although the colonel may well have underestimated the expense to make his point. Charles A. Thiselton, the chapter clerk at York, was paid by fees on the renewal of beneficial leases worth about £172 a year until the era of the Ecclesiastical Commission (c 1844); he was then paid 5 per cent of the rents he collected, which brought him only £60 a year, about which he complained constantly.¹¹⁹ In 1921 Thiselton's successor was paid 'about £380' to keep the accounts and chapter records, collect rent and other income, pay bills, let property and act as secretary and receiver for the chapter.¹²⁰

The Sotheron family, with property in Gloucestershire and East Yorkshire, employed as their East Yorkshire agents from 1824 to 1831 a father and son successively, both called Sam Spofforth, members of a firm of solicitors in the small town of Howden. Spofforth senior, who was paid £80 a year for his services, and also farmed on

his own account, died in 1827, leaving debts (which took all his circle by surprise) of more than £50,000. His son continued as agent, being paid £140 a year, a sum raised in 1831 to £160. Admiral Sotheron rarely audited the agents' books, and allowed the Spofforths to keep (on paper at least) credit balances of thousands of pounds, out of all proportion to their income. In 1831 Spofforth junior, who was probably involved in his late father's difficulties, became bankrupt, owing the Admiral £2307. He was kept on as bailiff at £1 a week, with a horse provided too, but the agency was moved to another solicitor in Howden, who was paid £80 a year, increased to £100 in 1836. The agency was moved again in 1845 to a Devizes (Wiltshire) solicitor, who was paid 2½ per cent of the rents, with expenses, and an assistant at 10 gns a year. The Devizes law firm kept the agency until the end of the century, payment increasing to 3½ per cent of the rents in 1890. The local bailiff was paid £8 a year in the 1890s.¹²¹

In addition to payment, many resident agents received other benefits. At Sledmere the agent lived rent-free at 'Sledmere Castle', an eighteenth-century farmhouse disguised to look like a medieval gatehouse. Lord Hotham's agents, men of the Hall family, lived in a house on the site of the old Hotham manor house at Scarborough. Birdsall and Londesborough, both estate villages, had agents' houses. John Coleman lived at Riccall Hall which belonged to the Wenlock estate. Some agents lived on farms, and at Wassand the agent lived in a lodge to the great house.

Often a horse was provided for the resident agent, and his travelling expenses would be paid. The estate office was often in the agent's house, but in the last third of the nineteenth century several estates built separate offices (for instance, at South

¹¹⁷ HUL, DDSY, DDFA, DDHO; Emanuel Hospital archives, Guildhall, London.

¹¹⁸ M E Ingram, *Leaves from a Family Tree*, Hull 1951, p 150.

¹¹⁹ Church Commissioners archives, Millbank, 8083/1048/ esp 51, 52.

¹²⁰ O Chadwick, 'From 1822 until 1916', in G E Aylmer and R Cant, eds, *A History of York Minster*, 1977, p 290; R Cant, 'From 1916 until 1975', *op cit*, p 543. Many agents' salaries, ranging from £150 to £1850, are given by F M L Thompson, *English Landed Society in the Nineteenth Century*, 1963, pp 161-2.

¹²¹ HCCRO, DDSE.

Dalton, Birdsall and Sledmere).¹²² In the office was kept the archives of estate management, so often the greater part of the landed family's records, and the source of so much estate and family history.

VI

It seems appropriate to look briefly at the common belief that land agents cheated their masters (a belief that is found in every century).¹²³ Admiral Sotheron was robbed by his agents in the 1820s and 1830s; it was partly his fault for not insisting on regular audits, but there seems no doubt that Spofforth speculated with his master's balances. Members of the family of Iveson, agents to the Burton Constable estates (sometimes jointly with others) from c 1800 to 1862, were clearly cheating the Constables, although they were never prosecuted. William Iveson went to prison for debt, but it was not Constable who put him there.¹²⁴ His brother John, steward to the marquess of Ailesbury's Wiltshire estates, cheated his master on a grand scale but was never prosecuted.¹²⁵ At Sledmere, Archer was dismissed for the unsatisfactory audit of his accounts (although he was subsequently re-employed), and his successor Salton disappeared with the books. Salton was prosecuted and became 'quite penniless'.¹²⁶ The Halls at Scarborough rose from being house servants in the late eighteenth century to landed proprietors by the 1830s; their rise was due to their connection with the Hothams and the opportunities offered them. The Hothams, like the Sotherons, did

not settle their accounts annually but left large balances to be transferred from year to year. Sometimes Hotham owed Hall money, but more often the reverse was the case, and in several different years Hall owed Hotham over £4000. As Hall was also partner in a local bank, he must have been able to make such large sums earn money.¹²⁷ In the estate accounts of the Sotherons and Hothams interest was not charged on the balances left from year to year. The chapter clerk at York complained in 1852 that as his accounts and remittances had been settled half yearly 'the amount in my hands has never been a source of profit'.¹²⁸

The owners of corporate estates were also inclined to let matters drift along without proper check or audit. John Singleton became rich at the expense of his client, the dean of York. St John's College, Cambridge was cheated by its senior bursar, who secretly leased some of the college farms to himself and kept the profit; this and defects in his accounting system led to his premature retirement to an East Riding living in 1846. Nevertheless, it was not until the close of the nineteenth century that St John's accounts were fully audited.¹²⁹ In the 1820s John Clutton's father, William, got the accounts of his Suffolk practice into a 'fearful tangle' and it took several years to prove that William's clients owed him money, rather than the reverse. The partners, even in the most prestigious firm, could still be let down by their employees; in 1894 Cluttons found that over a number of years a clerk had embezzled £14,000 from the Ecclesiastical Commissioners by preparing imaginary accounts and vouchers for work done. The partners immediately refunded the money and improved their system of checks.¹³⁰ From the small sample of East Yorkshire agents represented here there does seem to be sufficient evidence (even though the agents

¹²² The Sledmere estate office built in the village in 1894 was to contain the agent's room and private lavatory, a clerk's office, a waiting room (all on the ground floor) with a store room and a map room above: J Hobson, 'Sledmere and the Sykes Family', dissertation for Hull School of Architecture, 1978.

¹²³ For the nineteenth century, see F M L Thompson, *English Landed Society in the Nineteenth Century*, 1963, pp 154-5.

¹²⁴ HCCRO, DDCC 133/27.

¹²⁵ John Iveson was 'not merely uncontrollable, oblivious to repeated peremptory instructions, but a rascal'; F M L Thompson, 'English Landownership: the Ailesbury Trust 1832-56', *Econ Hist Rev* 2nd ser XI, 1958, pp 125-6.

¹²⁶ HUL, DDSY. See B English, 'On the eve of the great depression: the economy of the Sledmere Estate 1869-1878', *Business History* XXIV, 1982, pp 24-47.

¹²⁷ HUL, DDHO (2) 3/105.

¹²⁸ Church Commissioners archives, Millbank, 8083/1048/52.

¹²⁹ H F Howard, *The Finances of St John's College Cambridge 1511-1926*, 1935, p 172.

¹³⁰ Cluttons: *Some Historical Notes*, 1948, pp 5, 17.

themselves kept the books) to support the landowners' view of the propensity of their agents to defraud them. The system of audits on private estates remained unaltered until the end of the century.

VII

Two main conclusions emerge from this brief survey of patterns of land management in East Yorkshire in the nineteenth century. First, the role played by firms of agents, both those based in London and those in the country, was of far more significance than has been generally recognized. Their agencies were better paid and presumably more independent of the individual landowners than the resident agents. If this pattern is true of England as a whole, as the large firms acted for so many thousand acres, then it will be through a study of the management decisions of these firms, as well as those of landowners and resident agents, that the path

to understanding agricultural policy on the great estates must lie.

Secondly, the century did not see, at least in this county, the expected movement towards greater professionalism in the qualifications of the resident land agents. The change from relative to farmer to solicitor to surveyor went backwards as well as forwards; the 1890s saw the largest East Riding estate, Sledmere, in the hands of a relation, which had not been the case for all the preceding years of the century, and it also saw Burton Constable in the hands of a solicitor. The main change that had come about was in the gradual substitution of firms of agents for individuals. Resident agents may have been no better qualified in 1880 than in 1840, but more East Yorkshire acres had passed into the care of firms of agents, whose members were perhaps more efficient, not necessarily through formal qualifications, but through the corporate range of experience. What we now need is a serious study of these important organizations.

Distilling and Agriculture 1870-1939*

By R B WEIR

I

IN THEIR article 'Free Trade in Corn', published in 1959, Olson and Harris chastized historians for neglecting the developments which followed the repeal of the corn laws. 'From the attention lavished on repeal', they observed, 'one might assume that all that was important in British agriculture ended in 1846.'¹ Much the same criticism might be made about historians' treatment of the relationship between the drink industries and agriculture. The closeness of that relationship which involved the supply of barley and malt, the raw materials of the drink industries, and the return flow of waste products for animal feeding-stuffs, has long been an established part of the historical interpretation of the interaction between agriculture and industry.² It has less commonly been recognized that the relationship was highly dependent on a range of policy measures. These included, in addition to the corn laws, the high differential customs duties on imported drinks, prohibitions on the use of imported raw materials such as sugar, molasses and treacle, and, in the case of malt distillers, the exclusion of imported barley from the refund of the malt tax. All these were ways, directly and indirectly, of tying the drink producer to the British

farmer and of protecting the home cereal grower.³

Following the repeal of the corn laws, the underlying protective justification for these measures disappeared and by 1860 most had been removed. Molasses, treacle and sugar were permitted as raw materials by 1848, the malt drawback was withdrawn in 1855 and, in 1860, the differential customs duty on imported spirits ended.⁴ When viewed against the harmonization of the excise duty on spirits throughout the United Kingdom in 1858, it can be seen that distilling, like agriculture, was moving into a free trade environment.⁵ Much the same was true of brewing. Brewers were free to use sugar after 1847 and the customs duty on hops was abolished in 1861. Brewers, however, continued to face a duty on imported malting barley until 1880, when Gladstone 'freed the mash tun' by replacing malt duty with an excise on beer.⁶

Although large-scale production and a search for the cheapest possible raw materials had already strained the assumed harmony between drink producer and agriculturalist before repeal, liberalization greatly widened the possible sources of raw materials.⁷ The consequences for the relationship between the drink industries and agriculture remain unexplored and may legitimately be described as a neglected aspect of agricultural

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¹M Olson, Jr and C C Harris, Jr, 'Free Trade in "Corn": A Statistical Study of the Prices and Production of Wheat in Great Britain from 1873 to 1914', *Quar Jour of Econ*, LXXIII, 1959, pp 145-68.

²See, for example, P Mathias, 'Agriculture and the Brewing and Distilling Industries in the Eighteenth Century', *Econ Hist Rev*, V, 1952-53, pp 249-57.

³For explicit recognition of the protective elements in such measures see Report from the Select Committee on the Use of Molasses in Brewing and Distilling, BPP 1831, VII, p xi.

⁴The various changes are summarized in the First Report of the Board of Inland Revenue, BPP 1857, IV.

⁵On harmonization, see R B Weir, 'The Drink Trades', in R A Church (ed), *The Dynamics of Victorian Business*, 1980, p 224.

⁶Details of these changes are in G B Wilson, *Alcohol and the Nation*, 1940, chs 5 and 6.

⁷See Weir, *op cit*, p 232.

history. In view of the general lack of consideration for the consumer, or the demand side, in British agricultural history, this neglect may not be surprising. In view of the common but seldom explained observation that the differential between barley and wheat prices narrowed during the Great Depression it is nonetheless a surprising omission.⁸

This paper examines the distilling industry's demand for cereals mainly, but not exclusively, through the changing purchasing behaviour of Scottish distillers and considers the implications for cereal farming. Some comparisons are made with the brewing industry. The first part of the paper deals with the period 1870–1914, when distillers operated in a free trade environment. For most of this period the demand for spirits was rising, consumption of home-produced spirits expanding from 24.4 million proof gallons (mpg) in 1870 to a peak of 42.8 mpg in 1900.⁹ After 1900 the market contracted and by 1914 consumption had fallen to 36.0 mpg. Between the wars depression in the distilling industry intensified, consumption falling to 13.1 mpg in 1933. The second part of the paper covers the revival of protectionist sentiment in the 1920s and seeks to unravel the complex political economy of drink and agriculture after protection was reintroduced in 1932.

II

To understand the changes in the distilling industry's demand for grain after repeal, it is necessary to explain one important technological innovation in the production of spirits.¹⁰ Until 1830 the most widely used distilling vessel was the pot still which

suffered from several economic limitations. This traditional method of distilling was — and is — a batch process. The still had to be filled, distilled, emptied and re-charged. The first distillation produced a rather weak concentration of alcohol and a second or even third distillation was needed. Recharging and inadequate concentration raised the cost of labour and fuel. Such delays greatly restricted the opportunities for large-scale production. Fractionation of the separate portions of spirit was also difficult. Because fractionation was imperfect and concentration limited, the quality of the raw material greatly influenced the flavour of the spirit. This was of considerable importance, for the Scottish pot still distiller was forced to use a mash entirely composed of malted barley, a much more expensive material than raw (or unmalted) grain.¹¹

The long search for a satisfactory alternative to the pot still ended in 1830 when Aeneas Coffey, a retired Irish exciseman, patented a design for a continuous still. The Coffey or Patent still broke away entirely from the traditional design.¹² It was heated by steam, and the exchange of heat between steam and wash cut the cost of fuel. With extraordinary efficiency the still produced a concentrated spirit containing between 86 per cent and 96 per cent alcohol. The spirit was relatively low in the secondary constituents which give pot still whisky its flavour. The flavour imparted by the raw materials was therefore minimal and patent still spirit came close to being a homogeneous commodity. As fiscal barriers were relaxed and transport improvements widened the market, the potential for severe competition in patent still distilling was very high.

The benefits of the Coffey still — its prodigious output and lower variable costs

⁸The substitution of barley and oats for wheat during the depression and the importance of malting samples for the greater stability of barley prices are discussed in P J Perry, *British Farming in the Great Depression*, Newton Abbot, 1974, p 108.

⁹These figures are for UK consumption of home produced spirits and exports of British spirits. Figures from Wilson, *op cit*, Appendix F, Table 1, pp 331–4 and Table 8, pp 352–3.

¹⁰A fuller description is in R B Weir, 'Competition and the Patent Still Distillers', in L M Cullen and T C Smout (eds), *Comparative Aspects of Irish and Scottish Economic and Social Development, 1660–1900*, Edinburgh, 1975, pp 135–42.

¹¹In Ireland pot still distillers worked from a mixed mash, normally 30 per cent malt and 70 per cent unmalted grain. They also used three stills rather than two as in Scotland. The origin of this difference probably lay in the remission of malt duty which Scottish but not Irish distillers benefited from. A high proportion of raw grain economized on malt.

¹²Discussion of the features of the Coffey still is in A W Slater, 'A London firm of still makers', *Business History*, VII–VIII, 1965–66.

— required a sizeable fixed capital investment. It tended therefore to be adopted by the largest producers serving growing urban markets. In Scotland by 1860 there were 12 patent still distilleries with a combined output of 6.9 million proof gallons. Pot still distilleries numbered 111, a reduction of 57 since 1845, and shared an output of only 5.7 mpg. In the UK as a whole 27 mpg of spirit were distilled; 63 per cent came from patent stills concentrated in a mere 28 distilleries.¹³

Although the patent still distillers' star appeared to be in the ascendant the prospects were by no means trouble free. Their growth took place against a background of falling spirit consumption as a result of the increases in spirit duty necessary to achieve fiscal harmonization. Attempts to control the output of patent still spirit were one response to this situation and because the number of patent still distilleries was relatively small, combination was a feasible proposition. By 1877 six of the Lowland grain distillers had formed the Distillers Company Limited (DCL) and between 1878 and 1888 most of the patent still distillers were members of the United Kingdom Distillers' Association which sought to regulate the price and output of grain whisky.

Combination was one response to the intense competition in grain distilling. Another, and an important one from the point of view of British agriculture, was the search for cheaper types and sources of grain. Grain was the major component of patent still distillers' costs. In the 1850s it accounted for an estimated 80 per cent of the price (excluding duty) of a gallon of grain whisky. Although the patent still distillers began to experiment with maize, an entirely new raw material, immediately after the repeal of the corn laws, the major switch towards foreign sources of supply took place in the 1860s.¹⁴

Witnesses for the Irish and Scottish patent still distillers appearing before the Select Committee on British and Foreign Spirits in 1890 and the Royal Commission on Whiskey of 1909 dated the large-scale use of maize from the mid-1860s.¹⁵

By 1877, when the first detailed record of an individual firm's grain purchases becomes available (Table 1), the constituents of the patent still distillers' mash had developed what may be described as its modern form. The Distillers Company, which controlled over one-third of patent still output, made a mash 77 per cent maize, 19 per cent barley and 2 per cent oats.

TABLE I
Grain Purchases of the DCL in 1877
(quarters)

Type of Grain	Total Quantity Purchased	Type as % of Total Purchases	Home Supplies	Home as % of Total Purchases
Barley	40,402	19.78	841	2.08
Maize	157,483	77.12	0	0.00
Oats	5,197	2.54	342	6.58
Rye	14	0.02	14	100.00
Others*	1,117	0.54	17	1.52
	204,213	100.00	1,214	0.59

* Wheat 817 qrs, malt 300 qrs.

Source: DCL Board Minute Book, No 1.

Malted barley, as the most expensive raw material, was kept to a minimum, only sufficient malt being used to produce the enzymes which would convert the starch in the maize into fermentable sugars.¹⁶ The small amount of oats gave essential drainage in the mash tun.¹⁷ Home grown supplies accounted for a mere 0.59 per cent of total purchases. With the exception of a small amount of rye, included because of its

¹³ The other economic consequences of the patent still are discussed in Weir, *op cit*, pp 232-3.

¹⁴ Royal Commission on Whiskey and other Potable Spirits, Final Report, BPP 1909, Cd 4796, p 9.

¹⁵ Select Committee on British and Foreign Spirits, BPP 1890, X, Qn 2735.

¹⁶ As J P Currie, a London distiller, explained to the Select Committee in 1890: 'we only use the malt to convert the starch of the raw grain into the sugar, and every ounce . . . we use beyond that we lose by . . .', Qn 2875.

¹⁷ The larger husk on oats assists in drainage.

usefulness in yeast cultivation, home grown grain accounted for only 6 per cent of oats and 2 per cent of barley purchases.¹⁸

The movement away from home sources was not simply a function of relative prices. Maize had a higher starch content than barley. Foreign barley and oats could be bought in larger 'parcels' and the quality was more uniform than home grown grain. This and the fact that imported barley was more thoroughly ripened made storage and working easier. Imported barley also had a lower nitrogen content which reduced the risk of bacterial infection during fermentation. To these advantages may be added an institutional one, namely the growing sophistication of the international grain trade which lowered the costs of large-scale grain purchasing.¹⁹

The switch to imported supplies was very rapid. Between 1877 and 1884 the highest percentage of home grown grain purchased by the DCL was 5.8. After 1884 the firm was buying foreign grain entirely, a pattern which continued until the very different circumstances of the 1930s. The bulk of the DCL's maize purchases came from America and Canada, although a small amount also came from countries round the Black Sea. Barley came from North Africa and the Baltic, with oats being drawn from the latter area also. There is no reason to believe that DCL's behaviour was unique. The use of maize prices as the key indicator when the United Kingdom Distillers' Association was fixing spirit prices suggests the move to foreign sources was common practice.²⁰

The use of imported supplies effectively severed the patent still distillers' long-standing connection with the British farmer and marked yet another distinction between pot and patent still distillers for the pot still

distillers could not use maize. As Andrew Jamieson, the Irish pot still distiller, told the Royal Commission on Whiskey:

Maize is something like 30 per cent cheaper and besides has high extractive quality, and, of course, it would pay us tremendously if we could use maize. But we could not use it because it would give a flavour to the whiskey in our pot still which people would not like.²¹

Restricted in the range of his raw materials by the inferior fractionation of his still, the pot still distiller was limited to a choice between home and foreign barley. With the ending of the malt drawback in 1855 the fiscal incentive to use home grown barley disappeared. Imported barley entered the United Kingdom in increasing quantities from the second half of the 1860s, beginning the long slide in barley prices down to 1896 when barley was 21s 8d per quarter compared with its post-repeal peak of 43s 7d.²² The malt distiller, like the grain distiller, enjoyed falling raw material prices, but did he react in the same way by turning to foreign sources?

Two problems are involved in attempting to answer this question. The first is simply the difficulty of generalizing about an industry composed of a great many small producers. In 1860, as was noted above, there were 111 malt distilleries and only 12 grain distilleries in Scotland; by 1908 the respective figures were 142 and 8. The second problem is possible regional differences in malt distilling. By the 1870s the malt distillers were clustered into four main groups: Lowland, Islay, Campbeltown, and Highland. The bulk of the available evidence relates to the last group which was concentrated in the Eastern Highlands around Speyside and the Moray Firth. This group, however, accounted for the majority of Scottish malt distilleries and of malt whisky output. In 1874 they formed the North of Scotland Malt Distillers' Association, whose records provide useful evidence on the

¹⁸ The nitrogenous properties of rye are a valuable yeast food.

¹⁹ Changes in the market are discussed in A A Hooker, *The International Grain Trade*, 1936, pp 7-9.

²⁰ For discussion of UKDA see R B Weir, 'The Development of the Distilling Industry in Scotland in the Nineteenth and early Twentieth Centuries', Univ Edinburgh unpubl PhD thesis, 1975, pp 343-88.

²¹ Royal Commission on Whiskey, Minutes of Evidence, BPP 1908, Cmd 4181, Qn 1764.

²² See O M Ojala, *Agriculture and Economic Progress*, Oxford, 1962, Table II, pp 192-4.

TABLE 2
Barley Purchases at Glen Mhor Distillery 1894-1922

Season (Sept/Aug)	A Total	B Foreign	C B/A%	Season (Sept/Aug)	A Total	B Foreign	C B/A%
1894/95	2,647	1,036	39	1908/09	5,114	1,131	22
1895/96	4,062	500	12	1909/10	3,419	0	0
1896/97	5,368	755	14	1910/11	4,236	1,127	26
1897/98	5,530	632	11	1911/12	4,206	0	0
1898/99	4,216	250	5	1912/13	5,924	3,935	66
1899/1900	1,837	0	0	1913/14	7,342	1,740	23
1900/01	2,064	0	0	1914/15	5,679	0	0
1901/02	2,216	0	0	1915/16	5,940	3,673	61
1902/03	2,631	1,590	60	1916/17	5,383	2,592	48
1903/04	2,688	1,638	61	—	—	—	—
1904/05	2,948	0	0	1919/20	8,188	2,879	35
1905/06	4,003	300	7	1920/21	11,462	3,461	30
1906/07	4,794	0	0	1921/22	6,463	644	9
1907/08	4,637	975	21				

Source: Glen Mhor Distillery Records, Grain Purchase Books.

relationship between distilling and agriculture.²³

It is worth beginning by considering detailed evidence of grain purchasing by an individual pot still distillery and then relating it to a wider range of evidence. The barley purchases of Glen Mhor distillery in Inverness are shown below (Table 2).

Glen Mhor was built in 1892, just at the start of the whisky boom of the 1890s. Like many of the new distilleries established at that time it was founded by a partnership between a distiller, John Birnie, and a blender, James Mackinlay.²⁴ Column C of Table 2 shows foreign barley as a percentage of total purchases. The pattern, if such it can be called, is rather curious. The Glen Mhor contract books reveal a close relationship with local growers, few purchases being made beyond a 20-mile radius of the distillery.²⁵ At the start of each distilling season Birnie initially looked to local farmers for his barley supplies. In the boom of the 1890s when malt whisky production grew substantially (from 7.7 mpg in 1890 to a peak of 15.8 mpg in 1898) local supplies were

insufficient, so Glen Mhor was forced to buy in foreign grain. It is this which accounts for the appearance of foreign barley between 1894 and 1899 (Table 2). Thereafter, as output dropped, the pressure on local supplies eased and in the years before the First World War foreign purchases were usually limited to years when the local harvest was poor. As another malt distiller, Col George Smith Grant of the Glenlivet distillery, told the Royal Commission on Whiskey:

In a good season we get our barley from Morayshire, or Banffshire, or Aberdeenshire but if the season is a backward season and there is a poor harvest we go abroad for example, Denmark and get the best barley we can procure.²⁶

If limited supplies and the effects of bad harvests explain annual fluctuations in the use of imported barley, the attachment to local supplies depended ultimately on the belief that home grown barley made the best whisky. This belief was very much part of the craft mystique which surrounded malt distilling and originated in the malt distillers' fear that any alteration in technique or raw material would ruin the product. By the 1880s this conservatism had found a new

²³ See R B Weir, *The History of the Malt Distillers' Association of Scotland 1874-1974*, Elgin, 1974, Part 1, The North of Scotland Malt Distillers' Association, 1874-1926, pp 1-56.

²⁴ Blending is the practice of mixing malt and grain whiskies.

²⁵ Glen Mhor Distillery Records, Contract Books

²⁶ Royal Commission on Whiskey, Minutes of Evidence, BPP 1908, Cmd 4181, Qn 9154

raison d'être: faced with competition from cheaper grain whisky and the growing power of the whisky blender, malt distillers waged a persistent campaign to pre-empt the exclusive use of the title 'Scotch whisky' for their product. The more extreme protagonists, in Ireland as well as in Scotland, sought legal definitions of whisky which would restrict the title to pot still whisky made from a mash *entirely composed of home-grown grain*.²⁷ At this point trade protectionism harmonized with agricultural protectionism. As Sir Horace Plunkett, the Irish agricultural reformer, told the Royal Commission:

... I am concerned to see that Irish farmers ... are not unfairly competed with through the sale of manufactured articles the raw materials of which people imagine to be produced by Irish farmers [but] are not ...²⁸

Spirit made from maize misled the consumer and deprived the farmer. Even after the campaign failed, when the Royal Commission rejected such a restrictive definition of whisky, the malt distillers were still asserting that 'foreign barley was not so suitable for Pure Malt Whisky distillation'.²⁹ A M Cowie of Mortlach distillery offered an explanation for the limitations of foreign barley which ambiguously mixed economics and taste:

Despite their soundness, it is no great advantage to use cheaper Black Sea and Danubian barleys because the cost of labour and fuel are the same in both. Also from light Danubian barleys you would never get the same quality of spirit. You do not get the same thickness and body in the whiskey.³⁰

Whilst quality was of vital importance for a heterogeneous product like malt whisky there were other financial considerations which kept the malt distillers loyal to the home cereal supplier. One was that by purchasing direct from the farm the distiller cut out the grain merchant's commission and handling charges were also lower. The other was that in the north-east beef and dairy

cattle were important and farmers were more ready to buy draff (spent grains) from distillers who took their barley.³¹ In the boom years the large quantity of draff posed a serious disposal problem for distillers.³²

One factor absent from the malt distillers' choice between home and imported barley was any scientific appreciation of their respective merits. No malt distillery employed a chemist until after the First World War, and in the application of scientific technique to the analysis of raw materials, the malt distillers lagged far behind other sections of the drink trade and even the farmers. In the brewing industry, the brewers of Burton-on-Trent could boast three Fellows of the Royal Society within their laboratories whilst two schools of brewing had been founded by 1906, one at Birmingham, the other at Heriot-Watt.³³ In Ireland, Guinness, which absorbed 40 per cent of the Irish barley crop in 1900, had begun large-scale trials of barley varieties jointly with the Irish Department of Agriculture.³⁴ The grain distillers, too, ever mindful that all they wanted from grain was 'saccharine' employed a handful of chemists and chemical engineers.³⁵ The malt distillers' lack of enthusiasm for a scientific approach frustrated some northern farmers and also the North of Scotland College of Agriculture. The College had begun testing the yield per acre of different strains of barley but lacked any confirmatory evidence of the performance of different strains in the mash

³¹ Draff is the spent grain left in the mash-tun after the liquor, wort, has been drawn off. It represents about 25 per cent of the cereals in the mash tun and is sold for animal feed.

³² NSMDA, Minute Book No 2 at 3 July 1896. Later, from 1909 to 1913, the Association formed a combination to control the distribution and sale of draff. The combination investigated schemes for drying draff to eliminate the problem of the seasonal fall in draff prices when spring grass became available.

³³ J S Hough, 'Seventy Years' Progress in Malting and Brewing', An Inaugural Lecture delivered at the University of Birmingham (nd). See also E M Sigsworth, 'Science and the Brewing Industry, 1850-1900', *Econ Hist Rev*, XVII, 3, 1965, pp 536-50.

³⁴ Lord Iveagh, 'Guinness and Agriculture', *The Times*, 10 November 1959.

³⁵ A J Tedder, Chief Inspector of the Excise, described the distillers' attitude to maize in the following way: 'All the distiller wants is a saccharine'; see Royal Commission on Whiskey, Minutes of Evidence, Qn 309.

²⁷ Emphasis added.

²⁸ Loc cit, Qn 2867.

²⁹ NSMDA Records, 1909.

³⁰ Loc cit, Qns 8973-5.

tun.³⁶ Although distillers were urged to: '...take a leaf from the book of the manufacturer of wine and try to ascertain by practical experiment which variety of barley will yield the greater quantity of whisky per bushel',³⁷ no Highland malt distiller did so before 1914. A contrast thus existed between the farmers, 'especially the younger race of men, who at most of the schools in Scotland have the opportunity of getting a technical and scientific training' and who regarded 'the growing of barley [as] more and more a science', and their customers, the malt distillers.³⁸ This lack of a stimulus from the malt distillers was held by 1914 to be a potential threat to Scottish barley growing because the Danes with their improved varieties were beginning to penetrate the market. After 1918 attitudes to science and the pattern of grain buying were to alter markedly.

What conclusions then can be drawn about the relationship between the Scottish distiller and the cereal grower during the last quarter of the nineteenth century?

The first point is the sharp contrast between the grain purchasing patterns of pot and patent still distillers. By the early 1880s

the latter group was effectively divorced from the home farmer and at the very time when the cereal farmer was facing international competition he lost a large and growing demand. The output of Scottish grain whisky increased from 19.3 million proof gallons in 1870 to 43.4 mpg in 1900 and, if the argument about the patent still distillers' switch to imported sources is correct, none of this output was translated into acres of Scottish barley. Had the patent still distillers continued to use Scottish cereals then, at the level of output in 1880 an extra 118,000 acres, or 45 per cent, would have been added to Scotland's barley acreage.³⁹ Such, then, was the crude magnitude of the Scottish barley farmers' loss from free trade.

The second conclusion is that malt whisky producers remained closely integrated to local cereal farming. Moreover, although pot still whisky had a declining share of the spirit market, the market overall was expanding. Scottish pot still output rose from 10.2 mpg in 1870 to 14.5 mpg in 1900, less than a third of the increase in grain whisky output. Using certain assumptions it is possible to estimate the effects of this output on Scottish barley acreage (Table 3).

³⁶ *Wine Trade Review*, February 1914, p 140.

³⁷ *Ibid.*

³⁸ *Ibid.*

³⁹ Estimated on a similar basis to Table 3 but allowing a greater spirit yield because of the use of unmalted barley.

TABLE 3
Estimated Increase in Demand for Scottish Barley, 1870-1900

	Scottish Pot Still Output (mpg)	Barley (qrs)	Yield per Acre (cwtspa)	Number of Acres	Total Scottish Barley Acreage	Distillers Requirements as a %
1870	4.969	361,757	16.6	87,170	244,000	35.7
1880	6.502	394,060	16.6	94,954	264,000	36.0
1880	7.740	469,090	17.9	104,824	216,000	48.5
1900	10.398	630,182	15.9	158,536	240,000	66.1
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)

Sources:

Column (1) G B Wilson, *op cit*, Table 5, p 349.

(2) Assumes spirit yield of 16.5 proof gallons per quarter.

(3) HMSO, *A Century of Agricultural Statistics*, Table 56, pp 110-11. Statistics for yield per acre do not become available until 1885. The yields for 1870 and 1880 are based on the 1885 figure.

(4) Column 2 converted to hundredweights and divided by column 3.

(5) *Ibid*, Table 46, pp 98-9.

(6) Column (4) as a percentage of column (5).

The table shows that malt distilling requirements utilized an increasing proportion of a diminishing total barley acreage. It can thus be argued that the demand from malt distillers, though insufficient to prevent barley prices falling, continued to offer the northern farmer a market for his barley. And it was a much more remunerative trade than the only alternative for barley, as a feedingstuff. This demand may explain Scotland's growing share of UK barley acreage but it rested on an insecure footing: the scientific conservatism of the Highland malt distiller.⁴⁰

Finally, the brewer also loosened his ties with the home farmer during this period, partly through the use of substitute materials (sugar, rice, sago) and partly through imported barley.⁴¹ Reliance on imported supplies was, however, very much more modest than in patent still distilling, the proportion of foreign barley in the mash tun rising from 10 per cent in 1880 to 25–30 per cent in 1898.⁴²

III

A cyclical downswing in spirits consumption after 1900 turned into a prolonged depression as consumer demand wilted in response to sharp increases in excise duty (from 10s 6d per proof gallon in 1900 to 72s 6d by 1920). The extent of the depression is worth emphasizing: in 1900, home and export markets absorbed 42.8 mpg; by 1933, the year of the 'silent season' when malt distillers agreed to produce no whisky, demand had fallen to 13.1 mpg. Comparing the loss of markets suffered by the distilling industry between 1900 and 1933 with the experience of the great staple trades, industries whose problems attracted so much attention, only ship-building suffered a

greater loss. The depression confirmed the prescient observation by the *Wine Trade Review* in 1899 that 'farmers are beginning to realise that depression in the distilling industry may be inconvenient to them, as well as for the trade'.⁴³

Within the distilling industry the bulk of the structural adjustment needed to meet this fall in demand was borne by the pot still distillers for after 1900 a new market in non-potable spirit or industrial alcohol opened up for the patent still distillers. This new market which increased from 4 mpg in 1900 to 53 mpg in 1938 brought no comfort to the farmer for the major raw material, molasses, was nearly all imported.⁴⁴ Recovery in the potable market began in 1934 but it was not to be until 1959 that demand would pass the level reached in 1900. It was understandable, therefore, that in 1934 the Maitland Committee, investigating the use of Scottish barley by distillers, should describe malt distilling as 'a diminishing trade with an uncertain and precarious future'.⁴⁵

The depression brought in its wake far-reaching changes in the ownership and organization of the malt distilling industry which had important implications for relations between farmers and distillers. A widespread merger movement after 1918 produced increasingly concentrated ownership. By 1927 the successor organization to the North of Scotland Malt Distillers' Association, the Pot Still Malt Distillers' Association of Scotland (PSMDA), consisted of 52 firms who controlled 73 distilleries.⁴⁶ Forty-six firms controlled only 1 distillery each, leaving 6 firms with possession of the remaining 27. Within that group of 6, 1 firm, the Distillers Company, owned 17 malt distilleries. And in 1927 the DCL's

⁴⁰ *Wine Trade Review*, February 1899.

⁴¹ For discussion of the non-potable market see R B Weir, 'In and Out of Ireland: The Distillers Company and the Irish Whiskey Trade, 1900–1939', *Irish Econ and Soc Hist*, VIII, 1980, pp 45–65.

⁴² Report of the Committee on Scottish Barley for Use by Scottish Distilleries, Non-Parliamentary Scottish Office Paper 1934. A summary of the report is contained in P Ford and G Ford, *A Breviate of Parliamentary Papers 1917–39*, Shannon, 1969.

⁴³ The PSMDA united all the regional malt distillers' associations.

⁴⁰ Scotland's share of total UK barley acreage rose from 9.3 per cent in 1870 to 11.1 per cent in 1900. Calculated from Wilson, *op cit*, Table 29, pp 420–1.

⁴¹ Non-malt raw materials accounted for 6.2 per cent of the materials used by the Scottish brewers in 1896; see I Donnachie, *A History of the Brewing Industry in Scotland*, Edinburgh, 1979, p 187.

⁴² Figures from Wilson, *op cit*, p 53.

acquisitions had not reached a peak. By 1934 the DCL owned 51 malt distilleries. With its earlier 'consolidation' of patent still distilling and 'The Big Amalgamation' of 1925 behind it, the firm now came to dominate malt distilling as well.⁴⁷ For the politics of the malt distilling trade this development was of crucial importance: any policy, if it was to succeed, had to have the support of the DCL. Equally, any policy desired by the DCL tended to be accepted by the trade. Its power was great not only because it was a major producer of malt whisky but also because it was a major distributor and its purchases of malt whisky were important for many independent producers. The DCL used its influence to support the Scottish barley market and sought to coerce independent distillers to do the same. To understand this development it is necessary to consider the changes which occurred in grain purchasing in the 1920s.⁴⁸

Post-war circumstances settled the debate amongst malt distillers on the relative merits of home and imported barley largely in favour of imported supplies. In the face of falling demand malt distillers were, in the words of the Maitland Committee:

compelled to overhaul their businesses to secure the maximum of economy and efficiency. As a result they began to use imported barley, which was available in large quantities of uniform quality . . .⁴⁹

Barley purchases in the 1920s were drawn from a range of countries: Denmark, Romania, Chile, Tunisia, Canada, and Australia. Older distillers, former members of the Management Committee of the Pot Still Association who were interviewed in 1974, still remembered the favourable impression Danish and Australian barley made on them. By comparison with the Scottish crop it 'was beautifully dressed, had a consistent quality with only 10 to 12 per cent moisture and was

easier to store and work'.⁵⁰ A result of the prevailing international grain surplus, these low priced imports undercut home farmers and reduced the quantity of home-grown barley used by malt distillers. In the cost-conscious 1920s the malt distillers 'realised at last that all they were buying was starch and they wanted as high a percentage of starch as possible'.⁵¹

The search for cost reductions also involved a much closer scrutiny of many of the traditional processes surrounding malt whisky production. In an industry which had been the epitome of technological conservatism, scientists slowly began to erode the mysticism that underlay many cherished processes. S H Hastie was probably the first chemist to be employed in malt distilling. He started his career with Younger's, the brewers, and then moved to Sir Peter Mackie's firm⁵² to take charge of a new laboratory at Campbeltown. In 1923 when Mackie was attempting to arrange an amalgamation with Buchanan-Dewar Ltd, Mackie pointed to the benefits arising from industrial chemistry:

His (Hastie's) work is to check all the malt. He can tell us from the Barley what the possible extract should be, and if we don't get that, he wants to know the reason why from the manager, and he generally finds out. It may be improper drying in the kiln or the yeast or some other cause. For a considerable time at Lagavulin we were getting 98% of the possible, which is very good. It keeps our various Brewers and Managers up to the scratch; and if there is any bad work or ethers in the spirits Hastie pays a visit to assist them to get rid of it. He has been with us now for two or three years and we would not be without him. Otherwise, we would be working by the old rule of thumb which is no good . . .⁵³

The commercial pressures of the depression were such that by 1939 all malt distillers were investigating their yields, with the result that

⁴⁷ The amalgamation between 'The Big Three' blenders, Buchanan-Dewar Ltd, and John Walker & Sons Ltd, and the DCL.

⁴⁸ Much of the following discussion is drawn from the author's history of the Malt Distillers' Association of Scotland.

⁴⁹ Report of the Committee on Scottish Barley, Non-Parliamentary Scottish Office Paper, 1934.

⁵⁰ Interview with former members of the Management Committee of the Pot Still Malt Distillers' Association of Scotland, 1974.

⁵¹ Ibid

⁵² Later White Horse Distillers Ltd.

⁵³ John Dewar & Sons Ltd, Cameron Papers, Correspondence with Sir Peter Mackie re-proposed amalgamation of Mackie & Co Ltd by Buchanan-Dewar Ltd, 7 August 1923.

they are estimated to have risen from about 2.20 gallons per bushel to between 2.40 and 2.45.⁵⁴ The knowledge that different grains could make significant differences to yield was a contributory factor in malt distillers' preference for imported barley.

The crisis in Highland malt distilling was also a crisis for the northern barley growers. The malt distillers traditionally drew their main supplies from 9 northern counties, from Angus round to Ross & Cromarty.⁵⁵ This regional dependence on distilling was characterized by extremes of local dependence. The Scottish agricultural census of production of 1931 showed that in the 9 counties, 54 per cent of barley grown was used in distilling. For the counties of Banff and Moray alone, however, the figure was 84 per cent. As barley imports and falling spirit production reduced the price and demand for home cereals the historically close and generally genial relations between malt distillers and northern farmers took a sharp turn for the worse. At first distillers and farmers campaigned together for a reduction in spirit duty. Failure to convince the Government to reduce the excise persuaded farmers to seek other remedies. Their first initiative, the imposition of a tariff on barley, was rejected by a Treasury Committee in 1922 on grounds of administrative complexity, opposition from beef farmers wanting cheap barley for feeding and, not least, the political controversy surrounding protection.⁵⁶ Protection having been ruled out after the general election of 1923, the farmers sought a guarantee from the malt distillers that they would not give a preference to imported

barley. The guarantee which the farmers ultimately secured was that:

under no circumstances would the distillers buy or use foreign barley if sufficient home barley was available and suitable for their purposes, and other things being equal, a preference would be given every time to home barley.⁵⁷

The farmers believed they had 'a clear and unequivocal guarantee' but failed to appreciate the significance of the phrase 'other things being equal'. The critical point was that other things were decidedly not equal when comparisons were made between home and foreign barley. Malt distillers had at least two basic objections to the home crop: its excessive moisture, and the lack of uniform grading and bulking in adequately large quantities. Both added to the difficulty and hence the cost of malting and if the distillers considered economic advantage alone 'then they would buy very little home grown barley'.⁵⁸

The guarantee therefore did little to ease the farmers' difficulties. In the northern counties barley prices, which had steadied slightly at 40s 3d per quarter in 1928, resumed their downward course and by 1930 stood at 22s 3d. In March 1930 the farmers pressed for Government action. They once again sought import controls on barley, justifying these by the distillers' failure to support the home grain market:

with all deference we are satisfied that this pledge has not been carried out. Foreign barley is still being largely imported, though the supply of home barley of good quality, is ample.⁵⁹

This accusation greatly angered those distillers who had supported the home farmer.

⁵⁴ The estimate of yields is based on interviews with former distillers. In the brewing industry improvements also increased the rate of extraction and reduced the amount of malt required; see J Vaizey, *The Brewing Industry 1886-1951*, 1960, p 84. In 1925, S H Hastie commented on science in the distilling industry: 'Subsequent to the war . . . science has forced itself upon the attention of the conservative distiller and efforts are now being made to apply laboratory control to pot still distillation', *Jour Inst Brewing*, XXXI, 4 April 1925, pp 198-215.

⁵⁵ The nine counties were Aberdeen, Angus, Banff, Inverness, Kincardine, Moray, Nairn, Ross, and Cromarty.

⁵⁶ Distillers Company Limited, Board Minute Book, No 14, October 1923.

⁵⁷ PSMDA, Minute Book, 2 March 1928.

⁵⁸ Excessive moisture made barley more expensive to store as it had to be laid out thinner and turned more often than a drier barley owing to the danger of heating and the development of mould. This meant that it occupied more floor space and required more labour than a dry barley. Germination was less even and weaker. The amount of extract from a wet barley was smaller and there was a danger of poor fermentation. With some barley distillers were compelled to dry, condition, grade, and bulk the various barleys before they could be malted. Imported barley, by contrast, was ready for malting when delivered. A comparison of home and imported barley is contained in the Report of the Committee on Scottish Barley, Non-Parliamentary Scottish Office Paper 1934.

⁵⁹ PSMDA, Correspondence, 28 March 1930.

The DCL's malt distilling subsidiary, Scottish Malt Distillers Ltd. under orders from the main Board to support the home farmer in the hope that protection might be avoided, was particularly incensed:

during the past season we have done everything we possibly could to help the farming industry generally. We have done everything possible to relieve farmers in the North of their barley, and this too at a price which value for value was much in excess of what we could have obtained by buying foreign barley. The farmers' statement . . . is quite out of place . . .⁶⁰

Strained relations were further embittered in September 1930 when the Pot Still Association recommended a 25 per cent reduction in production. The farmers interpreted this as 'a counter move to spite the farmers because they have asked for a 10s tax on foreign barley'. This inaccurately labelled 'Act of Revenge'⁶¹ was in fact one of many such recommendations the Association had made to little effect until in 1930 the DCL lent its weight to the task of reducing output (Table 4). A futile intervention by Ramsay MacDonald on holiday in his native Largs failed to improve farmer-distiller relations.⁶² The distillers would not pledge 'to buy no foreign barley because the market would go against the distillers every time'.⁶³ Thus at the beginning of the 1930s the distillers were still asserting their right 'to have a free hand in buying in the best markets'.⁶⁴ With the imposition of a 10 per cent *ad valorem* duty on foreign barley under the Import Duties Act of 1932 that freedom disappeared and the issue for malt distillers was no longer one of free trade versus protection, but whether farmers would be satisfied with a duty of only 10 per cent.

TABLE 4
Malt Whisky Production in Scotland
1923-1933
(million proof gallons)

Yearended 30 September			
1923	13.210	1929	8.863
1924	12.883	1930	8.719
1925	12.849	1931	5.288
1926	8.317	1932	2.193
1927	5.646	1933	0.285
1928	7.680		

Source: Records of Pot Still Malt Distillers' Association of Scotland.

At the same time as Britain was adopting protection it was becoming evident to the malt distillers that the agreed reductions in output in 1930 and 1931 had not been sufficient to resolve the crises in the new and mature whisky markets. In August 1932 the DCL announced that it had decided not to open any distilleries in the coming season. Independent producers were urged to follow suit in the hope that a complete cessation of distilling might have 'a certain political effect':

[it] would let the Government and Chancellor know the effects of their indifferent policy, and stimulate the farmers and others interested in the industry in the North to take a stronger action than they have hitherto done.⁶⁵

The silent season 1932-33 failed to influence the Government.⁶⁶ The Budget of 1933 brought no fiscal relief for the industry though it did bring a concession for the brewing industry with a 1d per pint reduction in beer duty in exchange for a promise from the brewers to use more home-grown barley.

The reduction in the distillers' demand for barley did move the farmers to act. Within less than a year of the imposition of the import duty on barley, the Scottish Farmers' Union was pressing for more help and in December 1933 a Committee was appointed to examine the market for distilling barley. It

⁶⁰ PSMDA, Correspondence, 2 April 1930.

⁶¹ PSMDA records, newspaper cuttings, *The Scotsman*, 8 September 1930.

⁶² MacDonald suggested a 'round-table conference' between distillers and farmers. As discussions had been taking place for several years without distillers agreeing to limit their purchases to domestic barley there was little prospect of success. Report in *Aberdeen Press and Journal*, 10 September 1930.

⁶³ PSMDA, Minute Book, March, 1930.

⁶⁴ *Ibid.*

⁶⁵ PSMDA Correspondence, Sir Alexander Walker, DCL to Secretary, PSMDA, 26 August 1932.

⁶⁶ Three distillers dissented from the closure decision and a small amount was produced.

reviewed the causes of the inferior quality of Scottish barley and discussed the possibility of establishing a marketing scheme, the Scottish Distilling Barley Growers' Association. This it rejected, recommending instead that if the position of the pot still industry 'should be stabilised owing to an adequate reduction of the duty on whisky, or any other cause' then grain producers and merchants should reorganize the trade to provide distillers with barley, graded and bulked. In exchange the distillers should undertake to buy 100 per cent Scottish malting barley, to pay a reasonable price for it, and not to buy imported barley unless Scottish supplies were exhausted.⁶⁷ The Report greatly satisfied the distillers for it left them free from a compulsory marketing scheme.⁶⁸ The farmers were much less enthusiastic, and in 1934 applied to the Import Duties Advisory Committee for a revision of the import duty on barley. The application, a joint one by the Scottish Chamber of Agriculture and the Scottish Farmers' Union, sought the replacement of the existing 10 per cent *ad valorem* duty with a specific duty of 10s per quarter. With import prices at 19s 3d this would bring import prices nearer to the average cost of production in Scotland of 32s 10d.⁶⁹ The increase was to cover all types of barley, indicating that the opposition of the cattle interest had been overcome. The National Farmers' Union of England and Wales submitted a separate application which also sought a specific duty but at double the level suggested by Scottish farmers and thus higher than the current import price. Moreover, the NFU wanted the increase to cover malting barley and substitute brewing materials such

as sugar, molasses, maize and rice, but not barley for feeding.⁷⁰ Objections to the applications were submitted by brewers and distillers. The distillers argued that the cause of the farmers' problems originated with the spirit duty and that the import duty would further increase the price of whisky. This would lower whisky production, a smaller demand for barley would result and accordingly 'the tax would be to the disadvantage of the farmers themselves'.⁷¹ Scottish Malt Distillers Ltd in their objection pointed out that the Company was supporting the Scottish farmers to the extent of £37,000 a year, the difference between home and dominion barley prices.⁷²

In May 1936 IDAC reported that it had decided 'not to make any recommendation in the matter in the present circumstances'.⁷³ It gave two main reasons. One was the position of livestock producers. A duty on all imported barley was unlikely to be 'on balance' to the advantage of the farming industry as a whole, because an estimated two-thirds of imported barley was consumed by the farming industry and a high duty would merely increase costs. The other reason was the old administrative problem of distinguishing between the different uses of imported barley. 'An elaborate and burdensome control would be necessary' and it was preferable that a solution to farmers' problems should be sought in other ways, possibly by 'voluntary undertakings as to the purchases of home grown barley . . . by the chief consuming interests'. Provided the distillers continued to encourage home growers, IDAC would regard 'the application for an increased duty on malting barley as in suspense'.

⁶⁷ Report of the Committee on Scottish Barley, Non-Parliamentary Scottish Office Paper, 1934.

⁶⁸ PSMDA, Management Committee Minutes. The Report 'served the purpose of contrasting the uneven supplies which Distillers received from home growers'.

⁶⁹ PSMDA Records, IDAC Papers, 'Application to the Import Duties Advisory Committee for the imposition of increased import duties on imported foreign barley', prepared by John Hutchison, Secretary, Scottish Chamber of Agriculture, 17 December 1934.

⁷⁰ PSMDA Records, IDAC Papers, 'Application for Imposition of Increased Tariffs on imported foreign malting barley and other material of foreign origin used in brewing, distilling, and the manufacture of malt products', prepared by the National Farmers' Union of England and Wales, 5 December 1934.

⁷¹ PSMDA Minute Book, Objections to the Proposed Increased Import Duty, 20 May 1935.

⁷² PSMDA Records, IDAC Papers, Objections to Applications by Scottish Chamber of Agriculture and National Farmers' Union from Scottish Malt Distillers Ltd, 20 May 1935.

⁷³ PSMDA Minute Book, 19 September 1936.

Following IDAC's decision members of the Pot Still Association were urged 'to refrain from purchasing foreign barley otherwise the whole question of an increased duty on foreign grain would come up again for consideration by IDAC'.⁷⁴ The DCL made it clear that it would not hesitate to use its formidable powers as a distributor to enforce the undertaking:

The D.C.L. are willing to carry out the undertaking . . . and they will expect other distillers to do the same. This is being done for the benefit of the Malt Distilling industry generally . . . If the D.C.L. are restricted to the use of home barley it may be necessary for them to purchase only whisky . . . made at other distilleries from the same raw material . . .⁷⁵

Although the DCL adhered to the undertaking and by 1939 calculated that it was subsidizing home farmers to the extent of £100,000 a year, some independent producers refused to honour the undertaking.⁷⁶ They pointed out that the undertaking had not been accompanied by a reduction in spirit duty, no additional duties had been placed on imported spirits, and there was still only an inadequate statutory definition of Scotch whisky, insufficient to protect the distillers from piracy overseas. In April 1937 the Pot Still Association met Walter Elliot, the Scottish Secretary of State, and announced their intention to withdraw from the gentleman's agreement. The distillers told him that they appreciated the importance of agriculture to the country and:

in the event of certain safeguards for the benefit of our trade being obtained we would be prepared to give the farmers something much more definite and tangible. All that we ask is that the Government give a definite designation for our product under the title 'Scotch whisky'.⁷⁷

If the Government would give the distillers a clear and exclusive title to the words 'Scotch whisky' then the malt distillers would agree to use a minimum of 70 per cent of home

grown barley in the mash. Further, the patent still distillers would also agree to use a minimum of 5 per cent of home barley. Elliot undertook to review the barley situation and suggested the distillers draft a short bill giving a legal definition for Scotch Whisky. The bill proved unnecessary, for in December 1938 the Board of Trade instituted proceedings against the proprietors of a blended Irish patent still and Scotch pot still whisky sold as 'Scotch whisky'. This ultimately, in 1939, produced the legal ruling that to merit the description 'Scotch whisky' all the contents of a container must be made in Scotland. The geographical meaning of 'Scotch' must be kept. The case finally established the legal position of Scotch whisky and ended a campaign which the trade had pursued since before the First World War.⁷⁸

But what of the other part of the deal: Elliot's review of the barley market? A scheme to create a barley subsidy fund based on contributions from the importers of barley, brewers and distillers was included in the Agricultural Development Act of 1939.⁷⁹ If distillers only used home-grown grain they could claim exemption from the levy. To distillers, ever aware of the attractiveness of their trade for 'financial lactation' the levy looked dangerous: there might be no limit to which it could rise. By August 1939 the distillers were back negotiating with the

⁷⁴ The expansion of the export trade in Scotch whisky before 1914 created a growing problem of mixtures of Scotch with indigenous spirits which were retailed as 'Scotch whisky'. This intensified in the inter-war period whilst exports, with the collapse of the home market, became ever more important. The first statutory definition of Scotch whisky was in the Finance Act of 1933 but this did not go beyond the definition adopted by the Royal Commission on Whiskey, viz a spirit obtained by distillation from a mash of cereal grains saccharified by the diastase of malt. It could not thus be used to protect Scotch against mixing with (say) Canadian or Irish whisky.

⁷⁵ Details of the scheme and brewers' reactions to it are given by Vaizey, *op cit*, p 38. The initial version of the scheme was rejected by the Brewers' Society after a referendum. The 1939 scheme imposed a maximum levy of 1s per standard barrel on beer, together with a levy on distillers and a subsidy from the Exchequer. Barley growers got a subsidy of 30s per acre which was never paid as the price per cwt was higher than the 19s 11d per cwt which had been envisaged by the framers of the scheme. See also K A H Murray, *Agriculture*, 1944, pp 34, 57, 70, and R J Hammond, *Food, Vol I, The Growth of Policy*, 1951, pp 82-4.

⁷⁴ PSMDA Minute Book, 21 August 1936.

⁷⁵ PSMDA Minute Book, 21 August 1936.

⁷⁶ DCL Annual Report, 22 July 1939.

⁷⁷ PSMDA Minute book, 16 April 1937.

Government trying to have the levy dropped in exchange for the acceptance by distillers of a guaranteed minimum price for barley and a minimum use of 50 per cent home grown barley in the mash tun. By then the barley market was curing itself as prices edged upwards in anticipation of war. Very soon the problem would no longer be one of low barley prices but of obtaining cereals at any price.

IV

In the 1920s malt distillers moved decisively towards imported supplies of barley. Unity of purpose between distillers and farmers broke on the rock of the Government's unwillingness to reduce the spirit duty. In seeking protection as a remedy for the desperate state of the barley market, the farmers encountered a problem familiar to students of protection, namely the reliance of other sections of their industry on imports. Scottish, but not English, farmers were

apparently able to resolve this internal conflict but the body regulating the tariff failed to be convinced. With oats, the main cash crop in Scotland, also facing falling demand and without wheat as an alternative, reversion to pasture followed the decline of the malt whisky industry. The depression highlighted many deficiencies in the Scottish barley farmer's approach to his market. None were solved in the 1930s, and in the 1950s complaints by distillers about the poor state in which Scottish barley was marketed were still common. Distillers, on the other hand, waged a successful campaign against increases in the import duty and greater Government regulation. The price they paid was an 'unofficial' subsidy to the Scottish barley farmer, in effect an economic rent that kept land under barley, but the subsidy brought a useful benefit in legal protection for their product. The subsidy also reflected the substantial influence and market power of one particular company.

An approach to the Agrarian History of Upland Country: Ecology and Habitat*

By ADRIAN H COWELL

THE agrarian history of upland country has not been widely studied and one of the reasons could be, as Estyn Evans explains, that 'one of the attributes of a society which is essentially pastoral is that much of the documentation is lacking'.¹ The consequent lack of information about the social and economic implications of changes in husbandry techniques may be overcome by the application of quantitative ecological methods for, as Sir George Stapledon has argued, 'vegetation accurately read is a remorseless and objective historian'.²

It is argued here that the deficiencies of documentation so lamented by Estyn Evans may be made good by the type of analysis favoured by Stapledon. In this review of ecological methods and studies of the components of upland systems the object will be to establish their relevance to the elucidation of the agrarian history of the British uplands. It should be said here that the term 'upland' is applied *sensu latu* so as to include both upland and hill farming, rather than restricted to definitions of altitude or vegetational status which would here create confusion.

Ecology is concerned with the biological relationships between organisms in a habitat. Investigations take account of the physical environment to the extent that physical factors such as climate, geology, or soil chemistry modify such species interactions. Ecology is a quantitative science in so far as it is concerned to analyse and evaluate

the dynamic processes operating or to describe numerically the vegetational patterns in order to generate explanations for what is discerned. Because man's economic activities are a biological factor in the competitive interactions between organisms, they are of interest to the ecologist so that the distinctions between historical ecologists and ecological historians depend rather more on the application of the study than upon the methods employed. As Stapledon has commented 'There are no disciplines, only problems'.³

Recondite discussion of the mathematical and statistical theories involved in the analysis of vegetation does not seem appropriate here and interested readers are referred to accounts by Kershaw and Greig-Smith.⁴ It should be emphasized, however, that all techniques used in the analysis of pattern should be subordinated to biological considerations. Some explanation of the techniques is required. Numerical studies since the war have contributed to the idea that vegetative pattern is not generally explicable in terms of chance.⁵ The physiology, reproductive strategy, and dispersal mechanisms, the anatomy, morphology, and habit (i.e. whether it grows horizontally (creeps) or vertically (climbs), whether it is tussocky or clumped), as well as its competitive efficiency, all impose pattern.⁶ Clearly the scales at which these attributes are influential differ so that at large scales pattern may be the result of gross environmental

* A glossary and list of plant names is appended to this article.

¹ E Estyn Evans, *The Personality of Ireland: Habitat, Heritage, History*, 1972.

² R Waller, *Prophet of the New Age: the Life and Times of Sir George Stapledon*, 1972.

³ Waller, *op cit*.

⁴ P Greig-Smith, 'Pattern in Vegetation', *Jour of Ecology*, 67, 3, 1979; *Quantitative Plant Ecology*, 1983.

⁵ Greig-Smith, *op cit*.

⁶ K A Kershaw, *Quantitative and Dynamic Ecology*, 1973; J L Harper, *Population Biology of Plants*, 1978.

factors whilst at the smallest scale it may be explained by spatial exclusion. Plant assemblages may often provide an index of environment and it was observations of species sociology at any type of site which advanced the techniques of classification.⁷ Essentially the species composition at any one site is recorded and analysed so as to derive a form of 'information' statistic by noting presence and absence between sites. Such a process may suggest particular species as 'environmental indicators'. For reasons of computer time a divisive classification is preferred, whilst for ecological reasons an assemblage of species (polythesis) is an advantage. Classification according to a divisive polythetic scheme has permitted ecologists to develop a diagnostic view of species (aut-ecology) or of an assembly of species (synecology) as well as to identify the environmental parameters operating.

Investigation of pattern at large scales required that a reliable means should be found in order to place a species or a site in a graded series (ordinated). To do this, Principal Components Analysis (using P.C.A. as a generic term for a whole range of similar techniques, which is not strictly correct) has been employed, and the information content is calculated in multi-dimensional space in which each element is computed orthogonally to the preceding element. It is a technique which has been of considerable use since it permits the components of variation to be identified. There are many similar techniques and computer programmes available according to requirement but a scheme which uses a process called by its author 'reciprocal averaging' is widely used. This method allows the components of variation between sites and species to be mutually informative simultaneously.⁸ A useful extension of this method, known as Indicator Species Analysis, has enhanced the flexibility of reciprocal averaging by incor-

porating a divisive polythetic classification as a first stage which allows additional sites to be introduced into the analysis without requiring a totally new computation.⁹

A study by Basset of pastures in the Camargue provides an elegant example of how the technique may be used and integrated into a most effective analysis of habitat.¹⁰ He was able to identify differences in habitat which could be explained by differences of management. Similar studies of upland environments by Bunce *et al.*, and by Hill and Jones,¹¹ in which the concern was to identify the appropriate management strategies for economic and conservation purposes could point to variations in habitat which were explicable in terms of past utilization and were documented in maps and estate documents. A similar study of limestone upland in the south Pennines, using a different technique, revealed a pattern caused by human activity.¹² In all cases cited above the vegetative analysis has been complemented by extant documents which suggests the potential of such an approach for historical purposes.

One of the quantitative techniques used to investigate pattern at smaller scales is 'Pattern Analysis', in which species are recorded by contact along a transect and the data processed by a nested block analysis of variance. The data is then plotted as a graph of mean square or covariance against block size which indicates both the scale of pattern as well as the intensity according to the size of the peak. A most appropriate example of such a technique is provided by Chadwick's study of *Nardus stricta* (Mat Grass) on upland in North Wales.¹³ Here a pattern was discerned which could not be explained by

⁷J Braun-Blanquet, *Plant Sociology*, New York, 1932.

⁸M O Hill, 'Reciprocal Averaging. An eigen vector method', *Journal of Ecology*, 61, 1, 1973, p 273.

⁹M O Hill, R G H Bunce and M W Shaw, 'Indicator Species Analysis', *Journal of Ecology*, 63, 2, 1975, p 597.

¹⁰P Basset, 'The Vegetation of a Camargue Pasture', *Journal of Ecology*, 66, 3, 1978, p 807.

¹¹Hill, Bunce and Shaw, *op cit*; M O Hill and E W Jones, 'Changes in a Welsh Forest', *Journal of Ecology*, 66, 2, 1978, p 427.

¹²D J Anderson, 'Studies on structure in plant communities 1. An analysis of limestone grassland in Monks Dale, Derbyshire', *Journal of Ecology*, 53, pp 97-107.

¹³M Chadwick, *Studies of Nardus stricta in North Wales, 1959*, unpubl PhD thesis, Univ Coll Bangor.

environmental variation or independent species characteristics. When additional evidence from economic and social history was introduced an hypothesis could be advanced to explain the pattern. A change in the meat consumption pattern consequent upon the First World War resulted in smaller joints. Where hitherto upland and hill flocks were composed of wethers, smaller joints resulted in a switch to 'fat lamb', which meant that grazing was even more selective with a consequent neglect of *N. stricta*. When the rate of cloning by rhizomes was calculated the scale of the pattern coincided with the process of propagation of *Nardus* since the switch in the composition of flocks. A study of less relevance to upland studies is nevertheless interesting. Harper and Sagar studied the distribution of *Ranunculus spp* (buttercups, in this instance) along a transect of ridge and furrow in grassland of the English midlands.¹⁴ The three species of buttercup showed preference for different types of site on the ridge and furrow so that *R. bulbosus* seemed to flourish at the top of the ridge, *R. ripens* flourished in the furrow, whilst *R. acris* occupied the intermediate sites. These preferences seemed to be related to the water relations and drainage, and this was tested by experiment. The studies of Chadwick, and of Sagar and Harper, illustrate the range of evidence utilized in ecological investigations and they equally suggest historical applications. It is also important to note that such methods of investigation cannot be applied by rote but require a knowledge of species and their competitive capacity. 'Plot-less' patterns of analysis have been developed by Yarranton,¹⁵ and by Stow and Wade,¹⁶ which might have historical applications, but I have no examples to illustrate their immediate relevance.

One of the central concerns of ecology is 'climax'. The concept, grossly simplified, postulates that the interaction of species, habitat, and environment is directional so that at any one stage of development there are typical assemblages which indicate the state of a community towards climax. That is to say that an assemblage of plants on recently colonized ground will create the conditions for different plants to flourish. Each assemblage succeeds its predecessor according to the rate of change created by the competitive interactions of all species present. The implications of 'stability' are that the components of a stable habitat are in a state of competitive equilibrium which militates against substantial further change. The point of equilibrium may be designated a 'climax'.¹⁷ Clearly the more quantitative data which becomes available from studies of any stage or process the better are the chances of constructing a mathematical model by which future and past states may be extrapolated with predictive cogency. Such processes may be modelled using matrix sequences, and Usher has demonstrated its application in a Markov model of succession.¹⁸ Stowe and Wade have employed a similar model with their data from the plot-less pattern analysis to simulate pattern changes.

Grassland may be seen as a frustrated climax of human intervention. The intervention of a selective grazer (sheep) considerably modifies the competitive relationships between species. This pastoral intervention has effects that are compounded and confounded by environmental severity, which make the task of arriving at a viable management strategy more difficult to devise.¹⁹ Such systems have been modelled and a formula has been suggested by

¹⁴ J L Harper and G R Sagar (1953) 'Some aspects of the Ecology of Buttercups in permanent grassland', Proc British Weed Conference, 1, pp 256-65.

¹⁵ G A Yarranton, 'A Plotless method of sampling vegetation', Jour of Ecology, 54, 1966.

¹⁶ L G Stowe and M J Wade, Communities and Eco-systems, 2 edn, 1975.

¹⁷ R H Whitaker, Communities and Eco-systems, 2nd edn, 1975.

¹⁸ M B Usher, 'Markovian models in Ecological Succession', Jour of Animal Ecology, 48, 2, 1979, p 413.

¹⁹ P A Gething, P Newbould and J B E Patterson (eds), 'Edinburgh-Henley Hill Pasture and its economic utilization', 3rd Colloquium of the Potassium Institute, 1972; D A Jenkins, E R B Oxley and P A Gething (eds), 'Bangor-Henley Marginal Land: Integration of Competition', 4th Colloquium of the Potassium Institute, 1974.

Noy-Meir which can take account of differential effects as a result of different stocking policy.²⁰ Ecology should not therefore be considered to be field biology for mathematicians but as a synthesis of biological studies in an attempt to comprehend the integral calculus of a living system. In an approach to agrarian history it should not be considered to be a peripheral adjunct but as central and integral to such enquiries.

The upland systems of the British Isles are of considerable importance and have been recognized as such since remoteness and self-sufficiency have been associated with meditation and sanctity. The ecology of these systems has been of interest for many years. The highland regions of Scotland and the central mountain massif of Wales have been studied extensively, either because they are districts of interest for students of Alpine flora or because they are semi-natural wildernesses where the apparently conflicting needs of efficient management and conservation need to be reconciled.²¹ The 'anthropogenic factors' in these systems are of considerable importance as identifying the extent to which man as a pastoralist, miner, forester, or as a sportsman has affected the eco-system. Much of the chronology of man's involvement has been provided by palynology.

Turner, Moore and Chater, and Pennington²² have utilised columns of bog section to analyse the pollen components vertically and deduce from those assemblages what type of habitat and environment was prevalent at any one time. This analysis is calibrated by using ¹⁴C isotope in radio dating, although that isotope is of little use for recent times. There is clear evidence of man's activities in these systems provided by the nature and frequency of species iden-

tified; an intervention which can be distinguished over 5000 years. Turner compared her sections of a Tregarron series with sections from East Anglian Fen and ventured, on the basis of the contrast between the two, to formulate a pastoral/arable index which was derived from calculating the frequency of *Plantago* species as a percentage of total *Plantago* Compositae, *Artemisia*, *Chenopodiaceae*.²³ Where this percentage was high (between 52 and 70) it is taken as indicative of grassland and grazing as well. A species such as *Pteridium aquilinum* (bracken) provides also some indication of the quality of the grassland over the period. The variations in tree pollen also permitted the sequence of clearing to be fixed. Her scheme suggests the nature of pastoral management as well as providing a chronology. It is of interest that her study was able to distinguish a period of arable cultivation which coincided with the Napoleonic wars and which faded out completely in the 1870s when there was agricultural depression.²⁴

A similar picture emerges from the study by Moore and Chater. They are able to confirm their sequence with documented episodes in Welsh economic history. Both sets of workers suggest that the traditional tribal transhumance practised in Wales was severely modified or defunct in the early middle ages at about the same period as monastic influence becomes apparent. There will be occasion to refer to this at a later time.

Elner and Wood, Guppy and Wood, Wood and Liddle *et al*²⁵ studied sediments of fresh water mountain lakes and thereby the past and present ecological state of such lakes. They have been able to determine the nature of human activity on the river

²³ Turner, *op cit*.

²⁴ P J Perry, *British Agriculture 1875-1914*, 1973.

²⁵ Janet R Elner and C Hapley-Wood, 'Sediment cores from two linking and contrasting lakes in Wales', *Br Phycological Jour*, 13, 4, 1978, p 41; S F Guppy and C Hapley-Wood, 'Sediment cored from two linked lakes in North Wales', *Freshwater Biology*, 8, 1978; C Hapley-Wood, 'Distinctions in algal ecology and production in two linked lakes in North Wales', *Ver Int Limnology*, 19, 1975, p 1045; M J Liddle *et al*, 'A Survey of the biota, environment, and use for recreation of 12 lakes in Snowdonia', *Biol Jour of Linnean Soc*, 11, 1979.

²⁰ I Noy-Meir, 'A Grazing Model', *Jour of Applied Ecology*, 15, 3, 1978.

²¹ Jenkins, Oxley and Gething, *op cit*.

²² J Turner, 'The Anthropogenic Factor in Vegetation', *The New Phytologist*, 52, 3, 1964; P D Moore and H G Chater, 'The Changing Vegetation of West-central Wales in the light of human history', *Jour of Ecology*, 67, 2, 1969, p 361.

catchment areas. A similar picture has been obtained by Seddon in his study of fresh water macrophytes.²⁶ Elnor and Wood studied the cysts of *Algal genera* to obtain an indication of the population structure, and thus the nutrient status, of the two linked lakes, Llynys Peris and Padarn. Guppy and Wood examined the chemical system of the sediments by which slate quarrying, mining, and human demography could be dated. These studies were able to recognise the subtle (and not so subtle) changes in human activity, including the advent of tourism, which is signalled by the increased input of nitrates and phosphates with concomitant changes in species structure. This change of nutrient status from 'oligotrophic' to 'eutrophic' had been reflected in the population composition and frequency of the algal cysts in the sediment. Liddle *et al* used biological indicators (alga, fresh water invertebrates, and macrophytes) to study the status of twelve Snowdonian lakes in order to assess their condition in terms of prospective recreational use. Their study was ordinated using the indicator species analysis ordination, which suggests how a combination of biological and statistical techniques contribute towards a flexible quantitative approach to a wide range of problems in ecology, human geography and social history.

Entire upland systems have been studied, and it is interesting to appreciate how the significance of environmental factors can be estimated as a result of such projects being pursued in a wide range of locations. Hughes, Ratcliffe, and Edgell²⁷ studied the north-west Conway Valley (1946), the Carneddau (1959), and Cader Idris (1961) respectively. Edgell comments to the effect that it is 'interesting how upland systems

resemble each other despite being widely diverse in geography and geology. He makes the comparison between his own study and those of Hughes and Ratcliffe, pointing out how similar are their results despite the greater oceanic influences operating on Cader Idris.

Ratcliffe developed an interesting schematization of the relationships between soils, vegetation, aspect, and biotic pressure which he derived from his studies of the Carneddau. It was a good area for such a study since the uniformity of geology and climate allowed the biotic consequences of grazing to be separated from the environmental influences; these are often confounded. His scheme is similar to that of Hughes in the Conway valley, who used a suite of soils as an environmental indicator of rainfall and biotic gradient. These studies for North Wales have general support from studies of other British upland regions, and in this respect the studies of Wyllie Fenton are interesting and notable.²⁸ He was alert to the implications of human activity, which he discusses in two papers for the *Scottish Geographical Magazine*. The study of vegetation which he offers is associated with specific changes in management strategy. He, too, observes how biotic pressure by grazing has contributed to the deterioration of upland rough pasture, so that he is able to relate an instance of a change from a balanced grazing stock with cattle to sheep to a definitive vegetative analysis. The study lends cogency to a diarist's lament: 'Our mountains which were of old pastured by black cattle are now pastured only by sheep'. *Nardus stricta* (mat grass) and *Molinia acuticulata* appear at the expense of finer species. In a more concisely ecological paper he is able to support his generalizations by ecological evidence of historical significance and relevance.²⁹

²⁶ B Seddon, 'Aquatic macrophytes as limnological indicators', *Freshwater Biology*, 2, 1972, p. 107; 'Report on the organic deposits in the pool of Dinas Emrys Savery', *Arch Cambrensis*, 109, 13, 1960.

²⁷ R E Hughes, 'The Vegetation of the North West Conway Valley', *Journal of Ecology*, 37, 1959, p. 306; D A Ratcliffe, 'Environment and Vegetation of the Carneddau', *ibid*, 47, 2, 1959, p. 388; M C R Edgell, 'The Ecology of an upland sheep walk on Cader Idris', *ibid*, 50, 1961.

²⁸ W Fenton, 'Vegetation of upland environments', *Scot Geog Mag*, 1933; 'Vegetation and Grazing Management', *ibid*, 1937; 'Vegetation and Grazing in the British Uplands', *Journal of Ecology*, 25, 1937.

²⁹ Fenton, *op cit*.

Milton's studies of upland grass agromony are also of interest. By the establishment of experimental plots and by sustained recording of the changes observed during some thirty years he provided scientific cogency to explanations of how paradises are lost and regained.³⁰ Milton controlled grazing, and he applied nutrients to sample tracts of upland pasture at three different locations. The sites were at comparable altitudes (950 ft, 290 metres). At a site at Bwylchrosser there was a sward of fescue bent together with some lowland species whilst there was no *Nardus*, *Molinia*, *Vaccinium* (bilberry) or *Calunna* (heather). At a site at Llety, at the same altitude, there was a typical upland fescue sward in which there were some bents, as well as traces of *Molinia*, *Nardus*, *Vaccinium*, and *Calunna* but no lowland species. At a further site at Llety there was a *Molinia*-dominated sward containing some fescue, but also *Nardus*, *Carex* (sedges) and *Juncus* (rushes). The soils could be considered similar as regards exchangeable lime, potash, and phosphate. The experimental treatments were as follows:

Experimental treatments

- (a) No fertilizer
 - (b) Superphosphate at 42 cwts/acre/assnum
 - (c) Ground limestone at 2 tons/acre/per five years
 - (d) Superphosphate, Kainit, and, Sulphate of ammonia at ratio 4:4:1 respectively (PKN)
 - (e) As for (d) plus 2 tons limestone every fifth year
- NB At each centre, ie Bwylchrosser and Llety 1 and 2 there were a series of plots which were fenced to facilitate individual grazing of each plot on a monthly grazing regime during the season (April–October). Another series was unfenced and thus open to grazing. At Bwylchrosser grazing included cattle.

The results are not easily summarized since many detailed changes are of considerable ecological interest. Some of the salient points may be discussed because they do suggest a number of elements in the argu-

ment which connects ecology with agrarian history.

Herbage production increased at all the centres as a consequence of controlled grazing. The greatest increase was on those plots at which PKN were applied and on those on which additional limestone was applied. The seasonal distribution of growth was also improved. The most interesting changes effected were those of botanical composition. On the Llety *Molinia* sward (Centre 2), which could be considered an example of poor quality grazing, there was no ingress of lowland species on the unfertilized plots irrespective of grazing regime. Under open grazing with additional nutrients the sward changes were quite small during the first fifteen years but in the latter years of the experiment the *Molinia* component fell appreciably to be replaced by *Festuca ovina* (sheep's fescue) and *Nardus stricta*. This change could be attributed to the change of management during the years of the Second World War. In the fenced area the decline in *Molinia* occurred during the first five years where it was replaced by *Festuca ovina* and *Agrostis tenuis* (bent). During the next twenty years bent species replaced the fescue. In the fertilized and controlled swards lowland species became established during the first five years. The subsequent changes, depending upon fertilizer treatment, are remarkable and may be summed up as a transformation of an upland sward to a quality comparable with a lowland sward, including lowland species, both grasses and herbs, bent, white clover (*Trifolium ripens*) and red fescue (*Festuca rubra*). The close attention to sward composition as well as the sustained length of experimental observations is of interest for economic future of the uplands but its value for the analysis and interpretation of historical processes is also clear. The results of species composition at the Llety no. 1 site and at Bwylchrosser are also of interest, but since this review is more concerned to illustrate the type of studies with a few examples of results which illuminate the ecological approach

³⁰ W E J Milton, 'Grazing and species composition', *Jour of Ecology*, 38, 1940; 'Further Observations on grazing and species', *ibid*, 46, 1948.

there is no need to elaborate. The significance of the above results will become clear in later discussion.

The study was of greater significance when sheep performance was also studied. The standard rate of growth, the net weight gain, and the lambing rate were increased significantly on the improved plots,³¹ and it could be said that the difference in the viability of any farm could be altered, yielding profit rather than persistent loss.³² This is demonstrated when comparisons are made with contemporary farms in Ireland. Net weight gains of some 10 pounds are recorded on improved pastures, whilst the survival rate and the birth rate of infant lambs were increased from approximately 1.3 to 1.9–2.0, and from 0.7 to 1.9 respectively. The effectiveness of these findings has been supported by the practical improvements wrought at Fassfern (Aberdeenshire). The studies of Milton have confirmation from studies in Cumbria,³³ and from Scotland.³⁴ In the Scottish study the relationship between vegetation, soil status, and grazing regime has been noted by Nicholson and Robertson so that in 1958 they are able to write: 'The available evidence suggests that the influence of man and animals in comparatively recent times has been considerable. . . . For some years prior to 1944 balanced grazing has not been practised.' King, in his study of a *Festuca-Agrostis* grassland,³⁵ is able to comment that not all grasslands are equally susceptible to the incipient encroachment of *Nardus* but that all 'Low soil base status or increased soil moisture are predis-

posing factors', or as a result of 'selective sheep grazing'. Welch and Rawes studied the effect of two levels of cutting on an upland sward in Cumbria, the first cut at 3–4 cm and the other at soil level (the latter being an approximation of the level at which sheep graze). It was possible to distinguish the nature of the differences in an unseeded regeneration. Park *et al* had experimented with transplanting and survivals in the same area and were able to build up a picture of the environmental potential of species independent of grazing.

Studies of grazing patterns and the behaviour of sheep have obviously considerable relevance. Hunter has studied the home range behaviour of Cheviots together with their sward preferences and the associated vegetational changes, on a traditional 'weft' grazing policy in which there are nine distinguishable qualities of sward (by a criteria of vegetative composition). Differences according to season were also noted.³⁶

The studies discussed hitherto have been concerned with aspects of vegetation in upland environments as well as of the role of sheep in modifying that composition. Studies into the grazing behaviour of cattle and goats (and deer which have been overlooked here) have not been mentioned, but Milton's study at Bwylchrosser, and Milner *et al*,³⁷ who studied feral goats in Wales, indicate that neither of these animals is as selective in their grazing as are sheep. The flocking behaviour of sheep is also of interest because of the flushes they create by their urine and dung at the sites of night camping. At these sites noticeably luxuriant growth occurs where nutrients have been concentrated, and this process is important. There are metabolic differences between adult and lamb so that there is a differential rate of nutrient retention of the lamb which retains Ca and P to a greater extent than the adult. Clearly in a

³¹ I L Jones, *Studies on Hill Land in Wales*, Tech Bull no 2, Univ Coll Aberystwyth Welsh Plant Breeding Station, 1967.

³² J P Newton, 'The Future of the British Uplands', in CAS Paper 2, *Farming and Forestry in the Hills and Uplands*, 1977.

³³ M Rawes and D Welch, 'Upland Productivity of Vegetation and Sheep at Moor House National Nature Reserve Westmorland', *Oikos Supplementum*, 11, 1, p 72; D Welch and M Rawes, 'The early effects of excluding sheep from high level grassland in the Northern Pennines', *Jour of Applied Ecology*, 1, 1, 1964, pp 281–300; K J F Park, D Welch and S E Allen, 'Studies in Upland Grazing', *Jour of Ecology*, 50, 2, 1962, p 260.

³⁴ I A Nicholson and T Robertson, 'Soils and Vegetation in North East Scotland', *Jour of Ecology*, 46, 2, 1958, p 260.

³⁵ T King, '*Festuca agrostis* grassland in South East Scotland', *Jour of Ecology*, 49, 2, 1961, p 350.

³⁶ R F Hunter, 'The Grazing of hill sward types', *Jour Br Grassland Assoc*, 9, 1954, p 195; 'Hill Sheep and their Pasture', *Jour of Ecology*, 50, 3, 1962, p 651.

³⁷ C Milner, R Goodier and I G Crook, 'Feral Goats in Wales', *Nature in Wales*, 11, 1, 1968, p 3.

situation where the lamb is removed from the pastures early there is a greater loss of nutrients than when the adult is retained.

Where there is burning and clearing of bracken for either sheep grazing or for sport the resulting patterns may be analysed by pattern analysis, whilst further investigation can identify the age structures, and cycles of competition between bracken and heather have been demonstrated by Watt, Gimmingham, and Barclay-Estrup.³⁸ Watt has studied a whole range of such cycles which have proved a powerful conceptual basis for contemporary research into population and quantitative plant studies. Greig-Smith has pointed out how human activity may perpetuate a single age cohort for many generations after the original episode of burning or clearing. An example of such interference has been provided by Anderson in his study of limestone grassland in Derbyshire.

Studies of plant populations over a long period are of considerable value. Tamm in Sweden studied survivorship and floristics of a meadow which had been divided and had been subsequently managed in two distinct ways (grazing and mowing).³⁹ Similar studies have been pursued over a shorter time scale by the School of Plant Biology at UCNW Bangor. Tamm's studies provide a very good indication of how habitat changes wrought by man interact with specific traits to influence species composition at individual sites. Such studies also demonstrate how an ecological approach to agrarian history is not merely a matter of borrowed technique but imply an integrated biological understanding of a habitat in which men have intervened.

The deliberate use of ecological methods to investigate problems of upland agrarian history are illustrated by the studies and observations of R Alun Roberts and R E Hughes.⁴⁰ Studies of the relationships of the managed habitat and environment in Snowdonia by these two men extend back over fifty years of intimate acquaintance with all aspects of Snowdonia. They are studies which remain stimulating and vital contributions to historical investigation of Snowdonia's social and ecological history; they are also a splendid refutation of the excessive specialization of disciplines. At a summer meeting of the British Ecological Society in 1934 there was an excursion to Cwm Idwal in Snowdonia. On that occasion R A Roberts explained how the vegetation of the area was explicable in terms of its recent management history. The observation of *Nardus stricta* and *Molinia spp* was, he argued, a direct consequence of the enclosure movement during the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries which had destroyed balanced grazing hitherto in use and contributed to the increased intensity of sheep grazing and the associated neglect of upland cattle and goats. He recalled that sheep had been less intensively grazed during the middle ages and were introduced during the sixteenth century. The enclosure movement, he argued, destroyed the modified pattern of 'transhumance' which had survived relatively intact with livestock being

³⁸ A S Watt, 'Pattern and Process in the plant community', *Journal of Ecology*, 35, 1947; 'Bracken versus Heather: a study in plant sociology', *Journal of Ecology*, 43, 2, 1955, p 490; P Barclay-Estrup and C H Gimmingham, 'Vegetation Change in relation to the Calluna cycle', *ibid*, 57, 3, 1969, p 737; H Gimmingham, 'The effects of grazing on the balance of *Erica cinerea* and *Calluna vulgaris*', *ibid*, 37, 1, 1949, p 109.

³⁹ C O Tamm, 'Composition and Vegetation in grazed and mown sections of a former hay meadow in Sweden', *Oikos*, 7, 1956, p 144.

⁴⁰ R Alun Roberts, 'Report on B.E.S. Summer Meeting in Bangor', *Journal of Ecology*, 23, 1935, p 252; 'Agricultural Ecology', Univ Coll Bangor, Roberts Papers, Bangor MS 20081; 'Ecology of human occupation and land use in Snowdonia', *Journal of Ecology*, 47, 2, 1959; R E Hughes, 'Ecology of Snowdonia: ecology of live stock production', *Nature*, 176, 1955, pp 595-6; 'Sheep Population and Environment in the mountains of North Wales', *Journal of Ecology*, 46, 1, 1958, p 169; 'Studies in Sheep Population and Environment in North West Wales', *Journal Applied Ecology*, 10, 1, 1973, p 107; R E Hughes, J Dale, L Ellis-Williams, and D I Rees, 'Studies in Sheep Population and Environment in the mountains of North West Wales: status of sheep since medieval times', *ibid*, 10, 1, 1973, pp 113-72; R E Hughes, J Dale, M D Mountford, and L Ellis-Williams, 'Studies in Sheep Population and Environment in the mountains of North West Wales: contemporary distribution of sheep populations', *ibid*, 12, 1, 1975, pp 165-78; R E Hughes, J Lutman, A G Thompson, and J Dale, 'A Review of density and ratio of sheep and cattle in medieval Gwynedd with particular reference to the uplands', *Journal Merionedd Hist and Rec Soc*, 7, 4, 1973.

transferred to the hafod (summer farm) from the hendref (winter farmstead). The contemporary importance of winter grazing was emphasized by MacLeod, speaking in his capacity as a representative of Scottish upland farmers at a colloquium in Edinburgh, when he observed that the challenge to expertise still remains that of winter grazing. Roberts implies that the structure of transhumance remained intact throughout the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries as well as in the early eighteenth century, and insists, moreover, that the system was balanced as well as being 'wiser' than the 'efficient' intensive policy developed subsequently. Shades of this analysis can be found in Chadwick's explanation for *Nardus stricta* pattern, for Roberts can also point out the disastrous ecological consequences for upland pasture created by 'fat lamb' which impoverishes the nutrient status of the soil, and *ergo* the quality of the sward. He develops his argument further in his paper on 'The Ecology of Sheep Farming in Snowdonia', as well as in an earlier address to the British Association.⁴¹

R E Hughes has been equally interested in applying ecological expertise to the problem of upland pastures. Papers on the problems of human intervention into the environment have been appearing since 1940. In two recent papers Hughes *et al* have studied the status of sheep in Snowdonia since the middle ages through to the present where they have placed in perspective the present distribution and intensity of sheep populations.⁴² The general findings of Roberts and Hughes are apposite here. Essentially Hughes does not subscribe to the Roberts thesis. His historical studies suggest that within the upland region of Snowdonia (*sensu latu*) the ratio of sheep to cattle has always been higher. From monastic records and extrapolations from evidence of the

medieval wool trade he estimates this ratio to be 1.6:1, compared with a figure for Wales as a whole of 2.5:1. In the more mountainous districts of North Wales the figure varies between 10.1:1 and 21.1:1. Subsequently this figure rises to between 21.1 and 52.1:1 by 1969. These figures conceal further subtle variations. At Bodelwyddelan, on the Wynn estate, the figure of 10.1:1 may be compared with a figure of 21.1:1 at Llanberis. During the eighteenth century the comparable figures are 31.1:1 and 51.1:1 respectively.

There are other difficulties with these figures. They conceal demographic and economic fluctuations as well as the problems of defining 'rough pasture' and 'summer grazings'. Diaries and estate accounts of the Wynn estate at Gwyddir also raise the problem of the extent of pasture at any one time. The studies of Turner and of Moore and Chater would seem to confirm the estimates of Hughes and to challenge the arguments advanced by Roberts.⁴³ The evidence suggests that there was no discontinuity during the late eighteenth century but that the ratio of sheep to cattle was rising as part of a continuous trend from the sixteenth century onwards. The change in ratio, however, does not suggest the origin of the change. Not all the variations can be explained in terms of a decline in the stocking of cattle alone nor does documentary evidence suggest it to be the case. There is certainly documentary evidence and ecological evidence for the assertion that sheep have been intensively stocked to an increasing extent since c.1800. We have thus a problem of interpretation which is not easily resolved. Hughes believes that the evidence provided by the Cistercian monastic pastures is not broadly applicable, and there would appear to be support for this from the ecological studies of Turner and Chater and Moore.

Contemporary evidence is also capable of influencing historical interpretation.

⁴¹ R Alun Roberts, 'Report', *op cit*; 'Agricultural Ecology', *op cit*.

⁴² F V Emery, 'The Farming Regions of Wales', in Joan Thirsk (ed), *Agrarian History of England and Wales*, IV, 1967; E L Jones, 'Environment, Industry and Agriculture', *Journal of Agrarian History*, 1977.

⁴³ Turner, *op cit*; Moore and Chater, *op cit*.

Hughes *et al* have used evidence of a sheep census taken continuously since 1956 during the summer grazing period of April to October. A complex picture of grazing, vegetation, and environment has been tested statistically and there seems reason to argue that grazing is dependent upon a gradient inversely proportional to rainfall, acidity of soil, geological parental material, and altitude. This study raises many questions. What it suggests immediately is that Roberts's thesis is too simplistic and that his documentary evidence is not drawn from sufficiently representative samples. The thesis that goats played a more significant part in the grazing of Snowdonia is not supported by the inventories of stock cited by Emery, where goats hardly featured at all, and indeed some of the ecological studies suggest that some of the ideal sites for goat grazing had not been so grazed despite the presence of feral herds.

Ecological history is perhaps producing the first historiographic argument on upland agrarian evidence, and indeed one where the ecological evidence is central to the resolution of the dispute. It is hoped the problem will be discussed in a later paper in which the integrated work of Hughes will be discussed in closer detail and the ecological facets of Roberts's thesis will be examined accordingly.

The environmental evidence does not feature in agrarian historical studies. The latest volume of the Cambridge *Agrarian History* discusses the uplands (*sensu latu*) quite tersely. Mention is made of the improvements in the quality of upland pasture innovated by Stapledon and Bligh and pioneered in the Cahn Hill scheme. There is brief mention there of the changes in the structure of the flock resulting from the switch to 'fat lamb', but the significance in the process of deterioration of these changes is scarcely appreciated. Brief mention is made of these changes by Stamp and Darling; the former in his commentary in the *Land Utilisation Survey*, and the latter in his

monograph on *The Highlands and Islands*. This ecological approach to upland agrarian history is often intimated or implied whenever there are studies of the impact of human agencies upon environment whilst there has rarely been a full appreciation of the potential of quantitative ecology as a technique in investigations of upland agrarian history. E L Jones writes:

Among historians only the Annales School in France, and in the English speaking world a few professionals, not professional Agrarian Historians have shown much awareness of the interplay of different Eco-systems with the presence of long term economic change.

The view receives support from Le-Roy Ladurie, who recognises that ecology is part of the 'Territory of the Historian'.

This paper seeks to recommend to agrarian historians the range of ecological expertise and technique available for the enquiry into upland agrarian history. It is hoped that a further paper will consider some work which exemplifies the value of such an approach, and there would also appear to be scope for evaluating the value for agrarian history of the extant resources contained within past journals of agricultural science as well as re-appraisal of traditional sources which could assume new significance when placed into juxtaposition with new evidence. This review has been concerned to describe some of the techniques available to ecologists concerned with the condition of past habitats and historic environments. Where the elucidation of these conditions requires the knowledge of economic management the scrutiny of historical documentation is clearly essential. It is often the case that such historical documentation assumes new significance once ecological processes are understood. It is hoped that these indications of the state of ecological knowledge of upland systems and the range of work accomplished has been communicated (although necessarily rather summarily) so that there is a basis for further discussion between the several disciplines which con-

verge and interdigitate when they focus upon the complex of economic, cultural, biological, and environmental factors which constitute upland agrarian history.

GLOSSARY OF TERMS USED

DIVISIVE CLASSIFICATION

A means of classifying sites by species, in which the total species complement is divided into subgroups on the basis of presence or absence to derive an information statistic.

POLYTHETIC

A classification system which uses a range of criteria (ie species) as a basis for division.

DIVISIVE POLYTHETIC

A classification which combines both the above characteristics.

COMPETITION

This concept is at the very basis of evolutionary theory. The competitive interaction between species is the dynamo in evolutionary change and the study of implications of evolution for physiology, morphology, and population genetics is fundamental to ecological theory.

BASE EXCHANGE

EXCHANGEABLE BASES

Soils are classified in terms of their physical and chemical characteristics. Among the chemical criteria is pH (dissociated hydrogen ions in solution). Ions of other chemical elements PKN, Ca, Mg, present in the parent rock or in the soil are essential for nutrition. Thus the reactivity of these ions in the soil (their capacity to release or exchange ions) is a critical aspect in the evaluation of a soil.

ENVIRONMENT AND HABITAT

Used here to distinguish the factors at a site which originate from the climate and the physics and chemistry of soil and parent rock (environment) from factors consequent upon the interaction of organisms in an ecological community. The terms have no absolute delineation.

MATHEMATICAL (MARKOV) MODELS

Models in which measured values are derived for biological and environmental processes so that the entire system may be investigated mathematically. The models which seek to deal with many processes over time employ matrices among which number Markov models.

¹⁴C

An isotope of the element carbon: the proportions of the isotopes of carbon with half lives of some 5000 years are useful for dating.

APPENDIX OF PLANT NAMES

Scientific name	Vernacular
<i>Nardus stricta</i>	mat grass
<i>Ranunculus repens</i>	creeping buttercup
<i>acris</i>	meadow buttercup
<i>bulbosus</i>	bulbous buttercup
<i>Plantago</i> species	plantains
Family Plantaginaceae	
Family Compositae	family of herbaceous or woody plants among which number the Rag worts and Groundsels
Cruciferae	Annual or perennial herbs (rarely weedy species) among which number radishes, mustards and such plants as Lady's smock
Genera Artemisia	A genera of the Compositae including mugworts and wormwoods
Chenopodiaceae	Annual or perennial herbs, among which number Good King Henry, Fat Hen, Goosefoots, and Oraches
<i>Pteridium aquilinum</i>	Bracken fern
<i>Calluna vulgaris</i>	Heather; so also are the Ericas (Family Ericaceae)
<i>Molinia caerulea</i>	Purple moor grass. Known also as 'flying bent' but that latter name is misleading. A deciduous grass
<i>Vaccinium myrtillus</i>	Bilberry
<i>Carex</i> species	Sedges. The most frequent on upland habitats discussed is <i>Carex flacca</i>

Juncus species

Rushes. Amongst the rushes associated with wetter upland habitats is *Luzula campestris* but it is not limited to uplands. Vernacular: 'weeps brush' or field woodrush

*Other grasses**Agrostis* species

Bent grasses

Festuca spp

The fescues, ie *F rubra* — red fescue, *F praetensis* — meadow fescue, *F ovina* — sheeps fescue

Deschampsia flexuosa

Wavy hair grass

NB. The standard flora for Great Britain is Clapham, Tutin, Warburg. *Flora of The British Isles* published with separate volumes of black and white drawings.

Notes and Comments

WINTER CONFERENCE, 1983

The Winter Conference was held on Saturday 3 December 1983 at the Institute of Historical Research, Senate House, London, on the theme 'The Urban Consumption and Marketing of Agricultural Produce'. As in previous years, the conference was held jointly with the Historical Geography Research Group of the Institute of British Geographers, and 55 members of the two groups attended. Papers were presented by Dr R H Britnell (University of Durham), 'Agricultural trade and the market place in medieval towns'; Dr J A Chartres (University of Leeds), 'The modernization of agricultural marketing after 1640'; Dr G Shaw (University of Exeter), 'Food supply in Victorian cities'; and Dr P J Atkins (University of Durham), 'A comparative study of marketing and consumption in London's dairy and fruit and vegetable trades circa 1800-1914'. The Society is grateful to Dr Overton, who made all the arrangements for the conference, and who continued the successes of our previous organizers, and to the Director and staff of the Institute of Historical Research for providing accommodation for the conference.

ECONOMIC HISTORY SOCIETY CONFERENCE, 1983

The last dozen copies of the pamphlet produced by the Society for the last conference of the Economic History Society, containing four papers on agricultural history, are available from the Secretary, price £2 post free. Details appeared in the last issue of the *Review*.

SPRING CONFERENCE, 1984

The next Spring Conference will be held at Charlotte Mason College of Education, Ambleside, Cumbria, 9-11 April 1984. The programme is as follows: Mr William Rollinson (University of Liverpool), 'Aspects of Rural Life in Cumbria in the 17th, 18th and 19th centuries'; Dr John Langdon (University of Birmingham), 'Horses and the Development of Farm Transport in Medieval England'; Mr Donald Woodward (University of Hull), 'Life on a Yorkshire Estate in the 17th century: Henry Best revisited'; Dr Peter Solar (University of York), 'Irish Agriculture in the Early 19th century: a Reappraisal'; Dr Tony Phillips (University of Keele), 'Farm Building Provision in England, 1850-1900'; and Professor Jeremy Elston (University of Leeds), 'An agronomist's attempt to explain the changes in the yields of wheat in England and Wales from 1886'. Mr Rollinson will lead an excursion into the countryside around Ambleside on the afternoon of 10 April. The programme and booking forms are inserted into this issue of the *Review*. Any enquiries about the Conference should be addressed to the Secretary of the Society.

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING, 1984

The 33rd Annual General Meeting of the Society will be held at 9.15 am on Tuesday 10 April 1984 at Charlotte Mason College of Education, Ambleside, Cumbria. Nomination forms for the officers and members of the Executive Committee are inserted into this issue of the *Review*, and nominations should reach the Secretary no later than Tuesday 3 April 1984.

Annual List and Brief Review of Articles on Agrarian History, 1982*

By RAINE MORGAN

AMONG the few important articles on prehistory published in 1982 the continuing debate on agricultural origins figured most prominently. Kennedy (125), for example, takes a critical look at the North-Thomas thesis which argues that the emergence of exclusive communal territories (resulting from population pressure) played a crucial role in the birth of agriculture due to the incentive it gave for innovation. In particular, he criticizes the assumption that there were no exclusive property rights before agriculture was practised and argues that the barrier to development was not lack of incentive to invest but the mobility of hunters and gatherers which prohibited capital accumulation. Mayhew (145), too, questions the North-Thomas stress on property rights and also finds inconsistencies with the demographic, archaeological and anthropological record. From the example of contemporary under-developed societies, Testart (207) believes that the presence or absence of agriculture is a much less useful distinction than whether or not intensive storage was the cornerstone of an economy, since agriculturalists and storing hunter-gatherers have more in common than either have with non-storing hunter-gatherers. It has been thought that 'sols lessivés' — the argillic brown earths — were linked to clearance and agricultural activity, where they lay beneath neolithic earthworks. However, a review of pedological literature by Fisher (70) concludes that the belief is an unsound one and he suggests instead that sols lessivés developed with the post-glacial forest. Drewett (61) has collected data in the form of seeds, animal bones and artefacts to provide the basis for an economic resource area analysis of Bronze Age sites on the South Downs. From this an economic activity model is proposed. The coppiced hazel stems recently disinterred from the Somerset Levels, where they formed part of an important prehistoric trackway, are discussed again by Coles *et al* (40). From this evidence it is possible to gain valuable insights into ancient woodland practices that would have otherwise remained inaccessible. Ard marks discovered at Sumburgh in Shetland are interpreted by Lamb and Rees (128). These confirm that the implement was tilted to left or right to achieve the

effect of a mouldboard, but do not suggest a regular criss-cross ploughing pattern, and the authors warn against assuming that neat uniform fields resulted.

Medievalists were far more prolific in 1982. In a lengthy article Brenner (25) takes up objections to his argument that economic developments in pre-industrial Europe were determined by social structures based on property, while Day (51) offers a classical economic analysis of productivity and population growth to explain expansion and decline of manorialism. Opinions have differed over when the custom of peaceful and secure inheritance of baronial lands became established in England. By dating instances of forfeiture, escheat and other forms of disinheritance DeAragon (52) places the gradual crystallization of custom in the late eleventh and early twelfth century. Holt (108) looks at the different relationship of the family or kin to its property before and after 1066, and in an examination of feudal wardship Walker (218) denies that males and females were treated differently. Instead both married as they wished if the feudal marriage tax was paid. Rural settlement is still attracting a good deal of attention. Barrett (10) surveys field evidence of dispersed enclosed homesteads in Ireland and tries to explain the puzzling discontinuity in the distributional pattern. Environmental constraints and evidence for alternative settlement forms are discussed as well as the relationship between indigenous and alien types. Harvey (97) speculates upon the development of some apparently unplanned villages in eastern Yorkshire and constructs a model of township development for the area. This consists of different stages where the complexity of manorial structure and degree of seigniorial power were important influences underlying change. The usefulness of Anglo-Saxon charters is again illustrated by Hooke (109) in her search for the early patterns of estates and territorial administration in the West Midlands. Findings show nodal areas, often near rivers, linked to secondary development in more heavily wooded countryside suggesting a system of organization based on sound economic foundations. Dyer (63) undertakes a study of the same geographical area in order to learn when and why villages there were deserted. He blames long-term demographic, social and land-use changes between 1320 and 1520, rather than mere landlord acquisitiveness, for abandonment, and maintains that the English experience had far more

* Publications are dated 1982 unless otherwise noted. References to articles or off-prints should be sent to the Bibliographical Unit, Institute of Agricultural History, University of Reading.

in common with events in Europe than previously believed. Nor were changes necessarily indicative of a pernicious economic decline but represented important and helpful adjustments in agrarian organization to altered needs. Field systems are again the subject of considerable research this year. Hutton (116) describes how statistical pattern recognition techniques may help interpret their history and offers an Irish case study. To test theories about the cause of land scattering Pryor (177) has carried out a world wide examination of contemporary examples. Findings offer some support for the belief that production scheduling problems, where the growing season was short and difficulties existed in obtaining labour at work peaks, led to scattering. But he finds little to support the view that risk, joint production, striving for equality or even partible inheritance underlay its development. Yelling also (239) is critical of the view that economic considerations alone determined the nature of open fields or enclosure, and argues that the distinctiveness of midland and south-eastern systems justify the inclusion of social and institutional factors in any explanation. The evolution of land division in west Sussex is investigated by Nash (155) using field work, morphometric analysis and documentary research. He dates planning and subsequent remodelling to the thirteenth century and links it to the pressure of population which encouraged closer attention to property rights, size of holdings and tenure of land. In a detailed local study of relict boundaries on Dartmoor Fleming and Ralph (73) reconstruct the sequence of colonization and land use. They also show how strips can be used to establish land mensuration and provide evidence for early use of the Devon acre. With a different approach to the study of landscape history Whitehead (224) investigates the flora of a flood meadow and relates it to both physical factors and human influence, including communal haymaking, grazing and drainage since the medieval period. The range of sources available for this type of study is described by Gulliver (89). As usual very little has been written on actual farming. However, Langdon (129) provides a useful comparative study of the economics of using horses and oxen for draught in medieval England. He shows that although oxen did cost less to keep and were generally preferred on demesnes, the special circumstances of peasant farming made horses the more economical and preferred draught animal outside. Circumstances included the lower draught requirements of peasant holdings, different fodders available from them and the greater flexibility of the horse generally. Developments in cattle husbandry from the time of the Roman occupation to the early modern period are discussed by Armitage (5), who exploits osteological evidence for information on the size and appearance of stock at different times. The accounts of a northern demesne farm are analysed by

Lomas (134) to show that, contrary to belief, arable production could be profitable in the fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries where land was well situated and intelligently managed. In a welcome shift of attention away from eastern England Hare (94) looks at the circumstances of the uprisings of 1450 in Wiltshire. Economic recession and difficulties in the cloth trade emerge as the major underlying causes of the unrest at that time. More directly on the textile trade, Hanham (92) examines the financial side of wool exporting and estimates that staplers were averaging profits of around 20 per cent between the 1470s and 1540s.

Source material of the early modern period has come in for some close scrutiny, particularly the land tax records. Ginter for example (82) argues that they are not sufficiently consistent or reliable to be used as a guide to degrees of wealth inequality and he challenges Soltow's recently published interpretation of them. Wilson (231) also highlights unpredictability and variation in the incidence of land tax data which he insists cannot show precise acreages or property values. But Soltow (199) has compared data from 1798 with fresh valuations of 1803-15 and maintains that, despite problems, the records are the most useful indication of wealth available, and confirm continuing inequality in England. Also taking the more positive view Beckett (17) demonstrates the value of land tax returns for studying the English economy in the eighteenth century. The lives of ordinary Welsh people have been overlooked in the past, but Griffiths (86) has analysed lay subsidy assessments of 1543 to reconstruct the social and economic geography of the Glamorgan vale. For a slightly later period Palliser (167) describes the Bishops' returns of 1563 and 1603 in relation to the study of population, and Harrison (95) focuses upon Elizabethan field books. These can identify manorial holdings, field names and acreages of land under different uses, but lack details of sub-tenantry and can give a highly distorted picture of both land holding and the socio-economic structure. It was Kerridge's view that the returns of the Inquisitions of Depopulation could not show the extent of illegal enclosure. However, a critical examination of these sources by Martin (144) suggests that difficulties were exaggerated and that those returns of 1607, in particular, provide a true measure of its 'minimum' extent. Quoting revised population estimates, Palliser (166) offers an optimistic view of what has become known as 'Tawney's Century'. He claims that up to 1640, due to prudential rather than positive checks, population remained below medieval peaks, allowing a favourable balance with resources to be maintained. Gregory King's dubious social table has been subjected to further revision by Lindert and Williamson (130), who portray the seventeenth century as more prosperous, more industrial and less socially polarized than King indicated. Two local estate studies have a similarly

optimistic tone. Coward (45) focuses on the earls of Derby between 1504 and 1642 and finds that despite economic problems and civil war they suffered no genuine crisis, nor were local influence or authority impaired. Hawkins (99) assesses the effect of three forms of discriminatory taxation on the family fortunes of the Portmans during the seventeenth century when, despite unusually high costs of wardship, recusancy and delinquency payments, the estate prospered. By contrast a demographic catastrophe which hit the south Wales gentry in the eighteenth century is the subject of an article by Jenkins (119). This totally transformed the landed community and raises questions about whether areas outside underwent similar decline. On a national theme, Williamson (230) has collated a mass of data on pay in eighteenth- and nineteenth-century Britain to learn the degree of earning inequality both within and between different occupations. Findings suggest enormous variability over time: pay differential between farm and non-farm unskilled labour for example narrowed in the 1700s, widened from the French war to 1860 and had narrowed again by 1880, if only temporarily. It has generally been assumed that the mid-eighteenth-century depression in agriculture was national in character. But Beckett (15) highlights strong regional differences and links evidence of prosperity in pastoral areas to a long-term growth in consumption of meat and dairy products. It is also argued that cheap bread failed to stimulate demand for industrial goods — dietary improvements generally being preferred. From analysis of figures from Home Office enquiries of the Napoleonic Wars period Turner (213) presents important new national and regional data on cereal yields. When combined with other evidence they suggest that productivity changes of the eighteenth century have been underestimated and that the greatest advance was achieved before 1770. Furthermore, there may have been stagnation from that date until 1830, when population growth was advancing rapidly. This of course has implications both for the standard of living debate and links between agricultural productivity and industrialization. The limited influence of propagandists on eighteenth-century agricultural improvements is stressed by Horn (110). More effective, she believes, was the less spectacular work of land agents like Nathaniel Kent, and in a separate article (111) his contributions are described. These lay mainly in persuading owners of estates to tackle enclosure, reclamation, drainage, rational layout of farms and more productive cropping systems. There are also a number of interesting local studies. Zell (240) considers changes in landownership which revolved around sales and purchase of Tudor crown land in Kent, while in a study of Dorset land tenure Bettey (19) shows how custom could severely curtail landlords' power and he traces the replacement of copyhold by short-term

leases at high rents. Regional changes in farm transport in Huntingdonshire between 1610 and 1749 are charted by Porter (174) from probate inventories. The diffusion of the wagon from 1660 is related to increased farm size and to requirements for greater carrying capacity as farm production rose. Early techniques for manufacturing the Rotherham plough are investigated by Marshall (143), who finds that even before the mid-eighteenth century parts were being made by patterns which created identical, interchangeable components. The value of early maps for discovering the original form and structure of vernacular buildings is illustrated by Yates (238) from Wealden examples. Also on buildings, Priestley and Corfield (176) apply computer techniques to information on rooms and their use in Norwich probate inventories. They find clear testimony to the advance in standards of comfort in domestic furnishings between the late sixteenth and early eighteenth centuries.

There has been a welcome upsurge in publications on Ireland resulting, for the modern period at least, in a good crop of articles this year. O'Flanagan (164) indicates the rewards which may be secured by detailed scrutiny of estate maps in conjunction with other estate records, and highlights critical elements of landscape and social change which occurred in counties Cork and Waterford during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. It is Raymond's belief (180) that, largely for political reasons, historians of Irish economic development have for several generations past been 'unable to see the bog for the weeds'. He vigorously denies that either the Union with England or lack of market demand and incentives to invest can be blamed for pre-Famine stagnation. Instead, using a comparative analysis which draws upon Scottish experiences, he cites traditions of land tenure, greater density of population and unhelpful social values for curtailing progress after 1780. Demographic change in Ireland is of continuing interest. It had been supposed that data in early hearth tax returns was of poor quality, but Dickson *et al* (54) argue differently and offer new population estimates for the eighteenth century. These suggest major regional contrasts in the first half, and an even more rapid rate of growth thereafter than had been assumed. Focusing upon problems in the Irish linen industry, Collins (42) cites competition from cotton goods in British markets where linen was sold as the main factor in its decline. Disruption of the rural economy which followed precipitated an emigrant stream 30 years before the Famine. Mokyr and Ó Gráda (149) examine the nexus between emigration and poverty at this time. They argue that the outflow of Irish in their prime age was critical since it reduced per capita income of those who remained in Ireland and inhibited industrialization. The land question and agitation in the countryside are also widely debated. Clark (36) maintains that the Famine transformed class

structure in Ireland, which in turn fostered a significant alteration in the nature of collective action. Before, there had been action by and on behalf of the rural poor, especially the labourers, while afterwards it was mounted largely by tenant farmers concerned with rents, ejectments and land grabbing. However, Fitzpatrick (71) suggests that the primary agent of agrarian unrest was not class but family structure, and provides evidence to illustrate conflict both within and between a wide range of social strata. The Land League's achievements are discussed by Bew (21) who shows how many of their ideals were defeated by social and political realities of the nineteenth century. The failure of the United Irish League and smallholders to oust the powerful shopkeeper-grazier in the 1890s is examined by Higgins and Gibbons (102). Indebtedness on the part of smallholders was apparently the main reason for failure. Taking an international perspective, Grigg (87) considers the relationship between industrialization and modern population growth. He concludes that the traditional view which attributes reduced mortality from 1750 to industrialization is no longer tenable, since it also occurred in countries where modernization was absent. There are a number of articles on English sources. Fussell (77) describes the Tariff Commission report and the rich pickings it contains for historians of farming in the early years of the present century. Attention is also drawn by Chapman and Harris (34) to the inaccuracy of acreage estimates in enclosure acts and awards. In early acts in particular, estimates of acreages enclosed diverge markedly from actual acreages of land allotted. The shortcomings of official records are further illustrated by Chapman's study of a Sussex enclosure (33). Here the chance survival of some private papers of one of the principal unofficial participants reveals the complex motives involved, and shows that political interests and personal animosities could be as important as any desire for agricultural improvement in initiating the enclosure process. Evidence from the tithe files is used by Holt and Kain (107) to illustrate the landscape of Suffolk, while Dodd (57, 58, 60) describes the crop returns for Herefordshire, Wiltshire and south-east Scotland and the picture they give of agriculture there in the 1850s. A statistical explanation of land value changes between 1781 and 1880 based on Norton, Trist and Gilbert's figures is provided by Peters *et al* (172). They argue that the rate of interest was not a significant factor, although rent was highly influential. Crafts (46) has assembled poor law data and other evidence to throw new light upon the question of how regional price variations affected real wage differences in the middle of the nineteenth century. Although wage gains by unskilled migrants to urban areas may have been less than previously thought, Crafts believes that some gain nonetheless would have been obtained. The plight of the small owner of land in the eighteenth and

nineteenth centuries is considered by Beckett (14), who tests existing theories against evidence from Cumbria. He finds that regional differences were important, and contrasts those highly taxed midland and southern areas subject to enclosure of arable land with outlying pastoral areas, lightly taxed and with opportunities for by-employment. Here the small man survived late, sometimes even into the present century. The astonishing peasant industry of chicken cramming is described by Short (192) to show how environmental, technological and economic factors fashioned developments in the Sussex High Weald. Here depression rather than encouragement from conventional gentry and landowning classes stimulated innovation. There are a few articles on rural disturbances. Mitchell (147) looks at the measures taken to alleviate food shortages in Cheshire between the 1750s and 1812. Only provision of relief and protection of supplies prevented a massive breakdown in public order. Archer (4) reviews the Wells-Charlesworth debate on incendiarism in Norfolk and Suffolk, and concludes that arguments put forward are both over-emphatic and premature because research on the 1800-1830 period is still far from complete. Finally, Storch (203) investigates the last significant wave of food-price disturbances in the south west and Oxfordshire in 1867 and shows that those popular notions of 'fair price' associated with the eighteenth century had survived well into the industrial age.

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Work in Progress

This list has been compiled from the information given in response to a letter which was enclosed in the last volume of the *Review* and circulated in the summer of 1983. It does not lay claim to completeness.

ALEY, MRS S, Department of History, University of Nottingham.

The Nottinghamshire Gentry in the Eighteenth Century

ALSOR, J D, Department of History, University of Liverpool.

The sixteenth-century English crown lands and land sales.

ARTHUR, J R B, Cydweli, Court Wick, Littlehampton, Sussex.

Plants in the wild. Early domestication.

ASTON, T H, c/o History of the University of Oxford, Corpus Christi College, Oxford.

The estates of the Oxford Colleges, 1350-1500 (research assistants R Evans and R Faith).

ATKINS, DR P J, Department of Geography, University of Durham.

- (i) Urban food supply in the nineteenth century.
- (ii) Historical Geography of horticulture in Britain c 1800-1950.

AUGUSTYN, DRS B, Faculteit van de Letteren en Wysbegeerte, Ryksuniversiteit, Gent.

- (i) Peat digging in Flanders during the Middle Ages and the Modern Times.
- (ii) Historical Geography of the Belgian coastal plain, in particular the Sceldpolders.

AUSTIN, D, Department of Geography/Archaeology, St David's University College, Lampeter, Dyfed.

Farms and field systems on Bodmin Moor, Cornwall.

BAILEY, MISS L P,

- (i) Gloucestershire Landed Society in the Nineteenth Century.
- (ii) Rural Society in the south west, particularly Devon and Dorset.

BAKER, DR A R H, Department of Geography, University of Cambridge.

The development and spread of agricultural syndicates and of other forms of peasant association in Loir-et-Cher (France) 1815-1914.

BALLARD, MRS P, University of Reading.

Nineteenth-century Agricultural Labourers in Northants.

BANGOR-JONES, M, Department of Geography, University of Dundee.

Evolution of Land Use and Settlement in Assynt and Coigach.

BARKER, P A (University of Birmingham) and HIGHAM, R A (University of Exeter).

Field Survey of early field systems in Montgomery parish, Powys.

BARTON, P, Department of History, University of Reading.

The Cecil Estates: 1683-1824.

BAUGH, G C,

Shropshire Agriculture c 1940-1985 for Volume IV of VCH of Shropshire.

BAUGH, G C and HILL, R C,

Shropshire Agriculture 1750-c 1875 for Volume IV of VCH of Shropshire.

BECKETT, DR J V, Department of History, University of Nottingham.

English Landowners and their Estates 1500-1900.

BETTEY, DR J H, Extra-Mural Department, University of Bristol.

Agriculture and Rural Life in Somerset, Dorset and Wiltshire during the seventeenth century.

BIL, A, Department of Geography, University of Aberdeen.

Sheallings in Perthshire in the sixteenth to eighteenth centuries.

BLAY, S, Department of Geography, University of Liverpool.

The Labour Market in South Lancashire in late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries.

BOUD, R C, University of Leeds.

- (i) Early Scottish Agricultural Societies (1723-1835).
- (ii) The early development of Scottish geological maps, with special reference to the role of agriculture and the Highland and Agricultural Society of Scotland.

BRASSLEY, P, Seale-Hayne College, Newton Abbot, Devon.

Preparation of an edition of the notebooks of the Rev John Crakanthorp (1682-1692) for publication by the Cambridge Antiquarian Records Society.

BREEZE, MRS C, Institute of Agricultural History, University of Reading.

Pigs and pig-products in Britain, 1850-1940.

- BRIGDEN, R D, Institute of Agricultural History, University of Reading.
- (i) The development of farm buildings, including farm dairies.
 - (ii) Manufacture of agricultural tools and equipment.
 - (iii) Estate industries in the nineteenth century.
- BROWN, DR J, 7 Richborough Close, Earley, Berks.
- (i) Market Towns in England in the post-railway age.
 - (ii) British agriculture 1870-1940.
- BUCHANAN, BRENDA J, 13 Hensley Road, Bath, Avon BA2 2DR.
- Agricultural 'improvements' in Somerset in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, particularly parliamentary enclosures and post-enclosure problems of drainage, reclamation, and farm making.
- BYFORD, D, 58 Station Road, Hatfield, Doncaster.
- Agricultural change in the marshlands of south-east Yorkshire since c 1600. With special reference to the Manor of Hatfield.
- CAIRD, PROFESSOR J B, Department of Geography, University of Dundee.
- Origins of Crofting.
- CAMPBELL, DR B M S, Department of Geography, Queen's University, Belfast.
- Technology, Productivity and Profitability of Seigneurial Agriculture in Norfolk, 1240-1440.
- CAUNCE, S A, Institute for Folk Life Studies, University of Leeds.
- Farming with Horses in the East Riding of Yorkshire: some aspects of recent agricultural history.
- CHAPMAN, DR J, Department of Geography, Portsmouth Polytechnic.
- Parliamentary Enclosure in England and Wales.
- CHARLESWORTH, A, Department of Geography, University of Liverpool.
- Rural Protest in England.
- CHARTRES, DR J A, School of Economic Studies, University of Leeds.
- (i) The English Distilling Industry, c 1600-1830.
 - (ii) English Domestic Trade and Transport 1600-1850.
- CHIVERS, K, Shire Horse Society.
- Heavy draught horses. Further work, especially local stallion societies in England and Wales and biographies of breeders and users.
- COLLINS, DR E J T, Institute of Agricultural History, Director, Museum of English Rural Life, University of Reading.
- (i) Agriculture in the industrial economy (with F M L Thompson).
 - (ii) Agricultural labour and agricultural technology in Britain since 1800.
 - (iii) Woodland trades and industries in England, 1750-1940.
- COLYER, DR R J, University of Wales, Penglais, Aberystwyth.
- (i) The agriculture, estate management and rural history of nineteenth-century Wales.
 - (ii) The history of Welsh roads from Roman to turnpike.
- CONNOLLY, DR S J, Department of History, New University of Ulster, Coleraine, N Ireland.
- Landownership and economic change in Co Galway c 1690-c 1750.
- COOPER, D J, School of Economic Studies, University of Leeds.
- The standard of living of the agricultural worker in the North and East Ridings of Yorkshire, 1760-1851.
- COOPER, DONNA L, Birkbeck College, London.
- The estates of Thoby Priory and Mountnessing (Essex), mid-12th century to the Reformation.
- CORNTHWAITE, MISS U M, Department of Geography, Birkbeck College, University of London.
- Agriculture in Derbyshire during the seventeenth century.
- COTTIS, MRS J, Department of History, University of Reading.
- Agriculture in the Vale of White Horse, 1650-1760.
- CROWTHER, MRS J E, 1 St Margaret's Close, Cottingham, E Yorks HU16 5NG.
- Enclosure in East Riding 1730-1860.
- CUNNINGHAM, G L, York University, Toronto, Ontario, Canada.
- (i) The allotment garden movement in the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.
 - (ii) The social history of rural Dorset.
- DANIELS, S, Department of Geography, University of Nottingham.
- Social History of landscape gardening especially the work of Humphrey Repton.
- DAVENPORT, MS H M, School of Economic Studies, University of Leeds.
- The English wool trade, c 1680-c 1820.
- DEVINE, DR T W, Department of History, University of Strathclyde.
- Rural Society and Economy in Lowland Scotland, 1780-1914.
- DEWEY, DR P E, Royal Holloway College, London University.
- British agriculture during the First World War.
- DILLON, P J, Faculty of Environmental Studies, Bulmershe College of Higher Education, Reading, Berks.
- (i) Rural Entrepreneurship in the Nineteenth Century: The Rawlences of south Wiltshire in Farming and Land Agency.
 - (ii) Aspects of the Ecological History of the Wessex Chalklands: Nineteenth-century agricultural innovation and development and their bearing on habitat stability and species

- histories in biological systems (with others).
- (iii) (with CAMERON, R A D) Habitat stability, population histories and patterns of variation in *Cepaea. Malacologia* (in press).
- DODD, DR J P, 21 Townfield Lane, Frodsham, WA6 7QZ.
- (i) British Agriculture 1800-1860.
- (ii) Cheshire Agriculture 1066-1900.
- (iii) The Medieval Manor and Borough of Frodsham, Cheshire.
- (iv) Berkshire Agriculture 1800-1860.
- (v) The 1854 Crop Returns for Central Scotland.
- (vi) The 1854 Crop Returns for the Highlands and Islands of Scotland.
- DURIE, DR A J, Department of Economic History, University of Aberdeen.
- Rural Industries in Scotland, 1700-1900.
- DYER, C, School of History, University of Birmingham.
- Late medieval agrarian history of the west midlands; standards of living and patterns of consumption; settlement history and desertion of settlements (medieval); peasant society.
- EDGAR, C D, 76 Bingham Road, Radcliffe-on-Trent, Nottingham NG12 2FW.
- (i) Sir John Eastwood — Agricultural Venturer.
- (ii) Nottinghamshire — Cradle of Agricultural Revolution.
- EDWARDS, DR P, 21 Pine Dean, Great Bookham, Surrey.
- (i) Horse Trade in Tudor and Stuart England.
- (ii) Agriculture in Shropshire 1540-1750 (for Vol iv of the *Victoria History of Shropshire*).
- (iii) Surrey Probate Inventories Survey.
- ELLIOT, G, Department of Educational Studies, University of Hull.
- Themes in the Agricultural History of the Lake Counties: in particular the field systems, their evolution and role in the agricultural economy of the region.
- ELOFF, DR C C, Human Sciences Research Council, Private Bag x41, 0001 Pretoria, South Africa.
- Agrarian history and regional historical research (Afrikaans title), published in *Contree: Journal for South African urban and regional history*, No 14, July 1983.
- ELSTON, PROF J, Department of Plant Sciences, University of Leeds.
- Variations in wheat yields in England and Wales from 1886.
- EMERY, F V, School of Geography, University of Oxford.
- Early innovation and diffusion of clover, sainfoin, ryegrass, and lucerne.
- ESTEY, R H, Macdonald Campus, McGill University, Quebec, Canada.
- (i) History of Plant Pathology in Canada.
- (ii) History of the teaching of Agriculture in Canada.
- EVANS, R, c/o History of the University of Oxford, Corpus Christi College, Oxford.
- The tenants of Merton College, Oxford, in the middle ages.
- EVERITT, PROF A M, Department of English Local History, University of Leicester.
- (i) The Making of the Kentish Landscape.
- (ii) Continuity and Colonization: the Evolution of Kentish Settlement, circa 500-1300 (Completed, to go to press summer 1983).
- (iii) Vestiges of the wilderness: aspects of settlement in Leics, Northants, Beds, Hunts, Cambs.
- (iv) Dynasty and Community since the 17th century: an aspect of provincial society.
- FAITH, ROSAMUND, c/o History of the University of Oxford, Corpus Christi College, Oxford.
- A peasant rising of 1377 in Wiltshire, Hampshire, Surrey and Sussex, involving claims to ancient demesne status.
- FOX, H S A, Department of English Local History, University of Leicester.
- (i) Medieval agriculture, with particular reference to field systems, productivity and marketing in South-western England.
- (ii) Evolution of English rural settlement, dark ages to medieval.
- (iii) Nineteenth-century farmers' associations.
- FRANKEL, MRS E, Department of Economic and Social History, University of Sheffield.
- The development of Hungarian Agriculture since 1968, with special reference to the Closed Production System.
- FRANKLIN, DR P, 46 Fountain Street, Accrington, Lancs.
- Peasant Society, Economy and Landscape in Thornbury Manor, S Gloucs in the Later Middle Ages.
- GARDINER, M, Department of medieval Archaeology, University College, London.
- Medieval settlement and land-use in the Sussex Weald.
- GILLOTT, SARA, Linacre College, Oxford.
- Sherwood Forest — its economy and society, 1600-1800.
- GLENNIE, P D, Department of Geography, University of Cambridge.
- (i) Agrarian Economy and Society in late-medieval and early modern Hertfordshire.
- (ii) Occupational Structure of Pre-Industrial England.
- (iii) Material Culture and standards of living among European Farmers and Artisans, c 1550-1700.
- GODDARD, N P W, School of Geography, Cambridgeshire College of Arts and Technology.
- (i) The Royal Agricultural Society of England

- 1838-1988.
- (ii) Agricultural Progress in nineteenth-century England and the Communication of Agricultural Information.
- (iii) Victorian Agriculturalists.
- GOODACRE, DR J, The White House, Ashby Parva, Leics.
The role of the Midland Market Town in Agrarian Change, 1500-1700 (especially South Leicestershire) including mills and milling, enclosure of common fields and the Midland Revolt of 1607.
- GRACE, D R, Beaufort School, Windsor Drive, Tuffley, Gloucester.
Development of the Agricultural Engineering Industry 1780-1914.
- GREGORY, P, 'Brendon', Chester Avenue, Richmond, Surrey.
The growth of apple orcharding and the development of the cider industry, 1550-1850.
- GRIGG, D B, Department of Geography, University of Sheffield.
Agricultural trends during industrialization.
- HABAKKUK, SIR J, Jesus College, Oxford.
British Landownership 1600-1800.
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The history of Bellerby; landscape evolution and agricultural history; church, community, schools.
- HALL, MRS J L, Chapel End, Moor Road, Bellerby, Leyburn, N Yorks DL8 5QY.
The Chronicles of John Bell Dawson, farmer, 1885 and 1894; Vale of York Transcripts and farm and family history.
- HALLAS, MS C S, School of Economic Studies, University of Leeds.
Economic and Social Change in Wensleydale and Swaledale, 1750-1950.
- HARDEN, MS A M, Department of History, University of Keele.
The medieval settlement of the Domesday Hundred of Bucklow (Cheshire).
- HARRIS, DR A, Department of Geography, University of Hull. Yorkshire Agriculture 1900-1940.
- HARRISON C J, Department of History, University of Keele.
(i) Early Modern Manor Courts.
(ii) Sixteenth-Century Staffordshire.
- HARRISON, S, Department of Economic and Social History, University of Hull.
Land tax and land ownership in East Anglia.
- HARVEY, A, School of History, University of Birmingham.
Byzantine agrarian economy.
- HARVEY, P D A, Department of History, University of Durham.
(i) Food and food production in medieval England.
(ii) Medieval manorial accounting.
- HAVINDEN, MICHAEL, University of Exeter.
Increase in resident gentry in Somerset, 1500-1700.
- HEATH, MS H, Department of Geography, University of Exeter.
Upland English Farming, 1840-1870.
- HEESON, A J, Department of History, University of Durham.
Tenant right in County Down.
- HELLIER, MISS R, South Grange Road, Ripon, N Yorks.
(i) Farm building recording and use especially in Wensleydale and Vale of York.
(ii) Aspects of agricultural development in Wensleydale.
- HEY, DR D, Division of Continuing Education, University of Sheffield.
(i) History of Yorkshire.
(ii) Derbyshire and South Yorkshire woodlands.
- HILEY, MRS L, Department of History, University of Sheffield.
Hatfield, South Yorkshire in the fourteenth century.
- HINDE, P R A, Department of Geography, University of Sheffield.
Human fertility in nineteenth-century rural England.
- HODGSON, R I, University of Manchester.
(i) Interrelationships between population, agriculture and industry in County Durham c 1550-1850.
(ii) Enclosure in North-East England.
- HOLT, H M E,
Agricultural change in upland northern England, c 1840-1870.
- HOSKING, J L, East Harting Farm, Petersfield, Hants.
Rights of Common in the County of Sussex from the Feet of Fines 1580-1700.
- HOUSEGO, P M, Department of History, University of Durham. Manorial leasing in England, c 1135-1216.
- HOWKINS, A, University of Sussex.
(i) Farm labourers; social and trade union history. Work conditions and organization. Recently finished.
(ii) The idea of rural England — especially as expressed in literature and the arts c 1890-1930, and the development of popular ideas of the countryside.
- HOWLETT, C, Department of Geography, University of Aberdeen.
Agricultural landscapes in North-east Scotland, c 1750-c 1850, especially wasteland and reclamation, fields and fences and farm buildings.
- HOYLE, R, Corpus Christi College, Oxford.
Landlords and society in Craven, 1500-1600.
- HUDSON, DR P, University of Liverpool.
Agrarian structure and pre-factory industry in

- West Yorkshire.
- HUNN, J, Department of Geography, University of Southampton.
The reconstruction of rural landscapes near St Albans.
- HUNT, MRS S, Department of History, University of Reading.
Enclosure in Berkshire, 1500-1860.
- JOHNSON, C J, Department of History, University of Essex.
Historical Community Study of a Proto-industrial Society (Coggeshall, Essex) sixteenth and eighteenth centuries.
- JONES, PROF E L, School of Economics, La Trobe University, Victoria, Australia.
Summary History of world agriculture.
- JONES, G, University of Aston.
Diffusion of the roller mill, 1850-1914.
- JONES, JILL L, Department of Geography, University of Keele.
(i) The land agent and nineteenth-century agricultural improvement.
(ii) Capital investment in farm buildings, 1850-1900 (with A D M Phillips).
- JONES, P M, School of History, University of Birmingham.
Rural communities in nineteenth-century France.
- KAIN, DR R J P, Department of Geography, University of Exeter.
(i) An atlas of agriculture in mid-nineteenth-century England and Wales.
(ii) The tithe surveys of England and Wales.
(iii) Cadastral maps and agrarian change in Europe c 1470-c 1870.
- KAMM, R, University of Cambridge.
Patterns of consumption in late 17th-century Cambridgeshire: luxury goods in domestic interiors
- KEELEY, P, Jesus College, Oxford.
The Northcote family of Devon and their estates, 1500-1800.
- KETTLE, MISS A, Shropshire Agriculture, 1300-1540.
For volume iv of the Victoria County History of Shropshire.
- KEYTE, V C, Department of Geography, University of Liverpool.
Parklands in south-west Lancashire.
- KING, DR E J, Department of History, University of Sheffield.
Agricultural history of the east midlands in the later middle ages.
- KIRKHAM, G, Department of History, New University of Ulster, Coleraine, N Ireland.
Economic and social change in north-west Ulster, 1690-1840; Emigration from Ulster to North America, 1660-1820; Landholding and economic development in North Leinster, 1660-1830; Literacy in Ulster, 1660-1860.
- KITCHENER, M, Department of History, University of Keele.
Change and continuity in the English village, 1750-1850: a comparative study of upland and lowland areas in Staffordshire.
- KNIGHT, DR A S, Department of History, University of Essex.
Mexican Revolution. Mexican society and agrarian problems 19th and 20th centuries.
- LANGDON, J, School of History, University of Birmingham.
Medieval agricultural technology: draught animals, milling.
- LANGTON, DR J, School of Geography, University of Oxford.
Changes in the economy and society of the Swedish peasantry in the nineteenth century.
- LAWTON, PROF R, Department of Geography, University of Liverpool.
(i) Population and Society in nineteenth-century England.
(ii) Population trends in Victorian Staffordshire.
(iii) Population and Social Trends in Modern Britain.
- LESOFF, A, Cambridge University.
The Heart of the World: Oliver Heywood and his circle.
- LITTLEWOOD, J K, Department of History, University College, Cardiff.
Economy and Society in fourteenth-century Somerset.
- MCCLOSKEY, PROF D N, University of Iowa, Iowa City, Iowa 52242, USA.
(i) English open fields.
(ii) Storage in medieval England.
(iii) English enclosures.
- MCCOURT, DR DESMOND, Department of Geography, New University of Ulster, Coleraine, N Ireland.
Decline of Rundale in Ireland, 1850-1960.
- MAKEPEACE, G A, Department of Geography, University of Keele.
Rural settlement in the Peak district in the later prehistoric and Romano-British periods.
- MARPLES, D R, Department of Economic and Social History, University of Sheffield.
Collectivization of Agriculture in the West Ukraine, 1944-51.
- MARTIN, J M,
(i) The Vale of Evesham market gardening industry, 1700-1850.
(ii) The emergence of a proletariat in rural Warwickshire, 1750-1851.
(iii) Demographic and land-holding patterns on the north Warwickshire coalfield: a family reconstruction based on Bedworth, 1700-1830 (all studies completed).
- MAY, T, Institute of Historical Research, University of London.

- The London Cab Trade in the nineteenth century.
MEAD, W R, University College, London.
Agricultural Geography of early nineteenth-century Finland, focusing especially on the archive of *Finska Hushållsällskapet*.
- MILLS, DR D R, Cat Lane House, Bridge Street, Thornborough, Buckingham.
(i) Land tax assessments especially pre-1745 and post-1832.
(ii) Computerized, annotated bibliography of publications based on census enumerators' books. (Enquiries to Data Editor, Cambridge Population Group, 27 Trumpington Street, Cambridge CB2 1QA.)
- MINCHINTON, PROF W E, Department of Economic History, University of Exeter.
(i) History of cider in Europe, America and Australia.
(ii) Industrial archaeology of farming.
- MOIR, J M G, Department of English Local History, University of Leicester.
Squatter settlements and common land in nineteenth-century Herefordshire.
- MOORE, J S, University of Bristol.
Development of Economy of Bristol region, 5th-20th centuries, especially South Gloucestershire.
- MORGAN, DR R, Institute of Agricultural History, University of Reading.
(i) Sowing techniques in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.
(ii) Bibliography of British Agrarian History.
- MORRIS, MRS P R, Department of History, University of Keele.
The socio-economic structure of the Early Modern English Village.
- NEWMAN, DR P R,
Social and Economic History of the Ainsty of York, with emphasis on the period 1600 to 1914, and dealing particularly with farming history, tenancies and estates, land use, and settlement patterns.
- NEWMAN, R, Department of History, University College, Cardiff.
The development of the rural landscape of West Gloucestershire since 1500.
- NUNN, P J, Department of Economic and Social History, University of Sheffield.
Landed Estates in South Yorkshire, 1700-1850.
- OGDEN, CHRISTINE, King's College, London.
Climate and Agriculture 1750-1830: a study of certain farms in Sussex and Hampshire.
- OUTHWAITE, DR R B, Gonville and Caius College, Cambridge.
Agricultural backwardness in sixteenth- and seventeenth-century England.
- OVERTON, DR M, Department of Geography, University of Newcastle upon Tyne.
(i) Agriculture in early modern England.
(ii) Probate inventories as an historical source.
(iii) Computer analysis of historical data.
- PAWLEY, S, Department of English Local History, University of Leicester.
Maritime trade and economy of creeks and rural havens, Lincolnshire, c 1300-1600.
- PERKINS, J A, Department of Economic History, University of New South Wales, Australia.
(i) German views of British farming, 1870-1914.
(ii) Migratory labour in German agriculture, 1840-1914.
(iii) The German beet-sugar industry, 1830-1945.
(iv) The German agricultural worker, 1815-1914.
- PERREN, DR R, Department of Economic History, University of Aberdeen.
(i) Agriculture of Shropshire, c 1875-c 1940. For volume iv of the Victoria County History of Shropshire.
(ii) Land and credit in north-east Scotland.
- PHILLIPS, DR A D M, Department of Geography, University of Keele.
(i) Underdraining in England in the nineteenth century.
(ii) Capital investment in farm buildings 1850-1900 (with Miss J L Jones).
(iii) Cropping patterns and crop books, 1800-1875.
(iv) Farm size and field layout in Staffs and Salop in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.
- PHILLIPS, DR C B, Department of History, University of Manchester.
Regional History of NW England, 16th to 18th centuries.
- PIRANFAR, H, Department of Economic and Social History, University of Sheffield.
Stagnation of agriculture in a Rentier State: the case of Iran 1959-1979.
- PITT, S, Cambridge University.
Helpston and the effects of enclosure: mirror and reality in the poems of John Clare.
- POLLOCK, V, Department of History, New University of Ulster, Coleraine, N Ireland.
The scafishing industry in County Down, 1830-1930.
- PRATT, D, The Grange, Welsh Frankton, Oswestry, Shropshire SY11 4NX.
(i) The Marcher Lordship of Bromfield and Yale — political, social and economic aspects.
(ii) Moated sites in Clwyd.
(iii) Calendar of Flintshire Quarter Sessions Rolls 1747-56.
(iv) A History of the ancient parish of Ellesmere, Shropshire.
- PROCTOR, A P L, Department of Economic and Social History, University of Hull.
Change in the lives and working conditions of agricultural labourers in the East Riding of York-

- shire, 1870-1914.
- PURCHON, MRS J, Department of Geography, Birkbeck College, London.
Parliamentary Enclosure in Bedfordshire, 1790-1840.
- QUIGLEY, DR M A,
The introduction of the potato into England, and the agricultural and social effects of its cultivation in Lancashire.
- RABY, R, School of Economics, La Trobe University, Victoria, Australia.
Transfer of British agricultural science and technology to Australia in the nineteenth century.
- RANSFORD, ROSALIND W, Department of History, Birkbeck College, London.
The early history and estates of Waltham Abbey to 1230.
- REED, M, University of Sussex, Brighton.
The survival of the small farmer in Sussex, Kent, Surrey c 1820-1914.
- REID, DR F, Centre for the Study of Social History, University of Warwick.
Social and economic history of nineteenth-century Dorset, with an emphasis upon agricultural workers.
- RICHARDS, S, Wye College, University of London, Ashford, Kent.
(i) Agricultural education.
(ii) Relations of science with agriculture.
- ROBERTSON, I A, Department of History, University of Stirling.
Commercial salmon fishing on the River Tay during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.
- ROEBUCK, DR P, Department of History, New University of Ulster, Coleraine, N Ireland.
The Donegall Estate in Britain and Ireland, 1603-1760; A comparison of the circumstances and performance of Scottish and Irish landed proprietors, 1660-1815; The Ward Estate in Co Down, 1660-1850; English landowners and the demographic crisis, 1660-1750.
- ROWLEY, R,
(i) The Physical Environment.
(ii) Shropshire agriculture to 1300.
For vol iv of the *Victoria County History of Shropshire*.
- RUSSELL, R C, 11 Priestgate, Barton on Humber, Humberside DN18 5ET.
(i) An Atlas of Parliamentary Enclosure in Lindsey division of Lincolnshire.
(ii) Popular movements in 19th-century Lindsey villages — Friendly Societies, Temperance Movements, & c.
- RYCKAERT, DRS M, Faculteit van de Letteren en Wysbegeerte, Rijksuniversiteit, Gent, Belgium.
Historical cartography of West Flanders.
- RYDER, DR M L, Animal Breeding Research Organization, Dryden Field Laboratory, Roslin, Midlothian.
The study of sheep history and breed origins using all possible sources of evidence but particularly the wool surviving in old textile remains.
- SHEAIL, DR J, Institute of Terrestrial Ecology, Monks Wood Experimental Station, Huntingdon, Cambs.
(i) Impact of past land-use and management on wildlife.
(ii) History of rural planning and conservation in Britain.
- SMITH, D C, University of Maine, Orono, Maine, USA.
(i) Climatology of New England and New York.
(ii) Pre-industrial agricultural history of Maine (a history of small farms using farm diaries).
(iii) An annotated bibliography of Agricultural Science at the University of Maine Since 1870. (In the press.)
- SMITH DR S A, Department of History, University of Essex.
Peasants and workers in 20th-century China.
- SPUFFORD, DR MARGARET, University of Cambridge.
(i) *The Great Reclathing of Rural England: Petty Chapman and their Wares in the seventeenth century* (in press).
(ii) A seventeenth-century market town and its region: Eccleshall, Staffs.
- STANES, R G F, Culver House, Paymenbury, Honiton, Devon.
(i) Braunton Great Field.
(ii) Waste edge 'squatting' in East Devon.
(iii) Dr Addington's 'improving' activities at Upottery.
(iv) Whetstone and iron mining on the Blackdown Hills.
- STANIER, P, Department of Geography, University of Southampton.
The granite industry of Cornwall and Devon.
- STINSEN, MS M, School of Economic Studies, University of Leeds.
Economic and Social History of the honour of Wakefield, 1300-1500.
- STUDD, J R, Department of History, University of Keele.
A Templar colony in North Staffordshire: Keele before the Sneyds (article forthcoming).
- SUTCLIFFE, S D, Department of History, University of Keele.
Poverty, crime and housing in rural NW Staffs in the nineteenth century.
- TANN, JENNIFER, University of Aston.
(i) Corn milling: technology, organization and concentration 1780-1900.
(ii) Horse power in agriculture.
- THIRSK, DR JOAN, St Hilda's College, Oxford.
(i) English agrarian history 1500-1800.

- (ii) Horticultural progress in England and Europe 1500-1800.
- THOEY, DRS E, Faculteit van de Letteren en Wysbegeerte, Rijksuniversiteit, Gent, Belgium.
Social and economic history and demography of Flanders during the later middle ages and the early modern times (14th-16th centuries).
- THOMAS, DR COLIN, Department of Geography, New University of Ulster, Coleraine, N Ireland.
Settlement and society in early modern Wales.
- THOMAS, MRS M, University of Bristol.
Economic development of North Somerset, 18th-19th centuries.
- THOMPSON, PROF F M L, Institute of Historical Research, University of London.
(i) Horse economy and society of nineteenth-century Britain.
(ii) Farmers and social class in nineteenth-century Britain.
- TUCK, J A, Department of History, University of Durham.
The Northern Region. For the late medieval volume of the *Cambridge Agrarian History*.
- TURNER, DR M E, Department of Economic History, University of Hull.
(i) Estate Management during the Agricultural Depression of 1720-50.
(ii) The 1803 Livestock Survey of Co Down, Northern Ireland.
(iii) The Efficiency Gains of Enclosed over Open Fields.
- UPEX, S G, 25 Church Street, Warmington, Peterborough.
Open field agriculture in the East Midlands with special reference to cultivation remains.
- VERHULST, PROF DR A, Faculteit van de Letteren en Wysbegeerte, Rijksuniversiteit, Gent, Belgium.
(i) History of the Belgian landscape.
(ii) Agrarian history in Western Europe during the early middle ages.
(iii) Agricultural history/social and economic history of Flanders during the middle ages.
- VOSE, E K, School of History, University of Birmingham.
Estates of Worcester Cathedral Priory in the middle ages.
- WATT, I, School of Economics, La Trobe University, Victoria, Australia.
International diffusion of bulk handling of grain in the late nineteenth century.
- WALTER, J D, Department of History, University of Essex.
English peasantry and agrarian history sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.
- WARD, DR S B, Institute of Agricultural History, University of Reading.
History of Environmental Planning in England, 1918-1940.
- WATKINSON, M A, 19 Broadlands, Netherfield, Milton Keynes, Bucks.
Population change and agricultural development in Bradley, Scartho, and Humberston, South Humberside.
- WATSON, B, Vale Farm, Offenham, Evesham, Worcs.
Investigation of the social and economic history of three Worcestershire villages through documentary research, field survey of field systems and archaeological sites, hedge survey, land use survey, architectural survey and sample excavation of archaeological sites and medieval field systems. (Littleton's Medieval Agriculture Research Project.)
- WATSON, R, University of Reading.
Agricultural history of South Yorkshire.
- WELLS, R A E, Brighton Polytechnic.
(i) Famine in England in the 1790s.
(ii) Poverty, Protest and Police in south-eastern rural England, 1750-1880.
- WEST, MRS J, Institute of Historical Research, University of London.
Gunpowder supply in the second half of the eighteenth century, in England.
- WHITTINGTON, G, Department of Geography, University of St Andrews.
Palynological evidence for Scottish prehistoric agriculture.
- WILLIAMS, DR M, School of Geography, University of Oxford.
The clearing of the forests of the United States.
- WINCHESTER, DR A J L, Institute of Extension Studies, University of Liverpool.
Medieval settlement and agriculture in Cumbria and Lancashire, particularly the use and management of upland wastes.
- WOOLF, PROF S J, Department of History, University of Essex.
Peasantry and poverty in Italy throughout the modern period.
- WORDIE, DR J R, Department of History, University of Reading.
(i) Estate management in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.
(ii) English economic history (especially agricultural) 1600-1850.
- WRAY, T, University of Hull.
Opposition to enclosure: the social impact of the Parliamentary enclosure movement in Cumberland, Westmorland and Durham, 1730-1839.
- YOUNG, R, Department of Geography/Archaeology, St David's University College, Lampeter, Dyfed.
Prehistoric Land use in the Wear Valley, County Durham. An integration of archaeological and environmental data to produce models of prehistoric settlement and agriculture — Neolithic-Iron Age periods.

M R JARMAN, G N BAILEY and H N JARMAN (eds), *Early European Agriculture — its foundations and development*. CUP, 1982. 283 pp. £25.

This is the third and final volume of results from the British Academy Major Research Project on the early history of agriculture. The work was carried out in the Department of Archaeology, Cambridge, under the direction of the late Eric Higgs who died in 1976, and this volume is written in his honour. The first two volumes *Papers in Economic Prehistory* (reviewed in AHR 22, 1974, 191–192) and *Palaeoeconomy* (reviewed in AHR 26, 1978, 48–49) argued (as is now widely recognized) that the development of agriculture was a much more gradual and widespread phenomenon than had been thought previously.

This book now discusses the origins and early development of agriculture within the framework of prehistoric subsistence economies. These are considered as adaptations to three crucial resource zones: the uplands, the lowlands, and littorals, which developed into the peasant economy that is particularly characteristic of European agriculture.

The first chapter, entitled 'Philosophy and Basic Principles', discusses among other topics the nature of the archaeological evidence, the resources, technology, and the role of population pressure. Chapter 2 deals with territories and their exploitation including catchment areas and exploitation on a seasonal basis, as well as mobility versus sedentism. The third chapter leads up to the birth of European agriculture through considerations of plant, animal and marine resources and categories of economic behaviour coupled with the question of predation versus husbandry and early animal–man relationships.

Littorals are covered in Ch 4, lake as well as marine, through specific geographical examples from the Mediterranean, Denmark and Poland.

The lowlands are discussed in Ch 5, starting with soil and arable agriculture, and continuing with botanical, archaeological, ethnographic and historical evidence on Neolithic agricultural systems before covering separate areas in turn from Greece and the Northern Balkans through Hungary and Austria to Italy, Germany and Poland. Ch 6 covers the uplands taking the Carpathians, Pyrenees, Apennines and other Italian mountains as examples, and the last chapter takes a new look at megaliths, treating these large and widespread Neolithic stone monuments as a problem in palaeoethology.

As a biologist I find it gratifying that these archaeologists acknowledge in the conclusions that much that is of importance in human economic behaviour can be understood only by reference to the behaviour of other animals; and further, that much of human behaviour is governed by biological laws which are no less powerful for their subconscious

operation. But it was disappointing to see that Sauer is quoted but not Darlington (*Evolution of Man and Society*).

Despite the specific examples listed above there are many generalizations, and there is much theorizing with inadequate presentation of the evidence. References are infrequent, particularly outside the work of the Research Project. Zeuner is referred to but not C A Reed. I found this so, for example, in a discussion of the Braşov area of Romania which I had happened to visit in June 1982. The treatment ranged from topography through soils and climate to recent transhumance routes with hardly a reference to sources. In addition, the possibility of past climate changes does not appear to have been considered in the discussion from recent evidence of what crops would grow in the area. The suddenness and severity of such fluctuations are illustrated by the information I was given: that sheep now go to the mountains three weeks later than 20 years ago owing to a worsening of the climate.

Despite the accent on economy it is disappointing to see so little discussion of animal products. Neither milk nor wool, for instance, is listed in the index, yet the use of ethnographic evidence is acknowledged.

These criticisms apart, it is only fair to say that the volume will provide stimulating reading on the early history of European agriculture providing new lines of thought and an incentive to seek out (and add to) the evidence on which the writings are based.

M L RYDER

P J FOWLER, *The Farming of Prehistoric Britain*. CUP, 1983. 246 pp. £7.50.

This paperback is a revised reprint of Dr Fowler's highly acclaimed contribution to vol 1 of the CUP *Agrarian History of England and Wales*, for which I wrote the section on livestock (see AHR vol 30, pp 80–82, 1982). The aim of the author was to make available to a wider readership at a lower price an essay 'sandwiched in a prestigious tome'. The title of the book is, however, misleading since by far the larger part is devoted to arable farming (plant cultivation) and only 10 pages to pastoral farming, in which even then the concentration is on landscape evidence. This discrepancy should have been explained in the foreword and covered in the title by addition of the word 'arable'. The inclusion of this section in the original volume was advantageous in providing a link with a further 100 pages on animal husbandry, but here it gives the student new to the subject the impression that little is known about livestock — it is no good presenting a book on farming and then referring the reader to other works for a full treatment of pastoralism.

The book starts with a new prologue on Neolithic

farming in which the author oversimplifies the immense problem of domestication, lending credence to the idea that it was a conscious process on the part of man. He rightly points out that in Mesolithic times there was probably some form of what I have termed 'game management', but ignores the fact that the initial domestication, at any rate of animals, was almost certainly an unconscious and very gradual ecological process, the full understanding of which leads one into considerations of modern animal behavioural and genetic theory.

The author's title in the original volume was 'Later Pre-history' and that of his first chapter, repeated here, 'Later prehistoric Britain' in which he covers sources of evidence, the chronological outline, followed by the environment, including climatic change which has received too little attention in the past as a contributor to historical events; we should all read the works of H H Lamb. Next follow peoples, population and society, in recognition of the fact that one cannot divorce prehistoric farming activity from life in general. The first chapter ends with sections on settlement distribution and farms and farm buildings.

The second chapter on 'Agrarian Techniques and Technology' has only three sections. There is a large one on arable farming which forms the major part of the book and reflects Fowler's archaeological background and specialization on field systems. There are 2 pages on the use of wild plants and animals as food, and the section on pastoral farming to which I have already alluded. In this there is an incomplete summary of animal products (which I deal with at length); I always thought it odd that in the original volume there was no editorial cross-reference. Now the reference is given, but there has been no change in the wording to take account of what I said, which is almost like the situation in which the author gives his own views and then quotes someone else with different evidence as authority for them. Indeed it is clear that the author's major revision has concerned plants, since he acknowledges the assistance of plant authorities but not of animal authorities.

The final chapter is concerned with the environmental, cultural, economic and social achievement of later prehistoric farming in Britain, and it is interesting that the author uses 'Britain' throughout, even in the original volume, when the title referred to 'England and Wales'.

There is an excellent bibliography, index, and site index, yet I was disappointed that I could not find in the bibliography two sources which were given in shortened form as footnotes.

This volume and the original one indicate the dilemma encountered today in the presentation of results from what must be interdisciplinary studies. It is not easy for one person to cover an entire field —

even a botanist would concede that animals are infinitely more complex organisms than plants. Yet if one invites a group of specialists (as in the original volume) to cover the field they tend to write without reference to one another, and whole areas can be omitted entirely. The solution with both approaches must be a greater degree of editorial understanding and control.

M L RYDER

CHRISTOPHER DYER. *Lords and Peasants in a changing Society: the estates of the bishopric of Worcester, 680-1540*. Past and Present Publications, CUP, 1980. xiv + 426 pp. 50 tables, 7 figures, 11 maps, 4 illustrations. £22.50.

This is an expansive book; quite out of character with these days of parsimonious publishing. It contains over 400 pages of text, fully supported by footnotes (at the bottom of each page), a wealth of statistical tables and a fine range of graphics. No less impressive is the chronological sweep: from the late seventh century to the Dissolution. Within this ample compass Dr Dyer has pursued a mature and reflective approach to his material, frequently posing questions and searching for answers. In addition there are many illuminating digressions into the medieval world outside the lordship of the bishops of Worcester. All of this results in a book which is far more than simply a good example of that mainstay of generations of economic and social historians, the estate study. For as well as telling the story of the lords and tenants of a large ecclesiastical estate throughout the middle ages, Dyer has contributed to our knowledge and understanding of a wide range of important issues and current concerns in the subject at large.

Typical of the merits of this study is the way in which a discussion of the famous pre-Conquest charters of Worcester leads into a fruitful general appraisal of the debate about the origins of feudalism in England. Passing to the twelfth century, Dyer provides yet more evidence of contracting demesnes and the growth of demesne leases. Thereafter the fortunes of the estate continued to follow a broadly typical path: a shift into direct cultivation and management in the early thirteenth century, rising incomes for bishops, falling real incomes for the majority of their customary tenants, and so on. Of course there was also colonization, but the expansion of the cultivated area must be placed in perspective; for we are told that the total cultivated area in 1299 was in the region of 30,000-40,000 acres, 'of which perhaps 2,000 acres had been cleared in the previous century and a half'. Moreover, 'the new lands were inferior to those settled earlier'. Less surprising, but

perhaps still in need of emphasis, is the overtaking of customary payments by inflation from c 1170 onwards, with the result that customary rents 'seemed very cheap in the late thirteenth century'.

Interesting as these conclusions are, they have to be drawn from relatively poor documentation. It is in the later middle ages that the book comes into its own; for here records are unusually plentiful and informative, and Dr Dyer's analysis of them especially pertinent and perceptive. It is a rare pleasure to be able to follow economic and social developments across that great but artificial divide between late medieval and Tudor times. In this instance it is also a distinctly rewarding experience, for close attention is paid to such central issues as the evolution of copyholds and leaseholds and the changing pattern of landholding in the west Midlands. In brief it is the story of struggles between the bishops and their officials and the tenants over the levels of rents and the burdens of servile obligations. It was of course the tenants who won, and by the turn of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries many enjoyed hereditary copyhold tenure. Over the same period the manorial courts suffered a dramatic collapse in business and authority. Yet despite continuing security of tenure at rents which fell further and further behind the full value of land, in the first half of the sixteenth century economic differentiation among the peasantry proceeded apace. The numbers of tenants declined, while the numbers of really substantial landholdings rose sharply. Moreover, the large landholdings of the sixteenth century exhibited greater stability than hitherto. The result was a stark contrast between the fortunes of the richer members of village society and the swelling ranks of the poor. As for the bishops, the inefficiency which characterized the estate administration in the later middle ages was heightened in the sixteenth century, and against an inflationary background they suffered sharp falls in real income.

In a work which consistently seeks to answer questions, establish relationships and sequences, and explain why things happened it is inevitable that the reader will find the treatment of some issues less than convincing. This reviewer found the chapter on 'Population change, 1348-1540' disappointingly imprecise and inconclusive. There is a certain obliquity in defining crisis mortality in an era of high mortality as a doubling of the 'normal' high rate. This means that a death-rate of 30 per 1,000 must reach 60 per 1,000 in the fifteenth century in order to qualify. Nor has enough account been taken of the frequent village practice of retirement before death; counting the deaths of tenants is not the same as counting the deaths of adult males.

There are also problems in using the deaths of beneficed clergy for anything other than large-scale national epidemics; for the death-rate in each parish,

with only one person at risk, must be either 100 per cent or nil.

Paradoxically medieval economic and social history has of late been declining in a number of universities, including some where the subject has traditionally been strongest, while at the same time attracting increasing attention from influential non-medievalists (*inter alia* Robert Brenner and Alan Macfarlane) who have helped to place the Middle Ages at the centre of major historical debates. Can it be that the Middle Ages are too interesting and important to be left to medievalists? Whatever one is at times tempted to think, books such as this offer reassurance. Dr Dyer's fine mix of painstaking scholarship, sound judgement and intellectual curiosity will serve to stimulate students, inform specialists, and restrain the excesses of inadequately informed synthesizers.

JOHN HATCHER

EMMANUEL LE ROY LADURIE and JOSEPH GOY. *Tithe and Agrarian History from the Fourteenth to Nineteenth centuries, an essay in comparative history* (translated by Susan Burke). CUP and Paris, Editions de la Maison des Sciences de l'Homme, 1982. ix + 206 pp. £17.50.

The publication of this book is a major event in European agrarian history and marks the culmination of exactly 20 years of work co-ordinated and guided by Professors Ladurie and Goy. It is concerned with measuring long-term changes in the output of agriculture, a fundamental variable in any model of the pre-industrial economy. When work commenced in the early 1960s on the international project reported in this book, one of the principal *lacunae* in agricultural history was the lack of quantitative data on agricultural production in the period before central governments began collecting annual agricultural statistics. This book and its associated publications do much to fill the void.

In 1963, in a report to the Centre Nationale de la Recherche Scientifique de France, Ernest Labrousse argued that the analysis of long records of tithe payments might provide surrogate measures of gross agricultural product. This idea was subjected to further examination by seventeen authors in J Goy and E Le Roy Ladurie (eds) *Les fluctuations de la produit de le dîme . . .* (Paris, 1972). In essence these papers confirmed the basic thesis but also revealed that in some European countries, notably those on the northern margins, the tithe/production equation was not so straightforward as that encountered in parts of France and Spain. A tithe curve cannot be likened to a seismograph or an electrocardiogram: it is not possible to assume a direct relationship between each movement up or down and the levels of

production. Nevertheless, Ladurie and Goy remained convinced of the merits of this approach to providing long-term data on agricultural production and with the continued support of the Centre de Recherches Historiques of the Ecole Pratique des Hautes Etudes, they organized some 60 volunteer researchers to extend the territorial base of these studies. The detailed findings of this phase of the work carried out in the late 1970s have now been published as J Goy and E Le Roy Ladurie (eds) *Prestations paysannes, dîmes, rente foncière et mouvement de la production agricole à l'époque préindustrielle* (Paris, 1982, 2 vols). The book here reviewed summarizes the methods employed in these studies and their findings for Europe as a whole which, broadly speaking, are: (i) a late medieval collapse in agricultural output (though based on detailed evidence from just the Cambrésis and Upper Normandy in France); (ii) a general European recovery in the sixteenth century; (iii) crisis in some parts and stabilization in others in the seventeenth century; and (iv) various degrees of growth (except in Hungary) in the eighteenth century. Despite its title, the book does not concern itself with nineteenth-century developments.

The publication of this study should make what is an essentially continental European project better known in this country. There is not one reference to the admittedly few English studies which have used pre-Tithe Commutation Act records in the book; the paragraphs which discuss English agrarian history are derived in the main from the work of Deane and Cole. As a result, the book does not contribute anything really new to English agrarian history but does provide valuable comparative, European, context. However, all historians might profit from the authors' methodological comments and asides. For instance, Ladurie and Goy advocate the writing of history on a regional scale: 'the regional monograph is a powerful tool, a case study which reveals the functioning of a whole system in a much larger area' (p 78). On the strictly local study they comment by referring to the work of one author who 'worked on a mere 140 hectares, in the extreme north of France — which more or less amounts to studying the wealth of a vast region from a small garden in the suburbs' (p 84).

Professors Ladurie and Goy convincingly demonstrate that indices based on long series of tithe payments are potent tools for investigating long-term changes in agricultural production, though their comparative study of trends left this reviewer feeling that more 'suburban garden' scale work in the many as yet uncultivated parts of Europe would not be amiss to underpin the seductive general inferences.

R J P KAIN

PÉTER GUNST and TOMÁS HOFFMANN (eds). *Large Estates and Small Holdings in Europe in the Middle Ages and Modern Times. National Reports*. Akadémiai Kiadó, Budapest, 1982. 401 pp. \$29.

This volume contains 22 national reports written and discussed at regional conferences at Debrecen, Balatonmalmádi and Paris, for theme A1, preparatory to the Eighth International Economic History Congress, held at Budapest, 1982. Eight articles are in English, 6 in German, and 8 in French, by 28 authors. The printing is as typescript, and is remarkably accurate, with few of those awkwardnesses that occur in translations, or when the author is writing in a foreign language. The writing is simple, and avoids the highly technical, while the authors make the meaning of any special vocabulary very precise. The articles have few tables or maps, but most have a select bibliography. These are, in many cases, in eastern European, or other, languages not generally read by scholars, so that we are glad to learn about what we cannot read ourselves.

The subject is the intertwined development of large landholders and small men and dependants of every type. The authors have kept strictly to the point, though Melville's chapter may have crept in from another symposium. Each author deals with a different European country, and all are covered except for the south and south-east of Hungary, where the problem would have been of a different nature. The time range extends from the Middle Ages to modern times, but each author decides when to begin and end. Some go back to the genesis of the problem, but few come really up to modern times, when various solutions of the small man/big man problem have, perhaps, been achieved, or the problem has changed its character. In general, the sixteenth to mid-nineteenth centuries are discussed. The authors limit themselves to national frontiers or major long-enduring political units. Thus few consider regions other than political ones.

The articles are excellent and concise. In particular, one welcomes the freshness of discourse, and the absence of doctrines and preconceived ideas. More is known on some countries, and one can see why. The amount of statistical information available differs from country to country, but it is interesting to find authors in central and eastern Europe more ready to quote statistics.

Throughout Europe the large/smallholder problem existed, but its legal, social and practical significance varied greatly from place to place. An able pen is required to summarize these developments. Perhaps the most interesting feature described is the 'second' feudalization of large/small relationships in many countries in early modern times. The question is dealt with in full in the appropriate articles. The volume explores such developments clearly and

simply. While the articles do not read like digested reports, one would have liked every author to have had 40 rather than 20 pages, to look, for instance, across frontiers despite the many difficulties involved — difficulties of legal, social and conceptual definition. Were the problems of west, south, central and eastern Europe part of the same question, or merely apparently so?

Rarely does a volume of collected studies succeed as entirely as this. Responsibility for this great success rests upon the convenor, Professor H van der Wee, and the rapporteur, Professor L Makkai, and not least upon the publishers, Akadémiai Kiadó, Budapest, whose publications always have qualities of finish and originality that are quite peculiar to it.

D J DAVIS

HERMANN REBEL. *Peasant Classes: The Bureaucratization of Property under Early Habsburg Absolutism, 1511–1636*. Princeton, Princeton UP, 1983. xvii + 354 pp.

This is a handsomely made and printed book, with no printers' errors, with useful notes appended, a proper (and uninflated) bibliography, and helpful index.

Rebel begins with a slightly laboured discussion of the ideas of others about peasant revolts in the sixteenth century. This establishes that he can handle history in happy association with sociology, anthropology and economics. Later he does not worry much about the opinions of others, having quite enough original material to hand. He introduces us to the historical and geographical background of Upper Austria (round Linz) at the end of the century, of great help as his readers will be starting from cold.

He clearly states the evidence gathered from the analysis of some 800 inventories — surely an adequate number — from certain lordships of Upper Austria. He had a computer at hand, and uses Pearson correlation coefficients, most tactfully, and usefully, to demonstrate relationships between assets, real property, movables, loans and debts, and to discern various groupings of people. But he also discusses live cases. He shows that the absolute state had established a class of tenant with official status, and that below them were servants and lodgers, often their own kith and kin, who were outside the system ('dispossessed'). The only others who had official status were millers, innkeepers and teamsters. Perhaps a participation in growing rural industries alongside of, or in the absence of farming, could raise one's state.

Now the people with the tenure of a farm were the creatures of the new political system established by the increasingly absolutist state. They were carefully appointed, their marriages and inheritances

approved, and they were manipulated by a tight bureaucracy established by the Emperor, and the holders under him of estates. They were wholly responsible for dues and taxes, for order and seemly behaviour in their households. They might side-step the system at quite an early age by becoming the retired ex-heads of a household with some latitude to make a life of their own. All others were 'dispossessed', with grievances, likely to cause friction in the household.

When rebellion took place in the 1620s it was not because this rigid system had been formalized to its limits, for it was not then regarded as a grievance by the tenured peasants, but because of the enforcement of the Counter Reformation upon Protestants. Those Protestants who chose to migrate (there was no alternative) were prevented from leaving with their wealth intact. Rebellion was suppressed, those remaining being *politiques*, conforming outwardly, and inwardly one knows not what. When 10 years later small-scale, possibly millenary, movements occurred, followers appear to have been lodgers, dispossessed servants, children, etc. It was the tenured peasants who had to suppress them, brutally.

My outline is without nuance, but this volume is a lucid, perceptive, subtle description, an estimation of how it was to live under the new absolutism. The tenured peasant, who must keep his hands clean, be solvent, and maintain all those subject to him 'in the right', was firmly in the grip of his betters. This state of affairs was not, as some have thought, a new feudalism, but a powerful, efficient, bureaucratic way of running society for those at the top of the system. Rebel does not neglect to show how what he describes in Upper Austria fits into the central European picture. It seems quite reasonable to make these deductions from a careful analysis of the 800 inventories.

This is a most successful, extremely well, and economically, written volume.

D J DAVIS

ALDO DE MADDALENA. *Dalla Città al Borgo. Avvio di una metamorfosi economica e sociale nella Lombardia spagnola*. Milano, Franco Angeli, 1982. 379 pp. No price stated.

This volume brings together ten of De Maddalena's previously published articles. They are related mainly to the period of Spanish Habsburg rule over the state of Milan. Reproduced substantially in their original form, they have some of the footnotes condensed and some of the tables and graphs omitted. There remains, however, a solid mass of reference material and critical apparatus.

The first seven of these articles, arranged in the

chronological order of their subject-matter, are slow-moving, painstakingly-compiled, micro-economic studies, based on copious documentation. De Maddalena, with a deep love for the region of his studies, with gentle wit and critical bite, considerable erudition and no little wisdom, builds up piece by piece case-studies, which, by and large and with some justification, he takes as exemplifying the years each covers.

The first deals with the amassing of a large fortune over 20 years under Charles V by a Milanese silk merchant and entrepreneur, Orombelli. This on his death — in virtue of the business ineptitude of his wife and heirs — was switched to the development of property investments he had already started making. That side of his business, which concerned the orchestration of scattered manufacturing activities, together with his dependence upon large credit operations, was particularly impressive, and so were the profit margins of his trade.

The next article, focused on the third quarter of the Cinquecento, is a detailed exploration of the methods, costs and profits of the manufacture and sale of luxury silks and silk-based cloth of gold, the major production cost of the gold thread for this being interestingly that for the silver leaf (52 per cent). The prominent place of credit in such operations is again demonstrated by De Maddalena, who also shows how the industry was confronted by obstacles posed by Mint regulations. He contends that the way profits were represented as industrial rather than as commercial by the operators suggests that they themselves controlled the manufacturing processes as entrepreneurs.

Next follows an account of the riches of Gottardo Frisiani over the last quarter of the sixteenth and the beginning of the seventeenth centuries. These were accrued largely by loans against properties disguised as sales with redemption agreements, *fitti livellari*, or by the acquisition from the Regia Camera, the exchequer at Milan, of rights to specific public revenues. In the process, town and country property was acquired by both purchase and default on payments of *livelli*. Frisiani showed no interest in commerce and industry, nor in the speculative activity which is the concern of the ensuing article.

In the 40 years around 1600, the Lucini, hailing from Como but settled in Milan, centred business operations, either on their own behalf or as agents for others, on the 'Besançon fairs' at Piacenza. There, their annual exchange profit on the *scudo di marco* over the 4 yearly fairs was always more than 6 per cent and reached well over 10 per cent during the first lustrum of the 'nineties. Profits not ploughed back into the exchange business were used on the development of the family properties in Milan and Como and in the country.

The fifth study deals with the property of the newly ennobled Marquis Ambrogio d'Adda during the first half of the seventeenth century. Of his 6000 acres, nearly three-fifths comprised entailed property. It is this De Maddalena brings under his scrutiny. He finds the profitability of right-bank property on the Adda around Cassano to be 9 times that of left-bank property of the Ghiaradadda; and, although agricultural production, and especially wine, accounted for most of the profits associated with Cassano, feudal incomes, sale of licences on monopolies, tolls, etc, brought in almost as much again. Profits fell in rough conformity with the downward turn of prices in the 1630s. At the same time land proprietors such as d'Adda were not able to defend their fiscal exemptions from attacks by the small country communities, as the government in Milan brought them effectively within the tax system. It was a harder time, but not disastrous, for a family, whose original riches had come from commercial and industrial activities in mid-Cinquecento Milan.

The following article concerns the Belgiojoso estates of the counts Barbiano. In it De Maddalena traces changes in land use, 1670–1770. He posits the view that during the preceding decades investment had been aimed at improving the land rather than advancing crop returns. This later made possible major changes in the nature of farming. Forage crops and meadowlands increased, while wheat production declined. Rice also made some progress, and rye maintained an important, if variable, place as a crop to be grown on poor land. Over the period, 1546–1766, the number of fruit trees, including vines, fell to about 20 per cent of the original production, whereas other trees rose over the period by three times. These were mainly pollards, for reinforcing canal banks as irrigation systems were extended, and mulberries, which increased by over 23 times during the period 1670–1766. Belgiojoso illustrates well the growth of livestock farming and the silk industry at the time.

The final detailed study is concerned with indebtedness and rates of interest between 1620 and 1720, and is based on some 15,000 notarial acts. These are arranged in four categories of debts connected with dowry agreements, the alienation of immovables, loan activities and other obligations in which set conditions of repayment were laid down. This last, known technically as *obligationes*, was the major category throughout the century, although outside Milan debts on property deals dominated indebtedness between 1620 and 1670. De Maddalena notes that there was a general fall in interest rates over the second fifty years, and that speculative activity at the fairs, although also falling in profitability, recorded profits averaging 34.5 per cent more than those related to the above categories. The

article raises a great range of questions, but suggests only very tentative answers.

The final three articles are general in aim and recall the brilliant, synoptic essay: 'Il mondo rurale italiano nel Cinque e nel Seicento', *Rivista Storica Italiana*, 1964. They date from 1965 to 1981; the last, beginning as a critical appreciation of Domenico Sella's *Crisis and continuity*, ends with De Maddalena's mature thoughts on economic change in Spanish Lombardy. In so far as the material was investigated at the time, De Maddalena uses essentially the research behind his detailed articles as the basis of a general view, which leads to a certain unevenness of treatment. Little or nothing is said, for instance, specifically of towns such as Cremona, Pavia, Soncino, or Lodi.

As the title of this collection suggests, the trend in Spanish Milan is regarded as a movement from a flourishing urban economy to a concentration on the countryside. But first the urban economy was to recover from the disastrous period of war and become under Charles V reorientated to a changed international situation. The revival was greatly facilitated by the development of the manufacture of fine silks, but De Maddalena tells us little of the fortunes of other industries. At the end of the century monetary conditions had led to a growth in unproductive activities both on the exchange market and in usurious and rentier types of operation. Meanwhile, a share of profits had been directed towards the development of landed patrimonies. The family was becoming the vehicle of fortune and economic power; the land, the instrument whereby the power centres of government could be penetrated, so that power might be diverted to serve economic interests. It was not the introduction of Spanish attitudes, nor humanistic ideals concerning the *vita otiosa*, nor simply a desire for status, but cold, business calculation that lay behind the growth of a new, landed *élite*. Insistence on this is largely the basis of De Maddalena's rejection of the notion of refeudalization and its variants to describe the move from *città* to *borgo*. Similarly he rejects the notion of the betrayal of the bourgeoisie.

By 1620 the speculative drive, although not the sound business instincts of the Milanese, seemed to have given out. This, followed as it was by a period of war, the presence of troops, pestilence and famine, gave impetus to a realignment of the Milanese economy. With the subtle deployment of copious evidence relating to demographic, legal, monetary and political change, De Maddalena pursues over the next century or so this shift of the Milanese economy to a more soundly based rural regime, using new styles of agriculture and with trade and industry taking advantage of local raw materials and power sources, freedom from guild controls and cheaper labour.

Unfortunately one cannot leave a review of this book without serious reservation. First, the production of these articles is poor. An *errata* slip lists some 30 misprints. Many more could be added, including '28,050' *pertiche* (p 149) for what appears more correctly on p 139 as '20,850'; '100' *scudi* (p 107) for 10; and '15,560' *pertiche* (p 150) instead of 15,600. Moreover, throughout the seventh article references to tables are given wrongly. Second, there occur several numerical mistakes that cannot be attributed in any way to a printer: they are errors in calculation. Lire '1162.17.1' (p 108) should read 1162.16.11. 0.34% (pp 108, 119, 120) pointed to as a curious substitute for 0.33% should be, as one would expect, exactly one three-hundredth. The average profits of lire 33,422 (p 121) and lire 34,074 (p 123) have been increased here by a factor of ten, giving a completely false picture of the profitability of the Piacenza fairs. Also on p 123 lire '606,370' should read 596,370. '5.10%' (p 220) is a miscalculation for 5.01%, so that the consequent calculation of '17.3%' should be 15.8%. Incidentally, a little later, '*minimi*' appears for *massimi*. On p 215 '29.6%' should be 23.1%, and therefore the irrational '76.4%' (29.6 + 76.4 do not equal 100!) must become 76.9%. Some of these mistakes are substantial. Some were even translated into the 1967 *Annales* version of the article on the Besançon fairs. Perhaps one might consider whether De Maddalena's cavalier attitude towards arithmetical accuracy should undermine trust in the reliability of the numerical data on which the subsequent calculations have been made. At least it introduces a regrettable flaw into a devotedly scholarly achievement.

PETER LAVEN

J G L BURNBY and A E ROBINSON. '*Now Turned into Fair Garden Plots*' (*Stow*). Edmonton Hundred Historical Society, occasional paper, new series, No 45, 1983. 68 pp. Illustrated. £2.

Interest in different aspects of the history of horticulture is growing markedly these days, and a local study on the detailed scale of this publication, and at this modest price, is warmly to be welcomed. It affords a remarkable glimpse of market gardening in the Lea Valley on the outskirts of London between the sixteenth and early twentieth centuries. It has been carried out by two members of the Edmonton Hundred Historical Society, who have different but kindred professional interests in the subject: Mrs Robinson with her husband is a breeder of dianthus and daffodils in the area; Dr Burnby recently completed a thesis on seventeenth- and eighteenth-century apothecaries, all of whom relied, of course, on wild and cultivated herbs for their medicaments.

Their study surveys commercial gardening enterprises in Tottenham, Edmonton and Enfield.

As the authors explain in their introduction, market gardeners were a heterogeneous group, using varied terms to describe their work. Some were 'gardeners', some 'fruiterers', some 'florists' and some just 'farmers'. The gardening business was not new in the later sixteenth century, even though Thomas Fuller maintained in 1662 that it was. But clearly it underwent a qualitative change around the mid-sixteenth century, stimulated by the arrival of religious refugees from Flanders, Holland and France, bearing varied horticultural skills with them.

Historians generally focus attention at this time on North-East Kent and Thameside, but around 1600, if not earlier, surveys of the Edmonton-Enfield area show gardens that appear to be something more than cottage gardens. Other clues point to a developing professionalism: one of the sons of William Billings, a yeoman family of some prominence in Enfield, was apprenticed to a well-known Shoreditch market gardener, and in 1638 gained his freedom (of the Tallow Chandlers Company, in this case, since his master was of that company). Already horticulture embraced several different specialisms. Some 10 acres of land in Tottenham was being used to cultivate roses, according to a survey of 1619. Soft fruit growers were established in Enfield in 1636, one of whom grew raspberries, strawberries and cherries, and undertook to pay some of these in rent to his landlord. He also undertook to plant apple and pear trees, and grow willows in the ditches round his land for the making of baskets to hold his harvested fruit. Tree fruit growing was also developing apace for a survey of Enfield in 1572 names 205 orchards in the parish, while later surveys in 1610, 1635 and 1686 give evidence of moves to convert more land to orchards. Some trees evidently produced cider apples, for Enfield cider later enjoyed a fine reputation. Complaints about the poor state of the roads hereabouts in the eighteenth century yield information on thousands of gooseberry trees [*sic*], dispatched to Gravesend, and of potatoes which were a considerable crop in Tottenham's common fields by 1713.

What was the source of all this professional expertise? The authors offer examples of apprenticeships taken up elsewhere in the London area, and of families which continued in the business for many generations. But the authors also rate highly the influence of gentlemen's vegetable gardens and orchards as training grounds for commercial growers. A survey of Theobald's house and park, next to Enfield Chase, under the Commonwealth, shows elaborate and extensive fruit, vegetable and flower gardens, including a hedge of gooseberries, and a mulberry walk. Unverified tradition has it that the famous seed and nurseryman, James Cuthbert,

founder of the Middlesex and Hertfordshire firm, came to Southgate, having trained on the Scottish estate of the Duke of Chandos. More connections of this kind are scattered through the second half of the book, which is a substantial catalogue, extending to 40 pages, of commercial horticulturists, compiled from directories, newspapers, the *Gardeners Chronicle*, rate books, and miscellaneous other sources. Family relationships cannot be pursued in great detail, but some individuals plainly set up dynasties; the supreme example is Michael Rochford, the founder of the firm celebrated for its houseplants. He came from Ireland to Chelsea, and was launched on the road to success in Tottenham.

This is one of the most adventurous of this historical society's publications, and an outstanding contribution to the local history of horticulture. In a small compass it offers wide views of a diversified and flexible range of enterprises that still seem not to have exhausted their full commercial and economic potential.

JOAN THIRSK

MICHAEL HUNTER. *The Royal Society and its Fellows, 1600-1700: the morphology of an early scientific institution*. British Society for the History of Science Monographs, No 4, 1982. 270 pp. No price stated.

This carefully prepared typescript monograph is a greatly extended and revised version of a paper published in *Notes and Records of the Royal Society* in 1976. In the text, tables, notes, and appendices it contains a vast store of detail on the first 40 years of one of the world's oldest scientific societies. One of its major achievements is to provide an exhaustive analysis of the scientific activity of the 551 members elected between 1660 and 1700 and thus provide evidence of the changing nucleus of active members over four decades. There have been too many facile generalizations about membership of the early Society which failed to distinguish those who took the Society seriously from the majority who, disappointingly, provided little support. Michael Hunter's painstaking work provides powerful evidence refuting any assumptions of homogeneity among the members of the Society, who represented different social classes and occupations. Of the 479 British Fellows 14 per cent were members of the aristocracy (particularly prominent in the first decade), 16 per cent were 'courtiers, politicians or diplomats', 15 per cent were gentlemen of independent means, 16 per cent were medical practitioners, 12 per cent were scholars or writers, 8 per cent divines, 4 per cent lawyers, and 7 per cent merchants or tradesmen, although this latter group constituted only about 3 per cent in the first few years of the Society's history.

Despite what was said about respect for practical work, the superior social composition of the Society and its considerable membership fee did much to minimize participation by artisans. On the other hand medical men and scholars are shown to have been particularly active within the Society.

The ideal history of a scientific institution attempts to integrate a study of the organization and membership with an analysis of its scientific activities. The present book, though welcome, concentrates on the membership. It is to the credit of the Royal Society that it has conserved such a high proportion of documents relating to its early history and it is to the credit of Dr Hunter that he has made good use of them. The seventeenth-century history of the Royal Society has attracted a great deal of attention from scholars over the past 50 years. It is to be hoped that historians will now turn their attention to the history of the Society in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, some of which is still a veritable *terra incognita*.

MAURICE CROSLAND

PHILIP JENKINS. *The making of a ruling class. The Glamorgan gentry 1640-1790*. CUP, 1983. xxvi + 353 pp. £25.

This study of Glamorgan society before the Industrial Revolution is local history at its very best. Professor Jenkins is well versed in current views and theories on all aspects of his subject, from Mingay on estates to Malcolmson on recreations, and his findings are always concerned to confirm, correct or challenge received opinions. Glamorgan is an excellent test-bed in both the narrowly Welsh context and the wider aspects of British history. It was a dual community, with the rich southern Vale analogous to the wealthier English counties and a poorer upland typical of most of Wales. Peculiarly distinctive features are the religious background, with a fear of Catholicism remarkable even for the seventeenth century balanced by a correspondingly unusual toleration of Protestant dissenters after the Restoration, and of course the growing importance of industry from the later seventeenth century. Many of the gentry had disposable wealth: of 28 local squires who were MPs between 1700 and 1750, 15 of them sat for constituencies outside Glamorgan. The complex Glamorgan evidence does not confirm the Habbakuk view that great estates swallowed up small ones, and Jenkins himself prefers to emphasize the demographic lottery which saw the majority of the Glamorgan gentry fail in the male line during his period. Many estates passed into English hands, an important factor in the growing alienation of the gentry from their tenants not merely in life-style but also in a cultural and linguistic dimension that soon made

the Welsh rural situation more analogous to that of Ireland than England. If this tradition of Welsh history is confirmed, others are not. Jenkins challenges the conventional opinions that Wales was an ultra-Royalist area and that later on Welsh Whigs were thin on the ground. An unexpectedly large proportion of the book is concerned with the political context, whether radicalism (in both the mid-seventeenth- and late eighteenth-century senses), patronage, or Jacobitism and its links with freemasonry. On electoral alignments, however, the author seemingly fails to grasp that before 1760 a Whig versus Tory situation existed in Glamorgan that bore little relation to the behaviour of the participants in national politics.

Jenkins has produced a subtle analysis of a changing community, its attitudes and way of life. There is no narrative, and the book indeed suffers from a specialist fault commonly associated with thesis-writing. Undue familiarity with his evidence has made Jenkins forget that many of his readers may not understand his allusions to local and even national events. The fierce county elections of 1734 and 1745 are frequently mentioned, but nowhere discussed. The author's wish to avoid duplicating information in Volume IV of the official *Glamorgan County History* is in one sense commendable, but it might create difficulties for his audience. This drawback does not prevent the book from being an admirable case-study of the governing class of Georgian Britain in a peculiarly complex environment. It is impossible to mention all the good things in it, but there is enough space to deplore the lack of a bibliography.

PETER D G THOMAS

T M DEVINE and DAVID DICKSON (eds). *Ireland and Scotland, 1600-1850*. John Donald, Edinburgh, 1983. 283 pp. £16.

This book gathers together a score of papers presented to the second seminar in comparative Irish-Scottish economic and social history financed by the SSRC. Five of the contributions are collected in the section called 'rural themes': several of the others deal tangentially with agrarian matters.

The comparative element in the collection varies. Some papers deal solely with one country, and leave to the editors the task of drawing a comparative moral in the thoughtful concluding essay. Whyte's excellent novel account of rural social structure in seventeenth-century Scotland falls into this category, as does Dodgshon's survey of agricultural change in the Southern Uplands, 1600-1780. Mokyr's 'Uncertainty and Prefamine Irish Agriculture' amounts to a set of notes on risk avoidance strategies in respect to tenancy and crops and whets the appetite for his new book on pre-famine Irish agriculture.

More explicitly comparative are Crawford's essay on Ulster as a reflection of the two societies, and Lockhart's account of planned villages in Scotland and Ireland. Most interesting of all is Solar's comparison of the performance of Scottish and Irish agriculture in the early nineteenth century, arguing that there was little difference in the total factor productivity for the two countries, and that therefore the problems of backwardness in Victorian Ireland 'did not originate in a failure to modernise agriculture along Scottish lines'.

There are two main objections to Solar's thesis. Firstly, the data on which it is based are drawn from 1855-57, a decade after two million people in Ireland, heavily concentrated among the smallest and presumably least efficient landholders, had died or fled. Secondly, it takes no account of the main social effect of the agricultural revolution in Scotland, which was to effect a much more effective separation of the small man from the soil than ever took place in Ireland. Nevertheless, Solar is surely correct to emphasize the extraordinary fact that 'overcrowded' pre-famine Ireland not only easily fed itself (Mokyr reckons elsewhere that there was room for another million Irishmen on the uncolonized wastes by 1840) but exported a substantial quantity of food to England and Scotland — and that it achieved this without anything that would be recognized in the rest of Europe as an agricultural revolution. As explanation, he advances two points: that labour-intensive husbandry could be extremely efficient in terms of yield per acre, and, more interestingly if more tentatively, that Ireland had no need of an agricultural revolution since clover, that magic herb of fertility, spread uniquely there as a natural weed once it had been introduced, presumably in the seventeenth century.

Irish demographic historians have recently reached the conclusion that population grew from under one million to over eight million between 1600 and 1840. This is a rate analogous to American rather than European experience. The question of how Ireland could support such a natural increase over such a period and still have capacity to export, certainly demands an answer more sophisticated than that the Irish were fond of potatoes, and perhaps Solar provides the clue. A still more interesting problem, of course, is why the Irish should have wanted to breed to such extraordinary densities anyway. That could be on the agenda for another conference.

T C SMOUT

BARBARA ENGLISH and JOHN SAVILLE. *Strict Settlement: A Guide for Historians*. University of Hull Press, 1983. 144 pp. £5.95.

In the 1870s and 1880s historians tried to find an explanation for the concentration of landed property

revealed by the 1873 'New Domesday'. The most widely accepted opinion emphasized the role played by the strict family settlement in the period since 1660. In the twentieth century this view was refined by Sir John Habakkuk. He argued that from the time it came into operation shortly after the Restoration, the strict settlement was adopted earliest and most completely by the larger landed families. Consequently by the mid-eighteenth century the great estates had been constructed at the expense primarily of the smaller owners and yeomanry. However, Christopher Clay, and more recently Lloyd Bonfield, have used Hollingsworth's demographic data on the peerage to suggest that the actual role of strict settlement was less important than had previously been believed. Bonfield suggested that successive resettlement — the process whereby estates were held together — simply could not have happened.

Barbara English and John Saville do not accept this view. They believe Bonfield, and indeed many other historians of landownership, have misunderstood the nature of the strict family settlement by equating it more or less interchangeably with marriage settlement. Accordingly they attempt to unravel the legal intricacies of settlement, and to demonstrate the wide variety of practice. The first half of the book is primarily concerned with the history and legal structure of strict settlement, and it provides a 'model' settlement. For students of the subject this is a very useful guide, although the dangers of model building are also apparent in the authors' conclusion that every family pattern deserves investigation because none would perfectly fit the model. Certainly one of the most significant features emphasized by English and Saville is the occasion of settlement. They argue that marriage was only one of several possible opportunities; indeed, the significance of coming of age is emphasized throughout the book (pp 21, 22, 40, 104). Marriage settlements were often made only within the wider pattern of existing family settlements. The second half of the book is a series of case studies offering the settlement history of a variety of landed families at different levels of the hierarchy.

What emerges most clearly is the bewildering complexity of settlement practice, even in a small and admittedly non-random sample. English and Saville conclude that the settlement maze is sufficiently complex to render quantification impossible either as to the amount of settled land in England at any one time, or to the proportion of marriage settlements which were strict settlements in the sense that historians have usually viewed them. Clearly a representative sample cannot be found, and English and Saville rightly offer only 'impressions, not statistical certainties' (p 100). They suggest that the significance of wills in settlement history has been under-

estimated, and that land was more likely to be omitted from settlement due to a rational family decision than demographic chance. These conclusions clearly raise questions about Bonfield's findings, and they will cause other historians to make a more careful distinction in assessing the role of strict settlement.

The book is a useful guide to the background to strict settlement, and, in the wealth of example, a reminder that strict and marriage settlement should not necessarily be equated. However, this overall favourable impression is slightly marred in the epilogue. English and Saville forget their comment about 'impressions' to claim that 'Habakkuk's general thesis has certainly been vindicated in terms of the preservation argument' (p 114). Quite apart from the non-randomness of the sample, the book does not explain how strict settlement had brought about estate consolidation by c 1750. It would have been better to leave out such an unjustified assertion.

J V BECKETT

J R WORDIE. *Estate Management in Eighteenth-Century England. The Building of the Leveson-Gower Fortune*. Royal Historical Society, 1982. 303 pp. £20.

Dr Ross Wordie asks us to reconsider several key propositions about English agricultural history in the eighteenth century. He finds little significant evidence of depression in the years 1730 to 1750. He suspects that the most decisive changes associated with the 'agricultural revolution' occurred mainly after, rather than before, 1790. He believes that the financial demands of political status-seeking could drain a landlord's fortune and thereby force radical changes in estate policy. He argues that the great expansion of landlord investment in the land at the end of the century necessitated radical increases in rents and led to a serious overcapitalization of nineteenth-century agriculture. In general terms he contends that the great English landed estates were well managed by a working aristocracy who, despite an occasional tendency to squander their monies, ran a 'pretty good show'; the system was certainly better than the next most likely alternative method of running eighteenth-century England.

These are some of the themes drawn from a close study of the English estates of the Leveson-Gower family, the precursors of the dukes of Sutherland. More by luck than talent, the Leveson-Gowers had amassed one of the greatest territorial, commercial and political empires in the new industrial economy. Their estates in England, mainly in Shropshire (at Lilleshall) and Staffordshire (at Trentham), bestrode some of the classic territory of industrial genesis and agricultural advance in the West Midlands.

Wordie's study, severely managerial in focus, is

organized simply about the subjects of industry, agriculture and politics. Some of the bones of the research protrude through the body of the text — for this is a study heavily reliant on the paraphernalia of leases, rentals, vouchers, mining agreements, and endless estate correspondence. Packed full of data and cautious interpretation it adds up to a major contribution to our knowledge of the eighteenth-century estate and its managers. It is the fertile soil of scholarship, but sometimes rather heavy going.

The central argument of the book concerns the apparent re-definition of the landlord's economic function towards the end of the century. Having built up the family finances by lucrative marriages, good fortune and decent standards of management, the Leveson-Gowers increasingly came to call the tune in estate development and in every aspect of farming practice. In this policy the apparatus of control was vital: the channelling of capital investment became more directive and forceful, and the agents became more authoritarian. This process of modernization from above was consistent with the concurrent trend towards the concentration of ownership and the achievement of economies of scale in agricultural production. In the industrial development of the Leveson-Gower estates the story was different. In this sector the key to growth for the landlord was the engagement of co-operative and daring entrepreneurs, an 'important catalysing agent in the Industrial Revolution', in Wordie's view.

Telling the story of estate management and finances over 200 years is a tall order and Dr Wordie provides most of the answers, although some questions remain. For instance there is here little indication of the net return on capital during the entire period, an omission which necessarily vitiates any judgement on the effectiveness of investment policy. Nor is there much measurement of prevailing levels of consumption in the aristocratic household. The surviving evidence is probably inadequate for either of these tasks. Dr Wordie's book on Leveson-Gower estates, located in the very cradle of industrialization, should become the stimulus for a broader study of economic growth in the region. He demonstrates that it would be possible to produce an integrated study of the whole process of development (demographic, industrial and agricultural) for the West Midlands, on the model of J D Chambers' *The Vale of Trent 1670-1800*.

In the present book Dr Wordie has sensibly chosen to concentrate on the problems of management. Even his treatment of the political activities of the Leveson-Gowers is restricted to their consequences for estate policy. It is disappointing that the impact of estate management on social structure, and the relations of the classes, is excluded from this account, particularly since the author has already published

important findings in this area (in the *Economic History Review*, XXVII, 1974). There is virtually no reference to the social turmoil generated among the working people of the estates, and no mention of Thomas Bakewell's bitter denunciation of the Scottish estate agents imported to rule over Trentham. For here we have agricultural history written from the agent's office — even their masters have little voice in the story, while the tenantry, in their anonymity, are missing, presumably ploughing the fields and mining the coal and ironstone. The estate populations are practically invisible except for their alcoholic excesses during election campaigns. The available evidence of the period seems to allow Wordie no direct penetration into the minds of the people or their landlord. Even when the Leveson-Gowers decided to relinquish their great political power in Staffordshire, there is little explanation of their motives.

All of which is to say that the landed estate was a complex institution at the centre of economic and social change in the industrial revolution. Dr Wordie's sober discussion of such questions as the economics of aristocratic marriage, leasing policies, the interpretation of trends in rent arrears, and much more, will help build the foundations of our knowledge of agrarian change. His arguments about the timing and character of the changes in the West Midlands will require a response from agricultural historians.

ERIC RICHARDS

PAMELA HORN. *William Marshall (1745-1818) and the Georgian Countryside*. Beacon Publications, 1982. 88 pp. £3 post-free from 11 Harwell Road, Sutton Courtenay, Abingdon, Oxon OX14 4BN

I find it extremely difficult to write an unbiased review of this book. Part of the difficulty is that I have myself written a good deal about Marshall, none of which is mentioned and probably not used by Mrs Horn, doubtless for the sufficient reason that she was not acquainted with these contributions. For the sake of the record I shall list these items, before going on to the proper purpose of this review which is, of course, an attempt to assess the value of the work in question. My own writings about Marshall appeared in: *Agricultural History* 23, 1 (Jan 1949); *Four Land Agents' Society* (Nov 1954); and *More old English farming books 1950* (reprinted 1978), pp 114-20. Her research is in other respects exhaustive, and she has discovered a portrait of Marshall, something that is of value to a reader trying to envisage the man. Mrs Horn has made a complete, if brief, examination of Marshall's writings, but she was evidently restricted by space considerations, the cost of publishing being what it is.

Marshall was cantankerous, feeling that he was not appreciated at his own worth, as he assessed it. I think it can reasonably be said that his *Rural Economy* series are more precisely informative than the rather cursory surveys made in the course of his travels by Arthur Young, although I suppose the latter has the more posthumous fame. Marshall was a rather meticulous man. He did not think it possible to gauge local farming practice by looking over a hedge, but believed it was essential to spend some time, even years, in a district in order to see and understand the farming practices there. This mode of approach, essentially Marshall's, is fully appreciated by his biographer.

Marshall dropped into the business almost by accident. He made his home at Croydon at a time when he was a businessman in the city, and it was this estate that he must perforce manage because he owned it. Suffering as he did from the urge to write he must, being the egoist that he was, write about what he did at Croydon. This was the birth of a distinguished career as a writer about the farming of different parts of the country, although his birth pangs as an author were limited to his writing about Croydon. In the end there was little of England that he did not inspect, but the fundamental basis of his *Rural Economy* series was grounded in the grass roots, he having spent lengthy periods in the various parts of the country that he describes so meticulously.

From the early days at Croydon until his end at Pickering, Marshall was busy, not only with observing farming practices, but often in performing these practices. His *Rural Economy* series are in many ways superior to the somewhat cursory observations made by his great (and in some ways more urbane) rival, but I doubt whether his productions will ever be so well known.

Unfortunately, space forbids any detailed discussion of Dr Horn's admirable introduction but it must be said that this book fills a gap in our acquaintance with William Marshall and his work, and is so far welcome.

G E FUSSELL

ROLLO ARNOLD. *The Farthest Promised Land*. Wellington, NZ. Victoria University Press, 1981. xiii + 408 pp. NZ\$35. (Obtainable from Cam Books, 13 Oakrits, Meldreth, Royston, Herts.)

This is an ambitious attempt to study in depth the background and fortunes of assisted migrants from rural England to New Zealand during the 1870s. To this end Professor Arnold has tackled a remarkably wide range of sources including, in his own country, records of the immigration department, theses, local histories and reminiscences; whilst British sources

mostly familiar to readers of this journal are supplemented by regular recourse to the census enumerators' schedules of 1871. Considerable use has been made of newspapers and periodicals ranging from the *Taranaki Herald* and *The Yeoman* (Wanganui) to *The Stamford Mercury* and *Kent Messenger*, as well as *The Labourers' Union Chronicle*, *Labour League Examiner*, etc.

Arnold's story commences with 1300 navvies who, with their dependants, were brought to New Zealand by Brogden's, the railway contractors, in 1872-73. This scheme primed the government's own efforts to attract immigrants, a cause advocated vigorously by Julius Vogel who in 1870 was Colonial Treasurer and subsequently became Premier of New Zealand. As is well known, the movement was supported by the new labourers' unions in England and the role of Christopher Holloway, one-time chairman of the Oxfordshire district of NALU, is particularly richly documented including a detailed account of his journeys in New Zealand in 1874-75. The flow reached its peak in May 1874: thereafter targets were set and revised according to circumstances and in 1879 numerous applicants were still awaiting consideration when the New Zealand government, faced with deteriorating economic circumstances, took steps towards phasing out assisted immigration.

Chapter 2, 'The Village World and the Labourers' Revolt', seeks to enquire why farm labourers were so undervalued in the land of their birth. This is a competent if somewhat conventional account with much reference to Arch, the causes of the labourers' 'degradation', etc. Happily, Arnold did not rest content with such an outline and 132 pages are devoted to studies of the position of the labourer in Oxon, Lincs, Warwicks, Kent, Cornwall, and Devon, all of which (in contrast to Wales and the North) provided strong contingents for the emigrant ships. These essays show considerable sensitivity to differences of terrain and the nuances of English social structure and display versatility and imagination in the use of sources. Certainly they should serve to clarify for New Zealanders the background from which their forbears sprang, for apparently most consider that they are descended from yeoman stock and have no inkling of the significance of 'The Revolt of the Field'. The scene then shifts to the receiving country. Here Arnold stresses that immigrants gained self-respect deriving from success in being selected and from the solicitude shown for their welfare during the voyage and upon arrival. Of particular importance in easing the assimilation of some immigrants were co-religionists, whilst as reported in letters home, relations with employers were usually close and good. Many soon acquired horses with which to ride to work, symbolizing their

improved status. Subsequent chapters differentiate between patterns of settlement in 'Feldon' (open country) and 'Arden' (forest) territories. Numerous instances of the successful establishment of one-time labourers as yeoman farmers in the coastal regions are given, whilst from the mid-1870s the backwoods were being tackled for the first time by settlers who included immigrants working alongside experienced colonials in relatively arduous conditions. In following up individual immigrants, considerable use is made of a *Return of Freeholders* (1884) and the multi-volumed *Cyclopaedia of New Zealand* (1897-1908).

From a strictly social scientific standpoint, the book has some obvious weaknesses. For example, Arnold aspired to isolate the common features of villages supplying many applicants and to construct a profile of the 'typical' emigrant, to be contrasted with those who remained. Instead, his English studies succeed only in generating some tentative hypotheses, eg that there was some (unquantified) relationship with prevalence of nonconformity and whether a parish was open rather than closed. Even this relationship did not invariably hold true (see Lincolnshire, p 147), and emigration from the south-west patently had nothing to do with the 'Revolt of the Field', the primary influences being vicissitudes in the mining industry (Cornwall) and population pressure (south Devon). What stands out, therefore, is the diversity of circumstances conducive to emigration. Moreover, in tracing the fortunes of the migrants, Arnold's technique is to argue by example, using (as we have seen) sources which may be suspected of having a Smilesian bias towards the successful. In the final analysis, as he admits, a balance sheet can only be drawn up 'when we know how many remained illiterate labourers, how many became cottagers in town or city, and how many established themselves as yeoman farmers' (p 340). Of course, it is only fair to point out that research on the scale required to give final answers to such questions would require co-ordinated teamwork and massive financing, and can hardly be said to fall within the scope of the lone scholar, however imaginative he may be. In any case Arnold's book is a remarkable *tour de force*. Bold in design, graphic in detail, beautifully written and handsomely illustrated, *The Farthest Promised Land* is not a whit inferior to Charlotte Erickson's comparable study of the flow to North America (*Invisible Immigrants*, 1972) and it deserves to reach a wide audience in New Zealand and Britain.

W A ARMSTRONG

HEATHER A CLEMENSON. *English Country Houses and Landed Estates*. Croom Helm, 1982. 244 pp. 19 tables, 13 figures. £15.95.

Miss Clemenson is a Research Associate in the Department of Geography at the University of Guelph in Ontario, and although her book looks back as far as the Middle Ages to comment upon aspects of English landownership, essentially it concentrates upon the period between 1883 and 1980, relying heavily for its 1883 information on J Bate-man, *The Great Landowners of Great Britain and Ireland* (4th edn, 1883). As many as 1336 'large landowners' are specified in this survey, and Miss Clemenson takes a sample of 500 of these to serve as the statistical basis for her study. The purpose of the book is to follow through the histories of these 500 estates as fully as possible up to the present day, producing tables to show how many country houses and stately homes are still occupied by private owners, how many have been pulled down and when, and how many have passed into institutional ownership. The declining areas covered by the sample estates are charted, and so too is the decline of the 'amenity land' which once surrounded them. A clear picture of trends of development emerges from the sample estates, showing how some have declined and some have adapted, and we learn what has become of many of our lesser known stately homes.

In order to establish the present day position of her sample estates, Miss Clemenson sent questionnaires to the present owners or to their representatives, but this procedure was less than entirely successful. 'By no means all 500 questionnaires were initially completed in all sections, but provided a base on which to build' (p 237). It would have been interesting to see an example of the questionnaire form, but none was provided. The gaps needed to be filled, but how? The dustjacket of the book claims that it is 'based on extensive research in estates' archives', but little evidence of this is to be found. There are 633 footnote references in this volume, but of these only two refer to the Somersetshire Record Office, in one case to a newspaper report of 1948. There are no other references to county record offices, the PRO, or any other form of record repository to be found in the book. Apart from one trip to Somerset, Miss Clemenson appears to have conducted her research for this study from Guelph, using internationally available secondary material and her questionnaire responses. Moreover, numerous little errors and strange notes undermine our faith. A Canadian geographer may perhaps be forgiven for thinking it necessary to inform us that 'a knightage is not hereditary', but surely not for telling us that '1 acre = 2.4 hectares'. The Act of Union with Scotland leaps back by more than 100 years to 1604 (p 40): Sir Edwin Lutyens becomes Sir Edward (p 187). The

heart sinks. Can any good thing come out of telemetric research?

The answer is that it can. Thanks to her extensive work on recent legislation concerning landed property and her very wide reading of contemporary journals, Miss Clemenson has been able to draw together for us a wealth of information on landed estates in the twentieth century which can be found nowhere else in such a convenient and well expressed form. This book is perhaps more for geographers than for historians, but it is one that I will be glad to have on my shelves.

ROSS WORDIE

DONALD H AKENSON (ed). *Canadian Papers in Rural History*, vol III. Gananoque, Ontario, Langdale Press, 1982. 256 pp. \$(Cdn)14.95.

It is odd that a country that was predominantly rural up to World War One and always dependent on the export of its natural resources should have shown so little interest in its rural past. The appearance of the first volume of *Canadian Papers in Rural History* in 1978 was one of several recent events that has signalled an end to that neglect.

Of the nine articles in this third volume, edited by Donald Akenson of Queen's University (Kingston, Ontario), two are controversial, another two are solid contributions to scholarship, and the rest are either less significant or do not belong in the collection. Gerald Bloch takes up the challenge extended by English agrarian radical, Robert Gourlay, to find error in his work. Bloch's lucid analysis reveals both the internal inconsistencies and utopian nature of Gourlay's thought which continued to centre on solving the problem of the English poor despite his active involvement in colonial life. Equally admirable is Peter Russell's statistical study of fifteen Upper Canadian townships from 1812 to 1842. His research in assessment rolls reveals that land clearing proceeded much more slowly than we have commonly thought. His findings are important, but his evidence is too slight to support his other attack on the prevailing interpretation which views land granting in the province as having been plagued with favouritism and speculation.

A number of other papers are less satisfactory. Bruce Batchelor's study of the Methodist-inspired Saskatchewan Homestead and Land Company is mercifully short as it gets little further than the company did in its colonization efforts around Red Deer, Alberta. John Mannion's previously published essay on the Waterford (Ireland) provisioning trade to Newfoundland does not belong in such a volume, despite the editor's rationalizations. The evolution of

the plough is described by Alan Skeoch in an interesting account, but as the author relies heavily on non-Canadian sources, more work remains to be done in this area. Two geographers, Darrell Norris and Victor Konrad, provide a survey of vernacular house types in one south-western Ontario township, which they have linked with traditional sources such as censuses, assessment rolls and local directories. While the approach is promising, their conclusions are banal and their prose is alternatively pretentious and impenetrable. Greater problems are manifest in the study by John Clarke of the land acquisition activities of Essex County merchant and fur trader, John Askin. Because the author ignores the political and economic situation of the Detroit area, he misses some of the factors that influenced the purchase of land. Even then he is not certain that the lands he discusses belonged to the John Askin who is the object of his study! Clark also employs his evidence too literally, quotes too frequently, and arrives at conclusions unjustified by his argument. This essay is something less than an exercise in local history.

The two prize pieces are the articles by the editor on the *Ontario Irish*, and the reconsideration of French Canadian agriculture in the early nineteenth century by economist, R M McInnis. The contemporary debate on the latter issue stems from the writings of Ottawa historian, Fernand Ouellet, and it has drawn more attention than any other dispute in Canadian history since the effects of the British conquest of 1760 were the centre of attention in the 1960s. McInnis brings a much needed broader perspective to the subject of 'agricultural crisis' without fundamentally altering the substance of the debate. This is more an essay in historiography than revisionism, as was a previous article by McInnis where he provided an econometric formula that attempted to prove that French Canadian agriculture was not inefficient in 1851. McInnis rejects the traditional interpretations proffered for French-Canadian agricultural deficiency: cultural backwardness, soil exhaustion, poor climate, and overpopulation. He is more willing to acknowledge the influence of limited markets but he fails to consider the effects of the colonial situation itself in stemming the flow of information about improved farming from the government controlled by one nation to the people of another. In the end, however, McInnis is forced to conclude that the key to determining

whether or not there was an agricultural crisis (which then influenced the rebellions of 1837-38) lies in determining whether rural incomes suffered a real decline. Here the research of Fernand Ouellet in the tithe collection records suggests that the habitants in the Montreal region, at least, did see their revenues diminish.

In a revisionist article exaggerated in its claims and unnecessarily defamatory of existing scholarship, editor Akenson attempts to determine the religious composition of the Ontario Irish between 1842 and 1881 as well as to emphasize that both Protestants and Catholics became predominately rural. Some of this is not as new as the author contends. Not long ago two sociologists studying the 1871 census showed that farming was the foremost occupation of the Irish of both denominations. Akenson projects their conclusions backward and forward in time but with considerably less success statistically. His manipulations of the 1842 census are so replete with assumptions as to provoke a common North American expression to assume a new form: 'You fakes your numbers and you takes your choice.' Despite his own awareness of the fragility of his endeavour, Akenson latches on to statistics for the percentage of Irish-born and for their religious affiliation that he then brandishes with the confidence of a positivist. We still only know what we knew before: the majority of the pre-famine immigrants were Protestant, but Catholics represented a significant minority. Akenson's article does suggest that the Irish experience in Canada did not duplicate their experience in the United States, yet despite much posturing, he does not answer in other than demographic terms the question that he himself sets: whatever happened to the Ontario Irish? It is also peculiar that a person who brands the work of others as 'racist' should himself indulge in a characterization of his special interest, the Protestant Irish, that is no different in kind from that which he denounces. Revisionism generally needs revising, and this piece is no exception.

While it is not difficult to take exception to parts of this volume, the collection remains an important vehicle for an area that is controversial even though it is still in its infancy. Unfortunately the French in the McInnis article is printed without accents, and typos are too numerous in the volume as a whole. Tighter editing would enhance the value of future volumes.

TERRY CROWLEY

Shorter Notices

PETER FOWLER. *Farms in England: prehistoric to present.*

HMSO for the Royal Commission on Historical Monuments, 1983. 84 pp. 99 plates. £4.95.

This is a well-produced book of black and white photographs of farms, which word is used in the widest possible sense, even including supposedly prehistoric cultivations. The text is considerable, being partly in verse and partly in officialese, and occasionally ludicrous, as when describing a ploughed pond. But the illustrations are full of interest, showing, amongst other things, farm buildings of all kinds, agricultural implements, mills, livestock, and workers. I was struck by the photographs of farms in Brettenham and Shurdington and of the granary at Barton Turf, not to speak of the one at Colyton smithy, where the blacksmith worked within half a dozen yards of a supply of draught Bass. Obviously the National Monuments Record Photographic Archives, which contain over a million items, are a veritable treasure house of delights for the eye and the mind. We hope the volume at present under review will be far from the last in the series of which it forms part.

ERIC KERRIDGE

JOHN WOODFORDE. *Farm Buildings in England and Wales.* Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1983. 150 pp. 18 illus, 68 drawings by John Penoyre. £7.95.

This is another addition to the library of general interest books on farm buildings that the publishing houses have been creating in recent years. Along with the others, it will be competing amongst a readership mildly drawn towards history, the countryside and conservation.

In Mr Woodforde's words, the object of the book 'is to consider how the farm buildings admired by visitors to the countryside came into existence, and how far that admiration is shared by farmers whose normal business is to make money by producing as much food as possible'. This, therefore, is not a work for breaking new ground but rather an introduction or compendium which, as the author freely admits, owes much to other writers and commentators amongst whom J C Loudon of the nineteenth, and Nigel Harvey of the twentieth century, are the most prominent.

Through the 10 chapters of Part One, Mr Woodforde summarizes in a fluid and readable way the changing framework of farming practice and fortunes. Colour is provided by a liberal sprinkling of quotations and anecdotes from sources as diverse as Chaucer and Rider Haggard but the illustrations, drawn from standard nineteenth-century works, are randomly distributed and neither add to, nor are sufficiently amplified by, the main text. The final chapter analyses elements of the current debate on conversion and continuing use of apparently redundant farm buildings with most attention, as usual, focused upon barns.

Following the background, Part Two of the book attempts to be more specific by presenting 68 captioned drawings of existing farm buildings and grouping them into 4 categories. This is less satisfactory, for the sketch style of illustration, while attractive in itself, finds difficulty in projecting architectural detail with clarity. Moreover, for most of the buildings no further details of location are given beyond the country of origin, and the accompanying text varies substantially in content and quality.

In all, Mr Woodforde manages to present a slight variation on the farm buildings theme but only by skimming across the surface of a subject that is covered in greater detail in other recent general works.

ROY BRIGDEN

WILFRED FOREMAN. *Oxfordshire Mills.* Phillimore, 1983. 140 pp. 67 plates, 58 text figures. £9.95.

This volume is a result of Wilfred Foreman's work over a number of years recording mills throughout the county, for which he received the Watermill Award of the Society for the Preservation of Ancient Buildings. In a very useful gazetteer, 186 sites are identified by map reference and their present condition is briefly described. Windmills are also detailed in a separate list of 60 sites but for many of these so little remains that it is difficult even to provide a grid reference. With a survey of this kind, the revised county boundaries that followed local government reorganization in 1974 will always present a problem. Here post-1974 Oxfordshire, including those

parts of what was previously Berkshire, forms the survey area.

Mr Foreman obviously knows his mills, knows what to look for when he records them and, through his architectural training, how to reproduce on paper what he sees. Outstanding features of the book, therefore, are the quality and clarity of the drawings. They number over 50 and many are concerned with the finer points of millwork, including some local peculiarities, which can be accurately described in no other way. There is also a very good selection of contemporary photographs taken mostly during the twilight years of the country mill around the beginning of the century. This perhaps is not a book to go to for a historical perspective on the development of milling in general but as a local study, covering mills of all sorts from grinding corn to fulling cloth and pumping water, it is recommended.

ROY BRIGDEN

JEREMY GIBSON and DENNIS MILLS (eds). *Land Tax Assessments c 1690–c 1750*. Plymouth Federation of Family History Societies, 1983. 40 pp. £1. The value and usefulness of Land Tax Assessments have been debated by historians since A H Johnson

first used them to argue that small landowners were fast disappearing from the English countryside by c 1780. Although this pamphlet is primarily aimed at family historians, the team of 40 researchers brought together by Gibson and Mills has produced a comprehensive county-by-county listing of LTA survivals. It reveals a range of material available not just for the period 1780–1832 — when LTAs were kept because they were used to establish voting qualifications — but for the whole period from the 1690s to compulsory redemption in 1949. For the agricultural historian it suggests the possibility of a new line of approach to the question of the declining small landowner. By comparing some of the earlier LTAs with the post-1780 survivals it ought to be possible to obtain a clearer indication on both a national and regional basis of the extent to which numbers really did fall. This will not be an easy task. Many of the problems associated with using the post-1780 LTAs are also pertinent to the earlier period, especially as it was only from 1772 that the list of occupiers was incorporated in the documents. However, if this booklet helps to re-open the debate it will have performed a worthwhile service to historians as well as providing a valuable guide for genealogists.

J V BECKETT

Notes on Contributors

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The AGRICULTURAL HISTORY REVIEW



VOLUME 32 1984
PART II

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The Peasant in England: A Case of Terminological Confusion?

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V J MORRIS and D J ORTON

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The Peasant in England: A Case of Terminological Confusion?¹

By J V BECKETT

DURING the twentieth century historians of English society have faced a dilemma when describing those people connected with the land but below the gentry in the social hierarchy. Their predicament has arisen from the absence of a suitable collective noun with which to describe rural society. Consequently they have had to try to turn imprecise contemporary terminology into clear-cut categorization widely acceptable to their readers, and in this process the word 'peasant' has increasingly been utilized. The fact that influential contemporary social commentators such as Gregory King and Patrick Colquhoun did not use 'yeoman', despite its widespread currency in the countryside, has always suggested that it was an imprecise term. As a result, historians have tended to employ their own definitions, such as owner-occupier or owner-cultivator. However, as social anthropologists have come to attribute wider scope to the term peasant, writers on England have been able to regard it as a convenient description applicable to rural society.² This should not be taken to imply that there has been any uniformity on the matter; on the contrary, a split has occurred between those who use the word, and those who, for a variety of reasons, refuse to entertain it. The latter group base their objection either on the imprecision of

the term, or their belief that it has connotations appropriate to Medieval England and Continental Europe but not to modern England, rendering it a potentially confusing term. They are anxious, in other words, to avoid the dilemma of one recent scholar who has accepted that English rural dwellers were not peasants in the Continental sense of the word, but has still used it in a British context.³ The purpose of this paper is to add a further caveat to these drawbacks by suggesting that in its current usage the word is being employed unhistorically. Because of the connotations of the word to contemporaries most of them would almost certainly have resented the idea that they lived in a 'peasant society'. It will be suggested that whilst anthropological definitions may allow the word to be used, historical considerations should ensure that it is treated with great care.

I

In English society the terms yeoman and husbandman were widely used without being clearly defined, largely because contemporaries relied upon the community to judge the status of a particular individual. Legally, a yeoman was a freeholder who could meet the qualification for voting in Parliamentary elections, but the term was evidently applied much more widely, probably to most freeholders, copyholders, and even tenant farmers.⁴ In the 1560s Sir

¹ An earlier version of this paper was read to the British Agricultural History Society's Annual Conference in 1981. I should like to thank participants for constructive criticisms which have enabled me to refine some of the ideas contained in this paper.

² Alan Macfarlane, *The Origins of English Individualism*, Oxford, 1978, pp 9ff. The difficulty of defining 'peasantry' is pointed out by Barrington Moore: 'it is impossible to define the word peasantry with absolute precision because distinctions are blurred at the edges in social reality itself': *Social Origins of Dictatorship and Democracy*, 1967, p 111n.

³ Dennis R Mills, *Lord and Peasant in Nineteenth-Century Britain*, 1980, p 16.

⁴ Mildred Campbell, *The English Yeoman under Elizabeth and the Early Stuarts*, New Haven, 1942, pp 23-5. Eighteenth-century use of the word yeoman in Cumbria included freeholders, customary tenants and tenant farmers: J V Beckett, 'The Decline of the Small Landowner in Eighteenth- and Nineteenth-Century England: Some Regional Considerations', *Ag Hist Rev*, 30, 1982, pp 97-111.

Thomas Smith defined the ranks of his fellow Englishmen as gentlemen, yeomen and rascals. Forty years later Thomas Wilson included in his list yeomen, 'yeomen of meaner ability which are called freeholders, copyholders and cottagers'. In 1674 another commentator distinguished between yeomen (farmer-owners), farmers (tenant-farmers) and labourers.⁵ Giles Jacob's law dictionary of 1720 defined yeomen as being 'chiefly freeholders, and farmers; but the word comprehends all under the rank of gentlemen, and is a good addition to a name &c'.⁶ Both Adam Smith and Blackstone used the term in this wide-ranging sense, as apparently did the Board of Agriculture reporters in the 1790s, although by the early nineteenth century a slightly narrower definition seems to have been gaining ground. Arthur Young, for example, used yeoman only of freeholders who were not gentry, and this was how the term was employed by expert witnesses before the 1833 Select Committee on Agriculture.⁷ The use of husbandman varied. Fine distinctions were made in the Midland counties between yeoman and husbandman, but in other areas of the country including Cumbria and Kent, it was rarely used. Its greater employment in the Midlands seems to have reflected the importance of copyhold in that region.⁸ Perhaps significantly, it was not among the terms defined by Giles Jacob. Thus, in a society notable for its concern with rank and social order, 'yeoman' was a clearly recognized term applying to a rural, agricultural group below the gentry and, in some regions, above the husbandman.⁹

Yeoman did not apply in any general sense to a particular group of people with a specific

landowning base, and it may have been for this reason that Gregory King eschewed the word in drawing up his famous table of the income and expense of the nation in 1688. He distinguished between freeholders, farmers and labourers, and set a trend which both Joseph Massie in the mid-eighteenth century and Patrick Colquhoun in the early nineteenth were happy to follow. However, quite what they meant by freeholder has itself been a matter of dispute. According to D M Hirst, in his published work King followed Thomas Wilson in regarding a freeholder as a yeoman, but in some of his unpublished estimates he apparently wavered between including only those who qualified on tenurial grounds, and all those who were freeholders by virtue of having a vote in Parliamentary elections. This latter group could include cottagers as well as genuine landed freeholders.¹⁰

The imprecision of yeoman has raised acute difficulties, particularly for twentieth-century writers concerned with the problem of dating the decline of the small owner in English society. For many years 'yeoman' was used more or less without reserve. Mantoux used yeoman rather than peasant in his study of eighteenth-century England, and it was also employed in the years immediately preceding the first world war by several of the writers who debated the decline of the small owner. Later, Sir John Clapham used it, though making clear that he was aware of the 'varying uses of the word yeoman, both by contemporaries and by historians'.¹¹ H L Gray, Mildred Campbell and, most recently, Gordon Batho, have all freely employed the term. It has generally been those historians writing in recent years on the problem of dating small owner decline who have experienced most trouble

⁵The relevant passages from the work of Smith and Wilson are reproduced in L Stone (ed), *Social Change and Revolution in England, 1540-1640*, 1966, pp 116, 120. R H, *The Prevention of Poverty*, 1674, p 1, quoted in E Lipson, *The Economic History of England*, 6th edn, 1956, II, p 380.

⁶Giles Jacob, *A New Law Dictionary*, 7th edn, 1756.

⁷J H Clapham, *An Economic History of Modern Britain*, II, 1930, p 99.

⁸Joan Thirsk (ed), *The Agrarian History of England and Wales IV, 1500-1640*, Cambridge, 1967, pp 734-5.

⁹Campbell, *op cit*, p 30.

¹⁰D M Hirst, 'The Seventeenth-Century Freeholder and the Statistician: A Case of Terminological Confusion', *Econ Hist Rev*, 2nd ser, XXIX, 1976, p 310.

¹¹P. Mantoux, *The Industrial Revolution in the Eighteenth Century*, 1961 edn, pp 136ff. Lord Ernle, *English Farming Past and Present*, 6th edn, 1961, pp 296-7. E C K Gonner, *Common Land and Enclosure*, 1912. Clapham, *op cit*, I, p 98.

with the term. Mingay regarded it as being imprecise and charged with romantic and sentimental overtones, so that he preferred 'small owner occupier', whilst others have plumped for 'farmer-owner' and 'owner-cultivator'.¹² However, a number of historians have used the term peasant. For much of the twentieth century this was avoided, probably because of its politically emotive overtones, but the term has risen in popularity since its adoption by such eminent local and agricultural historians as W G Hoskins and Joan Thirsk. 'Peasant' has now become a useful term, in F M L Thompson's words, of 'analytical simplicity', and in discussing country dwellers, Dennis Mills has recently asked rhetorically, 'what else can we call them but peasants?'¹³

It is not difficult to justify the use of 'peasant' in an English context given the broad base of recent anthropological definitions of the term. In studying peasant societies, Eric Wolf has seen his brief to be with 'those large segments of mankind which stand midway between the primitive tribe and industrial society'.¹⁴ Daniel Thorner's historical definition of peasant societies encompasses five criteria which are sufficiently broad to include almost the whole of rural society.¹⁵ Most recently,

E Le Roy Ladurie, in a general survey of European peasantries, has used the term more or less interchangeably with rural society/civilization: for him the peasantry was 'a distinctive group of men tied to the land, growing crops and raising stock, whether to sell their produce on the market, or, more commonly, to consume it themselves or to barter it'. His only real distinction is between the day labourer and the yeoman farmer.¹⁶ Thus 'peasant' is largely being used in the common sense meaning of a countryman, and as such there can be no obvious objection to its use in an English context: after all, the French word 'paysan', which is often translated peasant, in fact means countryman. On the other hand it is not clear how the large numbers of countryside dual occupationalists in England fit into this scenario.

Clearly it is valid to ask what historians have meant in using 'peasant'. Two pre-first world war writers, Gilbert Slater and W Hasbach, used the term to supplement yeoman in their discussion of English agrarian society. Hasbach, a German, considered the peasantry to be small freeholders, copyholders and farmers, with the yeomen as the natural leaders of the peasantry. This idea is still current among some commentators; it can be found, for example, in Wolf's analysis of peasant societies.¹⁷ In the 1930s the Russian historian Lavrovsky used 'peasant' as a convenient short-hand term for small estates. He divided peasants on the basis of landholdings into big (50-100 acres), medium (25-50 acres) and small (under 25 acres). More recently, Hoskins has defined a peasant village as one without a lord, or manorial

¹² H L Gray, 'Yeoman Farming in Oxfordshire from the Sixteenth Century to the Nineteenth', *Quarterly Journal of Economics*, XXIV, 1910, pp 293-326. Campbell, *op cit*. Thirsk (ed), *Agrarian History*, pp 301-6. G E Mingay, *Enclosure and the Small Farmer in the Age of the Industrial Revolution*, 1968, p 10. H J Habakkuk, 'La disparition du paysan anglais', *Annales*, 20, 1965, p 659. Clapham, *op cit*, pp 102, 103.

¹³ W G Hoskins, *The Midland Peasant*, 1957. Joan Thirsk, *English Peasant Farming*, 1957. F M L Thompson, 'A Terminological Confusion Confounded', *Econ Hist Rev*, 2nd ser, XXIX, 1976, p 311. Mills, *op cit*, p 16.

¹⁴ Eric Wolf, *Peasants*, New Jersey, 1966, pp vii et seq. In a paper such as this it is clearly not possible to examine in any detail modern anthropological definitions of peasant societies. In general, anthropologists emphasize that the peasant is both *chef de famille* and *chef d'entreprise*, that he is integrated into the state/market economy as well as having a subsistence element in his activity, and that he is determined to maintain the family and its holding rather than to optimize his economic return. The best recent discussions are to be found in Wolf's book, and in S H Franklin, *The European Peasantry: the final phase*, 1969. I should like to thank Dr Philip Wheeler for advice on this point.

¹⁵ Daniel Thorner, 'Peasant Economy as a Category in Economic History', in T Shanin (ed), *Peasants and Peasant Societies*, Harmondsworth, 1971, pp 203-8.

¹⁶ E Le Roy Ladurie, 'Peasants', in P Burke (ed), *New Cambridge Modern History*, XIII, Cambridge, 1979, pp 115-63.

¹⁷ Gilbert Slater, *The English Peasantry and the Enclosure of Common Fields*, 1907, pp 4, 265. W Hasbach, *History of the English Agricultural Labourer*, 1908, pp 89, 107. Wolf, *op cit*, p 16. The term was also used by Betsy Sampson, 'The British Peasant 1770-1820 As Reflected in Our Literature', University of London MA thesis, 1921, in the context of the labouring classes and the poor. However, she quotes only one contemporary passage using the term.

organization, but within a self-contained society. The peasant farmers were those with 'five to thirty acres of land or cottage freeholders', with an upper limit of 60 or 100 acres.¹⁸ Thirsk's definition has been somewhat similar; peasants had family-sized farms with an upper limit, at least for the corn-cattle farm, of seventy acres.¹⁹ Thompson has used 'peasantry' for men with properties between one and 100 acres in 1873, and around 50 acres in the later seventeenth century.²⁰ Other historians have produced definitions which range beyond mere size of holding. For G R Quaife, writing of seventeenth-century Somerset, the 'peasant' world was that of the lesser yeomen, husbandmen, labourers, small shopkeepers, tradesmen, artisans, craftsmen, paupers and vagrants. In seventeenth-century Lancashire, according to N N Foster, the peasantry consisted of a mixture of day labourers, poor husbandmen, merchants and retailers, copyholders and artificers such as shoemakers, carpenters, brickmakers, bricklayers and masons. Dennis Mills has included amongst his peasants 'all kinds of small entrepreneurs, tradesmen, craftsmen and perhaps small factory owners'.²¹ Such wide scope for the one word seems to offend even the more liberal of modern anthropological definitions, although in the absence of a precise

definition individual writers are clearly entitled to produce their own.

Nonetheless, such broad usage seems scarcely acceptable to medieval historians, partly on the grounds that the word 'peasant' is inappropriate in an English context, and partly because if such a group existed in England it had disappeared by the later middle ages. They have tended therefore to question the use of 'peasant' in an early modern or modern sense. K B McFarlane referred to the 'so-called peasantry', and M W Beresford has asked 'what was a peasant?' Alan Macfarlane has suggested that peasants, as such, had disappeared from English society by the thirteenth century, and that even up until that time they were not called peasants.²² Other medievalists have not been so dismissive, regarding 'peasants' as people of an inferior status and legal disability (villeins) with a number of identifiable characteristics. According to M M Postan these included attitude to the family landholdings, relative self-sufficiency, and provision from within the family unit of most if not all of the labour required for cultivation. R H Hilton has suggested five 'essential characteristics' relating to the means of agricultural production, the use of family labour, and the community in which peasants live.²³ However, used in this way, Medievalists would generally agree that peasants had disappeared from English society by the later middle ages, and perhaps even earlier. They would also balk at the idea of a peasant landholding extending up to 100 acres.

Recognizing this apparent anomaly whereby the same word is used to describe different social groups at different periods, at least one historian has sought to make a

¹⁸ See Christopher Hill's review of V M Lavrovsky, *Parliamentary Enclosure of the Common Fields in England at the end of the Eighteenth and beginning of the Nineteenth Century*, Moscow-Leningrad, 1940, *Econ Hist Rev*, XII, 1942, p 93. Hoskins, *op cit*, pp 215, 219, 244. Hoskins does not appear to be entirely consistent, referring on p 215 to the upper limit of the peasant farm as 100 acres, and then on p 244 taking 'the limit of the "peasant" holdings at 60 acres'.

¹⁹ Joan Thirsk, 'The Disappearance of the English Peasantry', unpublished paper read to the University of London Centre of International and Area Studies Peasant Seminar, March 1974, and cited with permission. Elsewhere Dr Thirsk has written that the term peasant 'has to be used loosely in English conditions. I mean by "peasant" an occupier of land for agricultural purposes who does not claim the title of gentleman, or rank as a landlord . . . a peasant economy involves all classes of land cultivators, except gentry/landlords': 'The Peasant Economy of England in the Seventeenth Century', *Studia Historiae Economicae*, X, 1975, pp 5, 7.

²⁰ Thompson, *loc cit*, p 312.

²¹ G R Quaife, *Wanton Wenches and Wayward Wives*, 1979, p 13. N N Foster, 'The Peasantry and the Aristocracy', University of Manchester, MA thesis, 1977, p 11. D R Mills, 'The Peasant Tradition', *The Local Historian*, 11, 1974, p 201.

²² K B McFarlane, *The Nobility of Later Medieval England*, Oxford, 1973, p 215. M W Beresford in a review of Hoskins, *Midland Peasant*, *Econ Hist Rev*, 2nd ser, XI, 1958-9, p 157. Macfarlane, *op cit*.

²³ M M Postan, *Essays on Medieval Agriculture and General Problems of the Medieval Economy*, Cambridge, 1973, pp 279-80; 'England', in M M Postan (ed), *Cambridge Economic History of Europe*, I, 2nd edn, Cambridge, 1966, p 620. R H Hilton, *The English Peasantry in the Later Middle Ages*, Oxford, 1975, p 13.

qualitative distinction between the medieval peasant and the later yeomen. Cicely Howell has suggested that 'perhaps the Medieval holding with its culture could be termed "peasant" while the seventeenth-century holding with its qualitatively higher standard of living could be called a "small-holding" or "commercial family farm"'.²⁴ Yet few historians have seriously posed the question of whether or not 'peasant' should be used at all given its historic meaning in an English context. If anything, it has tended to be used because it has no history, but this is a mistake.²⁵ The word has a long pedigree in English which reveals that its normal usage has been rather different from that to which historians have recently been applying it.

II

'Peasant', according to the *Oxford English Dictionary*, refers properly only to foreign countries in its earliest use in English, and it is certainly rare to find it before the sixteenth century. Hilton has located a chance reference from 1313, but it does not occur in Chaucer's vocabulary, and even the famous 'Peasants' Revolt' was referred to by the chronicler as a 'rustic' rather than a 'peasant' tragedy.²⁶ The word began to appear regularly in English literary sources during the sixteenth century, generally as a term of abuse denoting low character, simplicity and rusticity. A 1550s source referred to 'France, where the peasantry is of no value', and in the *Discourse of the Common Weal* a discussion as to 'whether men at armes were as necessary here as in Fraunce', concluded that 'the stomakes of Englishmen would never beare that, to suffer such injurie and reproaches, as I know such a use to doe to the subjectes of France, in reproache of whom we call them

peasaintes'.²⁷ From its earliest employment the word was almost exclusively associated with labourers. Bacon, in an oft quoted phrase, mentioned 'the yeomanry or middle people, of a condition between gentlemen and cottagers or peasants'.²⁸ Shakespeare also used the word in a detrimental sense. 'Peasant' occurs twenty-nine times in his plays, usually coupled with words such as servant, dull, vulgar, worthless, base, slave, rogue and low. Edgar, disguised as a madman in *King Lear*, is called a 'bold peasant' when he emerges to defend his helpless father Gloucester against the assailant Oswald. In *Henry VI Part 2* Jack Cade's army is described as 'a ragged multitude / Of hinds and peasants, rude and merciless'. The sense of ignorance is also conveyed in *As You Like It*, when Orlando tells Oliver, 'My father charged you in his will to give me good education: you have trained me like a peasant, obscuring and hiding from me all gentleman-like qualities'.²⁹ A similar attitude is found in Spenser: 'He holdeth himself a gentleman, and scorneth to work, which, he saith, is the life of a peasant or churl'.³⁰

Seventeenth- and eighteenth-century writers also used the word to describe those at the bottom of the social ladder. H Peacham, in *The Compleat Gentleman*, 1627, inveighed against 'every undeserving and base Peasant aiming at Nobility', and in *Anatomy of Melancholy*, 1651, R Burton argued that although 'pesants' might ascend the social scale, their 'innate rusticity can hardly be shaken off'.³¹ Charles Cotton, in

²⁴ Cicely Howell, 'Stability and Change, 1307-1700: the Socio-Economic Context of the Self-perpetuating Family Farm in England', *Journal of Peasant Studies*, 2, 1975, p. 470. See also Macfarlane, *op cit*, p. 34.

²⁵ See Alan Macfarlane, *The Justice and the Mare's Ale*, Oxford, 1981, p. 199.

²⁶ Hilton, *English Peasantry*, p. 3. E B Fryde, *The Great Revolt of 1381*, Historical Association Pamphlet, 1980, p. 9.

²⁷ Quoted in Gilbert Burnet, *History of the Reformation*, 1681, II, p. 70. Elizabeth Lamond (ed), *A Discourse of the Common Weal of this Realm of England*, 1893, p. 94.

²⁸ J Spedding, R L Ellis and D D Heath (eds), *The Works of Francis Bacon*, 1861, VI, p. 95.

²⁹ *King Lear*, Act 4, Scene 6, line 236. *Henry VI Part 2*, Act 4, Scene 4, line 33. *As You Like It*, Act 1, Scene 1, line 68.

³⁰ Quoted in Johnson's *Dictionary*, 1755. 'Churl' according to the OED referred to a man without rank, a serf or bondman, countryman, peasant, rustic, boor. Like peasant it was a term of disparagement or contempt.

³¹ Peacham and Burton are quoted in A Smythe-Palmer, *The Ideal of a Gentleman*, London, 1928, pp. 15-16, 192.

The Wonders of the Peak, 1681, wrote of Poole's Hole, where:

Propt round with Peasants on you trembling go
Whilst, every step you take, your Guides do show
In the uneven Rock the uncouth shapes
Of Men, of Lions, Horses, Dogs and Apes.³²

Nicholas Rowe referred in *Tamarlene*, 1702, to 'the peasant-hind, begot and born to slavery', and in *The Tender Husband*, 1705, Richard Steele had Biddy reject her aunt's claim that Humphrey would be a good husband because he was true and hearty, with the response 'what a peasant-like amour do these words import'. In *Trivia*, 1716, John Gay commented about London, 'here oft the peasant, with inquiring face, / Bewilder'd trudges on from place to place'.³³ John Locke wrote of the French peasant being under much greater pressure of want and poverty, than, by comparison, the *day-labourers* of England; Johnson defined a peasant as 'one whose business is rural labour'; Richardson had Anna Howe in *Clarissa* despise all men 'from the gentleman down to the peasant'; Darvell wrote that 'peasantry is a disease (like the plague) easily caught'; and Goldsmith made it clear in the *Vicar of Wakefield* that 'the peasant must be disposed to labour'.³⁴

Similar sentiments also appeared in nineteenth-century literature. Cobbett wrote that 'the labouring classes . . . are called, now-a-days, by these gentlemen, "the peasantry"'. This is a new term as applied to Englishmen.³⁵ Richard Elsam's *Hints for Improving the Condition of the Peasantry*, 1816, consisted of a number of designs for cottages drawn up on the principle that 'peasants cottages are the habitations of rural labourers'. William Marshall was so surprised when he came

across a reference, in the report to the Board of Agriculture on Leicestershire, to 'a numerous and able-bodied peasantry' that he underlined the word and commented that it was a translation from the Russian!³⁶ David Low distinguished farmers from peasants who merely enjoyed the means of subsistence.³⁷ In a passage of *Coningsby*, 1844, Disraeli had Lord Henry Sydney say that 'I describ'd it as a petition of the nobility, clergy, gentry, yeomanry and peasantry of the county of _____: and, could you believe it, they struck out *peasantry* as a word no longer used, and inserted labourers.' Lord Everingham replied, 'what can it signify whether a man be called a labourer or a peasant'.³⁸ Writing in 1846, G W Perry argued that the peasantry had become detached from the land during the French wars:

a very considerable number of the peasantry possessed little fields of freehold or copyhold land, varying from half an acre to seven or eight acres in extent. Some of these practiced dairy husbandry, and some kept horses for the purpose of doing job-work. But this class of persons has long ceased to exist, except in a few solitary instances.³⁹

F G Heath made the analogy between peasant and labourer in two books on the English 'peasantry'. He argued the need to create conditions in which a well-paid peasantry would aspire first to rent small parcels of land, then perhaps to become large farmers, and 'he might, in some cases, ultimately become a landed proprietor'.⁴⁰ For R Heath, writing in 1893, a description of peasant life in Dorset meant in effect the Dorset labourer, while Hasbach, Collings in

³² Charles Cotton, *The Wonders of the Peak*, 1681.

³³ *Tamarlene*, Act 4, Scene 2. C Winton (ed), *The Tender Husband*, Act 2, Scene 1, lines 23-30. John Gay, *Trivia*, 1716, lines 77-8.

³⁴ For Locke and Johnson, *Johnson's Dictionary*. Samuel Richardson, *Clarissa*, Everyman edn, 1962, I, p 269. Darvell is quoted in Roy Porter, *English Society in the Eighteenth Century*, Harmondsworth, 1982, p 44. O Goldsmith, *The Vicar of Wakefield*, Signet edn, 1961, p 170.

³⁵ William Cobbett, *Taking Leave*, 1817, quoted in OED.

³⁶ William Marshall, *Review and Abstract of the County Reports to the Board of Agriculture*, York, 1818, IV, p 215. Marshall criticized the use of the term 'peasantry' to describe country people on the grounds that this 'hateful, because injuriously humiliating, appellation' should be confined to 'the live stock in human shape, — in Russia, and in other nations of demi-slaves'. Pamela Horn, *William Marshall (1745-1818) and the Georgian Countryside*, Abingdon, 1982, p 42.

³⁷ David Low, *Observations on the Present State of Landed Property*, Edinburgh, 1823, p 93.

³⁸ B Disraeli, *Coningsby*, 1927 edn, p 143.

³⁹ G W Perry, *The Peasantry of England*, 1846, p 19.

⁴⁰ F G Heath, *The English Peasantry*, 1874, p 271; *Peasant Life in the West of England*, 3rd edn, 1880.

1908 and Robertson Scott as late as 1926, all saw a peasant as an agricultural labourer.⁴¹

Overall, sufficient evidence survives to suggest that whilst 'peasant' may not have been widely used in contemporary England, it had a steady currency from the sixteenth century, often connected with ignorance and stupidity, and firmly associated with the labouring classes, particularly the rural labour force. Of itself, this must raise some doubts about the validity of using the word as some historians have recently been doing.

III

To complicate the matter further it is clear that during the eighteenth century the word also came to be used in a new way, acquiring overtones associated with the romantic movement, general beliefs about depopulation as the result of parliamentary enclosure, and fears that rural values and virtues were being destroyed by the introduction of materialistic city values into the countryside. One of the earliest examples of this development can be seen in Samuel Richardson's novel *Pamela*, 1740. The heroine writes to her humble parents of how at the last judgement 'the honest peasant will stand fairer in our esteem than the guilty peer'.⁴² But it was the Picturesque movement of the second half of the eighteenth century, with its much greater appreciation of the countryside, which can really be held responsible for giving the word new overtones. Writers visualized a past society, in which great stress was laid on the humble members of the community, the peasantry.

This romantic notion is clear in the work of Goldsmith, who despaired about the future. In *The Deserted Village*, 1770, he wrote of his fears that the 'mournful peasant' was sinking: 'But a bold peasantry their

country's pride, / When once destroyed can never be supplied'.⁴³ Further evidence of this romanticized notion of the word can be found in the 1780s. A pamphlet supposedly written by a member of the Society for Constitutional Information and published in 1782 took the form of a dialogue between a peasant and a scholar. The peasant described himself as a humble man with nothing in the world, 'but my cattle, implements of husbandry, and household goods, together with my farm, for which I pay a fixed rent to the squire'. Clearly he was rather more than an agricultural labourer, even if he was depicted as a country rustic, supposedly ignorant on all political matters. The scholar's task was to bring him to recognize the necessity of resisting the arbitrary nature of kingship which is inherently likely when Parliament is not voted for by the majority of the populace. Similarly, a play written in 1784 stressed the virtues of the innocent rural life and values, describing how Sir Eglamore, a valiant knight, when confronted by a wolf chose to hide up a tree, only to be rescued by a 'surly, sturdy, dauntless Swain . . . This Peasant did his [i.e. the wolf's] ribs so roast, That Mr Wolf gave up the ghost.' The knight then plucked up courage and cut off the wolf's head.⁴⁴ Thomas Bewick's *Memoirs of a Northumberland common* in the 1780s, written in the 1820s, recalled the 'cottage, or rather hovel, of some labouring man, built at his own expense, and mostly with his own hands. . . . These various concerns excited the attention and industry of the hardy occupants which enabled them to prosper, and made them despise being ever numbered with the parish poor.' To summarize his view of the community Bewick quoted Goldsmith's nostalgic lines on the lost peasantry.⁴⁵ Finally, a poem

⁴¹ R Heath, *The English Peasant*, London, 1893, pp v-vi, 121. Hasbach, *English Agricultural Labourer*. Jesse Collings, *Land Reform, Occupying Ownership, Peasant Proprietary and Rural Education*, London, 1908. J W Robertson Scott, *The Dying Peasant*, London, 1926, p viii.

⁴² S Richardson, *Pamela*, Everyman edn, 1914, II, p 14. For an even earlier example of the same type of thinking see *The Spectator*, no 174, 19 Sept 1711.

⁴³ Oliver Goldsmith, *The Deserted Village*, 1770, LL 55-6, 300-1.

⁴⁴ *The Principles of Government, in a Dialogue between a Scholar and a Peasant*, by a Member of the Society for Constitutional Information, 1782. *Songs, Duets, Glees, Choruses &c in the Comic Opera of the Noble Peasant*, 1784.

⁴⁵ Raymond Williams, *The Country and the City*, St Albans, 1975, ch 12 and p 125.

published in 1827, supposedly by 'a peasant', illustrated some of the same themes, with its notions of 'daily toil', 'low cottage door', 'my rustic thought', 'rural heart', and 'I am not letter-learned like many men. . . . A peasant like, in peasant dress appear.'⁴⁶ The problem with such 'whining pastoral poets', according to a Scottish farmer writing in 1808, was that by romanticizing the past, they were holding up the forward march of agricultural progress which demanded large farms, equitable leases and high rents.⁴⁷

Arguably the writer who did most to promote this vision of a past society was Wordsworth. Both in his poetry, and in his descriptive writings on the Lake District, he publicized the idea of a hardy Cumbrian 'statesman'. The term, far from being culled from antiquity, as Wordsworth would have had his readers believe, was in fact an eighteenth-century middle-class vulgarization.⁴⁸ It was in his *Guide to the Lakes* that Wordsworth most clearly expounded the idea of a romantic peasant-proprietorial system, still commonly found on the Continent, but lost in England except for the Cumbrian statesmen. Although ostensibly a tourist guidebook, only the first fifty pages

or so of the *Guide* actually described the countryside. Wordsworth then turned to the inhabitants, from the earliest times onwards. He argued that since the Union of England and Scotland in 1603 'this species of feudal population must rapidly have diminished'. The spread of southern customs, the loss of by employment, and the infiltration of tourists and others, together undermined the hardy 'native peasantry'.⁴⁹ For Wordsworth the characteristic mark of this group was its small, self-sufficient family farms, in the occupation of a single family for several hundred years, with no one family superior to any other in the community.

The impact of Wordsworth's argument was considerable, both because it increased the curiosity of travellers, and also because it coincided with calls for a restored 'peasant proprietorship', a movement associated with land reform. In his *Hints to Gentlemen of Landed Property*, 1775, Nathaniel Kent, later to become a highly successful land surveyor, recommended that every cottage should have half an acre of land so that a tenant could grow fruit and vegetables and keep a pig. Better-off cottagers might have three acres of pasture to keep a pig and graze a cow. Such views were developed in the 1780s and 1790s when William Ogilvie, Tom Paine and Thomas Spence, among others, began attacking the landowners' monopoly of the soil. Ogilvie wanted land letting out to small farmers on favourable terms, and Spence advocated public ownership of all land. Spence continued to hammer home his programme until his death in 1814, and the cause was continued in the immediate post-war years by Robert Owen. William Cobbett helped to maintain the legend of lost rights which lay behind this movement.⁵⁰

By no means everyone agreed with this view, and in any case the movement lost

⁴⁶ *Falsehood Exposed; or, the Reprover Reproved*, by a Peasant, Cheltenham, 1827.

⁴⁷ *An Immediate and Effectual Mode, of Raising the Rental of Landed Property in England*, by a Scotch Farmer now Farming in Middlesex, 1808, p. 83. Perry, *op cit*, was of the opinion that the demand for large farms during the Napoleonic wars had been a major reason for the detachment of the peasantry from the land. It is interesting that the poet John Clare, an agricultural labourer, was described in his first volume of poetry as 'a Northamptonshire Peasant'. In this context Roger Sales has commented: 'an agricultural labourer belongs to the brazen new world of agrarian capitalism, whereas a peasant, especially in early nineteenth-century England, tends to inhabit another country constructed by the pastoral imagination': 'The Politics of Pastoral', in K Parkinson and M Priestman (eds), *Peasants and Countrymen in Literature*, 1982, p. 91. The argument that peasant proprietors were detrimental to agricultural progress was sustained throughout the nineteenth century. Thus W Bench Jones, writing in 1882: 'There is no reason to listen to the talk of men whose agricultural knowledge would hardly enable them to distinguish a bull from a cow, who urge peasant proprietors and like plans as a remedy for our troubles. . . . I have never seen a single line written by any one having knowledge of farming who advocates peasant proprietors, and does not treat the plan as impossible': 'Landowning as a Business', *The Nineteenth Century*, XI, 1882, pp. 364-5.

⁴⁸ J D Marshall, 'Statesmen' in Cumbria: the Vicissitudes of an expression', *Transactions of the Cumberland and Westmorland Antiquarian and Archaeological Society*, 2nd ser, (CW2) LXXII, 1972, pp. 248-73.

⁴⁹ William Wordsworth, *Guide to the Lakes*, 5th edn, 1835, reprinted Oxford, 1970, p. 90.

⁵⁰ N. Kent, *Hints to Gentlemen of Landed Property*, 1775, pp. 228ff. G E Mingay, *English Landed Society in the Eighteenth Century*, 1963, p. 267. David Martin, 'Land Reform', in Patricia Hollis (ed), *Pressure from Without in early Victorian England*, 1974, pp. 131-58.

steam during the Napoleonic war years and the ensuing agricultural depression. However, just as Wordsworth's *Guide*, which first appeared anonymously in 1810, was reaching the height of its popularity in its best-known form, the fifth edition, 1835, came the Chartist land plan of the 1840s. This scheme, introduced by Feargus O'Connor in 1843 after the failure of the second national petition, was designed to re-create the virtues of a primitive life by placing men in two-, three- or four-acre plots. It was described by the *Economist* as 'a reasonable experiment upon a small scale, of the establishment of a peasant proprietary in England'. Allottees were required to pay the equivalent of an interest of 5 per cent on the cost of their allotment, house and capital loan of £7 10s. The money raised was to be used to buy more land. Sales were permitted despite some objections that land bought with public funds ought not to be disposed of privately.⁵¹ Ultimately it failed, but the Chartist plan gave a considerable boost to the land reform movement. In part, this was a consequence of the widely held belief that in England land was inequitably distributed, and in particular that there was no 'class' of peasant proprietors of the type common on the Continent. Since it was at root a nostalgic movement much was made of surviving English 'peasants' upon whom the model of peasant proprietary could be based. John Stuart Mill admitted in his *Principles of Political Economy*, 1848, that his support for such a system was partly based on his reading of Wordsworth's description of the Cumbrian statesmen, the one place in England 'where peasant proprietors are still common'.⁵²

Mill may have been impressed, but by the standards of twentieth-century Medieval historians the Cumbrian yeomen bore little relationship to the 'peasant proprietors' he

imagined; indeed, they scarcely conformed to the picture drawn by Wordsworth, which had been so influential. In the *Guide* Wordsworth touched upon several of the features which have come to be regarded by historians as amongst the more important characteristics of peasant society. Thus, he pictured an idyllic society in which 'many of these humble sons of the hills' walked over and tilled the land which had 'for more than five hundred years been possessed by men of their name and blood'.⁵³ Ostensibly, therefore, Cumbria fitted the conception of peasant land as family land, 'not merely a factor of production to be acquired and got rid of in obedience to his calculations of profitability, but an end in itself'.⁵⁴ In practice, however, this was not the case. To cite just a few of many examples, in the village of Irton, estates seldom stayed in the same family for more than two or three generations; of the thirty names of Aspatria tenants in 1578 only four occurred among the farmers listed in the 1829 *Directory*; and in Kirkby Lonsdale between 1642 and 1800 'there was hardly a farm owned by the same family throughout the period'.⁵⁵

Wordsworth also characterized Cumbria as having a classical subsistence economy. In his eyes sufficient corn was grown on each estate to satisfy the needs of each family, and no more, and each family spun from its own flock the wool which it needed for clothing.⁵⁶ This again appears to be typical

⁵¹ Wordsworth, *op cit*, p 68. In fairness, Wordsworth's views were hardly original. An earlier author had claimed that Cumbrian yeomen enjoyed 'exactly the same property which [their] lineal ancestors possessed in the reign of Edward the Confessor': R Warner, *A Tour Through the Northern Counties of England*, 1802, II, p 104.

⁵² Postan, *Essays on Medieval Agriculture*, pp 279-80. Cicely Howell, 'Peasant Inheritance Customs in the Midlands, 1280-1700', in J Goody, J Thirsk and E P Thompson (eds), *Family and Inheritance*, 1976, pp 113-14. Macfarlane, *Origins*, pp 18, 23. Compare Wordsworth, *op cit*, p 146, 'The degree and kind of attachment which many of the yeomanry feel to their small inheritances can scarcely be overrated.'

⁵³ C Moor, 'The Old Statesmen Families of Irton, Cumberland', *CW2*, X, 1910, p 195. G P Jones, 'Continuity and Change in surnames in four northern parishes', *CW2*, LXXII, 1973, pp 143-7; 'The Decline of the Yeomanry in the Lake Counties', *CW2*, LXII, 1962, p 209. Macfarlane, *Origins*, p 173.

⁵⁶ Wordsworth, *op cit*, pp 59-60.

⁵¹ A M Hadfield, *The Chartist Land Company*, 1970. W H G Armytage, 'The Chartist Land Colonies, 1846-1848', *Agricultural History*, 32, 1958, pp 87-96. Joy MacAskill, 'The Chartist Land Plan', in A Briggs, *Chartist Studies*, 1959, pp 304-41.

⁵² J S Mill, *Principles of Political Economy*, 1920 edn, pp 256-7.

of peasant societies: 'a typical peasant would consume all or most of his output within his own household'.⁵⁷ The size of holdings suggests that some yeomen can have been no more than subsistence farmers, but most were firmly market orientated, especially when the profits to be made from pasturing Scottish cattle heading south became apparent. Marshall has concluded that 'even the very modestly placed yeoman had a chance of forming a surplus of grain for sale'.⁵⁸ Nor is it easy to substantiate Wordsworth's conception of the local community as a 'pure Commonwealth... a perfect Republic of Shepherds and agriculturalists'.⁵⁹ This may have been a characteristic of peasant societies, but eighteenth-century Cumbria witnessed a deliberate search for status. Thus the more prosperous yeomen began to imitate the habits of the gentry, entailing their estates, giving portions to their daughters, and providing jointures for their wives. Many began to use the style 'Mr' as a sort of half-way house between yeoman and gentleman, until by the early nineteenth century the better-off were freely adopting the latter term and cultivating the leisured life-style of the true gentry.⁶⁰

Despite the efforts of Wordsworth, Cumbria was not a classic peasant society. Further evidence could be marshalled to show that landholdings were generally too large, even if many yeomen did have relatively small acreages. The absence of partible inheritance and the activity of the land market suggest a society which was not limited by the ties characteristic of European

peasants. The economic differentiation within the community was being enforced by the eighteenth century through growing social diffusion as superior members of the group sought to mark themselves off from lesser brethren. By the early nineteenth century Wordsworth's 'pure Commonwealth' was a figment of his vivid imagination.⁶¹ At the same time, it must be acknowledged that other writers also saw a link between the English yeomanry and Continental peasants. Marx referred to 'the yeomanry as an independent peasantry', and John Rae perhaps came closest to expressing a contemporary viewpoint when writing in the 1880s: 'the old yeomanry of England... were in reality when we come to see them at home in the last century, exactly the toiling, thrifty, humble, yet proudly contented beings that we now either pity or admire, or both, in the peasantry of France'.⁶² Modern research would suggest that this was an oversimplification.⁶³

IV

The evidence presented here suggests that the word 'peasant' is incorrectly used when treated as a catch-all for rural society, and that the nineteenth-century 'peasant proprietor' movement was a romantic notion copying ideas imported from the Continent about a group which, if it had previously existed in England, had not done so for a very long period. However, some historians do not accept that England was altogether different from the Continent, except insofar as the movement towards a landlord/tenant situation took place more rapidly. The critical point may hinge less on a distinction between Britain and Europe, and more on one between medieval and modern conditions in England. It can be argued that

⁵⁷ Postan, *Essays on Medieval Agriculture*, p. 279.

⁵⁸ J D Marshall, 'The Domestic Economy of the Lakeland Yeoman, 1660-1749', *CW2*, LXXIII, 1973, pp. 192-206, 212.

⁵⁹ Wordsworth, *Guide*, p. 67. Such views have continued to be repeated even in the twentieth century. S H Scott, for example, wrote of Troutbeck in Westmorland, where 'instead of the land being occupied by two or three squires and subservient tenantry, this single township has contained some fifty statesmen families, which have held the same land from generation to generation with the pride of territorial aristocracy': *A Westmorland Village*, Westminster, 1904, pp. 20-1.

⁶⁰ Carlisle Record Office, D/Lons/W Sir James Lowther to John Spedding, 22 Feb 1729, 27 Mar 1744; Spedding to Lowther, 25 June 1732: D/Ha/11. Marshall, 'Domestic Economy', p. 214.

⁶¹ Literary critics have recognized that Wordsworth's pastoral was political propaganda rather than the 'faithful copies from nature' he would have had his readers believe; Sales, *loc cit*, pp. 94-8.

⁶² K Marx, *Capital*, Vol 2, Everyman edn, 1930, p. 800. John Rae, 'Why Have the Yeomanry Perished', *Contemporary Review*, 44, 1883, p. 565.

⁶³ Macfarlane, *Origins*.

'peasant' is applicable to Medieval England because the basic characteristics were similar in that period to those found for western European peasants, with overtones of socio-legal disabilities, including villein status. Logically, these characteristics would seem to make the term inapplicable to the post-Medieval period when circumstances and conditions had radically altered. After all, in both its Medieval context, and also in its nineteenth-century peasant proprietorship usage, the word related primarily to very small landholdings, often not exceeding two, three or four acres. This calls into question its twentieth-century usage for holdings of up to 100 acres, except when employed as a generalization for rural society. Possibly Professor Everitt's use of 'peasant labourers' in discussing farm labourers is a modern definition most nearly applicable to the word's historical meaning, although few true 'peasants' would have been wealthy enough to leave inventories.⁶⁴ Even if it is accepted that the difference between England and western Europe has been exaggerated, the distinction between

modern and medieval usages ought perhaps to be recognized terminologically.

Overall, the question raised here produces an answer which itself amounts to a fascinating paradox: contemporaries understood and freely used the word yeoman, which historians have begun to reject on the grounds of imprecision; historians are increasingly using 'peasant' as an alternative for 'rural' society, even though contemporaries would have objected to a label which categorized them all with the lowest elements of that society. To contemporaries a yeoman and a peasant were not the same thing; a peasant was an inferior person with at best only a tiny landholding, whereas a yeoman was close to being a gentleman. 'Peasant' only came into common usage when romantic writers glorified the position of the lowest members of society. In a movement of pure nostalgia it became fashionable to praise the merits of a society in which each individual owned and worked a smallholding to support his family. Even whilst this vision was being developed, however, the use of peasant as an alternative term for agricultural labourer remained current. Thus, it can be suggested that when historians use 'peasant' as a descriptive term for rural society in general, they are using it in an unhistorical way. On the other hand, what are the alternatives?

⁶⁴ A. Everitt, 'Farm Labourers', in Thirsk (ed), *Agrarian History*, pp 396-465. An example of how the word is used unhistorically can be seen in Roger Wells's article, 'The Development of the English Rural Proletariat and Social Protest, 1700-1850', *Journal of Peasant Studies*, 6, 1979, pp 115-39. He distinguishes between a peasant as a subsistence or neo-subsistence farmer, and a landless agricultural labourer. Contemporaries would probably have seen the landless agricultural labourer as the peasant.

The Climate of Eastern England 1250–1350¹

By H E HALLAM

THE many chroniclers of Eastern England were very clear that there were four climatic periods in the century 1250–1350 — a wet period, interspersed with summer droughts in 1250–72; a warm and dry period from the summer of 1272 to the autumn of 1289; a forty-year period of unparalleled wet and misery from the poor harvest of 1289 to the good harvest of 1326; and a period of less inclement weather from 1326 to 1350. What truth is there in the chroniclers' scheme?²

A good deal, as it turns out, but we must remember who, according to medieval belief, made the weather. It was the king, and harmony in the state went with harmony in nature. If the weather went wrong and the harvests failed then you could expect politics to be wrong as well. As a rule this meant either that rebellious subjects had risen against a duly anointed and crowned king, or that a legitimate king was ruling like a tyrant, or that a usurper was reigning in place of the rightful king. Thus the bad years 1250–72, and especially the dearth of 1256, and the famines of 1257–58, 1260, and 1271–72 correspond with the Barons' Rising against

Henry III, the good period 1272–89 covers the years of Edward I's most fruitful legislative activity and the Conquest of Wales, and the bad period 1289–1326 the period of his ill-success in Scotland, the quarrel with the barons which led up to the *Confirmatio Cartarum* in 1297, and the disastrous rule of his homosexual son, Edward II, which included the great defeat of Bannockburn in 1314, and ended with Edward II's deposition. No sooner was Edward II dead than the weather improved and the early years of the young and popular soldier-king, Edward III, which included the great victories against the French at Sluys and Crécy in 1346, were a period of better weather and greater prosperity. More objective, and more local information, is clearly necessary.³

The account rolls vary in the type of information they convey. All those used give, in the *grangia* account on the dorse of the roll, sufficient material to make possible the discovery of the ratio of crops grown to crops sown, calculated by the grain. Where there are consecutive accounts we also sometimes know the yield per acre.

¹An earlier version of this paper was presented at the International Conference on Climate and History at the University of East Anglia on 12 July 1979.

²See H E Hallam, *Settlement and Society: A Study of the Early Agrarian History of South Lincolnshire*, Cambridge Studies in Economic History, ed M M Postan, Cambridge, 1965, Chapter V, 'Climate and Sea-Floods', pp 119–36, for an early attempt to elucidate climate from the chronicles. The most important, additional, local chronicles used are: *Chronica monasterii S. Albani*, edited by Henry Thomas Riley, Rolls Series, 1863–76. These include the chronicles of Thomas Walsingham, William Rishanger, and John of Trokelowe. Thomas Walsingham is particularly valuable since he has a statement on the weather and the harvest at the end of every year from 1272 to 1327 with odd years down to 1348. Like all chroniclers he was interested mainly in the politics which so fascinated the upper classes and, like all monks, he was a gentleman and ate wheat bread.

³The sources used will be found in the Eastern England chapter of *The Agrarian History of England and Wales*, Vol II (in the press). A much-abridged summary appears in H E Hallam, *Rural England 1066–1348*, Fontana Paperbacks, 1981, Chapter 4, 'Eastern England', Section 2, 'Crops and livestock', pp 40–55. See also F M Page, 'Bidentes Hoylandiae', *Economic History*, I, 1929 and F M Page, *The Estates of Crowland Abbey*, Cambridge Studies in Economic History, II, Cambridge, 1934. J Z Titow, 'Evidence of weather in the account rolls of the bishopric of Winchester 1209–1350', *Economic History Review*, second series, XII, 1960, pp 365–91 is important for the study of weather in Southern England, but the Winchester account rolls are in some ways less useful than the account rolls of Norwich Cathedral Priory. These last are now in the Norfolk Record Office. The priory had manors at Martham, Eaton, Gnatingdon, Denham, Gateley, North Elmham, Hindringham, Eaton, Thornham, Hindolveston, Sedgford, Hemsby, Taverham, Plumstead, Catton, Melton, and Monks' Grange, all in Norfolk.

Particularly on the estates of Norwich Cathedral Priory the reeve or bailiff also often comments upon the season in order to explain a poor result to the auditors. Finally, the Norwich accounts often give the dates of harvest, usually in the dairy account, for the milk then went to the harvesters rather than to making butter and cheese.

In East Anglia about eighty per cent of the grain grown was barley, and in Lincolnshire, Cambridgeshire, and Essex also, barley was very important. Barley is a spring grain and will stand a good deal of rain, but suffers greatly from drought. Yield ratios of 339 barley harvests in 1258-1349 have survived. Over the period 1258-1349 the yield ratios decreased from 3.44 in 1258-1322 to 3.25 in 1322-49, so that if the sowing rate was the same, the yield of a given area was 94.5 per cent in 1322-49 of what it had been in 1258-1322. By cohorts of 110 harvests the yield ratios were 3.5 in 1258-1312, 3.3 in 1312-26, and 3.12 in 1326-46. The harvests of 1326-46 were 93.9 per cent as productive as the harvests of 1258-1312. During the whole century there was a steady, not very great, but perceptible decline.

For the period 1264-1328, for the Norfolk estates of Norwich Cathedral Priory only, the account rolls tell us the dates and length of the harvests. Groups of from four to twelve harvests — in all 207 harvests — cover 25 years. The normal harvest took 26-36 days, the short harvest 25 days or less; the long harvest over 36 days. Early harvests began before 1 August; normal harvests took place mainly in August; late harvests mainly in September. At North Elmham in 1326 the harvest began on 21 July and was complete by 24 August. At Monks' Grange in 1318 the harvest began on 26 July but was not complete until 29 September. At Sedgford, in the famine year, 1316, the harvest began on 2 August and was in by 29 September. The rolls offer no support for harvests incomplete by Michaelmas day. All twenty-five harvest years were of normal length, except 1312, 1325 and 1328 which were

short and 1320 which was long. The short harvests were also early. The 1312 harvest was normal; the 1325 harvest poor, and yields for the 1328 harvest are not known. In 1325 a summer drought followed a wet winter. There were early harvests also in 1288, 1292, 1298, 1306, 1318 and 1326. There is no reliable information about the yields of barley in 1288 and 1306; the harvest of 1298 was normal; the harvest of 1292 very good; and the harvests of 1318 and 1326 poor. By normal I mean within ten per cent either way of the average yield ratio for 339 Eastern England barley harvests in 1258-1349; by poor and good 10-20 per cent below or above average; by very poor and very good over 20 per cent below or above average; by dearth and excellent 30 per cent or more below or above average. In 1292 the chroniclers say that a very hard winter preceded a wet summer with floods and Thomas of Walsingham classifies the harvests as poor. This directly contradicts the evidence of the account rolls, but we have it from only four manors. A summer drought followed the hard winter of 1326 and Thomas of Walsingham called the harvest good. That same autumn, on 24 September, Isabella had landed in Suffolk and Edward II was a captive on 16 November. Fifteen Eastern England barley harvests fell victim to the dry summer.

The late harvests are also interesting. We know nothing about the yields of barley in 1274, 1276, 1296, and 1310. The late harvest of 1319 was normal on seven manors in spite of summer drought and a wet autumn, but Thomas of Walsingham calls it very poor and several chroniclers call it a famine year. The late harvests of 1313, 1320 and 1323 were all good on three, sixteen and five manors. All three autumns were wet and Thomas of Walsingham calls the harvest of 1313 poor, and that of 1323 mediocre. His strictures clearly do not apply to the barley harvests of Eastern England, which, though late, gave good yields.

A number of other discrepancies exist

between the chroniclers and the accounts of Eastern England manorial bailiffs. At only one point do comparisons seriously affect the period 1250-72. The chronicles say 1258 was wet all autumn until 1 November and that there was famine. Barley crops on three Eastern England manors were normal and since East Anglian peasants ate barley bread they may not have suffered famine.

The good period 1272-89 was a period of drought and plenty for wheat-eaters, but barley did not do so well. The chroniclers' very good and good harvests of 1273 and 1278 were normal on twelve and poor on three Eastern England manors. In 1273 a wet summer followed floods at Cambridge and Norwich on 31 March, and in 1278 there was a summer drought.

There are seventeen discrepancies between the accounts and the chronicles during Thomas of Walsingham's forty evil years 1289-1326. The dearths of 1290 and 1295, according to Thomas, accompanied poor and very poor harvests in two drought years. In 1290 the harvest was in fact good on three manors and in 1295 normal on fourteen manors. The poor harvest of 1309 was very good on seven Eastern England manors. Similarly Thomas of Walsingham's mediocre harvests of 1298, 1299 and 1312 were normal, good, and normal on four, five, and fourteen manors. Thus the period 1289-1313 was better than the chroniclers say even though there were many dry summers.

When we get to the great famine the discrepancies are even more glaring. The most extravagant chroniclers make every year from 1315 to 1321 a famine year. Certainly the weather was foul. In 1313 a wet autumn followed a summer drought, and in 1314 the weather was unusually wet, with heavy rains and floods in the autumn. Thomas says that a poor 1314 harvest followed the poor 1313 harvest. On three Eastern England manors the harvest of 1313 was good and on four manors the harvest of 1314 was excellent. In 1315 winter, summer and autumn were all very wet, and in 1316,

after a spring drought, the summer and autumn were again very wet. These were both years of terrible famine. Unfortunately few accounts of crops are known for 1315 and 1316, but what we have do not always confirm the usual view. At Sedgeford in 1315 the lord's crops were normal, but at Kempstone his crops were a failure. At Calthorpe in 1315 the lord's wheat crop was very good, his barley poor, and his peas and oats very poor indeed. At Kempstone in 1315 the peasants' barley crop was poor, but at Calthorpe very good indeed.⁴ Death-rates, known from heriots, were not unusually large in 1315 and 1316 and the Master of the Cellar at Norwich Cathedral Priory was short of wheat, but not of barley. Neither did grants of food to the poor exceed the norm. On the other hand at Hindolveston between March 1316 and April 1317 there were 176 surrenders of holdings, and the court roll contains the perpetual refrain, 'Surrender made for great hunger'.⁵ In East Anglia 1315-17 was certainly difficult, but caution is needed before we cry disaster.

Some chroniclers claim 1318-20 as famine years. There were summer droughts in 1318 and 1319 and wet autumns in 1319 and 1320. Thomas of Walsingham calls the harvests of 1318 and 1319 poor and very poor, but on seven Eastern England manors the harvest of 1319 was normal and on sixteen manors the harvest of 1320 was good. According to Thomas three mediocre harvests in 1323-25 succeeded a poor harvest in 1322, but on five, fifteen, and sixteen Eastern England manors in 1323-25 the harvests were good, normal, and poor, and on twelve manors in 1322 the harvest was normal. Drought caused the

⁴The monks sometimes received the tythes, from which we know what crops the peasants grew and their quantity. The culture of the mills also reflects their interests.

⁵*Norfolk Archaeology*, XX, 1921, pp 179-214, especially pp 202-3. The article does not clearly state whether others took up the holdings, but since, in the period 1309-26, 443 out of 753 surrenders were for private convenience, including marriage arrangements, 136 from transferences by the tenant during his lifetime, 73 from retirements, 46 from transferences to daughters or sisters, 17 from transferences to others, and 100 were the result of stress from bad seasons, the problem may not have been so bad as it seems.

TABLE I

Weather, Harvests, and Agrarian Crises in Eastern England 1250-1350

<i>Date</i>	<i>Weather</i>	<i>Harvest</i>	<i>Crises</i>
1250	Wet: storms and floods	—	—
1251	Wet	—	—
1252	Dry winter; hot summer with drought; wet autumn	—	—
1253	Wet winter; summer drought	—	—
1254	Hard winter; summer drought; very wet autumn	—	—
1255	Wet February, March; summer drought	—	—
1256	Wet: Ouse flooded at Bedford, 19 June	—	Dearth
1257	Wet: floods on 15 July	—	Famine
1258	Wet all autumn until 1 November	—	Famine
1260	Summer storms, floods, hail storms	—	London famine
1261	Storms 27 July	—	—
1262	Storm 30 November	—	—
1263	Summer drought	—	—
1271	Floods 18 September	—	Famine 1271-72
1272	Drought in summer and autumn	Good	—
1273	Wet March: floods 31 March at Cambridge and Norwich; very wet summer	Very good	—
1274	Summer drought	Very good	—
1275	Wet summer and autumn	Good	—
1276	—	Good	—
1277	Drought: rained 10-12 October: floods at Cambridge and Bury St Edmunds	Normal	—
1278	Summer drought	Good	—
1280	Drought; floods 2-4 August	Good	—
1281	—	Good	—
1282	—	Very Good	—
1283	Wet and drought	Good	—
1284	Drought: wet all summer and most of autumn	Good	—
1285	Severe drought	Good	—
1286	Summer drought	Good	—
1287	Summer drought	Good	Glut
1288	Summer drought	Superabundant	Glut
1289	Flood in winter; summer drought; wet autumn	Poor	Dearth
1290	Winter flood; summer drought; cold, rainy 24 June	Poor	Dearth
1291	Summer drought; very wet autumn	Mediocre	—
1292	Very hard winter; wet: floods in summer	Poor	—
1293	Wet winter; dry summer	Poor	Famine
1294	Wet August, September	Abysmally poor	Famine
1295	Drought	Very poor	Dearth
1296	—	Poor	—
1297	Summer drought	Poor	—
1298	Summer drought	Mediocre	—
1299	Drought: strong wind	Mediocre	—
1300	Summer drought	—	—
1301	—	Mediocre	—
1302	Summer drought	Mediocre	—
1303	Summer drought	Poor	—
1304	—	Mediocre	—
1305	Summer drought	Normal	—
1306	Summer drought	Mediocre	—
1307	Summer drought	Mediocre	—
1308	Wet autumn	Normal	—
1309	Cold winter 1309/10; summer drought	Poor	—

TABLE I (*continued*)

<i>Date</i>	<i>Weather</i>	<i>Harvest</i>	<i>Crises</i>
1310	Severe frost; summer drought	—	—
1311	Summer drought	Mediocre	—
1312	—	Mediocre	—
1313	Wet autumn but summer drought	Poor	—
1314	Wet: heavy rains, floods in autumn	Poor	—
1315	Very wet winter, summer and autumn	Abysmally poor	Famine
1316	Spring drought: very wet summer and autumn	Abysmally poor	Famine
1317	Wet	Abysmally poor	Famine
1318	Summer drought	Poor	Famine
1319	Summer drought and wet autumn	Very poor	Famine
1320	Wet harvest	—	Famine
1321	—	Very poor	Famine
1322	Wet	Poor	—
1323	Wet barley burned in stack in autumn	Mediocre	—
1324	—	Mediocre	—
1325	Wet winter; summer drought	Mediocre	—
1326	Hard winter; summer drought	Good	—
1327	Summer drought	Very good	—
1330	Floods in spring; rainy weather, tempests and floods in autumn	—	—
1331	Drought all year; barley very scarce	—	—
1333	Drought: pea crop failed	—	—
1334	Drought: pea crop failed; water shortage	—	—
1337	Wet autumn	Very good	—
1338	Wet winter; dry summer; very wet autumn	Normal	—
1339	Hard wet winter; dry summer; rainy autumn	Superabundant	—
1340	Very hard winter; dry summer	—	—
1341	28 nights frost and ice; wet spring	Very good	—
1348	Rain and floods 24 June–25 December	—	—
1350	Drought in spring and summer	—	Black Death

poor harvest of 1325. The famine years therefore are strictly 1315–17, and thereafter, down to 1324, conditions were normal.

Thomas calls 1326 a good year and 1327, 1337 and 1341, very good. Just as he exaggerates the bad times so does he exaggerate the good. The summer of 1326 saw another drought and on fifteen Eastern England manors the barley harvest was poor. It was normal again in 1327, 1337, and 1341 on sixteen, four, and five Eastern England manors.

Climatic extremes were certainly noteworthy in 1250–1350, but they were not so extreme as the chroniclers claim. Barley growing became slightly more difficult on average, probably because, in spite of the

wet years 1313–17, 1320 and 1322, on the whole the summer became drier. In 1258–1312 the East Anglian farmer could expect to get 21 bushels of barley to the acre, in 1312–26, 20, and in 1326–46, 19½ bushels. The worst years were 1324–26 when he only got 16 bushels to the acre.

What impact did this slow change have upon the people? In 1086 the five Eastern counties contained 31 per cent of the population of England if we exclude the Northern Counties (except Yorkshire); by 1300 the East housed 46 per cent of the population of the same area. In most of these counties the majority of the people had less than 10–20 acres of land, that is less than the minimum for subsistence. Did the extremes of weather cause a population decline

through a high death rate? The Domesday population had trebled by 1229 and quadrupled by 1278, and at no time was there a general decline before 1300. The increase slowed in 1251-78, and again in 1278-1300, but was still going in 1300.⁶ This is not to say that the climatic change had no effect, but perhaps through the marriage rate rather than the death rate. Marriages decreased markedly in the Lincolnshire Fenland in 1260-1300, but they increased again in 1300-48, and Eastern England was still very populous and prosperous when the Black Death struck. Still there were many poor people and the churches' gifts to the poor underline the difficult years. They were 1294/5, 1295/6, 1297/8, 1305/6, 1312/13, 1322/3, and 1324/5 — not those expected.⁷

How do these findings compare with recent evidence from other parts of England? Severe winters and dry springs do not so much affect the crops as wet autumns, what one German meteorologist calls 'the north-west European' monsoon. The weather turns wet and thundery in July, sometimes after dry weeks in April, May and June, and continues wet throughout August and even

TABLE 2
Lengths, Times and Sizes of Barley
Harvests in Eastern England 1258-1390

Date	Length	Time	Size	Number of harvests	
				Length	Size
1258	—	—	Normal		(3)
1264	Normal	Normal	—	5	
1266	Normal	Long	—	5	
1267	—	—	Very good		(3)
1273	Normal	Normal	Normal	7	(12)
1274	Normal	Late	—	8	
1276	Normal	Late	—	8	
1278	Normal	Normal	Poor	4	(3)
1288	Normal	Early	—	8	
1290	—	—	Good		(3)
1292	Normal	Early	Very good	4	(4)
1295	Normal	Normal	Normal	9	(14)
1296	Normal	Late	—	11	
1297	—	—	Poor		(4)
1298	Normal	Early	Normal	6	(4)
1299	—	—	Good		(5)
1300	Normal	Normal	—	10	
1306	Normal	Early	—	10	
1309	—	—	Very good		(7)
1310	Normal	Late	—	9	
1311	—	—	Poor		(9)
1312	Short	Early	Normal	9	(14)
1313	Normal	Late	Good	11	(3)
1314	—	—	Excellent		(4)
1318	Normal	Early	Poor	11	(11)
1319	Normal	Late	Normal	11	(7)
1320	Long	Late	Good	5	(16)
1321	Normal	Normal	—	9	
1322	—	—	Normal		(12)
1323	Normal	Late	Good	12	(5)
1324	—	—	Normal		(15)
1325	Short	Early	Poor	10	(16)
1326	Normal	Early	Poor	9	(15)
1327	Normal	Normal	Normal	7	(16)
1328	Short	Early	—	7	
1329	—	—	Poor		(4)
1330	—	—	Normal		(3)
1331	—	—	Dearth		(5)
1332	—	—	Excellent		(3)
1333	—	—	Good		(14)
1334	—	—	Poor		(4)
1336	—	—	Normal		(4)
1337	—	—	Normal		(4)
1338	—	—	Normal		(4)
1340	—	—	Poor		(4)
1341	—	—	Normal		(5)
1342	—	—	Normal		(4)
1343	—	—	Normal		(4)
1344	—	—	Normal		(4)
1347	—	—	Normal		(3)
1348	—	—	Normal		(3)
1349	—	—	Good		(3)

⁶These statements are based upon the material contained in the 'Population' chapter of *The Agrarian History of England and Wales*, Vol II. I wrote the final version of this chapter in 1974 and am now prepared to be a little more positive. I have scaled the recorded population figures in the tables to make each county take the share in the later totals that it takes in the DB totals. The reader will find a brief statement of the results for each region of England in H E Hallam, *Rural England 1066-1348*, London, 1981, pp 39-40, 80, 102-3, 126-8, 151-2, 169, 192 and 219-20.

⁷The following articles connect population history and climatic history: G Utterstrom, 'Climate Fluctuations and Population Problems in Early Modern History', *Scandinavian Economic History Review*, III, 1955, pp 3-47; E Le Roy Ladurie, 'Histoire et climat', *Annales*, XIV, 1959, pp 3-34; E Le Roy Ladurie, 'Climat et récoltes aux xvii^e et xviii^e siècles', *Annales*, XV, 1960, pp 434-65; E Le Roy Ladurie, 'Aspects historiques de la nouvelle climatologie', *Revue historique*, 225, 1961, pp 1-20. The classical article on the great famine is H S Lucas, 'The great European famine of 1315', *Speculum*, XV, 1930, pp 343-77, confirmed from similar sources in H Van Werveke, 'La famine de l'an 1316 en Flandre et dans les régions voisines', *Revue du Nord*, XLI, 1959, pp 5-14. This famine did not affect the Mediterranean world and struck the wheat harvest most heavily. Flanders imported wheat from East Anglia, mainly from Lynn and Ipswich. The best summary of what was thought in 1962 about the crisis of the fourteenth century is Élisabeth Carpentier, 'Famines et épidémies dans l'histoire du XIV^e siècle', *Annales*, XVII, 1962, pp 1062-92. See also I Kershaw, 'The Great Famine and Agrarian Crisis in England 1315-1322', *Past and Present*, No 39, 1973, pp 31-50.

into September. August in England is the third wettest month (after February and October) and at the best of times under medieval conditions harvesting was precarious. The English climate is not really suitable for growing wheat, even in the lowlands, and in years when the storm track passes across the English Channel and Northern France instead of out beyond the Hebrides harvesting is difficult even now. Even so, England is quite big enough to have climatic differences in any given autumn. Cambridge and the South experienced, in 1968, one of the coldest and wettest summers of the century. The ground never dried and little children could not go out to play. Cumbria, Scotland and Ireland had weeks of sunshine and suffered drought. In Edinburgh the thermometer registered 70°F and the Scots complained of the heat. These local variations in the summer and autumn weather

induce caution when we discuss climate outside East Anglia.

Dr P F Brandon has written about late medieval weather in Sussex.⁸ Unfortunately for our purposes nearly all his account roll material is after 1350, but he can supplement our account of the decade before 1350. 1339/40 saw unusually severe weather, with an exceptionally cold winter and a very hot, dry summer. The following year was unremarkable, but in 1341/2, 1342/3 and 1343/4 (the years run from Michaelmas to Michaelmas) there were long dry spells in summer, particularly in 1344. In 1344/5 there was a hard winter followed by an unexceptional summer. In 1345/6 and 1346/7 droughty spells in summer returned. There was a rainy harvest in 1347/8 and 1349/50 was normal. Apart from the harvest of 1348 when the Eastern England chroniclers say there was rain and floods from 24 June to 25 December there were no difficult harvests. Dr Brandon is inclined to stress dryness itself as a difficulty in parts of Sussex and feels that there was not much fluctuation in the weather during his period. Of the Eastern England harvests only that of 1340 was poor: 1341-44 and 1347-48 were all normal and 1349 was good. This decade does not seem to have been a time of trial. On the other hand, Dr Brandon's criteria of normality, badness and goodness are coarser than those used here. He says that 42 per cent of his harvests — 337 out of 783 — were normal and means that they fell between 15 per cent above or below the average. For him a good harvest is 15-29 per cent, a very good harvest 30-49 per cent and an excellent harvest more than 50 per cent above the average, and poor, very poor and dearth harvests the corresponding percentages below the average. Peasant holdings in Sussex were generally larger than in Eastern

TABLE 3
**Discrepancies between Chroniclers' and
Bailiffs' Accounts of Harvests in Eastern
England 1258-1341**

Year	Chroniclers	Bailiffs	Number of accounts
1258	Famine	Normal	3
1273	Very good	Normal	12
1278	Good	Poor	3
1290	Poor: dearth	Good	3
1292	Poor	Very good	4
1295	Very poor: dearth	Normal	14
1298	Mediocre	Normal	4
1299	Mediocre	Good	5
1309	Poor	Very good	7
1311	Mediocre	Poor	9
1312	Mediocre	Normal	14
1313	Poor	Good	3
1314	Poor	Excellent	4
1319	Very poor: famine	Normal	7
1320	Famine	Good	16
1322	Poor	Normal	12
1323	Mediocre	Good	5
1324	Mediocre	Normal	15
1325	Mediocre	Poor	16
1326	Good	Poor	15
1327	Very good	Normal	16
1337	Very good	Normal	4
1341	Very good	Normal	5

⁸P F Brandon, 'Late-medieval weather in Sussex and its agricultural significance', *The Institute of British Geographers: Transactions*, No 54, November 1971, pp 1-17. For the later middle ages see also J Z Titow, 'Le climat à travers les rôles de comptabilité de l'évêché de Winchester (1350-1450)', *Annales*, XXV, 1970, pp 312-50.

England but the consumption of grain was so high everywhere in medieval England that there was dearth with a harvest of 70 per cent.

The other place which needs discussion is Cuxham in Oxfordshire. Professor Harvey has long ago given us his thoughts on corn production there, and now he has edited the manorial records.⁹ The account rolls seem not to mention the weather but there are good yield ratios for both wheat and barley. The average yield ratio for 39 wheat harvests in 1291-1357 was 6.4. In cohorts of 10, 10, 10 and 9 this becomes 8.25 in 1291-1306, 5.84 in 1307-21, 6.31 in 1322-40 and 4.46 in 1341-57. Compared with Oakington, Cambridgeshire 1271-1320, Ottery, Devon 1335-43, Hurdwick, Devon 1412-1537, Norwich Cathedral Priory estates, nine manors of the Bishop of Winchester 1200-1450 and the anonymous 'Husbandry', these were very good yields. The same was true of barley. The average yield for 40 harvests in 1289-1349 was 5.7. In cohorts of 10 this becomes 5.83 in 1289-1303, 5.35 in 1304-17, 6.07 in 1318-31 and 5.37 in 1332-49. The lord usually sowed his wheat at 2½ bushels to the acre and his barley at 4 bushels to the acre, so that on every ten acres, after setting on one side the seed-corn, he had 135 bushels of wheat and 160 bushels of barley.

Table 4 compares wheat and barley yields at Cuxham using the same criteria of poverty and excellence. Out of 46 harvests 33 give figures for both wheat and barley. Of these 33 in only 9 years was there virtually complete correlation between the harvests of wheat and barley. Both were excellent in 1301, both normal in 1309, both good in 1313, wheat in dearth and barley very poor in 1316, wheat in dearth

and barley poor in 1317, both normal in 1320, both excellent in 1333, wheat very poor and barley poor in 1348, wheat poor

TABLE 4
Wheat and Barley Yields at Cuxham
1289-1357

Harvest	Wheat	Barley
1289	—	Very good
1290	—	Very good
1291	Excellent	Poor
1294	Excellent	—
1297	—	Very poor
1298	Very good	Normal
1299	—	Very good
1300	Excellent	Very poor
1301	Excellent	Excellent
1302	Good	Normal
1303	Normal	Very good
1304	Good	Very poor
1305	Excellent	Good
1306	Excellent	Poor
1307	Good	Poor
1308	Poor	Good
1309	Normal	Normal
1310	—	Poor
1313	Good	Good
1316	Dearth	Very poor
1317	Dearth	Poor
1318	Very good	Excellent
1319	Dearth	Normal
1320	Normal	Normal
1321	Normal	Dearth
1322	Normal	Good
1323	Very poor	Normal
1328	Good	Excellent
1329	Poor	Good
1330	—	Normal
1331	—	Good
1332	Normal	Poor
1333	Excellent	Excellent
1334	Good	Normal
1335	Normal	Poor
1339	Dearth	Good
1340	Normal	Good
1341	Very poor	—
1342	Normal	—
1343	Poor	Good
1344	Normal	Poor
1347	Dearth	—
1348	Very poor	Poor
1349	Poor	Dearth
1350	Dearth	—
1357	Dearth	—

⁹P D A Harvey, *A Medieval Oxfordshire Village: Cuxham 1240 to 1400*, Oxford Historical Series, Second Series, eds N Gibbs, R W Southern, J S Watson and R B Wernham, Oxford, 1965, pp 46-57; *Manorial Records of Cuxham, Oxfordshire, 1200-1359*, ed P D A Harvey, Historical Manuscripts Commission, JP 23, HMSO, London, 1976.

and barley in dearth in 1349. In 9 other years the results were utterly different. There were good or excellent crops of wheat in 1291, 1300, 1304, 1306 and 1307 and poor or very poor crops of barley. There were poor or dearth crops of wheat in 1308, 1329, 1339 and 1343 and good crops of barley. On all these occasions what the farmer lost on one he gained on the other. Wheat went to extremes more than barley. There were excellent wheat crops in 1291, 1294, 1300, 1301, 1305, 1306 and 1333: excellent barley crops only in 1301, 1318, 1328 and 1333. The difference of time reflects the difference in weather. There was a dearth of wheat in 1316, 1317, 1319; 1339, 1347, 1350 and 1357: a dearth of barley only in 1321 and 1349. Never were both crops in dearth simultaneously, but times were hard in 1316, 1317, 1348 and 1349. Barley was a much more reliable crop than wheat and peasants generally ate barley or maslin bread.¹⁰

Table 5 compares barley harvests at Cuxham and in Eastern England. There are 21 comparable harvests. Only in 1318, 1329, 1331, 1332 and 1340 were harvests completely different in the two neighbourhoods. Except in 1332 the Cuxham harvest was better. Both sets of figures agree that the 1313 harvest was good and the harvests of 1319, 1320 and 1322 normal or good. There was greater correlation between barley harvests in Cuxham and Eastern England than between wheat and barley harvests in Cuxham.

I have argued that the chroniclers are a poor guide to weather conditions in the period 1250-1350 and that they need supplementation by recourse to remarks about harvests in bailiffs' accounts and to what we know about grain yields. I have also argued that we should study the grain people actually ate and drank, which, in

TABLE 5

Barley Harvests at Cuxham and in Eastern England

Harvest	Cuxham	Eastern England
1290	Very good	Good
1297	Very poor	Poor
1298	Normal	Normal
1299	Very good	Good
1309	Normal	Very good
1313	Good	Good
1318	Excellent	Poor
1319	Normal	Normal
1320	Normal	Good
1322	Good	Normal
1323	Normal	Good
1329	Good	Poor
1330	Normal	Normal
1331	Good	Dearth
1332	Poor	Excellent
1333	Excellent	Good
1334	Normal	Poor
1340	Good	Poor
1343	Good	Normal
1344	Poor	Normal
1348	Poor	Normal

Eastern England, was also the predominant crop, barley, rather than the gentleman's wheat. At Cuxham barley yields seem to have been very much more reliable than wheat yields and seldom did both crops fail. Crops and climate both varied too according to locality and to a multitude of other factors. Dr Titow has indeed been able to show congruence between weather and poor harvests, but even in the lengthy series of 80 wheat harvests on the Winchester estates 35 were normal (i.e. 10 per cent either way). Dearth occurred in 1315, 1316, 1339 and 1349, but in this same period of autumnal disaster came the excellent harvests of 1318 and 1326. Doubt must therefore continue to exist about the extent of the Great Famine and its impact upon the people. Certainly there was a crisis but it was not so bad as the chroniclers believed.

¹⁰ On Dr Brandon's criteria only 1349 would be a dearth year in barley and there would be no dearth years in wheat. In barley there would be no excellent years and in wheat only 1301.

Enclosure in North Buckinghamshire, 1500–1750

By MICHAEL REED

IT IS BECOMING increasingly apparent that Parliamentary enclosure, even at its most intensive, as in such counties as Oxfordshire, Leicestershire and Northamptonshire, was, for many individual parishes and villages, but the last phase of a very protracted process, a process which had been going on at least since the twelfth century.¹ This is as true for north Buckinghamshire as it is for any other part of the country. To study only half of a county may perhaps call for a word of explanation. The topography of Buckinghamshire south of the Chiltern scarp differs so markedly from that of the north of the county that it has imposed its own terms upon the evolution of agricultural practices. Enclosure of open fields in the Chilterns and the Thames valley is at once more piecemeal, more protracted and far less well-documented than it is in the north of the county.²

Recent research has shown that only 35 per cent of Buckinghamshire as a whole remained to be enclosed by private Act of Parliament in the eighteenth century. This figure conceals wide differences between one part of the county and the next, ranging from 57.7 per cent of Cottesloe Hundred and the 48.8 per cent of Aylesbury Hundred, through the 27 per cent of Ashendon Hundred to the 9.1 per cent of Desborough Hundred and the 7 per cent of Burnham Hundred.³

We can, however, look at these figures the other way round, and say that in Cottesloe Hundred 42.3 per cent was enclosed without an Act of Parliament, 51.6 per cent of Aylesbury Hundred and 73 per cent of Ashendon Hundred, and much of this enclosure had already taken place before the opening decades of the eighteenth century and the beginnings of the Parliamentary enclosure movement. It is this, clearly very extensive, enclosure which is marked on Fig 1 (see page 144) and which forms the subject of this paper.

I

Enclosure from common arable, meadow, pasture and woodland and from royal Forest can be documented from the end of the twelfth century, but it is only at the end of the fifteenth century that the social and economic problems which enclosure could create — depopulation and desertion of villages, decay of tillage, unemployment, poverty and vagabondage — compelled some half-hearted attempts to halt it. An Act of Parliament of 1489 (4 Henry VII, c.19) 'against pullyng down of Tounes' was largely ineffective. It was followed by a royal proclamation in 1514 against the engrossing of farms, and a further Act of Parliament in the following year. This Act would also have remained without effect had not Wolsey in 1517 obtained a royal commission to enquire what houses had been demolished, what land had been converted from arable to pasture and what parks had been enclosed since Michaelmas 1488.

Buckinghamshire is one of the counties covered by this commission, the returns to

¹ R A Butlin, 'The enclosure of open-fields and extinction of common rights in England, c.1600–1750', in H S A Fox and R A Butlin, eds, *Change in the Countryside: Essays on Rural England, 1500–1900* (1979), pp 65–82.

² On the differences, topographical and otherwise, between north and south Buckinghamshire, see my *The Buckinghamshire Landscape* (1979).

³ M E Turner, *English Parliamentary Enclosure* (1980), pp 39–42.

which have long been in print.⁴ These returns show that over the county as a whole enclosure amounted to 898½ acres, or 1.93 per cent of its total area. This figure covers wide variations between the north and the south of the county, from the .09 per cent of Desborough Hundred to the 4.46 per cent of Ashendon Hundred. The largest recorded enclosure was that of 960 acres at Doddershall in Quainton, the smallest the four acres recorded in Hillesden. These returns are very interesting in themselves, but they are certainly not a reliable guide, either to the extent or to the distribution of enclosure up to that date, even if only because the commissioners were not empowered to look further back than 1488. At least three enclosures, known to have taken place before 1517, find no place in these returns, at Creslow, at Snelshall in Tattenhoe, and at Tetchwick in Ludgershall.⁵ Knowledge of them depends upon the chance recovery of casual notes in documents. The full extent of enclosure before 1517 must remain unknown and unknowable.

The discrepancies between the returns for Buckinghamshire to the 1566 commission of enquiry and the other surviving documentary evidence for enclosure are even more noticeable, although it must not be forgotten that no Buckinghamshire returns to the 1545 commission survive. On this occasion, 1566, 406½ acres of enclosed or converted land are recorded, representing some 0.87 per cent of the total area of the county.⁶ The largest recorded enclosure was at Thornton, where 560 acres were said to have been enclosed, twelve houses of husbandry and the parsonage house decayed. At Caldecote in Newport Pagnell 490 acres had been

converted from tillage to pasture. At Milton Keynes 240 acres were converted and seven houses of husbandry decayed. The smallest enclosure recorded was at Twyford, where three acres were said to have been converted from arable to pasture. Enclosures which slipped through the net include 100 acres of Abbess Park in Burnham before 1565, the New Park in Boarstall in about 1553, a close of land at Cheddington enclosed in the time of Henry VIII, enclosures at Barton Hartshorne made before 1558, and an enclosure made at Hartwell in about 1550.⁷ Once again this cannot be an exhaustive list, and further additions to it depend entirely upon the survival, and the discovery, of casual documentary references.

A further commission of enquiry into enclosure and depopulation was issued in August 1607, provoked by the widespread outbreaks of violence and unrest earlier in the year, especially in Northamptonshire, Leicestershire, Warwickshire and Bedfordshire, outbreaks which appear to have been directed almost exclusively at enclosures.⁸ The articles of enquiry looked at enclosure and conversion from 1578 onwards, but did not take account of enclosure of pasture and waste. In any case the commission was declared 'against law'. The returns for Buckinghamshire record 7077 acres, 1.52 per cent of the area of the county, as having been enclosed, converted or severed, 80 houses of husbandry decayed and 86 persons displaced. The returns themselves contain much interesting detail: Great Pollicott was described as a whole hamlet turned to pasture; three small plots of land in Oving, of 1½, 2 and 3 acres, were converted to pasture for the maintenance of milch kine for housekeeping; at Broughton in Bierton 80 acres of arable were converted into ley ground; at Brill 240 acres were enclosed and

⁴I S Leadam, ed, *The Domesday of Enclosures, 1517-1518* (1897, 1971 reprint).

⁵Creslow, *VCH Bucks*, III, p 365, Snelshall in Tattenhoe, British Library, Add MS, 37069, f113, Tetchwick, in Ludgershall, A H Thompson, ed, 'Visitations in the diocese of Lincoln, 1517-1531', Vol 1, *Lincoln Record Society*, 33 (1940), p 80.

⁶E F Gay, 'Inclosures in England in the Sixteenth Century', *Quarterly Journal of Economics*, 17 (1903), pp 576-97. The originals PRO E 178/424, have deteriorated considerably since Gay's time and his figures cannot now be checked.

⁷PRO E 134 7-8 Eliz Mich 1. PRO E 134 25-26 Eliz Mich 7. PRO STAC/2/6, Nos 11 and 12. PRO STAC/4/5/8. Buckinghamshire Archaeological Society, Hartwell 402/39.

⁸E F Gay, 'The Midland Revolt and the Inquisitions of Depopulation of 1607', *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*, New Series, 18 (1904), pp 195-244.

converted to pasture, causing a hundred cottages to be in great want and decay; and there is substantial confirmation of the activities of John Temple at Stowe described below.⁹ Nevertheless, as with the preceding returns, a great deal of enclosure went unrecorded, as much of the evidence analysed below makes clear.

All of the returns made by these successive bodies of commissioners from 1517 to 1607 contain much very interesting detail about individual enclosures, but it is apparent that a great deal escaped them, so that the seeming air of precision about the acreages they record affords no basis whatsoever for any quantitative study of enclosure during this period. Indeed, from the Buckinghamshire evidence at any rate, it may not seem implausible to suggest that by and large the commissioners learnt only of enclosure which for some reason proved to be contentious, since they failed to record almost all of the enclosure by agreement discussed in the next section. Enclosure by this method was taking place by the 1550s, and may well have become the most usual method of enclosure during the seventeenth century, although it is impossible to substantiate what is in reality nothing more than a subjective impression.

II

The earliest enclosure with some pretence to being by agreement so far traced for Buckinghamshire is that of 1551 by which Master Hampden was permitted to enclose twenty acres and more in Hartwell in return for an undertaking not to keep a rabbit warren.¹⁰ This falls only one year after the earliest enclosure agreement so far traced on the Chancery decree rolls, that of 1550 for Condoover in Shropshire.¹¹ Rabbits at this time were a source of considerable profit,

both for their carcasses and for their fur, but they also cause great damage to grain and pasture and in a number of agreements of this period an undertaking not to keep a rabbit warren forms part of the conditions for enclosure. This occurred at Great Billing in Northamptonshire, for example, in 1629, and in 1611 Dame Mary Digby, lord of the manor of Gayhurst, gave up her rights to common of pasture over an enclosure of forty acres in Lathbury in return for an undertaking not to build a rabbit warren.¹²

The next enclosure by agreement so far discovered is that made in about 1584 for Loughton.¹³ Here it was stated that for the general good of all the inhabitants it was agreed that, the price of hay and grass having become excessive in recent years, each inhabitant should enclose for himself a piece of ground to be taken either at the outside of the field or else adjoining the town, according to how he can agree with his neighbours. Every man was then to abate his commoning in proportion to the number of acres he had enclosed. The agreement was put into writing, but so liberal an arrangement was wide open to abuse, and it was the enclosing of two common drift or cartways that brought it into Star Chamber.

Two agreements were made for the enclosing of lands in Stowe, in 1587 and in 1599. In both cases the agreements were made between John Temple and his tenants. In the first he was permitted to keep enclosed Grove Meadow, of nine acres, accepting restrictions on his rights to common of pasture. In the second, by making a series of exchanges, he was able to enclose a piece of land, 73 acres in extent, arable, ley and meadow, in the Netherfield in Stowe.¹⁴ This enclosure was recorded in the 1607 returns, although it was noted that it was done by exchanging lands with the inhabitants of Stowe, and with their consent.

⁹PRO C 205/5/2. The documents have deteriorated considerably since Gay's time and it has proved impossible to check his figures.

¹⁰Buckinghamshire Archaeological Society, Hartwell, 402/39.

¹¹PRO C 78/85/15. See M W Beresford, 'The Decree Rolls of Chancery as a Source for Economic History', *Economic History Review*, Second series, 32 (1979), p 1, note to Table 1.

¹²Northamptonshire CRO SS 3683. Buckinghamshire CRO D/CA 13/6.

¹³PRO STAC/8. 141/16.

¹⁴Huntington Library, Stowe Papers. Temple Land Papers, Bucks, 1572-1607. Box 2. L8.5.

The Temples were at first interested in sheep rather than cattle. Early in the seventeenth century clothiers from Coggeshall, Braintree, Malmesbury, Thaxted and Chipping Camden were making their way to Stowe in order to buy wool.¹⁵ However, the wealth that the sheep brought led in due course to wider social aspirations, a baronetcy, and a shift in the motives for enclosure. When Sir Peter Temple took in twelve acres of Stowe Waste and the ground called the Heuinges or Wood Common it was for the better enlarging of his park. The final enclosure of Stowe did not take place until later in the seventeenth century.¹⁶

From the early years of the seventeenth century enclosures by agreement become much more common, although this impression may simply be the consequence of the better survival of documents. At least a dozen agreements are known for Buckinghamshire, and for several more parishes, Gayhurst, for example, we know that there was an agreement to enclose, but the document itself has disappeared.¹⁷ Yet more will undoubtedly come to light when the Chancery decree rolls are fully explored. These rolls, now in the Public Record Office, are of particular importance because in order to give full legal validity to an enclosure agreement it was often made the subject of a law suit, more or less fictitious, in Chancery, and the decision of the court served to confirm its terms.¹⁸ Chancery was not the only court used, however. Agreements could be confirmed in Common Pleas and Exchequer by a variety of means, including fines and recoveries, but these

records are even less well-known than those of Chancery.¹⁹

Glebe terriers can provide a great deal of indirect evidence as to the progress of non-Parliamentary enclosure, and those for Buckinghamshire have been studied by Professor Beresford.²⁰ Only occasionally, however, do they give a precise date for enclosure, they do not survive for every parish, and by their nature they can yield only very rarely indeed any insight into the reasons or motives for enclosure.

There is yet a further documentary source which is so far almost entirely unknown as far as enclosure agreements are concerned. In all questions relating to the glebe, its enclosure and exchange, and to tithe, it had become customary by the Restoration to seek the consent of the bishop. He issued a Commission of Enquiry into the terms of compensation, and then gave his consent in writing if the terms were discovered to be satisfactory. Such Commissions for Kingsey and Great Linford are known from documents in the Buckinghamshire County Record Office, and another for Tyringham confirmed in 1709 has been found in the Registers of the bishop of Lincoln.²¹ More will undoubtedly come to light when this source is fully explored.

Articles of agreement to enclose frequently contain an elaborate recital of the terms and motives, but in fact how far each was a genuine agreement is difficult to say. In some cases there were too many tenants involved for them all to have been brow-beaten, and in others the words do have a genuine ring about them. In yet others pious words clearly cover high-handed actions.

The lords of the manors at Astwood in 1613 were Tyringham Norwood and Godfrey Chibnall. Their motives for

¹⁵ Huntington Library, Stowe Papers. Wool Book. ST 48.

¹⁶ E F Gay, 'The Rise of an English Country Family. Peter and John Temple to 1603', *Huntington Library Quarterly*, 1 (1937-38), pp 367-90.

¹⁷ G. Lipscomb, *The History and Antiquities of the County of Buckingham*, 4 (1831), p 142.

¹⁸ M W Beresford, 'The Decree Rolls of Chancery as a Source for Economic History', *Economic History Review*, Second series, 32 (1979), pp 1-10; E M Leonard, 'The Inclosure of Common Fields in the Seventeenth Century', *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*, New series, 19 (1905), pp 101-46, M W Beresford, 'Habitation versus Improvement: The Debate on Enclosure by Agreement', in F J Fisher, ed, *Essays in the Economic and Social History of Tudor and Stuart England* (1961), pp 40-69.

¹⁹ See my 'Pre-Parliamentary Enclosure in the East Midlands', *Landscape History*, 3 (1981), p 61.

²⁰ M W Beresford, 'Glebe Terriers and Open-field Buckinghamshire', Part 1, *Records of Buckinghamshire*, 15 Part 5 (1951-2), pp 283-98, Part 1, *Records of Buckinghamshire*, 16 Part 1 (1953-4), pp 5-28.

²¹ Buckinghamshire CRO PR 120/3/1, DU 1/48/5-6. Lincoln RO Register 36, f 125.

consenting to enclose seem almost too good to be true. The inhabitants, the agreement declares, had often requested some reasonable stint of cattle in the common fields, and also the enclosing of the fields so that every man could enjoy his share in severalty. Norwood and Chibnall were willing to listen 'for that they saw by experience that the poorer sort of the said parish were much oppressed and wronged in the taking and using of the said Commons by the richer sort of the said inhabitants who commonly did putt into the said Common field a greter number and proporcon of Cattell than belonged to their lands lying in the said Comon field'. They therefore assembled the inhabitants together and an enclosure was agreed. It would, among other things, save the charges of a neat-heard, hog-heard and pinder, and much corn and grain from damage by cattle trespass. Articles of agreement were made in 1614 and confirmed in Chancery in 1617.²² Nevertheless, enclosure did not affect all the common fields in Astwood. There were still four fields, Church, East, Trotts and Argents, Trotts said to be in East Field season, to be enclosed by private Act of Parliament in 1836-1840, but the Act affected only 328 out of the 1281 acres in the parish, only fractionally more than a quarter.

At Chearsley, as at Stowe, two attempts were made at enclosure.²³ The first articles of agreement were made in October of 1624, with the object of dividing up, enclosing and holding in severalty the meadows of the village. This was because the meadows lay close to the river Thame and other brooks, and were frequently inundated with water. They were particularly 'fruitful, mellow and tender', and so were overstocked, leading to sheep rot and cattle murrain. In addition, there was no convenient pasture for milch kine save among the corn and grain. This caused much loss when the cattle broke loose, and many disputes among neigh-

bours. As a consequence many inhabitants had to hire pasture for dairy cattle away from Chearsley. Enclosure, it was thought, would put a stop to all these disputes and inconveniences, and a surveyor, Mr Thorpe, was employed to carry this out.

The second agreement was made in 1666. Once again it was shortage of pasture for cattle that was given as the reason. This time, however, parts of the arable were enclosed, and the inhabitants chose those parts 'lying far from home and far distant from their several messuages and habitations', a clear example of cost benefit analysis. The remainder of the arable was then to be divided into four fields, part to lie fallow, the rest to be sown with several sorts of grain according to the course of husbandry agreed to be used in Chearsley. An enclosure Act for Chearsley was obtained in 1805. Unfortunately the enclosure map does not survive. There are no other early maps for Chearsley and so we cannot tell exactly where these first enclosures actually lay, but they cannot have been very extensive since the Act of 1805 affected 917 acres of a total parish area of 942 acres.

Other agreements make it clear that in fact they were doing little more than legalizing enclosures which had already taken place. At Great Horwood, for example, the landlord, New College Oxford, farmed out the manor and the demesne, and a subtenant managed to enclose some part of the demesne, removing many of the ancient boundaries. It was agreed in Chancery in 1611 that all the enclosures and exchanges should be confirmed and that the College should enclose a further thirty acres of the demesne.²⁴ At Ashendon in July 1634 it was agreed by Richard Grenville and other farmers, lessees and tenants that Richard, having already enclosed with hedge and ditch a piece of ground within the common fields called Sheep Walk, should keep it in severalty, freed from all demands for common, for

²² PRO C 78.291/5.

²³ PRO C 3. 333/1, 398/110. (1624). PRO C 5. 594/109. (1666).

²⁴ PRO C 78. 171/3.

seven years. In return he agreed to pasture no more than sixty sheep over the common fields and to abide by the ancient customary stint of sixty beasts and 30 sheep for every yardland, plus sufficient horses.²⁵ It is still possible to trace in the landscape today the bounds of the Sheep Walk enclosed by Richard Grenville in 1634.

The clearest statement of the motives for agreeing to enclose the common open fields comes from Great Linford. Here an agreement was drawn up in 1658, and it has every appearance of being a genuine agreement. In Great Linford, the agreement recites, a great part of the land lies open and unenclosed and commonable.²⁶ Many spoils, trespasses and destructions occur daily by reason of the escape of cattle into the corn and grass, causing disputes, actions, quarrels and troubles between neighbour and neighbour. An enclosure was agreed, a surveyor appointed to mark out each person's land 'as near adjoining to their dwellings as with conveniency may be', and with due respect to the quality and the quantity of their lands. Referees were appointed to decide on fencing, and on compensation for tilth already prepared, and the enclosure was to be executed with all speed. A Decree in Chancery confirming the enclosure was obtained in 1662, and the bishop of Lincoln, in his open primary visitation held at Stony Stratford in July 1662, confirmed the changes made affecting the glebe, being assured that the 28 acres allotted to the rectory were not only much better in value than the ancient glebe but also 'being laid out together so near to the said parsonage were much more convenient, commodious and profitable'.²⁷

The difficulties and disputes over managing the open common fields which undoubtedly lay behind many agreements to enclose were very real. Population pressure, with all

that it entails of new mouths to be fed and new farms and cottages to be provided with land, was putting severe strain on the open field system in many north Buckinghamshire villages in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, and increasingly elaborate codes of practice were required to keep things going. At the heart of the problem was the proper balance between arable and grazing. If the arable were extended too far then there would be insufficient grazing for the indispensable draught animals, without which the arable itself could not be cultivated. At the same time there was an increasingly profitable market for wool, hides, meat and dairy produce. In some villages the problem was solved by the careful regulation of the existing open field system, as at Padbury for example, where elaborate regulations, basically designed to preserve the balance between crops and animals, were drawn up as late as 1779.²⁸ In other villages the inhabitants, scrapping a traditional, familiar, well-tried system of communal risk-spreading, threw caution to the winds and leapt into the unknown dangers of enclosure and possessive individualism. It must have taken a lot of courage to do.

However, not all enclosure in north Buckinghamshire was carried out in a spirit of compromise, or even of far-sighted self-improvement. The tenants of the manor of Pollicott in Ashendon complained bitterly in 1599 of the 'unconscionable dealings' of their lord, Thomas Palmer. He and his son enclosed the better half and took it into their demesne. The whole was formerly let for £24, and now they demanded £150 for the half. When leases expired Palmer demanded impossibly high rents, but assured the tenants that their livings would be better than before if they took their land into severalty. They made some doubt about the statute, but Palmer assured them that he would bear them out, and promised to meet

²⁵ Buckinghamshire Archaeological Society, Ashendon 3/59.

²⁶ Buckinghamshire CRO, DU 1/48/1.

²⁷ Buckinghamshire CRO, DU 1/48/3. It has not yet been found in the Chancery Decree Rolls. The bishop's decree is DU 1/48/5.

²⁸ Buckinghamshire CRO, PR 162/18/1.

their costs of hedging and ditching. Once enclosure was completed, Palmer refused to carry out his side of the agreement and sued them at common law for their rents.²⁹ There is at present no further record of what must have been a very unpleasant affair, although the enclosure is mentioned in the 1607 returns. Enclosure at Wolverton and at Aylesbury seems to have been carried out with a similar degree of ruthlessness, whilst the Chancery decree which confirmed enclosures at Grandborough seems to have settled a bitter dispute over the stopping up of lanes and cart ways.³⁰

The surviving documentary evidence makes it clear that the reasons and motives lying behind enclosure were often very complex, not least because as much was carried out by yeomen and husbandmen as by landlords. The story of the way in which Anthony Cave, over a period of at least two decades, steadily bought out tenants and freeholders in Chicheley, so that by 1616 he had 1088 acres of enclosed pastures in a parish of 2070 acres, has been told elsewhere.³¹ He, like John Temple of Stowe, was perfectly well aware of the money to be made from grazing sheep over enclosed pastures, and just how valuable these pastures could be is apparent from a survey of enclosed lands made by the Deputy Lieutenants in 1620. Mr Palmer's enclosures in Pollicott were worth £410 a year, those of Sir Henry Lee at Burston were worth £597 and those of Sir Richard Wenham at Twyford were valued at £900 a year.³² These are the enclosing landlords of tradition, although it should not be forgotten that not all enclosing landlords were equally successful. The three sons of Roger Nicholl, lord of the manor of Willen, ruined themselves by enclosing the parish in about 1650, and had to sell up and get out.³³

But many peasant farmers, whether yeomen or husbandmen, freeholders or copyholders, were equally well aware of the advantage to be gained from enclosure, and there is plenty of evidence of hard bargaining, both among themselves and with their landlords, in order to make sure that they did not lose out. The inhabitants of Great Pollicott seem to have been both foolish and unlucky when compared with the inhabitants of Oving, whose enclosures in 1620 were valued at £500, whilst 'divers persons' in Oakley had grounds newly enclosed worth £400. Small proprietors of this kind would appear to have been motivated by two principal reasons. First of all the monumental inconvenience of the open field system is mentioned so often in enclosure agreements of this period that it must be accepted as one of the most important reasons for enclosure. Secondly, it is clear that many small proprietors were short of pasture by this time, not so much for the grazing of sheep as for the grazing of cattle, whether as draught animals, as milch kine, or as at Nash in 1702, because of the large numbers of cattle that the inhabitants were constrained to keep to provide dung and compost for their arable lands.³⁴

Nevertheless, enclosure by agreement suffered from a number of severe disadvantages. The consent of *all* proprietors was required, and this was sometimes difficult to obtain, and the death of any one of them before an agreement could be enrolled in Chancery could vitiate months of protracted negotiations. This happened at Chearsley in 1635,³⁵ and at Leckhampstead the death of the rector in 1625 threw a complex agreement into confusion.³⁶ Further, even when agreement had been reached, it could at any time in the future be questioned by a dissatisfied party or his successor. Thus in 1683 the rector of Milton Keynes brought a suit in the Court of Exchequer to overthrow

²⁹ PRO C 3.285/7.

³⁰ British Library, Add MS, 5839, pp 433-4. Birmingham Reference Library, MSS Nos 508622-5. PRO C 78 300/2.

³¹ A C Chibnall, *Beyond Sherington* (1979), pp 76-82.

³² Bodleian Library, Willis MS 30.

³³ British Library, Add MS 5839, f 411.

³⁴ Buckinghamshire CRO DX/434.

³⁵ PRO C 3. 398/110.

³⁶ PRO C 78/640/6.

an agreement to enclose the parish, to which he had been a party, made some twenty years before, because, it was alleged, when he ploughed the lands allotted to him in exchange for the glebe he found that they yielded poor crops, and their value declined from 23s an acre to 18s an acre.³⁷ The only way in which these disadvantages could be overcome was by obtaining a private Act of Parliament. This was a method of enclosure adopted only very slowly and it did not become at all popular or widespread before the second half of the eighteenth century. There were only three enclosure Acts for Buckinghamshire before 1760, the first being in 1738 for Ashendon where, as we have seen, fairly extensive enclosure had already taken place, and enclosure by agreement continued in very rare cases into the early years of the nineteenth century.³⁸

Thus the final phase of the enclosure movement in north Buckinghamshire makes a cautious and hesitant beginning.

III

But agreements, however amicable, and disputes, however bitter, record only part of the enclosure that was taking place over north Buckinghamshire between 1500 and 1750. Other enclosure was taking place quietly and without formal record. Only chance documentary references hint at what was going on, and much must have taken place without finding its way into any written record at all. Much was piecemeal, involving only very small plots of land. Much must have been carried out by individual villagers and could scarcely have been distinguished from squatting, its continuance depending upon the indifference and the inertia of neighbours. Thus in 1611 John Symons was presented in the manorial court of Prebend End and Gawcott for building a cottage in the common field of

Gawcott at Southwell and enclosing a plot of land there. Only a deed of 1708 reveals that the medieval deer park of Great Brickhill had by this date been divided up into eight closes. A deed of 1677 mentions in passing enclosed lands in Lavendon.³⁹ An elaborate terrier of his estate at Wotton Underwood written out in 1657 by the same Richard Grenville who had enclosed lands at Ashendon describes 854 acres of enclosures and 1168 acres of open and common fields.⁴⁰ His own capital messuage occupied four acres. The adjoining close was once of 32 acres, but he had pulled down two cottages and taken in their closes to increase it to 35 acres. This he had then divided into two; one half was mown and the other grazed in alternate years.

That survey of enclosed lands in Buckinghamshire made in 1620 by the Deputy Lieutenants already mentioned reveals yet further enclosures that would otherwise have gone unrecorded; at Drayton Parslow, for example, at Ivinghoe, Cublington, Bragenham and Whitchurch, at Chilton, Oving and Singleborough. At Ashendon, it was said, Mr Benedict Winchcombe had a sheep walk for 300 sheep. At Wing, Lord Dormer's enclosed lands supported 2810 sheep and were worth £904 a year. At Quarrendon the enclosures of Sir Henry Lee were worth £2100 per annum. Surviving formal agreements to enclose clearly cover no more than a fraction of the enclosures that were taking place in north Buckinghamshire in the years between 1550 and 1750.

IV

It was not only the arable that was affected by enclosure in north Buckinghamshire in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Wood and waste were equally affected, especially those areas where intercommoning was still practised. Thus much of Lenborough Wild, where tenants from Gawcott, Buckingham

³⁷ PRO E 134 35 Charles II, Easter 21.

³⁸ The minute book of the privately appointed commissioners for the enclosure of Edgcott, 1800-01, is in the Berkshire County Record Office, D/EW1 EH2.

³⁹ Buckinghamshire CRO D/AR/2/21. f 3. D/Du/2/16-17. D/C/1/215.

⁴⁰ Buckinghamshire Archaeological Society, Wotton Underwood. 422/42.

and Hillesden intercommoned, was enclosed and divided up in 1662, and in 1669 the waste on Ovinghill was ordered to be surveyed so that it could be divided up, and arbitrators were appointed to settle disputes.⁴¹ But the really large-scale enclosure of waste and woodland in north Buckinghamshire came with the disafforestation of the Forest of Bernwood in the 1630s.

The bounds of the Forest were fixed in the thirteenth century and then remained unchanged until disafforestation.⁴² A Royal Forest was by no means an area of impenetrable woodland. It was, rather, an area subject to the Forest Laws, an area where the deer were given consideration over everything else. Within the Forest of Bernwood were a number of villages, of which Brill and Boarstall were the largest. Each had its own open fields cultivated in strips. One of the earliest of English maps, made in about 1440, illustrates this very clearly.⁴³

By the middle years of the sixteenth century it is apparent that much enclosure and clearing had been going on in the Forest. A survey made in 1587 records 723 acres enclosed, and other documents of about the same time speak of yet further enclosures, five hundred acres in Boarstall and above six hundred in Brill.⁴⁴ Some of this enclosure was undoubtedly done to protect the coppice trees, since the wood and timber were by this time becoming more valuable than the deer, now more of a nuisance than anything else, but much more enclosure was done in order to convert woodland and arable into pasture. At least 7600 sheep were grazing in the Forest, imposing what must have been intolerable pressures upon the natural regenerative powers of the woodland.

A commission to disafforest Bernwood was issued in 1623, but the inhabitants of Brill, Boarstall and Oakley did not like the

terms under which they were to be compensated for the loss of their grazing rights, and so a new one was issued in 1626. The inhabitants of the Forest still found the terms objectionable and there were a number of disturbances, with fences and hedges being pulled down and cattle turned into the new enclosures. Enclosure and disafforestation were finally agreed upon in 1635.⁴⁵ Within little more than a generation the surviving woods had been almost entirely felled, the tree roots grubbed up, the land divided up into closes by means of hedges and ditches, and then turned to arable or pasture. A map of part of Boarstall parish made in 1705 shows how far this clearing had gone by that date.⁴⁶ New, isolated, farms had already begun to appear in the new landscape. Old Arngrove, Pasture and Upper Panshill Farms are all seventeenth-century in origin. At the very end of the seventeenth century there seems to have been a sudden and rapid fall in population. As late as 1676 it is likely that there were about 130 inhabitants in the village, but a map of 1697 shows no more than seven cottages in addition to the manor house, then still standing behind the gatehouse.⁴⁷

V

Enclosure, however carried out, could affect the landscape, the economy, the settlement pattern, the social organization, and the demography of a village to a greater or lesser extent, and the more extensive the enclosure the greater its impact.

We are fortunate in having for Great Linford two maps, one made before the enclosure agreement of 1658 described above, and the other made after. These have already been discussed elsewhere,⁴⁸ and so it is sufficient to mention that to compare them is to appreciate that enclosure by agreement

⁴¹ Buckinghamshire CRO D/AR/2/47, DP/AR/23A/66, No 2.

⁴² See my *The Buckinghamshire Landscape* (1979), p. 75.

⁴³ Reproduced in colour in 'Buckinghamshire Estate Maps', *Buckinghamshire Record Society* (1964), Plate 1.

⁴⁴ British Library, Lansdowne MS 47, Nos 3-5.

⁴⁵ Buckinghamshire CRO D/AF/2/3.

⁴⁶ PRO MR 447.

⁴⁷ Buckinghamshire CRO Ma/AF/266. W H Summers, 'Population Returns for Buckinghamshire, 1676', *Records of Buckinghamshire*, 8 (1903), pp 146-52.

⁴⁸ See my *The Buckinghamshire Landscape* (1979), p 178.

could have as profound and as dramatic an effect upon the landscape of a village as anything brought about by Parliamentary enclosure. Great Linford was transformed. New hedges, ditches and roads appeared. A new pattern of closes replaced the old open fields. A landscape emerged that must have been both neater and greener than that which it replaced. The picture is reinforced by a comparison of two glebe terriers for the village. One of 1607 describes in minute detail the exact location of 22 acres of arable glebe land, divided into no fewer than 34 pieces, lying scattered over three fields, the Woodfield, Middle Field and Field next Newport. Another of 1690 lists briefly 28 acres of enclosed ground lying in four closes adjoining the parsonage orchard.⁴⁹

The agreement for the enclosure of Great Linford was completed in 1658. An estate rent book of the early eighteenth century reveals the changes which fifty years of enclosure could bring to the economy and the social structure of the village.⁵⁰ At Lady Day 1714 fourteen tenants paid a total of £1048 10s in rents. Of these fourteen, six were grouped to form three partnerships. One partnership consisted of Ralph Coleman of Fenny Stratford and Samuel Shilborn of Great Brickhill. They paid £110 a year for a three-year lease of 203 acres of pasture divided into three closes, Kents Ground of 80 acres, Great Cowpen Meadow of 21 acres and Neath Hill of 102 acres. Of the total of eleven farms, only five seem to have included a house, and only three appear to have had any ploughed land, and that in small quantities. In other words, enclosure in Great Linford had turned almost the whole of the parish down to pasture and this was leased out to prosperous tenants, several of whom had no obvious connection with the parish but instead were butchers, graziers and dairymen concerned with supplying the London market.

There was no marked homogeneity among these fourteen tenants. They ranged from John Gilpin, who paid £120 a year for 113 acres of pasture divided into four closes, to Richard Haire, who paid £48 a year for 83 acres, of which 57 were in one field, the Horse Ground. But the difference between Gilpin and Haire was as nothing compared to the difference between this group of tenants and the next, twenty cottagers who between them paid a total of £23 8s 8d a year. They included six day labourers, a coachman, two women, one of whom was a lacemaker, Henry Knight, who had been Mr Gilpin's pasture keeper and was now old and poor and paid nothing, a blacksmith, a shepherd and a carpenter. Enclosure in Great Linford had served to sharpen the social and economic differences between well-to-do tenant farmers on the one hand, and agricultural labourers and the poor on the other.

The impact of enclosure upon Great Linford in the late seventeenth century is unlikely to have been unique. It is merely better documented than most of the villages of north Buckinghamshire, and differences in their experiences are likely to have been differences of scale rather than of substance.

Enclosure could mean the gradual dispersal of farmsteads away from the village into the comparative isolation of the newly enclosed lands. This development probably took place more slowly than that dispersal of settlement which followed Parliamentary enclosure, but it was very real nonetheless. Knowlhill Farm and Muxwell Hill Farm in Middle Claydon both owe their origin to the enclosure carried out by Sir Edmund Verney in the early seventeenth century. Tenants could sometimes be attracted to take up leases of the newly enclosed lands if houses were erected for them, so that, when the constable of Middle Claydon made return to the High Constable of Ashendon Hundred in 1634 concerning the conversion of tillage to pasture he could write that, although Sir Edmund Verney had converted between 30

⁴⁹ Buckinghamshire CRO D/A/GT Box 6.

⁵⁰ Buckinghamshire CRO DU/4/10.

and 40 acres of land to pasture there had been no decay of houses in the parish, 'for though there be some howses downe yett there are more erected in theyr places'.⁵¹

The impact of enclosure upon the demography of individual townships is particularly difficult to assess, and that for two reasons: first of all each village community has its own unique history, and enclosure is but one of the variables, and one which cannot effectively be isolated save in the most obvious instances where there is definite documentary evidence to show that enclosure was rapidly followed by depopulation. It is the long-term impact of enclosure which it is almost impossible to assess satisfactorily. The second reason is the absence of reliable demographic statistics. Two ecclesiastical surveys, one for 1563 purporting to be a count of the number of families and the second for 1676 a count of communicants, provide the basis for estimates of total population numbers at those dates.⁵² Both present very real problems of interpretation, and the information that they yield cannot be pressed very far. Unfortunately there is no further source from which to estimate population before the census of 1801. It would be possible to link these population estimates for individual parishes by the aggregative analysis of their registers, where they survive, but this is too complex a task to be done within the confines of this paper. Nevertheless it is clear that only a small handful of villages were severely affected by depopulation in north Buckinghamshire in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries: Stowe, Wotton Underwood, Gayhurst, Boarstall; and the first three were the consequence of aristocratic taste in landscape gardening rather than any desire to replace arable by pastoral husbandry.

Enclosure during the period under consideration did not lead to any large-scale depopulation. Its impact upon the demographic history of individual townships was diffuse and indirect. It seems to have been but one of a large number of factors at work, and to assess the relative importance of all of these in any one township over a period of two hundred years would require research at microscopic level.

VI

This paper has been concerned first of all to draw attention to the importance of pre-Parliamentary enclosure in north Buckinghamshire. Of 138 parishes within the region, 52 were entirely enclosed without Act of Parliament, and of the other 86 there is incontrovertible evidence for at least half of them of enclosure during this period and before the passage of their enclosure Acts of Parliament. All of the parishes within which this pre-Parliamentary enclosure took place are indicated on Fig 1, although because of the nature of the documentary evidence it is impossible either to give any kind of indication as to the areas of land involved or to provide any more precise dating.

Secondly it has been concerned to draw attention to the importance of enclosure by agreement during this period. The enclosures listed by the various commissions of enquiry during the period 1517 to 1607 have long been known and it is now well apparent that they record only a small part of the enclosure that took place between 1500 and 1750. Quite by 1550 the practice of enclosing by means of an agreement amongst all the proprietors involved had been adopted, and this may well have become the most usual form for enclosure upon any scale. Our detailed knowledge of individual enclosure agreements must depend either upon the survival of the original articles of agreement or else upon their being recorded for some purpose in a court of law. In the absence of both of these sources we cannot tell whether or not the enclosure recorded in other

⁵¹ Buckinghamshire CRO Claydon Correspondence, microfilm, Reel 2.

⁵² W H Summers, 'Population Returns for Buckinghamshire, 1676', *Records of Buckinghamshire*, 8 (1903), pp 146-52. J Cornwall, 'An Elizabethan Census', *Records of Buckinghamshire*, 16 Part 4 (1959), pp 258-73.

documents was by agreement or not. It is for this reason that no attempt has been made to differentiate the type or method of enclosure on Fig 1. For some villages the glebe terriers tell us approximately when enclosure took place. Pitchcott, for example, was enclosed between 1664 and 1690; Lathbury was 'lately enclosed' in 1674; and Cuddington was part enclosed by 1703. Much other enclosure was taking place without any kind of written record at all, and our knowledge of it must depend upon the chance survival of casual references in a wide range of documentary sources. For some villages there is not even this. There is no indication at all as to when either Worminghall or Shabbington were enclosed.

Thirdly, it has attempted to indicate that, like Parliamentary enclosure, enclosure carried out by whatever means during this period could affect waste, common and woodland as well as arable, and that it could have the same or very similar effects upon the landscape of individual villages.

In Maids Moreton and Padbury, north Buckinghamshire has two of the classic examples of the Midland open field system as it had developed by the end of the sixteenth century.⁵³ Both parishes were taken up with huge open fields divided into thousands of strips. There were less than 100 acres of enclosures in Maids Moreton in 1595, and none in Padbury in 1591. Both remained unchanged until enclosure by Act of Parliament in the late eighteenth century. They must be considered the exception rather than the rule for northern Buckinghamshire in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.

⁵³ See M W Beresford, *History on the Ground* (1957), pp 65-86 and M W Beresford and J K St Joseph, *Medieval England* (second edn, 1979), p 31.

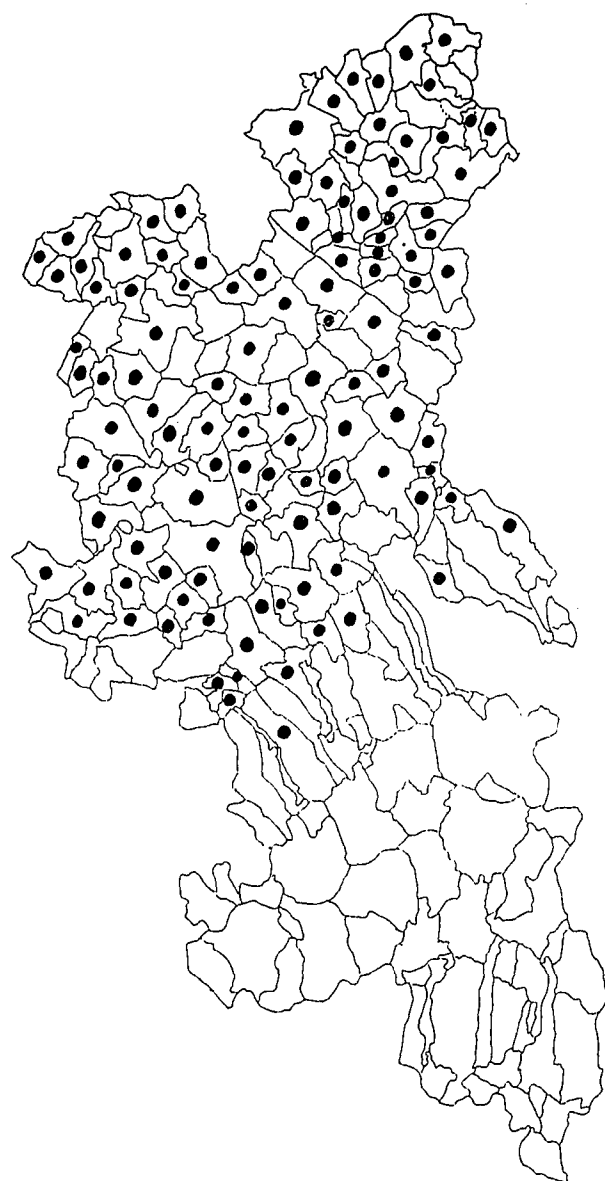


FIGURE 1
Parishes in which pre-Parliamentary enclosure is recorded

The Origin of South Devon Cattle

By C M ANN BAKER

I

Introduction

UNTIL RECENTLY, it was popularly understood that South Devon cattle were an indigenous English breed. It has now been claimed: '... Gelbvieh and South Devon had a common ancestry on the Continent and are distinct from other British breeds...'.¹ The claim is now included, without discussion, in some texts.²

The assertion of relationship rests upon a statistical analysis of biochemical data. This approach has contributed to many aspects of animal breeding but usually in conjunction with other disciplines. Indeed, there are examples where biochemical data gave apparently anomalous results which could be explained after a careful re-examination of breed history.³ The Gelbvieh-South Devon comparison did not include historical information and the origin of the latter breed was described as 'unknown'.⁴

The present paper reviews the evidence concerning the origin and history of South Devon cattle.

The oral tradition (repeated to the author as a student and, later, when resident in the south of Devon) is that the present breed of South Devon cattle arose from crosses of North Devon cattle with breeds of the Channel Island breed group, especially the Guernsey.

Written material is variable: some works may not mention matters which others discuss in detail and not all descriptions, even contemporary ones, are in agreement. To help in the assessment of such records, supplementary evidence was obtained from landscapes in local collections, summarized in Table 1.

Information about any named breed is rare before the late eighteenth century. Trow-Smith noted early evidence of Devon as an important cattle district from the large numbers recorded by the Domesday survey.⁵ In 1366 the Abbey of Tavistock received a heriot of a red bull. Although Finberg found it 'tempting' to connect this bull with the Devon breed, he apparently rejected the idea on the grounds that '... the adjective of colour would have been superfluous had other varieties been unknown'.⁶ This objection can be countered: Cornish cattle were black;⁷ and, as will be discussed later, the requirement of whole red is a comparatively late development in the history of Devon cattle.

A further suggestion of antiquity is given by the former Red Cow Village, now absorbed in Exeter and only marked by a public house called the Red Cow.⁸ Red cattle from Devon were taken to Massachusetts in 1623.⁹ Shortly thereafter the Devon chorographer, Tristram Risdon, recorded '... the great navigation in these western parts,

¹K K Kidd, D Osterhoff, L Erhard and W H Stone, *Animal Blood Groups and Biochemical Genetics*, X, 1974, pp 21 and 27.

²J B Friend, *Cattle of the World*, 1978.

³See C Manwell and C M A Baker, *Molecular Biology and the Origin of Species: Heterosis, Protein Polymorphism and Animal Breeding*, 1970; C M A Baker and C Manwell, pp 367-412 in P G Board and N S Agar (Eds), *Biochemistry and Genetics of the Erythrocyte of Domesticated Mammals*, Amsterdam, in press.

⁴Kidd *et al*, *loc cit*, p 22.

⁵R Trow-Smith, *A History of British Livestock Husbandry to 1700*, 1957, p 112.

⁶H P R Finberg, *Tavistock Abbey*, Cambridge, 1951, pp 132-3.

⁷G B Worgan, *General View of the Agriculture of the County of Cornwall*, 1811, p 140.

⁸C J Baker, Royal Albert Memorial Museum, personal communication.

⁹J E Rouse, *World Cattle. Volume III: Cattle of North America*, Oklahoma, 1973, pp 359 and 388.

TABLE I

Cattle depicted in local collections in the South of Devon*

<i>ROYAL ALBERT MEMORIAL MUSEUM, EXETER</i>			
<i>Accession number</i>	<i>Artist and dates</i>	<i>Title and locality</i>	<i>Notes on cattle[†]</i>
46/1956.4	John White Abbot 1763-1851	'On the Warren, Kenton, Devon'	5 or 6 cows: 3 or 4 red; one white with black ears and muzzle; one yellow with a very broad white blaze but yellow around the eye
77/1937.1	John White Abbot 1763-1851	'The Lime Kiln at Topsham on the Exe'	3 cows: one red (Devon type); [†] one red with a white blaze (Devon type); one white with red round the eyes and on the neck (Devon cross Shorthorn?). All have short, slightly cocky horns
52/1929.1	John White Abbot 1763-1851	'Stepping Stones'. Exact location unknown	2 cattle: both red with medium cocky horns; one has a suggestion of a white star
101/1952	W H Hallet c 1820	'View of Exmouth from the Beacon Walls'	A number of cattle, all red with medium cocky horns. 2 cows with white patches (which could be light effects); one of these has a white face
106/1978x	A B Johns 1776-1858	'Landscape', Bickleigh Vale near Plymouth. Dewerstone in the background, the river in the centre probably the Plym	5 cattle, not very clear: 4 light red; one very dark red or black
47/1933.1	James Leakey 1775-1865	'Landscape'. Probably based on Devon scenery as Leakey was born in Exeter and lived there all his life except for a few years in London	7 milch cows, from left to right: 1. White with red spots on the barrel, shoulder and flanks, short horns and biggish udder (Shorthorn or Shorthorn cross?). 2. Red with small white star, small cocky horns and biggish udder (Devon type). 3. Reddish-fawn-brown with mealy ring around the muzzle and white on belly, brisket, legs and switch, short horns and big udder (Channel Island type — Jersey?). 4. White with short horns and a big udder (Shorthorn type). 5. Red with medium cocky horns; probably a heifer as she is small and has a small udder (Devon type). 6. Red with a white star, medium cocky horns, udder looks as if in milk but is not large (Devon type). 7. White with medium cocky horns but rest of head and forehead obscured by the cow in front; udder medium size (Shorthorn or Shorthorn cross?)
47/1933.2	James Leakey 1775-1865	'Nadderwater near Exeter'	2 cows: one red; one white with coloured patches (not clear if pied or just shading); both have medium horns

47/1933.3	James Leakey 1775-1865	'Landscape'. Probably based on Torquay-Babbacombe area: sea centre distance; centre left a rock formation based on one near Torquay known as 'London Bridge'	3 cows, from left to right: 1. red with finch back, medium cocky horns (Devon type). 2. Red, medium cocky horns (Devon type). 3. Red with creamy-white blaze and cream patch on underbelly, medium cocky horns (Devon type)
32/1951.2	William Payne 1760-1830	'Near Plymouth'. Plymouth Sound centre distance; Plymouth itself behind bank centre right	2 cows: one dark red; one pied red and white
83/1932.2	William Traies	'The Lime Kilns near Topsham on the Exe'	2 cattle, not very clear: one red, one white

PLYMOUTH MUSEUM AND ART GALLERY

Accession number	Artist and dates	Title and locality	Notes on cattle
		'Langford Court'. Near Cullompton in SE Devon, north of a line between Exeter and Honiton	9 cattle: one red; 8 probably black (could be mulberry or a very dark red). 2 of these have finch backs and the other 6 have white markings (some of which could be light effects). Type not clear
		'Old View of Plymouth'	2 milch cows: one light orange with a touch of white on the face, medium cocky horns (Devon type); one dark (mulberry?) colour, short horns (Channel Island type)
	P H Rogers 1793-1853	'The Sound, seen across Beaumont Park'. Plymouth	3 cows: one red with medium horns; one black with medium horns; one white with red on the sides of the neck and shoulders and with big red patches round the eyes
	P Rogers 1811	'Landscape'	2 cattle: one mahogany red with white star, white shoulder cross and white on loin and underbelly, medium horns (Devon—possibly with Channel Island?); one corn colour with white on loin and tail, medium horns (Channel Island type)

*I thank Miss Maureen Attrill, Keeper of Art, Plymouth Museum and Art Gallery, and Miss C J Baker, Curator of Fine Art, Royal Albert Memorial Museum, Exeter, for access to and information about local landscapes.

†Some pictures contained other livestock.

‡Devon type is based on the type of the 'Devonshire Cow' facing p 327 in Vancouver.

requireth store of victuals, which is fully supplied by our own breed'.¹⁰ A century later, Defoe commented on north-west Devon, '... here are bred those fine Oxen, in great Numbers, which by the Drovers of Somersetshire and thereabouts are brought up . . . fattened fit for *Smithfield* Market, whither they drive them'. Later he noted that

Bridgwater Marsh'. . . is wholly employed in feeding of black Cattle which they bring out of the West Part of Devon and the neighbouring Borders of Cornwall, where the finest are bred'.¹¹

By the latter part of the eighteenth century Devon cattle were known widely. This was

¹⁰T Risdon, *The Chorographical Description or Survey of the County of Devon*, written c 1630, this edition 1811, Rees and Curtis, Plymouth, p 7.

¹¹D Defoe, *A Tour Thro' the Whole Island of Great Britain*, written c 1724, Vol. 1, 6th edn, 1762, pp 340-1; Vol. 2, 6th edn, 1761, p 23. I could not find these passages in the 1974 edition published by J M Dent and Sons, so it may be that other editions would yield further information.

more than just a case of calling cattle by the name of the district in which they were found. The County Surveys made for the Board of Agriculture recorded Devon cattle all over England. The survey of Hampshire is of particular interest as both North and South Devon cattle are named.¹² Many writers did not distinguish between different types of Devon cattle. Others recognized differences but tended to view them as departures from a standard or ideal represented by the North Devon. Hence any discussion of South Devon cattle has to include information about the North Devon.

II

The North Devon

The centre of the North Devon (often just called the Devon) is around Torrington and Molton and north of them to the Bristol Channel. The full extent of the district is '... bounded by the river Taw on the west, extending from Barnstaple to South Molton ... thence to Wiveliscombe, Taunton, then turning towards Williton and on to the Bristol Channel which forms its northern boundary'.¹³ Much of the Devon part of this area consists of hilly land with stony soils; the Somerset part is more fertile, especially in the Vale of Taunton Deane.

Robert Smith, writing in 1859, claimed that breeding to improve Devon cattle had been practised 'for upwards of 200 years'. Pure Devon cattle were bred in the early eighteenth century by at least two North Devon families: the Quartlys of Great Champson in Molland and the Davys of Rose Ash and North Molton. Purebred Devon cattle were exported to the USA in 1817, thirty-four years before the first volume of the Herd Book.¹⁴

The Devon was, and is, primarily a beef breed, formerly used extensively for

draught and sometimes for dairy purposes. Its conformation, feeding qualities and working ability were described for a period of over a hundred years in similar terms by different writers.¹⁵ All emphasized the neat, symmetrical, compact form; clean head and forequarter; low offal and small bone. The breed was praised for ability to thrive on poor ground; aptitude to fatten (and to do so early); good handling; and high-quality meat. As a draught beast the Devon possessed docility, patience, endurance, pluck, quickness (including the ability, unusual in British breeds, to trot) and elegant movement. All writers mention the small size but regard this as a consequence of thriftiness under marginal conditions and compensated for by agility and by quality: the Devon was called '... the "pony" of the ox tribe';¹⁶ and referred to as '... the tenant farmers' breed',¹⁷ and '... a good rent-paying breed ... where more bulky animals would fare badly'.¹⁸ Practically the only writer to mention specific points of conformation which required the breeders' attention was Vancouver,¹⁹ although some others qualified their praises with reference to variation within the breed.²⁰

Opinion concerning milking ability was more equivocal. Marshall stated: 'As DAIRY CATTLE the Devonshire breed are not excellent ... Nevertheless, I have seen

¹² W Marshall, *Review and Abstract of the County Reports to the Board of Agriculture*, V, York, 1818, pp 348-9.

¹³ J T Davy, *JRASE*, 2nd series, V, 1869, p 108.

¹⁴ R Smith, *JRASE*, XX, 1859, p 336; Davy, 1869, *loc cit*, pp 116, 117 and 127.

¹⁵ For example W Marshall, *The Rural Economy of the West of England*, 1796 (reprinted 1970); C Vancouver, *General View of the Agriculture of the County of Devon*, 1808 (reprinted 1969); W Youatt, *Cattle, Their Breeds, Management and Diseases*, 1834; H W Keary, *JRASE* IX, 1848, pp 435-6 and 438; H Tanner, *JRASE*, IX, 1848, p 478; H Tanner, *Journal of the Bath and West of England Society, New Series*, VI, 1858, pp 182-3 and 185; R Smith, *JRASE*, XX, 1859, pp 336-7; Davy, 1869, *loc cit*, pp 109 and 111; J T Davy, pp 125-31 in J Coleman (Ed), *The Cattle, Sheep and Pigs of Great Britain*, 1887; F Punchard, *JRASE*, 3rd Series, I, 1890, pp 526-7; J Sinclair (Ed), *History of the Devon Breed of Cattle*, 1893; R Wallace, *Farming Industries of Cape Colony*, 1896; R Wallace, *Farm Livestock of Great Britain*, Edinburgh, 1907 (4th edn). I thank Mr Simon Hunt, Curator, Museum Services, Bath, and Miss C J Baker, Royal Albert Memorial Museum, for locating Sinclair; and Mr I Maxted of the Westcountry Studies Library, Exeter, for making this book available to me.

¹⁶ Smith, *loc cit*, p 327.

¹⁷ Tanner, 1858, *loc cit*, p 185.

¹⁸ Davy, 1869, *loc cit*, p 111.

¹⁹ Vancouver, *op cit*, p 328.

²⁰ For example Marshall, 1796, *op cit*, p 241; Tanner, 1858, *loc cit*, p 183.

some individuals of the breed, which evinced the practicality of improving them, as dairy stock.' In Bideford market he saw some heifers '... with remarkably fine bags! The most promising appearance of milk, that I have observed in the Devonshire breed of cattle.'²¹ Vancouver expressed similar opinions, but also quoted yields: one average expected per cow was a total of 190 lb of butter over 42 weeks.²²

Devon cattle are so noted for their rich red colour that this has been included in general descriptions of the county.²³ It has been claimed that this had been so 'From the earliest times'.²⁴ However, exceptions were not uncommon. Both Marshall and Youatt considered that the Devon and the Hereford were very much alike, including in colour. Marshall recorded the colour of some of the cattle he saw. Between Bideford and Barnstaple were 'Good cows; mostly of a dark blood-red'. Out of six cows belonging to one of the foremost breeders of the day, a Mr Trigg of South Molton, 'One of them superior to the rest . . . a lightish blood red; the rest darker, and mostly with smokey faces'. On Roborough Down the cattle were 'Chiefly of a dark red color; a few of them with white Gloucestershire spines'. Treby and Youatt mentioned further variation, including white patches on the body, a white star and even a white face. All these patterns can be seen in the landscapes of the period (Table 1). There is also evidence for selection for whole red colour. Vancouver specified that this should be '... without white or other spots, particularly on the male'. Davy repeated this requirement but admitted '... it is not improbable that our ancestors . . . were less fastidious . . . and probably did not object to breed from an animal with a dark muzzle or a little white on

the skin, if it came up to their standard as a meat producer'.²⁵

Other fancy points associated with colour were (and are) a light flesh-coloured muzzle,²⁶ and dark orange skin, visible inside the ears and around the eyes and nose.²⁷ The horns are variable in length (short to medium). Older pictures of the breed usually show '... elegantly turned horns, which have an upward tendency (and cast outwards at the end)'.²⁸ In more recent times there has been a tendency to shorter horns, a change Davy thought due to growth being checked by the reduction of age at first calving from 4 years to 2½–3 years.²⁹ Many writers do not mention that some North Devon cattle were polled.³⁰ These were known as Devon Natts. It is not clear whether they were kept as a separate variety or only in mixed herds with horned cattle.

Although Defoe considered the cattle from the west of Devon and the Cornish border to be the best of the breed, Marshall formed other opinions: 'In WEST DEVONSHIRE, the breed is considerably smaller, than in the Northern District; and their quality, in every respect, is lower. In CORNWALL, the breed gets coarser; with somewhat larger and more upright horns'.³¹

Some early writers regarded the Devon cattle bred on the eastern border of the county and in the Vale of Taunton Deane as distinct. The main criteria were greater size and bone, long straight hair (in contrast to the curly coat of the North Devon) and better dairy qualities. It was generally held that these differences were due to a more fertile locality, but they were sufficiently marked for at least one mid-eighteenth-century writer to refer to the 'East Devon and Somerset breed'. One Somerset breeder of

²¹ Marshall, 1796, *op cit*, I, p 242; II, p 61.

²² Vancouver, *op cit*, pp 324, 332 and 215.

²³ 'J.T.', pp viii–ix in Risdon, *op cit*; W White, *History, Gazetteer and Directory of Devonshire*, Sheffield, 1850 (reprinted 1968).

²⁴ Davy, 1869, *loc cit*, p 113.

²⁵ Marshall, 1796, *op cit*, I, pp 67, 76, 240 and 243; Youatt, *op cit*; P T Treby, *Annals of Agriculture*, 1792, p 304; Vancouver, *op cit*, pp 327–8; Davy, 1869, *loc cit*, p 113.

²⁶ Keary, *loc cit*, p 435; Davy, 1869, *loc cit*, p 113.

²⁷ Vancouver, *op cit*, p 327.

²⁸ Smith, *loc cit*, p 336; Youatt, *op cit*; and Sinclair, *op cit*.

²⁹ Davy, *loc cit*, p 112.

³⁰ Youatt, *op cit*.

³¹ Marshall, 1796, *op cit*, I, p 243.

this period, Mr Walter Farthing, could trace his herd back to his great-great-grandfather.³² Although he and others used North Devon bulls extensively, the distinction of a 'Somerset Devon' or an 'East Devon' variety within the Devon breed has persisted.³³ Yet another early variety was the 'Sheet Cow' which '... resembles a red cow of North Devonshire or West Somersetshire, with a white sheet thrown over her barrel; her head, neck, shoulders and hind parts being uncovered'.³⁴ This does not seem to be mentioned by later writers on Devon cattle.

III

The South Devon

The main centre of South Devon cattle was (and is) in the South Hams. This district lies between the estuaries of the Tamar and the Teign, bounded by the sea to the south and isolated by the hills of Dartmoor to the north. The area is so warm and fertile that it has been called 'The Garden of Devon'.³⁵ The name South Hams is significant: it was ancient when Risdon wrote; and 'ham' is not only descriptive of terrain (a flat, low-lying pasture near a stream) but of use (a stunted common pasture for cows), suggesting a long association with cattle.³⁶ South Hams is still a recognized synonym for the South Devon breed of cattle.³⁷

All writers on cattle in the south of Devon recognize them as of the same native origin as other Devon cattle. Some observers considered that the local South Devon type was due to neglect or admixture; for example, the variation for presence and absence of horns, and in colour, recorded in the parish of Plympton in the late eighteenth century, was thought to be connected with Guernsey and

Jersey cows and with bulls belonging to Lord Boringdon.³⁸ But this variation was more widespread than a single parish.

Marshall's opinion of cattle in the South Hams was, 'The BREED is that of *Devonshire* excepting . . . a few of the *short horned* breed.' He visited Plympton Fair but his only comment on the appearance of the stock was, 'Altogether a mean collection'. More information was given about the animals he saw at Tamerton Foliot Fair: 'The Cattle . . . were mostly of the West Devonshire, etc. breed: namely, bred on the East and West banks of the Tamar.' Two animals merited the description of 'Barnstaple heifers'. There were also a few shorthorned and polled cattle, which he speculated might have resulted from the Holderness breed being brought in for milk production by 'Gentlemen of the County'.³⁹ At a later date Marshall took exception to South Ham cattle being described as shorthorned, declaring, 'The South Ham breed of cattle, — if that district can be said to have one, — differs as much from the true shorthorned variety of the North of England, and the South of Scotland, as it does from the longhorned breed of the Midland Counties . . . they appear, either as an unimproved, or as a deteriorate variety of the North Devonshire breed.'⁴⁰

The cause of this outburst was a description of South Ham cattle in terms which suggested a distinct breed: 'They are of the *short horned* breed and have been in the south part of Devon from time immemorial. The best of this breed are excellent milkers and answer well for either work or fattening . . . These cattle are larger and heavier than the North Devon breed, the beauty of which is so famed.'⁴¹

This description was confirmed and extended by Vancouver. He found the South Hams stocked with what he described as

³² Tanner, 1858, *loc cit*, pp 181–3; Davy, 1869, *loc cit*, pp 108, 117, 121–2.

³³ Punchard, *loc cit*, p 527; I L Mason, *A World Dictionary of Breeds, Types and Varieties of Livestock*, Farnham Royal, 1969.

³⁴ Marshall, 1796, *op cit*, II, p 203 fn.

³⁵ Risdon, *op cit*, p 5; Marshall, 1796, *op cit*, I, p xxxiii; White, *op cit*, p 37; Punchard, *loc cit*, p 512.

³⁶ J Wright (Ed), *The English Dialect Dictionary*, Oxford, 1905.

³⁷ Mason, *op. cit.*

³⁸ P T Treby, *Annals of Agriculture*, *loc cit*, p 304.

³⁹ Marshall, 1796, *op cit*, I, p 302; II, pp 247–8 and 274.

⁴⁰ Marshall, 1818, *op cit*, V, p 556.

⁴¹ R Fraser, 1794, *General View of the County of Devon*, p 32.

North Devon cattle and '... with a larger animal of the same kind, called the Old Marlborough Red. This breed is said to have originated from the South Moulton stock, although at this time they differ very materially from them in size, and in having a dirty brown, or rather blackish colour at the ears, nose, and encircling the eyes, and in all such parts as the orange line prevails in the genuine North Devon breed.' Vancouver then went on to compare and contrast the North Devon with 'the South Ham stock'. The latter was '... in all its points a much coarser animal, and produces a greater offal. There does not appear to be any choice with regard to colour in this breed.' For draught, the oxen were described as 'equally gentle' but 'perhaps not quite so hardy'. Dairying qualities were praised: 'For the bucket, the old South Ham breed are much preferred to the North Devon when in the same pasture.' Examples were given of milk and butter yields of individual South Ham cows: one attained 24 quarts of milk yielding 2½ lb butter a day; another gave 22 quarts of milk yielding 2¾ lb butter a day.⁴²

It was not stated whether Old Marlborough Red, old South Ham and South Ham cattle were synonymous or local variant types within the South Hams district. The isolation possible from the numerous small rivers draining the South Hams makes local varieties feasible.

Some writers mention a 'native cow' in the Honiton district (which is in south-east Devon but not in the South Hams). This animal was distinguished from both the North and South Devon but was not described in detail. Again, it is not clear whether a synonym is involved. One possibility is that the 'native cow' was the East Devon, which was not described by Vancouver. The latter might seem to be supported by the inclusion of the yield of 'a cow of the Somersetshire breed' with those of South Ham cows.⁴³ Another piece of

circumstantial evidence pointing the same way is that Davy compared the Vale of Taunton Devons before the heavy crossing with North Devon bulls and the South Hams cattle indirectly: likening each in turn to the Sussex, but not directly to each other.⁴⁴

Cattle of the North Devon type also had 'a very great ascendancy' in the Honiton district and '... the great demand and high price given for the calves of this breed for raising, occasions this sort of cow to be universally in use throughout all the dairies'. The yields were very similar to those for other North Devon cattle, averaging a pound of butter a day for the first twenty weeks and a total of 206 lbs over some 40 weeks.⁴⁵

As with the North Devons, the early opinions of South Ham cattle were repeated by subsequent authors. There was general agreement that the South Ham was derived from the same stock as the North Devon although most writers regarded these as two separate breeds.⁴⁶ But Wallace thought that they were so similar that, while noting the differences in type and the separate herd book, he referred to the South Devon only as '... a division of the Devon breed'.⁴⁷

The close connection has led to the South Ham being described by admirers of the North Devon, many of whom perceived the differences exhibited by the South Ham as faults. The greater size was criticized for having greater offal and acquired the adjective 'coarse'. The flesh of the South Ham was described as inferior. After describing the South Ham shape as 'wedge-like' (a conformation traditionally associated with superior dairy qualities) Davy expressed regret that there was no evidence of attempts to select for the parallelogram shape considered ideal in the North Devon.⁴⁸

⁴² Davy, 1887, *loc cit*, pp 126 and 127.

⁴³ Vancouver, *op cit*, pp 335, 230 and 233.

⁴⁴ Youatt, *op cit*; Tanner, 1848, *loc cit*, p 479; Tanner, 1858, *loc cit*, p 180; Davy, 1869, *loc cit*, p 113; Punchard, *loc cit*, p 527.

⁴⁵ Wallace, 1907, *op cit*, p 131.

⁴⁶ Tanner, 1848, *loc cit*, p 479; Tanner, 1858, *loc cit*, p 180; Keary, *loc cit*, p 435; Davy, 1869, *loc cit*, p 113.

⁴² Vancouver, *op cit*, pp 334-5.

⁴³ Vancouver, *op cit*, pp 335 and 337; Youatt, *op cit*, p 23.

Not all comments were biased. One writer noted: 'The North of Devon claims the pre-eminence in general estimation, probably more from fashion than any real superiority.'⁴⁹ Keary said of the cattle he criticized that they were 'sometimes designated South Devons' but occurred in Cornwall and Somerset as well.⁵⁰ Other early writers considered that South Devons were remarkably like the Hereford.⁵¹ Descriptions of animals at major shows in the late nineteenth century included 'a splendid collection' and that the bull 'filled the eye'.⁵²

Many writers pay tribute to the South Ham's ability to lay on flesh.⁵³ If fed too long, large amounts of fat were deposited, '... an excess of which is the farmer's loss and the butcher's gain'.⁵⁴ Possibly this was why many South Ham cattle were sold in what some nineteenth-century observers regarded as an unfinished state and lacking in tallow.⁵⁵ Whatever the case, the meat had a ready sale locally, especially at the naval dockyard.⁵⁶ Most writers describe milk production as good and Vancouver's estimate of 24 quarts in a day for one cow is repeated '... as no unusual quantity for a South Hammer to give' by Punchard.⁵⁷

South Ham cattle were considered hardy.⁵⁸ Both flesh and milk were produced economically from bulky foods (no doubt as a consequence of the digestive capacity which contributed to what North Devon men considered an excess of offal).⁵⁹ Above all, the farmers in the South Hams

considered their cattle profitable. It may have been no coincidence that Fraser found 'In the South Hams in particular, the respectable class of yeomanry is more numerous than in any district of England I have seen. They live in great comfort . . .', and that Marshall noted that, although the South Hams was characterized by small farms, '... it possesses men who think for themselves'.⁶⁰

This independence could have been a factor in the delay in the establishment of the South Devon herd book and the lack of selection for a common type. As late as the 1890 show of the Royal Agricultural Society of England at Plymouth, Punchard wrote of the prize-winning South Ham cattle: 'Authorities differ very much as to what is the correct type or colour of the South Hammer, and the absence of a herd-book militates against its breeders or admirers arriving at definite conclusions thereon', and, after reference to the introduction of Guernsey blood, 'The establishment of a herd-book would prevent future repetitions of this'.⁶¹

Punchard's reference to colour is probably to the exact shade of red, as he described the South Ham as '... several shades lighter' when compared with North Devons. The present South Devon cattle are usually described as red: there is, as in the North Devon, variation as to shade, but the tendency is to a lighter, more orange red. But, again like the North Devon, colour used to be more variable. Treby speculated that the original colour might have been black. White markings used to occur. Youatt wrote: 'They bear considerable resemblance to the Herefords, and sometimes the colour and horn and the white face are so much alike in both, that it is difficult to distinguish between them'. At the Plymouth Show of the Royal Agricultural Society of England in 1865, a heifer called 'Starhead' was described

⁴⁹ 'J.T.', *loc cit*, p ix.

⁵⁰ Keary, *loc cit*, p 436.

⁵¹ Youatt, *op cit*, p 22; T. Rowlandson, *JRASE*, XIV, 1853, p 449.

⁵² Davy, 1887, *loc cit*, p 127; Punchard, *loc cit*, p 527.

⁵³ Youatt, *op cit*; Tanner, 1848, *loc cit*, p 479; Davy, 1869, *loc cit*, p 113; Punchard, *loc cit*, p 527.

⁵⁴ Davy, 1869, *loc cit*, p 113.

⁵⁵ Vancouver, *op cit*, p 335; Tanner, 1858, *loc cit*, p 180.

⁵⁶ Youatt, *op cit*; Tanner, 1848, *loc cit*, p 479.

⁵⁷ Vancouver, *op cit*, p 335; Punchard, *loc cit*, p 527; see also Tanner, 1858, *loc cit*, p 180; Davy, 1869, *loc cit*, p 113; Davy, 1887, *loc cit*, p 127.

⁵⁸ For example Worgan, *op cit*, p 137; Tanner, 1858, *loc cit*, p 180; Davy, 1887, *loc cit*, p 127.

⁵⁹ Tanner, 1848, *loc cit*, p 479; Tanner, 1858, *loc cit*, p 180; Vancouver, *op cit*, p 335.

⁶⁰ Fraser, *op cit*, p 17; Marshall, 1796, I, pp 292 and 293; Youatt, *op cit*; Tanner, 1848, *loc cit*, p 479; Davy, 1869, *loc cit*, p 113.

⁶¹ Punchard, *loc cit*, p 527.

as '... red, white spots'. A brindled South Hams bull was exhibited at the same show.⁶²

The landscapes listed in Table 1 include cattle of Devon type which are black (or very dark red) or red with white markings, including considerable white on the face.

Cattle in the landscapes show some variation of horn size and shape. There do not appear to be any polled cattle (in some pictures the animals are too small for it to be clear whether they are polled or not). However, the reports of polled cattle suggest an explanation for some of the short horns observed. Although it is conventional to refer to polled as completely dominant to horned, the expressivity of the horned trait in heterozygotes varies considerably. Many have obvious scurs (i.e. small, loose horns). At the two extremes of the range, the scurs can be either small scales, giving a polled appearance; or quite large and become attached to the skull, so seeming like a normal horn.⁶³

IV

The divergence of North and South Devon cattle
All the evidence points to a common, local source for the breeds and varieties of Devon cattle. Both North and South Devons were originally triple-purpose for draught, meat and dairy purposes. A similar range of variation, including for colour and the polled trait, occurred in both. Several writers have ascribed the differences, especially of size, to the quality of land in the various localities; and it is claimed that in its own district each breed excels the other.⁶⁴ Differences of this kind can still be observed in some relatively unimproved breeds which have populations partially isolated in geographically different areas.⁶⁵

⁶² Treby, *loc cit*, p 304; Worgan, *op cit*, p 304; Youatt, *op cit*, p 22; JRASE, 2nd Series, I, 1865, pp lxii and lxiii.

⁶³ W F Dove, *Journal of Experimental Zoology*, 69, 1935, pp 365-6.

⁶⁴ For example Tanner, 1848, *loc cit*, pp 493-4; Tanner, 1858, *loc cit*, pp 180 and 181; Davy, 1869, *loc cit*, p 108; Davy, 1887, *loc cit*, p 127; Punchard, *loc cit*, p 528.

⁶⁵ J E Rouse, *World Cattle. Vol. I. Cattle of Europe, South America, Australia and New Zealand*, Oklahoma, 1971.

Apart from the differences caused by environment, the South Devon became subject to different economic pressures, first from the growth of Plymouth as a naval base in the sixteenth century and then from the establishment of the naval dockyard on the Tamar in 1696.⁶⁶ 'In the South Hams, large, strong, heavy red beasts were bred for the purpose of drawing timber to the Plymouth dockyard.'⁶⁷ Before the days of rapid transport the dockyards relied heavily on the immediate hinterland for supplies. These included quantities of cheap beef, as is evidenced by references to '... neighbouring markets and navy provisions' and 'four-penny beef' in connection with South Ham cattle. In 1793, when the summer price of butter in North Devon was sixpence a pound, '... in the South ... on account of the fleets and encampments, butter was fourteen and eighteen pence a pound'.⁶⁸

The few biochemical polymorphisms for which there are data for both North and South Devons do not reveal any significant difference between the breeds.⁶⁹ But the morphological differences which have evolved by the late twentieth century are striking. If all characteristics are considered together the South Devon and the North Devon are distinct and separate breeds.

V

Relationship with other breeds

The general consensus that Devon cattle are all derived from the same basic stock has not precluded discussion of connections with other breeds. Two types of relationship have been considered: through common origin and through crossbreeding.

Most speculations concerning common origin are based on resemblance. Five possibilities have been advanced for the Devon breeds.

⁶⁶ W G Hoskins, *Devon*, Newton Abbot, 1972, pp 455 and 456.

⁶⁷ P F S Amery, *Devon and Cornwall Notes and Queries*, II, 1902-03, p 120; Treby, *loc cit*, p 304.

⁶⁸ Tanner, 1848, *loc cit*, p 474; Youatt, *op cit*; Davy, 1869, *loc cit*, p 113; Fraser, *op cit*, p 31.

⁶⁹ C M A Baker, *Animal Blood Groups & Biochemical Genetics*, 13, 1982, pp 199-212.

First, a common origin with geographically close breeds of a similar type in the UK. Reference has been made to this already in respect of the Hereford. Several other breeds were regarded as belonging to the same group: Sussex; Glamorgan (probably extinct through crossing with neighbouring breeds such as the Hereford and the Welsh Black); Gloucester; Somerset (extinct); and Norfolk (extinct: probably absorbed into the Red Poll). Marshall wrote: 'These several breeds I conceive to have sprung from the same stock.'⁷⁰ This assumption is reasonable from the standpoints of morphology and location. The grouping is supported by biochemical data.⁷¹

Secondly, the Salers was considered very like what Sinclair described as '... the Devon group in all its gradations from the North Devon to the Sussex breed'. Three possible reasons were advanced for the resemblance: evolution of a similar type in both breeds; imports of the Salers to the UK (for which no evidence was quoted); or exports of English cattle to France. There is evidence that Devon cattle were exported, some to cross with the Salers; but this was comparatively late in breed history and it is not clear whether the Devon imports were for the improvement of French breeding stock or for commercial crossbreeding for beef.⁷² The latter practice has been the basis of exports of South Devon and Sussex cattle to France in recent times.⁷³

Thirdly, there have been speculations (but no evidence) concerning 'Phoenician cattle'. Sinclair interpreted Phoenician to mean cattle of Spanish origin, entering via Cornwall.⁷⁴ Wallace doubted Spanish cattle but suggested Phoenician imports could have come from North Africa. He also noted

that cattle similar to the North Devon could be seen on some of the Greek islands.⁷⁵

Fourthly, Wallace observed: 'The colour, as well as the head and forward part of the body, of the Afrikaner cow is so Devon-like, that a speculative belief based on no trustworthy evidence exists that the Devon breed must have contributed to its formation.' Despite his idea of Phoenicians bringing African cattle to the Dumnonian peninsula, Wallace did not suggest a common African origin but concluded '... the type of the Afrikaner is very different from that of the Devon'.⁷⁶ His opinion is supported by at least two authorities on African cattle who regarded any resemblance as superficial.⁷⁷

Fifthly, the occurrence of the polled gene in Devon cattle led Wilson to suggest a Scandinavian origin. His evidence was the distribution of polled cattle throughout the British Isles.⁷⁸ However, this was so widespread that it could equally well support the idea that polledness was part of the variation carried by unimproved British cattle, just as it is carried in other stocks, including African and Indian cattle.⁷⁹

Cross-breeding has occurred in the history of the South Devon. Two crosses are mentioned repeatedly: with the North Devon and with breeds of the Channel Island breed group. Even after the establishment of the South Devon Herd Book in 1891 Drennan favoured mating a South Devon bull with a North Devon cow for beef or with a Guernsey cow for milk.⁸⁰

Vancouver recommended the practice of crossing North Devon and South Ham cattle for earlier maturity and fatter beef and also noted that the North Devon was crossed

⁷⁰ Marshall, 1796, *op cit*, p 241. Many later writers have grouped these same breeds: e.g. Youatt, *op cit*; Rowlandson, *loc cit*, p 449; Davy, 1869, *loc cit*, p 108; Sinclair, *op cit*; Wallace, 1907, *op cit*; R Trow-Smith, *British Livestock Husbandry 1700-1900*, 1959.

⁷¹ C M A Baker and C Manwell, *ABGBG*, XI, 1980, pp 127-50; C Manwell and C M A Baker, *ABGBG*, XI, 1980, pp 151-62.

⁷² Sinclair, *op cit*, pp 12, 13 and 20.

⁷³ For example *Farmers Weekly*, 28 Feb 1975, p 71.

⁷⁴ Sinclair, *op cit*, p 21.

⁷⁵ Wallace, 1907, *op cit*, p 124.

⁷⁶ Wallace, 1896, *op cit*, pp 127 and 254; Wallace, 1907, *op cit*, p 127.

⁷⁷ A M Bosman, *Cattle Farming in South Africa*, 1932; H Epstein, *The Origin of the Domestic Animals of Africa*, 1971, p 490.

⁷⁸ J Wilson, *Scientific Proceedings of the Royal Dublin Society*, XII, 1909, p 160.

⁷⁹ Mason, *op cit*, records the occurrence of polled cattle in different breeds.

⁸⁰ R. Drennan, pp 168-75 in C B Jones (Ed), *Live Stock of the Farm. Volume I, Cattle*, 1916.

with the 'native cow' of the Honiton district. Youatt alluded to similar crosses and Keary wrote of the cross between a North Devon bull and a South Devon cow, 'In many instances the produce is very good.' Thus there was plenty of opportunity for gene flow from North Devon cattle to South Devon cattle as well as a common origin. But the effect of such crosses on breeding stock should not be overestimated as most of the records are with reference to the production of cattle for feeding; and at the same time that North Devon crosses were advocated for beef production, there were suggestions that South Ham cattle could be improved by selection. By the 1890 Royal Show at Plymouth, it was claimed that improvement had occurred, '... mainly by a more careful and judicious selection of sires ...'; and though the reporter thought that the South Ham could benefit from some North Devon characteristics: 'The line is, however, at present strictly drawn between them.' The following year the Breed Society and Herd Book were formed.⁸¹

At least two other crosses for beef were noticed and recommended: Hereford or Shorthorn bulls onto South Ham cows. It is not clear how many (or, indeed, if any) attempts were made to improve South Ham breeding stock by either cross, as the crossbreds were not as hardy as the pure South Ham. The Hereford cross was considered hardier than the Shorthorn cross; the former also maintained size and weight better than the latter or than the hardy North Devon cross. As the observer of these crosses thought South Ham cattle looked like 'degenerate Herefords' it would be difficult to detect any contribution of the Hereford to the former breed.⁸²

The Shorthorn has been suggested as a source of the muscular hypertrophy which

occurs in some South Devons.⁸³ But as the condition exists in other British breeds it is not at present possible to choose between crossing and other potential causes of muscular hypertrophy, namely, an ancient common origin or an independent mutation. A similar objection exists to Marshall's supposition that short horned and polled cattle indicated crossing with the Holderness, as polled cattle used to occur in many British breeds.⁸⁴

Whether or not Marshall's surmise that Holderness cows had been introduced to improve milk production was correct, both Shorthorn and Shorthorn x Guernsey cows were kept for the dairy in the South of Devon in the mid-nineteenth century.⁸⁵ John White Abbot's 'On the Warren' includes a yellow and white cow which could represent the latter cross. The same picture shows a white cow with black ears and muzzle. One of James Leakey's landscapes has a white cow of shorthorn type. Both pictures include red cattle of Devon type.

Imports of Channel Island cattle can be traced to the mid-eighteenth century.⁸⁶ They were reported in many counties, including some with North and South Devon cattle.⁸⁷ Marshall reported that in the Vale of Exeter there were '... fine Cattle of the pure North Devonshire sort ...' but that in the vicinity of the City '... many Alderney or "French Cows" are seen; and a mongrel sort, between that and the Devonshire breed are not uncommon'. Lawrence wrote of '... the South Devons, which from known facts, as well as from appearance, have been much crossed with Norman and Alderney stock ...'; and Youatt noted North and South Devons, Alderneys and 'mongrels of every description' around Exeter. However, Tanner discovered that the mixture was not made

⁸¹ J J Lauvergne, J G Boyazoglu and D. Hubert, *Le phénomène ciularid chez les bovins: bibliographie annotée*, Jouy-en-Josas, 1968.

⁸² Marshall, 1796, *op cit*, II, p 248; Wilson, *loc cit*.

⁸³ Tanner, 1858, *loc cit*, p 188.

⁸⁴ Trow-Smith, 1959, *op cit*, p 118.

⁸⁵ Marshall, 1818, *op cit*.

⁸¹ Vancouver, *op cit*, pp 334, 335 and 337; Youatt, *op cit*, p 22; Keary, *loc cit*, p 436; e.g. Tanner, 1848, *loc cit*, p 479; Davy, 1869, *loc cit*, p 113; Punchard, *loc cit*, p 527.

⁸² Tanner, 1858, *loc cit*, pp 180 and 181.

indiscriminately: 'In the vales of the Exe and Honiton . . . [i]t is a frequent practice to keep one Guernsey cow in a dairy of ten or twelve Devons — the milk and butter being much improved in quality and *appearance* by it.' Later writers suggested that the Guernseys would be got in calf by the South Devon bull and the female descendants would be absorbed into the breed, increasing its divergence from the North Devon.⁸⁸ A similar practice once existed in Normandy, where a few Jerseys would be included in a herd to help the rise of cream and improve the quality of the butter.⁸⁹ It is of interest that, at the time Marshall wrote, some dairies had started to supply the London market and so were making butter by churning raw cream. In the days of hand-skimming this did not separate from the skim milk as completely as the traditional clotted cream raised by heat.⁹⁰

Although several breeds of the Channel Island group are named in connection with the South Devon, the most frequently mentioned seem to be the Alderney (in earlier literature) and the Guernsey (in later literature). The former breed was largely absorbed into the Guernsey breed by the earliest twentieth century.⁹¹

The local landscapes include a number of cattle of Channel Island type. Further identification is made difficult by conflicting claims that the Alderney was identical with the Jersey *and* the Guernsey.⁹² This uncertainty means that it is not easy to trace Alderney influence on the South Devon breed. Its possession of traits derived from the Guernsey is recorded by several writers.

Furthermore, in the first half of the nineteenth century the Guernsey was a triple-purpose breed, and discarded work oxen were fattened to weights of 1300 pounds or over.⁹³

The frequency with which mention is made of crossing the South Devon with the North Devon and the Guernsey raises the possibility that these could have been crossed with yet other breeds, enabling these to make an indirect contribution. There is little firm evidence that this occurred to a great extent.

For the Guernsey, it has been suggested that there were contributions from Froment de Leon and Normandy cattle in the eleventh century;⁹⁴ and that imports of Spanish cattle and of the old Red Dutch breed were made before foreign breeding stock were forbidden to enter the Channel Isles. After this, the exchange of dowry calves among the various islands was still permitted; and, as mentioned earlier, the Guernsey absorbed the Alderney.⁹⁵

There are early references to crosses between the North Devon and Somerset, Welsh, Cornish, Hereford, Durham and Guernsey.⁹⁶ The last three crosses are mentioned by later writers. Tanner thought that for the dairy 'a *slight touch* of the Guernsey renders them more profitable' but noted that the Hereford cross increased size to the detriment of activity. Sinclair described experimental crosses which some nineteenth-century breeders of North Devons made with Herefords and Short-horns but concluded ' . . . the cattle having alien blood were either sold . . . or else crossed so often back to the Devon that within a few generations all traces of the cross had disappeared'.⁹⁷

⁸⁸ Marshall, 1796, *op cit*, II, pp 119–20; J Lawrence, *A General Treatise on Cattle, the Ox, the Sheep and the Swine*, 1805, p 44 (I thank Dr H B Carter for sending me a copy of this material which was not available in Australia); Youatt, *op cit*, p 23; Tanner, 1848, *loc cit*, p 479; Punchard, *loc cit*, p 527; W. Houseman, *Cattle Breeds and Management*, 1915.

⁸⁹ R. Delatouche, p 144 in E J Boston (Ed), *Jersey Cattle*, 1954.

⁹⁰ Marshall, 1796, *op cit*, I, pp 249–53 and II, p 120.

⁹¹ 'A Native', p 230 in Coleman, *op cit*; Wallace, 1907, *op cit*, p 230; F. Eggleston, *The Times*, 2 July 1977, p 12; P W Radice, *The Times*, 11 July 1977, p 13.

⁹² For example see C P Le Cornu, *JRASE*, 20, 1859, p 62; Wallace, 1907, *op cit*, p 230.

⁹³ For example see Punchard, *loc cit*, p 527; J C McKellar, *Veterinary Record*, LXXII, 1960, p 507; 'A Native', *loc cit*, p 231; Wallace, 1907, *op cit*, p 228.

⁹⁴ R B Becker, *Dairy Cattle Breeds*, 1973, p 187.

⁹⁵ Boston, *op cit*, pp 39 and 53. E P Prentice, *American Dairy Cattle*, 1942; C Wheaton-Smith, in A E Mourant and F E Zeuner (Eds), *Man and Cattle*, 1963.

⁹⁶ Youatt, *op cit*, pp 11, 17, 21, 25 and 27.

⁹⁷ Tanner, 1848, *loc cit*, p 478; Sinclair, *op cit*, p 66.

A cross which excited interest at the time involved the zebu *Bos indicus* L. John White Parsons of Westcamel, Sherborne, Dorset made various crosses between Devon and 'French' (i.e. Channel Island) cattle, both then common in the county, and 'Indian Cattle'.⁹⁸ Although the breed (or breeds) of zebu was not specified, Parsons was given a bull by the Duke of Bedford, who owned a Guzerat (Kankrej) bull and a Ceylon bull, so it is not unreasonable to assume that one of these was involved.⁹⁹ Some of the crosses mentioned are: 'A beautiful cow and bull, of a mixed breed, between an East Indian bull and a Devon cow. . .'; a bull ' . . . of the Devon and French breed. . . ' and a cow ' . . . of the Devon and Indian breed . . . ' ; and a cow of ' . . . the mixed bred Indian, French and Devon'. This cow was modelled by Garrard. There are also reports of cattle bred by a Devon bull from a 'small Indian cow' owned by Sir William Curtis.¹⁰⁰ Lawrence acknowledged, 'Nothing could be more preposterous in speculation, than the idea of crossing Devon cattle, already sufficiently fine, with Indian zebu; . . . I have yet seen Devon heifers, apparently having Indian blood, squarer in form, and shorter legged than the pure Devons, and equally well laden with flesh. Impartiality demands of me this avowal.'¹⁰¹

Sinclair thought ' . . . the Indian-Devons . . . had died out',¹⁰² but the possibility that the zebu made some contribution to the Devon breeds cannot be dismissed completely.¹⁰³ Further investigation should be made of pedigree records and for zebu characteristics. The latter include several

cryptic markers: bifid processes to the last thoracic vertebra;¹⁰⁴ the *Bos indicus* Y chromosome;¹⁰⁵ and the occurrence and frequency of some protein polymorphisms.¹⁰⁶

VI

The Gelbvieh connection

There seems to be no record or speculation concerning relationship with the Gelbvieh until the twentieth century, when justification was sought for crossing this breed with the South Devon in South Africa. The biochemical data upon which the claim rests were not published, and, despite a claim that they were available from the authors, cannot be obtained. However, it was possible to investigate the matter further by assembling and analysing data published in other papers. One analysis confirmed the traditional position of the South Devon and Gelbvieh in separate breed groups. The second, made at the level of individual breeds, placed the South Devon closer to the North Devon, Hereford and Guernsey than to the Gelbvieh.¹⁰⁷ However, the distance calculated between the South Devon and the Gelbvieh was very close to the value obtained by Kidd *et al.*¹⁰⁸ A possible reason for this agreement was supplied by an anonymous referee: Devon bulls were used in Franconia (the centre of the Gelbvieh breed) in the first half of the nineteenth century.¹⁰⁹ While this does not explain the other, discrepant results (possible reasons for which are discussed elsewhere) it confirms the importance of historical information in biochemical studies.¹¹⁰

⁹⁸ Sinclair, *op cit*, p 62; H B Carter, *His Majesty's Spanish Flock*, 1964, p 275 and personal communication. I thank Dr H B Carter for corresponding with me on this topic and for sending me copies of the appropriate material (cited below) from Lawrence *op cit* and from the *Agricultural Magazine* which were not available to me in Australia.

⁹⁹ J. Clutton-Brock, *Ag Hist Rev*, 1976, pp 18-26.

¹⁰⁰ *Agricultural Magazine*, XI, 1804, pp 453 and 454; *Ibid*, XII, 1805, p 214; *Ibid*, XIII, 1805, pp 435 and 453.

¹⁰¹ Lawrence, *op cit*, p 45.

¹⁰² Sinclair, *op cit*, p 62.

¹⁰³ Carter, *op cit* and personal communication; Clutton-Brock, *loc cit*, p 26.

¹⁰⁴ Epstein, *op cit*, pp 197-8.

¹⁰⁵ T C Hsu and K Benirschke, *An Atlas of Mammalian Chromosomes*, Berlin, 1967.

¹⁰⁶ Baker and Manwell, 1980, *loc cit*; Manwell and Baker, 1980, *loc cit*.

¹⁰⁷ Baker and Manwell, 1980, *loc cit*; Manwell and Baker, 1980, *loc cit*; C M A Baker, *ABGBG*, 13, 1982, pp 199-212.

¹⁰⁸ Kidd *et al*, *loc cit*.

¹⁰⁹ H. Gutbrod, *Land Jahrbuch*, Bayern, Heft 4, 1924. I thank the referee and Dr R L Spooner (Ed, *ABGBG*) for sending me this information; and Professor C Manwell for translating Gutbrod's paper.

¹¹⁰ Baker, *ABGBG*, 13, 1982; Baker and Manwell, 1980, *loc cit* and in P G Board & N S Agar, *loc cit*, 1983, pp 367-412.

Tracing the evolution of breeds and the relationships between them is not the function of any one discipline to the exclusion of all others, but the synthesis of information from a variety of sources. The latter approach reveals that, although there is a link between the South Devon and the Gelbvieh in the recent past, it is not by 'a common ancestry on the Continent'; and that the position of the South Devon among other indigenous British breeds is confirmed.

VII

Summary

The historical evidence is that North and

South Devon cattle were derived from a common stock and that, after divergence, there was some gene flow from the former to the latter. The other main contribution to the South Devon was from the Channel Island breeds, especially the Guernsey. These relationships are supported by pictorial evidence from early nineteenth-century landscapes and by analyses of biochemical data.

Minor contributions may have been made by adjacent, related breeds, by the Shorthorn and, possibly, from *Bos indicus*. There is no evidence of any contribution from the Gelbvieh.

Notes on Contributors

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C M A BAKER worked for a number of years as an Advisory Officer in the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food, England and Wales. At present she is a Visiting Research Fellow in the Department of Zoology, University of Adelaide, South Australia. Most of her research concerns the genetics and evolution of domesticated animals. She has also published on the biochemistry of egg-white proteins, the molecular basis of hybrid vigour in fish, and the sociology of science. She is co-author of *Molecular Biology and the Origin of Species*. In 1983 Miss Baker was elected an Honorary Member of the Australian South Devon Cattle Breeders' Association in recognition of her work on the breed.

(continued on page 169)

Continuity and Change in a Seventeenth-century Scottish Farming Community

By I D WHYTE and K A WHYTE

I
IN THE past few years there have been significant advances in our knowledge of Scottish agriculture and rural society during the sixteenth, seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.¹ Recent research has added to our understanding of the development and functioning of rural settlement and field systems and has demonstrated the existence of evolutionary changes in what had previously been considered a stagnant, even declining, rural economy.² Nevertheless, one central figure still remains shadowy and insubstantial: the tenant farmer. Tenants were not the most numerous group in the Scottish countryside; in many Lowland parishes they were substantially outnumbered by cottars and farm servants.³ However, tenants were arguably the most important group, as the others depended on them for employment and were affected by their prosperity or poverty. The fortunes of the tenantry were equally important to the landowners whose incomes were mainly derived from the rents which they paid. It is surprising, therefore, that although the condition of tenant farmers in Lowland Scotland is central to an understanding of the roles of continuity and change in Scottish agriculture at this period they have received little attention. Impressions of their reactions to economic changes have been

formed from the biased writings of eighteenth-century improvers who consistently described them as ignorant, reactionary, and unwilling to innovate. Equally, their position within rural society has been viewed within a model of a stagnant, impoverished economy, and they have been portrayed as a comparatively poor and homogeneous group. Some writers have depicted them as uniformly squalid and hardly distinguishable in wealth or status from their cottars.⁴ Their poverty has been attributed to insecurity of tenure caused by the prevalence of short leases and tenancies at will.⁵ Insecurity is thought to have caused poverty by encouraging low standards of husbandry as tenants were reluctant to invest labour or capital in improving their holdings if they were likely to be evicted without compensation at the end of a short lease or have their rents raised. Implicit has been the suggestion that short leases caused high rates of turnover with little or no continuity for long periods of occupation of farms by the same family. The poverty of tenant farmers is considered to have rendered them vulnerable to the effects of short-term subsistence crises which continued to affect Lowland Scotland into the early eighteenth century.

This paper aims to show that existing theories regarding Scottish tenant farming at this period are over-simplified and require some modification. The basis of the study is the particularly well-documented estates of the Earls of Panmure in the Forfarshire lowlands between Dundee and Arbroath

¹For general surveys see: R A Dodgshon, *Land and society in early Scotland*, Oxford, 1981; M L Parry & T R Slater (eds), *The making of the Scottish countryside*, 1980; I D Whyte, *Agriculture and society in seventeenth-century Scotland*, Edinburgh, 1979.

²Traditional views regarding agrarian change in early-modern Scotland are summarized in Whyte, *op cit*, pp 1-5.

³I D Whyte & K A Whyte, 'Some aspects of the structure of rural society in seventeenth-century Scotland', in T M Devine (ed), *Ireland and Scotland, 1660-1850: parallels and contrasts in economic and social development*, Edinburgh, 1983, pp 32-45.

⁴H G Graham, *The social life of Scotland in the eighteenth century*, 1937, pp 179-81.

⁵J E Handley, *Scottish farming in the eighteenth century*, Edinburgh, 1953, p 120.

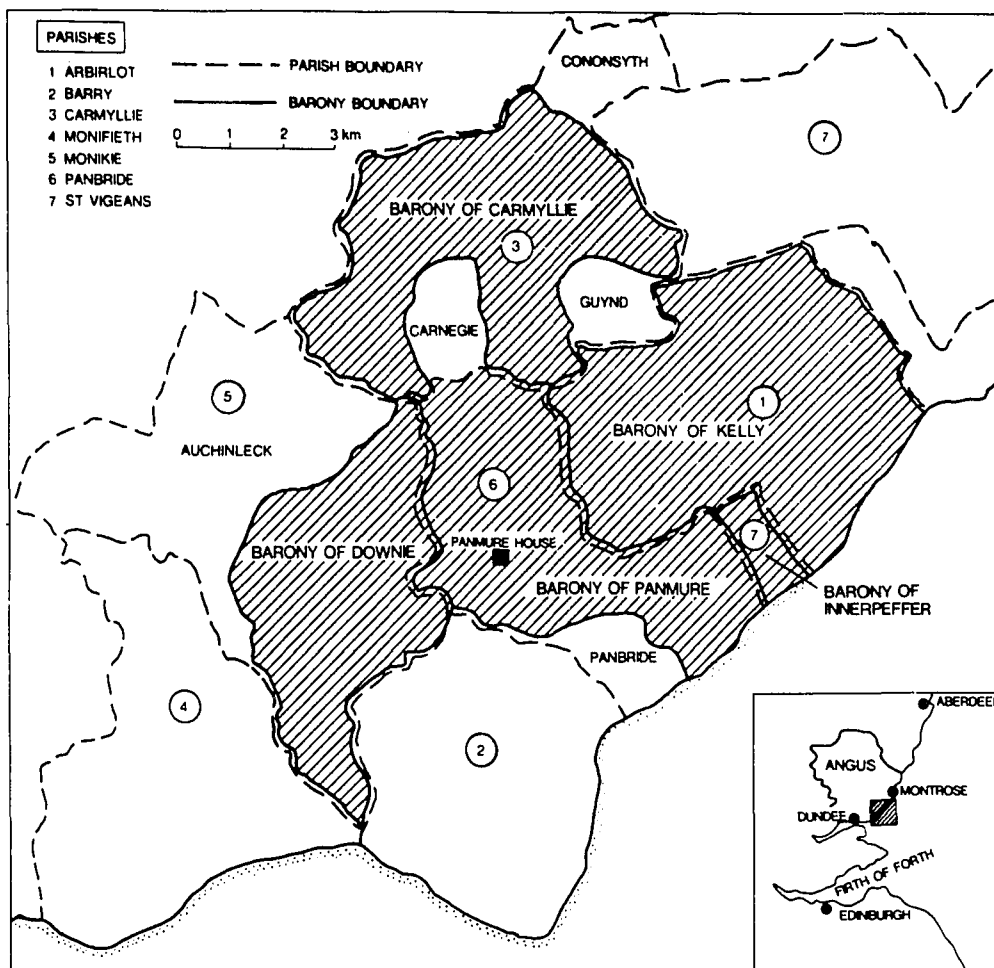


FIGURE I

(Fig 1). A series of annual rentals and accounts for the estates from the later seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries provides a framework into which data from other sources can be fitted.⁶ The background of rents, farm structure and holding sizes, and leasing policies within which the Panmure tenants operated is first outlined. This is followed by an analysis of continuity of tenure and the role of geographical and socio-economic mobility within the tenantry. The vulnerability of tenants to short-term economic fluctuations and the implications of this for agriculture and rural society as a whole are then considered.

⁶Scottish Record Office, Dalhousie muniments. Series of rentals commencing GD 45 18 1 (Carmyllie, Downie, Innerpeffer and Panmure baronies) and GD 45 18 1031 (Kelly barony).

II

Rents

A measure of the overall stability of conditions at Panmure is the stagnation of rents between the early seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries. On the South Mains of Panmure, for example, rents remained unchanged between the 1630s and 1714. Some small-scale adjustments of rents did occur but there was no move to raise rents generally. As rack renting is known to have occurred elsewhere,⁷ this has the appearance of a deliberate policy carried out under successive Earls of Panmure and must, in itself, have conferred a measure of stability and security on tenant society.

⁷Whyte, *op cit*, p 252.

Nor did the structure of rents alter materially. As was normal throughout the arable areas of the eastern Lowlands rents were paid mainly in kind. The principal rents of most tenants consisted of grain: some wheat from the most favourably located farms, but generally bere and oatmeal. In addition kain rents, small payments in kind including poultry and coarse linen cloth, were required, as well as labour services such as harvest work on those mains farms which the Earls of Panmure kept in their own hands. Only in Carmyllie barony were money rents normal. Dodgshon has contrasted the early appearance of money rents in the pastoral upland areas of Lowland Scotland with the persistence of rents in kind in arable areas.⁸ Nevertheless, Carmyllie tenants were as strongly oriented towards arable farming as their grain-paying neighbours in other baronies.⁹ Carmyllie was a comparatively late-settled area among the low hills at the eastern end of the Sidlaws and rents had probably been set in money from the start. A few farms in grain-paying baronies like Panmure paid money rents, and these, too, have the appearance of lands taken in from the waste at a comparatively late date. There was no significant trend towards commutation of rents in kind to money during the seventeenth or early eighteenth centuries and, as will be discussed below, this had important implications for the conditions under which tenant farmers operated.

Farm structure and holding sizes

Something of the socio-economic contrasts within the Panmure tenantry can be appreciated by considering farm structure and holding sizes. The traditional model of pre-improvement farm structure in Lowland Scotland has been the joint or multiple-tenant farm on which four or more

tenants worked small holdings and pooled labour and equipment to furnish a common ploughteam.¹⁰ At Panmure, however, 67 per cent of all farms were in single tenancy and only 29 per cent in multiple tenancy, many of the latter being divided into only two or three substantial holdings. The remaining 4 per cent comprised clusters of pendicles or smallholdings on which most tenants leased only two or three acres.

It is hard to be precise about holding sizes as these were given only for smallholdings. The best way of measuring the sizes of holdings is to examine the rents which they paid and relate these to the amount of land cultivated where a commissary court testament for the tenant of a particular holding survives. The relationship between rent and the amount of land in cultivation will have varied with land quality and the proportion of infield to outfield between farms. Nevertheless, where data are available, the strength of the correlation coefficient between rent paid and the amount of land cultivated ($+0.69$, significant at the 0.01 level) suggests that such differences were not of major significance. Table 1 shows that a considerable range of rents and holding sizes existed and that the tenantry were far from homogeneous. There must have been major contrasts in capital resources and status between the tenants of larger and smaller holdings. Many smallholders were part-time artisans and testaments for this group show that there was no real distinction in wealth between them and the cottars. On the other hand, at least a third of the tenancies were large enough to have required a full ploughteam, traditionally of eight oxen, while the largest holdings needed two ploughteams and a substantial labour force.

Farm structures and holding sizes, like rents, remained unchanged throughout the period under study. There was some flexibility regarding whether certain farms

⁸ Dodgshon, *op cit*, pp 98-9.

⁹ I D Whyte & K A Whyte, 'Regional and local variations in seventeenth-century Scottish farming: a preliminary survey of the evidence of commissary court testaments', *Manchester Geographer*, 3, 1982, pp 49-59.

¹⁰ Whyte, *op cit*, pp 137-45.

were leased as single units or divided, probably depending on the availability of suitable tenants, but there was no long-term movement towards the farm amalgamation, holding enlargement, and reduction in the number of tenancies which occurred on some other Lowland estates.¹¹

TABLE I
Range of Rents and Holding Sizes on the
Panmure Estates

Rent		Approx. Acreage Under Cultivation (Scots acres)	% of all Holdings
Rolls of Grain	Money (£ Scots)		
1-5	5-20	0.5-4	34
6-10	21-40	5-8	14
11-20	41-75	9-16	9
21-40	76-100	17-36	15
41-60	101-200	36-48	15
61-100	200+	49-75	10
100+		76+	3

Continuity of tenure

The series of annual rentals allows the length of time during which tenants occupied particular holdings to be calculated (Table 2). Considerable variation occurred: 9 per cent of tenants held land for only a single year and 37 per cent for five years or less, while 39 per cent held land for over ten, and 18 per cent for more than twenty years. This indicates that elements of mobility and continuity existed within the tenantry, and the pattern is strikingly similar to those identified by Williams for the Devon community of Ashworthy and by Nalson for an area in the Pennines, both in recent times, and, apparently, under more secure conditions of tenure.¹²

A breakdown of length of occupation by holding size showed no significant tendency for particular sizes of holding to change hand more or less rapidly than the rest. Other studies have suggested that higher-lying,

TABLE 2
Length of Occupation of Holdings within
Panmure Estates 1650-1714

Years Occupied	% of Tenants
1	9
2-5	28
6-10	24
11-15	12
16-20	9
21-25	6
26-30	5
31-35	3
36+	4

more marginal farms experienced faster rates of turnover,¹³ but at Panmure there was no significant statistical relationship between the turnover of holdings and either altitude or land capability class. This probably reflects the generally favourable environmental conditions for arable farming in this area with even the higher farms in Carmyllie not being marginal for the cultivation of oats or bere. It could also, however, have been influenced by the estate's policy towards rent arrears, as will be discussed below.

One group of short-stay tenants which can be isolated were women. Most were widows who leased their husbands' holdings temporarily until a new tenant could be found or a son was old enough to take over. Their mean period of tenancy was 6.3 years against 12.6 years for all tenants, though instances did occur of widows managing large holdings for extended periods.

To what extent did the estate's leasing policy influence continuity of tenure? Surviving leases or tacks¹⁴ show that short leases for five years or less predominated until the late 1660s. There is then a gap in the sequence, and when the run re-commences in 1701 leases of eleven, fifteen and nineteen years had become normal. During the earlier period the renewal of short leases was often

¹¹ R A Dodgshon, 'The removal of runrig in Roxburghshire and Berwickshire 1680-1766', *Scottish Studies*, 16, 1972, pp 121-37.

¹² M W Williams, *A West-Country village — Ashworthy*, 1963, p 32; J S Nalson, *The mobility of farm families*, Manchester, 1968, p 66.

¹³ Nalson, *op cit*, p 199.

¹⁴ Scottish R O, Dalhousie muniments, series of leases from GD 45 18 148.

automatic; 85 per cent of tenants for whom leases survive from the 1650s and 1660s worked the holding concerned either before or after the period covered by the lease. Thus it was normal for tenants to go through at least two tacks on a particular holding and short leases did not necessarily cause a high rate of turnover. Equally, the change to longer leases later in the century did not slow down the rate of turnover.

The evidence of tenants' surnames also indicates a significant amount of continuity. The wide range of surnames on the estate makes it likely that when successive tenants of a holding bore the same surname they were related, probably father and son in a majority of cases. Most female tenants were demonstrably the widows of the previous occupants and were often succeeded by a son. About a third of all changes of tenancy involved such relationships. However, this is probably too restricted a definition of continuity. It omits instances where, for example, a son-in-law took over a holding after marrying a tenant's daughter. As will be discussed below, it can also be shown that in one barony at least nearly half the sons who followed their fathers into farming did so within the same barony but on a different farm, something which cannot be distinguished from rentals without supplementary evidence from parish registers. Continuity of farming on the estate within individual families was thus an important element in tenant society.

Tenant mobility

The rentals also allow tenant mobility within the estate to be studied. Between 1660 and 1710, out of nearly 700 tenants in the five baronies, only 16 per cent can be identified moving from one farm to another. This figure underestimates geographical mobility as it does not include Panmure tenants who moved to other estates or farmers who migrated into the estate. However, figures for individual baronies allow us to come closer to real levels of

mobility. Kelly had the highest proportion of geographically mobile tenants, with 27 per cent moving internally or to and from other baronies. Kelly was located on the coast and was bordered by other Panmure baronies on a substantial part of its landward perimeter. Given the limited distances over which migration to new farms occurred (see below), it is probable that this figure does not greatly underestimate the total movement of tenants and that overall about a third of the Panmure tenants made a migratory move of this kind during the period under consideration.

With the farm structures which existed, many tenants were able to alter the amount of land which they worked without moving to other farms. One option was multiple leasing, where a man leased all or part of a neighbouring, separately-named farm in addition to the land which he already held. On multiple-tenant farms a tenant could increase his share of the farm. Equally, a reduction of holding size could be effected by relinquishing land held on an adjoining farm or reducing the share of a multiple-tenant farm. Such non-migratory means of changing holding size formed an important proportion of known alterations in tenants' operations. Multiple leasing accounted for 39 per cent of changes against 33 per cent for migration and 28 per cent for increasing or decreasing the share of a multiple-tenant farm. The balance between migratory and non-migratory options varied with the farm structures and range of holding sizes within particular baronies. In Kelly a high proportion of the farms were single-tenant ones, and here multiple leasing accounted for 62 per cent of all changes. In Downie, where many single-tenant farms were very large, there was less scope for multiple leasing or engrossing and migratory moves made up 58 per cent of changes in holding size.

The importance of changes in holding size which did not involve migration by the tenant may indicate a desire to minimize risk. Multiple leasing and engrossing involved

expansion from a base of land whose qualities were known and working with familiar neighbours. A move to another farm might increase the risk of failure by requiring the tenant to work land whose qualities had not been assessed personally as well as co-operating with comparative strangers.

When tenants did move to other farms the distances involved were short. Seventy-six per cent of all moves were under 5 km, 54 per cent under 3 km, and 70 per cent of moves occurred within baronies rather than between them. The restricted horizons of mobility are also shown by surviving leases which give the origins of incoming tenants. Only 14 per cent of the leases were granted to farmers from outside the estate and 69 per cent of these 'outsiders' came from farms on estates within the same parish as the Panmure farm to which they were moving. In such instances the parish minister would have been able to vouch for the character of the tenant, who would probably also have been known to the Panmure factor responsible for allocating tenancies. Most Panmure tenants seem to have originated within the estate, whether from existing tenant families or other groups, while most incomers came from within a narrow radius.

The rentals provide an over-view of geographical mobility among the tenants but more detail can be obtained by comparing them with data from other sources. For Downie barony the origins of tenants can be explored using the register of Monikie parish, in which the barony was located, which is virtually complete from the early seventeenth century, listing baptisms, the calling of banns, and marriages though, unfortunately, not burials.¹⁵ If tenants who entered holdings in Downie between 1670 and 1714 are examined it is possible to check whether they had been baptized in the parish and to compare the origins of larger tenants and smallholders with a sample of cottars.

Only 28 per cent of tenants leasing holdings after 1670 could be traced in the baptism register. However, 40 per cent of tenants taking on holdings paying over twenty bolls of grain had been baptized in Monikie against only 21 per cent of smallholders paying five bolls or less and 20 per cent of cottars. Of the tenants leasing these larger holdings who had been baptized in the parish 82 per cent had fathers who had been Panmure tenants, though not necessarily on the same farms. Forty-six per cent of the men who followed their fathers as Panmure tenants in Downie barony did so on different farms. Only 14 per cent of smallholders were the sons of Panmure tenants. This suggests that when holdings were leased to men from within the estate the larger ones usually went to men with tenant origins, while smallholdings were more frequently occupied by men from non-tenant backgrounds.

So 60 per cent of the men taking on substantial holdings in Downie had not been baptized in the parish. The entries in the parish register indicate that some of them were already married when they moved into the parish and may have been established farmers from neighbouring parishes. In cases where a tenant had no baptism record but his father had been a Panmure tenant then a move of this kind had probably occurred a generation earlier. Many of the incomers were probably tenants from other Panmure baronies but it is impossible to demonstrate this as the registers of the appropriate parishes are deficient.

Socio-economic mobility

It has already been shown that the patterns of farm structure and holdings on the estate provided a range of holding sizes from pendicles to ones with 80 or more acres under crop in any year. Within this framework, how much socio-economic mobility occurred within the tenantry in terms of movement to larger or smaller holdings? This can be answered by examining the

¹⁵ Scottish R.O., Old Parish Registers, Monikie parish, OPR 311 1-3.

change in holding sizes shown in the rentals. If holdings are divided into the seven size categories shown in Table 1 then 56 per cent of all increases in holding sizes did not involve a tenant moving into a higher size category and are unlikely to have involved marked changes in the socio-economic position of the tenant involved. Only 12 per cent of all tenants showed marked upward social mobility by moving into a higher class of holding size, whether by migration or other types of adjustment. There was a good deal of small-scale adjustment within the individual size groups, and geographical moves tended to produce more marked upward changes of holding size than non-migratory alterations. Significant downward socio-economic mobility was even less common. Most farmers finished their period of tenancy leasing a holding of more or less the same size as when they started, suggesting that the various levels of the tenantry were substantially self-recruiting and that despite the range of holding sizes the idea of a 'farming ladder' had only limited applicability.

The difficulty of upward socio-economic mobility within the Panmure tenantry can be appreciated by examining the resources needed to stock holdings of a given size. This can be done using commissary court testaments.¹⁶ The total value of farming stock, including livestock, crops and implements, was abstracted for a sample of sixty-five tenants and sixteen cottars. The mean value of farming stock for cottars, £91 Scots, was not materially different from that of smallholders paying under five bolls (£100 Scots). This explains the ease of movement between the cottars and the lowest level of the tenantry noted previously. Above this level, however, the mean value of farming stock increased rapidly. Tenants paying between twenty-one and forty bolls of grain required seven times as much capital to stock their holdings, tenants of the largest

holdings fifteen times as much. Given this scale of difference it is not surprising that few tenants in the two lowest size categories rose to acquire one of the largest holdings. The amount of capital needed to stock the latter suggests that inherited wealth must have been important in determining who was in a position to lease the larger holdings.

It is possible to make some assessment of downward mobility from the tenantry to the lower levels of rural society in Downie barony by comparing names of tenants with those of people who received money from the parish poor fund.¹⁷ Between 1660 and 1714, out of 118 tenants only twelve received any poor relief. Nine cases involved smallholders; only three tenants of larger holdings came onto the poor list after relinquishing their tenancies and only one received money on a regular basis. It was thus uncommon for tenants to sink to this level.

Stability and crisis in tenant society

Many features of tenant society at Panmure were clearly stable throughout the period under consideration, particularly the nature and level of rents, farm structures and holding sizes. Within this framework, how vulnerable were tenants to short-term economic fluctuations? Some indications can be gained from studying the turnover of holdings, levels of rent arrears, and grain prices.

An analysis of the testaments of Panmure tenants mentioned above shows that they operated with very slim reserves. If the debts owing to and by tenants at their deaths are related to the value of their farming stock, 78 per cent had a net deficit which, had all the debts been called in at once, could only have been met by selling the livestock, implements and grain. In 13 per cent of the testaments the debts owed by the tenants exceeded the combined value of debts owing to them and farming stock, while only 10 per

¹⁶ Scottish R O, CC Series, Brechin commissary court records.

¹⁷ The parish poor records are interleaved with the parish register, *op cit*.

cent had a credit surplus which equalled or exceeded the value of their equipment. This implies that tenants may have been highly vulnerable to short-term crises such as harvest failures. On the other hand, a high proportion of the debts owed by most tenants consisted of rent arrears, and much of their security or vulnerability would have depended on their landlord's attitude towards arrears. There are indications of an important element of what can be seen as paternalism, shown, for example, by the readiness to enter widows into their husbands' holdings, and by the way in which tenants were allowed to continue working a holding and even have a lease renewed despite substantial rent arrears. Estate policy seems to have been to keep tenancies filled as far as possible even when the rent could not be paid immediately. Instances of holdings not being cultivated due to the lack of suitable tenants were rare.

While the financial weakness of the tenants may have encouraged a flexible attitude towards arrears by the earls of Panmure the system also reinforced the farmers' dependent position. While most rents were paid in grain, arrears were charged at a money equivalent. Undelivered grain was charged against the tenant at the market rate for that particular year. Thus, after a poor harvest when prices were high, tenants accumulated heavy arrears which they had to try and pay off from surplus production in good years when prices were low. It might have taken several years to write off arrears accumulated after one bad harvest.

While the survival of such rent structures into the eighteenth century in Lowland Scotland may be attributed in part to inertia and a lack of economic growth, the system may also have been a method of social control which prevented tenants from accumulating enough capital to enter the land market. A recent study of land ownership in Forfarshire during the late seventeenth century has emphasized the absence of any 'peasant' land market and

stressed the ability of the nobility and shire gentry to remain exclusive groups capable of resisting penetration of the land market by outsiders; for example, by urban burgesses.¹⁸ Such rent structures may have helped landowners to distance themselves from their tenants by maintaining the gulf between proprietor and tenant as the greatest single division within Scottish rural society. The existence of large sums in arrears may also have enabled proprietors to borrow money more easily, while the arrears themselves gave them direct control over their tenants.

The prices paid by Dundee and Montrose merchants for Panmure oatmeal (Fig 2) give a general indication of the quality of harvests in the second half of the seventeenth century, though conditions for individual baronies and farms may well have varied. The trend of prices corresponds broadly with those for eastern Scotland as a whole, with generally low prices from the 1660s through to the 1690s and then a sharp increase reflecting a succession of poor harvests which brought widespread famine conditions.¹⁹ The pattern of rent arrears correlated highly with prices (+0.72, significant at the 0.01 level), though even during the period of generally low prices between 1660 and 1695 some arrears still occurred in all baronies in each year.

The crisis of the later 1690s affected all tenants, though in Carmyllie, where rents were paid in money, the increase in arrears was much lower proportionally than elsewhere. Whatever the social and demographic effects of the harvest failures, the economic crisis was prolonged. Arrears began to build up rapidly after the first sharp rise in prices following the harvest of 1696, but although prices fell after 1701, arrears remained at far higher levels than during

¹⁸ J. McFaulds, 'Forfarshire landowners and their estates 1660-90', unpublished PhD thesis, Univ Glasgow, 1980, p. 239.

¹⁹ R. Mitchison, 'The movements of Scottish grain prices in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries', *Econ Hist Rev*, 2nd series, 18, 1965, pp. 278-91.

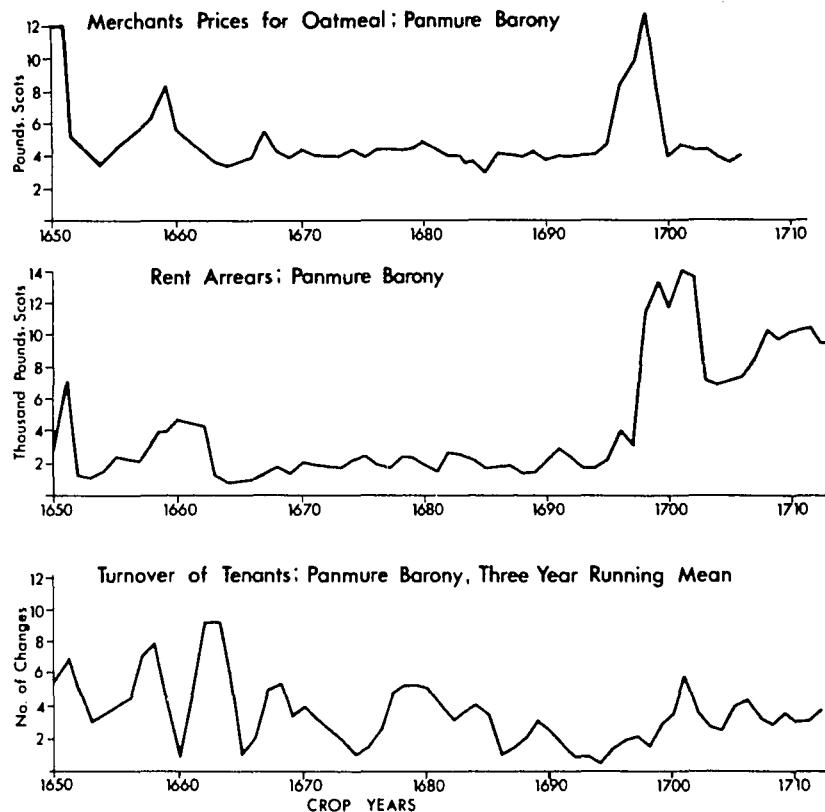


FIGURE 2

most of the second half of the seventeenth century until the data for most baronies terminate in 1714. In Kelly, where the series continues into the 1740s, arrears peaked at about twelve times the 1695 figure but remained at around nine times this level until 1711, after which they fell slowly, though without returning to late seventeenth-century levels. As late as 1717 the barony accounts list arrears specifically for 'crop 1699 and before' and sums of money described as 'old rests' were listed separately through the 1720s and 1730s, gradually diminishing, in all probability, as tenants died off rather than as debts were repaid.

To what extent were economic fluctuations reflected in the rate of turnover of the tenants? There was virtually no correlation between the annual turnover of tenants and levels of arrears for the same crop year. Correlations between arrears in any crop

year and turnover in the succeeding two, three or four crop years were only very weakly positive, and were not statistically significant, suggesting only a slight time lag effect. Difficult economic conditions do not seem to have led to a markedly increased turnover with bankrupt tenants relinquishing their holdings. A notable feature is that there was no sudden rise in turnover during the late 1690s. Along with the fact that no farms were left untenanted, this indicates that no matter how indebted tenants became they were not displaced. Farms continued to be occupied and when a holding fell vacant a new tenant was found. The period from 1696 to 1701 is indeed characterized by relatively low rates of turnover. With the crisis being so widespread there may have been little incentive for tenants to move elsewhere, while the factor may have been unwilling to allow tenants to move to other estates as this

would have made the recovery of arrears more difficult. Only around 1702 was there a rise in turnover, but overall from 1696 to 1702 the turnover of tenants was only marginally higher than for 1689-95. While it is difficult to assess the effects of such crises on the morale of tenants they did not lead to large-scale displacement.

Conclusion

This paper has merely introduced a largely unexplored topic. Nevertheless, tenant society on one Scottish estate has been shown to have been more complex than previous models have allowed for. There was more continuity of occupation of holdings than expected and the prevalence of short leases did not necessarily in itself cause high levels of turnover. Some interesting contrasts in mobility patterns among the tenantry existed, however, and further investigation of the demographic background to farming, such as age at first marriage and first tenancy, and life expectancy, may help explain them. Tenants were geographically mobile but on a more limited scale than expected and over shorter distances: their responses in changing the sizes of their holdings seem to have been essentially cautious. Tenants may have formed a comparatively stable element within rural society, being less mobile than cottars or farm servants, but the relationship between these groups and the tenantry requires clarification to determine to what degree they were linked by life and labour cycles: for example, whether it was common for sons of tenants to work away from home as farm servants before acquiring their first holding. The Panmure tenantry was more markedly stratified than might have been expected, but there was only a moderate amount of socio-economic mobility within the farming community and little indication of the existence of a farming ladder.

The contrasts in the amount of capital investment required to stock holdings of

different sizes suggest that it may have been hard to build up the resources required to work one of the larger areas, other than by inheritance, reinforcing the idea of continuity and limited social mobility within tenant society. Patterns of debt, credit and capital accumulation within tenant society require further study. Limited socio-economic and geographical mobility, and the restricted participation in the market system implied by rent structures, indicate that the responses of tenants are likely to have been cautious and conservative. While their limited capital reserves may have rendered tenants potentially vulnerable to short-term economic fluctuations, they were protected by a system of estate management which simultaneously granted them reasonable security of tenure while reinforcing financial insecurity through a rent system which discouraged profit and worked against capital accumulation.

The crisis of the late 1690s, while undoubtedly severe, was not unique. It has been suggested that the demographic effects of the famine of 1623, which by comparison is poorly recorded, may have been far greater.²⁰ However, the pattern of arrears following the late seventeenth-century crisis highlights the problems faced by tenants. It is not difficult to appreciate why commercial efficiency in agriculture should have been so low and innovations difficult to introduce. Tenants were caught in a vicious circle which could only be broken by alterations in rent structures, more direct participation in a market economy, and greater capital accumulation. The existing system ensured that when prices were low, as between the 1660s and mid-1690s, tenants could accumulate little capital, whereas when prices were high they built up debts which could wipe out the marginal returns from several favourable harvests. Changes in this system were introduced only gradually during the eighteenth century. It must be emphasized

²⁰ M. Flinn (ed), *Scottish Population History*, Cambridge, 1977, pp 119-26.

that while this study of a single estate may have some general validity for arable areas of eastern Scotland, particularly north of the Tay, different farming economies, different farm and holding structures, and different estate management policies could have

produced contrasting conditions within the tenantry, greater capital accumulation and different responses to economic change. It is hoped that further research will shed more light on some of the questions which have been raised here.

Notes on Contributors (continued from page 158)

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Village and Town: Occupations and Wealth in the Hinterland of Gloucester, 1660-1700

By PETER RIPLEY

I

DURING the years since the Second World War much use has been made of probate inventories in studies of the pre-industrial period, but no direct comparisons of towns and villages based on this source have been attempted.¹ In the present article it is proposed to focus attention on late seventeenth-century Gloucester and to identify the physical extent of its hinterland before examining the occupations of the city, the smaller towns, and the villages. Subsequently the opportunities for accumulating wealth within the three types of settlement will be assessed, and in conclusion the composition of wealth will be scrutinized. By selecting the area surrounding a county town it is possible to focus on an economic structure common to many parts of England. With its population of about 5000 in the seventeenth century, Gloucester was smaller than Bristol, the regional capital of the south-west, and in its network of commercial relationships was devoted to internal rather than international trade. Unlike new towns such as the port of Chatham and the burgeoning industrial complex of Birmingham, Gloucester was a traditional shire town in which administrative, legal and ecclesiastical business supplemented standard market and service activities. As only a few random diocese of Gloucester inventories survive for the period before the Civil War it is necessary

to turn to the late seventeenth century for satisfactory evidence, and documents for the years 1660-99 will be the main source used.

II

Evidence concerning the nature of Gloucester's hinterland is to be found in the records of the Tolsey Court which met every weekday with the sheriffs presiding. Although this body had competence over all personal causes arising within Gloucester's boundaries, the vast majority of cases heard were concerned with debt. Two books which embrace the years 1667-82 are of great value in revealing the extent of the city's hinterland, for they list the towns and villages in which defendants lived.² If attention is limited to defendants from outside Gloucester, 447 people were resident within a radius of ten miles, and only 157 came from further afield. Support for the hypothesis that the city's sphere of influence was so restricted lies in the figures for defendants who gained their livelihood from agriculture: 255 out of a total of 290 yeomen, farmers, husbandmen, and gardeners lived within ten miles' distance. Population figures obtained by the antiquary Sir Robert Atkyns throw further light on the nature of the hinterland: 15,083 lived in the western half and 21,306 in the eastern half; thus Gloucester was flanked on the one side by relatively underdeveloped tracts, many of them beyond the Severn, and on the other side by the more sophisticated Vale and Cotswold escarp-

¹Most of the relevant literature on probate inventories is conveniently listed in J D Marshall, 'Agrarian Wealth and Social Structure in Pre-industrial Cumbria', *Econ Hist Rev*, Vol XXXIII, 1980, pp 503-5. J Patten, 'Village and Town: an Occupational Study', *Ag Hist Rev*, Vol XX, 1972, is based on muster roll material.

²Gloucestershire Record Office: GBR 1426/1548, 1427/1549.

ment.³ There were six towns other than Gloucester within the hinterland, and five of these lay to the east of the city. Their size can only be estimated, for with the parish being the unit of measurement it is not possible to distinguish between relatively crowded urban centres and scattered hamlets with small populations. Stroud and Bisley each had about 3000 inhabitants, Tewkesbury 2500, Cheltenham and Painswick 1500 each, and Newent 1000. In addition to their abundance of people, these places possessed active markets to establish them clearly as urban communities. No other settlements qualify. King's Stanley contained 1100 inhabitants but was a sprawling village enlarged by an influx of clothworkers rather than a town. Although Newnham possessed a market it was yet to enjoy its boom as a Severn port and coaching stage on the road to South Wales; with fewer than 500 inhabitants it was smaller than ten parishes of the hinterland encompassing populations of between 500 and 1000. Sixty-two villages had like Newnham between 500 and 100 inhabitants, and ten communities possessed fewer than 100 people.⁴

III

The characteristic farm of the Vale possessed a dairy herd, and cheese was stored in the lofts of yeomen's houses until it was ready for transportation to market. Surplus milk was employed to feed pigs and thus supply bacon, greatly in demand among Gloucestershire consumers, and wheat, barley and beans were the most common

crops. These mixed farms were chiefly small units, with 82 per cent of yeomen leaving herds of twenty cattle or less, and with 75 per cent possessing no more than twenty acres under the plough. Pastoral farming was more firmly established on the higher land to the north-west of the Vale, where only 67 per cent of farmers had herds of twenty animals or less. The yeomen on the Cotswold Hills kept smaller herds on the whole than farmers in the north-west and the Vale, and a greater proportion owned sheep, but like farmers in other parts of the hinterland they tilled fields for wheat and barley. Although there were individuals leaving 280 and 220 sheep, 25 per cent of the farmers had flocks numbering twenty animals or less.⁵

With farming the hub of village life it was natural that the processing of agricultural products should provide occupations. All six of the tanners lived in villages to the west of the Severn where they were able to draw on the resources of a strong breeding area. One maltster was processing barley at Charlton King's, conveniently near Cheltenham's market, and another was serving the needs of small consumers at Redmarley. Grazier-butchers, blacksmiths, and coopers were found throughout Gloucester's hinterland. The limited number of other non-agricultural occupations underlines both the simplicity of rural life and the self-sufficiency of the villagers. Bakers, fishermen, innkeepers, tailors, shoemakers, masons and carpenters served householders' needs, and the survival of inven-

³Diocese of Gloucester parish figures are contained in R Atkyns, *The Ancient and Present State of Gloucestershire*, 1712. This source has been preferred to the hearth tax returns and lists of communicants; although not contemporary it is comprehensive and based on the estimates of well-informed witnesses, the incumbents. The four diocese of Worcester parishes of Eldersfield, Pendock, Redmarley, and Stoke lay in the hinterland, and estimates for these communities are derived from the hearth tax assessment for Michaelmas 1664 (PRO, E 179/201/312).

⁴There is no work providing a complete picture of the hinterland during the late seventeenth century. H P R Finberg, *The Gloucestershire Landscape*, 1971, is useful. The relevant volumes of the *Victoria County History* should also be consulted: *Gloucestershire*, Vol VIII, 1968; Vol X, 1972; Vol XI, 1976; Vol XII, 1981.

⁵The diocese of Gloucester records at Gloucestershire Record Office contain 863 inventories for the hinterland; the documents are identified by the year of probate followed by a serial number, and are referred to below by the abbreviation Gl. Fifty diocese of Worcester inventories are in the Worcester branch of the Hereford and Worcester Record Office (BA 3585/249-359); the abbreviation WI followed by the box number is used below. Twelve Prerogative Court of Canterbury inventories have emerged so far among a collection being prepared for students at the Public Record Office; the relevant classes are PROB 4 and PROB 5. Because of shortage of space, references are confined to individuals and occupational groups of up to ten people. For examples of farming in the hinterland see Gl, 1675/41, 1677/22, 1682/1, 1687/167, 1696/191, 1699/22; WI, 259/130, 321/80, 330/22.

TABLE I
Distribution of Occupational Categories among Settlements of Varying Sizes, 1660-1699⁶

<i>Occupational category</i>	<i>Gloucester</i>	<i>Market towns</i>	<i>Villages</i>	<i>Total</i>
Agriculture	7	67	407	481
Textiles	4	60	76	140
Food and drink	37	24	20	81
Clothing and footwear	16	14	20	50
Building and allied trades	7	10	25	42
Professions	16	4	18	38
Metalwork	11	6	13	30
Distribution	14	9	2	25
Transport	2	1	16	19
Leatherwork	5	4	6	15
Miscellaneous	1	1	2	4
	120	200	605	925

tories for only two distributors, a Birdlip mercer and a petty chapman of Rodborough, suggests that for all but the most basic goods the countryman was dependent upon a visit to his nearest market town.⁷

Since a great proportion of land was under grass and since there was a restricted number of trades and crafts in the villages, many countrymen were forced to search for alternative sources of employment. Fourteen men living in the riverside villages were mariners, and eight were the outright owners or had shares in vessels which plied between the Severn towns and Bristol. However, textiles absorbed a larger number of countrymen, and inhabitants of the Cotswolds and to a lesser extent of villages in the Vale such as Arlingham and Moreton Valence were engaged in the production of woollen cloth. Apart from the staple broadcloth, fabric was made by narrow-weavers at Cowley and Shurdington, and rugs by workers based at Woodchester. Although thirty-one of the thirty-nine weavers were independent enough of the clothiers to own their own looms, there was a contrast

between the small farmer-weavers and those who relied completely on industrial work, with the men in the first category leaving almost without exception greater personal wealth than the latter.⁸

The market towns possessed a greater number of specialist processors than the villages. While no inventories for village dyers survive, Stroud, Bisley, Painswick and Newent each contained a single member of the trade, and there were besides two clothiers at Bisley, two at Painswick and one at Stroud who owned vats and colours. Three maltsters at Cheltenham, two at Newent and one at Tewkesbury tapped neighbouring villages for supplies of barley, and the presence of two tanners in Newent reflects the pastoral nature of much of the farming in that town's vicinity. Mercers' and chandlers' shops were general stores from which might be purchased woollen cloth or lighter fabrics, groceries, candles, wines and spirits, tobacco, and hardware. Both the town resident and the country visitor could avail themselves of the services of barber-surgeons or sample the fare provided at coaching inns. The existence of inventories for a bodicemaker, a joiner, a

⁶Occupational categories are based on L Clarkson, *The Pre-Industrial Economy in England, 1500-1700*, 1971, pp 88-92.

⁷Gl, 1684/231, 1688/13, 1689/11, 1690/202, 1692/105, 1694/243, 1695/29, 1697/49, 147; Wl, 310/268.

⁸Gl, 1663/86, 1670/22, 1675/35, 1682/90, 1683/32, 1684/99, 119, 438, 1685/148, 203, 1686/176, 1687/184, 1690/62, 210, 242, 1692/33, 1695/32, 1697/78, 1698/25, 1699/28.

brazier, a pewterer, a saddler, and a collar-maker — occupations not found among the village documents — are eloquent testimony to the greater complexity of the economic structure of the small towns.⁹

Following the movement of clothiers from Gloucester to the Cotswolds during the sixteenth century the county town had ceased to be a centre for textile manufacture, but the existence of inventories for a combmaker and a feltmaker show that individuals might profit from supplying the craftsmen of the hinterland or from making raw material for hatters. Metal-working had supplanted cloth as the main industry, as is witnessed by documents for four pinmakers, two wiredrawers, two cutlers, and a gunsmith. Like the smaller towns Gloucester had a role as a processor of agricultural produce, and maltsters, curriers and tanners were working within its boundaries. But the city outclassed its urban neighbours chiefly because of its strength as a centre for distribution, shopping, and services. Mercers, haberdashers, vintners and booksellers assembled stock from Europe and North America to perform a dual role, as wholesale suppliers of small businessmen, and as retailers serving Gloucester's residents and visitors. The stock of these men was larger and more specialized than that of distributors in the market towns. The city's professional men, lawyers, scriveners, doctors, barber-surgeons and schoolmasters, provided services for the cross-section of country society attending the assizes, prosecuting litigation, attending to the needs of their families, or merely seeking diversion from the routine of rural life during autumn and winter.¹⁰

IV

The occupations of the wealthiest men illustrate the nature of the economy in the various settlements of the hinterland. The ten most prosperous men in the city of Gloucester were two mercers, a haberdasher, a woollen-draper, a grocer, a chandler, a baker, a maltster, a tanner, and a prebendary. William Niccolls, a tanner, had the largest personal wealth, £2522, but six men were members of the distributive trades which gave Gloucester economic leverage over the market towns. Textiles provided most opportunities for creating wealth in the small towns, where three clothiers were among the ten wealthiest men and in Painswick the clothier William Small with an inventory of £2331 was the richest man. A yeoman, a mercer, a haberdasher, an innholder, a maltster, a tanner, and a minister were among the ten wealthiest people. Agriculture and textiles provided residents of the village with a twofold opportunity of making a fortune, and the two men with the greatest personal wealth belonged to these occupational categories. Jeremiah Norris, clothier, left £5250 when he died in Rodborough in 1683 and Rees Heald, yeoman of Churchdown and occupant of Elmbridge Court, left £1445 in 1699. Five of the remaining most wealthy men were yeomen and three clothiers.¹¹

A more detailed picture of fortunes can be obtained through scrutiny of the inventories according to the occupations of the deceased. In Gloucester a market gardener and a yeoman left over £100, but the five other agriculturalists had personal wealth under that figure. Transport and textiles provided so few men for whom there are inventories that comment is not feasible. In building and allied trades only one cooper and one joiner left wealth over £100, and

⁹GI, 1666/8, 1670/100, 1671/16, 1677/12, 1678/28, 86, 1682/14, 47, 48, 119, 1684/14, 228, 1685/251, 1686/236, 239, 1687/47, 91, 1689/34, 114, 170, 1690/93, 1692/31, 1693/205, 1696/85, 115, 185, 1697/149, 1698/143, 1699/16; PRO, PROB 4/1955, PROB 5/378.

¹⁰GI, 1662/12, 1668/21, 1678/21, 1679/15, 1682/7, 92, 1683/35, 1684/3, 56, 193, 207, 1685/204, 309, 1686/129, 132, 1687/249, 1690/193, 1691/205, 223, 1692/118, 1694/79, 1695/139.

¹¹GI, 1677/12, 48, 65, 1682/73, 1684/148, 229, 246, 1685/204, 269, 289, 1686/161, 295, 1691/153, 1693/170, 224, 1695/196, 1696/176, 198, 1698/36, 143, 1699/3, 11, 16; PRO, PROB 4/361, 1179, 2986, 3422, 3892, 3895, 5629.

TABLE 2
Median Personal Wealth in Settlements of
Varying Sizes, 1660-99 (£)

Occupational category	Gloucester	Market towns	Villages
Agriculture	38	61	101
Distribution	684	270	—
Leatherwork	148	169	193
Food and drink	200	64	118
Professions	112	23	152
Clothing and footwear	118	36	28
Metalwork	39	123	27
Textiles	65	47	38
Building	44	33	44
Transport	—	—	39
All non-agricultural categories	131	58	46

among the metalworkers the reward for skill is reflected in £196 left by William Collier, gunsmith, and £113 by Thomas Farley, cutler, but by contrast three out of four pinner, the backbone of the city's metal trades, left sums under £100. Although the making of articles of dress and footwear was a vital part of the city economy, material rewards were slender, for the personal wealth of the tailors ranged from £3 to £369 with four out of seven men leaving less than £100. Nine documents for bakers show values from £19 to £747 and include four totals over £250; the butchers' inventories comprise two under £100, three between £100 and £250, and one of £536. The occupation of innholder included both the manager of a large coaching inn and the owner of a small alehouse; one man left £529, three between £250 and £500, four between £100 and £250, and three less than £100. The sum of over £2000 left by William Nicolls, tanner, has already been noticed, but the wealth of the one other tradesman was valued at £148. The wholesaling activities of the distributors allowed the accumulation of the largest sums: the value of the mercers' inventories began at £193 and rose

to £1128, with three of the five tradesmen represented leaving over £500; a grocer and a Chandler each possessed wealth exceeding £1000. Caution must be employed when commenting on the wealth of the professional men, for few inventories are available. Two lawyers who practised in the consistory court left £231 and £114, a doctor £31, a schoolmaster £178 — all relatively small sums. The prebendary Abraham Gregory's inventory totalled £1729, that of John Middleton, archdeacon, £112, and those of three minor churchmen £354, £35 and £10. Altogether this élite appears to have had little business acumen, unless their assets were concealed in real property, and their wealth was on a par with that of the barber-surgeons, men of more humble status, who left £351, £172, £73 and £41.¹²

In the market towns three clothiers left over £1000, four between £500 and £1000, six between £100 and £500, and seven under £100. But no other men could rival these *entrepreneurs*, for although dyers' wealth ranged from £17 to £380 three men left less than £100, and of the nineteen broadweavers all but one had estates under £100 in value. Three of the mercers left sums between £500 and £750, but no distributor in the market towns left over £1000. Although two out of five maltsters had estates between £500 and £750, the food and drink trades appear to have suffered from the lack of custom such as was available in the county town, for five out of six bakers, both butchers and five out of seven innholders died worth less than £100. Likewise all six cordwainers had inventories under the same figure, and two out of the three tailors. As in Gloucester, high expertise brought rewards to the

¹²GI, 1663/78, 113, 220, 1664/15, 27, 1665/56, 1668/21, 1669/12, 1677/29, 107, 140, 1678/17, 20-1, 1682/7, 71, 1683/4, 1684/3, 56, 328, 399, 406, 442, 1685/20, 83, 204, 260, 309, 1686/132, 157, 1687/97, 102, 166, 171, 214, 1688/75, 1689/73, 119, 183, 1690/63, 86, 165, 193, 1691/87, 153, 223, 1692/196, 205, 1693/89, 101, 104, 170, 210, 224, 1694/79, 121, 242, 1695/139, 226, 241, 1696/176, 1697/180, 213, 221, 1698/86, 163, 170; PRO, PROB 4/446, 1179, 1951.

metalworkers, for a watchmaker who left £311 was the only man in this category to top £100, but unlike his counterpart in the county town the carpenter could leave over £100, and two out of three men had wealth exceeding that figure. Unfortunately there is very little evidence for the professional men, and lawyers, doctors and schoolmasters are unrepresented. Robert Pleydell, minister, had wealth of £811, but all three of the barber-surgeons' inventories totalled less than £100. Farming on the fringes of the market towns gave prosperity to a few but was probably only marginally profitable to half the men for whom documents survive. Three yeomen left between £500 and £1000, five between £250 and £500, sixteen between £100 and £250, and twenty-nine less than £100. All but one of the husbandmen had personal wealth under £100.¹³

Solid but unremarkable assets characterize the inventories of the village farmers. One left wealth over £1000, eleven men wealth in the range £500-£1000, fifty-five between £250 and £500, but the majority of the yeomen left smaller sums — 138 wealth between £100 and £250, and 157 less than £100. Probably the south-western quadrant produced the greatest prosperity within the hinterland. If one restricts analysis of inventory wealth to fortunes of £250 and over, twenty-seven men were residents of villages to the south-west of the city as against twelve to the north-west, fifteen to the north-east and eleven to the south-east. The village clothiers numbered eleven men leaving over £250, six between £100 and £250, and eleven under £100, but with the exception of two broadweavers and one clothworker all other members of the textile industry left less than £100. This

distribution of wealth — a few relatively affluent men outnumbered by a poorer majority — was common to all occupational categories within local rural society. In the food trades one butcher left £528, two men between £100 and £250, and three less than £100; although two cordwainers left over £250 and one between £100 and £250 all six other members of the craft left less than £100, as did all eleven tailors; one mariner's inventory was valued at between £250 and £500, two men's between £100 and £250, and the estates of ten men at less than £100. Much the same pattern is revealed by the inventories of the village parsons, the only professional men, for the personal estates of four were in the range £250-£500, six left between £100 and £250, and eight less than £100.¹⁴

V

It has already been seen that the nature of occupations and material assets divided countryman and townsman, and it is now appropriate to turn to the structure of individual wealth for which probate inventories are a rich and relatively untapped source. The Prerogative Court of Canterbury documents were more carefully prepared and detailed than those for the diocesan courts, but all enable the student to ascertain the distribution of personal wealth under the headings shown in Table 3. Only one difficulty was encountered in making the analysis, and this arose from the custom of the appraisers for men whose estates were administered by the consistory court of Gloucester grouping 'money in purse' together with clothing. From a study of the inventories where clothing and the cash left on an individual's person were shown separately it appears that £3 was the average value of the

¹³ GI, 1663/267, 1670/29, 100, 1675/27, 41, 1677/12, 63, 68, 108, 133, 1678/38, 113, 1681/172, 1682/48, 63, 1683/30, 1684/14, 121, 437, 1685/40, 46, 95, 161, 173, 251, 311, 1686/119, 126, 1687/91, 247, 1689/34, 170, 1690/93, 1692/31, 137, 184, 227, 1693/7, 20, 1694/25, 113, 1695/24, 145, 190, 238, 1696/85, 168, 203, 211, 1697/149, 1699/3, 16, 204; PRO, PROB 4/361, 1955, 2441, 2986, PROB 5/378.

¹⁴ See for example GI, 1663/263, 1664/93, 1675/35, 66, 1678/11, 1682/125, 1684/119, 220, 1685/67, 378, 1687/168, 1689/83, 1691/131, 1692/60, 82, 1694/230, 1695/177, 196, 1696/105, 212, 1697/118, 1698/87, 123, 1699/53; WI, 336/65.

TABLE 3
The Structure of Personal Wealth, 1660-99

	£			Per cent		
	Villages	Market towns	Gloucester	Villages	Market towns	Gloucester
Farm stock	32,872	4,664	792	39.6	15.0	2.7
Stock-in-trade	5,191	6,919	7,047	6.2	22.4	24.0
Money and plate	4,766	2,318	2,505	5.7	7.5	8.5
Credits	15,667	9,957	9,244	18.9	32.2	31.5
Leases	10,722	1,790	3,514	12.9	5.8	12.0
Household goods	13,892	5,288	6,273	16.7	17.1	21.3
Total	83,110	30,936	29,375	57.9	21.6	20.5

garments, and this allowance has been made when working out the calculations needed.

The figures for farm stock confirm that agriculture was the basis of the village economy, and that it shrank from marginal to minimal significance in the market towns and Gloucester. By contrast, stock-in-trade amounted to a small proportion of village wealth, but bulked larger in both the market towns and Gloucester. In the city the distributors, food and drink tradesmen, and leatherworkers held a variety of stock, but members of other occupations possessed exiguous quantities of materials and a few implements. Tailors and cordwainers tended to make suits and shoes for individual customers on request rather than keep articles on display, builders had little other than their tools, and pinmakers located in small workshops needed chiefly coils of copper wire in addition to the mills required by the manufacturing process. Finished cloths in Stroud and Painswick constituted £3209 of the stock of the market town testators, but for other occupational groups the pattern was much the same as in Gloucester. In the villages the yarn, cloth and implements of the clothiers and dyers were valued at £3349, much the highest proportion of stock. As in the towns builders, makers of clothing and footwear, blacksmiths and other metalworkers left less in this respect than

members of the food and drink trades, and leatherworkers. The vessels of the mariners were valued at £418.

The credits left by the deceased throw light on commercial and financial practice in the hinterland. From the city inventories which allow analysis £2660 had been placed in bills, bonds and other specialties, and a further £259 in rents and tithes, but £2167 appear in the documents as 'book' debts — the sums recorded in ledgers by tradesmen allowing their customers the privilege of delaying payment for purchases. Twenty-five tradesmen left credits worth £100 and over as assets, and twenty-nine less than that sum; five professional men had over the figure of £100, and the same number smaller amounts. In spite of the vagaries of business transactions the city residents seem to have been reasonably successful in making their creditors meet their obligations, for the documents describe £871 of debts as 'good', and only £422 as 'bad' or 'desperate'. The composition of credits in the market towns suggests a less adventurous attitude than in the city, for £2363 were in specialties, £171 in rents, and a mere £606 in book debts. However, testators appear to have been as skilful as Gloucester tradesmen in recovering debts, with £1107 categorized as good and £493 as bad. The mechanism of credit made less impact on village society, and the small creditor, almost invariably a farmer, was

typical. Ninety-five men's inventories contained credits less than £50, fifty-three men's sums between £50 and £100, and twenty-seven sums over £100. As compared with the deceased in both the city and the market towns, villagers were less adroit in recovering money and more inclined to resort to the safe device of the specialty. Of the debts which can be analysed a mere £315 were good and £519 bad. A total of £6800 had been placed in specialties, £319 in rents and the sale of produce, and £288 were book debts.¹⁵

The type of property leased reveals the divergent aspirations of the townsman and countryman. For the city tradesman the houses and tenements owned by the Corporation and the Dean and Chapter offered first a site for shop and workshop and later a means of increasing capital by subletting. A prosperous minority of those who held leases, eight out of a total of thirty-three, left £2284 out of the £3514 shown under Table 3 in this form of personal wealth. In the market towns urban housing formed the most popular attraction for the thirty-four tradesmen concerned, and only a few men invested in country property. The inventories reveal nothing about the leases held by the farmers who lived on the fringes of the small towns. By contrast, a clear picture of the villagers' holdings emerges. Altogether 188 men held leases of whom 134 were farmers, fifty-three craftsmen, and one a professional man. Many yeomen of modest means held a single farm by leasehold. For the more successful man investment in leasehold was often a device to secure a greater acreage in the village where the home farm was located. Alternatively the prosperous yeoman took leases in his own and a neighbouring village, and was thus able to provide more grazing for

himself or a sub-tenant. Most of the craftsmen held small amounts of arable, and typical of these men were the weavers and blacksmiths growing food in plots adjoining their cottages.

As regards household goods, residents of the city enjoyed marginally higher living standards than testators of the market towns and villages. Leather chairs and feather mattresses gave the tradesmen of Gloucester comfort, and prints and pieces of porcelain decorated their mantelpieces. Farmhouses of the hinterland contained sturdy and serviceable furniture, but there were few instances of the apeing of fashion. However, half the yeomen possessed parlours and were able to enjoy a degree of ease. In general the townsmen secured more spacious domestic surroundings than countrymen through owning or leasing larger houses; six men out of ten in the city and market towns lived in dwellings with six rooms or more as against four men out of ten in the villages.

VI

Finally, does a picture of contrasting town and village communities emerge from our study of the hinterland of Gloucester? In terms of occupations and leases there was polarization. Agriculture enjoyed primacy in the villages, and when it was practised by the residents of the market towns tended to be located in hamlet satellites, while in Gloucester the main emphasis was on market gardening to support the city population. Although both villages and towns participated in cloth production, weaving was predominantly a village occupation while town dyers and other specialists profited from central locations to finish the process. In both the city and the small towns distribution was a key function, with the shops of mercers and chandlers supplementing the weekly markets. There was both an urban and rural pattern in the acquisition of leases. Most of the tradesmen of Gloucester and the market towns

¹⁵ For comparison with another area, see B A Holderness, 'Credit in English Rural Society before the Nineteenth Century, with Special Reference to the Period 1650-1720', *Ag Hist Rev*, Vol XXIV, 1976.

turned their backs on the opportunity of obtaining country estates and farms, and invested in town houses. For townsmen, trade successfully prosecuted might lead to a *rentier* life and *bourgeois* comforts; for countrymen, agricultural profits allowed the accumulation of yet more property to be farmed or sublet. However, too simplistic a contrast between townsmen and countrymen must be resisted. Materially life in the city had more to offer than life in the smaller towns and the villages, for

whereas mean personal wealth in Gloucester was £244, it was £154 in the other towns and £137 in the countryside. Again in the more sophisticated use of credit the tradesmen of Gloucester showed a more modern outlook than the inhabitants of the market towns and villages. The county town presented the main channel of advance to the businessman, and because of the importance and diversity of its functions it was the hub of the hinterland.

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Village Traders and the Emergence of a Proletariat in South Warwickshire, 1750–1851

By J M MARTIN

THE numerical dominance of the landless labourer within agricultural districts like the Feldon of Warwickshire is a commonplace of nineteenth-century social history. In the east Feldon for example over 60 per cent of occupied males were of that class at the 1851 census.¹ This transformation is often associated with enclosure, although the details remain almost wholly obscure.² One of the present aims is to probe further the implications of Feldon land tax figures which warn of the extreme complexity and variability of rural society on the eve of change.³ By pressing into use a variety of sources one hopes to illuminate more clearly the impact of enclosure and the growing pattern of landlessness. The focus here is largely upon the east Feldon. In 1730 this remained an area of generally nucleated settlement and extensive common fields. Specialized industries like those found in the densely populated hamlets of North Warwickshire, or in adjoining counties like Northamptonshire, were largely absent. The debt here to other writers on the eighteenth century will be obvious. Malcolmson and Patten have made general statements about the cottager and country trading classes, while Kerr, Holderness, Neeson and Obelkevich have

each produced suggestive case-studies with a bearing on the present piece.⁴

The Feldon was a wholly farming locality, but in the eighteenth century the bulk of the pre-enclosure villagers, it will be suggested, probably followed a trade or craft. Malcolmson's recent text can perhaps provide a useful starting point. In many localities, even where most men did not occupy regular field land, they might, he notes, still secure a major part of their livelihood from the land because of the wide prevalence of customary rights of usage.⁵ So in the Feldon many of the near-landless preserved rights of access to the land in one form or another. The present discussion attempts to assess the usefulness of such rights, highlighting the vulnerability of common-field communities on the eve of the re-ordering of the fields. The land could sustain a not inconsiderable population of cottagers and tiny landowners, both occupying and non-occupying, precisely because they drew their living not only from the land, but also from other ancillary pursuits. This can perhaps be seen as an intermediate stage in the proletarianization of the village community, though in its origins it preceded the parliamentary phase of the enclosure movement.

A detail which calls for a word of explanation at the outset is the concept of village trader used here. The cottager who

¹The author is grateful to Drs J Thirsk and M Turner for commenting on an earlier draft of this piece. The 1851 census enumerators' schedules for South Warwickshire, PRO, HO 107/2075–7.

²For general comment see: G E Mingay, 'The Size of Farms in the 18th Century', *Econ Hist Rev*, 2nd ser, XIV, 1961, pp 480–7; Arthur Young and his Times, 1975, pp 112–15; *The Agricultural Revolution: Changes in Agriculture 1660–1880*, 1977, pp 52–3, 64; M E Turner, 'Parliamentary Enclosure and Landownership Change in Buckinghamshire', *Econ Hist Rev*, 2nd ser, XXVIII, 1975, pp 565–61.

³J M Martin, 'The Parliamentary Enclosure Movement and Rural Society in Warwickshire', *Ag Hist Rev*, 15, I, 1967, pp 19–39; 'The Small Landowner and Parliamentary Enclosure in Warwickshire', *Econ Hist Rev*, 2nd ser, XXXII, 3, 1979, pp 323–43.

⁴R W Malcolmson, *Life and Labour in England 1700–1780*, 1981, pp 23–158; J Patten, *English Towns 1500–1700*, 1978, pp 205–23; B Kerr, *Bound to the Soil: A Social History of Dorset 1750–1918*, 1968, pp 12–136; B A Holderness, 'Rural Tradesmen 1660–1850: A Regional Study in Lindsey', *Lincs Hist and Arch*, 7, 1972, pp 77–81; J Neeson, 'Common Right and Enclosure in Eighteenth Century Northamptonshire', unpubl. PhD thesis, University of Warwick, 1977, pp 188–220; J Obelkevich, *Religion and Rural Society: South Lindsey 1825–1875*, Oxford, 1976, pp 46–102.

⁵Malcolmson, *op cit*, p 24.

inhabited the pastoral districts of England, and who found his salvation around 1700 in the pursuit of some specialized craft activity, has become a familiar figure. Preoccupied with national and international markets, such craftsmen were fundamentally different in character from the class of more localized traders which grew up in predominantly arable districts like the Feldon.⁶ In the latter one can broadly distinguish three types of country trader: a sprinkling of very substantial men-maltsters, mercers and the like; the farmer who from the late seventeenth century also occasionally carried on some trading activity; and finally the figure at the heart of the present discussion: the near-landless cottager who combined some craftly calling with a small, but for him significant, stake in the land.

It is not easy in Warwickshire to assess the effects of enclosure since so many villages were enclosed prior to 1780. Still, where common fields survived up to the era of the land tax both tiny landowners and village traders also sometimes survived in large numbers, the one group lending strength to the other.⁷ There is also a suggestion that in such parishes the cottager class at least were adversely affected by the abolition of the fields, and that this in turn hastened the divorce of the trade and craft elements from the land. As the agricultural economy was transformed these groups came under pressure from other quarters. The outcome can be pieced together from the 1851 census returns. In the light of this evidence the discussion concludes by suggesting that village traders and craftsmen formed a major source of recruitment for the rural proletariat of the nineteenth century. This does not, of course, exclude the possible importance of

other factors like the tendency, touched on elsewhere, for local population to expand.⁸

II

One might begin the detailed discussion by considering the question of occupational structure. At Priors Marston, located on the clays of the east Feldon, Styles discovered that by 1710 some 41 per cent of males were already absorbed into the trades, crafts and professions.⁹ Furthermore this tendency was probably strengthened by the depression of prices at that time. Thus, for example, at Brailes, a parish located in the south-east Feldon, Tennant tells us that the numbers engaged in trades and crafts multiplied then, a tendency which was complemented by a proliferation of very small holdings.¹⁰ And this seems to have occurred elsewhere. At Wolfhamcote nearby even the day-labourer was said in 1730 to be better off than the poor farmer on the clays of the east Feldon, so that a move into village trading perhaps made sense to hard-pressed cultivators on poor soils.¹¹

A source which further underlines this trend is the accounts of overseers of the poor. Those of the parishes of Grandborough and Wolfhamcote were examined for the years 1755-70, and those of the parish of Tysoe for 1790-99.¹² In each case some 40-50 males provided a range of 12-17 trading and craft services; the equivalent of half of the 89 and 85 families returned for Grandborough and Wolfhamcote in 1801. There was also a noticeable crowding in the traditional lesser trades like carpentry, tailoring and shoe-making; this became very much more pronounced in the next century, as we shall see, and can be regarded perhaps as a rough

⁶For the early history of these industries see: J Thirsk, *Economic Policy and Projects*, Oxford, 1978, pp 158-80.

⁷On this point see: S Addington, *An Enquiry into the Reasons for and Against Inclosing the Common Fields*, Coventry, 1768, p 38; more recently, Mingay, 'The Size of Farms', *loc cit*, p 473; A J Tennant, 'Brailes: A Feldon Community, 1550-1800', unpubl. MPhil thesis, Leicester, 1977, pp 120-2, 145-52, 193-7.

⁸J M Martin, *The Rise in Population in Eighteenth Century Warwickshire*, Dugdale Society Papers, 23, 1976.

⁹P Styles, 'The Social Structure of Kineton Hundred in the Reign of Charles II', in P Styles, *Studies in 17th Century West Midland History*, Kineton, 1978, p 154.

¹⁰Tennant, *op cit*, pp 120-1.

¹¹See: 'The Case Stated for the Enclosure of Flecknoe Field', Warwickshire County Record Office (henceforth CRO), ref Z/12.

¹²Tysoe Overseers of the Poor Accounts, CRO, ref DR 288/5; Grandborough, ref DR III/26-8; Wolfhamcote, ref DR 167/5.

index of incipient pauperization, made fact after enclosure.

Support for these findings comes from two other useful sources: the Victuallers Recognizances of 1764, and the Return of Persons using Weights, Measures and Balances of 1797.¹³ The proliferation of victuallers was most marked, with several of the larger agricultural parishes recording eight or nine apiece. In aggregate some 34 east Feldon parishes returned 89 licensed persons. The 1797 Return is equally illuminating. It can yield no more than a rough impression of the number of shopkeepers of various sorts, and even they are probably seriously understated in some instances. A case in point is the parish of Hillmorton which returned only three beershops and one bakery, whereas a valuation of 1803 named eight public houses and three bakers within the parish (which coincided with the village).¹⁴ The Return records a total of 195 village shops spread over 36 agricultural parishes of the east Feldon. There were in all 42 separate village trades and crafts including some 13 specialist trades — six coal merchants, four mealmen, and salt-, cheese-, bacon-, tea-, and pig-dealers. The figures show that in parishes like Harbury, Brailes, Tysoe and Hillmorton there were at least 19–16 food and beer shops apiece, which suggests that in each of the larger parishes nearly 20 per cent of the families were taken up with the retailing of food alone during the second half of the eighteenth century.

A further source which sheds valuable light on this village landscape is the £10 freehold rolls which survive for most years from the 1690s and include occupational detail for all resident lease-, copy- and freeholders qualified to serve on juries.¹⁵ Most of these were farmers of some sort or

other. This material serves to remind us that not all village traders were mere cottagers; some were men of more substance, employed in some form of dual enterprise coupled to farming. It was a tendency which began in Brailes, says Tennant, in the late seventeenth century.¹⁶ The number of freeholders tended to increase over the course of the century: in 18 parishes enclosed between 1775–1815 for instance the rise was from 108 to 152 (40 per cent) between those dates. This influx was mainly of the new class of tenant farmer and more substantial dealer. Nevertheless there was a wide variety of occupations (31) outside farming. A count of individuals appearing in the lists of 14 east with a sizable body of small owners the indicated that of 173 persons, some 73 (42 per cent) were said to belong to some trade or craft. In the tiny market-town of Southam, decayed market villages like Kineton and Brinklow, and advantageously situated parishes like Dunchurch, they formed upwards of 60 per cent.¹⁷ And in the larger agricultural parishes they were hardly less striking, with at least 25 of 64 men appearing in the lists of Priors Marston, Napton and Tysoe engaged in some occupation other than farming. Surviving Militia Lists, as for the tiny Hundred of Chipping Warden located upon the adjoining Northampton Clays, make the same point.¹⁸ Of the 360 men aged 18–45 in the year 1777, some 113 (31 per cent) were engaged in trade and crafts, forming the largest single group. Traders and craftsmen were thus a sheet anchor of the traditional community in south Warwickshire. More generally their numbers found reflection in a sustained pamphlet and parliamentary campaign (in which tiny Feldon towns like Southam

¹⁶ Tennant, *op cit*, p 145.

¹⁷ By 1730 Acts had been passed relating to roads from Birmingham to Warminster, Dunchurch to Northampton, and Stratford to Long Compton. An Act of 1769 initiated the Coventry to Banbury stretch of the Oxford Canal.

¹⁸ V A Hatley (ed), *Northampton Militia Lists 1777*, Northampton Record Society, XXV, 1973.

¹³ Victuallers Recognizances, 1764, CRO, QS/35; Return of Persons using Weights, Measures and Balances, 1797. CRO, QS 89/1.

¹⁴ Valuation, parish of Hillmorton, 1803, DR 367/24 in CRO.

¹⁵ Annual Returns of £10 freeholders, 1698–1820, CRO. QS 76.

played their part) aimed against the hawkers and pedlars.¹⁹

How then do we explain the role of the village trader? One part of the explanation was the precocious transport development which transformed the local economy in the half century after about 1670. Ancient saltways and two great drovers ways leading from Wales to London had long traversed the Feldon.²⁰ In addition Stratford-upon-Avon was by 1670 becoming 'an outpost of Bristol's commercial empire', and most of the rest of the Feldon was said to share in the wealth created by this trade.²¹ This is evidenced by the striking number of tiny market towns and villages in and around the seventeenth-century Feldon.²² All — even Southam — were decayed or in decline by 1750, but as Patten noticed, the retail function of their defunct markets passed then to the surrounding villages.²³ Another feature of the time were the early turnpikes which cut across the county from the south-east.²⁴ By 1720 Nuneaton, Atherstone and Coventry, placed in the north of the county at the centre of the Midlands road system, were all said to be flourishing.²⁵ Later the Oxford canal passed through the east Feldon. There were other less tangible advantages accruing to the local trader able to tap the growing consumer market without jeopardizing his favourable taxation position.²⁶ Homer, the Warwickshire cleric and author, noticed the broad-based expansion of demand which overlay the long troughs experienced by local

bread-grain prices with the result that the common man had 'learnt to live more luxuriously'.²⁷

III

When one turns to examine the links of this trading class with the land two points emerge. A marked differentiation, arising possibly out of settlement restrictions, meant that a high proportion of the Feldon population resided in the eighteenth century in common-field villages.²⁸ In a block of 51 parishes comprising the whole of east and south-east Warwickshire bounded by the Fosse Way and Watling Street, an area of 125,220 acres, a mere 15 of the larger agricultural parishes enclosed between 1754 and 1812 accounted for 2023 (50 per cent) of the 4030 families. Another sample group consisting of 11 old-enclosed parishes accounted this time for a mere 390 (9.6 per cent) of the total families. This feature of the population geography of the Feldon should be borne in mind when assessing the social impact of enclosure.

Another point underlined recently by Malcolmson is the widespread access to the land enjoyed in common-field villages. One form of access was highlighted by Addington, drawing his evidence from the counties adjoining the east Feldon. Most large parishes of this type, he observed, had men with 'little parcels of land . . . by the assistance of which with the profits of a little trade and their daily labour they procure a very comfortable living'.²⁹ Nevertheless the most common form of access was acquired through the rights attached to the occupation of cottages: no less than 538 cottage rights were dealt with under the awards of Atherstone, Alcester and Warwick alone. Atherstone, a small market-town placed between the Feldon and the Arden, offers us

¹⁹ See petition from the traders of Southam, said by 1820 to bear 'the aspect of a large village', Commons Journal, XXI, 1727-32, p 484.

²⁰ J H Drew, 'The Welsh Road and the Drovers', *Trans B'ham Arch Soc*, 82, 1965, pp 38-43.

²¹ A Dyer, 'Warwickshire Towns under the Tudors and Stuarts', *Warwickshire History*, III, 1976, p 123.

²² Dyer, *op cit*, pp 124-5; Tennant, *op cit*, p 195.

²³ Patten, *op cit*, pp 205-7, 222; also 'Changing Occupational Structure in the East Anglian Countryside, 1500-1700', in H S A Fox and R A Butlin (eds), *Change in the Countryside: Essays in Rural England 1500-1900*, pp 105-9.

²⁴ See note 17 above.

²⁵ Dyer, *op cit*, pp 123-6.

²⁶ For complaint regarding the light burden of taxation borne by rural traders see *Gentlemen's Magazine*, XIV, 1744, p 654.

²⁷ H Homer, *An Essay . . . Upon the Inclosure of Common Fields*, Oxford, 1766, pp 16-20.

²⁸ For long-standing effect of the Settlement Laws, see debate 'to prevent vexatious removals of the Poor', *Parliamentary History*, 1775, XVII, col 843.

²⁹ Addington, *op cit*, pp 26-33.

a particularly arresting case-study, allowing the enquirer a rare glimpse behind the screen of words, often heightened improvement propaganda, which tended to dismiss such rights as rendered 'useless'.³⁰ Above 100 of the 160 Atherstone cottagers were keeping up to two horses and two cows which were 'plentifully supplied with Grass . . . because that part of the Fields they are restrained Yield a Supply when that which they Enjoyed is gone, and also for above Halfe a Year they have the whole Reape of the common Fields'; in addition, the cottagers had exclusive rights over certain pastures from 23 April till Opentide, and from Mowing to Opentide they had feeding rights in the Midsummer Grounds and Meadowing; finally there were their rights in the Cow Pasture and Outwoods. Enjoyment of such extensive grazing rights had been fundamental to the personal economy of the cottagers, allowing them to 'carry on their business at a distance' and to participate in an extensive carrying trade between the Feldon, Arden and the nearby coalfield. Many parishes may not, of course, have preserved such generous commoning as this. Nevertheless, information contained in manorial, probate and award documents shows that quite a number of Feldon parishes dealt with in Parliament did, in point of fact, preserve a wide variety of commoning: extensive heathland for example finds mention at Hillmorton, Napton, Brailes, Easington, the Comptons, Stretton-on-Fosse, Tredington and a number of other places. It is also worth noting that many individuals not in possession of regular field land were compensated for loss of rights in the fields (quite apart from loss of common rights). Examples of this are the 'two butts attached to a cottage' at Barford; the compensation for 'a piece of greensward and one land' at Radway; and for 'odd leys', 'odd

lands' and 'lottground' at Harbury, Napton, Avon Dasset, and Southam, to mention but a few. It is clear from manorial court rolls and probate records that much store was set by the grazing of the numerous uncultivated open spaces scattered about the unenclosed village. At Whichford and Harbury the court rolls mention a variety of commoning including the greensward between the strips and about the fields. Such spaces occasionally received specific mention in Feldon wills, as in the bequest by G Bradshaw of Priors Marston of a yardland with its 'leys, heads, baulks and other commonable land'.³¹

The rights arising out of the ordinary working of the common fields were also important. To the 60 or so cottagers who, at Atherstone, declined to stock their commons they afforded 'a certain Livelihood'; at harvest time men got 'six shillings per week and beer' and women got '2 shillings till Corn Harvest, then 3 shillings'; gleaning, we are told, 'secured 15 shillings to a family' while the right to gather fuel brought in an addition 6-8 shillings per week in its season; all other work in the fields got '4 shillings per week and beer in the (various) Branches'.³² Similar opportunities must also have existed in the east Feldon before the abolishment of both common fields and arable type farming. Homer, for example, who drew his observations from the Feldon, underlined the commonable nature of all the fields throughout half of the year, while pointing to the loss of fuel and other rights which always occurred at enclosure. Gleaning rights, he found, were a special boon to the cottager since the amount granted had been as great in years of dearth as of plenty, so that it was 'most advantageous when most wanted to be so'.³³ Addington covers the

³⁰ Enclosure details for Nuneaton and Atherstone are in Compton Bracebridge Papers, CRO, box HR/35; it was only twenty years after loss of the fields that the Atherstone commons were rendered useless, and enclosed without resistance: *CJ*, XLI, 1786, pp 303, 656.

³¹ Whichford and Harbury manorial documents, CRO, 450/box 30, and 299/4/11, 4/13, 3/3, 319; will of G Bradshaw, 18 June 1737, Lichfield Joint Record Office (henceforth LJRO), Calendar of Wills, 1726-50.

³² Loose document: 'On the Design of Inclosing Atherstone fields, 1730', Compton Bracebridge MS, *loc cit*.

³³ Homer, *op cit*, pp 18-20, 23-5; Addington, *op cit*, pp 33-9.

same points: gleaning and the right to turfs, roots and furze had been widespread; most of the cottagers in every parish that had been enclosed were deprived of the means of support. Previously, 'some in almost all such open parishes had . . . little parcels of land . . . with a right of common for a cow or three sheep'. Significantly both men note the decline in the horse population essential for engaging in trade.

A survey of benefits enjoyed by the community at large must also note those ordinarily attached to the cottagers' homesteads. Thus at Morton Morrell for example the award of 1758 recorded 56 acres attached to cottages in the form of orchards, gardens, backsides, and homesteads which served to complement the commoning lying disposed about the village.

If access to the land was indeed widespread and varied in many common-field parishes, the next question is: to what extent did village traders and craftsmen make use of such rights on the eve of enclosure? Here one can take advantage of the surviving probate material, though problems of space allow only a passing reference. The wills, or where extant, the inventories of all labourers, traders and craftsmen were examined for the period 1727-49, involving the records of some 78 individuals.³⁴ Since most men whose inventory wealth was less than £30 would fall into one of these three occupational groups, a further 20 inventories valued at under £30 were added to the above sample, which was then divided by area, as between the east Feldon and the Avon valley. Towns like Southam and Rugby were excluded, leaving 42 parishes. What does this evidence tell us? If one excludes small parcels of hay, straw and flax, along with stocks of bees and poultry, then one is left with some 37 individuals (56 per cent) who were in possession of field land, animals or crops in the east Feldon, and a

further 17 (51 per cent) in the Avon valley. For various reasons these figures could have underestimated the true proportions involved. Humble testators were nearly as likely to be taken up with some farming, apparently, as the more substantial trader: of 52 men leaving inventory wealth of under £30 some 28 (53 per cent) recorded field land, animals or crops, compared to 26 of 39 (66 per cent) of those valued at over £30.

The bulk of these men were petty traders with their backs in an acre or two: men like T Overton of Morton Morrell worth only £7, who left a cow in the yard valued at £3 together with 'one land of pease in the field'; or M Savage, a shopkeeper of Oxhill worth £38, who boasted half a quartern of land in the field, and grazed cattle worth £8.³⁵

Traders and craftsmen also figured quite often in Feldon enclosure awards. At Hillmorton (enclosed 1754) some 11 of 35 holdings of under 100 acres went to traders; at Priors Marston (1758) and at Grandborough (1766) the figures were 20 of 54 and 5 of 13 holdings respectively. In the small market town of Southam (1761) over half of the allotments of under 100 acres went to tradesmen.

Enclosure came after 1780 to the last great Feldon strongholds. Correlation with the land tax records serves to highlight the presence here as elsewhere of many village traders, particularly amongst the smallest group of contributors. Thus of 23 traders who figured in the returns at Tysoe, 12 contributed a sum of under £1. At Brailes, Tennant found that 15 of the 23 men paying between two shillings and £1 were village traders,³⁶ and at Easington a similar picture emerged.

The existence of such a large class of village traders may perhaps help to explain certain features of ownership in the Feldon. There were, for instance, in some large parishes quite a few forty-shilling free-

³⁴ Probate wills and inventories for South Warwickshire are in LJRO and the Worcester and Hereford Joint Record Office, St Helens, Worcester (henceforth WHRO).

³⁵ WHRO, inventories dated 28 and 21 May 1730.

³⁶ Tennant, *op cit*, p 120.

holders and land tax contributors who apparently owned but did not occupy small fragments of field land.³⁷

IV

It might be useful at this point to summarize the discussion so far. The common fields formed the lynch-pin of an age-old system of cottage farming on a minute scale. The main beneficiaries of this régime were, in the course of time, the village trading and craft families, possibly the most numerous section of the community on the eve of enclosure.

What then was the effect of the re-ordering of the fields? Here one should try to distinguish between the immediate and the longer-term consequences. In large parishes with a sizable body of small owners the former could have been quite serious. At Atherstone (1730–38) many of the 160 cottagers were unable to prove their claims, while at Alcester (1771) Styles found that substantial selling-up occurred amongst the owners of the 280 cottage commons in the interval between Act and award.³⁸ Correlation of the 1774 Poll Book with the land tax lists suggests that after 1780, some small owners, many of whom were village traders, were also affected by the abolishment of the fields in large east Feldon parishes like Napton, Harbury, Brailes, and Tysoe.

A key to understanding this selling-up where it occurred can be sought in a consideration of the costs of enclosure, and of the compensation meted by commissioners. The former were undoubtedly high, while the latter usually took the form of some mere token gesture. The details recorded in 60 Warwickshire awards, while reflecting the survival of extensive commons, also suggest a distinct decline in generosity over time. This hardening of attitudes appears to correspond to a rise in

poor law expenditure in the Feldon. Thus at the enclosure by Private Agreement of the tiny hamlet of Thurlaston in 1728, on the eve of the parliamentary movement, some 45 acres were left in common for the benefit of the poor. More typical later on, however, was the provision of an allotment in place of fuel and furze gathering rights, the benefit confined, as at Napton, Easington and Brailes, to those 'industrious poor not in receipt of relief'. Even such modest benefits as the poor did enjoy came under threat of re-interpretation during the eighteenth century. This tendency is well illustrated by two episodes involving customary practice in Feldon parishes.³⁹ Such events underline the widespread uncertainty which surrounded all communal rights vested in the land, even where common fields remained intact. It also helps to explain the selling-up by cottagers who possessed little or nothing except common rights.

When one turns to the long-term consequences of enclosure the picture appears equally gloomy for the cottager and village trading classes. For the moment, however, one might turn aside to note that it was from the trade and craft families that the eighteenth-century village derived much of its character. Reflecting the exigencies of apprenticeship arrangements as well as the habits of the ubiquitous farm servant, marriage took place late for both sexes, a practice which yielded only slowly to the changed conditions of the nineteenth century.⁴⁰ Another characteristic was the apparently high level of functional literacy amongst males.⁴¹ In the second half of the eighteenth century five of the six parishes looked at produced a rate of register signing in the range 62–69 per cent. This then fell to 50 per cent in three, and from 68 to 66 per cent

³⁷ For this pattern and the impact of enclosure, Martin, 'Small Landowners', *loc cit*, pp 338–42.

³⁸ *Victoria County History of Warwickshire*, III, 1945, p 124.

³⁹ For threat to custom in Napton, Shuckburgh estate collection, CRO, CR 1248, box 41, 16/11/F; for the Harbury cottagers' rights: Harbury manorial documents, *loc cit*, 450, box 30.

⁴⁰ J M Martin, 'Marriage and Economic Stress in the Feldon of Warwickshire in the Eighteenth Century', *Population Studies*, XXXI, 1977, pp 519–35.

⁴¹ For the literacy of agricultural labourers see Obelkevich, *op cit*, p 78.

in a fourth parish; in two others it remained constant.

This fall-off in literacy was symptomatic of a more general deterioration in village life. While at the end of the century the Earl of Warwick could castigate the Feldon farmer for allowing shortages and actual starvation to go unchecked, behind this lay a set of more fundamental circumstances.⁴² As noted earlier a disproportionately large part of the local population resided in parishes which saw wholesale conversion of former arable fields to permanent pasture. Enclosure thus served as a catalyst. Socially the effect was summed up by Addington: small farmers were tending to be replaced, he noted, by '4-5 wealthy graziers'; and this in turn meant the disappearance of other families employed or supported by them: 'blacksmiths, carpenters, wheelwrights, and other artificers and tradesmen, besides their own labourers and servants'.⁴³ This last point was also made, by Kerr, of early nineteenth-century Dorset.⁴⁴ In Warwickshire, Lane noted that with the fading away of the servant and village apprenticeship groups, both the independent labourer and the lesser craftsman lost status.⁴⁵ The former were then recruited, according to Cobbett, from the 'progeny of miserable and propertyless labourers'. At Tysoe in the Feldon, Ashby traced the disappearance of 30 craftsmen (half of the whole) and 120 dependants in the 20 years following enclosure.⁴⁶ Local manorial rolls and census schedules touched on below tell a similar story. The loss of the fields themselves was perhaps the worst blow of all. The demands made by the community upon small-scale village traders tended then to dry up. In the three years

1818-21 the wages of local agricultural labourers fell by 30 per cent, and rising poor-law expenditure was concentrated, as in Dorset, on a narrower range of relief. Post-war depression hit both agriculture and the local building trade, with house construction standing virtually still in the east Feldon before the 1830s.⁴⁷ The scope for family earnings was also severely diminished, particularly in the east Feldon. Women and children lost their traditional harvest tasks, and apart from a little haymaking, no work remained, as the 1834 commissioner found, even in the vicinity of the largest labourers' parishes like Napton and Wellesbourne.⁴⁸ Nor, as is shown below, did any rural industry spring up in the Feldon to compensate for this loss.

Socially there was a growing differentiation of the rural community. The chief concern of the Warwickshire farmer became, says Quinault, 'to keep the poor-rate low by forcing the despised Hodge to live in insanitary open villages at a distance of two or three miles from his work'.⁴⁹ The 'close' parish, symbol of the triumph of the gentlemen farmer, encroached upon the local landscape.⁵⁰ Close by lay satellite 'open' parishes, divided off, like George Eliot's Bassett, by 'poor soils, poor roads, and rather less than half a curate, also poor'. The local landed interest opposed the notion of allotments, and so near-starvation became, it was said, a not infrequent experience.⁵¹ Feldon farmers also opposed the schooling of the labourers' children, so that where this did exist it was 'bad almost beyond belief', a view reflected in the faltering standards of literacy noted earlier.⁵²

Manorial and census documents relating

⁴² Lord Warwick led the campaign for a wheat maximum: *Parliamentary History*, 32, 1795-7, col 236; 35, 1800-1, cols 833-4; local starvation reports occurred for example in 1795, 1800-1, 1835.

⁴³ Addington, *op cit*, p 38.

⁴⁴ Kerr, *op cit*, pp 125-35.

⁴⁵ J Lane, 'Apprenticeship in Warwickshire, 1700-1834', unpubl. PhD thesis, Birmingham, 1977, pp 14, 89-91.

⁴⁶ A W Ashby, *One Hundred Years of Poor Law Administration in a Warwickshire Village*, Oxford Studies in Social and Legal History, III, 1912, p 334.

⁴⁷ Information on house construction drawn from decennial census returns.

⁴⁸ Poor Law Report, 1834, Irish University Press, 10, Answers to Rural Questions, No 23, Appendix B, I, pp 537-56.

⁴⁹ R E Quinault, 'Warwickshire Landowners and Politics c 1841-1923', unpubl. DPhil thesis, Oxford, 1975, pp 198-9.

⁵⁰ Report to Poor Law Board on Laws of Settlement and Removal of the Poor, BPP 1850, XXVII, pp 171, 409.

⁵¹ J O'Leary, *The Autobiography of Joseph Arch*, 1966, p 23; *The Life of Thomas Wamless Peasant* (by himself), 1885, p 32.

⁵² Wamless, *op cit*, p 32; Arch, *op cit*, p 28.

to the ten principal former common-field and three old-enclosed estate parishes of the east Feldon serve to illuminate this re-shaping of the community. Suit rolls cover the parishes of Eatington and Oxhill: in the former only 23 of 146 occupied males (15 per cent), and in the latter some 14 of 65 males (21 per cent) were in each case engaged in trade or craft callings in the year 1833.⁵³

Turning to the 1851 census, it appears that the three adjoining parishes of Harbury, Napton and Southam together provided a substantial pool of both agricultural and craft labour to serve the needs of the east Feldon, and Brailes did the same for the south-east Feldon. There were, on the other hand, certain parishes, including some former common-field strongholds, with relatively few surviving traders and craftsmen. This question needs to be considered in more detail. What follows, therefore, is an estimate of traders and craftsmen as a proportion of all occupied males in a sample of 13 east Feldon parishes. This comprised the ten principal former common-field parishes of the locality, and three old-enclosed parishes. In the first group of ten parishes there were in aggregate some 621 traders and craftsmen out of 2571 occupied males, a mean of 24.1 per cent of the labour force. This mean varied for individual parishes: in six of the ten cases it lay in the range 15–23, and in the remainder 24–29 per cent of occupied males. In the second group of three parishes — all old-enclosed — the aggregated trades and craft element amounted to 21 of 214, or a mere 9 per cent of occupied males. Finally the figure of 24 per cent or less of occupied males in 1851 can be compared with estimates, noted above for the previous century, of between 31–41 per cent of much smaller village populations who followed some trade or craft in that earlier period.

Even more significant, perhaps, than any shrinkage in overall numbers, was the

crowding of the local labour force into a narrow range of lesser crafts, highlighted also in Kerr's Dorset parishes.⁵⁴ Brailes was the only one of the 13 parishes looked at which attracted any non-village trades. By contrast, in the nine other former common-field parishes no less than 157 of 320 craftsmen (49 per cent) were taken up with the traditional pursuits of carpentry, tailoring or shoemaking.

There was, of course, another side to these events. While the lesser trades sank into the ranks of pauperized labour, some individual traders nevertheless built up quite large-scale concerns. In the neighbouring parishes of Dunchurch and Hillmorton for instance, the existence of road link and canal wharf had encouraged the rise, by the 1790s, of numerous coal, salt and milling enterprises serving the rest of the Feldon. Farmstock advertisements in local newspapers demonstrate that the period of the French Wars also saw the beginning of a purchasing switch by the new gentleman farmer away from the products of the ordinary village craftsmen in favour of more specialized or new-fangled machinery.⁵⁵ One or two of the more populous communities — Brailes in the east Feldon was one example — thus gained the opportunity to satisfy some of this demand.

Behind all the changes stood the new class of tenant farmer. Enclosure was sometimes the occasion for noticeable alterations in tenancy arrangements. Thus after the 1769 award at Grandborough a notice appeared in the *Northampton Mercury* inviting bids for the tenancy of a 390 acre farm, all laid to pasture. Elsewhere old farming dynasties, long-established in the locality, took the opportunity to extend their hold over the former common-field parishes. One such was the Middleton family who, occupying tenancies in the estate parishes of the Earl of Northampton and R Child, a banker, went on after enclosure to occupy the principal

⁵⁴ Kerr, *op cit*, p 133.

⁵³ Suit rolls covering the parishes of Eatington and Oxhill (1833) in Shirley Estate papers, CRO, CR 229, box 3/1.

⁵⁵ See J M Martin, 'Warwickshire and the Parliamentary Enclosure Movement', unpubl. PhD thesis, Birmingham, 1966, I, p 68.

tenancies in a block of parishes surrounding Tysoe.⁵⁶

Not one among a host of commentators who ranged from the Earl of Warwick speaking at the turn of the century, to Henry Evershed writing in the calmer days of High Farming had so much as a good word for this new class of farmer.⁵⁷ Separated physically as well as socially, farmers, petty tradesmen and labourers harboured a strong mutual antipathy remarked upon by all. These new distances are illuminated by the records. At Hillmorton the farmers appear almost to have withdrawn from acts of public ceremony, so that over the years 1837-51, of 184 marriage-partners entering their names in the registers, no more than six involved the sons or daughters of farmers. Only at Napton, unusual in that quite a few small

farmers survived, did some 34 of 163 entries (20 per cent) refer to the offspring of farmers. At the same time marriage into farming families was virtually unknown in either parish. The main connection of the trade and craft element was downwards: one third of the grooms drawn from these classes married into labouring families in both parishes.

The debate over the fate of the small landowner has not given due weight, perhaps, to the amazing variety and complexity of English rural life in the eighteenth century. But if one had to generalize it might be more true to say that the old society crumbled in the Feldon with the passing away of the village trades and crafts rather than with the destruction of the small landowner class as such. This it was, perhaps, that determined the character of the new order. Across the void left by the disappearance of many village traders, farmer and labourer faced up to each other in mutual antipathy and low regard.

⁵⁶ *Northampton Mercury*, 26 February 1770; for outcry against the engrossing of tenancies see *Parliamentary History*, 32, 1795, col 236.

⁵⁷ Evershed repeats Murray's comment of 1815, 'a sly jealous set': 'The Farming of Warwickshire', *JRASE*, XVII, 1856, p 493.



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Assistant Commissioners and Local Agents: Their Role in Tithe Commutation, 1836–1854¹

By H M E HOLT

I

Introduction

IN AUGUST 1836 the Tithe Commutation Act was passed by Parliament. It spelt the end of an outdated tithing system which had become the cause of much rural unrest and established a Tithe Commission in London to supervise the business of commutation. A number of local agents and assistant tithe commissioners were employed to implement the Commutation Act at grass-roots level. Eric Evans, in his book *The Contentious Tithe . . .*, describes them as 'the overworked infantry of the commutation army, who carried the battle in the field, working under strategic direction from Whitehall'.² It was the local agents and assistant tithe commissioners who, in the course of their visits to individual parishes, came up against unique tithe problems, and were required to understand them and in some cases arbitrate between the opposing parties. Without their careful handling of local disagreements about tithes and diligence in their work, the implementation of the Tithe Commutation Act might have passed off much less smoothly and speedily, and the tithe surveys, a valuable source of evidence much used by English agrarian and landscape historians, might have been seriously flawed. This article examines in detail the work of local agents and assistant tithe commissioners in

implementing the Tithe Commutation Act. Particular attention will be focused on one local agent and assistant tithe commissioner, Henry Pilkington of Corbridge in Northumberland.

II

The structure of the Tithe Commission

At the head of the Tithe Commission were three commissioners: William Blamire, T Wentworth Buller and Richard Jones. These men, based in London, were responsible for formulating the general policy for commuting tithes. Once commutation began they were also required to confirm local agreements and awards for tithe commutation. The secretary to the Commission, his assistant, over thirty clerks and twenty draughtsmen were also based in London. The local agents and assistant commissioners were the link between this central organization in London and parishes and townships throughout England and Wales. They travelled throughout the country, visiting parishes and assisting with commutation.³ Between August 1836 and January 1839 fifteen assistant commissioners were appointed (two also resigned during this period), a further seven men were appointed as 'assistant commissioners for special purposes', and twenty-two men were appointed as local agents.⁴ As the pace of commutation gathered momentum in 1838 and through the early 1840s more assistant commissioners and local agents

¹Research for this article was conducted while the author was employed as research assistant at the University of Exeter on a project financed by the Social Science Research Council to compile *An Atlas of Agriculture in England and Wales circa 1840*. R J P Kain, 'Compiling an atlas of agriculture in England and Wales from the tithe surveys', *The Geographical Journal*, CXLV, 2, 1979, pp 225–35.

²Eric J Evans, *The Contentious Tithe. The Tithe Problem and English Agriculture, 1750–1850*, London, 1976, p 138.

³The exception to this was Capt. R K Dawson (assistant commissioner) who was based in London.

⁴BPP 1839, XLI, 555.

were employed. Seventy is a conservative estimate of the total number employed.⁵

III

The duties of assistant commissioners and local agents

In order to understand how the tithe commissioners decided on the suitability of an applicant for the post of either assistant commissioner or local agent it is necessary to examine the differences in emphasis of the duties attached to each appointment. Although both assistant commissioners and local agents worked locally in the parishes and townships, local agents were only required to visit places where tithe-owners and landowners had *agreed the rent-charge* to be paid in lieu of tithes, and to report on the fairness of this agreement. An assistant commissioner's duties were more diverse. Part of his time was spent reporting on agreements which had been reached, but from 1840 a significant proportion of it was in parishes where an agreement could not be reached, and consisted of hearing evidence from both parties and deciding upon the sum to be paid in lieu of tithes, *i.e. making an award*. Later he might also have to hear appeals against awards, or against the apportionment of rent-charge amongst the landowners. Assistant commissioners (special purposes) were temporary appointments and their duties, though more diverse than those of a local agent, did not always include the full range undertaken by assistant commissioners. Three local agents were promoted to assistant commissioner (special purpose): Henry Pilkington on 23 December 1839, Thomas Hoskins on 23 December 1840, and Francis Offley Martin on 1 July 1841. This coincided with the stage in commutation when there was a great deal of

work to be done on the apportionment of rent-charge and more assistant commissioners were required to hold apportionment appeal meetings. These three men dealt mainly with such matters; Henry Pilkington, for example, was not asked to draft awards.

Assistant commissioners were expected to be available at all times for tithe commutation employment.⁶ The different manner of payment of assistant commissioners and local agents further reflects the differing emphasis of their work. An assistant commissioner was paid £3 per day for each day he was employed on the Tithe Commission's business plus an allowance of a guinea for personal expenses and 1s per mile for travelling expenses; a local agent was paid for piece work, at the rate of £5 5s 0d for each parish viewed and reported on.⁷ An account giving details of the expenditure of the Tithe Commission in the year ending 5 January 1842 gives as its largest item £21,677 3s 9d for assistant commissioners' salaries and travelling expenses whilst only £2,618 19s 8d was paid to local agents for reporting on voluntary agreements.⁸ In this year 635 agreements had been confirmed, 469 awards made and 1,721 apportionments completed.⁹

The appointment of assistant commissioners and local agents

'Assistant commissioners needed resourcefulness, initiative and considerable professional skill,' wrote Eric Evans.¹⁰ These qualities were certainly required for an assistant commissioner holding award meetings, assessing the evidence given at them (especially on the validity of moduses, *i.e.* small fixed payments in lieu of tithes), and awarding a fair rent-charge. Unfortunately, the papers of the Tithe Office which

⁵Sixty-seven men reported on agreements to commute tithes. Assistant commissioners Thomas J. Tatham and Capt. R K Dawson did not work at all on agreements; the former attending award and apportionment meetings and the latter supervising the inspection of tithe maps. Similarly, Francis Offley Martin, who was appointed as an assistant commissioner for special purposes in 1841, dealt with problems arising out of the apportionment of rent-charge.

⁶R J P Kain and H C Prince, *The Tithe Surveys of England and Wales*, CUP, forthcoming.

⁷BPP 1839, XLI, 555.

⁸BPP 1842, XXVI, 344. Admittedly part of the total paid to assistant commissioners was for reporting on agreements.

⁹BPP 1841, sess 2, II, 46; BPP 1842, XXXIII, 102.

¹⁰Evans, *op cit*, p 138.

might have given an indication of the considerations which influenced the Tithe Commissioners in their choice of men for the posts of assistant commissioner are seemingly not extant.¹¹ From the qualifications of some of those who were appointed it seems that they were required to have some experience of land valuation or management, together with an aptitude for the dispatch of public business. Assistant commissioner Joseph Townsend was a land agent from near Great Marlow, Buckinghamshire and had previously worked as an enclosure commissioner.¹² T S Woolley was a landed proprietor from South Collingham in Nottinghamshire, and J Mee Mathew had been auditor and agent to Lord Ferrers on his estate in Staffordshire.¹³ Twelve of the assistant commissioners were also barristers, and such experience of the law would have served them well when they were called upon to arbitrate between parties at award meetings.¹⁴

A local agent did not require the skill in arbitration which was essential for an assistant commissioner. He did, however, need to be fairly familiar with local tithing customs of the parishes he visited and

understand their influence on agricultural practice. He had also to be able to assess the quality and value of land, sometimes several thousand acres of it, in the course of a few hours' visit. The tithe commissioners, recognizing the importance of local knowledge, chose as local agents men with this type of expertise.

IV

The procedure for tithe commutation

Commutation of tithes, whether by agreement or award, had to be effected according to strict procedures. To help those involved, i.e. the titheowners, landowners, local agents and assistant commissioners, the Tithe Commission issued a mass of printed instruction sheets. These documents have occasionally survived in the tithe files, and others are held among solicitors' papers in county record offices.¹⁵

Agreements to commute tithes:

the involvement of the assistant commissioners and local agents

In the case of an agreement all the initial communication was between the parish concerned and the Tithe Office in London. The local agent or assistant commissioner did not become involved until an agreement which appeared to be in order had been received by the office. Only then would he be directed to visit the parish to make a report. Unfortunately there is no correspondence from the Tithe Office to the assistant commissioners and local agents in the tithe files (these contain only those papers relating to the particular district) and so it is difficult to assess how much control the tithe commissioners had over the itinerary of individuals. Certainly, the Tithe Office controlled the assignment of parishes and townships to individual assistant commissioners and local agents, but it seems that they themselves fixed the actual date and

¹¹ A search for these papers has been made at the Tithe Redemption Commission, the Public Record Office, the Board of Inland Revenue, the House of Lords Record Office, the British Library and the Royal Commission on Historical Manuscripts.

¹² Evans, *op cit*, p 138.

¹³ PRO, IR 18 9433, Mavesyn Ridware, Staffordshire.

¹⁴ The *London Gazette* lists the following appointments to assistant tithe commissioner: T S Woolley, 27 September 1836; H Dixon, 28 September 1836; J Johnes, Barrister of Dolecothy, Carmarthen, 3 November 1836; J S Donaldson, 11 November 1836; C Pym of Ryde, Isle of Wight, 14 December 1836; J Milner, 11 March 1837; T Sudworth of Blacon Point, Cheshire, 11 March 1837; C Howard of Melbourne, Yorks, 21 April 1837; T J Tatham of Russell Square, London, 18 May 1837; J D Merest of Bury St Edmunds, Suffolk, 10 June 1837; J Townsend of Wood-end, Bucks, 25 September 1837; *J M Herbert, Barrister, 6 March 1838; J Smith of Lewes, Sussex, 9 March 1838; *J M Mathew, Barrister, 15 March 1838; *J J Rawlinson, Barrister of Milnthorpe, Westmorland, 20 April 1838; J Hibbert, Barrister, 27 April 1838; G Louis, Barrister of Colyton, Devon, 1 November 1838; A Owen of Egryn, Denbigh, 1 November 1838; J J Rawlinson, Barrister of Milnthorpe, Westmorland, 17 January 1839; *J Jerwood of Teignmouth, Devon, 12 February 1839; *H B Gunning, Barrister of Whittlesford, Cambs, 20 March 1839; *G H Whalley, Barrister, 8 June 1839; C Thompson, Barrister, 6 December 1839; H Pilkington, Barrister, 23 December 1839; *T Hoskins of Gosport, Hants, 23 December 1840; *F O Martin, Barrister, 1 July 1841. *Denotes appointments to assistant commissioner (special purposes).

¹⁵ Salop County Record Office, Papers of Thomas Salt, Solicitor; Devon Record Office, Burrow and Co., Solicitors of Cullompton.

time of a visit. The Tithe Office informed the parish that an assistant commissioner or local agent would be visiting it to report on the propriety of confirming their agreement, and prior to his visit the assistant commissioner or local agent sent out a circular to the parish.¹⁶ It stated the day and time he would be arriving, requested that certain documents be made available, and also asked that someone well acquainted with the parish should accompany him on a view of it.

The reports on agreements made by the assistant commissioners and local agents are contained in the Tithe Files at the PRO (Kew).¹⁷ They were required to be unbiased reports and their purpose was to help the Tithe Commissioners decide on the propriety of confirming agreements. In a report the assistant commissioner or local agent had to furnish details of the meetings which had been held to agree a rent-charge in lieu of tithes, to state the amount of tithes paid in kind, the compositions and rates which had been paid, to form an opinion of the quality of the lands and system of farming, and to give a valuation of the titheable produce. He had also to decide whether to advise that the agreement be confirmed. Almost always he was able to recommend that it should.

Location of work by assistant commissioners and local agents reporting on agreements

During the first year after the passing of the Tithe Commutation Act assistant commissioners and local agents were not needed on a regular and full-time basis by the Tithe Commission but they were employed on a broad geographical canvas. For example, in 1837 J D Merest reported on agreements reached in Staffordshire, Shropshire and Lincolnshire, but his later work was entirely confined to East Anglia. From 1838 it seems that many assistant commissioners and local agents were employed mainly in one part of the country. This was fairly easy for the tithe

commissioners to organize between 1838 and 1841 because of the large number of agreements being reached. Tithing customs, agricultural practices and the value of land varied markedly from one part of the country to another, and so to employ assistant commissioners and local agents mainly in the districts which they knew, would help to ensure that the reports contained relevant information and that a correct interpretation was made of the evidence which had been presented.

It might be expected from the title 'local agent' and the fact that no travel expenses were paid to these men, that the geographical area in which they worked would be much more circumscribed than that of the assistant commissioners. Some local agents did work in a fairly small area. John Farncombe reported on agreements reached in Kent, Sussex and Hampshire, whilst William Mears worked only on agreements reached in Norfolk, Suffolk, Cambridgeshire and Huntingdonshire. However, if the geographical distribution of the work of the twelve assistant commissioners and local agents who completed most reports on agreements (56 per cent) is examined, it is evident that assistant commissioners might also work in a fairly small region while some local agents had wider geographical horizons. It does seem, however, that in many cases both local agents and assistant commissioners tended to do most of their work in one part of the country.

Appendix 1 indicates that nine assistant commissioners and local agents had a distinct regional bias in their work and that at least five lived in the area in which they reported for the Commission.¹⁸ Charles Howard (of Melbourne, Yorkshire), Henry Pilkington (Corbridge, Northumberland) and R B Phillipson worked mainly in northern England and to a much lesser extent in the Midlands; Henry Gunning

¹⁶Salop County Record Office, Papers of Thomas Salt, Solicitor (OI) - 189; (OI) - 46.

¹⁷PRO IR 18.

¹⁸This does not mean that they were necessarily natives of the region in which they mainly worked. They may just have lived there for the duration of the tithe commutation.

(Whittlesford, Cambridgeshire) and J D Merest (Bury St Edmunds, Suffolk) worked in East Anglia; James Jerwood (Teignmouth, Devon) and R Page worked in south-west England; George Bolls in western England; Thomas Hoskins in western England and south Wales. Only J Pickering, R Kynaston and T S Woolley seem to have worked over a wider area. In the last case this is partly explained by the fact that the Tithe Commission held the judgement of T S Woolley in high esteem and on occasions when they felt the initial report on an agreement was unsatisfactory they would send him to give a second opinion.

Reporting on agreements reached in the Welsh townships and parishes was almost solely the responsibility of four men.¹⁹ John Fenton and Aneurin Owen worked mainly in north Wales and Thomas Hoskins and John Johnes in central and south Wales. There were additional difficulties facing assistant commissioners and local agents working in Wales. Language and travel were obvious problems but there were also the many peculiarities of tithing customs to be taken into consideration. In parts of north Wales tithes were let annually by public auction, and strange moduses were claimed. At Llanfihangel Esgeifiog on Anglesey a modus of Sunday lunch for the minister was given in lieu of tithe of hay.²⁰ It is perhaps not surprising to find that two of the men chosen to work in Wales were themselves Welsh; John Johnes from Dolecothy in Carmarthenshire and Aneurin Owen from Egryn in Denbighshire.

Procedure for the commutation of tithes by award
From 1837 to 1841 the bulk of the work of assistant commissioners was concerned with voluntary agreements and apportionments. Only after 1841 were there more parishes

with tithes being commuted by compulsory award than by agreement.²¹ In parishes where an agreement to commute tithes could not be reached, a majority of either party could request the attendance of an assistant commissioner to arbitrate between them and award a sum to be paid in lieu of tithes. The spirit of the Tithe Commutation Act was to encourage voluntary settlement, so before 1840 the tithe commissioners encouraged agreements for rent-charge wherever they could.²² After 1840 this policy had to be changed somewhat as the tithe commissioners realized that in many parishes there was little likelihood of a voluntary agreement being reached. They sent letters to the incumbents of these parishes informing them of their intention to commute the tithes by a compulsory award and notifying them of the date on which an assistant commissioner would attend to hold a meeting in the parish.²³ The minister was required to fix a notice of this meeting (twenty-one days in advance) to the church door and return a copy of the paper to the Tithe Office.²⁴ A synopsis outlining the course the assistant commissioner would take in making the award was also sent to the parish.²⁵ This informed the titheowners and landowners of the facts which the assistant commissioner would request, and indicated the stages in the proceedings where they would be allowed to put their cases. The minutes of award meetings together with the draft award are usually contained in the tithe file. The award might be disputed, either because there were errors in it or because one party was dissatisfied with the total sum awarded. Minutes of award appeal meetings and supplementary awards are also to be found in the tithe files. Once an award had

²¹ Kain, *op cit*, p 227, fig 1.

²² Evans, *op cit*, p 14.

²³ Salop County Record Office, Papers of Thomas Salt, Solicitor (OI) - 263.

²⁴ Salop County Record Office, Papers of Thomas Salt, Solicitor (OI) - 124; (OI) - 142.

²⁵ Salop County Record Office, Papers of Thomas Salt, Solicitor (OI) - 130.

¹⁹ Three other assistant commissioners/local agents completed a few reports in Wales: C Pym, two reports; M Sayer, one report; G Bolls, one report.

²⁰ PRO IR 18 13853.

been confirmed the rent-charge was apportioned amongst the various landowners. The final duty of an assistant commissioner was to attend meetings to hear appeals against the apportionment.

By 1844 the tithe commissioners were proud of the success of this scheme for commuting tithes where disputes existed. Deploying assistant commissioners to the parishes to hear evidence and make awards was a much less expensive procedure than calling the witnesses for the opposing parties to London. The tithe commissioners also felt that by undertaking the legal proceedings of making an award in the parish itself justice would actually be seen by all concerned to be done. Assistant commissioners had by this time made considerable progress with the commutation of tithes in parishes where disputes existed. The Revd R Jones cites the example of assistant commissioner John Maurice Herbert, who between August 1836 and July 1844 dealt with 148 disputed cases, and in only ten had appeals been made against his decisions. The Revd R Jones was strongly in favour of a similar system being adopted for dealing with disputes concerning inclosures under a General Inclosure Act.²⁶

V

The career of Henry Pilkington, local agent and assistant tithe commissioner

Henry Pilkington was born in 1787. He was the eldest son of William and Sarah Pilkington who both came from minor gentry families in Yorkshire.²⁷ His father was an architect in London.²⁸ In 1805 Henry went up to Oriel College, Oxford. He graduated in 1810, was admitted to Gray's Inn in 1812 and called to the bar in 1815.²⁹ In

1834 Henry Pilkington obtained his first appointment in government service, for it was in that year that the poor-law commissioners appointed nine assistant commissioners to help bring about the introduction of the workhouse system throughout the country. The poor-law commissioners were looking for the 'possession of sound practical knowledge and experience of the subject matter . . . or the possession of acknowledged talent and general aptitude for the dispatch of public business', in their choice of men for the posts of assistant poor-law commissioners.³⁰ After offering to serve as an assistant commissioner in a letter dated 8 September 1834, and prior to his subsequent appointment in November, he bombarded the commissioners with letters detailing the advice he had given in his professional capacity on the Poor Law Amendment Act in cases of bastardy and the marriage of paupers. By these means he managed to convince the commissioners of his suitability for the post of assistant poor-law commissioner.³¹ A similar example of lobbying has come to light for the post of assistant tithe commissioner.³² Pilkington was interviewed at the end of October and appointed assistant commissioner on 4 November 1834.³³

Assistant poor-law commissioners were instructed to investigate the workhouses, and furnish themselves with data for determining how the parishes should be grouped together and relief given.³⁴ They were also required to meet the poor-law commissioners frequently to decide on their general course of proceedings and to discuss their recommendations before they were put into operation. The post of assistant poor-law commissioner was a full-time one and was well paid: £700 per annum in 1836,

²⁶ BPP 1844, V, 583, pp 3-4.

²⁷ John Burke and John Bernard Burke, *A genealogical and heraldic dictionary of the landed gentry of Great Britain and Ireland*, Vol. II, London, 1846, p 1042.

²⁸ *Gray's Inn Admission Register, 1521-1887*, part 2, p 415.

²⁹ Joseph Foster, *Alumni Oxonienses: the members of the University of Oxford, 1715-1886: their parentage, birthplace, and year of birth, with a record of their degrees*, Vol III, Oxford and London, 1888, p 1117.

³⁰ BPP 1835, XXXV, 500, p 8.

³¹ PRO MH.33.5.

³² Kain and Prince, *op cit.*

³³ PRO MH.2.1.

³⁴ PRO MH.1.1.

plus a guinea a day for maintenance when out of London, and travel expenses.³⁵

Such experience in the implementation of legislation at a local level, coupled with his training as a barrister and the fact that he was himself a titheowner, might appear to have been valuable for work as an assistant tithe commissioner, but Henry Pilkington was only appointed as a local agent.³⁶ There was certainly plenty of competition for the posts of assistant tithe commissioner at this time; the appointment of Joseph Townsend indicates that the qualifications of the applicants were carefully scrutinized.³⁷ The mysterious circumstances surrounding Pilkington's resignation from the post of assistant poor-law commissioner in 1836 may have militated against his chances of employment as an assistant tithe commissioner in 1837. Henry Pilkington resigned poor-law employment on 22 February 1836, having worked for the Poor Law Commission in Sussex, Hampshire, Lincolnshire, Northamptonshire, Rutland, Huntingdonshire and Leicestershire. In these counties he had been instrumental in declaring twelve unions, uniting 272 parishes.³⁸ Until an incident in July 1835 when instructions concerning the election of guardians that he had given to the parish of Hove, Sussex had to be recalled and a different order issued by the poor-law commissioners, there is no indication that they were in any way dissatisfied with his work.³⁹ Then in early December 1835 he was told not to interfere further in the Newark and Claypole unions.⁴⁰ Following his resignation on 22 February 1836 it is recorded in the register of correspondence that Mr Pilkington had 'transmitted a circular . . . to every union he had formed . . . requesting them to express their opinion of the manner he had discharged his duties as

assistant commissioner . . . Several noblemen and gentlemen had written to him expressive of their good opinion of him that his dismissal is loss of public if not of private character.'⁴¹ He had also enclosed copies of testimonials from the Marquis of Exeter, James Morton Esq., magistrate and chairman of Holbeach union, Mr Moore, magistrate and chairman of Spalding union, Lord Brownlow, the Duke of Rutland and several others. Finally, on 12 March 1836 he hopefully put in a request to the commissioners that they should not object to paying him his full quarter's salary.⁴² This plea fell on deaf ears, and they paid him off with his salary (£101 12s 11d) and his expenses (£96 0s 5d) to 22 February 1836.⁴³

VI

Henry Pilkington's work as a local agent for the Tithe Commission 1837-38

Henry Pilkington began working as a local agent for the Tithe Commission in 1837. In that year he completed thirty-four reports on agreements to commute tithes in the four counties of Essex, Cheshire, Shropshire and Staffordshire (Table 1). The relatively small amount of work he did in 1837 compared with the next two years reflects the production of agreements in the parishes and townships, which grew rapidly to a peak in 1839 and fell thereafter.

The nature of his agricultural descriptions and his careful land use and crop valuations indicate that he was anxious to provide the tithe commissioners with all the information that they might require. They are much more detailed than those produced by many other local agents and assistant commissioners at this time. Perhaps he was keen to avoid a repetition of his previous downfall. It appears that in most of the parishes and townships he visited in 1837 he made a detailed inspection of the land. At Norham, Cheshire he writes,

³⁵ BPP 1840, XXXIX, 425; PRO MH.1.1.

³⁶ PRO IR 18 7037, Heddon East, Northumberland.

³⁷ Kain and Prince, *op cit*.

³⁸ BPP 1837-38, XXVIII, 147.

³⁹ PRO MH.1.2.

⁴⁰ PRO MH.33.5.

⁴¹ PRO MH.33.5.

⁴² PRO MH.33.5.

⁴³ PRO MH.33.5.

TABLE I
Henry Pilkington's reports on agreements 1837-46

(source: PRO IR 18)

County	Total	1837	1838	1839	1840	1841	1842	1843	1844	1845	1846
Cheshire	8	8									
Cumberland	13			12			1				
Derbyshire	1		1								
Durham	101		66	14	6	2	6	6	1		
Essex	5	3	2								
Lancashire	32		32								
Leicestershire	2							2			
Lincolnshire	2							2			
Northamptonshire	3			3							
Northumberland	173		13	97	29	3	6	16	6	3	
Shropshire	20	18	2								
Staffordshire	8	5	3								
Westmorland	11		1	10							
Yorkshire (E R)	4						4				
Yorkshire (N R)	23		11			1	6	2	2	1	
Yorkshire (W R)	16		7				3	2	2		2
Total	422	34	138	136	35	6	26	30	11	4	2

'The low land is generally wet and the high land in many parts appears "springy", and is as often sown with oats as with barley. The alternations too from sand to clay to sand again are as frequent and as sudden — the same close frequently affording several changes of soil — on one side of the road may be seen the holly which affects a dry soil, on the other the alder which will scarcely thrive off a wet one — on the banks of this close grows in abundance the Fox Glove, of the bottom of the next the family of the Rush claim exclusive possession.'⁴⁴

The ability to discern the quality of the land from knowledge of plants and their habitats gives added weight to his descriptions, and leaves the impression that they were written by one who was skilled at valuing land. Also, he always set out a detailed table of acreages of the various land uses and crops, and their yields and value.

In 1838 the tithe commissioners made a change in policy which was to affect the local agents and assistant commissioners. This was the introduction of printed questionnaire forms which helped to standardize the descriptions and statistical information provided in the reports.⁴⁵ From 1838 Henry

Pilkington was assigned work mainly in the northern counties (Table 1). In Durham and Northumberland he reported on more agreements than any other individual local agent or assistant commissioner, whilst in Cumberland, Lancashire and Westmorland he was the second most productive. He also worked in a few of the Yorkshire and east Midland townships, but in the main, this was not until the final years of tithe commutation by agreement, and this work forms only a very small proportion of his total output. There is no direct evidence for why he was selected to work in the northern counties. Pilkington's family ties were in Yorkshire rather than the border counties, and though his family were settled in Corbridge, Northumberland in 1841, it may have been a fairly temporary home. It is likely that they moved to Corbridge after he started to work for the Tithe Commission, since before 1837 his work for the Poor Law Commission was in the southern and eastern counties. By 1851 the Pilkingtons had moved from Corbridge.

⁴⁴ PRO IR 18 168.

⁴⁵ Questionnaire form (OI) - 99 was designed for use in the predominantly arable counties, and questionnaire form (OI) - 58 for use in the pastoral counties. The format of both types of

questionnaire is described in detail by E A Cox and B R Dittmer in 'The tithe files of the mid-nineteenth century', *Ag Hist Rev*, 13, 1965, pp 1-16.

Henry Pilkington's itinerary in the sample year 1839

Pilkington's itinerary in 1839 shows how a busy local agent's work was organized. In that year he reported on agreements reached in 136 parishes and townships. All but three of these were in Cumberland, Durham, Northumberland and Westmorland. His travels to visit townships in these counties were well planned in advance to incorporate as many parishes and townships as possible into a trip of about a week. In rural districts in this part of England road communications could be atrocious; at Hartside, Northumberland, he remarks, 'the roads can hardly be called roads they are so bad'.⁴⁶

A route which minimized mileage and time, whilst incorporating as many of the townships to be visited as possible, would bring him the greatest financial gain, since local agents were not paid travelling expenses. Very occasional visits, coming when they do, appear less logically planned, though perhaps the date inscribed on the report is not always to be believed. His sequence of visits between 12 and 14 November, and also between 10 and 12 July, must have involved a great deal of travelling. He frequently reported on several townships in the same parish on one day, e.g. on 17 June 1839 at Ovingham parish in Northumberland he reported on agreements reached at Horsley, Nafferton, Spittle and Whittle townships.⁴⁷ In the week between 29 October and 4 November 1839 he reported on agreements made in fifteen townships in the north of Northumberland. The first week of August was spent reporting on agreements in Durham and the first week of April in Westmorland. Generally it seems that Henry Pilkington attempted to adhere to a tight schedule involving a minimum of travelling in his visits. All the townships involved had to be notified in advance of the day and time of his visit and it would have been very difficult for him to alter his

schedule if visits and travelling did not go according to plan.

The time available to him to make his report, coupled with a better knowledge both of the agricultural and tithing practices of the region, and the type of detail required by the tithe commissioners, affected the agricultural information recorded in the tithe files. Parish descriptions were in general more concise than the ones he had made in his 1837 reports, and in some instances they were neglected altogether. At Keverstone and Raby townships he gave no descriptions of the land and quality of farming, merely referring the tithe commissioners to his report on Snotterton, another township in the parish of Staindrop which had the same rotation.⁴⁸ At Cartington in Rothbury parish he decided that a description was unnecessary since all the tithes were covered by a modus.⁴⁹ The land use and agricultural statistics given in answer to question twenty-two of the questionnaire were also less complete in his 1839 reports than they had been in earlier ones. Altogether there were forty-six tithe districts out of the 136 he visited in 1839 for which he gave only arable, pasture and woodland acreages. The most frequent reasons given for the lack of a full valuation were that the tithes were to be merged, or that the corn tithes were covered by a modus. A few examples of this are at Branton in Eglingham parish, Branxton in Branxton parish and Coupland in Kirknewton parish.⁵⁰ A different excuse is given at Mindrum township in the parochial chapelry of Carham where he writes, 'the compositions are the annual valuations of Mr. Lowrie, a very able, and here considered high valuer'.⁵¹ The absence of a valuation of the titheable produce and a description of the agriculture is frustrating for agricultural historians interested in the reports from the standpoint of discovering more about

⁴⁶ PRO IR 18 7022.

⁴⁷ PRO IR 18 7065/7143/7227/7295.

⁴⁸ PRO IR 18 2102/2129.

⁴⁹ PRO IR 18 6882.

⁵⁰ PRO IR 18 6846/6847/6896.

⁵¹ PRO IR 18 7134.

mid-nineteenth-century farming practices. The tithe commissioners, however, appear to have shown little concern, acquiescing to Pilkington's decision when he considered that such information was not essential for the confirmation of an agreement.

It is more surprising that Henry Pilkington managed to report on six Northumberland townships without visiting them at all! His reputation must by this time have been sufficiently high to allow him some flexibility in the way he performed his duties. There is no evidence of a reprimand for this lapse. At Crawley in Eglington parish on 12 November he writes: 'I did not visit this township, apprehending you would think my doing so a waste of time, as there is only one landowner in it, and only thirty-seven acres of land which are titheable in kind, and the same individual is owner both of the land and the tithes which arise from it.'⁵² At Hetton in Chatton parish he also thought there was no need to make a visit, but his excuse for not visiting Lyham township in that parish on 23 November was more colourful and highlights the rigours of a local agent's life:

'I was unable to visit this township. — I had intended to have visited it on the day I was overturned in my gig, but I was unable to reach it — and tho' I remained several days in the immediate neighbourhood, yet the rains, which had continued almost incessantly for a fortnight, had so swelled the rivers and brooks, that a ford, which I should have had to pass, was not then considered safe. Mr. Culley, however, one of the titheowners informed me that it is a township of inferior land, about half sandy loam and half clay — a township not as a whole very favourable either to the growth of turnips or to the breeding of sheep. Its climate is raw and the roads to and about it very bad.'

He adds, in humble vein:

'I shall at any time be ready . . . to visit the township . . . should you, after reading the following report, think it would be more satisfactory to you that I should do so.'⁵³

The tithe commissioners were, however,

prepared to accept this report despite the possible bias.

VII

Henry Pilkington: assistant tithe commissioner

By the end of 1839 fewer agreements were being reached. The number of reports on agreements made by Henry Pilkington from 1840 to 1846 accurately reflects this national trend. From this time tithe commutation increasingly took place by compulsory award at the instigation of the tithe commissioners, and from 1843 more awards were confirmed by the tithe commissioners than agreements. This placed a much greater demand on the assistant commissioners since it was they, and not the local agents, who were able to hold award meetings and draft awards. At the same time the amount of work created by the apportionment of rent-charge was increasing. This mainly took the form of appeals by landowners against the amount of rent-charge which had been apportioned on their land. Again, it was the task of assistant commissioners to preside over meetings to hear appeals against the apportionment. By 1840 the original one-to-one ratio of assistant commissioners to local agents was out of balance with the amount of work being generated for each to do. It is hardly surprising then (given his now apparently good reputation), that Henry Pilkington was appointed an assistant commissioner to help redress this imbalance. He was sworn in as 'an assistant tithe commissioner for especial purposes' at Newcastle upon Tyne on 23 December 1839.⁵⁴ From this time onwards his work for the Tithe Commission diversified. In addition to reporting on agreements he was sent all over the northern counties to attend apportionment appeal meetings, e.g. 28 August 1840 at Talkin, Cumberland; 31 August 1840 at Whicham, Cumberland; 2 October 1841 at Whinfell, Cumberland.⁵⁵ As late as 1847 he was still employed on this

⁵² PRO IR 18 6901.

⁵³ PRO IR 18 7048/7115.

⁵⁴ The *London Gazette*, 1839, Vol II, No 19806, p 2677.

⁵⁵ PRO IR 18 765/785/784.

business, e.g. 31 July 1847 at Whitehaven.⁵⁶ He was not, however, responsible as an assistant commissioner for presiding over the initial award meetings and fixing a rent-charge, though on a few occasions he was required to make a supplementary award in townships where an agreement or award had later been found unsatisfactory.⁵⁷ Another new aspect of his work was to give evidence to the tithe commissioners on the propriety of confirming awards. Such evidence was required from only a few townships in Pilkington's region. For example, on 21 April 1842 he reported on the awards which had been drawn up for Catchburn, Hepscott and Ulgham townships in Morpeth parish, Northumberland.⁵⁸ Having established himself through his previous work as the person with greatest knowledge of the tithing customs and agriculture of Northumberland, it was fitting that he should have been chosen to undertake these reports.

Henry Pilkington reported on more agreements in England than any other local agent or assistant commissioner. In all, he wrote reports on 422 tithe districts between 1837 and 1846. For the period 1837 to 1839 it can be calculated that he would have received £1617 for work which would have occupied him for between twelve and fifteen months. It should be remembered, however, that out of this sum he would have had to pay his living and travel expenses. From 1840 he would have been paid as an assistant commissioner for each day he worked on the Tithe Commission's business.

VIII

Conclusion

The different parts played by the local agents and assistant commissioners in tithe commutation are difficult to reconstruct in the

absence of the day-to-day working papers of the Tithe Office. It is likely that such papers would resemble in type the Poor Law Commission's documents, and include registers of correspondence between the tithe commissioners and the assistant commissioners and local agents, minutes of meetings held between them, ledgers etc. Unless these papers are discovered, suggestions made in this paper as to the way assistant commissioners and local agents were appointed, and their duties organized, can only be regarded as tentative. The career of one of the busiest local agents/assistant commissioners has, however, served to bring to light the importance of these men to tithe commutation and to show how their perception of the information required by the tithe commissioners often influenced the agricultural statistics and descriptions they provided in their reports. Henry Pilkington's work aptly illustrates the rigours (brought about by a hectic itinerary and bad roads) which were endured by the whole body of assistant commissioners and local agents in the course of bringing into effect this piece of nineteenth-century reforming legislation.

Correspondence to the Tithe Office contained in the file for Plumpton Street, Cumberland includes the following passage:

During the night of the 14th, however, much snow had fallen, and the coachman of the William would not start until a snow plough, which he understood the surveyor of the roads had promised to send, might have had time to somewhat smooth the passage. He therefore did not start till nine o'clock a.m., but bad as I had anticipated the state of the road, I found it far surpassed by the reality. Notwithstanding the snow plough and with six horses, with all the speed we could urge them to, and with many *all-but* upsets, we did not reach Newcastle, hungry, faint and starved to death (for the cold was Siberian) 'till between six and seven at night.⁵⁹

⁵⁶ PRO IR 18 788.

⁵⁷ PRO IR 18 1877, Auckland St Andrew, Durham; PRO IR 18 1887, Bedlington, Durham.

⁵⁸ PRO IR 18 6915/7046/7266.

⁵⁹ PRO IR 18 735, Plumpton Street, Cumberland. Letter from Henry Pilkington to William Blamire, written from Wigton, Cumberland on 18 December 1846 describing his journey from Alnwick to Newcastle on 15 December.

APPENDIX I

Location of work by Local Agents and Assistant Commissioners reporting on agreements

(source: PRO IR 18)

<i>Assistant Commissioner/ Local Agent</i>	<i>Counties and number of reports completed 1836-1848</i>
C Howard Assistant Commissioner	Yorks NR 75; Yorks WR 71; Yorks ER 43; Durham 42; Lincs 27; Lancs 11; Salop 8; York C&A 7; Cheshire 6; Staffs 5; Cumb 3; Westm 2; Notts 2; Rutland 2.
R B Phillipson Local Agent	Yorks WR 53; Cheshire 43; Yorks NR 40; Northumb 38; Salop 30; Durham 27; Staffs 26; Lancs 24; Derby 21; Lincs 14; Yorks ER 8; Notts 7; Westm 3; Leics 3; Rutland 2; Cumb 1.
H Pilkington Local Agent/Assistant Commissioner (special)	Northumb 173; Durham 101; Lancs 32; Yorks NR 23; Salop 20; Yorks WR 16; Cumb 13; Westm 11; Cheshire 8; Staffs 8; Essex 5; Yorks ER 4; Northants 3; Lincs 2; Leics 2; Derby 1.
H Gunning Assistant Commissioner (special)	Norfolk 109; Suffolk 86; Cambs 17; Hunts 2.
J D Merest Assistant Commissioner	Norfolk 161; Suffolk 64; Staffs 4; Salop 1; Lincs 1; Essex 1.
J Jerwood Assistant Commissioner (special)	Devon 122; Cornwall 61; Dorset 22; Somerset 7; Wilts 2.
R Page Local Agent	Somerset 284; Gloucs 23; Cornwall 9; Dorset 8; Hereford 6; Wilts 4.
G Bolls Local Agent	Wilts 144; Dorset 116; Gloucs 37; Hereford 16; Worcs 13; Radnor 1.
T Hoskins Local Agent/Assistant Commissioner (special)	Hereford 110; Monmouth 56; Pembroke 55; Brecon 52; Cardigan 42; Glamorgan 38; Worcs 36; Yorks NR 31; Carmarthen 29; Gloucs 27; Radnor 20; Yorks WR 16; Cheshire 10; Salop 9; Staffs 5; Lincs 3.
J Pickering Local Agent	Lincs 63; Surrey 29; Essex 20; Yorks WR 18; Notts 17; Leics 17; Suffolk 15; Derby 12; Norfolk 12; Salop 10; Staffs 8; Warwicks 7; Hants 6; Cambs 5; Beds 5; Berks 5; Kent 4; Rutland 4; Northants 4; Hunts 3; Yorks ER 3; Herts 3; Bucks 3; Oxon 2; Middx 1; Sussex 1.
R Kynaston Assistant Commissioner (special)	Essex 63; Suffolk 49; Kent 26; Hants 23; Berks 10; Derby 8; Norfolk 6; Oxon 6; Warwicks 4; Cambs 2; Staffs 2; Middx 2; Herts 1; Beds 1; Bucks 1; Surrey 1.
T S Woolley Assistant Commissioner	Lincs 47; Kent 46; Warwicks 26; Norfolk 14; Leics 13; Suffolk 12; Notts 11; Sussex 11; Hants 10; Bucks 9; Northants 9; Essex 8; Herts 7; Cambs 6; Hunts 5; Derby 5; Staffs 4; Beds 4; Berks 4; Surrey 4; Yorks ER 1; Worcs 1; Wilts 1.

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Book Reviews

N D G JAMES. *A History of English Forestry*. Basil Blackwell, 1981. xii + 339 pp. 24 illustrations. £19.50.

This book is primarily about the development of forestry in England since the Norman conquest. The author hopes that it will be useful as a guide to earlier times, and as a record of the expansion of modern forestry. It was written to commemorate the centenary of the Royal Forestry Society of England, Wales and Northern Ireland by one of the society's past presidents.

The thirteen chapters fall into three groups. Chapters 1-5 deal with the medieval forests, their laws, administration and beasts. The majority of the pages, however, are devoted to a descriptive inventory of 129 forests, giving for each their boundary and a few historical records and anecdotes. The sources used are entirely secondary, for example, gleanings from the Victoria County History and well known books by J Manwood, J G Turner and J C Cox. Chapters 6-8 cover the early development of 'modern' forestry, i.e. plantation forestry. There is much about the seventeenth-century timber supply and what should be done about it; ship building and the supply of timber for 'wooden walls'; early forms of plantation forestry; and the introduction of tree species from abroad. Chapters 9-13 cover forestry over the last century, dealing in particular with the origins of modern forestry around the turn of the century, the formation of the Forestry Commission, the drive for large-scale afforestation, and the formative experiences of two world wars. Appendices include a comprehensive list of statutes relating to forests and forestry 1184-1971; a select bibliography; and a list of relevant Government reports 1787-1957.

Two general criticisms seem in order. The first is more a warning: this is not a history of English woodlands. Until recent times most woods were treated as coppice, yet the system is scarcely mentioned. One of Oliver Rackham's books is listed, but as a work containing substantial parts devoted to matters other than forestry. Wood pasture, the other traditional system, is mentioned in the earlier chapters, but we get little idea of how the pasture woods were managed. Secondly, I would dispute the implication that there is any significant connection between the medieval forests and modern plantation forestry. Admittedly, some medieval forests remained in state

hands long enough to become part of the modern Forestry Commission estate, and in the New and Dean Forests forestry today is influenced by the remains of the medieval system, but that is about the end of it. The practices and philosophy of modern forestry are quite different and indeed a new element in the scene. If this book had not perpetuated the spurious connection with medieval forests, thereby leaving space to dwell more on modern forestry, it would have been a great deal more valuable.

Nevertheless, it would be wrong to dismiss the book. It is a clear summary of received wisdom amongst foresters. The section on modern forestry is valuable. Many will find the appendices useful as a source of reference. With its clear type, varied illustrations and the colour reproduction of Gainsborough's Cornard Wood on the cover, the book is most attractive.

G F PETERKEN

M L RYDER, *Sheep and Man*. Duckworth, 1983. 846 pp. Illustrated. £55.

This monumental work contains 846 pages, weighs over 4 lb, and costs £55. It embodies the vast knowledge accumulated by Dr Ryder during a lifetime devoted to the study of all aspects of sheep. It discusses in Part I the unrecorded domestication of various species of sheep by man and continues through the prehistoric period of skeletal remains. Part II collects together records of the middle ages when sheep and wool dominated the English economy and also discusses the evolution of sheep in other regions of the world. Part III describes the modern breeds and their place in the various systems of contemporary agriculture, ranging from arid deserts through the temperate zones to the mountain regions, where transhumance is still practised. Throughout, Dr Ryder has produced a variety of illustrations culled from ancient drawings and sculptures as well as from modern sources to illustrate changes in the evolution of sheep and of the tools associated with their husbandry; archaeologists and anthropologists will find much to interest them in Part I. The appendix (pp 785-801) contains a list of the locations of such material, and the references (pp 802-829) contain more than eighty referring to Dr Ryder's own publications.

The index is inadequate in relation to the size of the book, because it repeatedly gives a string of

undifferentiated page numbers after an entry — 94 after 'shearing', 54 under 'cheese', 51 under 'weaving', when half a dozen should be the maximum entries under one heading. And Dr Ryder's erudition does not include the titles of the English aristocracy. Lord Leicester of Holkham we know, or Thomas Coke of Norfolk, if preferred; but please *not* 'Lord Coke of Norfolk' (p 492)!

The price of this book will restrict its use to the readers in agricultural and archaeological libraries for whom it will be an essential reference work on the history, breeding, and husbandry of sheep from the prehistoric times to the present day. Dr Ryder must be congratulated on the publication of this authoritative volume on his chosen topic.

EDITH H WHETHAM

CHRISTOPHER TAYLOR, *Village and Farmstead: A History of Rural Settlement in England*. George Philip, 1983. 254 pp. Illus. £10.95.

One problem with any subject which is making rapid progress is that research findings often remain relatively inaccessible in journals. Settlement history has suffered from this, but in his book Christopher Taylor has drawn together many strands of recent scholarship to provide a valuable summary of current developments which helpfully distinguishes between new and defunct ideas. Tracing changes since prehistoric times he adopts an approach which goes beyond a narrow concern with locational or spatial aspects of settlement to consider it in the context of society and economy as a whole. *Village and Farmstead* is also a noteworthy addition to the new *genre*: scholarly texts enlivened with copious illustrations. The subject matter is eminently suitable since crop marks, landscape features and village layouts are often difficult to describe but come vividly alive in aerial photographs or diagrammatic form. The successful juxtaposition of text and illustration is a major strength, as is the book's straightforward and readable style.

Prehistory has undergone perhaps the most revolutionary thinking during the past decade due to the work of palaeoecologists, palaeobotanists, geographers, archaeologists and historians, a revolution fully reflected in this work. For example, findings are suggesting a very much smaller role for environmental determinism than once thought. Thus the belief that mesolithic and neolithic sites were confined to the light upland soils is no longer tenable. It is now recognized that the abundance of evidence reflected a smaller subsequent disturbance of these marginal areas by man, compared with lowland sites. Nor were early societies spread thinly upon the landscape. Instead Taylor portrays a dense and highly mobile territorially-based settlement pattern, which left few

areas untouched and wrought spectacular changes on the environment including deforestation, regeneration, soil erosion and blanket peat formation. The Bronze Age, from around 1500 BC, emerges as a period of particularly notable change. It witnessed a radical and massive alteration to landscape patterns with the replacement of haphazard settlements and small fields by a planned countryside of large field systems flanked by long territorial boundaries which ignored topographical features. Reasons for this change are inevitably conjectural but we are offered tantalizing glimpses of continuity with later time periods. For example, in certain areas there is evidence to suggest that these territorial boundaries formed the original estate or parish boundaries of Roman and later periods. And there are further indicators that these early farmers practised seasonal grazing on certain detached portions of territories similar to the transhumance of more recent times.

The belief that once documentary evidence becomes available we can begin to date the origin of villages as we know them with certainty is another myth firmly rejected by Taylor, who has found that place-name evidence and the evidence of Domesday Book for example can seriously mislead. A much more reliable approach has been the combination of assiduous field walking, aerial photography, excavation and a more critical use of literary evidence, which in recent years has led to some radical re-interpretations. These contradict the traditional notion of cataclysmic change often associated with the influx of new peoples, and provide instead support for the author's own view of continuity and gradual adaptation. Thus the neat nuclear village thought to be the typical settlement form created by the early Anglo-Saxons is shown not only to have appeared relatively late in the eleventh century, but to have made small progress over large areas of the countryside. Much more typical was the small hamlet or isolated farmstead usual in prehistoric and Roman times. The popular opinion that massive desertion of sites occurred with the Black Death is also shown to be a fallacious one. Where abandonment did occur, resettlement was often rapid and generally the crisis only further weakened settlements which were already vulnerable. The reality, argues the author, was a constantly changing pattern of settlement right through from prehistoric to modern times. Within the territorial-estate or parish boundaries sites shifted, expanded, contracted, were abandoned, resettled and shifted again while undergoing endless changes of form and structure. Against this backdrop certain developments came into prominence at different periods. The seventeenth century saw an upsurge in the removal of entire villages or part of them for the creation of formal gardens around country seats; forest clearance and fenland drainage were followed by a rash of isolated farmsteads; and squatters built cottages

along the edges of heaths as population grew. In the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries enclosure preceded the building of more farmsteads on former strip fields or common wasteland; industrial villages sprouted around mines or quarries; hamlets were created along canals and towns grew in response to the arrival of railways. In the present century the pace of change quickened with further shifting, creation, expansion, shrinkage or wholesale abandonment of sites.

In his discussion of the causes of shifts in the settlement pattern Taylor is wary of national explanations. So often villages or hamlets witnessed changes in total contrast to that of close neighbours. Although demographic swings had a role and geographical factors were sometimes relevant, it is the human element to which responsibility for change is mostly ascribed. Purely local decisions by landowners, industrialists, local authorities or poor migrants have created new settlements or condemned old ones, irrespective of national trends. The result of course is that underlying causes often remain unknown. We lack explanations for the abandonment of sites as recent as the past century: Luddington in Northamptonshire finally disappeared in the 1950s though it is not known why it happened. Painstaking local research of the kind Taylor has himself undertaken is vital for throwing further light on the problem: Snap in Wiltshire was deserted in 1914 and local tradition blamed failure of the water supply whereas closer investigation revealed that purchase of land by a family of butchers was the true cause.

Village and Farmstead is a handsome book, and very moderately priced considering the lavish illustrations and quality of content. Both interested laymen and students of settlement history will find it invaluable for obtaining an overall view of the complex changes that have occurred in the past. And the useful bibliography of over 200 references will point them to more detailed reading if they so wish.

RAINE MORGAN

T H ASTON, P R COSS, C DYER and J THIRSK (eds.), *Social Relations and Ideas: essays in honour of R H Hilton*. CUP, 1983. xiii + 337 pp. £25.

Few persons have affected medieval historiography in recent years more profoundly than Rodney Hilton. His warm approach to economic and social concerns, reaching profoundly into the political arenas (less so into the administrative concerns of some modern historians); his sensitivity to all sorts of evidence, medieval literature as well as court rolls, landscapes and maps as well as private household records; his deep concern for rigorous scholarship and yet his willingness to plunge, sometimes uninvited, into areas of conflict and debate (few will forget his timely

intervention in *Past and Present* in the Robin Hood controversy) — all these have left a mark, not only on his many research students, some of whom are now colleagues, but on other medieval scholars further afield. Once viewed with suspicion, his judgments are increasingly welcomed and valued.

This tribute volume richly deserves a welcome. Only in one respect is it unworthy of him who sought the widest audiences for his views — its unreasonable price. The range of subjects covered both reflects Hilton's wide-ranging interests and at the same time precludes detailed review. After an introduction by Edward Miller, Aston's essay on the origins of the manor in England, first published in 1958 and reprinted here with a postscript, has a peculiarly dated and even irrelevant feel about it; he seems to be arguing about a subject and along lines which no longer interest contemporary historians. It may be salutary, nevertheless, to be reminded of these earlier debates to which Hilton himself contributed and on which he was nurtured (as the bibliography shows, by 1958 Hilton had at least two major books and seventeen articles, most of them dealing with matters of social rather than legal-administrative matters).

Aston's paper is the earliest in period; it is also the only one reprinted. The rest have presumably been prepared specially for this volume and reflect Hilton's wide-ranging interests. Domesne agriculture in the late eleventh century (Sally Harvey) reviews over a wide area the structures of demesnes and their profitability and suggests that demesne farms were less desirable in this early period than they have often been thought to be. A welcome posthumous essay by Postan on the decline of feudalism as seen by 'historians of antiquarian bent' and 'historians operating systems, whether Marxist or not' posits the view that since feudalism means many things to many people, the phrase 'the decline of feudalism' is meaningless. Essays on the imposition of a Church-dogmatic concept of marriage on an older order and morality as seen in twelfth-century France (Georges Duby), on the different views of the *vavasour* in France ('a holder of a sub-fief') and England ('a man of modest fortune', although it changed over time) by P R Coss, and on earlier conflicts between lords and tenants on the ecclesiastical estates of Halesowen (Razi, an essay which needs a map) reflect the wide interests of Hilton in social constructs, literature and language, and social protests as well as his geographical range from Europe to west midlands local history. Poverty is dealt with in two other essays — as reflected in *Piers Plouman* (Geoffrey Shepherd) and in a study of diet, using a wide range of documentary and some archaeological evidence (Dyer). Two important review articles follow — a survey (Astill) of what evidence archaeology has thrown on the late medieval economy (concentrating, justifiably, on pottery, village and

urban settlements, coins and bones and opening up a range of new questions; it is regrettable that industry is not included, for the evidence marshalled is now extensive), and an analysis of recent work on late medieval peasant freedom and unfreedom (hereditary serfdom) in SW Germany, Bavaria and E Germany (Wunder). An essay on attitudes to time, space and modes of control (Smith) in Russia up to the seventeenth century is matched by Joan Thirsk's paper on English books of husbandry in which she shows that most of the authors were themselves practical gentlemen farmers concerned to share their views with 'humbler men'.

The book is handsomely produced and, as is so necessary in such a wide-ranging collection, well indexed. The British Library copy will be in great demand for many years to come; get in your inter-loan request now.

ALAN ROGERS

F M L THOMPSON (ed), *Horses in European Economic History: a Preliminary Canter*. British Agricultural History Society. 1983. 206 pp. £6.50.

With major works already devoted to the vine, the potato, and, more recently, the sheep, it is very surprising that more attention has not been devoted to the history of the horse. As Prof. Thompson's introduction to these essays indicates, this volume is no more than a preliminary run through aspects of what are defined as 'some of the different approaches to the study of the historical role of horses in the economy and society, rather than a fully integrated history'. Viewed in the light of this modest ambition, the volume is a considerable success.

Inevitably, a series of papers presented to the Eighth International Economic History Congress at Budapest in 1982 will be patchy in its coverage, both chronologically and geographically. The wide-ranging survey of the great horse in medieval times, R H C Davis's 'The Medieval Warhorse', is sadly isolated in both senses. This chapter raises sufficient questions about the origins, breeding, and possible late medieval decline of the warhorse to demand substantial further research. In England in particular, the years after 1360 saw the decline of the royal studs, and perhaps of controlled breeding in general, and the growing importance of artillery in English military tactics completed the decline of the English great horse.

Three studies examine the complexities of horse power and its gradual replacement by water and steam and later by the internal combustion engine. Jennifer Tann's 'Horse Power' packs a great deal into a brief and elegant survey of the potential of the horse as a source of industrial motive power, c 1780, and points to the very low marginal cost of horse-powered additions to plant as the secret of their long enduring attraction.

Even to the middle years of the nineteenth century this relative cheapness remained attractive, except in industries such as iron, where unit demands for power found the horse totally wanting. The two other studies discuss the twentieth-century displacement of the horse from transport and from draught on the farm. T C Barker's 'The Delayed Decline of the Horse in the Twentieth Century' employed standard sources to point out the slowness of the process, and its international contrasts, in which Germany, perhaps surprisingly, remained predominantly horse-powered on the farm until the Second World War. E J T Collins's 'The Farm Horse Economy of England and Wales in the Early Tractor Age', with its analytical appendix by David Hallam, penetrates more deeply into the problem, making significant alterations to previous statistics of the decline and in consequence laying greater stress on exogenous demands for horses and the retreat of the plough as its causes. The study is important in its own right, and as a foretaste of Hallam's fuller study, which will no doubt extend to other important variables, such as the price and availability of labour on the farm.

The other studies of Part I, F M L Thompson's 'Horses and Hay in Britain, 1830-1918' and Keith Chivers's 'The Supply of Horses in Great Britain in the Nineteenth Century' are both concerned with the supply side of the horse economy. The former extended his previous estimates of horse populations to quantify demands for fodder, and to analyse the consequent extension of the radius of supply. By the 1890s, the mechanical baling press had opened yet another domestic market to competition from abroad. Commercial structures responded to the challenge, and domestic supplies only failed to cope when challenged by the half million extra animals on the Western Front in 1918. Chivers presents a clear and concise analysis of the breeding and rearing of draught horses, of the economics of stallion ownership and of the trade in general, and of the determinants and sources of imports.

The 'Case Studies' of Part II are generally of lesser interest, although based on deeper research. P R Edwards's 'The Horse Trade in Tudor and Stuart England' presents an early statement of his important and novel analysis of the toll books of English horse fairs, in defining the geography and nature of the trade, and stressing the complexity of the commercial structure, in which middlemen predominated. Herman Diederiks used the Napoleonic surveys of 1807 to assess ownership in 'Horses in the Netherlands at the Beginning of the Nineteenth Century'; and Olga Crisp's 'Horses and Management of a Large Agricultural Estate in Russia at the End of the Nineteenth Century' presented a Russian perspective on the issue of the horse *versus* the ox in a general study of the Meyendorf estate in Kursk province. Most

interesting and demanding of these European case studies was A Gomez Mendoza's 'The Role of Horses in Transport in a Backward Economy: Spain in the Nineteenth Century', which presented detailed estimates of motive power for a country in which the mule and the donkey reigned supreme. Cheap carrying services were supplied by the peasants to break down Spain's autoconsumption, but the author does not quite explain how the country coped with a huge horse population and its demand for fodder under conditions of strict protection for the cereal farmer.

This is a cheaply but nicely produced volume which has done sufficient in its ten varied essays to indicate that the economic and social history of the horse can be a rich and varied subject. Naturally, vast questions remain unanswered: although horse meat is mentioned on a number of occasions in these essays, none explains why so much of Europe, the Belgians excepted, was so profligate with so large a potential store of protein. Horse history in its evolution is thus at an early but interesting stage: while a valuable preliminary, this is more a rising trot than a canter.

J A CHARTRES

G WHITTINGTON and I D WHITE (eds), *An Historical Geography of Scotland*. Academic Press, 1983. xiii + 282 pp. 28 figures, 14 tables. £22.50 (hardback), £9.80 (paperback)

At the start of 1980 the growing community of historical geographers working in Scotland had no substantial collaborative works to their credit, a sorry situation in comparison to the steady productivity of historians and economic historians. With the publication of *An Historical Geography of Scotland*, however, we now have two major works on Scotland within four years making special use of the historical geographer's particular concern with spatial patterns and processes.

The earlier work, *The Making of the Scottish Landscape*, edited by M L Parry and T Slater, was correctly identified by its editors as the first collection of essays on rural Scotland. As such it was quite consciously a summary of progress in research, with contributions by specialists covering their own fields and a recognition of the lacunae without any attempt to fill them.

The new *Historical Geography* is rather more ambitious. It attempts, refreshingly, to cover a much broader canvas; the editors recognize the importance of moving on from the rural and parochial to examine a much wider range of patterns, not merely focussing on Scotland *simpliciter* but putting the country in its wider British and European context, and trying to bring Scottish historical geography up to date methodologically. All this is attempted in such a way, at least as

far as the publisher's description is concerned, that it should interest and inform the student and the general reader. How well does it succeed?

The reviewer is left with the feeling that it does succeed, at least to the extent that it is a useful addition to a scanty literature, but that it by no means satisfies the need for a clear modern appraisal of Scotland's geographical past.

It has to be said first that the student or general reader will not find this book to be a well-rounded reference work. Like Parry and Slater before them, the editors in their preface are ready to consign to oblivion topics like transport history which possess no specialist. Other topics vanish down the cracks between the chapters; this fate befalls the Romans, whose misfortune it was to be neither prehistoric (Chapter I) nor of the Dark Ages (Chapter II). Indeed, one wonders whether the editors had a very clear view of their readership. The style and presentation of individual chapters varies greatly. Dodgshon's stimulating Chapter III, for example, is a research summary supporting its arguments about pre-eighteenth-century rural developments with copious references, including specific documents in the Scottish Record Office. Gordon's chapter on industry, in contrast, has a broad-brush approach uncluttered by any except occasional secondary references. Both approaches are legitimate, but the offspring are uneasy bedfellows.

The editors' task can certainly not have been easy, considering the task of devising a coherent structure that would adequately take into account the chronology of events, the range of topics, and some striking regional variations, but the book does not present a very satisfactory solution to the problem. The progression is untidy and unclear, and some contributions are not well matched to their titles; even the most hardened Scottophobe might accept that the designation 'medieval' is inappropriate in the title of a chapter (Chapter III) terminating in 1700.

The greatest difficulty is with the later chapters, which tread the uneasy line between history and current affairs. David Turnock's contribution on the Highlands copes well with the situation, but in other cases the balance is not well-maintained. George Gordon's industrial survey, for example, is hardly a contribution to historical geography; it is indicative of its emphasis that his three maps (at a rate of one per ten pages this book is poorly provided with maps and diagrams) all relate to the last fifteen years.

It would be unfair to ignore the real strengths of this volume. The early chapters by Ian Morrison and Robert Dodgshon in particular succeed in meeting the standards set both by editors and publishers, and there is much of interest too in the late chapters by Gordon Clark (rural land use after 1870) and J Doherty (urbanization after 1750). Most contributions are quite adequate in themselves, although Whittington's

eccentric chapter on the agricultural Lowlands, however justified in its attack on previous approaches, seems unfairly selective in singling out one particular culprit.

The real problem is one of integration; the book suffers from a failure to mould contributions into a form compatible with a clear editorial policy. That expertise exists in some quantity is evident from the editors' ability to draw on a group of authors almost entirely different from the earlier rural book. However, it is inevitable that this book should be compared with the *Historical Geography of England and Wales* of 1978, and in view of the lack of cohesiveness the comparison cannot be very favourable. With a clearer overview, Whittington and Whyte could have raised the status of this book from 'useful' to 'very good indeed'; in the meantime Scotland's historical geography still awaits its first comprehensive analysis.

J M LINDSAY

A R BRIDBURY, *Medieval English Clothmaking: an economic survey*. Heinemann Educational Books; Pasold Research Fund, 1982. xiii + 125 pp. £9.50. Dr Bridbury's mode of argument is by now well known, but on this occasion it is compounded by a particular lack of facts with which to support his thesis. This short book, then, is not likely to leave the mark on our growing understanding of medieval English clothmaking which Dr Bridbury himself agrees is greatly needed.

His general thesis is simple. At all stages during the Middle Ages, at least from the mid-twelfth century into the fifteenth century (the period covered by this book, although most of it is concerned with the mid-thirteenth to the late fourteenth centuries), clothmaking was very important in England; we cannot say much about it because 'the ordinary activities of ordinary people are, for the most part, irretrievable'. Having absolved himself from the need to search the documents and to assess the growing archaeological material relating to medieval clothmaking, Dr Bridbury argues that the alleged supremacy of wool-exports during the period between the 1270s and the 1370s is the result of historians concentrating exclusively on taxation records (his own appendices, nevertheless, deal almost exclusively with these same tax records; the figures given on pp. 116-122 are not Bridbury's but those of Carus-Wilson and Coleman, and those on pp. 114-115 come from H L Gray and are known to be unreliable). Instead of concentrating on wool *versus* cloth exports, he argues, we should instead concentrate on how the indigenous clothmaking industry first faced and eventually overcame a threat to the home market from

foreign imports of cloth and then recovered the lost ground by exporting more and more cloth throughout the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries.

The argument is buttressed not by facts but by rhetoric; the book abounds in 'probably', 'possibly', 'presumably', 'perhaps', etc, much of it verbose escapism from the necessity of a rigorous search for evidence: when discussing the 'success' of Edward I's customs of 1275 as contrasted with the 'failure' of those of 1196-1203, we are met with the following remarkable passage:

'What does this extraordinary contrast between Edward's response to the fiscal potentialities of foreign trade and John's indicate? Can we really believe that it merely reflected the differences between John's character and stature as king and Edward's? Can we believe that John, who resorted to such ignominious shifts in order to raise money, would not have revived his taxation of foreign trade if foreign trade had been worth the trouble of doing so? May we not with justification see a change over the years, not so much in personality as in circumstances? And may we not conclude that the change in circumstances was brought about by a prodigious but unrecorded increase in the volume of wool being shipped abroad between the beginning and the middle of the thirteenth century?'

When to this is added more than a dash of moralizing, the concoction becomes unpalatable. Without the facts to support the thesis, this small book represents a regrettable waste of money on the part of the Pasold Research Fund, whose contributions to the history of textiles have in the past been of much more significance than this ill-researched offering.

ALAN ROGERS

M C COLEMAN, *Downham-in-the-Isle: A Study of an Ecclesiastical Manor in the Thirteenth and Fourteenth Centuries*. Boydell, 1984. x + 166 pp. 3 maps; 6 plates. £15.

The monograph which deals in depth with a single manor or village has long held an important and respected place in the literature on medieval agrarian history. Indeed, such a scale of analysis is frequently imposed by the essentially local nature of so much of the available evidence. Yet, as the best of these studies — P D A Harvey's now classic account of Cuxham or Z Razi's recent court-roll based investigation of Halesowen — amply demonstrate, the end result need not be parochial: with their sharp if perforce narrow focus they afford insights into agrarian life which are often denied to students of later periods. Alas, the same cannot be said of the work currently under review.

Miss Coleman's chosen subject possesses considerable intrinsic interest. Downham-in-the-Isle was part of the estate of the Bishops of Ely, about whose administration and financial organization E Miller has already written at length, but about whose agricultural activities etc much remains to be known. Downham is one of the best documented of the Ely manors, with two thirteenth-century extents, two sequences of fourteenth-century court rolls, and some good fourteenth-century account rolls. Although subject to a locally all-powerful and old-established ecclesiastical authority, with all that that implies, Downham lay in the heart of one of the most idiosyncratic and dynamic regions of medieval England. Other parts of the Fenland and their immediate environs have already attracted a great deal of attention; so any study of the Fenland's largest island — the Isle of Ely — is of potential interest for comparative purposes. Ecologically, Downham, like all Fenland settlements, was richly endowed: it enjoyed naturally fertile soils, virtually unlimited pastoral resources, and easy riverine access to the great trading entrepot of Kings Lynn. There is therefore much of general relevance that a study of Downham's fourteenth-century court rolls and accounts might have revealed.

Unfortunately, Miss Coleman's monograph fails to do justice to these sources and to recent advances in their methods of analysis. The subjects covered include holdings and tenure, bylaws and local administration, the operation of the manor court, inheritance and dower, and arable and pastoral husbandry, whilst a third of the ninety-six page text (there are an additional sixty pages of tables) is given over to the reconstructed biographies of villagers. The treatment of husbandry practices is particularly disappointing. The existence of a three-field system is implied but never explicitly demonstrated, nor is it made clear how such a rotational scheme was reconciled with a pattern of demesne cropping which devoted 43 per cent of the sown area to winter corn, 38 per cent to spring corn, and 19 per cent to legumes. More seriously, there is no attempt to explain why on apparently fertile soils which could command an annual rental in the early fourteenth century as high as 30d an acre, mean yields both per seed and per acre should, with the exception of barley, have been so low (with ratios for the ten or so harvests which are recorded of 2.0 for rye, 2.3 for oats, 2.4 for wheat, and 4.1 for barley). The proverbial livestock deficiency of medieval England can hardly in this case provide the reason; for, as Miss Coleman quite rightly stresses, pastoralism was a mainstay of the local economy. In this context it can only be regretted that the author provides no systematic data on demesne livestock to set beside the much fuller statistics which she gives of arable production. The absence of full information on the size and composition of the demesne labour force is

likewise unfortunate. There is, of course, much in this book which it is useful to have in print; but at a price of £15 its cost is out of all proportion to the modest aims and achievements of its author.

BRUCE M S CAMPBELL

W G V BALCHIN, *The Cornish Landscape*. Hodder and

Stoughton, 1983. 234 pp. 19 maps, 63 plates. £7.95. Since man modifies his environment, Professor Balchin, a historical geographer, has, for a second time but far more extensively, described the making of the Cornish landscape during a period extending over four thousand years. Over even longer cons geological changes and climatic vagaries have affected the profile of the land and its ecological surface. So a recent land utilization survey has classified nearly seven-tenths of the area of Cornwall as 'farmscape', less than a twentieth 'wildscape', more than a fifth 'marginal fringe' between these two categories and a bare 0.5 per cent as true 'townscape', leaving the small remainder as rural-urban — 'rurban' — fringe, a somewhat suspicious classification. This distribution, of course, results from many generations of human occupation and suggests a predominantly agricultural region, but with the two fringes accounting for a full quarter of the total area of the county the landscape, or rather landscapes, of the peninsula might merit a designation of hybrids; furthermore, in that lies their interest and appeal.

There are two aspects of man's relationship with nature of which the historical geographer is conscious — co-operation or adaptation towards and exploitation. The former is essential to continued agricultural success. The latter, however, has provided some of the more eye-catching features of the west country landscape — the 'Cornish Alps', waste from china clay in the St Austell area, and the derelict ruins of mine surface workings scattered throughout the county from St Just in Penwith right up to the Tamar and beyond. Yet as the years pass even these scenes are changed from stark dereliction through weathering and the slow but sure establishment of organic vegetative life which eventually may support some type of farming activity.

Its geological structure and climate have meant that throughout the ages of human occupation Cornwall has been marginal or 'fringe' agricultural land. Adaptation to these natural conditions has enabled men to utilize this land, a long story which Professor Balchin has traced from the tiny prehistoric fields found in parts of West Penwith with their massive hedges, built partly to give shelter from Atlantic gales, partly to dispose of rock to get a few plots of cultivable soil, right down to present-day experiments to establish vegetation on china clay spoil tips. Most progress has been made since fairly large-scale mining

began towards the end of the seventeenth century accompanied by a rapid growth of population, the reversal of which during the period 1861-1911 also modified the farmscape. The same period saw the still continuing transportation revolution, both in land and sea travel; two successive highmarks of this have been the construction, a century apart, of the rail and road bridges over the Tamar at Saltash, furthering the development of the tourist industry which has been responsible for so much 'rurban' fringe development to accommodate holidaymakers and those of them who decide to retire to Cornwall.

This second, much expanded version of Professor Balchin's original 'essay' on Cornwall in 'The Making of the English Landscape' series, suggests comparisons with its predecessor. It has a much handier and attractive format; although much of the original text is incorporated it is brought up to date while most of the illustrations are new and far more clearly reproduced. The up-dating of the study since 1954 is vividly instanced by the earlier version including pictures of both the exterior and interior of Morwenstow church and the present containing an illustration of the satellite tracking station in that parish. Let it not, however, from this be too hastily concluded that times and human preoccupations and proclivities have changed, for in the mid nineteenth century Morwenstow's famous parson, Hawker, was vastly concerned in attempting to reduce or alleviate perils of shipwreck on the perilous coast of his parish. The index includes national grid reference to practically every place mentioned in the text, ensuring that this work has consummate qualities as a tourist guide besides its scholarly qualities as a work of county historical geography.

JOHN ROWE

BARRY COWARD, *The Stanleys, Lords Stanley and Earls of Derby, 1385-1672. The Origins, Wealth and Power of a Landowning Family*. Manchester UP, Chetham Society. Third series, XXX, 1983. xvi + 252 pp. £21.

By and large the dust has long since settled on the controversies over the rise of the gentry and the crisis of the aristocracy. Historians these days devote more attention to peasants than to peers. But systematic studies of the vicissitudes of landowning families are still needed and the Stanleys — one of the major influences in the North of England — have long required the treatment which Dr Coward has now provided. Writing after the initial disagreements over landed society have subsided has enabled him to identify and profit from the mistakes of his predecessors, to recognize the need for extreme care in the handling of sources and the wisdom of avoiding easy generalizations and neat but misleading formulae. For these reasons he joins earlier critics in questioning

the validity of Lawrence Stone's 'crisis of the aristocracy' and refutes the notion that aristocracy and gentry were distinct, competing groups. He is also critical of more recent attempts by Dr Blackwood (in *The Lancashire Gentry and the Great Rebellion 1640-1660*, 1978) to reduce the subject to statistical tables. The evidence, he rightly says, is too incomplete and ambiguous to support this kind of treatment. Even the historian of the Stanleys — the leading family in Lancashire — has to cope with a corpus of records which is patchy in the extreme. Their rule in the Isle of Man is the best documented. Elsewhere their activities are often shadowy. Such are the shortcomings of the evidence that it is impossible to be precise about the family's wealth even at particular moments in time.

The political interest of Dr Coward's subject, in the nature of things, can never be far from the centre of the stage. The part played by the first Earl of Derby in assisting Henry VII in 1485 and the execution of the seventh Earl in 1651 are familiar incidents in national history. For readers of this journal, however, the particular interest of Dr Coward's volume will lie elsewhere. Though the Stanleys rose to power by a mixture of advantageous marriages and royal favour it was as landowners that they sustained that position. The author has interesting things to say about their leasing policies, estate management, and their relations with their tenants. He notes, for instance, the continuance of a conservative combination of long leases and high entry fines until well into the seventeenth century. Rents payable in kind were by no means uncommon even in the 1630s though in the Civil War when redress was at hand tenants complained that they had 'suffered great losses by the earl's means, who hath endeavoured to break their customs and raised their fines for his own advantage'. In the short term, undoubtedly, the English Revolution had disastrous consequences for the Derby family. In the longer term, as Dr Thirsk's seminal research has taught us to expect, the effects were less serious. 'Only those estates which had been "voluntarily" alienated were not restored in 1660, and despite the earl's failure to recover some of them in parliament, he may have been more successful by other means.'

One could quibble about the merits of the arrangement adopted in the book — part chronological, part thematic — which has produced a certain amount of repetition. Conversely, there are times when the treatment remains tantalizingly brief and suggestive. But this is a useful, well-researched and judicious study. One of its chief merits is that though it recognizes the pre-eminence of the Stanleys in Lancashire it places them firmly within the context of the county community of which they formed a part and reveals the limitations as well as the strength of their social and political influence.

R C RICHARDSON

A CHARLESWORTH (ed), *An Atlas of Rural Protest in Britain 1548-1900*. Croom Helm. 1983. 197 pp. 62 maps. £16.95.

This is an oddly difficult book to read, in that it is the product of the editor and sixteen collaborators and covers a very extended period in less than 130 pages of dense prose. In the preface, the editor and principal author commented on the self-doubt he experienced in the production of this book, and it is a work of somewhat questionable utility: not all the maps are meaningful, nor is all the protest discussed rural.

This book — it is not an atlas in the conventional sense — is divided into a general introduction and six subsequent chapters covering 'land protests' 1548-1860, food riots 1585-1847, turnpike disturbances, the Clubmen and militia protests, protest by agricultural labourers 1790-1850, and rural protest from Rebecca to the Highland land wars. Within each chapter or section a general introductory text prefaces sections and maps dealing with shorter periods or specific events. Thus, Chapter 3, 'The Geography of Food Riots 1585-1847', has maps and text covering the periods 1585-1649, 1660-1737, 1740, 1756-7, 1766, 1771-3, 1776-93, 1794-6, 1799-1801, 1810-18, and 1847 before presenting three micro-studies on the North Midlands in August and September 1756, Gloucestershire and Wiltshire in 1766, and Devon in 1795 and 1800-1.

From this description of its form, it will be apparent that the book suffers badly from excessive compression. Many of the events, incidents, and movements summarized in the maps and the accompanying text have warranted or been the subject of full monographs, and this atlas simply does not have the space to convey sufficient information to make its text on such subjects meaningful. Thus, the amazing feat of D J V Jones in compressing the Rebecca Riots of 1839-44 into four maps and less than two pages of text is mitigated by the fact that it will be virtually meaningless to all who have not already read Williams's monograph on the subject. D E Williams's doctoral thesis analysing the food protests of 1766 fares a little better, but still leaves the reader seeking the monograph to make the map more meaningful than two pages of explanatory text permit. To point the issue more clearly, this section, founded on excellent detailed research, employs thirteen different symbols on the map and lacks the space to make them fully intelligible; it also squeezes into the map an over-reduced region-by-region time profile of incidents.

This is not to say that the atlas is without value. Some sections present entirely new information and the maps clearly heighten our understanding of the dimensions of protest. Thus Charlesworth's map of the waves of rioting in late 1830 clearly indicates the movement of protest and thus advances our

understanding of its causation; Jeanette Neeson's maps and text add very substantially to knowledge of the opposition to enclosure in a study of Northamptonshire, 1760-1800; and, drawing heavily on the work of Roger Wells, the absent prince from this *Hamlet*, maps 27 and 28 detail the food riots of the years 1794-6 and 1799-1801, and are outstandingly valuable.

In sum, this is a book of considerable value to the specialist possessed of sufficient background knowledge to be able to follow the heavily compressed text and somewhat over-sophisticated maps. It is generally well produced, although some of the maps are too reduced to permit easy reading. Despite some omissions, for the more general reader it represents a sound illustrated and annotated bibliography of work on the subject and a clear signpost to areas requiring further research. It pulls together a very great deal of work on protest, rural or otherwise, maps and comments with mixed results and forms a useful work of reference for the agrarian historian.

J A CHARTRES

ROBIN CLIFTON, *The Last Popular Rebellion, the Western Rising of 1685*. Maurice Temple Smith, 1984. xi + 308 pp. 4 maps. £17.50.

The ill-fated Monmouth rebellion of 1685 was not only the last serious attempt to overthrow the Crown, it was also the most tragic and pathetic incident of west-country history, and the folk memory of the vicious punishment of the rebels and of the terrible retribution of Sedgemoor and the Bloody Assize remains strongly alive in Somerset and west Dorset. There have been many books dealing with the dramatic events of June 1685, and the approaching tercentenary has stimulated a great deal of interest and further detailed research on the rebels and their motives, and on the reasons for Monmouth's remarkable popularity in the region, especially among the small farmers, tradesmen and cloth-workers, 'sober and pious men' who followed the Duke in an excess of religious zeal and concern for their liberties, and above all for the maintenance of the Protestant faith. Dr Clifton's readable account adds little that is new to the oft-told tale of the rebellion itself and its gruesome aftermath, but it does analyse in detail the social and economic background to the rising, and provides a much fuller and often more sympathetic picture of Monmouth himself than has hitherto emerged. This is based on a great deal of research among local and central records and published sources, notably on Somerset probate inventories, although the number which survives is small and the results should accordingly be treated with caution. Dr Clifton carefully analyses the social and economic conditions and the religious and political attitudes in Somerset in the decade before the rebellion, and it is this first section

of his book which will be of most interest to readers of this *Review*. Although it concentrates on Somerset at the expense of west Dorset from where Monmouth also drew so much enthusiastic support, the book makes an interesting contribution to our understanding of why so many apparently level-headed men rushed to join the Duke and stayed with him to the bitter culmination at Sedgemoor. The problem remains of why Monmouth received so much support in west Dorset and Somerset, and yet so few joined him from the similar puritan, cloth-producing, dairy-farming regions of north Dorset, west Wiltshire or the Severn valley. The book has evidently been in preparation for some time, although the Preface is dated 1983, since it ignores some important recent work on the subject, including Peter Earle's account of *Monmouth's Rebels* (1977), and W MacDonald Wigfield's important study *The Monmouth Rebellion* (1980) which provides an admirable summary as well as a painstaking account of the misfortunes of the rebels and of the careers of those who were transported. A bibliography would have been a useful addition to Dr Clifton's book. There are numerous minor errors: many place-names such as Bridgwater, Sherborne, Shepton Mallet, West Monkton, Lansdown and even Westonzoyland are mis-spelt; Dame Alice Lisle is said to have been tried at Dorchester on p.232 and at Winchester on p.233; Ilchester is confused with Ilminster; the geographical spread and influence of the 'Clubmen' movement is over-emphasized. But such quibbles apart, this book provides an interesting picture of the background to the rebellion and of the complex character, motives and conduct of the major participant, as well as a succinct account of the course of the rebellion and of the hideous fate which awaited so many of the rebels.

J H BETTEY

primarily with the great family but with the tenant community, and each holding is examined in turn. Documentary material is backed up by painstaking fieldwork and the parish is placed in the wider context of the agricultural history of the northern Vale of York. A number of old photographs and maps enliven the text.

Scagglethorp is of interest in being a deserted site whose decay was protracted. The open fields were enclosed very early and the habitation sites were dispersed, but the township still supported eight dwellings in the late-seventeenth century; by 1786 these had been reduced to three. In 1619 Moor Monkton had twenty-eight farms or cottages, twenty-six of which shared land in the thirty-six furlongs of the three open fields. By the time of the parliamentary enclosure award of 1786 the open fields accounted for only 22 per cent of the township whereas enclosures covered 33 per cent, though the cultivated area was much the same as before. The 1786 enclosures corresponded roughly to the surviving furlongs and did not lead to any dispersal of farms, only to a decline in their numbers.

Looking at the map that was the prelude to parliamentary enclosure, one is struck by the extraordinary position of All Saints church standing alone in Church Field (one of the three common fields) half a mile south of the village. A church is recorded in 1089 and a great deal of Norman work has survived in the 1879 restoration. One cannot help wondering whether the village was re-planned on a new site early in the middle ages, like so many other Yorkshire villages, possibly including neighbouring Nun Monkton. The parish has not yet yielded up all its secrets, but Dr Newman's thorough and convincing account of the post-1600 period is one that agricultural historians will certainly approve.

DAVID HEY

P R NEWMAN, *Moor Monkton and its People, 1600 to 1916: Aspects of the Social History of a Township in the Ainsty of York*. Moor Monkton Village History Committee, 1982. 140 pp. Illus. No price given.

Moor Monkton lies near the confluence of the Nidd and the Ouse a few miles north-west of York. Dr Newman's detailed and scholarly study is concerned with the civil parish, which covers 2,700 acres of low-lying land comprising the estate village of Moor Monkton, the deserted township of Scagglethorp and the lost manor of Launde. The small freeholders' township of Hessay is excluded on the grounds that it had little economic contact with the rest of the ecclesiastical parish. The study is based on the estate records of the Slingsby family of the Redhouse (originally the 'redehouse'), who acquired Scagglethorp and Launde in 1560 and Moor Monkton in 1598 and held them until 1916. However, it is not concerned

N MCKENDRICK, JOHN BREWER, J H PLUMB, *The Birth of a Consumer Society: The Commercialization of Eighteenth-Century England*. Europa Publications, 1982. viii + 345 pp. £18.50.

One day, during a meeting of the Caius historical society, Messieurs Brewer, McKendrick and Plumb discovered that each was examining the commercialization of English society in the eighteenth century. The result of their discovery is *The Birth of a Consumer Society*, a set of essays effectively and interestingly tied together by a common theme. All three authors agree that the expansion of the eighteenth-century home market was so considerable that it markedly affected the behaviour of Englishmen. So, while other books on the eighteenth-century economy debate the relative importance of home and foreign markets to England's development, this book begins with a statement of the

importance of the home market and proceeds to explore the new culture associated with its growth.

McKendrick's focus is on sales techniques, that is, on those cultural accoutrements which were invented to accelerate the market's growth. Given McKendrick's previous work on Wedgwood, the reader expects that this examination of the rise of the self-service shop, of shop displays, of travelling salesmen, and of newspaper advertising will reveal innovative attempts to appeal to a mass market. What is less expected is McKendrick's evidence that almost all social strata participated in this market. In 'The Commercialization of Fashion', McKendrick uses pictures, new varieties of pedlars, and the rise of the cardboard fashion doll to argue that even the rural poor were customers of the new entrepreneurs.

Brewer's contribution, 'The Commercialization of Politics', constitutes a triptych whose centre panel celebrates the clubs pledged to liberty and John Wilkes. The two flanking panels tie Wilkes and the clubs to the new market. The first depicts tradesmen and artisans banding together in voluntary associations for protection against the vicissitudes of frequent and unpredictable fluctuations in the supply of short-term credit. Brewer argues that these clubs decreased their members' economic and political dependence upon the élite, and that club members resented the government's manipulation of finance: and so to Wilkes. Wilkes, in turn, inspired the final panel — a portrayal of the clubs as customers of brewers, tavern-keepers, potters, and printers, all of whom satisfied the clubs' demands for political emblems. The culture of politics was now tied to the mass market.

As Plumb demonstrates, the new market even and markedly affected leisure and the upbringing of children. That these two articles (one of which was not easily available) are here reprinted alongside McKendrick's and Brewer's reminds the reader that Plumb's topics are central to analysis of eighteenth-century society. The new market for books, theatre, music, race-meetings, holiday resorts, schools, toys, and circuses was the market of the Industrial Revolution and the market which generated demands for parliamentary reform. How eighteenth-century Englishmen enjoyed themselves and raised their children was directly related to England's new economic structures. And, Plumb argues in 'The Acceptance of Modernity', Englishmen's use of leisure and practices of childrearing served to alter habits of thought. Hobbies and family expeditions to enlighten the children accustomed the populace to novelty, stimulated curiosity in the material world, and prepared Englishmen to accept concepts of rational improvement.

As these essays make evident, the new culture associated with the predominance of the home market also accustomed Englishmen to urban living. It is

remarkable how large a proportion of the new pastimes, goods, amusements, and even sales techniques presented here were either urban enjoyments or aimed at an urban populace. Not only were the Wilkite clubs urban, as were the theatres, museums, concert halls, and shops, but even newspaper advertising was directed largely to the urban populace, for a much greater proportion of city dwellers were literate than were rural residents. In presenting a pronounced change in English culture associated with the new mass market, these essays suggest further questions about the structure of that market and the permeation of its culture. Which aspects of the new culture were adopted by which groups? And which aspects were resisted, and why, and with what consequences? How did the appeal to a mass market affect the role and influence of groups who had heretofore acted as cultural mediators, who had communicated news of fashion, taste, education, and behaviour to their neighbours and so been arbiters of culture? In raising the intriguing possibility that the new market made the differences between the culture of the city, the small town, and the countryside more marked and more important than they had been before, these essays should stimulate new approaches to analysis of the relation between town and country, and of the transformation of England from a rural to an urban society.

NORMA LANDAU

D TURNOCK, *The Historical Geography of Scotland since 1707*. CUP, 1983. xi + 352 pp. £25.

David Turnock's new study of Scottish historical geography since 1707 construes the problem in terms of a modernization process. Each stage of modernization is seen as having a different geographical impact. What he regards as the first stage, 1707–1821, saw attempts to spread change as widely as possible, with investment being directed to the highlands and islands as well as the lowlands, and with as much concern being shown for the social as for the economic consequences of change. During the second or take-off stage, 1821–1914, growth became more geographically selective, being concentrated more and more in the central valley whilst the highlands and islands or 'outer regions' were rapidly reduced to the status of a laggard or backward sector. By the twentieth century and third stage of modernization, the arena of growth had narrowed still further to the urban centres of the central valley. This broad geographical treatment of modernization enables Turnock to set both growth and problem areas in a more explicit interpretative context, with accessibility to markets being given particular stress as the key to economic success.

Discussion of each stage is prefaced by a general overview in which Turnock skilfully sketches out the

broadier issues before proceeding with a series of in-depth thematic chapters. As one would expect from an author who has contributed so much to our understanding of crofting and the highland economy, those chapters dealing with change in the countryside are notably strong. His style here is to combine local case-studies, in which the processes of change are comprehensively explored, with the mapping of regional but inevitably more selective data sets. On the whole, it is a method that works well. There are some fine discussions of change, especially on areas like the Grampians and north-west Argyll. It also enables a wide range of topics to be thoroughly dealt with, from landholding and forestry to industry and transport. There are also some excellent maps. His mapping of references to farming improvement in the Old and New Statistical Accounts is typically resourceful and provides the basis for a valuable discussion on where improvement took place, though the reviewer would have liked more comment on the actual mechanics of change (especially the change which took place in the arable areas of eastern Scotland) so as to balance the largely retrospective view provided by the Accounts.

Although readers of the *Review* will be more interested in Turnock's exploration of rural change, the book balances this with an equally substantive analysis of change in Scotland's urban-industrial economy since 1707. Indeed, the book is structured around a single, conceptual framework that embraces both sectors. The result is a satisfyingly coherent and successful argument. Not least amongst the book's merits is its examination of change down to the present day, enabling the author to display his firm grasp not just of recent historical change, but also of present-day planning problems. Altogether, it represents an important and praiseworthy addition to the literature on Scottish historical geography.

R A DODGSHON

P ROEBUCK (ed), *Macartney of Lisanoure, 1737-1806: Essays in Biography*. Belfast, Ulster Historical Foundation, 1983. 376 pp. 18 maps and illustrations. £16.50.

This is not a book to be judged by its cover (the publishers would be well advised to replace the depressing dust jacket) or by its title. 'Who of where?' will be the first reaction of many people. By itself, Macartney's name will not be unfamiliar to students of eighteenth-century British diplomatic and imperial history, since he was envoy extraordinary to Russia 1764-67, chief secretary of Ireland 1769-72, governor of Grenada 1775-79 and of Madras 1780-86, first ambassador to China 1792-94, unofficial envoy to Louis XVIII of France at Verona 1795-96, and governor of the Cape 1796-98. Scarcely anyone, however, has ever heard of Lisanoure, his estate in the

northern part of County Antrim. The use of his local habitation with his name in the title of this book of essays therefore does not readily identify their subject. Nor does it reflect what most of the book is about, since seven of the ten chapters (237 pages) deal with Macartney's career as diplomat (or Irish secretary). The point is important only because it may put some people off what is really an excellent book, one which — given the extraordinary geographical range of Macartney's diplomatic career — justifies the use of several specialists rather than a single author. The chapters by Michael Roberts on Russia, Thomas Bartlett on Ireland, Edith Johnston on Grenada, T G Fraser on India, J L Cranmer-Byng on China, W R Fryer on Verona and J L McCracken on the Cape expertly unravel Macartney's public career. The volume is held together by good editing and the editor's own judiciously-placed contributions, which deal with Macartney's early, middle and later years and are followed by a short conclusion.

Macartney was descended from a Belfast merchant whose son, Macartney's grandfather, had taken to the law, married well and accumulated sizable (though not very valuable) landed estates in County Antrim which raised him to solid gentry status. Macartney's good fortune began with his being an only son and an only grandson, and hence the inheritor of most of his grandfather's property. This modest patrimony, from which for many years he derived an annual income well short of £1000, was nothing like sufficient to promote his career in public life: it took the patronage, and the money, of Lord Holland and the connections, though little else, acquired by marriage to a daughter of Lord Bute to do that. He apparently did not revisit Lisanoure (his birthplace) until 1770. At that time his 8500 scattered acres in north Antrim had a gross rental of only £694 (an average rent of just over 1s. 7d. an acre); much of the land consisted of bog, rough pasture and mountain; many of the tenancies were held in partnership or in rundale, neither of which was conducive to improvement; and the whole area was remote and economically underdeveloped. In order to enhance his status as a landowner, Macartney sold leasehold property elsewhere and borrowed over £7500 (from his banker Coutts among others) with which to improve the house and demesne at Lisanoure and to augment and consolidate his estate, the acreage of which was nearly doubled. Lady Macartney's first impression of Lisanoure as a 'place without a single tree' was probably no exaggeration, and could have been applied to many another part of the country untouched by the improving hand of a resident landowner, both in the 1770s and later.

From 1786 onward Macartney, at last rendered financially secure by the profits of his Indian appointment, spent long periods at Lisanoure and — this time in an economic climate much more

favourable than that of the early 1770s — continued his policies of improvement more systematically. Some more land was acquired (this time, though, purchases were few and very selective), the demesne was enlarged and the house (never well roofed, and perpetually damp) partly rebuilt, and the village of Dervock was reconstructed and developed as a market town. As old long leases, which had kept the income low and had hindered his plans, fell in, Macartney got rid of middlemen and shortened his leases, in some cases replacing leases by tenancies-at-will, rather earlier than the general trend. In economic terms, the return on money spent cannot have been great. All his life, however, Macartney lived up to his ambitious image of himself, and towards the end was at last able to afford it, while at the same time investing heavily in government securities. By the time he died in 1806, he had effected a considerable transformation in the size, income, organization and development of his estate by the thorough planning and consistent pursuit of rational policies.

Little has appeared in print as yet about the finances and estate management of eighteenth-century Irish landowners, partly because few available collections of papers contain good material for that (still less any earlier) period. The Macartney papers, though by no means complete, are not only better than most for the last quarter of the century but have the additional interest of referring to a gentry estate rather than to one of the leviathans such as Downshire or Abercorn. Peter Roebuck's analysis of the material is characteristically well-organized and thorough, and places Macartney's activities as a landowner firmly in the context of his overall financial history, just as this in turn is placed in the still wider context of his public career. The nabob of north Antrim was by no means a typical Irish landowner, but then one begins to wonder if such a creature ever existed. The Ulster Historical Foundation is to be congratulated on producing another volume of exceptional interest and real historical worth.

W A MAGUIRE

JOEL MOKYR, *Why Ireland Starved: a quantitative and analytical history of the Irish Economy, 1800–1850*. Allen and Unwin, 1983. 330 pp. £22.50.

In 1980 Dr Clarkson commented in the *Economic History Review* that Irish Economic History 'looks a trifle old-fashioned with the bewitching voices of the social sciences muted and statistical wizardry missing', and what was then a mountain stream has since become a raging torrent to which this full-length econometric study is the latest contribution. Professor Mokyr seeks his answers by examining a series of hypotheses: these he tests with statistical equations based mainly on variously weighted government statistics, in par-

ticular the 1841 and 1851 Census, the 1836 Poor Law Commission and the 1844 Report of the Devon Commission. In working through these massive reports the author is following in the steps of the late Professor K H Connell and his successors.

It is perhaps unfortunate that he decided not to counterbalance this evidence by looking at some of the large collections of estate papers for specific cases which might illustrate his theories. For instance, p.199, 'the microeconomic effect of landlord absenteeism is more persuasive and more compelling than the macroeconomic effect. The cost of absenteeism to society was not so much that it caused consumption of the wrong goods in the wrong places, but that it led to a monumental case of entrepreneurial failure.' Nevertheless, many of the conclusions which result from his austere clinical method are stimulating and rewarding to the persevering reader. This is a professional book intended for a professional audience: it is not, in the words of its author, 'a general survey of the economic history of Ireland between the Union and the famine. It is not intended as such and should not be read for the purpose of an introduction to the subject . . . My purpose in this work is to answer one question . . . why was Ireland poor?'

The answer to this question is formulated in terms of a series of hypotheses based on factors relating to geography, politics and institutions, social and ethnic considerations, population, capital formation, entrepreneurship, and emigration. The book is carefully planned and divided into ten chapters including an introduction and a conclusion in which he emphasizes that 'Irish poverty was not really one single "event"; rather we are dealing with a series of related but separate phenomena which did not necessarily share the same causal mechanisms.' The individual phenomena are discussed in the intervening chapters and while the emphasis is on quantification Professor Mokyr asks a number of interesting qualitative questions, for example (p.8) he comments that 'Irish consumption patterns differed from those in most other western European countries . . . measures of national income per capita are misleading as indices of welfare. Some items such as leisure and large families, while obviously consumer goods bearing positive prices, are not included.'

In Chapter 2 there is an important discussion of the bimodal nature of the economy, definitions of poverty, questions of diet and the nature of the available evidence. Chapter 3 asks the much discussed question, 'Was Malthus right?' It is followed by a chapter on land tenure and its social and economic implications. The economics of rural conflict and unrest are investigated and the hypothesis advanced (p.144): that 'the background of the difficulties in Ireland was the changes taking place on both the supply and demand side in the market for agricultural

products'. In analysing the core problem of Ireland's limited industrialization Professor Mokyr considers the problem of wealth and limited natural resources together with the availability of capital and entrepreneurship and regards both in the light of the McKinnon syndrome. Ireland's lack of viable mineral resources was probably a more serious element than Mokyr admits. A discussion on entrepreneurship and labour raises a number of important issues, among them questions such as cheap labour and low productivity, the managerial failure of the landlords, the entrepreneurial failure consequent upon absenteeism, and even the question of laziness! Emigration is considered in the light of its contribution to this entrepreneurial failure. Emphasis is given to questions such as did emigration 'cream off' potential entrepreneurial talent from Irish society? Did it remove a potential industrial proletariat? Chapter 9 begins with an *ex cathedra* but questionable statement that: 'the prefamine history of Ireland inevitably will be interpreted in terms of the famine' and goes on to analyse the famine and its consequences, concluding that: 'to summarize, the Irish potato famine of 1846-51 was the last large-scale natural demographic disaster to strike Europe. It provides an opportunity to study in some detail the impact and factors determining the magnitude of the excess mortality such disasters involved.'

This study is primarily based on quantitative evidence and, as with any mathematical formula, if you are convinced of its premises, and any subsequent deduction from them is logically correct, then you are led inexorably to the conclusions which flow from them. Professor Mokyr comments (p. 4) that: 'the idea of content analysis of qualitative information is pursued in several instances because the Irish sources lend themselves well to it': yet on p. 134 he admits that: 'using the Poor Law Commission data to examine what happened to the dispossessed tenants is not less hazardous than using the Devon Commission witnesses. Although the Poor Law witnesses were asked explicitly what had become of the dispossessed tenants, the majority of them ignored that part of the question.' It is in the handling of this flawed evidence that what Dr Liam Kennedy describes as Professor Mokyr's 'statistical wizardry' is most dazzling but it cannot obscure the fact that his raw materials have serious defects for the treatment to which he has subjected them, leaving many of his conclusions probable, possible or doubtful but still not convincingly proven.

Nevertheless, Professor Mokyr's problem with the historical evidence at his disposal is no different from that which confronts any historian — our evidence is always less than we desire. What is disturbing is the clinical impersonality with which he draws his conclusions from an overall view of Ireland placed as a

composite specimen under an adjustable statistical microscope. From time to time he recognizes the difficulty of this problem but it is larger and more fundamental than his model allows. For example, not only did the famine not strike evenly throughout the country but even in normal times there were very real regional variations in social and economic conditions; for instance, Ulster had many distinctive features — a degree of both proto-industrialism and industrialization (rather cursorily dismissed on p. 13) and a diet which relied on oatmeal as well as potatoes. However, what is most surprising and disquieting is the sudden appearance of totally unquantified and unsubstantiated statements like (p. 291), 'the real problem was that Ireland was considered by Britain an alien and even hostile country . . . Most serious of all . . . the British simply abandoned the Irish and let them perish. There is no doubt that Britain could have saved Ireland.' This is debatable. Can it fairly be stated that the reports which supply the statistics for this study indicate an abdication from Ireland's social problems? Even the most cursory reading of the correspondence of Sir Robert Peel and his ministers, along with a consideration of the administrative infrastructure then available to arrange and distribute the necessary relief, might suggest at least a modification of these generalizations.

No country, not even Ireland, is an historical island and all Irish historians must be greatly in Professor Mokyr's debt. In looking at Ireland in a different and wider historical context, and in his extensive application of econometric methods, he has drawn our attention to new hypotheses and emphasized different aspects of an important event not only in the history of Ireland but also in the history of Europe. In doing so he points out both the great value and the substantial limitations of the mass of statistics demanded by the Parliament of the United Kingdom in its well-meaning if unsuccessful attempts to solve the problem of Ireland. Unfortunately, Parliamentary Commissions, particularly with regard to Ireland, have more often provided evidence rather than solutions. Nevertheless, Professor Mokyr has done us all a great service, not least when he reminds us (p. 4) that: 'quantitative and qualitative evidence serve different ends and should be viewed as complements, not substitutes'.

EDITH MARY JOHNSTON

MARTINE SEGALLEN, *Love and Power in the Peasant Family. Rural France in the Nineteenth Century*. Basil Blackwell, 1983. ix + 206 pp. 16 illus. £15.

Most historical records have been compiled, and most agricultural histories have been written, by men. Our perceptions of the past have been refracted mainly through masculine lenses. The extent to which such

images might have been distorted is suggested by Martine Segalen's book which both provides a reinterpretation of the relations between husband and wife in rural France during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries and offers some specifically — but not stridently — feminist insights into French peasant society.

Arguing that too much uncritical reliance has hitherto been placed upon descriptions of 'savage' rural life by 'civilized' urban travellers and bourgeois folklorists unable to comprehend the social structures which they encountered, Martine Segalen prefers instead to call upon landscape painters like Millet and Courbet as discerning observers of French rural society and more particularly (and more directly) upon its actors whose customs, rituals and proverbs she combines in a way which enables the peasants to speak for themselves even though both as a social group and as individuals they left few written accounts of their *genres de vie*. From a demographic point of view, Martine Segalen contends that the community and the household were more significant than the family and she views sceptically ideas about the emergence of nuclear families in rural France during the nineteenth century. Furthermore, she insists that even within a wider social context relations between husband and wife showed a balanced affection and were not, as some have argued, loveless partnerships as functions of the peasants' algorithm for survival. From an agricultural point of view, Martine Segalen demonstrates that cooperation and complementarity in the sharing of tasks characterized French peasant households and that behind a public male superiority lay a private equality between wife and husband: the systematic division of labour on the farm was reflected in a spatial segregation of activity which to casual observers might suggest a fundamental schism between man and wife but which Martine Segalen interprets as reflecting a logical and harmonious complementarity within the household's organization. Martine Segalen sees this balance being increasingly challenged in rural France today as mechanization and related changes threaten the role and status of women on French farms and as the couple comes to be more characteristic than the household.

This is a provocative book which will provide both excitement and frustration: its general thesis is bold, its detail fascinating, its argument not always convincing, and its style will be unfamiliar to those not acquainted with the elements of French structuralist history. It is an admirable book which offers a novel perspective upon the French peasantry in particular and upon the practice of agricultural history in general. It places people and their relationships at the centre of agricultural history, crops and livestock at the periphery.

ALAN R H BAKER

C J BLISS and N H STERN, *Palanpur: the Economy of an Indian Village*. OUP, 1982. xii + 340 pp. Figures. Tables. £15.

At the Second International Conference of Economic History in 1962 Michael Postan argued that the agrarian experience of early European societies could provide clues with which to approach the problems of Third World societies today. This philosophy, of course, works both ways, and historians of agricultural history have long been accustomed to consulting the work done on modern peasant societies to provide insights with which to consider the agrarian problems of the past. The comparison of societies set in different time spans but sharing cultural and economic similarities is thus well established, and therefore it is not out of place in a journal devoted to the agriculture of the past to consider a work that is firmly set in a modern context. Agricultural historians have a wealth of such materials from which to draw, and indeed many have been discouraged from even sampling the literature by its sheer bulk. A short guide to the best of modern peasant studies, embodying the work of such scholars as Chayanov, Shanin, Thorner, Boserup, and Redfield, would be invaluable in this regard.

Bliss and Stern's work would surely be included in such a guide. Geographically and temporally it is a very restricted study in that it treats with only one village, Palanpur in north central India, and is concerned mainly with data collected during a nine-month period in 1974-5. But the range of subjects dealt with and more particularly their detailed treatment are more than likely to make the work a classic in times to come. It is a highly econometric work, and some of the chapters may thus be inaccessible to many readers (although still of interest to those with a statistical bent, because of the methodology employed). The authors, however, have wisely catered for more general tastes by including a number of extremely useful and readable summary chapters, which could almost stand as a book by themselves.

There is at least one major limitation. In their introduction, Bliss and Stern claim that the main purpose in studying Palanpur is to analyse 'rural markets and the behaviour of those involved in them' (p. 1). In fact, the book takes a much more restricted view than this, in that essentially only input markets — the buying of grain for seed, pump sets for irrigation, the hiring of bullocks, and so on — are considered in much detail. Output sales are in the main superficially treated, and only the sale of labour gets extended coverage. One of the questions to which a clearer answer would also have been desirable in Bliss and Stern's study is the degree to which crops in Palanpur are produced for the market as against family consumption.

These criticisms aside, there is much of interest in the book for agricultural historians. There is an extended

analysis of tenancy, which in Palanpur is almost exclusively of a 50-50 sharecropping arrangement, a system which is curiously static in view of the changes that have been occurring in Indian agriculture over the past twenty to thirty years. Bliss and Stern suggest that this is due to a communal desire for uniformity in land and other transactions, a phenomenon that also keeps labour wage rates relatively constant. In short, the attributes of a perfectly competitive market scarcely apply to Palanpur.

Despite the strong element of conservatism in Palanpur's economic dealings, the village has undergone considerable change in recent times. In the twenty years before the main data collection in 1974-5, grain yields had trebled or better. The village population had also increased during this period, but only by about 50 per cent. As a result, the prosperity of some families at least — particularly among the higher castes — seems to have risen markedly, as indicated, for instance, by the increase in the number of consumer durables — bicycles, watches, and the like. Yet the attitude of Palanpur inhabitants to production remains very cautious. Bliss and Stern examine this aspect in a controlled study of wheat production, where the cultivating activities on forty-seven peasant plots in Palanpur were monitored very closely. Perhaps the most surprising thing about this study were the huge variations in production evident among farmers. Attempts to explain these variations by such factors as farm size are in the main inconclusive, and, as much as anything, production seems to depend upon the attitude of the individual farmer himself. Of prime concern to Palanpur men is the question of uncertainty, which often tends to discourage the adoption of certain improvements, especially if they are costly. Extra production, of course, is very desirable, but a miscalculation can spell disaster for the well-being of a peasant and his family. Although still only a theory in medieval and early modern agricultural history, risk aversion seemingly still exerts a very real influence on the economic and agricultural development of this particular Indian village.

JOHN LANGDON

BARRY HARRISON and BARBARA HUTTON, *Vernacular Houses in North Yorkshire and Cleveland*. John Donald, Edinburgh, 1984. 254 pp. Illus. £25.

This book is a major contribution to the study of vernacular architecture and is likely to become a classic work. Future studies of other regions will need to turn to it as a point of reference, for it is of far more than local importance. The authors and their amateur assistants have spent ten years in surveying 770 buildings throughout the modern counties of North Yorkshire and Cleveland and in examining relevant documents.

Vernacular Architecture has raised its sights from the technicalities of individual buildings to the discussion of broader themes of continuity, diffusion and diversity in the best tradition of Barley and Mercer. And the authors have been well-served by their publisher, for the book is lavishly illustrated with plans, elevations, isometric drawings and photographs.

The opening section uses archaeological and documentary material to discuss origins. The authors have stern words about the early Wharfedale Percy reports which fostered the widespread belief that medieval vernacular buildings were flimsy, impermanent structures. They suggest instead that in their area seventeenth-century houses may not have been so very different from their medieval predecessors in terms of plans and proportions, though not of building materials. Hardly any houses of a type likely to have been inhabited by even the wealthiest farmers have survived in north Yorkshire from before 1600, and few from the next half-century except in one or two favoured areas. The Great Rebuilding occurred later than in the south or midlands, and plan-types survived longer.

The second part is devoted to the classification of post-medieval farmhouses into groups: the hearth-passage plan, the lobby-entry plan, the end-stack and direct-entry plan, and ultimately the double-pile plans and Georgian farmhouses. Their evolution and their characteristics are explained convincingly and in detail and their distributions are related to farming practices and systems of tenurial structure, where possible. A particularly interesting discussion derives the hearth-passage plan from the medieval longhouse, a type that disappeared rapidly from the area after the mid-seventeenth century. Longhouses are not easy to identify as their byres have been converted into kitchens and service rooms, but the authors are able to show that in north-east Yorkshire and Craven such buildings were in no way inferior in terms of quantity and standard of domestic accommodation to other contemporary houses.

The section on construction deals with building materials (related to the underlying geology), roofs and interior features. In the central Vale of York common rafter roofs were the prevalent type, but elsewhere principal rafter roofs were usual; eighty cruck frames survive, especially on the North York Moors and in the Vale of Pickering, but not apparently in the northern dales where not even a fragment of a cruck blade has been found. Timber-framing ceased during the seventeenth century.

The final part commendably relates building types to farming sub-regions, for wide variations exist in the quality and chronology of accommodation between different areas. Hearth-Tax returns for 1672-3 and all the 375 probate inventories taken in the region in

1709–10 have been analysed, together with longer runs of inventories for particular places. Not only did housing vary from one farming sub-region to another, but in certain areas such as the southern Vale of York its quality changed from one village to the next according to the social-and-economic structure of the locality.

Barry Harrison, Barbara Hutton and the sixty members of their study group have worked on this project for ten years and mean to continue. What remains to be done, other than more recording? In the first place, the people who built and lived in these houses remain elusive. No probate inventory in this study has been related to a surviving building, nor have any identifications been made from the Hearth Tax returns; inventories cannot normally be used in this way in nucleated villages, but can be occasionally in areas of scattered settlement. Secondly, the authors use the term 'vernacular' in a narrow way that excludes the manor houses and halls of the gentry; they confess (p.24) to their 'preference for recording houses of a slightly lower social level'. But if they admit the influence of 'supra-vernacular' houses of an earlier period (and therefore record them in detail), how can they deny the influence of seventeenth-century halls, especially when their owners were the *resident* leaders of local communities? How can such buildings as Kildwick Hall in Craven, Coleby Hall in Wensleydale or Myton Old Hall in the northern Vale of York be regarded as anything other than vernacular in their building materials, plans, elevations and decorative detail? Cannot all domestic buildings in North Yorkshire and Cleveland be regarded as vernacular until Sir John Vanbrugh arrived with his schemes for Castle Howard?

DAVID HEY

ADRIAN BELL, *Silver Ley*. OUP, 1983. 291 pp. £2.95. This is a paperback re-issue of a book first published in 1931. The author, an ex-public schoolboy, was the son of the news editor of *The Observer* when G L Garvin was in charge. He entered his father's firm but after a short spell in journalism he became apprentice for a year to a Suffolk farmer of the old school. He then set up in a thirty-five-acre farm of his own. Towards the end of the 'thirties, about ten years after coming to Suffolk, he wrote a trilogy of novels about his experience. *Corduroy*, the first, was about his initiation into farming. *Silver Ley* describes his first years as a small, gentleman farmer.

He deposited £200 in the local bank – not a negligible sum in the early 'twenties. He hired a man as his helper; bought himself a pair of horses and a heifer that calved as soon as he brought her home from market; and he immersed himself in the life of a working farmer. At week-ends he spent an occasional day visiting his family in London; and he so enthused about his new life

in the country that his parents, and his younger brother and sister, eventually decided they would like to join him on the farm, his father travelling to the country at weekends. They rented a bigger cottage, letting his man, Walter, take over the cottage at the farm, *Silver Ley*. This compromised Bell's plan to farm on his own; but he weathered the period when the family farmed with him, and eventually went back to his original cottage.

Adrian Bell had trained with a substantial yeoman farmer, and inevitably fitted into the social pattern of that class who hunted and rode to the point-to-point event at the end of the hunting season. He took for granted the scene that had not changed appreciably since pre-1914. This book, as do the other two in the trilogy, contains the author's best writing: autobiographical novels which flow along with an easy rhythm that is fresh, lyrical and perceptive. It is a fair picture of the state of farming in the 'twenties, told perforce from the standpoint of the small yeoman farmer who had some money behind him, while hinting at the strain that farming was under after the repeal of the Corn Production Act of 1917 and the abolition of the Agricultural Wages Board.

It is instructive to compare the account in *Silver Ley* with a film of the same period. It was made by the Ministry of Information during the last war and concentrated on the plight of the Suffolk farm worker. He is played by John Slater who later became a television star. The film, called *The Harvest Shall Come* (I believe, still available), reveals the actual stresses farming had been under more starkly than did contemporary writings. It was as though more of the truth was palatable to wartime audiences. It shows that it was a bad period for farmers and an even worse one for farm workers.

GEORGE EWART EVANS

A G STREET, *Farmer's Glory*. OUP, 1983. 292 pp. Illus. £2.95.

Arthur Street (1892–1966) was a South Wiltshire tenant farmer, who began writing on farming topics in 1929, wrote thirty-five books, and became a popular journalist and broadcaster, while remaining a working farmer as well. *Farmer's Glory* was his first book, originally published in 1932. This welcome reissue is accompanied by an affectionate preface by the author's daughter, Pamela Street.

The first part of the book is an account of his boyhood on his father's farm (Ditchampton Farm, near Salisbury). It was a large tenant farm (actually two farms worked as one) of 630 acres, based on a long-established four-course rotation centred on sheep and corn. It was a time that he remembered as spacious and relaxed, for himself and his family. Part of this feeling came from the plenitude of labour; there

were twenty-three employees, including a groom-gardener ('there was always somebody to tell in those days' — p.28). It also came from an elevated social status; the larger tenants, although definitely not 'county', were above almost everybody else in the rural order of society. Two other features of this pre-1914 life stand out; one did not question the customary system of farming, and one paid little attention to questions of comparative costs and revenue. In fact, 'One didn't farm for cash profits, but did one's duty by the land' (p.29).

After leaving school in 1907, Street worked on the family farm for three years. Following a disagreement with his father, he then left, and spent four years working as a farm labourer in Canada. This period forms the second part of the book. Entitled 'A Canadian Interlude', it was for Street rather more than that. For the first time he was earning his living on his own merits, and happy in the knowledge that he was doing so. The Canadian experience also seems to have contributed to two important facets of his character; an ability to work extremely hard, and the mental flexibility which came from seeing a very different farming system at work.

The outbreak of the First World War brought him back, with the intention of enlisting. He failed the medical examination, and went back to helping his father on the farm, where the old system was just maintaining itself, although handicapped by labour shortage. His Canadian experience was immediately useful, since it gave him ideas on how to save labour (eg the use of double-furrow ploughs, pp.188-9). In 1917 his father died, and Street took over the farm the next year (at a doubled rent, which the estate offered him on a 'take it or leave it' basis). In spite of the higher rent, the next few years were easy ones; product prices went ever higher, and he later wrote that in 1918 he had an income of £2000 (*Wessex Wins*, 1941, p.58). High profits went to many people's heads; the social life interrupted by the war was renewed in a rather frenetic manner, and 'in short', he wrote, 'farmers swanked' (p.206). He admits that he was no exception, giving tennis parties for twenty people, and getting his golf handicap down to eight.

Nemesis struck in 1921, when agricultural prices began to fall steeply (especially corn). Street, in common with other farmers, at first tried to raise his

income by growing even more corn. This made things worse, since he rapidly came up against diminishing physical returns (pp.213-4). As early as 1925, 'ruin gibbered in the background not so very far away' (p.215). An attempt at intensive dairying and sugar beet also failed. By 1927 he knew that he had to find a radical solution or leave farming as a failure. The solution turned out to be the newly-invented Hosier 'bail', a movable milking parlour which allowed cows to be milked (by machine) in the fields in which they grazed. The bail cut milking costs dramatically, and also led to better manuring of the fields, and thus better hay crops. Street went over entirely to the new system, selling all his arable equipment, quitting one of the farms, and completely grassing down the other. Cheap milk production saved him from disaster. He followed up this breathing space by donning the white coat of the milk roundsman (no easy thing for a formerly prosperous farmer) and starting a retail milk business. Thus cushioned, he was able to weather the next depression after 1929 with composure — or so one must presume, since he does not mention that it affected him.

The final chapter consists largely of reflections on the direction in which farming was going at the time of writing (1931), and thoughts on agricultural policy. His general prescription was that others should follow his lead and abandon tillage for grass, a course which he thought justified by climate and consumer demand. He also considered that it was sound from the point of view of national defence, since it increased the fertility of land, and this fertility could be tapped in wartime by switching over to tillage. This view (p.281) is echoed by his daughter (p.2), and is less sound than the rest of the diagnosis; the high cereal yields of both wars owed more to artificial fertilizer than previously stored-up fertility.

Street wrote that the book was an attempt 'to paint a true picture of farming life in southern England during the last twenty-five years' (p.271). Within the limitations of an individual's viewpoint, it succeeds remarkably well. But its popularity owes something also to its protean nature; it can also be read as autobiography, rural nostalgia, a store of good anecdotes, or as a fine example of simple and evocative English prose.

P E DEWEY

Shorter Notices

G AVELLA-WIDHALM, L LUTZ, R MATTEJET, U MATTEJET (eds.), *Lexikon des Mittelalters*, Vol. II. Bettlerwesen — Codex von Valencia, München and Zürich, Artemis Verlag, 1982-3. 2210 cols.

The fascicules of this unique lexicon appear in pairs in rapid succession. The whole work will now comprise seven volumes. Since our first review its format has continued as an alternation of longer articles of manageable length on fundamental topics, and many shorter articles, terse and stimulating, with compact bibliographies dating into the eighties. This volume contains about twenty short articles on agricultural history. Irish and Celtic matters seem to attract more attention than the rest of the British Isles. Articles on cities and families are strong points. The history of peoples, places and ideas takes a certain priority over economic history. It is usually unnecessary to await cross-references in later volumes. Each volume consists of ten fascicules, now costing DM39 each, with special subscription terms. This represents extremely good value. The editors have co-ordinated the work of more than eight hundred contributors with great skill, and have kept a just proportion between the length of articles.

D J DAVIS

HERBERT JAMES HEWITT, *The Horse in Medieval England*.

J A Allen, 1983. 87 pp. £10.50.

Herbert James Hewitt is one of the *doyens* of medieval economic and military history, and in this little book he has drawn together much of the information he has collected about horses in the course of his long academic career. The result is an attractive and informative essay for non-specialists. It must be pointed out, however, that the subject matter is both wider and narrower than the title suggests. On the one hand it covers several topics which, though related to horses, are not strictly equestrian: roads, the speed of travel, the transport of heavy goods and the campaigns of Edward III and the Black Prince. On the other hand it is confined almost wholly to the fourteenth century and gives little more than a passing nod to the problem of the horse in agriculture. Being aimed at a popular audience, the book has no footnotes or bibliographies. For these the serious student will have to turn to Mr Hewitt's earlier works, *Medieval Cheshire* (1929), *The Black Prince's expedition of 1355-1357* (1958) and *The Organization of War under Edward III* (1966).

R H C DAVIS

THOMAS TUSSER, *Five Hundred Points of Good Husbandry*.

OUP, 1984. xxi + 344 pp. £3.50.

Good value for money will be found in this edition of Tusser's works, being the definitive one of 1580, as originally republished by the English Dialect Society, with one introduction by Sir Walter Scott and a better, though slightly precious, one by Geoffrey Grigson, and with the notes supplied by Hillman in 1710 and Mavor in 1812. Many readers may find pages and pages of what perhaps is best described as from verse to worse, about such matters as gelding and muck-spreading, apt to become tiresome, unless counteracted by frequent reference to the highly illuminating and mercifully prosaic notes. Sad to say, Tusser rarely waxes poetic, except in his religious verses. His strong point was his acquaintance with husbandry, housewifery and rural economy in eastern England. His verse is a mine of information, or, rather, of ore from which information can usually be extracted, and the spoil thereof contains enigmas enough to taunt the minds of generations to come. No agricultural, horticultural or economic historian can afford to ignore either Tusser or Hillman; no more can the student of English language and literature. For one thing, Tusser lards his verse with old proverbs, sayings and colloquialisms. He was at once deeply religious and truly earthy. He was a man of many and great parts. Who else would compose a piece of verse in which every single word begins with 't'? And who but Tusser can write so sensibly and engagingly about common fields and severalty or so graphically and delightfully about the hay harvest? Every Englishman should read his Tusser.

ERIC KERRIDGE

AVICER WILSON. *Cocklebury. A farming area and its people in the Vale of Wiltshire*. Phillimore, 1983. xx + 119 pp. Illus. £12.

The history of a village is no new thing, as all readers of this *Review* will be well aware. The county antiquarian societies' journals are full of such things, ranging from those printed in the nineteenth century to those peeping out of print at the present day; but it must be emphasized that it was these small, often tiny, villages from which came the Yeomen of England, the people who made the country great; there they lived and died and had their being. This is all the more reason for making a study of a particular place, indeed for

many scholars to make studies of their immediate rural environment and its history. Miss Wilson has done just this and with some taint of scholarship. Cocklebury is indeed an example to later students who are engaged upon the same sort of study in different and varied areas. They might well take example from the industry in seeking sources that Miss Wilson has, in this which may be called an exemplary study.

G E FUSSELL

ALAN EVERITT and MARGERY TRANTER, *English Local History at Leicester, 1948-1978*. Department of English Local History, University of Leicester, 1981. xxxi + 87 pp. £1.85.

Although local history was well established and widely practised before the creation of the Department at Leicester in 1948, and has flourished in many locations since, Leicester has justly achieved pre-eminence in the field. It has become to local history what Cheshire is to cheese. This booklet was compiled to celebrate thirty years of the Department and published as part of the celebration of the Jubilee of the University in 1981. It lists over 1200 items, including book reviews, produced by members, students, and others connected with the Department, and allows the outsider to view the range and quality of its contribution to the broad field of English local history. More than a quarter of the 550 publications have been concerned with agriculture and rural society, and with many entries under the names of Finberg, Hoskins, Thirsk, and Everitt, it is clear that agrarian history has been significantly advanced by the Leicester connection. Professor Everitt's introduction also presents a county-by-county breakdown of the books and articles generated: few readers will be surprised that Devon (22 per cent) and Leicestershire (13 per cent) predominate. As a guide to one very distinctive institutional contribution to the development of modern analytical local history this is very useful and modestly-priced. Many agrarian historians will find in it a valuable addition to the bookshelf.

J A CHARTRES

Cheshire History. Autumn 1983, No.12. Cheshire Community Council Local History Committee, Watergate House, Watergate Street, Chester. Annual subscription £3.50.

The attention of readers is drawn to a deserving biannual publication. This particular number has interesting articles on the court rolls of Macclesfield, enclosures in Frodsham, ridge and furrow, and trailbaston proceedings. It would be easy to decry their authors as mere amateurs, but at least they are historians enough to turn to the original sources.

ERIC KERRIDGE

WALTER MINCHINTON (ed.), *Agricultural Improvement: Medieval and Modern*. Exeter Papers in Economic History, No.14, Exeter, 1981. 137 pp.

This set of useful essays reflects the growing interest in matters of agricultural improvement and technology from the medieval to the modern period and the results thereof. Three of the essays deal specifically with the English south-west and three with the country as a whole. Of the latter three, Roger Wilkes provides a perceptive and stimulating review of the development of drill husbandry, while Nicholas Russell's paper on the improvement of the Longhorn cattle breed offers a much-needed reminder that these improvements were in evidence well before Bakewell's time. John Rule completes the trio of papers covering England as a whole with a handy survey of diet among agricultural labourers during the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. The three regional studies open with John Hare's analysis of Wiltshire agriculture in the later middle ages, where the emphasis is on changing patterns of land distribution and use rather than technical innovation. In a similar vein Robin Stanes deals with landlord-tenant relationships in a study of husbandry covenants in eighteenth-century Devon and argues that here at least covenants played a key role in maintaining high standards of farming. Finally, Derek Jewell shows how the distinctive features of farming in Devon and Cornwall led to and were reinforced by the development of particular types of agricultural equipment. This collection of essays will be of value to anyone seriously or even casually interested in the field of agricultural technology and development.

JOHN LANGDON

P LYTH, *The Southwell Charter of 956 AD: An Exploration of its Boundaries*. Philip Lyth jointly with the Thoroton Society of Nottinghamshire, 1984. 15 pp. 2 maps, 6 plates.

The Southwell Charter is one of the very few early documents relating to the estates of the See of York which provides any information at all on agricultural development. The grant referred to four townships, roughly coincident with modern civil parishes, which could be seen as centred round the site of a Roman villa. Headlands along parts of the boundary show open fields on the northern limits, while hedged enclosures in woodland areas indicate a certain amount of assarting. Some at least of the woodland was coppiced. Mr Lyth accepts uncritically the validity of hedge dating, but his interpretation of a corrupt Anglo-Saxon text seems reasonable in spite of the liberties that had to be taken to make any sort of topographical sense. His maps are clear and informative, his photographs rather less so. All in all this is a useful addition to the growing number of published boundary perambulations.

H E JEAN LE PATOUREL

Notes and Comments

CHANGES AMONG SOCIETY OFFICERS

As reported below, a new Secretary was elected at the Annual General Meeting, and a new Editor came into office. Dr Mark Overton of the University of Newcastle upon Tyne has replaced Dr John Chartres, Secretary since 1978, in that office. Members and readers should note that all correspondence should be addressed to the new Secretary.

With the retirement from office of Professor Gordon Mingay, Dr Chartres has become the Editor of the *Agricultural History Review*. As reported below, particular tribute was paid to the work of Professor Mingay as Editor at the AGM. He was only the third Editor of the *Review* in its thirty-one years of publication, succeeding Professor Herbert Finberg (1953-64) and Dr Joan Thirsk (1964-72) in 1972, having thus been the longest-serving of the three. Members will be pleased to hear that Professor Mingay will remain as a member of the Executive Committee of the Society.

ANNUAL CONFERENCE AND AGM, 1984

The Spring Conference of the Society was held at Charlotte Mason College of Education, Ambleside, Cumbria, 9-11 April 1984. Papers were presented by Dr William Rollinson (University of Liverpool), 'Aspects of Rural Life in Cumbria in the 17th, 18th, and 19th centuries'; Dr John Langdon (University of Birmingham), 'Horses and the development of farm transport in medieval England'; Mr Donald Woodward (University of Hull), 'Life on a Yorkshire Estate in the 17th Century: Henry Best revisited'; Professor Jeremy Elston (University of Leeds), 'An agronomist's attempt to explain the changes in the yields of wheat in England and Wales from 1886'; Dr Peter Solar (University of York), 'Irish agriculture in the early 19th century: a reappraisal'; and Dr Tony Phillips (University of Keele), 'Farm building provision in England, 1850-1900'. Dr William Rollinson conducted an excursion along the shores of Windermere to Kendal and the Museum of Lakeland Life and Industry.

The thirty-second AGM was held on 10 April 1984. Dr Joan Thirsk was re-elected as President of the Society, and Dr E J T Collins re-elected as Treasurer. Dr M Overton was elected as Secretary, and Dr J A Chartres appointed as Editor. Professor G E Mingay assumed Dr Overton's seat as a member of the Executive Committee, and four vacancies on the Committee were filled by the re-election of Dr J H Bettey, Dr D G Hey, Dr P Roebuck, and Professor FML Thompson.

The Chairman, Mr M A Havinden, presented the report of the Executive Committee. The EC had met twice during the year, which had again proved very successful for the Society, with membership again rising, to 847, and with its finances in a very sound state. It had also been a successful year for publications, with the volume *Horses in European Economic History* edited by Professor Thompson out and selling well, and with another new publication, Dr Raine Morgan's *Bibliography of Farm Tools, Implements and Machines* just appearing, and on sale at the conference. In the light of the Society's sound financial position, and the steady flow of good articles, it had been decided to increase the size of the *Review* to 112 pages for the next two issues. The next Winter Conference would be held on Saturday 1 December, as usual at the Institute of Historical Research, on the theme 'Conservation of the Agricultural Past'. The next Spring Conference would be held at the College of Ripon and York St John, Ripon, 1-3 April 1985. It was hoped to hold the Spring Conference at Seale-Hayne Agricultural College, Newton Abbot, in 1986, and the views of members were invited on a possible conference in Northern Ireland in 1987.

He expressed very particular thanks to Professor Gordon Mingay for his work over twelve years as the Editor of the *Agricultural History Review*, who was now retiring from that office. The meeting joined in expressing its very special thanks and appreciation to Professor Mingay for his work, and welcomed Dr Chartres as his successor.

The Treasurer presented the audited accounts of the Society in reporting on another successful year, in which a small balance of income over expenditure had been achieved. Sales of the *Horses* volume had been encouraging, and already half of its costs had been recovered. The current very low level of the annual subscription to the Society was likely to be maintained, largely because of the substantial economy in printing costs made by the transfer from the Broadwater Press to the Leeds University Printing Service: Leeds provided a service of excellent quality and, since the transfer, had made only moderate increases in its prices. He drew attention to the copies of the 1983 Economic History Society Conference booklet, still available from the Secretary, and to the other recent and new publications, available at the conference. Thanks were expressed to Mr Arkell, the new 'business manager', who had computerized the accounts. The Treasurer reported on the problems incurred with the charities division of the Inland Revenue over the repayment of tax on the Society's

building society accounts, and that it had now been confirmed that repayment on premium-rate accounts was not permitted. The accounts were adopted, and the meeting congratulated the Treasurer on his skilful handling of the Society's finances.

Dr Chartres presented the Editor's report. Arrangements for the transfer of the editorial files had gone ahead smoothly, and a good stock of articles awaited publication: the current backlog was fifteen. The third bibliographical survey of the regions of agriculture in the USA was on its way, and the fourth and fifth in preparation. As a result of the quality and quantity of articles awaiting publication, the next two issues of the *Review* were to be enlarged.

At the conclusion of the meeting, thanks were expressed to the Principal and staff of Charlotte Mason College for providing the conference with excellent facilities and accommodation.

WINTER CONFERENCE, 1984

The Society's Winter Conference will be held in conjunction with the Historical Geography Research Group of the Institute of British Geographers on Saturday 1 December 1984, at the Institute of Historical Research, Senate House, London. The theme this year will be 'Conservation of the Agricultural Past', and the speakers as follows: P F Brandon (Polytechnic of North London), 'New Approaches to Landscape Conservation'; J Sheail (Institute of Terrestrial Ecology), 'Nature Conservation and the Agricultural Historian'; P Fowler (Royal Commission on Historical Monuments), 'Buildings on the Farm'; and R D Bridgen (Museum of English Rural Life), 'The Preservation and Interpretation of Agricultural Object Material'. A copy of this programme together with the booking form is inserted in this issue of the *Review*. Enquiries should be addressed to Dr M Overton, Secretary BAHS, Department of Geography, The University, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE1 7RU.

SPRING CONFERENCE, 1985

The Society's Spring Conference will be held at the College of Ripon and York St John, Ripon, 1-3 April 1985. The full programme and booking forms will appear in the next issue of the *Review*, but the speakers will be as follows: Mrs Christine Hallas (Askrigg), 'Agricultural change in nineteenth-century Wensleydale and Swaledale'; Mr Richard Hoyle (Corpus Christi College, Oxford), 'The Pilgrimage of Grace as

Peasant Movement'; Dr John Chapman (Portsmouth Polytechnic), 'The Impact of Parliamentary Enclosure: a Reconsideration of the Statistics'; Dr Brian Outhwaite (Gonville and Caius College, Cambridge), 'Progress and Backwardness in English Agriculture, 1500-1650'; Dr Cormac Ó Gráda (University College, Dublin), 'Patterns of succession to Irish farms after the Famine'; and Dr John Perkins (University of New South Wales), 'Contemporary German Perspectives on British Agriculture before 1914'. Mrs Hallas will be leading an excursion through Swaledale and upper Wensleydale. Any enquiries should be addressed to Dr J A Chartres, School of Economic Studies, University of Leeds, Leeds LS2 9JT.

THE CLIOMETRICS SOCIETY

A new society, the Cliometrics Society, has been formed to cater for the interests of those involved with the new economic history. It proposes to maintain a list of members and their research interests, publish a periodic newsletter, and organize annual conferences. The first of its World Congresses is to be held in May 1985, and those interested should contact the Cliometrics Society, Department of Economics, Miami University, Oxford, Ohio 45056, USA.

THE HISTORIC FARM BUILDINGS STUDY

In January 1984 the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food commissioned a study of historic farm buildings, defined as those built before 1900, administered by the Council for British Archaeology, and undertaken by Mr Nigel Harvey. Its objective is to produce a handbook for the use of MAFF officials, and a series of advisory and training leaflets. It is hoped that these will prove of more general interest to all concerned with historic farm buildings.

The study is not to be based on fieldwork, but rather upon returns to enquiries by questionnaire. The handbook, the principal product of the study, will cover the following main items: sources of information on historic farm buildings (HFBs); lists of current research on the subject; rates of destruction of HFBs; methods of recording and dating; and areas requiring further research. Individuals and organizations are encouraged to contribute to this study, and questionnaire forms on which to return information are available from Mr Nigel Harvey, Historic Farm Buildings Study, 41 Corringham Road, Golders Green, London, NW11 7BS.

VOLUME 58, NUMBER 3, JULY 1984

AGRICULTURAL HISTORY

"History of Rural Life in America"

A special issue edited by Barbara R. Cotton

Papers from a symposium sponsored by the U.S. Department of Agriculture,
the Agricultural History Society, and Florida A&M University.

Voices for Improving Rural Life: Alabama's Black Agricultural Press, 1890-1965,
Allen W. Jones

Rural Telephones in the United States, *Don F. Hadwiger* and *Clay Cochran*

Rural Life Among Nineteenth-Century Mormons: The Woman's Experience,
Leonard J. Arrington

Sisters of the Grange: Rural Feminism in the Late Nineteenth Century,
Donald B. Marti

Modernization as a Function of an Agricultural Fair: The Great Grangers' Picnic
Exhibition at Williams Grove, Pa., 1873-1916, *Warren J. Gates*

Watermills in the South: Rural Institutions Working Against Modernism, *Larry Hasse*
Self-Sufficiency and the Origins of the Marketable Surplus in the Rural North,
1860, *Jeremy Atack* and *Fred Bateman*

Self-Sufficiency and Rural Life on Southern Farms, *Louis Perleger*

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Jane Marie Pederson

Government Research Concerning Problems of American Rural Society,
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Changing Concepts of the Country School as a Community Center in the Midwest,
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Education of Freedmen and the Role of Self-Help in a Sea Island Setting,
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The World Around Hampton: Postbellum Life on a South Carolina Plantation,
Carolyn Baker Lewis

Rural Life Along the Mississippi: Plaquemines Parish, Louisiana, 1830-1850,
David O. Whitten

Subscriptions: \$15 for individuals; \$25.00 for institutions; \$8.00 for students. Outside
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institutions.

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THE BRITISH AGRICULTURAL HISTORY SOCIETY

Articles and correspondence relating to editorial matter for the *Agricultural History Review*, and books for review, should be sent to Dr J A Chartres, Editor, *Agricultural History Review*, School of Economic Studies, The University, Leeds LS2 9JT.

Correspondence about conferences and meetings of the Society, and about more general matters, should be sent to Dr M Overton, Secretary BAHS, Department of Geography, The University, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE1 7RU.

Correspondence on matters relating to membership, subscriptions, details of change of address, sale of publications, and exchange publications should be addressed to E J T Collins, Treasurer, BAHS, Museum of English Rural Life, The University, Whiteknights, Reading, Berkshire.

Correspondence on advertising should be sent to Dr R Perren, Department of Economic History, University of Aberdeen, Aberdeen AB9 2TY.

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The Society aims at encouraging the study of the history of every aspect of the countryside by holding conferences and courses and by publishing *The Agricultural History Review*.

Membership is open to all who are interested in the subject and the subscription is £5 due on 1 February in each year. Details may be obtained from the Treasurer.

The Agricultural History Review

EDITOR: J A CHARTRES

SCHOOL OF ECONOMIC STUDIES, THE UNIVERSITY OF LEEDS
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The *Review* is published twice yearly by The British Agricultural History Society and issued to all members. Single copies may be purchased from the Treasurer for £4. Back numbers to Vol 20 (1972) are £1.50 per issue, except for the Supplement to Vol 18 (1970), *Land, Church, and People*, which is £2.

Contributions and letters on any aspects of the history of agriculture and rural society and economy should be sent to the Editor. Articles should not normally exceed 8000 words in length, but, very exceptionally, manuscripts of up to 15,000 words can be considered. Proposals for Supplements, of length intermediate between the long article and the book, normally not exceeding 30,000 words, should also be sent to the Editor. Intending contributors are advised first to obtain a copy of the *Review's* 'Notes for Authors and Reviewers' from the Editor. The Society does not accept responsibility for the opinions expressed by contributors, or for the accidental loss of manuscripts, or for their return if they are not accompanied by a stamped addressed envelope.