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PART I

*

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the Evidence of *Inquisitiones Post Mortem*

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Rural Land-use in the Metropolitan Hinterland, 1270–1339: the Evidence of *Inquisitiones Post Mortem*

By BRUCE M S CAMPBELL, JAMES A GALLOWAY, AND MARGARET MURPHY¹

Abstract

Inquisitiones Post Mortem (IPMs) have been used by historians for a variety of purposes, but their value as a source for the study of medieval land-use has not been fully realized. Used in large numbers they can illustrate broad contrasts between places and regions in terms of resource endowment and value. This study outlines a methodology for analysing the IPMs with reference to a group of ten counties around London. The results point to the existence of distinctive and specialized agrarian regimes, responsive to a variety of influences – environmental, institutional, and economic.

EXPLOITATION of land lay at the core of the medieval economy and society, but to account accurately for the diverse forms which this exploitation took, and thus to locate medieval land-use within its social, economic, and ecological context, is no simple matter. The biological constraints of an organic agricultural technology, coupled with a reliance upon hand tools and human and animal muscle power, ensured that natural, environmental factors exercised an important general influence upon the overall pattern. Yet if climate, soil, and topography presented certain physical opportunities, it was human factors which determined the precise land-use response.

Prominent among these human factors were the socio-property relations which determined access to, and control of, land. Seignorial and royal privilege marked out substantial areas of the countryside as forest or park-land within which land

exploitation was limited or constrained.² Manorialism was superimposed irregularly upon the land, with important implications for the respective land-use shares of lords and their dependent tenants.³ Demesnes varied greatly in size, in the range of resources with which they were endowed, and in the supplies of customary labour upon which they could draw. They varied also in the size, composition, and type of ownership of the estates to which they belonged, with an important distinction existing between estates on which the consumption requirements of the household dictated patterns of production and those on which production for exchange prevailed.⁴ The need to provide for basic

¹ The research upon which this paper is based forms part of the 'Feeding the City I' project at the Centre for Metropolitan History, Institute of Historical Research, London. The project is funded by the Leverhulme Trust and is organized in partnership with The Queen's University of Belfast. The authors are grateful to John Power and Olwen Myhill for research assistance. Derek Keene, Richard Britnell, and Harold Fox have provided valuable guidance and advice.

² P Stamper, 'Woods and Parks', pp 128–48 in G Astill and A Grant, eds, *The Countryside of Medieval England*, Oxford, 1988, pp 128 ff; L M Cantor, 'Forest, chases, parks and warrens', pp 56–85 in *idem*, ed, *The English Medieval Landscape*, 1982.

³ Variations in manorial structure and their implications are discussed in E A Kosminsky, *Studies in the Agrarian History of England in the Thirteenth Century*, Oxford, 1956. For a case study see also B M S Campbell, 'The Complexity of Manorial Structure in Medieval Norfolk: a Case Study', *Norfolk Archaeology*, XXXIX, 1986, pp 225–61.

⁴ For analyses of the role of consumption in structuring production on major ecclesiastical estates see K Biddick, *The Other Economy: Pastoral Husbandry on a Medieval Estate*, Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1989, and *idem*, 'Agricultural Productivity on the Estates of the Bishopric of Winchester in the Thirteenth Century: a Managerial Perspective', pp 95–123 in B M S Campbell and M Overton, eds, *Land, Labour and Livestock: Historical Studies in European Agricultural Productivity*, Manchester, 1991.

subsistence is generally considered to have loomed large in shaping the land-use of peasant producers and this, in turn, was influenced by the extent to which production was organized on an individual or collective basis. Thus, contrasting field-systems imposed their own stamp on the land and its use and were themselves inextricably related to a range of human and physical factors.⁵

In an age when organic resources set an absolute limit to the size of population that could be supported, these 'institutional' considerations profoundly influenced the fundamental relationship between population and land.⁶ The size and density of the population for its part affected the total area of land devoted to specific activities and the intensity with which those activities were conducted. In the formulation of M M Postan and his followers, a mounting imbalance between population and land-use resources during the thirteenth century is seen as the key to the 'agrarian crisis' which emerged during the first half of the fourteenth century. In its essentials the 'Postan thesis' holds that an increasing scarcity of grass-land *vis-à-vis* arable, in the absence of significant technological progress, led, through a shortage of animal manure, to a progressive impoverishment of the arable and eventually a general productivity decline and associated abandonment of 'marginal' land.⁷ Central to this interpretation is the belief that stocking densities were a direct function of grass-

land supplies and that available technology offered limited scope for the evolution of pastoral farming systems which made more intensive and productive use of available resources. High prices and valuations of meadow and pasture are thus regarded as evidence of the scarcity of these resources rather than the returns contingent upon their productive and profitable use.⁸ Nevertheless, recent research has tended towards a more positive interpretation, with medieval land-use regimes – both arable and pastoral – being viewed as dynamic and adaptable rather than stagnant.⁹ Within this reappraisal the role of market demand as mediated via economic rent is seen as crucial.

In contrast to Ricardo's notion of economic rent, with its emphasis upon land quality and population density as determinants of land-use, von Thünen's formulation stresses the differential impact of concentrated urban demand and its propensity to generate zones of specialized land-usage in the hinterlands of cities.¹⁰ While the assumption that urban demand is necessarily a positive and progressive factor is by no means universally shared – as witness the literature on 'parasitic cities' reviewed by P Abrams – its significance is increasingly stressed by medievalists.¹¹ Recent reappraisal of the population of London and of several leading English provincial towns has increased this interest

⁵ A R H Baker and R A Butlin, 'Conclusion: Problems and Perspectives', pp 619–56 in *idem*, eds, *Studies of Field Systems in the British Isles*, Cambridge, 1973, p 628 ff.

⁶ For example, J B Harley, 'Population Trends and Agricultural Developments from the Warwickshire Hundred Rolls of 1279', *Econ Hist Rev*, 2nd ser, XI, 1958, pp 8–18.

⁷ M M Postan, 'Medieval Agrarian Society in its Prime: England', in *idem*, ed, *Cambridge Economic History of Europe*, I, *The Agrarian Life of the Middle Ages*, Cambridge, 1966, pp 552–9. Also, N Hybel, *Crisis or Change? The Concept of Crisis in the Light of Agrarian Structural Reorganization in Late Medieval England*, Aarhus, 1989, pp 184–5, 230–6; B F Harvey, 'Introduction: the "Crisis" of the Early Fourteenth Century', pp 1–24 in B M S Campbell, ed, *Before the Black Death: Studies in the 'Crisis' of the Early Fourteenth Century*, Manchester, 1991.

⁸ M M Postan, *The Medieval Economy and Society: an Economic History of Britain in the Middle Ages*, 1972, pp 58–61.

⁹ For example, P F Brandon, 'Demesne Arable Farming in Coastal Sussex During the Later Middle Ages', *Ag Hist Rev*, 19, 1971, pp 113–35; B M S Campbell, 'Agricultural Progress in Medieval England: Some Evidence from Eastern Norfolk', *Econ Hist Rev*, XXXVI, 1983, pp 26–46; *idem*, 'Towards an Agricultural Geography of Medieval England', *Ag Hist Rev*, 36, 1988, pp 87–98; M Bailey, *A Marginal Economy? East Anglian Breckland in the Later Middle Ages*, Cambridge, 1989, pp 8–25; Biddick, *op cit*, 1989, pp 61–5.

¹⁰ J H von Thünen, *Von Thünen's Isolated State*, ed P Hall, trans, C M Wartenberg, 1966; see also M Chisholm, *Rural Settlement and Land-Use: an Essay on Location*, 1962, pp 20–32.

¹¹ P Abrams, 'Towns and Economic Growth: some Theories and Problems', pp 9–35 in *idem* and E A Wrigley, eds, *Towns in Societies: Essays in Economic History and Historical Sociology*, Cambridge, 1978.

in the impact of urban consumption on patterns of agricultural specialization.¹² D Keene has argued that London may have had a population of 80-100,000 in 1300, around twice the previously accepted estimate, and the estimated populations of Winchester and Norwich have also been subject to significant upward revision.¹³ These concentrations of non-agricultural population placed a wide range of demands on what E A Wrigley has termed the 'organic economy', for fuel, clothing and building materials as well as for human and animal foodstuffs.¹⁴

I

The importance of the land-use issue for understanding of the medieval economy makes it essential that the subject be investigated as systematically as possible. One source, hitherto under-exploited, which is capable of yielding statistical data on land-use on seigneurial holdings in many thousands of places in medieval England is the inquisition *post mortem* (hereafter IPM). It is the aim of this paper to illustrate the range of information which may be extracted from inquisitions, to establish a methodology for their systematic exploitation, and to apply this methodology in a preliminary examination of the patterns of land-use found in London's hinterland in the period 1270-1339.

IPMs are only one in a range of sources which can be utilized by the historian to

study medieval land-use. The range encompasses the Domesday Survey of 1086, surveys for some large estates, charters and feet of fines recording transfer of lands, treatises on estate management, the 1279 Hundred Rolls, and the annual accounts of manorial bailiffs.¹⁵ In original function the IPMs fall closer to the Domesday Survey than most of these other sources in that like the 1086 Survey their purpose was to inform central government about the landed resources of tenants-in-chief. Inquisitions were held by the king's escheator or his deputy after the death of a lay person who had been or was believed to have been a tenant-in-chief of the crown. Twelve jurors – local men of high repute – were assembled and gave information under oath regarding the lands held by the deceased, the composition of each manor or other holding at a given place, and the revenues accruing thereto each year. They also gave evidence concerning the heir and whether he or she was of inheriting age. The result was an extent or description of each property. The extent itemized the principal types of land-use – arable, meadow, pasture, wood etc. – and commonly provided an acreage and/or valuation for each. In many cases, particularly for arable and meadow, a per-acre valuation was also given which represents the annual 'rent' which the land would be expected to yield. The IPMs also record the existence and value of other types of resource such as dovecots, mills, fishponds, vineyards, and warrens as well as the rents owed by the free and villein tenants of the manor.¹⁶

¹² P Bairoch's recent claim that within western Europe as a whole the level of urbanization c. 1000 was only a few percentage points lower than the corresponding level c. 1700 suggests that the role of medieval urban demand requires more general reassessment: *Cities and Economic Development: from the Dawn of History to the Present*, trans C Braider, Chicago, 1988, pp 136-41. On rural-urban relations in the medieval period see G Persson, *Pre-industrial Economic Growth, Social Organization and Technological Progress in Europe*, Oxford, 1988, pp 30-1, 78-82.

¹³ D Keene, *Cheapside before the Great Fire*, 1985; D Keene, *Winchester Studies*, 2, *Survey of Medieval Winchester*, I, part i, Oxford, 1985, pp 366-70; E Rutledge, 'Immigration and Population Growth in Early Fourteenth-Century Norwich', *Urban History Yearbook* 1988, pp 26-8.

¹⁴ E A Wrigley, *Continuity, Chance and Change*, Cambridge, 1988, pp 5-6.

¹⁵ For descriptions of these sources and their usefulness, see R H Hilton, 'The Content and Sources of English Agrarian History before 1500', *Ag Hist Rev*, 3, 1955, pp 3-19; C C Dyer, 'Documentary Evidence: Problems and Enquiries', pp 12-35 in Astill and Grant, *op cit*.

¹⁶ *Calendar of Inquisitions Post Mortem and Other Analogous Documents in the Public Record Office, Henry III-Henry IV*, 18 vols, 1904-87. The Calendar selectively summarizes the information contained in the inquisitions which are organized in files in the Public Record Office (hereafter PRO). IPMs for the counties palatine are calendared separately.

If the heir was of age the escheator was instructed to release the lands to him after a relief had been paid and homage performed. If the heir was a minor the lands stayed in the king's hand until he reached his majority or, in the case of heiresses, married. A primary function of the inquisition therefore was to inform the exchequer how much profit could be expected from lands while they were in the king's hand, and the escheator had to account to the exchequer officials for that revenue.¹⁷

IPMs survive in large numbers for the whole country (see, for example, Table 2 below) from the mid-thirteenth century until 1660, and are especially numerous for the period 1270–1350.¹⁸ Their usefulness as a source is increased by the fact that their chronological and geographical coverage, though far from even, is less riddled with the gaps which characterize sources such as the Hundred Rolls and manorial accounts.¹⁹ Furthermore, although the IPMs concern the lands of lay tenants-in-chief this is in fact an umbrella title for a large group of individuals which included both the owners of major estates made up of 50 or more manors throughout and beyond England, like the Bigods and de Clares, and lesser men and women whose lands covered a small geographical region sometimes organized into manors, sometimes just one 'manor' with scattered parcels of land.²⁰ Not all IPMs contain full extents, but when they do they adhere to a fairly

consistent format and therefore lend themselves particularly well to computerized analysis.

Notwithstanding that the source has been used in various ways by successive generations of historians, systematic analysis of large numbers of IPMs drawn from a wide geographical area has hitherto been unusual.²¹ Much use has been made of individual manorial extents, particularly by settlement historians, who have linked IPM descriptions of land quality with field work evidence relating to marginal cultivation, and deserted and shrunken medieval villages.²² There have also been several county-level studies of the size of demesnes and value of land, as exemplified by R H Hilton's use of evidence drawn from fifty-eight inquisitions to establish the average size of holding of the Warwickshire nobility *circa* 1400.²³ But studies which transcend county boundaries are comparatively few. Among the earliest and most interesting is H L Gray's pioneering employment of statements drawn from the IPMs to identify areas characterized by two- or three-field systems.²⁴

¹⁷ For a thorough if rather impenetrable account of the escheator and his work see E R Stevenson, 'The Escheator', pp 109–67 in W A Morris and J R Strayer eds, *The English Government at Work, 1327–36*, II, Cambridge, Mass., 1947, pp 109–167. A full list of escheators is printed in *List and Index Society*, 72, 1971.

¹⁸ By the seventeenth century IPM extents rarely provide separate valuations of individual resources.

¹⁹ See below Tables 1 and 2 and Figure 1.

²⁰ The estates of the Bigods are discussed in N Denholm-Young, *Seigniorial Administration in England*, Oxford, 1937, pp 123–51; F J Davenport, *The Economic Development of a Norfolk Manor*, Cambridge, 1906; M Lyons, 'The Manor of Ballysax 1280–1288', *Retrospect*, new series, 1, 1981, pp 40–50. For the de Clares see M Altschul, *A Baronial Family in Medieval England: the Clares 1217–1314*, Baltimore, 1965.

²¹ J C Russell and T H Hollingsworth's extensive use of the information provided on heirs and heiresses in their studies of the replacement rate of England's medieval population are perhaps the most notable exceptions: J C Russell, *British Medieval Population*, Albuquerque, 1948; T H Hollingsworth, 'The Demography of the British Peerage', supplement to *Population Studies*, XVIII, 1964. The per-acre value of arable, meadow, and pasture and ratio of grassland to arable are mapped for the country as a whole at a county level in B M S Campbell, 'People and Land in the Middle Ages, 1066–1500', pp 69–121 in R A Dodgshon and R A Butlin eds, *An Historical Geography of England and Wales*, 2nd edn 1990, p 82.

²² M W Beresford, *The Lost Villages of England*, Lutterworth, 1954, pp 269, 427, n 39.

²³ R H Hilton, *The English Peasantry in the Later Middle Ages*, Oxford, 1975, pp 115, 118–19, 129. See also the *Victoria County History* volumes for Sussex (Volume II, 1907, p 169); Rutland (Volume I, 1908, pp 216–20); Oxfordshire (Volume II, 1907, p 181), and Nottinghamshire (Volume II, 1910, p 275). Subsequently, IPMs were used by R Scott in her 1959 account of medieval agriculture in Wiltshire (*VCH*, Volume IV, p 15); by H C Darby in his 1948 description of medieval agriculture in Cambridgeshire (*VCH*, Volume II, pp 65–6); and by R H Hilton in his 1954 analysis of the medieval agrarian history of Leicestershire (*VCH*, Volume II, p 159–65). More recently IPMs have been used to map the size of demesnes in Norfolk, Campbell, *op cit*, 1986, pp 228–31.

²⁴ H L Gray, *English Field Systems*, Cambridge, Mass., 1915, pp 44–6, 301–2.

However, the approach is essentially qualitative, as is Postan's use of the IPMs along with other manorial valuations to add weight to his argument that late thirteenth-century England was pasture deficient.²⁵ Altogether different is J A Raftis' investigation of land values in a block of eight East Midland counties, which represents the first large-scale attempt to exploit the quantitative potential of this source.²⁶ Unfortunately, Raftis stops short of mapping the data which he so systematically tabulates.

Thus, for all their historical familiarity, as Raftis observes, 'the Inquisitions *Post Mortem* have never had their own historiographical tradition; nor ... even their own historian', and their potential for yielding systematic maps of demesne land-use has yet to be fully realized.²⁷ In part this lack of scientific analysis stems from the IPMs' reputation for unreliability. In this respect E A Kosminsky's verdict that 'it is certain, then, that we are dealing with an extremely unreliable source' has been highly influential.²⁸ Kosminsky, however, was mainly interested in the IPMs as a source of information on feudal rights and revenues, where the jurors concerned may well have had a vested interest in understating the value and jurisdiction of the estate. Certainly, historians studying baronial incomes have been less than happy with the IPMs, believing that the jurors were not well informed about the overall financial condition of the estates.²⁹ But this seems much less likely to apply to the physical composition of the demesne and the annual value of its constituent parts, matters with which the local jurors would

have been more familiar. Indeed, Kosminsky's own cross-check between the figures given in the surveys for fourteen manors of Roger Bigod in Norfolk and the contemporaneous (1269-70) series of manorial accounts shows that, although in general the sums given in the accounts were higher than those in the inquisitions, the difference overall was not great.³⁰ This conclusion is endorsed by comparisons of IPMs and accounts undertaken by R H Hilton and P F Brandon.³¹

Clearly, the IPMs are a complex source whose accuracy at a detailed level should not be pressed too far. They are also subject to the usual problems of inconsistencies in the size and types of measures employed. Yet, as Kosminsky concedes, 'a comparison of the figures they contain, carried out over wide areas, enables us to capture certain characteristic traits, certain peculiarities which, though vague, are vital'.³² Nor is it likely, as Raftis points out, that the complex and sophisticated machinery of central government would have tolerated a system which produced thousands of spurious valuations over many generations with the object of defrauding the exchequer.³³ Most historians would agree that the values in the IPMs are often rounded and like many such valuations today have a tendency to under-estimation. In common with many other historical sources they must be treated with care and checked where possible. Used as Raftis used them, in large numbers over a period of time, they do provide a wide variety of data and permit study of the distribution and variation in

²⁵ Postan, *Medieval Economy and Society*, pp 66-7.

²⁶ J A Raftis, *Assart Data and Land Values: Two Studies in the East Midlands, 1200-1350*, Toronto, 1974.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, p 12.

²⁸ Kosminsky, *op cit.*, p 63.

²⁹ C D Ross and T B Pugh, 'Materials for the Study of Baronial Incomes in Fifteenth-Century England', *Econ Hist Rev*, 2nd ser., VI, 1953-54, pp 186-8; J C Ward, 'The Estates of the Clare Family, 1066-1317', unpublished PhD thesis, Univ of London, 1962, pp 133-4.

³⁰ Kosminsky, *op cit.*, p 62.

³¹ R H Hilton compared IPMs and manorial accounts from the first half of the fourteenth century for five Leicestershire manors: *VCH Leicestershire*, Volume II, 1954, pp 161-2. P F Brandon compared IPMs and accounts for the manor of Rotherfield in Sussex: 'Medieval Clearances in the East Sussex Weald', *Trans IBG*, XLVIII, 1969, p 150. A detailed assessment of the reliability of IPM demesne acreages and per-acre valuations will be the subject of a separate publication.

³² Kosminsky, *op cit.*, p 63.

³³ Raftis, *op cit.*, 1974, p 14.

value of different resources in a way that other sources do not. If the absolute areas and values are not entirely to be trusted, their relative amounts are less likely to mislead.

Several historians have, in fact, by their confident use of IPMs, favourably reappraised their worth. In 1967, for instance, I S W Blanchard made extensive use of IPMs to throw light on manorial descent and changes in the composition and level of rents in Derbyshire between 1247 and 1540.³⁴ In 1984, H S A Fox further rehabilitated the reputation of the IPMs when he stated, 'figures from extents in Inquisitions *Post Mortem* provide our best widely and easily available evidence on land-use': he conceded that figures in many extents are rounded approximations, but concluded 'I have become convinced, from the way in which they consistently reflect known local contrasts in physical setting, that they provide a good generalized picture of medieval land-use'.³⁵ The results presented in this paper endorse Fox's positive view.

II

The 'Feeding the City I' project has assembled a computerized database, drawn from all available IPMs for ten counties around London – Bedfordshire, Berkshire, Buckinghamshire, Essex, Hertfordshire, Kent, Middlesex, Northamptonshire, Oxfordshire, Surrey – in the period 1270–1339, as part of its study of the metropolis's influence on its agrarian hinterland.³⁶ This comprises information on the quan-

ties and values of all demesne resources extracted from a total of 1966 IPMs, the chronological and geographical distribution of which is shown in Table 1.³⁷

As will be noted, there are some striking differences in the decadal totals. In part this is explicable in terms of annual fluctuations in mortality, but it also reflects both the evolution of the inquisition as an instrument for raising royal revenue and periodic reforms of escheatorial procedures.³⁸ Thus, by the close of Edward I's reign the range of estates being netted by the scheme was significantly wider than at the beginning. Geographically, as can be seen from Table 1 and Figure 1, the data's density of coverage is very good, being especially full in Essex, Bedfordshire, and Buckinghamshire, but significantly less so in Hertfordshire, Surrey, and, especially, Berkshire. These differences in density, like the more conspicuous of the gaps in Figure 1, are largely explicable either in terms of the prevailing density of settlement or the ratio of lay to ecclesiastical holdings. Hence, extensive tracts of poor soil, such as Bagshot Heath, help to explain the sparseness of geographical coverage in parts of Surrey and its neighbouring counties, as the substantial ecclesiastical holdings of Peterborough Abbey do of the Soke of Peterborough. Nor are these ten counties unusual in the density of coverage afforded by the IPMs. Table 2 gives a breakdown by county of IPMs with equivalent extents for the country as a whole during the decade 1300–09. This shows, if confirmation were needed, that the IPMs are a national source of remarkable comprehensiveness (albeit, more

³⁴ I S W Blanchard, 'Economic Change in Derbyshire in the Later Middle Ages, 1272–1540', unpublished PhD thesis, Univ of London, 1967.

³⁵ H S A Fox, 'Some Ecological Dimensions of Medieval Field Systems', pp 119–58, in K Biddick, ed, *Archaeological Approaches to Medieval Europe*, Kalamazoo, 1984, p 121.

³⁶ The counties concerned are the ancient and historic counties. The IPM extents have been used to provide a dense coverage of land-use information which can thereby provide the context for evaluating other less plentiful but more complex sources such as manorial accounts.

³⁷ Damaged or illegible inquisitions were rejected as were those which could not with confidence be ascribed to a county.

³⁸ For a study of mortality among the medieval nobility, see A E Nash, 'The Mortality Pattern of the Wiltshire Lords of the Manor, 1242–1377', *Southern History*, 2 1980, pp 31–43. Reorganizations of the escheatry are discussed by Stevenson, *op cit* and by S T Gibson, 'The Escheatrics, 1327–1341', *Eng Hist Rev*, XXXVI, 1921, pp 218–25.

TABLE 1
Ten-county study area: number of extents per county per decade

County	1270-79	1280-89	1290-99	1300-09	1310-19	1320-29	1330-39	Total	Extents per 100 sq. km.
Beds.	4	15	23	21	29	16	25	133	11.0
Berks.	7	6	17	27	12	17	15	101	5.4
Bucks.	19	15	34	41	31	25	36	201	10.5
Essex	54	62	108	78	72	83	70	527	13.2
Herts.	8	13	17	22	26	19	14	119	7.2
Kent	17	25	62	70	50	60	42	326	8.1
Middx.	2	2	14	6	6	11	14	55	7.5
N'hants.	33	22	38	35	29	40	17	214	8.3
Oxon.	15	6	28	39	28	14	18	148	7.6
Surrey	5	10	39	19	28	17	24	142	7.2
10 counties	164	176	380	358	311	302	275	1966	8.9

TABLE 2
National coverage of IPM extents 1300-09¹

County	No.	County	No.	County	No.
Beds.	21	I.O.W.	23	Notts.	12
Berks.	27	Heref.	37	Oxon.	39
Bucks.	41	Herts.	22	Salop.	46
Cambs.	24	Hunts.	7	Somerset	38
Cornwall	40	Kent	70	Staffs.	14
Cumb.	18	Leic. & Rut.	32	Suffolk	60
Derbs.	13	Lincs.	48	Surrey	19
Devon	49	Middx.	6	Sussex	42
Dorset	25	Mon.	14	Warks.	21
Essex	78	Norfolk	78	Wilts.	44
Gloucs.	40	N'hants.	35	Worcs.	16
Hants.	47	Northumb.	19	Yorks.	25
Total 1190					

¹ Figures for Beds., Berks., Bucks., Essex, Herts., Kent, Middx., N'hants., Oxon., and Surrey from the 'Feeding the City I' database, all others from an independent investigation of IPMs. The separately calendared IPMs of the counties palatine are omitted.

reliable and informative for the counties south of the Trent than for those which fell within the remit of the northern escheators), providing data for parts of the country and types of manor for which there are often all too few alternative sources.

Comprehensive as is their spatial coverage, to derive maps of demesne land-use from the data contained in individual inquisitions is far from straightforward. Each inquisition relates to an individual

manor at a specific point in time. To obtain a sufficiently full geographical coverage to permit detailed mapping therefore means casting a wide chronological net. Yet, as the inquisitions themselves may be used to demonstrate (see Table 9), land-use and land-values changed with time, and administrative procedures remained far from fixed, hence the range of years and choice of terminal dates require careful consideration. Those employed here – the first decade of the

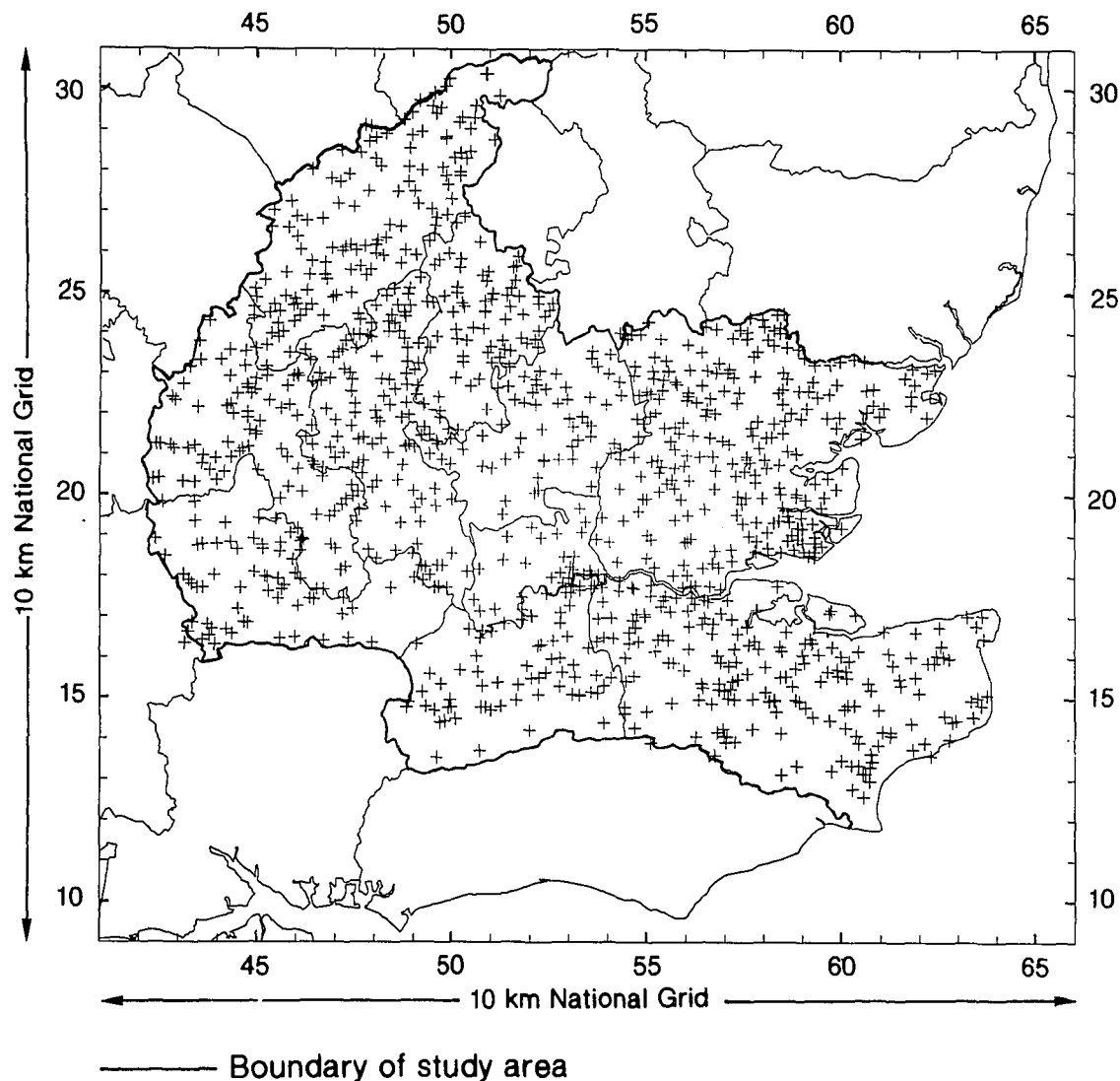


FIGURE 1

Distribution of IPM extents in 'Feeding the City' database 1270-1339

fourteenth century and the three decades to either side – were chosen to reflect rural land-use when the populations of both London and the country at large were at their medieval maxima.

Further problems derive from the complex and dynamic nature of manorial structures. For many manors there is more than one extent, the details of which are often different, thus posing the problem of which extent to use. Quite often

manors comprised lands at a number of different locations, whilst at any one place there might be more than one manor. The problem is highlighted by the situation prevailing at Luton in Bedfordshire, for which there are no less than twelve extents between 1278 and 1328, representing, perhaps, as many as ten different manors. Luton, an area of settlement comprising many hamlets, in addition to a market town, is fortunately an extreme

TABLE 3
Ten-county study area: number of grid-
references with data per county 1270-1339

County	No.	No. per 100 sq. km
Beds.	67	5.5
Berks.	65	3.5
Bucks.	114	5.9
Essex	241	6.0
Herts.	62	3.8
Kent	196	4.9
Middx.	27	3.7
N'hants.	127	4.9
Oxon.	92	4.7
Surrey	74	3.8
10 counties	1065	4.8

TABLE 4
Ten-county study area: number of grid-
references per 10 kilometre grid-square

Grid refs. per grid sq.	Grid sqs.	
	No.	%
0 per grid sq.	30	10.95
1 per grid sq.	27	9.85
2 per grid sq.	44	16.06
3 per grid sq.	36	13.14
4 per grid sq.	31	11.31
5 per grid sq.	32	11.68
6 per grid sq.	27	9.85
7 per grid sq.	15	5.47
8 per grid sq.	12	4.38
9 per grid sq.	10	3.65
10+ per grid sq.	10	3.65
Total	274	99.99

example.³⁹ Over the period 1270-1339 only 9 per cent of grid references have more than three extents whereas 55 per cent have only one. Restricting analysis to relatively short spans of time is one way of dealing with the problem of multiple extents. Another is to select just one extent per place on the basis of the range and quality of the information provided. The former, however, militates against small-scale mapping and the latter entails the arbitrary loss of much potentially useful information. A more satisfactory solution, facilitated by the computerization of the data-base, is to derive a single composite measure of land-use at a particular place by averaging the information contained in all available extents, regardless of their manor of provenance and the exact geographical disposition of their lands.

According to the procedure employed here, a mean is first calculated from all the extents relating to the same 'place'. This exercise is then repeated for all 'places' identified by a single grid reference, thereby permitting mapping on a point basis as exemplified by Figures 2 and 3. In this way data from the original 1966 extents are reduced to 1065 discrete grid references, as specified in Table 3. For

purposes of choropleth mapping a final set of means is then calculated from those for the individual grid references on the basis of a superimposed grid of 274 ten-kilometre squares (Table 4).⁴⁰ The coverage thereby obtained is dense, with, on average, 8.9 extents and 4.8 grid references per 100 square kilometres. Only 11 per cent of grid squares contain no information at all and, as will be seen from Figure 4, these are mostly in peripheral locations, where only part of the grid square lies within the area under investigation. This consistency of coverage lends confidence to the land-use patterns revealed by choropleth mapping.

The IPMs itemize a wide range of different demesne resources which occur with varying frequencies and in differing combinations so that no two demesnes were ever exactly alike. A diagnostic feature of all working demesnes was the presence of a complex of farm buildings usually in conjunction with a dovecot, fishpond, garden, and even vineyard, and often a manor house or other lordly residence. Separate valuations of the individual components of this 'capital messuage

³⁹ J Godber, *History of Bedfordshire 1066-1888*, Bedford, 1969, p 84.

⁴⁰ The squares used are based on the National Grid and are those shown on the Ordnance Survey 1/250,000 map series.

complex' occur in only a minority of extents and show that a capital messuage was worth, on average, 3s 4d, a dovecot 3s 0d, a fishpond 6s 0d, and a garden 5s 10d. These values are, however, unlikely to be truly representative, for the average value of the entire capital messuage complex – and it is a single aggregate value that is most usually given – was only 6s 6d. Over four out of five extents record the presence of a capital messuage complex, the exceptions mostly being extents of lands which were either at farm or formed a detached portion of a demesne whose main focus lay elsewhere.⁴¹

Within the study area the average demesne comprised some 180–90 arable acres. In some cases this figure clearly includes land lying fallow, in others it does not: due allowance for the latter would therefore raise the mean arable acreage to perhaps 225–75 acres. These mean figures, however, subsume a very wide size range, from a maximum of 1200 acres belonging to William de Beauchamp at Hanslope, Buckinghamshire, in 1298, down to the small isolated plots of arable which are a feature of many extents, such as the 6 acres belonging to Philip Burnell at Kingston upon Thames, Surrey, in 1294.⁴² There can be no doubt that the arable holdings of many lay owners were relatively small: half of those extended comprised less than 150 recorded acres, of which a third contained less than 75 acres. Such modest arable holdings might be encountered almost anywhere, but, as Figure 4 shows, were especially a feature of the immediate environs of London, as, more generally, of Kent and Surrey. Substantial arable holdings, by contrast, were more restricted in distribution. One in six demesnes comprised 300 acres or more,

but localized concentrations of such demesnes were relatively unusual. Northamptonshire affords several examples, but altogether more remarkable is the concentration of substantial arable demesnes in eastern Hertfordshire and north-central Essex. Such size variations imply important variations in the intensity and techniques of management. Other things being equal, small holdings were likely to have been more intensively cultivated than large, not least because inputs of labour and capital are likely to have been higher per unit area.⁴³ On the other hand, as the 1279 Hundred Rolls show, large demesnes were more likely to have access to supplies of cheap customary labour since servile tenures tended to be more developed on large manors with large demesnes.⁴⁴ The institutional variations implied by this evidence of demesne size are certainly intriguing and their economic implications merit closer investigation.

Table 5 shows that, of the 'landed resources' surveyed in the extents, arable was almost universally present, whereas meadow was encountered at three-quarters of all locations, pasture at two-thirds, and wood at half. As these figures imply, most demesnes lacked at least one of these land-uses, with only about a quarter of the total combining all four principal types. Compensation was occasionally provided by other types of land-use. These included parks, present at only one in ten locations, and marsh and heath/moor, present at only one in 40. Mapping these lesser land-uses serves to confirm the topographical reliability of the IPMs at an aggregate level since the patterns which emerge are consistent with other factors.

As can be seen from Figure 2, the distri-

⁴¹ In order to maximize the geographical accuracy of the database and avoid the intractable problems of trying to reconstitute functional units such 'detached' lands have been given grid references representing the places where they are stated to lie.

⁴² PRO C133/86 (1); C133/68 (10).

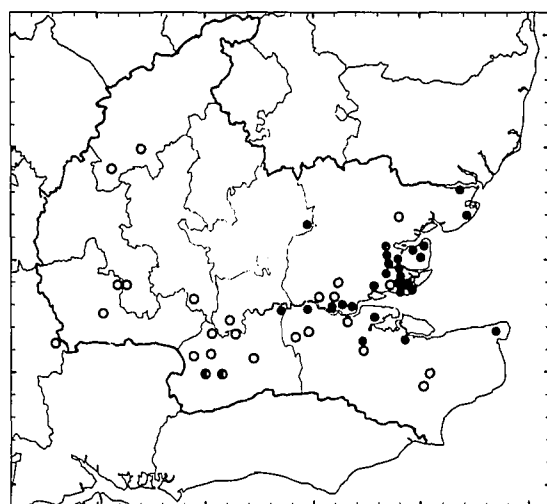
⁴³ The relationship between farm size and capital and labour inputs is discussed by R C Allen: 'The Two English Agricultural Revolutions, 1450–1850', pp 236–54 in Campbell and Overton, *op cit*, pp 244–6.

⁴⁴ Kosminsky, *op cit*, pp 99–103.

TABLE 5

Ten-county study area: presence/absence of principal extended land-uses 1270-1339
(percentage of 1966 extents and 1065 grid references)

Resource	Extents		Grid references	
	No.	%	No.	%
Capital messuage complex	1636	83.2	936	87.9
Arable	1901	96.7	1040	97.7
Meadow	1461	74.3	835	78.4
Pasture	1183	60.2	727	68.3
Wood	824	41.9	532	50.0
Parks	122	6.2	107	10.1
Marsh	38	1.9	30	2.8
Heath and moor	31	1.6	25	2.4
Warrens	11	0.6	11	1.0



○ Heath/Moor ● Marsh ● Heath/Moor and Marsh

FIGURE 2

Distribution of heath/moor and marsh recorded in
IPM extents 1270-1339

butions of heath/moor and marsh are topographically very specific. Heath and moor are recorded in only 31 extents at 25 different locations, most of them in areas of light soil which were too poor to sustain permanent agriculture. It was rarely worth very much – 7 shillings on average – and the quantities involved were mostly quite small, since the more extensive heaths were held in common and consequently did not qualify for inclusion as a demesne asset. Forty acres of heath at Boughton Aluph

in Kent were valued at only a penny an acre in 1286, and at Hockenden in the same county 92 acres of heath were worth in total a mere 1s 2d in 1305.⁴⁵ At the opposite extreme, 100 acres of moor, heath, and waste at Anningsley in Surrey were valued at £1 5s 0d in 1324.⁴⁶ Kent and Surrey, with their extensive tracts of light sandy soil, account, in fact, for half of all references to heath and moor, the overall distribution of which is decidedly southerly. References to marsh, in contrast, are almost exclusively confined to coastal locations, the only significant exceptions being freshwater marshes at Sawbridge-worth in the Lea Valley in Hertfordshire and at Shere and Shalford in the valley of the Tilling Bourne in Surrey.⁴⁷ Coastal marshes are ecologically rich, and in the Middle Ages were an important source of grazing, reeds, rushes, turves, and salt. They were valued accordingly. Marsh belonging to William de Leyburne at Mere in Murston in northern Kent was valued at an impressive £20 0s 0d in 1310 and the mean value of the 37 marshes recorded between 1270 and 1339 was £3 3s 0d, a sum equivalent in value to 125-90 acres of arable.⁴⁸ The estuarine

⁴⁵ PRO C133/45 (1); C133/120 (9).

⁴⁶ PRO C134/90 (6).

⁴⁷ PRO C133/71 (19); C133/80 (6).

⁴⁸ PRO C134/17 (7).

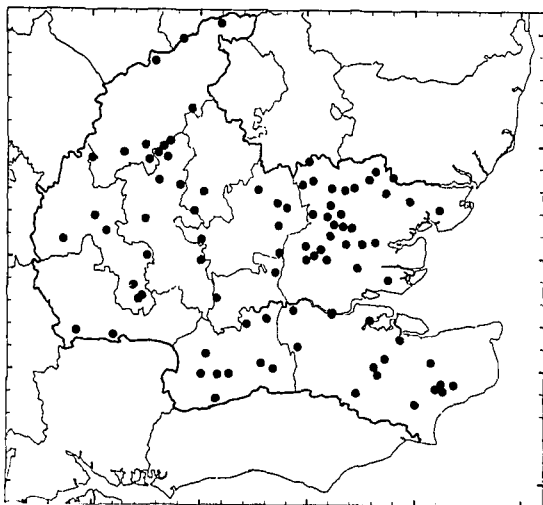


FIGURE 3
Distribution of parks recorded in IPM extents
1270-1339

marshes of the lower Thames Valley, northern Kent, and especially coastal Essex thus show up as a valuable demesne resource, as they had done two centuries earlier in the Domesday Survey.⁴⁹

By contrast, the distribution of parks as shown in Figure 3 reflects the influence of a combination of environmental and human factors. In terms of the former, parks are rarely encountered on soils of the first quality; which may explain both their absence from the rich lands of north-east Kent and their comparative frequency on the poorer soils of Surrey. But this relationship is complicated by the fact that there is also clearly some correlation between park frequency and demesne size. The latter, as observed above and illustrated in Figure 4, was subject to marked spatial variation and bears testimony to the significant contrasts in manorial structure which existed within the region. Nor were these variations independent of environmental conditions. The boulder-clay soils of eastern Hertfordshire and

north-central Essex, for instance, were dominated by the most notable concentration of large arable demesnes in the country, many of them comprising 300 acres or more. Significantly, this same area was characterized by a notable cluster of parks. The explanation undoubtedly lies in the fact that only on the more substantial manors could lords afford to set aside resources solely for the purposes of hunting and recreation, especially if those resources were not themselves intrinsically valuable.⁵⁰ Parks were valued in several different ways depending on the intensity with which this prime use, hunting, was pursued. Brushwood and timber in the park might be ascribed a monetary value, or might be stated just to suffice for fencing the park, as at William Latimer's 200-acre park at Wotton in Surrey.⁵¹ Similarly, herbage in the park might be valued or might be stated to have no value beyond the sustenance of the wild beasts, as at Copton in Kent.⁵² Total valuations of parks thus vary considerably. Robert de Vere's park at Downham in Essex was said to be worth nothing while Guy de Beauchamp's two parks at Hanslope in Buckinghamshire had a combined value of £10 13s 4d.⁵³ The mean value of parks was £1 14s 2d.

In the absence of evidence to the contrary, all these resources are presumed to have been held in severalty. With certain notable exceptions, common resources to which demesnes had access were neither recorded nor valued. Common pasture, for instance, although a widely available resource and in some localities the single most important source of grazing, is separately recorded in only forty-three extents. As with other resources there is a wide

⁴⁹ On the economic significance of the Essex marshlands see H C Darby, *The Domesday Geography of Eastern England*, Cambridge, 1952, pp 239-44.

⁵⁰ For a discussion of the factors influencing the creation and distribution of parks at local and national level see L M Cantor and J Hatherly, 'The Medieval Parks of England', *Geography*, 64, 1979, pp 71-85; Cantor, *op cit*, 1982, pp 73-82.

⁵¹ PRO C135/44 (6).

⁵² PRO C133/71 (19).

⁵³ PRO C135/28 (17); C134/49.

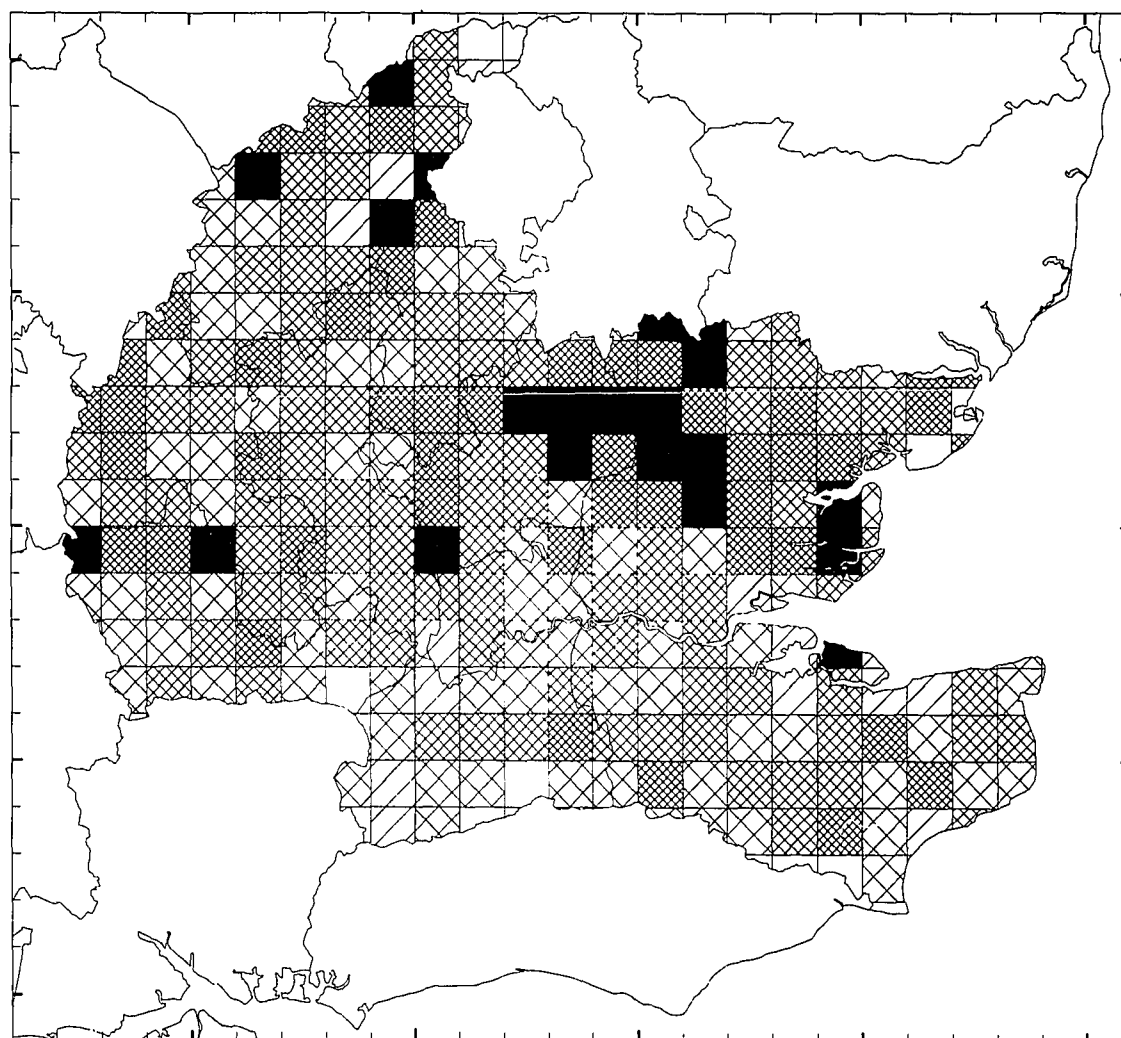


FIGURE 4

Mean acreage of demesne arable recorded in IPM extents 1270-1339

range of values. At Shepperton, Middlesex, 40 acres of pasture were said to be worth nothing because common, whereas at Northampton, Hertfordshire, 46 acres of common pasture were valued at 6d an acre (only 2d an acre less than the 6 acres

of several pasture).⁵⁴ Recorded amounts of common pasture were, however, seldom worth more than two or three shillings in total.

⁵⁴ PRO C135/47 (2); C135/48 (2).

TABLE 6
Ten-county study area: percentage occurrence of land-use information

Resource	N	% of N providing information		
		Aggregate value	Acreage	Value per acre
Arable	1901	99.2	96.5	95.9
Meadow	1461	99.5	98.0	97.6
Pasture	1183	99.5	69.9	69.7
Wood	824	97.3	79.4	77.2
Park	122	98.4	24.5	23.8

N = number of extents with information on the specified land-use.

Rights of common grazing on both mown meadow and fallow arable are also encountered, often in order to explain why the land in question was worth less than might normally be expected. At Yardley Hastings in Northamptonshire 60 acres of demesne arable was said to be worth nothing when fallow 'because it is common to all the tenants'.⁵⁵ The question thus arises whether the acreage figures for arable relate in the main to the entire arable area or merely that part of it which yielded a crop each year. Given that fallowing practices, field systems, and common rights all varied considerably, this has an obvious bearing on any comparison of demesne size, as also upon the relative availability of arable and grassland. Sometimes it is plain that the jurors only recorded that part of the arable capable of yielding an annual income. Fallow arable in such cases was only included when it was a source of seigneurial income, as at Langham and Great Totham in Essex in 1335 where the profits from fallow grazing accrued exclusively to the lord.⁵⁶ Recording practice was, however, far from consistent and changed over time, in as much as from the 1330s extents increasingly distinguished between the sown arable, which yielded an income, and the unsown, which did not. A fuller resolution of this issue is only likely to be

obtained by testing the evidence of the IPMs against that of manorial accounts and other independent sources.

The ambiguous status of fallow arable is frustrating given that in other respects the information available on the principal land-uses is remarkably complete and detailed. As will be seen from Table 6, arable, meadow, pasture, and wood were almost invariably given an aggregate value. The vast majority of arable and meadow entries also specify the acreage and, hence, the value per acre. Thirty-nine manors used carucates to measure arable. Thus, the 1274 extent for Sutton Courtenay in Berkshire gives a value of £12 for the six carucates of demesne arable.⁵⁷ Carucates occur much more frequently in Berkshire and Buckinghamshire than in the eastern counties of the study area. Virgates, which were used by fifty-five manors to measure arable, are also largely absent from the eastern counties, with the bulk of occurrences in Northamptonshire and limited numbers in Oxfordshire and Buckinghamshire. The use of such measures is the main reason why it is meadow rather than arable that is recorded with the most consistent detail.

Some extents distinguish between land of differing qualities on the same demesne. For instance, an inquisition for Woking in Surrey in 1331 distinguishes between arable worth 2d, 3d, and 4d an acre and

⁵⁵ PRO C134/91.

⁵⁶ On both manors the sown arable was assessed at 4d an acre and the unsown at 2d: PRO C135/44 (4).

⁵⁷ PRO C133/6 (1).

specifies no less than eight different meadow valuations ranging from 6*d* to 24*d* an acre. With meadow worth as little as 6*d* an acre the distinction between poor quality meadow and good quality pasture is not always easy to see, especially as the latter sometimes commanded a superior value per acre, but contemporaries seem to have designated grassland as meadow when it was mowable and as pasture when it was not.⁵⁸ Pasture varied a great deal in both quality and extent and in its rougher and more extensive forms was often given only an aggregate value. Hence the fact that only seven out of ten pasture entries specify an acreage, so that it is the better-quality pasture that is disproportionately represented among the per acre values. Interestingly, four out of five woodland entries specify an acreage as well as a value, but here too there are ambiguities. 'Great wood', 'lesser wood', and 'underwood' commanded different values, and, in the case of the last (normally taken to mean coppice wood), it is not always clear whether the value was recurrent or applied only to those years in which wood was cropped. On the whole, the more important and valuable a resource the greater the information which the IPMs are likely to provide about it. Variations in the detail with which resources are recorded thus tell us something about how their economic utility was perceived.

Given these variations in the method and consistency of recording, it becomes clear that comparison of the relative availability and importance of different land-uses is more effectively undertaken in value than areal terms. The effects of doing so may be illustrated with reference to arable and meadow, the only two land-uses for which a value and an acreage are both fairly consistently recorded. A com-

parison of the number of acres of meadow per 100 acres of arable, and the value of meadow in pence per 100 pence of arable is contained in Table 7. The class intervals of the latter have been chosen to reflect the fact that meadow land was worth on average four to five times an acre of arable. Notwithstanding these different intervals and units of measurement, both frequencies exhibit a remarkably similar profile. Meadow was a highly prized resource: on average there were 6.9 acres of meadow per 100 acres of arable and 34 pence worth of meadow per 100 pence of arable. At one in five locations there was no meadow at all and at over half of the remainder there was less than 7.5 acres of meadow per 100 acres arable and less than 30 pence of meadow per 100 pence arable. Both methods of measurement show that locations which were relatively well endowed with meadow were few and far between. In a few exceptional cases there was actually more meadow than arable, but this usually had more to do with the limited extent of the latter than the abundance of the former. At Greenwich, for instance, Giles de Badlesmere had 32 acres of meadow and 28 acres of arable in 1338.⁵⁹

Hay meadows constitute an improved and intensively managed form of grassland developed in response to the need to provide livestock with fodder during the winter months when grass growth ceased.⁶⁰ Environmentally they were dependent upon adequate levels of ground water and spring and early summer sunshine. Their yield varied considerably, as is reflected in valuations which generally lay in the range 6*d* to 4*s* an acre, though

⁵⁹ PRO C135/56.

⁶⁰ For a medieval example of land which was progressively upgraded from marsh, to pasture, to meadow see, H S A Fox, 'The Alleged Transformation from Two-field to Three-field Systems in Medieval England', *Econ Hist Rev*, 2nd ser, XXXIX, 1986, pp 544-5. For the earlier extensive creation of hay meadows during the Romano-British period see M K Jones, 'Agricultural Productivity in the Pre-documentary Past', pp 78-94 in Campbell and Overton, *op cit*, pp 86-93.

⁵⁸ There is only one reference to 'unmowable meadow' - at West Peckham, Kent - where it was worth 3*d* an acre: PRO C133/77 (3).

TABLE 7
Ten-county study area: ratio of meadow to arable
 (calculated at grid reference level)

<i>Acres of meadow per 100 acres of arable</i>			<i>Pence of meadow per 100 pence of arable</i>		
	No.	%		No.	%
0	202	20.1	0	215	20.7
0.1- < 2.5	119	11.8	0.1- < 10.0	120	11.5
2.5- < 5.0	244	24.2	10.0- < 20.0	187	18.0
5.0- < 7.5	160	15.9	20.0- < 30.0	152	14.6
7.5- < 10.0	86	8.5	30.0- < 40.0	88	8.5
10.0- < 12.5	52	5.2	40.0- < 50.0	78	7.5
12.5- < 15.0	29	2.9	50.0- < 60.0	46	4.4
15.0- < 17.5	33	3.3	60.0- < 70.0	39	3.8
17.5- < 20.0	12	1.2	70.0- < 80.0	19	1.8
20.0- < 22.5	20	2.0	80.0- < 90.0	18	1.7
22.5- < 25.0	10	1.0	90.0- < 100.0	13	1.3
25.0- < 50.0	30	3.0	100.0+	64	6.2
50.0+	10	1.0			
Total	1007	100.1	Total	1039	100.0

TABLE 8
Ten-county study area: value per acre of arable and meadow by county
 (pence per acre)

<i>County</i>	<i>Arable</i>					<i>Meadow</i>				
	<i>mean</i>	<i>min</i>	<i>max</i>	<i>sd</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>mean</i>	<i>min</i>	<i>max</i>	<i>sd</i>	<i>N</i>
Beds.	4.4	1.6	10.0	1.4	130	21.5	8.0	48.0	9.4	104
Berks.	3.8	1.5	12.0	1.7	89	18.7	6.0	48.0	7.5	76
Bucks.	4.8	1.0	12.0	2.2	186	21.2	7.6	60.0	8.5	170
Essex	4.4	1.3	23.1	1.8	495	23.0	6.0	72.0	7.3	399
Herts.	3.7	1.0	10.5	1.3	112	21.8	7.4	42.0	7.4	84
Kent	6.8	1.0	36.0	5.2	319	18.2	0.0	80.0	10.3	178
Middx.	4.9	1.0	18.0	3.4	47	24.7	12.0	57.0	10.7	41
N'hants.	5.3	1.0	21.0	2.6	178	24.5	6.0	80.0	10.6	158
Oxon.	3.9	1.5	12.0	1.9	133	22.9	3.2	80.0	10.9	121
Surrey	3.9	1.0	24.0	2.5	132	19.6	6.9	48.0	8.9	96
10 counties	4.8	1.0	36.0	3.0	1821	21.8	0.0	80.0	9.2	1427

sd = standard deviation

occasionally rose as high as 6s 8d. On average an acre of meadow was worth 4.5 times an acre of arable but there were significant variations in both the absolute and relative value of the two resources (see Table 8). This differential reflected their relative availability, together with the intensity with which meadowland was managed and its central role within an agricultural system which relied upon

livestock for traction and haulage.⁶¹ It is also to be expected that the demands of a city such as London placed an additional premium on accessible supplies. Thus, it was in Middlesex, on London's doorstep, that meadow commanded its highest mean value per acre. Hay in large quantiti-

⁶¹ A Smith, *An Inquiry into the Nature and Causes of the Wealth of Nations*, Book I, new edn, Edinburgh, 1872, p 69.

ies would have been required by the great volume of traffic which the metropolis generated, as well as by those engaged in supplying meat and dairy products to the city's markets. The profits of intensive dairying may likewise have served to boost meadow values in Essex, given that county's subsequent reputation as a cheese and butter producer.⁶² At a further remove, Northamptonshire also stands out as distinguished by a high mean meadow value; which may reflect local conditions prevailing within the county or, just possibly, its role as a staging post in the long-distance transfer of stock from rearing areas to the north and west to fattening areas to the south and east.⁶³

At the opposite extreme, meadow was least valuable in Kent, closely followed by Berkshire and Surrey. In these three counties it was undoubtedly the general unsuitability of physical conditions for generating lush crops of grass that depressed its value. Significantly, sheep, which were well suited to downland and heathland pastures and returned comparatively low profits per unit area, occupied a relatively prominent role in the livestock economy of these counties.⁶⁴

By and large the values of meadow and arable varied independently of one another. Thus Kent, which had the lowest valued meadowland, commanded both the highest mean arable value – 6.8*d* an acre – and the highest individual value, a remarkable 36*d*. In part this reflected the presence of fertile and easily cultivated loam soils, although it was commercial opportunity, facilitated by good water-transport links with both the London and continental markets, which promoted their early exploitation by progressive and

intensive systems of cultivation.⁶⁵ Northamptonshire, too, at a far greater distance from London but nevertheless linked to major external markets by the navigable rivers Welland and Nene, was also characterized by some good medium-grade arable soils which commanded a high mean value per acre.⁶⁶ The corresponding values of heavy soils were invariably lower since, for all their potentially higher natural fertility, they were much more expensive to cultivate and often returned disappointing yields. Of the clayland counties it was Middlesex, significantly, the closest to London, which supported the highest mean value, followed by Buckinghamshire, Essex, and Bedfordshire. By contrast, values per acre were well below average in Berkshire, which contained much indifferent downland, as also in Hertfordshire and Surrey, neither of which is celebrated for the fertility of its soils. Somewhat surprisingly, the mean value per acre of arable was also below average in Oxfordshire, despite its good medium and heavy soils and the commercial link to the London grain market provided by the Thames. However, county averages conceal important local variations, and a full assessment of the significance of per acre valuations demands more detailed analysis and mapping than is possible here.⁶⁷

The specific moisture and sunshine requirements of meadow meant that opportunities for expanding its area were strictly limited. This was not the case with the other principal type of grassland incorporated into manorial demesnes – pasture. If it is valid, as Postan believed, to see

⁶² F J Fisher, 'The Development of the London Food Market, 1540-1640', *Econ Hist Rev*, V, 1935, p 51.

⁶³ *Loc cit*.

⁶⁴ B M S Campbell and J P Power, 'Mapping the Agricultural Geography of Medieval England', *Jnl Hist Geog* XV, 1989, pp 28-37.

⁶⁵ R A L Smith, *Canterbury Cathedral Priory: a Study in Monastic Administration*, Cambridge, 1943, pp 128-45; M Mate, 'Medieval Agrarian Practices: the Determining Factors?', *Ag Hist Rev*, 33, 1985, pp 22-31; P F Brandon, 'Farming Techniques in Southeast England', pp 312-25 in H E Hallam, ed, *The Agrarian History of England and Wales*, II 1042-1350, Cambridge, 1988, pp 317-25.

⁶⁶ J E Edwards and B P Hindle, 'The Transportation System of Medieval England', *Jnl Hist Geog*, XVII, 1991, pp 123-34.

⁶⁷ This detailed consideration will form the basis of a separate publication.

land-uses as being in competition with each other, the main focus of such competition must thus have been between pasture, or grassland resources as a whole, and arable. In Figure 5 the total value of all types of grassland – meadow, pasture, heath/moor, marsh, herbage, fallow grazings when these are valued separately – is

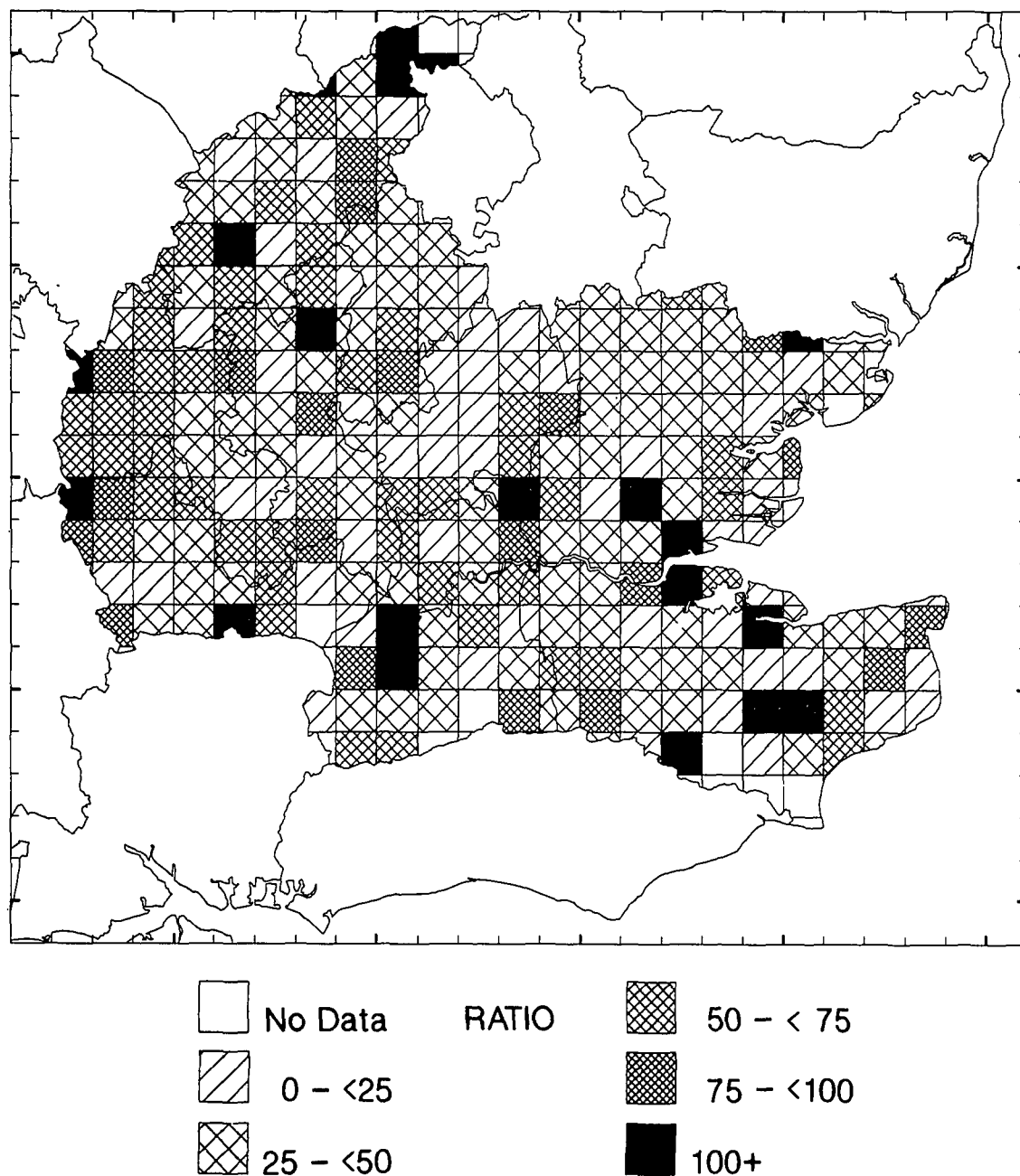


FIGURE 5

Mean ratio of value of demesne pastoral resources to demesne arable recorded in IPM extents 1270-1339
(expressed as pence of pasturage per 100 pence of arable)

expressed as a ratio of the total value of the arable (for convenience this can be referred to as the grassland ratio).

In parts of the area – notably much of Chiltern Hertfordshire, parts of the Berkshire Downs, and the eastern reaches of the North Downs – the bias in favour of arable exceeded four to one; although in these specific instances the shortfall in several grassland was almost certainly offset by the availability of significant reserves of common pasturage. West of the Chiltern escarpment, on the commonfield-dominated clay plain which extended south-westwards from Bedfordshire, through central Buckinghamshire, into southern Oxfordshire, the ratio was somewhat higher – the arable generally being worth three times as much as the grassland – but here alternative sources of pasturage were scarcer. An almost identical ratio prevailed on the heavy boulder-clay soils which dominated so much of Essex, which were likewise characterized by three-course cropping although in the absence of a fully-fledged commonfield system of husbandry. On the evidence of the IPMs these were some of the least grassy areas in the country for, on average, notwithstanding the higher per unit value of most meadowland and some pasture, arable resources were worth roughly twice in aggregate the value of all several grassland resources.

Where grassland ratios were higher specific topographical circumstances and commercial opportunities often provide the keys. The lush river valleys, especially those able to cater to the London market and the traffic which its presence generated in the surrounding districts, all had grassland ratios which were well above average, as higher than average acreages of grassland combined with higher than average values. Hence the bands of higher grassland ratios which follow the Wey Valley south of the

Thames, the Colne and especially the Lea Valleys north of the Thames, and much of the upper Thames Valley itself. On the northern edge of the study area, the lower Nene Valley in Northamptonshire and Stour Valley in Essex also show up as having supported higher grassland ratios, as does the Fen edge in the Soke of Peterborough. High grassland ratios also show up in coastal marshland situations, in parts of Kent and coastal Essex. Apart from these specific riverine and coastal contexts, above average grassland ratios were a general feature of the Cotswold escarpment of western Oxfordshire, as well as of parts of south Bedfordshire and neighbouring north Buckinghamshire and south Northamptonshire. The latter is an intriguing area distinguished by high per-acre valuations of meadow and pasture whose pastoral economy may well repay closer investigation.

Areas with low grassland ratios were not necessarily livestock deficient, provided that the shortage of several grassland was compensated by adequate supplies of common pasture and/or the cultivation of fodder crops. One means of testing this relationship is via the livestock data recorded by the many thousands of extant manorial accounts. Analysis of a sample of accounts data assembled by Dr John Langdon has, for instance, revealed an interesting contrast between the livestock profiles of counties such as Oxfordshire with relatively high grassland ratios and counties such as Essex with low. This manifests itself in a greater reliance upon the more intensive forms of livestock husbandry in the more grassland deficient areas (especially those well placed to take advantage of major urban markets): horses rather than oxen for draught work, cattle rather than sheep, and dairying rather than breeding and rearing.⁶⁸ Paradoxically,

⁶⁸ Campbell and Power, *op cit*, pp 24-39; Campbell, *op cit*, 1988, pp 94-8.

TABLE 9
**Ten-county study area: trends in mean value, area, and composition of resources recorded
 in IPM extents 1270-1339**
 (overlapping 10-year means)

Years	mean per extent per decade								
	Total value of all land-use resources* (£)			Combined acreage of arable & meadow (acres)			Grassland ratio† (pence)		
	mean	N	sd	mean	N	sd	mean	N	sd
1270-79	7.91	159	7.37	256	130	209.5	41.2	148	84.6
1275-84	6.30	135	5.13	229	120	198.8	35.2	137	51.3
1280-89	5.62	176	4.52	216	166	170.1	43.2	173	55.5
1285-94	5.35	237	6.35	183	231	184.5	53.8	225	129.5
1290-99	5.90	362	6.66	201	357	192.4	51.6	348	112.6
1295-04	5.51	390	5.40	201	387	174.3	44.5	384	58.8
1300-09	4.58	355	4.26	176	351	151.5	41.0	347	50.4
1305-14	4.97	379	5.62	173	379	144.6	45.7	370	68.3
1310-19	5.30	308	6.53	180	311	147.6	42.5	304	67.4
1315-24	4.58	256	5.06	196	261	158.5	35.6	256	39.7
1320-29	4.46	296	4.42	183	294	146.2	53.8	287	71.7
1325-34	5.02	283	6.24	170	279	147.7	73.8	279	107.9
1330-39	6.04	264	7.34	197	263	183.5	93.1	266	259.7
1270-1339	5.50	1917	6.01	194	1872	170.4	52.8	1873	122.6

* i.e. arable, meadow, pasture, wood, parks, marsh, heath, moor etc.

† pence of grass per 100 pence of arable

N number of extents with information on the specified land-use.

sd standard deviation

therefore, some of the most grassland deficient areas supported some of the most developed and integrated mixed-farming systems, central elements of which were the employment of labour intensive methods and associated partial substitution of fodder crops for forage and grass products.⁶⁹

A more detailed accounts data-base has now been assembled by the 'Feeding the City I' project. This comprises a sample of 461 accounts drawn from the period 1290-1315, within which some 204 individual demesnes are represented. A preliminary and largely non-statistical investigation of this material has pointed

towards the existence of specialized, market-oriented regimes within London's hinterland.⁷⁰ It remains to be seen whether this picture is borne out by more systematic and detailed analysis.⁷¹

The patterns that have been considered in this paper presuppose a static picture, whereas in reality demesne husbandry was a dynamic system. Some impression of the main temporal trends taking place over the period can be gauged from Table 9, which summarizes a series of ten-year means for the total value of all land-use resources, the combined acreage of arable and meadow, and the grassland

⁶⁹ B M S Campbell, 'Commercial Dairy Production on Medieval English Demesnes: the Case of Norfolk', in A Grant, ed, *Animals and their Products in Trade and Exchange, Anthropolozologica, Quatrième Numéro Spécial*, Paris, forthcoming.

⁷⁰ J A Galloway and M Murphy, 'Feeding the City: London and its Agrarian Hinterland', *London Journal*, 16, 1991, pp 3-14.

⁷¹ For some preliminary results see M Murphy and J A Galloway, 'Marketing Animals and Animal Products in London's Hinterland c.1300', in Grant, *op cit*.

ratio. These figures indicate a decline in the mean value and size of the extended units from the 1270s down to *circa* 1300. In part this is explicable in terms of the widening net of the escheators as the inquisition was developed as an instrument for raising royal revenue. But it also probably reflects a genuine decline in the size of manorial units under the kind of demographic and economic pressures whose effects on the size and number of peasant holdings are generally much better known. With the opening of the fourteenth century the value and size of demesne holdings appear to have stabilized, but whether, as these figures suggest, the 1330s actually witnessed an upturn in the size and value of demesne holdings, is a moot point. The problem is that the upturn in the mean figures for 1325-34 and 1330-39 is accompanied by an increase in their standard deviations, which implies that the results obtained for this decade may derive from a structurally idiosyncratic sample of IPMs. This applies particularly to the grassland ratio, which points to a significant swing from arable to grass commencing at about this time, a trend which, if real, demands further investigation.⁷²

III

The consistency and plausibility of the results presented endorse the verdict of those who have argued for the utility of the IPMs as a source for reconstructing medieval demesne land-use. Local idiosyncracies apart, broad spatial and temporal trends may be recognized which make sense in the light of other evidence. To appreciate the full significance of the picture presented here requires both the

extension of analysis to a wider geographical area and investigation of complementary sources of evidence, especially manorial accounts since only these can provide explicit evidence both of the farming systems which these land-use patterns supported and their commercial involvement. Nevertheless, it is already clear that the balance struck between arable and grass and the respective values of these resources were determined by a more complex array of factors than Postan's influential land-use model will allow.⁷³ As it becomes clearer that there was no simple 'frontier' between the two land-uses, so the notion of a 'scarcity' of grassland becomes increasingly anachronistic.

Land-use in the hinterland of medieval England's leading city and market reflected a range of influences. London lay in the midst of a predominantly arable-farming region, but not one that was characterized by uniform soils and terrain, nor by a uniform institutional structure. These factors, combined with unequal access to cheap water transport, ensure that no perfect von Thünen-type pattern of concentric bands of land-use is to be expected. Instead, it seems likely that the capital influenced its hinterland in terms of the impact which its demands for necessities had upon the emergence of specialized agrarian regimes, whose intrinsic character derived from natural resource endowment, institutional structures, and locational factors. In terms of the basic land-use elements considered here, these regimes may be identified as sub-regional types, distinguished by size of demesne, the relative proportion of the principal land-uses and presence or absence of some minor ones, and the varying per unit value of the resources in question. Future work will aim to define these regimes more

⁷² For evidence of a swing away from grain and towards livestock during the fourteenth century see B M S Campbell, 'Land, Labour, Livestock, and Productivity Trends in English Seignorial Agriculture, 1208-1450', pp 144-82 in *idem* and Overton, *op cit*.

⁷³ See above n 7.

clearly, in terms of their character and spatial extent, using the IPM data on per-acre values and the detailed evidence of demesne accounts on land-use and the marketing of produce. Through this study

of the structure of the metropolitan region, and of the flows of commodities and influences within it, a focused view of the impact of a major medieval city on its hinterland should emerge.

Notes on Contributors

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Rental Policy on the Estates of the English Peerage 1649–60*

By IAN WARD

Abstract

This article is based on the estate papers of four English peers during the mid-seventeenth century – those of the Marquis of Hertford, and the Earls of Bridgwater, Dorset, and Northumberland. It seeks to impress the importance of the striking improvement in rental return on these estates during the years immediately following the English Civil Wars. It is submitted that the key to this improvement lay both in policies of rack-renting and also, and perhaps most importantly, in the concentration upon altering the nature of tenancies, from copyhold to leasehold. This concentration coincided with certain important developments in the English laws of property.

THE purpose of this essay is to assess the attempts made by the English peerage to improve rental income from their estates between the years 1649–1660. It will concentrate particularly on the estates of four English peers – the Marquis of Hertford, and the Earls of Bridgwater, Dorset, and Northumberland. In doing so, the essay will unavoidably enter a long-standing debate on both the condition of aristocratic estates in the mid-seventeenth century, and also on the condition of tenancies and rental policy in the early modern period.¹ In the years following the Civil War, landowners were not only faced with long-term inflationary problems, but also with the more immediate effects of the hostilities. By 1649 the

English peerage was experiencing considerable economic difficulties. It has been suggested that the Civil Wars 'constituted the most serious crisis faced by large landowners in the sixteenth and seventeenth century'.² Indebtedness, though not uniform, was all too common. Both the Duke of Newcastle and the Marquis of Worcester claimed to have lost more than £900,000.³ The three senior Howard Earls were all heavily in debt. Suffolk claimed a debt of £132,060, Arundel hid at home, owing an alleged £124,448, and Berkshire remained incarcerated in the Upper Bench throughout the Commonwealth, owing £34,260.⁴ The Sackville estates were in a particularly desperate condition. In 1650, the 4th Earl of Dorset wrote to the Earl of Middlesex, lamenting that 'itt hath pleased the Divine Providence to lay his hand heavy on mee (w^{ch} I acknowledge my sinns iustly deserve) by making mee less able in my worldly fortune by 40 thousand pounds, then I was when the match between y^r sister and my sonn was

* I should like to express my gratitude to Dr John Morrill for his advice and assistance with the material contained in this article. Thanks are also due to two anonymous referees for their advice on an earlier draft.

¹ See particularly Habakkuk's essays, 'English Land-ownership 1660–1740', *Econ Hist Rev*, x, 1940, pp 2–17; 'Landowners and the English Civil War', *Econ Hist Rev* 2nd ser 1965, pp 130–150; 'The Rise and Fall of English Landed Families', *TRHS*, 5th ser 2 xxix, 1979, pp 187–207; and 'The Long Term Rate of Interest and the Price of Land in the 17th Century', *Econ Hist Rev*, 2nd ser v, 1952, pp 26–45. See also L Stone, *The Crisis of the Aristocracy 1558–1641*, Oxford, 1965, particularly pp 273–334; F M L Thompson, 'The Social Distribution of Property in England since the Sixteenth Century', *Econ Hist Rev*, 2nd ser xix, 1966, pp 505–517; E Kerridge, 'The Movement of Rent 1540–1640', *Econ Hist Rev*, 2nd ser VII 1953, pp 18–26, and J R Wordie, 'Rent Movements and the English Tenant Farmer, 1700–1839', *Research in Economic History*, 6, 1981, pp 193–243.

² B Coward, *The Stanleys, Lords Stanley and Earls of Derby 1385–1672*, Manchester, 1983, p 63.

³ See G Trease, *Portrait of a Cavalier*, 1979, p 187, and H Dircks, *The Life, Times and Scientific Labours of the 2nd Marquis of Worcester*, 1865, p 238.

⁴ PRO, SP 23/215/557–9; SP 23/62/543; and 589–90; British Library, Thomason Tract, E 213 (8); and H Causton, *The Howard Papers*, 1862, pp 506–7, 518.

consummated' [1641].⁵ Seven years later, the 5th Earl wrote to his cousin Lady Northampton thanking her for her forbearance in levying jointure rents. She was 'a restorer of this poor family, which, Madame, truly without such noble care, must needs, in a few years, come to its last years, with continual wasting and losses of the estate.'⁶ The Earl of Northampton's estates had fared little better. In two 'Particulars' submitted to the Commissioners for Compounding, in 1647 and 1650, the Earl reported an inherited debt of £30,000, to which could be added losses during the hostilities of over £50,000.⁷ The same Commissioners were prepared to accept that all but £3650 pa of the Marquis of Hertford's combined incomes of around £28,000 p.a. was encumbered.⁸ The financial difficulties encountered by these peers, however, paled in comparison with those faced by the 2nd Earl of Bridgwater upon his inheritance in 1649: in December 1649 these debts stood at £51,700.⁹

As a means of facilitating estate reconstruction, the peerage, like other landowners in the mid-seventeenth century, were faced with three options of varying desirability: alienation by sale; alienation by mortgage; and improvement of rental return. The sale of property was certainly the least desirable, and to a certain extent precluded by the nature of the strict settlement.¹⁰ It is clear, from an examination of the estate papers of the four peers under consideration, that sales were only entered into with extreme reluctance. The particularly desperate condition of the Egerton

estates forced the 2nd Earl to make some sales, chiefly to possessory mortgagees, in the three years immediately following his inheritance, 1649–1652. 1652 appears to have been a watershed year in the Earl's fiscal policy; a year in which he discharged over £14,700 of debt. After 1652, with the Egerton estates at least partially restructured, there is no evidence of any further sales.¹¹ The Marquis of Hertford made two substantial sales, Merrivale farm in 1647 and Blackfriars House in 1648, but thereafter there is no evidence of further sales.¹² Similarly, the Earl of Northumberland sold property valued at over £12,000 in Yorkshire between 1647–1650, but with the exception of the sale of his Goodwood estate in Sussex in 1656, for £2400, there appear to have been no further sales of Percy estates during the 1650s.¹³ Only the Earl of Dorset was forced to continue selling property, through trustees for settlements and sales throughout the 1650s. A list of the Sackville estates, drawn up in 1660, reveals a handful of sales during the previous decade, including the large estates at Awkridge and Eltham.¹⁴

The second alternative, the mortgaging and re-mortgaging of estates, was clearly more popular. Most obviously it did not require the immediate and permanent alienation of property, and the destruction of the strict settlement which such an alienation would have entailed. Moreover the increasing willingness of the courts of Chancery to permit the redemption of mortgages after the date of foreclosure, allowed mortgagors to mortgage property, through settlement and debt trustees, to mortgagees without fear of permanent

⁵ Kent Archive Office, (hereafter, KAO) Sackville MSS, U 269, C 248 unfol. letter dated 1650.

⁶ Castle Ashby MSS, 1084 fol 21.

⁷ Castle Ashby MSS, 1083 fol 41.

⁸ PRO, SP 23/191/598; 600; 607; 611; 615; 758; and 797; SP 23/3/258; SP 23/4/36; and SP 23/198/1; 2 and 8; and Longleat, Seymour MSS, Box 5 nos 102–113.

⁹ Hertfordshire RO, (hereafter, HRO) Ashridge MSS 1013. See 1015 and 1016 for other assessments, totalling a debt at around £56,000.

¹⁰ See I Ward, 'Settlements, Mortgages and Aristocratic Estates 1649–1660', *Journal of Legal History*, 12, 1, 1991, pp 20–35.

¹¹ Huntington Library, (hereafter, HL) San Marino, Ellesmere MSS, 8012, 8026, 8027, 8033–5, 8131, 8214, 8236, a, g and h, 8270 g–k, 8282; and PRO C 54/3569/11, 54/3616/41 and 134, 54/3625/3 54/3647/52 and Ward, 'Settlements', pp 24–27.

¹² Longleat, Seymour MSS, Box 5 nos 58–69.

¹³ BL micro 365 and 366; Alnwick Castle Archives, Percy MSS, Cl 3a accounts of 1647, 1650 and 1656.

¹⁴ KAO, Sackville MSS, U 269, F3 book 3.

alienation.¹⁵ The Earl of Bridgwater's lawyers strongly suggested that a policy of remortgaging should be the keystone of the Egerton estate policy. Bridgwater took his lawyers' advice. A 1653 account reveals that £4200 of a total income of £4989 was to be applied to 'detts secured on the land'. The accounted debt for that year was £18,625, of which £15,220 was secured by mortgages.¹⁶ The Earls of Dorset, Northampton, and Northumberland appear to have shared the confidence in the suitability and security of mortgages. Dorset was prepared to use his Easington estate to secure a £6000 debt owed to Lord Rockingham, whilst Northampton repeatedly used his Cannonbury estate as security for mortgages. The Earl of Northumberland's confidence was such that he was prepared to use his mansion at Petworth as security for £10,000 borrowed from Sir Theodore Mayerne.¹⁷

The success of a policy of mortgaging, as opposed to the less desirable option of permanent alienation, largely depended upon the ability of landowning peers to meet capital and interest repayments. As long as they could do so, Chancery would protect them against common law foreclosure.¹⁸ Much then depended upon the ability to implement the third policy, rental improvement. It has already been established that landowners had striven for rental improvement during the century before the Civil War, as a means of countering the effects of inflation. Indeed it has been suggested that estates survived so effectively during these periods of inflation precisely because of a mobile policy of rental improvement.¹⁹ Of

course, in 1649, the problem was not simply one of effecting improvement. Dislocation of rentals during the war years was perhaps inevitable. It has been estimated that Lord Saye's rental income in Oxfordshire was cut by at least fifty per cent.²⁰ The Earl of Salisbury's Wiltshire tenants were still requesting abatements in 1649.²¹ Following the war, peers, like all landowners, had to both resuscitate their rental income, and improve it. A detailed study of the Earl of Pembroke's estates has suggested that rents on his Wiltshire estates recovered with some rapidity, and that the returns for the 1650s were at least as good as those for the 1630s, the decade in which Pembroke had forced a policy of rent 'improvement'. This 'improvement' was generated by 'increased entry fines', although, there is also some evidence of a complementary transfer of tenancies from copyholds to leaseholds.²²

Copyholders enjoyed long leases at low rents, and it was for the landowner to try to realize the full value of the tenancy by larger arbitrary fines. However as the seventeenth century progressed, it has been suggested that many landowners had reached the conclusion that arbitrary fines were not enough, and that tenancies had to be transferred to leaseholds, with shorter leases and lower fines, but with much higher rents, which could better reflect the true value of the land. The enforced transference from copy to leaseholds appears to have become increasingly widespread as a means of rental improvement. Lawrence Stone has suggested that both methods were already in use on estates in the years before the war; that the Earl of Southampton had transferred tenancies in the 1620s, and that the Earl of Salisbury had done likewise in the 1630s, whilst

¹⁵ Ward, 'Settlements', pp 28-29.

¹⁶ HL, Ellesmere MSS, 8275, and HRO, Ashridge MSS, 1025, 1026 and 1028.

¹⁷ For the mortgages of Cannonbury see Castle Ashby MSS 734. For Easington see Sackville MSS U 269 F 3 fol 6. For the use of Petworth see W Sussex RO, Petworth House Archives, Percy MSS 621.

¹⁸ Ward, 'Settlements', 28-29.

¹⁹ See A Simpson, *The Wealth of the Gentry: 1540-1660*, Cambridge, 1961, particularly pp 179-180, 199-201 and 210.

²⁰ According to Gardiner, *History of the Great Civil War*, 1893, III, p 196.

²¹ HMC 9th Report, 22, Salisbury MSS, pp 418-419.

²² See E Kerridge, 'The Movement of Rent 1540-1640', *Econ Hist Rev*, 2nd ser VI, 1953, 18 and 24-26.

peers such as the Earls of Bath and Berkshire, and Lord Petre, rack-rented in estates further to the west.²³ Christopher Clay has made a similar observation, and noted that the popularity of a purely fine-based income diminished as the seventeenth century progressed.²⁴ Examination of the estates of four peers – the Marquis of Hertford, and the Earls of Bridgwater, Dorset, and Northumberland – reveals that this determination to force a full value from their estates was expressed with especial vigour during the 1650s. The decade was clearly a critical one for the improving and restructuring of rental policies, and the pervasive tendency appears to have been to enforce widespread transfers from copyholds to leaseholds.

I

The August 1653 revenue account for the Earl of Bridgwater's estates includes an 'estimate' of revenue, together with the actual revenue received 'ffor my lords owne proper use'.²⁵ The total receipt was £4989 2s 10d, and the estimate was £6230. In 1653 therefore, Bridgwater was receiving 80 per cent of his total potential income. The deficiency in rental receipt was far from uniform. In the 'estimate', Ashridge was accounted with £1500, Mold with £220, Tatton with £220, and Worsley with £350. The receipt, using a slightly different estate demarcation, revealed that Ashridge yielded £1450; Ellesmere £990; Worsley £350; Mold £220; and Brackley-Halse £843. Whitchurch, Worsley, Mold and Brackley-Halse appear to have been barely in arrears. Yet Ellesmere was producing only 66 per cent of its potential yield. The high

rent returns in Whitchurch can be traced back to 1650 when it again yielded £1450.²⁶ The low Ellesmere yield had only reached £1002 as late as 1656, and by 1662 had only recovered to £1036.²⁷ The 1655 total for Middle actually dropped, from £206 to £195.²⁸ The chief variant was clearly geographical, and except for rack-renting in some of the estates in the middle of the decade, returns varied but little within each unit, from one six-month period to another.

There is no doubting Bridgwater's determination to improve both potential and actual yield, or the improvement in yield between the 1653 receipt of £4989, and the 1661 receipt of £6250.²⁹ Given the 1662 total of £7166, and there is no evidence of excessive sales or borrowing in 1661–2, the total was 87 per cent of a yield which even in 1662 may not have been a maximum. It is an improvement of 7 per cent on the yield potential in 1653.³⁰ Actual yield was the immediate problem in 1650, and its 20 per cent loss was exacerbated by rent arrears. John Elliot, steward in Northamptonshire, visited a Mr. Onely 'to demaund the rent [and] arrears due from him to my lord.' The sum was only 4s 4d p.a., but it had not been paid for '13 or 14 years'.³¹ The accounts for Kings Sutton, in Northamptonshire, were submitted in 1654 for the previous three years. The chief rents were £11 5s 10d p.a., of which £2 19s 10d 'cannot be gathered'. After various expences, 'the bayliffe [Elliot] is out of purse yearly over [and] about his charge on this account £3 17s 3d.' Elliot added optimistically, 'besides of his paynes [and] expenses in demanding [and] receiv-

²³ See L Stone, *The Crisis of the Aristocracy 1558–1641*, Oxford, 1965, 303–310 and 321.

²⁴ C Clay, 'Lifeleasehold in the Western Counties of England 1650–1750', *Ag Hist Rev*, 29, 2, 1981, 83–96.

²⁵ HRO, Ashridge MSS, 1027.

²⁶ See C Hamilton, 'The Bridgwater Debts', *Huntington Library Quarterly*, 42, 1978, p 225.

²⁷ HRO, Ashridge MSS, 1026, subscript on MS.

²⁸ HRO, Ashridge MSS, 1026.

²⁹ An improvement of over 20 per cent, HRO, Ashridge MSS, 1026 and 1066.

³⁰ HRO, Ashridge MSS, 1026, 1065 and 1066.

³¹ Northamptonshire Record Society (hereafter, NRO), Ellesmere Brackley MSS, 606.

ing yearly the chiefe rents, which is left to consideration.³² An accompanying 1653 Kings Sutton account revealed that, of £11 5s 10d, £2 19s 10d 'Rents following were never received'.³³

The 1653 account suggests that the Northamptonshire yield was relatively good, but arrears appear to have been worse in the north-west midlands and north Wales. In February 1651, George Hope despaired of ever receiving Cowsylt arrears. His accompanying account revealed a multitude of tenants' excuses; Edward Parry, owing the considerable sum of £44 15s, could not pay until he received sub-rents; Richard Parry, owing £5 10s was 'very poore'; Robert Griffith, owing £5 16s 10d was 'extreame poore'; Richard Griffith, owing £5 4s simply 'sayes he is unable'; whilst John ap Griffith, owing 'old' rents of £13 5s 4d simply 'denies he is any behind'.³⁴ As late as 1656, John Day emphasised the lingering poverty in Cheshire and Shropshire, exacerbated by decimation tax.³⁵ Rentals in Cholmston, he reported, were in severe arrears, and a rent charge of £170 p.a. was £540 in arrears.³⁶ It is impossible to ascertain how much of the arrears Bridgwater's agents were able to recover. In December 1649, the auditors had noted 'Rents and arrearages ... are said to bee of great value, but never like to be halfe gotten up, by reason of taxes, free quarter, decay of tenants'.³⁷ In September 1657 Day reported that one tenant had finally produced 'ould arrearages ... beinge 6^l 2^s', whilst another had promised to produce his.³⁸ Yet, six months later other Shropshire rents under James Haughton's charge were in 'great arrears'. Haughton's employment was terminated soon afterwards, and Bridgwater

expressed extreme dissatisfaction at the efforts of many of his stewards.³⁹

The Earl's dissatisfaction was probably exacerbated by the limited success of his initiative to 'improve' rent receipt in some of his estates around the middle of the decade. Many of the Cholmston leases fell due for renewal on Lady Day 1656. Bridgwater demanded a 55 per cent increase from £192 15s 10d to £301 5s 4d.⁴⁰ Many of the tenants immediately petitioned for a renewal of their leases at old terms. Elizabeth Bettley claimed, 'The demands beinge soe greate [and] extreame and soe farr above the valuacon that to hold it upon those termes, she was never able to pay the Rente, nor to have any comfortable subsistaunce for herselfe and poore children'.⁴¹ In November 1656, Day reported a meeting with the tenants, where he had 'made y^e demaunds and ... taken theire severall Offers'. Day's letter revealed his own doubts about the wisdom of rack-renting in Cholmston, commenting, 'I doe acknowledge my Offers are shorte of the demaunds w^{ch} I conceive are farr more than it can yield unto the lands beinge overvalued both in quantitie and qualitic'.⁴² Bridgwater reviewed his demands, reducing the figure to £277 11s 8d, but Day's correspondence revealed the continued intransigence of the tenantry.⁴³ When the Earl's disapproval was made plain, Day responded, 'if some of the Ten^{ts} offers doe not give content doe not blame mee, I cannot help y^t'.⁴⁴ In the end Bridgwater was forced to retreat further and settle for a 26 per cent improvement, and the offered receipt of £243 7s.⁴⁵ Even this was encumbered. In November 1657, Day reported that many

³² NRO, Ellesmere Brackley MSS, 318.

³³ NRO, Ellesmere Brackley MSS, 319.

³⁴ HL, Ellesmere MSS, 8032.

³⁵ HL, Ellesmere MSS, 8210 (7).

³⁶ HL, Ellesmere MSS, 8059.

³⁷ HL, Ellesmere MSS, 8275.

³⁸ HL, Ellesmere MSS, 8065.

³⁹ HRO, Ashridge MSS, 1041 and 1042.

⁴⁰ HL, Ellesmere MSS, 8202-8204.

⁴¹ HL, Ellesmere MSS, 8210 (2). For the complaints of other tenants see 8210 (1, 3, 4, 5 and 7).

⁴² HL, Ellesmere MSS, 8210 (7).

⁴³ HL, Ellesmere MSS, 8276.

⁴⁴ HL, Ellesmere MSS, 8120 (8).

⁴⁵ HL, Ellesmere MSS, 8205 and 8206.

tenants demanded a concession, 'to plowe some p^{te} of those lands they hould by reason of theire late improv^t, or otherwise some of them must looke to take lands in other places.⁴⁶ Bridgwater was not prepared to risk depopulation of his tenancies, and agreed, demanding 'treble rent if the[y] plowed'.⁴⁷

It is difficult to be sure whether the 1656 initiative was widespread in the Eger-ton estates. Much depended on the timing of leases. The Whitchurch returns reveal an increase from £1450 in 1650 and 1653, to £1800 in 1662. The 24 per cent increase on what was virtually a maximum yield, is strikingly similar to the Cholmston figure. But in Ellesmere rental receipt only improved by 5 per cent. Whether or not an improvement was pressed by increased entry fines is left to conjecture. In contrast, the Tatton return almost doubled.⁴⁸ The only consistent trend in the figures is that Bridgwater appears to have improved annual rents in the estates where yield was already approaching a maximum potential. The Earl's policy in the Northamptonshire estates appears to have been slightly different. There was virtually no change in the annual rental yield on the Brackley-Halse estates between 1653 and 1662.⁴⁹ Correspondence with his stewards suggest that Bridgwater was far from content with the return, and the stewards negotiated with tenants whose terms were not already 'improved'.⁵⁰ Moreover with thirteen leases renewed in 1655, worth £600 of the £840 p.a. total estate receipt, Bridgwater certainly had the opportunity to improve. These leases are clearly leasehold and not copyhold. The entry fines for 1655-6 were high, totalling £4161, approximately seven years' value. Clearly Bridgwater took the opportunity to force

an increase in entry fines.⁵¹ The Kings Sutton and Worsley fines were also improved during the 1650s. In Kings Sutton receipts nearly doubled between 1653 and 1662.⁵² Whilst in Worsley the 1662 receipt was £600, £250 more than the 1653 estimate.⁵³ The 1662 figure does not appear to have been inflated by fines, and so these two estates must have been transferred to leasehold sometime since 1653.

II

The administration of the Sackville estates had all but collapsed during the 1640s. In 1654 a Sussex steward reported long-term dislocation, having tried to collect arrears which had built up in the early 1650s. The Hartfield rents had been stayed in the tenants' hands for many years, and those of Tarring Peveril, where the manorial court had ceased to sit and administer, were 'of late ... behind and none appointed to gather them in'.⁵⁴ Another steward reported dislocation in Bexhill in 1653.⁵⁵ Imberhorne rentals, due to Sackville College, were reported to be in arrears.⁵⁶ Charles Agard, steward of the Croxhall estate in Derbyshire, reported similar difficulties after the Michaelmas 1654 levy.⁵⁷ The Earl's problems were compounded when trustees for debt seized jointure rents in Herefordshire and Worcestershire. The Earl wrote bitterly to his steward and accused him of discouraging tenants from paying rents.⁵⁸ Difficulties in collecting rents and arrears continued throughout the decade. In late 1654, Agard requested Dorset to be patient and wait until the following spring, 'which will do the poore Tenants a favor'.⁵⁹ There

⁴⁶ HL, Ellesmere MSS, 8068.

⁴⁷ HL, Ellesmere MSS, 8069.

⁴⁸ HRO, Ashridge MSS, 1025-7, 1035 and 1038.

⁴⁹ HRO, Ashridge MSS, 1025 and 1065.

⁵⁰ NRO, Ellesmere Brackley MSS, 609.

⁵¹ NRO, Ellesmere Brackley MSS, 431-443.

⁵² NRO, Ellesmere Brackley MSS, 319 and 320.

⁵³ HRO, Ashridge MSS, 1027 and 1065.

⁵⁴ Kent Archives Office, Sackville MSS, U 269 C 57 fol 1.

⁵⁵ KAO, Sackville MSS, U 269 C 59 fol 1.

⁵⁶ KAO, Sackville MSS, U 269 C 54 fol 1.

⁵⁷ KAO, Sackville MSS, U 269 C 63 fol 2.

⁵⁸ KAO, Sackville MSS, U 269 C 68 fol 1 and C 71 fol 3.

⁵⁹ KAO, Sackville MSS, U 269 C 63 fol 4.

were arrears following the Lady Day levy in 1655 and Agard was still struggling to get in rents after the Michaelmas levy.⁶⁰ In September 1656, he wrote apologizing for the delay in sending rents levied, but 'cruelly tormented with this desimation' and afflicted by these 'poore harvests', adding 'never was money so hard to be got, for uppon my knowledg severall of the tenants have soald part of their cowse ... and part of their Oxon.'⁶¹ As late as June 1660 Agard wrote, 'I hope, now god has sent us a kinge againe he will send us better times, for never was money so hard to be gott together among poore Tenants'.⁶² Sussex rents were also reported to be in arrears in 1657, and tenants 'would not pay ther rent with out the howses may be repaired'.⁶³ The Imberhorne rents were still in arrears, and the stewards reported that barely half of the rental had been levied in June 1656.⁶⁴ In 1657 Lady Dorset informed her husband, hiding from his creditors abroad, 'I have not yet received your rents ... when all this halfe yeares rent comes together it will not pay what you left me to pay'.⁶⁵

The stewards' reports can be verified by the various rental accounts for the Sussex and Derbyshire estates, given in Table 1.

The Derbyshire estates, which should have yielded £378 each six months from 1647-1655, never produced more than £334 which, perhaps surprisingly, was in Michaelmas 1648. During the early 1650s the returns, coinciding with poor harvests, were very low, ranging from £306 to £321.⁶⁶ By Michaelmas 1655 the receipt had only risen to £331. The major constituent of the Derbyshire estates was

TABLE 1
Rental Accounts for the Sackville Estates in
Sussex and Derbyshire 1648-60*

Period	Croxhall	Derbyshire	Sussex
L 1648	—	304	—
M 1648	—	344	—
L 1649	—	322	—
M 1649	226	335	—
L 1650	271	306	—
M 1650	234	316	—
L 1651	243	—	—
M 1651	188	—	—
L 1652	230	316	—
M 1652	230	327	—
L 1653	71	321	298
M 1653	189	317	422
L 1654	245	310	265
M 1654	201	314	151
L 1655	114	—	240
M 1655	401	331	485
L 1656	384	—	417
M 1656	394	—	492
L 1657	1202 all rents including arrears		—
M 1657	339	—	595
L 1658	200 (part)	—	366
M 1658	510 (inc. arrears from L 1658)	—	530
L 1659	313	—	534
M 1659	256 (part)	406	535
L 1660	—	435	—

* L - Lady Day M - Michaelmas. The figures are taken from KAO Sackville MSS U 269 A 4 fols 1-3 and A 156.

Croxhall, for which the accounts suggest a similar deficiency. There is no figure for potential yield, but between 1649 and Michaelmas 1655, when there is clearly a change in leasing, the receipt varies between £188 and £271. The majority of receipts range between £226 and £245. The Sussex accounts do not begin until Lady Day 1653, and the Lady Day 1655 account includes £400 arrears for rents not levied until 1653, which supports the stewards' reports of poor administrative order. Miscellaneous rental arrears for Sussex reveal £12 due in Michaelmas 1652 and a further £37 due in Michaelmas 1653.⁶⁷ The returns for 1653 to Lady Day 1655 fluctuate considerably, although three of the five returns were between

⁶⁰ KAO, Sackville MSS, U 269 C 63 fols 7 and 14.

⁶¹ KAO, Sackville MSS, U 269 C 63 fol 19.

⁶² KAO, Sackville MSS, U 269 C 63 fol 22.

⁶³ KAO, Sackville MSS, U 269 C 76 fol 3/2.

⁶⁴ KAO, Sackville MSS, U 269 C 54 fol 2.

⁶⁵ KAO, Sackville MSS, U 269 C 12 fol 4.

⁶⁶ For the poor harvests see W G Hoskins, 'Harvest Fluctuations and English Economic History 1620-1759', *Ag Hist Rev*, 16, 1968, p 16.

⁶⁷ KAO, Sackville MSS, U 269 F 3 fol 4.

£246 and £298. After Michaelmas 1655, the returns are more consistent and with the exception of a low figure for Lady Day 1656, probably caused by the decimation tax, they are concentrated in the range, £485 to £535.

The annual rental returns for both the Derbyshire and Sussex estates increase sharply after Michaelmas 1655. The consistency of the rack-rent would further suggest that the improvement was not made purely by brutal arbitrary entry fines.⁶⁸ The annual rental return for Sussex is improved by an average of 58 per cent, whilst the less consistent Croxhall accounts suggest an improvement of 62 per cent. The more abbreviated figures for Derbyshire, including Alrewas, suggest an increase of 75 per cent. Clearly many leases, on both the Sussex and Derbyshire estates were due for renewal in 1655-6. The Imberhorne leases certainly were, and in late 1654 a Bexhill tenant had anxiously requested the renewal of his lease at the old rate.⁶⁹ In March 1655, the Earl of Northampton had written to Dorset whilst he was abroad, warning that Lady Dorset should take advantage of the opportunity, and ought 'not to have businesses at six [and] sevens, by having those lands and tenants now falling at will, but to let her understand that no benefit accrues to her [and] that prejudice will ensue to you by having long terms at undervalues upon the estate [and] that y^e onely desire is to have all things set at good rates, then that her L^{ty} may order the terme as shee pleaseth'.⁷⁰

It would appear that Lady Dorset took the advice. The re-leased Imberhorne tenancies were restricted to just ten years.⁷¹ A list of Tarring Peveril tenancies, taken after the re-leasing of the estate in 1656,

further suggests that tenants were forced to take leaseholds. Only three of the thirty-three tenancies were still held on copies.⁷² There is no evidence of how the tenants reacted to Dorset's rental policy. Certainly the Croxhall steward, Agard, had his doubts, reporting in late 1654, 'I assure you my lord the land is sett at such deare rates yt poore men have a hard taske to gett money redy, and then returnes are as unredy, but I have altered some of the Tenants, or rather they are tyred out, and I have gott some other yt I hope will be more punctuall'.⁷³ A January 1655 report from a steward at Easington similarly expressed reservations about the wisdom of presenting the new leases to the tenants.⁷⁴ Despite these reservations, Dorset like Bridgwater was clearly determined to force the transfer. By erasing arrears, releasing and improving tenancies, Dorset's estates in 1658 were yielding 63 per cent more than the 1652-3 receipt; the accounting year following his inheritance.

III

The 1649 rental account for the Seymour estates in Somerset, covering thirteen manors, accounted £698 received in rents, £2985 received in fines, and £1297 received in past arrears, but £1378 due in arrears on the present account.⁷⁵ It underlines two characteristics which pervade the Seymour estates during the years 1649-60; severe arrears and a fine based rental income. It would appear that the Somerset estates were, in effect, operating one levy behind. The 1646 levy had been very poor, and between 1647-50, the stewards seemed to collect previous arrears, roughly equal to arrears on the present account.⁷⁶ Arrears were not restricted to Somerset.

⁶⁸ It cannot be explained by any retrieval of estates. The entire Derbyshire estates appear to have remained in the Earl's control throughout the 1640s and 1650s.

⁶⁹ KAO, Sackville MSS, U 269 C 59 fol 2 and M 32.

⁷⁰ KAO, Sackville MSS, U 269 C 86 fol 1.

⁷¹ KAO, Sackville MSS, U 269 M 32.

⁷² KAO, Sackville MSS, U 269 M 58.

⁷³ KAO, Sackville MSS, U 269 C 63 fol 2.

⁷⁴ KAO, Sackville MSS, U 269 C 71 fol 3.

⁷⁵ Longleat, Seymour MSS, Box 16 no 66.

⁷⁶ See Longleat, Seymour MSS, Box 5 nos 102-113 for the steady-ing of rents in Somerset between 1647 and 1650.

A miscellaneous account noted £643 arrears in the smaller Wiltshire estates between 1650-54, and the Finch estates in Kent were £890 in arrears in 1652.⁷⁷

The continuing problem of arrears is evidenced by correspondence from various stewards. A Somerset steward reported that rents were slow and in arrears following the Lady Day 1652 levy. In October 1654 the steward at Castle Cary, where arrears had been £200 in 1649, reported similar problems.⁷⁸ In May 1653 William Sherborne reported from Herefordshire that Lady Day payments would be late; 'but one Tenant hath any peny in the manour of Lyonhall, not one peny yet out of Bodeyhome, very little from Webley and out of Pembridge'.⁷⁹ In October 1654 Beardesley, steward of the Staffordshire estates, reported that rents were certain to be in arrears.⁸⁰ Three weeks later, Beardesley wrote again, reporting, 'but Rents never were paid so slackly', and that some tenants refused to pay until they had been admitted to new copies.⁸¹ In November 1654 the steward at Ross reported that none of the rents were 'ready' and that, 'many of the tenants have begged respite until that faier [St Andrews Day fair at Ross] ... As I was coming homewards I mett with the ffarmers of Haughwood att ffawnehope consulting together how to gett in money to discharge their yeares rent, but they gave me small encouragement to expect it sudainely'.⁸² The Ross levy for Lady Day 1655 was similarly poor. One steward promised to forward money as soon as possible, and 'did give us an account of what he had received for this half yeare (which was but little in comparison of

what was due)'.⁸³ The Irish estates at Ballygart and Carrick were also in arrears, and it was suggested that leases should be renewed on old terms.⁸⁴ In December 1658, the Marquis's receiver, Amos Walrond, visited the Yorkshire estate 'w^{ch} is much out of order' and in a March 1659 letter, Walrond noted that there were still arrears from the 1658 levies.⁸⁵ As late as March 1660 the Castle Cary steward reported that there was 'much money in arreares'.⁸⁶

The problems of arrears and levies in the Staffordshire estates were exacerbated by the long-running dispute with the tenants of Drayton. In June 1654 Beardesley reported the unanimous opposition of the Drayton tenants to the Marquis's proposal to transfer copyholds to leaseholds. One tenant, Prettie, according to Beardesley, should not be allowed to renew his tenancy, for 'he is a proud fellow [and] one that anymates the tennants as I feare to question those ancyent rights belonging to the mannor and not to take any estates but by coppie of court'.⁸⁷ The following Michaelmas, Beardesley reported, 'in stedd of paying rents there was divers of your tenants come to require to be admitted tenants [and] to have new estates by Coppies'. Some had agreed to yearly rent 'but the[y] only tendered old rente, [and] clayme new estates.' Beardesley told them that none would be admitted to new copies.⁸⁸ In August 1655, Gape informed Lady Hertford of a legal success against her 'most undutiful tenants of Drayton'. But rather than 'acquiesce to this their late great (and not to be repaired) overthrow ... their full intentions are otherwise designed, beinge forwarded therein by the pestilent incouragemts of some avaricious lawyers ... and some envi-

⁷⁷ Longleat, Seymour MSS, Box 5 nos 85 and 87. Hertford administered the Finch estates of the Earl of Winchelsea following his marriage to Lady Mary Seymour.

⁷⁸ Longleat, Seymour MSS, vol 8 fols 16 and 34, and Box 16 no 66.

⁷⁹ Longleat, Seymour MSS, vol 7 fol 33.

⁸⁰ Longleat, Seymour MSS, vol 7 fol 45.

⁸¹ Longleat, Seymour MSS, vol 7 fol 48.

⁸² Longleat, Seymour MSS, vol 7 fol 50.

⁸³ Longleat, Seymour MSS, vol 7 fol 60.

⁸⁴ Longleat, Seymour MSS, vol 7 fol 77 and 97, and Box 3 no 123.

⁸⁵ Longleat, Seymour MSS, vol 7 fols 120 and 124.

⁸⁶ Longleat, Seymour MSS, vol 8 fol 45.

⁸⁷ Longleat, Seymour MSS, vol 7 fol 42.

⁸⁸ Longleat, Seymour MSS, vol 7 fol 48.

ous neighbours'.⁸⁹ In November 1655, having met with the leader of the tenants, Beardesley was able to finally report, 'now he will submitt [and] the others in like manner'. The tenants could no longer afford the costs of a suit.⁹⁰ However, a month later Walrond reported seeking Bridgman's advice, following the decisions of the 'rebellious Tennants' to get 'a Reference to 6 gentlemen of Staffordshire to decide Y^e busines betweene your Honour and them.' But Sir Orlando Bridgman, Walrond added reassuringly, 'is well plead'd wth this procedure of them, and says it portends good, and that experience has taught him, in his own particular that it will signifie noe thing but a Courtship to their misfortune'.⁹¹ In December 1658 Walrond reported that all Drayton tenancies had been satisfactorily re-leased, and in March 1659 certified that Beardesley's returns for the estate were adequate.⁹² Drayton was not the only estate where Hertford tried to force an improvement, or where he encountered opposition. One of his Ballygart tenants sought recourse at law in an attempt to retain 'old rent'.⁹³ In 1656 a Yorkshire steward informed Lady Hertford of an 'improvement' of £20 on each of five leases. But as to the 'designe' of improvement, the steward commented that the Marquis 'promises himsele much future profit, of which I dare not be so confident'. It is quite possible that this 'designe' referred to a transfer to leaseholds.⁹⁴ In April 1655, Bridgman informed the Marquis that he could not 'improve' rents in Essex until December.⁹⁵ The Seymour estates in Wiltshire had been repeatedly rack-rented in the 1630s and 1640s, but unlike the Staffordshire estate,

they remained essentially copyhold tenancies yielding a fine-based income. A 1672 survey of Wiltshire, Somerset and Hampshire estates revealed that there were 526 tenancies, of which 398 were held on copy, 77 were free, and only 51 were held on leasehold. In 1647 the Somerset estates had produced £3725 in fines, and in 1649 this figure was £2985. However, in the Michaelmas levies of 1659 and 1660 the Somerset fine receipts were £1527 and £1457 respectively.⁹⁶ This suggests that at least some of the limited transfers to leaseholds on the Somerset estates may have been made during the 1650s. The picture on the Seymour estates is then one of an improvement generated by both transfer of tenancies together with the more conventional rack-renting.

IV

The accounts of the Earl of Northumberland's estates provide the most comprehensive series of rental receipts. The total receipt for the northern estates between 1649 and 1660 is strikingly consistent, and given in Table 2.

The variance between the lowest return in 1651 and the highest in 1649 is only 20 per cent; once the number of sales receded after 1652, the variance is only 9 per cent. Figures for the years following the Restoration further suggest that the northern estates were producing a near maximum yield during the 1650s. In 1670, for example, the total receipt of £11,285 was an increase of only 4 per cent on the 1660 figure. The figures for rental receipt alone are equally strong. The high 1658 rental receipt includes all income except fines. Otherwise there are two distinct series of returns. For the years 1649–53 the returns range between £6309 and £6802. Whilst for the years 1654–60 the average increases

⁸⁹ Longleat, Seymour MSS, vol 7 fol 64.

⁹⁰ Longleat, Seymour MSS, vol 7 fol 66.

⁹¹ Longleat, Seymour MSS, vol 7 fol 68.

⁹² Longleat, Seymour MSS, vol 7 fols 122 and 155.

⁹³ Longleat, Seymour MSS, vol 7 fols 77 and 97, and Box 3 no 123.

⁹⁴ Longleat, Seymour MSS, vol 7 fol 73.

⁹⁵ Longleat, Seymour MSS, vol 7 fol 58.

⁹⁶ Longleat, Seymour MSS, Box 5 nos 44–53, and 227–90, and Box 16 no 66.

TABLE 2
Receipts from the Northern Estates of the
Percies, 1649-60*

Year	total receipt			rental receipt		
	£	s	d	£	s	d
1649	11,164	7	8	6802	14	9
1650	10,909	1	6	6309	11	9
1651	8965	4	6	6423	9	9
1652	9553	18	8	6781	3	4
1653	10,426	7	11 1/2	6638	18	4 1/2
1654	10,042	18	5	7794	19	0
1655	9828	15	2	no rental receipts		
1656	9806	9	10	8013	19	7
1657	10,157	2	6	8789	13	11
1658	10,738	16	11	10,026	4	8
1659	9105	10	3	8221	5	8
1660	10,799	6	0	8739	10	4

* Figures taken from BL micro. 366 Alnwick Castle Archives (hereafter, ACA), Percy MSS CI 3a accounts of 1649-60.

by 21 per cent, and ranges from £7794 to £10,026.

The figures for fines and rents during the 1650s reveal the individual rental policies in each of the three northern estates: Cumberland, Northumberland and Yorkshire and appear below in Table 3. The smallest of the accounting units, Cumberland, produced around 5-8 per cent of the rental receipt, where fine

receipts remained reasonably consistent, varying just 30 per cent between the lowest figure and the highest. For seven of the eleven years the variation was only 10 per cent. Rents are similarly consistent, but in two sets: apart from an inexplicably low 1650 return, the figures for 1649-54 range between just £500 and £545; but the figures for 1655-59, are on average of 24 per cent higher. The consistency of fines indicates neither alteration in the terms of the tenancy, nor significant repopulation of tenancies, so it can be concluded that the Earl forced an improvement by rack-renting alone.

The Yorkshire accounts are characterized by the sudden drop in fine income from 1654 to the end of the decade, accompanied by an equally striking increase of rents from 1655 to 1659. Fines dropped by an average of 70 per cent in this second period whilst rentals increased by a fifth. In monetary terms though, the loss of an average £165 p.a. in fines was more than compensated by an average increase in rents of £865 p.a. The suggestion that Northumberland improved the receipt by transferring copyholds to leaseholds is enhanced by the figures for the

TABLE 3
Income from Rents and Fines on the Percy Estates in Cumberland, Northumberland, and
Yorkshire, 1649-59*

	Cumberland		Northumberland		Yorkshire	
	Rentals £	Fines £	Rentals £	Fines £	Rentals £	Fines £
1649	545	304	1025	—	3501	—
1650	447	276	2389	858	3473	—
1651	500	252	2465	99	3457	—
1652	532	230	2628	172	3620	532
1653	537	270	2545	227	3556	565
1654	655	268	2972	276	3760	140
1655	862	207	3727	634	4699	192
1656	655	303	3074	459	4284	120
1657	686	339	3893	556	4401	291
1658	733	271	3447	306	4838	135
1659	652	283	3068	222	4500	149

* BL, micro. 366, ACA, Percy MSS, CI 3a 1649-1660 accounts.

TABLE 4
Receipts from the Seven Yorkshire Manors, 1646-60*

Manor	1645 £	1654 £	1656 £	1657 £	1659 £	1660 £
Cotton	8	202	368	466	368	384
Kildale	—	94	194	192	293	188
Leconfield	208	439	903	1007	1000	943
Tadcaster	—	78	260	191	304	303
Topcliffe	148	283	841	943	962	451
Spofforth	125	205	570	557	568	552
Wressal	73	401	1011	1018	1019	962
Total receipts	3456	3760	4284	4401	4500	3837

* Sources: As for Table 3.

individual Yorkshire manors, given above.

The returns for each estate improve between the 1654 and 1656 receipts, and in some the improvement was dramatic. The Topcliffe returns virtually doubled from £148 in 1646 to £283 in 1654, and then improved by a further 310 per cent during the years 1656-9, when the average receipt is £915. In Spofforth the 1654 receipt of £205 improved to an average of £562 between 1656-60. The two most productive manors were Leconfield and Wressal. The Leconfield return improved from £439 in 1654 to an average of £963 for the years 1656-60; receipts from Wressal rose from £401 in 1654 to an average of £1002 for the years 1656-60. In two estates, Kildale and Tadcaster, the improvement took place later in the decade, around 1659, increasing by 34 and 37 per cent respectively.

The figures for the Northumberland estates are the least clear. Rental figures seem to oscillate quite unpredictably. The lowest return was £2025 in 1649, and the highest was £3727 in 1655, but by 1659, the return had receded to £3068. No return between 1649-54 exceeded £2972, and none after 1654 fell below £3074. There was an improvement, but in comparison with the other Percy estates, the rental returns are wholly inconsistent, as are the fine returns. Estate correspondence

suggests that the Earl attempted to improve rental returns by both altering tenancies and by increasing rents. In June 1648 one Earsden tenant petitioned for the renewal of his copyhold. He petitioned again in 1654, 'to have his coppie according to the custome of the said Manno', and as of right he ought to have'.⁹⁷ In April 1657, the receiver for the northern estates reported that the Tynemouth tenants had 'late made divisions of their Copyhold tenem^{ts} notwithstandinge expresse direccion to the contrary', whilst 'severall of them presste for copies'.⁹⁸ The letter coincided with an increase in Tynemouth rentals, from £581 in 1656 to £695 in 1657, and even more dramatically, to £1006 in 1658; an improvement of 31 per cent.⁹⁹

Books of contracts and lease-fines in Northumberland provide some intermittent evidence. Thirty-three contracts and fines were made in 1646; eighteen in 1647; three in 1648; twenty-three in 1650; eleven in 1651; and two in 1652. In 1655 there were ninety-eight contracts plus 129 renewal fines, and in 1656 there were ninety-eight contracts and fines combined. In 1657 this figure had declined to forty-

⁹⁷ BL micro. 386; ACA, Percy MSS, RX 11 and 3b.

⁹⁸ BL micro. 388; ACA, Percy MSS, 3m.

⁹⁹ BL micro. 366; ACA, Percy MSS, 3a accounts for 1656 and 1657.

nine.¹⁰⁰ Clearly 1655 was a year of major contracting and re-leasing. Moreover, the arithmetic progression 1646-1649-1652-1655 suggests a series of short-term three-year leases for fifty-seven per cent of the contracts which in turn suggests a prevalence of copies before 1655. The figures for the years after 1655 seem to be uniformly higher than those for the years preceding, and the prevalence of re-leasing in 1655-56 coincides neatly with the increase in rent returns. The actual lists of contracts have to be treated with care. The overwhelming majority of entries in the 1646 list are for contracts at the 'same rent', or with small increases of £1-2. The 1649 book reveals reasonably uniform increases of 15-19 per cent in rent, but virtually no fine increases. A handful of fines are reduced and there are just three substantial rent increases. The 1655 and 1657 books are also dominated by renewals for the 'same rent', together with numerous entries for 'double rent'; a legal mechanism for levying an exit fine.

The consistency of return in the northern estates throughout the decade implies that arrears were minimal. Where arrears levied are included in the account, an exponential decline is clear. In Yorkshire arrears were £568 in 1649, £499 in 1650, £117 in 1651, £188 in 1652, and £12 in 1653. The trend in Northumberland is similar, with £309 arrears levied in 1649, £40 in 1651, £269 in 1653, and £109 in 1654. There are only occasional entries in the following years.¹⁰¹ The strength of the receipt is further evidenced by correspondence. In Spring 1657, the northern receiver, Potter, was able to report that 'rents in this county [Northumberland] are thus farr very well paid and I hope to take such course as there shall not be many arrears'. In the same letter he reported that the Yorkshire steward had assured

him that the Yorkshire 'rents wilbe well paid'.¹⁰²

The accounts for the Sussex estates are not comprehensive. The 1649 and 1661 statements of receipt list £2619 for 1649 and £2321 for 1661.¹⁰³ It is clear that much of the Sussex estate had been transferred to freehold before 1646. Separate receipts in each of 1646, 1649, and 1650 suggest that Petworth yielded £34, Sutton £68-98, and Duncton £6, for copyhold rents. Yet Petworth returned between £800-£935 in all, Sutton £68-98 and Duncton £195-£222.¹⁰⁴ A Chancery action brought by Petworth copyholders to preserve their tenancy rights, in 1659, suggests that Northumberland was trying to force a transfer to leaseholds.¹⁰⁵ The Sussex receipts which were included in the northern accounts reveal that the 1654 yield was £1854; the 1655 yield was £2106; the 1656 yield was £2421; and the 1658 yield was £2780.¹⁰⁶ There is a clear rise, but given the 1661 receipt of £2321, it would be unwise to seek to draw too many conclusions from what is only a handful of accounts.

V

The general picture on the Earl of Northumberland's estates, as well as those of the Marquis of Hertford, and the Earls of Bridgwater and Dorset, appears then to be reasonably clear. The most striking conclusion to be drawn from these four estate studies is the determination of all four peers to both rack-rent and improve rentals, and to do so around the middle

¹⁰⁰ BL micro. 381; ACA, Percy MSS, LII 1.

¹⁰¹ BL micro. 366; ACA, CI 3a.

¹⁰² BL micro. 388; ACA, PII 3m.

¹⁰³ W Sussex Record Office (hereafter, WSRO), Petworth House Archives, Percy MSS 621.

¹⁰⁴ Of course there would have been more copyholders per pound than leaseholders, but not that many. Lord Leconfield lists 163 copyholders in Petworth, but unfortunately does not refer to the number of others, see *Petworth Manor in the Seventeenth Century*, 1954, p 5.

¹⁰⁵ WSRO, Petworth House Archives, Percy MSS, 6368.

¹⁰⁶ BL, micro. 366; ACA, Percy MSS, CI 3a 1654-6 and 1658 accounts.

of the decade. Bridgwater, Dorset, and Northumberland all improved rentals around 1654-6, and furthermore, they did so by around 20-25 per cent. Whilst Hertford may have been content to realize his improvement chiefly by increased fines, the other three peers appear to have concentrated on transferring their estates from copy to leasehold. Of course there are cautionary factors. Rental accounts can be a treacherous source.¹⁰⁷ Clearly much of the force of the argument would be lost if there had been substantial changes in the estate units themselves. But there is no evidence of this. It has already been noted that sales of property were limited, and most importantly that units mortgaged and remortgaged appear to have remained unchanged. Thus, as any sales that did take place tended to be sales of mortgage units made to mortgagors, it is unlikely that there were any substantial changes within estate units.¹⁰⁸ Similarly, if there had been serious alterations in the conditions of tenancies, then the impact of change in types might have been affected. But again, with the exception of one or two leases on the Egerton estates, there is no evidence of this. And once again, there is no real reason to expect any alterations. Clay noted that there was 'little change' in the condition of the various copy and leasehold tenancies in the west of England during this period.¹⁰⁹

Both Wordie, in his study of the Leveson-Gower estates, and Hopkins, in his study of the Ellesmere estates before the Civil War, noted that the rental policies themselves would often change from one estate administration to another.¹¹⁰ It is notable that inheritances on both the Eger-

ton and Sackville estates during this period were accompanied by alterations in rental policy. Whether or not these changes would have come about, regardless of the effects of the Civil War is a subject for speculation. But it is suggested that they probably would. Hopkins concluded that by 1650 the existing fine-based system on the Ellesmere estates had become unstable and untenable.¹¹¹ The evidence in this study, for the years 1649-60, clearly supports that conclusion, and suggests that the Earl of Bridgwater's administrators were only too aware of the problems, and consciously chose to administer the final rites to fine-based rental income. A fine-based system had always provided a more random income. In Clay's words, 'the random chances of life and death ensured that fluctuations would sometimes be enormous'.¹¹² The long-term pressures of high inflation had increasingly strained estates based on arbitrary fines, and by the end of the sixteenth century, landlords were continually looking for increasingly novel means of improvement.¹¹³

The pervasive seventeenth-century trend away from fining and towards rack-renting and then transfers of copy to leasehold, was simply concentrated by the particular pressures of the 1640s and 1650s. As Clay's study of tenancies in the western counties suggests, in such periods of economic pressure, the first concession that landlords would make would be to waive fines. In such times as the late 1640s the tenantry was quite simply very often unable to pay high fines.¹¹⁴ The fact that a transference to leasehold offered the landlord a more stable and regular income was clearly the prime impulse for change. The pressures of the 1640s merely underlined the importance of restructuring rental policy on individual estates. It has

¹⁰⁷ See Wordie, 'Rent Movements' esp., pp 193-202.

¹⁰⁸ This is the same conclusion that was reached by Wordie in his study of the Leveson-Gower estates, see 'Rent Movements', pp 195-196.

¹⁰⁹ See Clay, 'Lifeleasehold' *England*, p 93.

¹¹⁰ See Wordie, 'Rent Movements', p 194, and E Hopkins, 'The Releasing of the Ellesmere Estates 1637-1642', *Ag Hist Rev*, 10, 1962, pp 16, 26.

¹¹¹ Hopkins, 'Ellesmere Estates', esp. pp 26-8.

¹¹² Clay 'Lifeleasehold', p 85.

¹¹³ See Simpson, *The Wealth of the Gentry*, 179-80 and 199-201.

¹¹⁴ Clay, 'Lifeleasehold', p. 91.

been suggested that, in practice, the immediate effects of the transference, upon both landlord and tenant, were not that great. The terms of the lease usually varied only a little, if at all.¹¹⁵ But the regularity, realized in the increased overall return of around 24 per cent which can be detected in the four case studies, would have provided sufficient motivation to enforce renewals on leasehold terms.

There is some evidence of tenants' disquiet at the transference of copies into leases, most obviously in the Seymour papers. But this may have been as much an instinctive reaction to change, as a calculated response to the long-term repercussions. However the transference of copies to leasehold represented a still broader trend in the social and economic relations of landlord and tenant. In the same way as the enclosure of common could be seen as a dismembering of the manorial custom, so too could the abolition of the copyhold system in the manor. It is not surprising that landowners such as the Earl of Bridgwater were enclosing common at the same time, and indeed prior to the switching of the bases of their rental policy.¹¹⁶ Throughout the 1650s, Bridgwater received reports from anxious stewards that tenants were 'incroaching' upon common around Brackley, Syresham, and Crowfield.¹¹⁷ The Earl of Northampton was beset by a particularly bitter and arduous dispute with his Yardley Hastings tenants throughout the 1650s, with regard to the attempted enclosure of the common.¹¹⁸ One of the Earl of Northum-

berland's stewards reported, in early 1657, that Tynemouth tenants had re-entered recently enclosed common.¹¹⁹ The changes in rental policy suggested by these four estate studies, were then merely a part of an important and much wider trend in social, agricultural and also legal history; the trend away from custom and towards contract.¹²⁰ Already established as economically untenable, copyholds, tied to the custom of the manor, had become equally undesirable at law. According to Simpson, copyholds had become a matter of 'inconvenience' for all the parties concerned.¹²¹ They were certainly cumbersome. But, as Baker has observed, if anything, the copyhold benefited the tenant, because the common law would enforce custom, and bring equity to it.¹²² On the other hand, a leasehold created contractual obligations, and, as the age of freedom of contract dawned, these obligations offered far greater benefit to the landlord as contractor, than the often ancient and restrictive custom of the copyhold.¹²³ The idea of the copyhold belonged to an age past. By 1649 the copyhold tenancy was economically, socially, and legally untenable, and with their minds concentrated by the particular economic and social pressures of the 1650s, the landowning peerage of England clearly had no compunction in laying it to rest.

¹¹⁹ BL micro. 388; ACA, Percy MSS 3m.

¹²⁰ Clay, 'Lifeleasehold', 91 and 94.

¹²¹ A W B Simpson, *A History of the Land Law*, Oxford, 1986, 170-171.

¹²² J H Baker, *An Introduction to English Legal History*, 1990, 348-350. See also C M Gray, *Copyhold, Equity and the Common Law*, Harvard, 1963.

¹²³ For the classic exposition of the theory of the rise and fall of freedom of contract, see P S Atiyah, *The Rise and Fall of Freedom of Contract*, Oxford, 1979.

¹¹⁵ Clay, 'Lifeleasehold', p. 91.

¹¹⁶ See Hopkins, 'Ellesmere Estates', p. 15.

¹¹⁷ NRO, Ellesmere Brackley MSS, 307, 483, 607 and 647.

¹¹⁸ Castle Ashby MSS 1084 fol 18/1.

Output and Prices in UK Agriculture, 1867–1914, and the Great Agricultural Depression Reconsidered*

By MICHAEL TURNER

Abstract

This article is based on the late J R Bellerby's United Kingdom agricultural output series. It does not use his published series, but rather it employs his unpublished manuscript originals. The published series was presented in undifferentiated terms whereas the manuscripts present a full product differentiation, as well as individual price series for those products. The article proceeds to use this material in three ways. It establishes the output estimates as a credible source by comparison with other estimates; it constructs a composite agricultural price index using that series; and finally the index is used to illustrate different ways to understand the transformation of UK agriculture in the late Victorian and Edwardian period.

IN economic history we find it difficult at times to make meaningful analyses about movements and adjustments in economies without involving prices. These may be individual commodity prices, or composite industrial or other sector prices. We can manipulate such series and talk about terms of trade and intersectoral movements, and inter-country adjustments. Price indexes are fundamental to these issues. They are our primary data, but also they are our deflators, inflators and so on. Patrick O'Brien has made us question the role of agriculture in eighteenth-century British economic growth through his construction of a composite agricultural price index, a comparable industrial prices index, and the interaction of the two in a terms of

trade index.¹ Some years ago W B Rothenberg, in outlining the pivotal role played by agriculture within the overall sectoral adjustments in the Massachusetts economy of the late eighteenth and nineteenth century, reviewed the price indexes available to help her isolate those adjustments. She argued very strongly that she '[did] not have a price index relevant to that population, composed on the farm products characteristic of that agriculture, constructed from the prices received by those farmers, and weighted by the relative importance of each of those products to those farmers.'² What did she do? She constructed one. For Irish agriculture, in that crucial period of Irish development after the Famine, I have constructed a composite prices index.³

But what of Britain in the comparable time period, after the Repeal of the Corn Laws, during the period of 'High Farm-

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¹ P K O'Brien, 'Agriculture and the Home Market for English Industry, 1660–1820', *Eng Hist Rev*, C, no 397, 1985, pp 773–800.

² W B Rothenberg, 'A Price Index for Rural Massachusetts', *Jul Econ Hist*, XXXIX, 1979, p 975.

³ Originally in M E Turner, 'Towards an Agricultural Prices Index for Ireland 1850–1914', *The Economic and Social Review*, 18, 1987, pp 123–36, now revised in 'Output and Productivity in Irish Agriculture from the Famine to the Great War', *Irish Economic and Social History*, XVII, 1990, especially pp 67–9.

ing', into the Great Depression, and out again and up to the Great War? This was a period which blossomed with fact-finding missions by Parliamentary Select Committees; it provoked wide debates on the Depression itself and related issues, such as contagious diseases. And within the period, in 1866, the annual agricultural census or June Returns was begun. The comparable Irish returns date from 1847. In many ways they are fuller than the British census returns. For example, returns of crop yields in Britain were not made until 1884, but they had been a mainstay of the Irish returns for a long while. This Irish aside has significance in view of what previous historians of output have done because yields are an important element in estimating production and output. Historians of output in this period, or at least for that part of the period before the 1880s, all had to perform heroics of assumption and extrapolation to complete their series of output estimates, and that extrapolation was often dependent on deriving a British or UK estimate but based on Irish crop yields.⁴ And the problem of collating data did not end with crop yields, there were also problems regarding the sizes of milk yields, wool clips, and carcass weights.⁵

But even if the data could be found and manipulated there is more than one

definition of output. Ultimately we seek measurements of gross output after deducting for seed retained, for animal mortality, and for the recycling of crops as animal feed, and also after deductions for the recycling of milk for consumption by pigs and calves, and any other parts of agricultural output which were recycled and which should be deducted from total production to produce gross production. This gross production becomes sales off farm, but including farmers' own consumption.⁶ Rothenberg referred to this output as 'net', while most historians use the term 'gross'. The term 'net' is more usually reserved to define final output after deducting inputs.

This is not the place, however, to rehearse definitions and the problems involved in constructing agricultural output series.⁷ Instead we take a UK agricultural output series, in the main unadjusted, and do three things with it: we establish the series as a credible source, or at least no more incredible than the ones already at our disposal; we construct a composite agricultural price index using that series; and finally we use the index to suggest a different way to understand the transformation of UK agriculture in the late Victorian and Edwardian period.

I

Ultimately the improvement to our understanding of the period may come with the construction of a composite agri-

⁴ E M Ojala, *Agriculture and Economic Progress*, Oxford, 1952, especially pp 191-217; J R Bellerby, 'The Distribution of Farm Income in the UK 1867-1938', reprinted and revised in W E Minchinton, ed, *Essays in Agrarian History*, II, Newton Abbot, 1968, pp 261-79; and T W Fletcher, 'The Great Depression of English Agriculture 1873-1896', reprinted and revised in Minchinton, *Idem*, pp 241-57.

⁵ For example see D Taylor, 'The English Dairy Industry, 1860-1930', *Econ Hist Rev*, 2nd ser, XXIX, 1976, pp 585-601. See also a critique of the availability and usage of milk yield data in T W Fletcher, 'The Economic Development of Agriculture in East Lancashire, 1870-1939', MSc Leeds University, 1954, Appendix III. For contemporary debate and estimates on milk yields, carcass sizes and wool clips see P G Craigie, 'Statistics of Agricultural Production', *JRSS*, XLVI, 1883, pp 26-30; for a discussion of carcass weights see R H Rew, 'Production and Consumption of Meat and Milk: Second Report', *JRSS*, LXVII, 1904, pp 374-78; and for a discussion of milk yields see *Idem*, 'Production and Consumption of Meat and Milk: Third Report', in *Idem*, pp 385-93.

⁶ This is the standard procedure though P E Dewey expressly omits farmers' own supplies, P E Dewey, *British Agriculture in the First World War*, 1989, p 246. My thanks to Peter Dewey for confirming this.

⁷ There are many examples of the ways scholars have tackled this problem, for example, for Massachusetts see Rothenberg, 'A Price Index'; for the UK see Ojala, *Agriculture and Economic Progress*, pp 191-217; for Ireland see, amongst others, C Ó Gráda, 'Irish Agricultural Output Before and After the Famine', *J Eur Econ Hist*, 13, 1984, pp 149-65 but especially 159-65; and for Canada see R M McInnis, 'Output and Productivity in Canadian Agriculture, 1870-71 to 1926-27', in S L Engerman and R E Gallman, eds, *Long-Term Factors in American Economic Growth*, Chicago, 1986, pp 737-78, especially pp 763-8.

cultural price index. Before we proceed with that construction we linger awhile and discuss the indexes that are already available. Officially, agricultural price indexes were first published in 1913.⁸ Using weights for each commodity in the series, those weights based on the value of sales off farms for the period 1906–8, and in association with price relatives for those same commodities, a composite price index was made available for England and Wales from 1908. There were adjustments over time to reflect the changing face of agriculture as indicated in changes in the relative weights of the commodities. The Irish were one step ahead in the construction of their own agricultural price index which is available from 1881–1915.⁹ But what else is available? There are of course some well-known and well-used indexes. For example, the Rousseaux series includes separate indexes for vegetable and animal products as well as a total agricultural products' index for the period 1800–1913, and there is the Sauerbeck-Statist price index for the period 1846–1938.¹⁰ In general there are many individual product price series or raw prices.¹¹

The only relatively modern attempts to construct afresh a composite price index for the British agricultural sector (in fact for the wider UK) have been made by E M Ojala and J R Bellerby. The Ojala index gives just seven reference dates for the period 1867–1914, but the Bellerby index is annual.¹² Bellerby's work was based on the group research which he led at the Agricultural Economics Research

Institute at Oxford in the late 1940s and 1950s.¹³ He laboured many years to construct many series on agricultural farm income and related topics.¹⁴ It is the Bellerby output series on which the present study is based. We may criticize or highlight some of the problems he encountered – at stages he confesses to short cuts, guesses and intuition – nevertheless we take his raw data, unadjusted for criticism, and reconstruct a new agricultural price series. It would take a major research project to start afresh, such a project would face the same data and data limitations, and while it might wrinkle the edges and make marginal adjustments here and there,¹⁵ ultimately the method of construction would remain intact, and we hazard the guess that the results would remain closely the same.

II

Those familiar with Bellerby's work will know that he was more interested in aggregate farm incomes and not the component parts of that income (that is the contributions of individual crops and animals), and as such there is no statement in his published work of individual product outputs. Our earlier quotation from Rothenberg provided a list of the necessary items needed to construct a price series. Individual product outputs are essential. They establish a system of distributional weights for the final construction

⁸ MAFF, *A Century of Agricultural Statistics: Great Britain 1866–1966*, HMSO, 1968, pp 85–6.

⁹ Agricultural Statistics, Ireland 1915, 'Return of Prices of Crops, Livestock and Other Irish Agricultural Products', BPP, Cd 8452, 1917, pp 5–7.

¹⁰ B R Mitchell, *Abstract of British Historical Statistics*, Cambridge, 1962, pp 471–5.

¹¹ Mitchell, *Abstract*, pp 488–9 for wheat, barley and oats for the period 1771–1938.

¹² Ojala, *Agriculture and Economic Progress*, p 210; Bellerby, 'The Distribution of Farm Income', pp 276–7.

¹³ Bellerby's index was based on the Paasche formula for construction. C H Feinstein noted that this was an unusual procedure in the face of the more normal construction using the Laspeyres' formula. Others who construct price indexes of this sort generally employ the Laspeyres' formula. C H Feinstein, *National Income Expenditure and Output of the United Kingdom*, Cambridge, 1972, p 50.

¹⁴ The list of publications arising from this research team was large. They are too many to list but a flavour can be obtained from the pages of *The Farm Economist*, for the 1950s.

¹⁵ As Fletcher once did to the Ojala estimates, in Fletcher, 'The Great Depression', especially p 256, and also in his unpublished manuscripts, especially a typescript 'Notes on the Gross Output Estimates'. These manuscripts are in the custody of Dr Ian Blanchard of Edinburgh University. My thanks to him for permission to consult them.

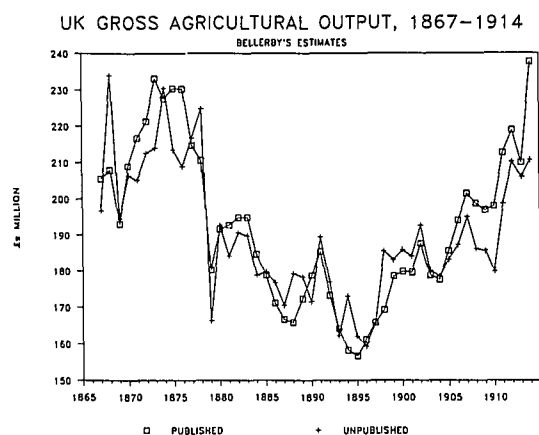


FIGURE I

of an index. Fortunately a version of Bellerby's product outputs has survived, in part, in his working papers which have been deposited at Reading University.¹⁶ Within them there are precise instructions as to how the outputs were derived with detailed schedules of the individual product outputs for the years 1867-1938. Therefore we can derive not only product weights at a particular moment in the chronology, but also we can see how those weights changed over time. The dating of some of these manuscripts is unclear though a postscript to a 1968 revision and reprint of a 1953 article indicates the rough and ready date.¹⁷ The manuscripts provide, therefore, a product differentiation as well as a final estimate of gross output.¹⁸ The gross output estimate from the unpublished manuscripts and also that from the final published version are compared in Figure I. Evi-

dently, revisions were made before the final estimate was presented in 1968, but what those revisions were remains obscure. However, the correlation coefficient between the two estimates is 0.88. For more years than not during the chronology the final published estimate is higher than the initial unpublished version, and always higher from 1905-14, and in general the amplitude of yearly fluctuations of the published estimate is smaller than the one observed in the original unpublished calculation. There are occasional discontinuities between the two estimates in the direction of the long-term trend. For example, there is a fall in the unpublished trend in 1874/5 but a rise in the published trend in the same years, a rise in the unpublished in 1894 but a fall in the published. There are other discontinuities, but in general both estimates tell the same story. There was a rise in the value of output to the mid-1870s, a savage fall to the mid-1890s and then a substantial recovery towards the Great War. This is not an unfamiliar tale.

How do these series compare with other estimates? Our comparison is necessarily limited. In 1912, in fulfilment of the Census of Production Act of 1906, there was published a report of *The Agricultural Output of Great Britain* based on the single year 1908. This employed a definition of output with which we are familiar – sales off farm and farmers' own consumption – but it was an assessment which was conducted separately for Britain and Ireland.¹⁹ Here we combine the two in the reasonable expectation that they were conducted in like manner. In addition, we can compare the Bellerby estimates with those produced by Ojala for groups of years, and also compare them with Fletcher's reworking of Ojala where he (Fletcher)

¹⁶ Bellerby MSS, Institute of Agricultural History, Museum of English Rural Life, Reading University, D/84/8/1-24, especially 17.

¹⁷ Bellerby, 'The Distribution of Farm Income', p 279.

¹⁸ In what turned out to be an unsuccessful attempt to trace the possible disaggregation of data according to country I have corresponded with a number of scholars who worked at the Agricultural Economics Research Institute at Oxford. My thanks to Dr E M Ojala in retirement in New Zealand, Emeritus Professor D K Britton who with K E Hunt was responsible for constructing, independently, gross output estimates for the period 1900-38, and also to Professor G H Peters of the International Development Centre of Oxford University.

¹⁹ Department of Agriculture and Technical Instruction for Ireland, *The Agricultural Output of Ireland, 1908*, HMSO, 1912, passim; and Board of Agriculture and Fisheries, *The Agricultural Output of Great Britain*, Cd 6277, 1912, especially p 25.

TABLE I
Different Estimates of Agricultural Output for the United Kingdom, 1867/69, 1870/76,
1894/1903 and 1908

	Crops	Animals	Total (All in £s Million)	Crops	Animals	Total
Source		1867-69			1870-76	
Ojala	104.2	125.7	229.8	95.0	152.2	247.2
Fletcher	104.2	126.8	230.9	95.0	154.9	249.9
Bellerby 1	103.0	105.5	208.4	93.2	119.9	213.0
Bellerby 2	103.0	117.8	220.7	93.2	132.4	225.5
		1894-1903			1908	
Ojala	49.8	133.0	182.8			
Fletcher	62.0	146.2	208.1			
Bellerby 1	64.0	113.1	177.1	57.9	128.3	186.2
Bellerby 2	64.0	124.4	188.4	57.9	141.1	199.0
Census of Production				58.3	138.1	196.4
Percent Differences		1867/9 to 1894/1903			1870/6 to 1894/1903	
Ojala	-52.2	5.8	-20.5	-47.6	-12.6	-26.1
Fletcher	-40.5	15.3	-9.9	-34.7	-5.6	-16.7
Bellerby 1	-37.9	7.2	-15.0	-31.3	-5.7	-16.9
Bellerby 2	-37.9	5.6	-14.6	-31.3	-6.0	-16.5

Note: Differences between Bellerby 1 and 2 explained in text.

Sources: E M Ojala, *Agriculture and Economic Progress*, Oxford, 1952, p 208;

T W Fletcher, 'The Great Depression of English Agriculture 1873-1896', reprinted in W E Minchinton, ed, *Essays in Agrarian History*, Volume II, Newton Abbot, 1968, p 256;

Bellerby Mss., D/84/8/17 and 24, and estimates described in this article;

Board of Agriculture and Fisheries, *The Agricultural Output of Great Britain*, Cd. 6277, 1912, p 25, and Department of Agriculture and Technical Instruction for Ireland, *The Agricultural Output of Ireland*, 1912, p 5.

made certain adjustments to the price material. The grouping of the years is determined by Ojala because there are no other annual series except those estimated by Bellerby and produced here. The comparisons are presented in Table I.

The differences between the two Bellerby estimates arises because he made two kinds of adjustments to his initial estimate. Originally it was priced at market prices or wholesale prices (Bellerby 1), but that which was farmer's own self-supplies, he said, should have been valued at rural retail prices. An adjustment to accommodate this necessarily raises the value of gross output. In addition he made adjustments for inventory changes.²⁰ In the main these two adjustments affected

animal products more than others (inventory changes were entirely calculated on the basis of livestock changes) and without precise guidance as to the distribution of these adjustments we have added them entirely to the animals sector. From Table I we see that the value of these adjustments was quite large (Bellerby 2), but certainly that proportion which was derived by revaluing farmers' own consumption are based on 'only very scanty data', and statistical manipulation thereafter. We may shy away from these estimates for their imprecision, but it has to be said that in the main other researchers have not always paid as much attention to detail as Bellerby clearly did.

Referring back to Table I we see for the 1860s a near perfect agreement between the various authorities on the size of crop output, a near perfect agreement

²⁰ See Bellerby MSS D84/8/17, pp 119-22 and 110-111 and also Bellerby, 'The Distribution of Farm Income', p 276; see also Feinstein, *National Income*, pp 40-41, who revalued farmers' own supplies back in terms of market prices.

between Ojala and Fletcher on animal output, but a smaller estimate from Bellerby on the size of the animal contribution. For the 1870s the crop estimates pretty well remain in agreement but the difference between Ojala/Fletcher and Bellerby over the size of the animal contribution widens. For Ojala the animal contribution increased by 21 per cent but for Bellerby the increase was only 12 per cent. For the turn of the century the separate estimates from Fletcher and Bellerby are very close in terms of the contribution of crops, and for animals Ojala and Bellerby 2 are not so very different. In all cases, in total output terms, Bellerby could not be accused of exaggeration. Finally, we can make a comparison with the estimates of the first Census of Production for the single year 1908. In this case we have aggregated the appropriate figures from two reports, the independently constructed estimates for Ireland and Great Britain.²¹ Bellerby should have been pleased and encouraged to see such a closeness of fit between his estimates and the official ones, but if he was, he made no mention of it in his writings.

We can make one other comparison. Working independently Peter Dewey and I (hereafter Turner) have also estimated agricultural output. In Dewey's case it was the annual average of 1909-13 for Great Britain, and for Turner it was for Ireland annually from 1850-1914.²² From Turner's estimates of Ireland and from Bellerby for the UK it is possible to rework output on annual averages for the years 1909-13 thus to conform with Dewey. Thus it should be possible to add Dewey and Turner to equal Bellerby. If we do this without any further adjustments we find the following:

	Crops (in £s Million)	Animals	Total
UK - Dewey plus Turner	69.0	145.0	214.0
UK - Bellerby 1	63.4	132.8	196.2
UK - Bellerby 2	63.4	141.7	205.1

In this case the difference between Bellerby 2 and Dewey and Turner combined is just four per cent for total output, with the difference between the crop estimates twice this size and for animals half this size. By casual statistical fit we have a close tolerance between these estimates. This may not be the correct comparison to make because neither Dewey or Turner adjusted the price paid for farmers' own consumption, and Dewey omitted farmers' own consumption altogether.²³ In addition, these three authorities did not all include the same products in their estimates. For example, Turner omitted some minor crops altogether. If we correct for some of these differences, and therefore as nearly as it is possible compare like with like, we find the following, and a difference of 6.5 per cent between the two estimates;

	Crops (in £s Million)	Animals	Total
UK - Dewey plus Turner	57.1	142.2	199.3
UK - Bellerby	48.5	138.6	187.1

On the one hand we may conclude that there are no reasonable estimates which we can use, but on the other we should face up to the fact that a completely fresh approach to the problem of estimating output will be no guarantee of better results; the same problems and essentially the same data would confront researchers. In addition, the reasons why economists and historians attempt to estimate output in the first place can be different. In Fletcher's case he was keen to revise Ojala. He did this for two reasons: simply for

²¹ cf note 19.

²² M E Turner, *After the Famine: Agricultural Structure, Output and Performance*, (Forthcoming), Chapters 4 and 5, and Dewey, *British Agriculture* p 247.

²³ *Ibid*, Appendix C, p 246.

the sake of it, which he does successfully in an upwards direction for the estimates at the end of century; but also because he had an eye on the nature and depth of the late nineteenth-century depression. He necessarily moderated the depth of that depression in his revisions, but he brought out clearly the bifurcation of the agricultural economy into the crop and livestock sectors where the suffering of the grain producers was a gain to the livestock farmers. This pointed to the complexity rather than the simplicity of the agrarian economy, and he clarified the language of unremitting depression which was in play in the literature.

Referring back to Table I, we see from Ojala's estimates that output fell by over 20 per cent from 1867/9 to 1894/1903, though according to Fletcher this was more modestly estimated at 10 per cent. He (Fletcher) was unhappy with 1867-9 as a base starting point since the peak of output was reckoned to be in the early 1870s.²⁴ In general, the estimates in Figure 1 agree with that. When Fletcher adjusted the base to 1870/76 his and Ojala's estimates necessarily increased the size of the base and therefore increased the size of the subsequent decline in output. All authorities accept the view that there was a decline, but from the Bellerby estimates we generally see a smaller decline. Fletcher achieves one of his principal objectives of moderating the depth of the depression for animal output, or even increasing that animal output according to which set of base years is employed. In a separate estimate for England alone Fletcher adjusted the two end periods to the annual averages of 1867/71 and 1894/8 and this resulted in a fall of 37 per cent in crop output, but a 10 per cent increase in animal output, and a final, relatively modest decrease of 13 per cent in total output. If we perform the same adjustments to the Bellerby esti-

mates we find that UK crop output decreased by 36 per cent, animal output declined by only 3 per cent, and total output declined by 18 per cent.

From these calculations and from certain of those in Table I we can certainly identify or confirm what F M L Thompson calls the 'Fletcher effect', though we are unable to turn the corner fully and see an actual improvement in the value of output of the animal sector.²⁵ This Fletcher effect can be seen as both a moderation in the extent, meaning depth, of the Great Depression, and also as an actual improvement in the fortunes of the livestock sector. Fletcher demonstrated it nationally in the calculations we have quoted, and he found a regional expression for it in Lancashire.²⁶ From independent calculations for England alone Thompson has demonstrated it on a wider basis, employing a county by county calculation of total output for the years 1873 and 1911. At the national level he found a 25 per cent decrease in total output from 1873-1911, within which the counties of Lancashire and Cheshire actually experienced increases in output and 10 other counties performed better than the national average. This was measured in current price terms. In constant (1911) price terms there was no change in the national output over the period 1873-1911 but now including seventeen counties where output actually improved. While we do not perform the same calculations in this article, nevertheless we will return to this point later and measure the 'real' movement in the value of agricultural output, but by a different method.

²⁴ Fletcher, *The Great Depression*, passim.

²⁵ F M L Thompson, 'An Anatomy of English Agriculture, 1870-1914', Chapter 11 of B A Holderness and M E Turner, eds, *Land, Labour and Agriculture, 1700-1920: Essays for Gordon Mingay*, 1991, pp 211-40.

²⁶ T W Fletcher, 'Lancashire Livestock Farming during the Great Depression', reprinted in P J Perry, ed, *British Agriculture 1875-1914*, 1973, pp 77-108.

III

Within the Bellerby manuscripts along with the meticulous calculations of output there exists, *pari passu*, the price material which went into the construction of the output series. As we have indicated already, the collation of the price material may sound a few notes of caution and criticism. In the main he used official product price series which exist from 1906, spliced to the Sauerbeck product price series before this date. The main weaknesses in his estimates, fortunately, involve those products which in weighting terms have the least influence over the composite price index. His estimate of the vegetable output was the most unreliable of all the estimates, derived as it was from an official vegetable price series from 1906 to 1938 spliced to an index of imported fruit(?) prices, which in turn was based on imported apple prices from 1882 to 1905, and imported orange and lemon prices from 1867 to 1881.²⁷

If Dewey's estimates for GB which we presented earlier are a better guide to the contribution of vegetables then we can certainly sound a note of caution. According to Dewey, for GB, the contribution of vegetables amounted to an annual average of £3.6 million for 1909-13 (peas, beans and cabbages) but for the UK from Bellerby they amounted to £7.5 million (for the same and a number of additional vegetables). Turner's estimates of Ireland, in keeping with other historians of that country, assumed that all vegetables, or rather non-garden root and green crops, were recycled as animal fodder and made their contribution to output through livestock. At the most, historians have assigned an arbitrary five per cent mark-up of all arable output to represent marketed vegetables. Table 2, for three specific years, demonstrates that at well under five per cent of output they are not an import-

ant feature of the agricultural economy (except as fodder) and their omission is not significant.²⁸ For several marginal products there were no price series available. These included rabbits and flowers. Bellerby made the assumption that they represented a constant proportion of total output. These 'other' products have been omitted from the remaining exercise and the gross output adjusted downwards accordingly.²⁹

Thus from the Bellerby manuscripts we can construct Table 2, the distribution of gross output for the three years 1870, 1895 and 1910. These distributions now form the weights to be attached to the individual product price series in the construction of a composite price series. Without necessarily being the precise years, these represent the essential features of the changing UK agricultural industry: near the end of 'High Farming'; at the bottom of the Depression; and on the eve of the Great War after a period of recovery. In product-comparative terms, the most dramatic change in UK agriculture was the demise of the corn sector, particularly wheat, but also barley. Conversely, there was the rise in the contribution of certain animal products, in particular cattle throughout the period, pigs during the depression, and milk and milk products after the depression. Crops represented one half of UK output in 1870 but only one third by 1910.

In Table 2 we also compare the product distributions derived from Bellerby for the UK with those we have derived by combining Dewey's GB estimates with Turner's Irish estimates. As explained earlier, there has necessarily been some adjustments of all three estimates to allow a

²⁷ Bellerby MSS D84/8/17, pp 37-8.

²⁸ Ojala faced similar problems with his estimate of vegetables, *Agriculture and Economic Progress*, pp 201-2, and these must be problems common to other estimators.

²⁹ It is a frequently used device to have what is often a vague allowance for 'other' crops and animals, often as a modest 5 per cent or so mark up of output. This is intended to account for items where data is incomplete or simply not available.

TABLE 2
Product Distribution in UK Agriculture

	1870 (1)	1895 (2)	1910 (3) (In Percentages)	1909/13 (4)	1909/13 (5)
<i>Crops</i>					
Wheat	12.7	2.3	4.5	5.2	4.0
Barley	7.9	4.5	3.5	4.1	2.5
Oats	4.3	3.5	3.7	4.1	3.5
Rye	0.01	0.01	0.01		
Potatoes	7.3	7.2	4.7	5.7	7.1
Hay	6.2	9.4	7.6	9.2	11.5
Straw	4.6	2.5	2.0		
Vegetables	1.6	3.0	3.6		
Fruit	0.5	1.7	3.0		
Hops	1.2	1.2	0.9		
Flax	0.9	0.2	0.2		
	47.2	35.5	33.7	28.3	28.6
<i>Livestock</i>					
Cattle	10.9	13.8	17.0	17.4	20.2
Sheep	6.3	6.9	7.1	7.3	12.2
Wool	4.1	3.4	2.8	2.9	2.9
Pigs	8.1	13.9	4.4	8.5	11.4
Milk and its products	19.2	19.4	26.4	28.0	18.0
Eggs	2.0	3.7	5.0	7.5	6.7
Poultry	0.7	1.3	2.0		
Horses	1.5	2.1	1.8		
	52.8	64.5	66.5	71.6	71.4

Subject to rounding errors.

Sources: Columns 1, 2, 3, and 4 derived from Bellerby Mss, Institute of Agricultural History, Museum of English Rural Life, Reading University, D/84/8/17 and 24.

Column 5, the addition of Irish estimates and estimates for Great Britain, derived from M E Turner, *After the Famine* Chapter 5, and P E Dewey, *British Agriculture* p 247.

precise comparison. The lower valued products have been omitted thus properly leaving those products which have the largest influence on the final composite price index. The main differences concern the sheep and milk products, especially the milk products. There is no sensible reason for this. As it happens, comparisons with the work of all other estimators who give product differentiation reveal other differences. It is perhaps fortuitous that these differences often cancel one another to some degree to produce the kinds of

reasonably close comparisons we have identified so far.

The index we produce from this data is reported in Table 3. We use price relatives for our products based on 1867-77 thus conforming with Bellerby's original estimates, and incidentally, and probably not accidentally, the same base as the Sauerbeck-Statist series.³⁰ We report Bellerby's original index alongside four new versions. In one case we use the 1870

³⁰ Mitchell, *Abstract*, pp 474-5.

TABLE 3
United Kingdom Agricultural Price Indexes, 1867-1914

Year	Yearly Weights (In all cases 1867-77=100)	1870 Weights	1895 Weights	1910 Weights	BELLERBY Index
1867	99.1	98.9	95.7	95.9	97.1
1868	101.3	99.4	95.6	96.7	93.7
1869	95.8	95.7	96.6	96.2	93.2
1870	93.1	93.1	94.4	94.0	94.8
1871	98.8	97.3	97.1	97.5	99.6
1872	102.4	100.9	100.5	100.5	103.3
1873	109.1	107.4	107.4	106.9	108.3
1874	104.6	104.0	104.1	104.3	100.1
1875	103.1	101.8	104.9	104.9	103.6
1876	101.0	100.1	103.0	101.5	102.9
1877	101.4	101.4	101.1	101.5	100.3
1878	99.0	97.5	98.9	98.0	94.0
1879	90.5	89.2	91.0	89.6	89.0
1880	95.5	94.2	96.9	95.3	91.9
1881	92.1	90.4	92.8	92.5	91.2
1882	96.1	93.6	96.4	96.3	92.0
1883	92.6	89.8	92.6	92.3	88.5
1884	87.3	84.3	88.3	88.7	83.7
1885	83.5	79.4	83.4	83.2	78.6
1886	80.9	77.2	81.3	80.4	77.4
1887	77.4	74.7	78.2	78.0	73.8
1888	79.9	76.5	79.8	80.0	75.1
1889	80.2	76.4	80.6	80.2	76.2
1890	81.0	77.2	80.4	80.1	76.2
1891	81.6	79.5	82.0	82.6	75.7
1892	81.5	77.0	81.8	81.2	75.8
1893	80.2	76.4	81.8	80.5	76.5
1894	79.0	72.5	78.2	77.7	73.0
1895	75.1	70.0	75.1	75.7	70.9
1896	71.9	68.0	71.7	73.0	68.6
1897	78.3	73.6	78.0	77.4	74.2
1898	81.2	76.9	80.6	79.4	70.9
1899	76.7	71.7	76.6	77.2	72.3
1900	81.9	76.0	81.5	81.6	76.5
1901	82.4	75.7	81.9	81.2	76.7
1902	87.6	78.8	85.1	85.0	78.3
1903	82.0	74.6	80.5	80.8	76.5
1904	80.4	75.1	79.6	79.9	75.2
1905	81.6	76.3	81.4	81.7	77.8
1906	85.6	78.2	84.7	85.5	80.9
1907	86.4	80.1	85.9	86.6	82.7
1908	82.9	76.3	81.0	83.1	79.6
1909	85.2	79.1	83.4	84.7	80.2
1910	87.5	80.2	87.2	87.4	83.1
1911	91.0	83.5	89.3	90.4	85.1
1912	96.3	89.6	95.3	96.1	89.8
1913	95.2	88.1	95.5	95.0	88.8
1914	94.9	85.9	92.2	93.6	94.8

Source: See Text.

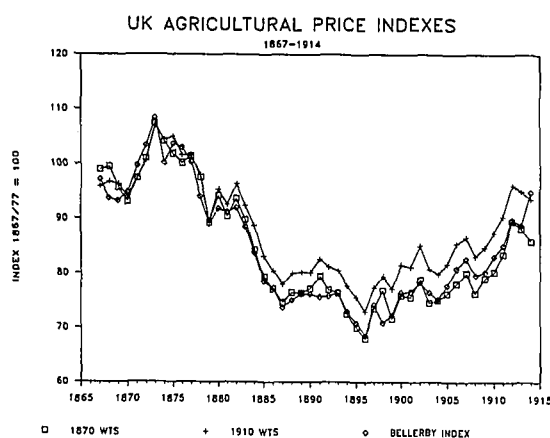


FIGURE 2

product weights, and in the others the product weights for 1895, 1910, and finally an index which uses annual product weights.³¹ The 1870 and 1910 versions, and the pre-existing Bellerby index are plotted in Figure 2.

IV

From Table 3 we see the essential difference between the weights for 1870 and 1910 as the product differentiation switched from crops to livestock. Yet those differences do not confuse an apparently straight-forward piece of history. This was essentially the decline in output we now call the Depression. The high point of Victorian price history is perfectly reproduced, as is the 1896 low point, followed by the recovery into Edwardian times. The choice of scales may exaggerate the trend but a more useful function of this price series is to use it in association with the estimates of the value of output. Referring back to Figure 1 and the general trend of output, this trend seems to be replicated in the price movements in Figure 2. But the eye can deceive. The general decline in the value of output

³¹ Such a method was originally employed in constructing my Irish series, on which occasion I expanded fully the equations which represent the various formulae, Turner, 'Towards an Agricultural Price Index', especially p 128.

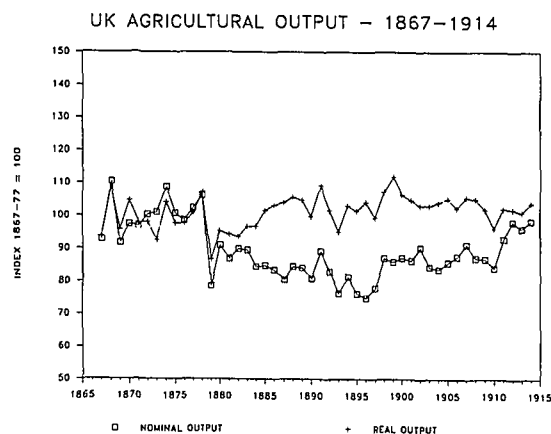


FIGURE 3

could have had at least two causes: an actual decline in the quantity produced or a decline in price; or indeed a combination of the two. On closer inspection we see that the real reason was a decline in prices.

Thus finally we use the price index as a deflator in association with the nominal output series. This is designed to adjust that output to test for price changes wholly within agriculture. What we produce is a real *volume* output series, as in Figure 3. Evidently there was a substantial downturn in nominal output from 1878/79 to 1895/6 (ignoring the upturn in 1891) – that is during the two decades of the Great Depression – but in real volume terms agriculture output actually increased, though with some reversal from 1888 to 1893. Conversely, after 1896 and the recovery in prices, while nominal output rose, the real volume of output continued to rise to 1899 but declined thereafter, or at best tended to level off. The recovery was a recovery of prices, but not necessarily an improvement of output in the agricultural industry.³²

There is some confirmation of these trends in earlier estimates. Leo Drescher's physical volume index produced in the 1930s, and calculated apparently by converting output into starch equivalents, cer-

³² See also the summary in Thompson, 'An Anatomy', pp 219-20.

tainly showed an almost continuous rise in livestock production from the late 1860s to 1914, but a somewhat erratic arable production index over the same period. In general, after smoothing the outstanding peaks and troughs in the arable index it trended downwards with an especially marked downturn in 1879. But there are serious doubts over both the completeness and the representativeness of the products Drescher included in his series.³³ O J Beilby's estimates of agricultural production for England and Wales based on calorific values showed an almost continuous rise in gross livestock production from 1885-1914, but a decline in crops from 1885-1904 before a small recovery in 1905-9 and then the resumption of decline.³⁴ This actually identifies what we have already shown with our changing product weights, the switch from arable production, or more accurately from grain production, to animal production.

We can improve on these historic measures and use the Bellerby material to construct separate price indexes for composite grain and composite animal production. The results are presented in Figures 4, 5, and 6. We have taken grain to mean wheat, barley and oats, and animal production to mean cattle, sheep, pigs, milk, wool, eggs and poultry. The products in the separate indexes represented about three-quarters of total output throughout the chronology. The major items excluded are potatoes and hay. In the sense that the depression is always characterized as a choice between the grains and certain (not necessarily all) livestock products we have captured the essence of that choice here.

Ignoring most short-term movements

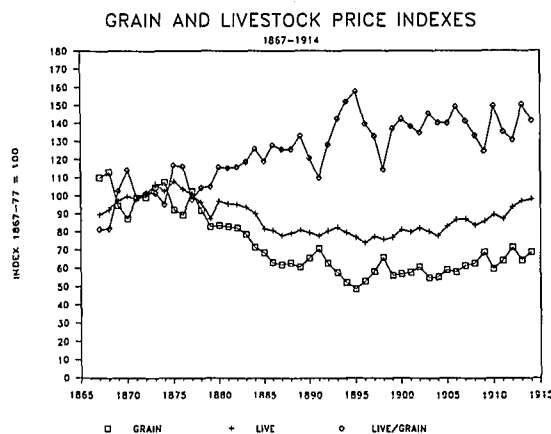


FIGURE 4

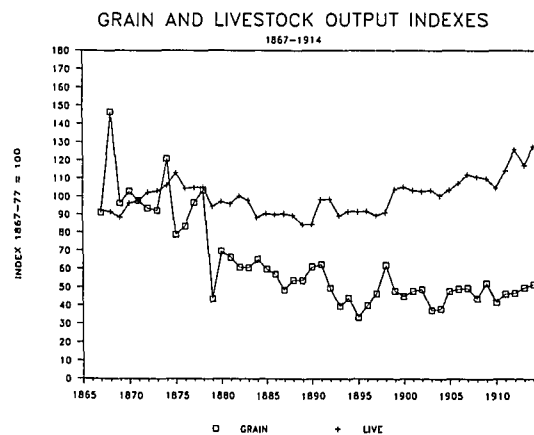


FIGURE 5

we see from Figure 4 the downturn in the two price indexes of both sectors of agriculture until the mid-1890s, but with a steeper trend for the grains. The resulting sectoral prices terms of trade therefore, in general, moved towards livestock farming. The main interruption in this trend was the see-saw motion from 1891-97, a motion which was provoked mainly by large fluctuations in grain prices. After the mid-decade, prices recovered. The reflection of this in nominal output terms is given in Figure 5. This shows (a) the steep decline in grain output down to the mid-1890s, with a marked fall at the end of the 1870s; and (b), when all the wrinkles are ironed out, the more or less flat output

³³ Originally published in German in 1935 and translated as L. Drescher, 'The Development of Agricultural Production in Great Britain and Ireland from the Early Nineteenth Century', *The Manchester School*, XXIII, 1955, pp 153-75, especially p 174, with a comment and critique by T W Fletcher, pp 176-83.

³⁴ O J Beilby, 'Changes in Agricultural Production in England and Wales', *JRASE*, 100, 1939, p 64 columns 2 and 4.

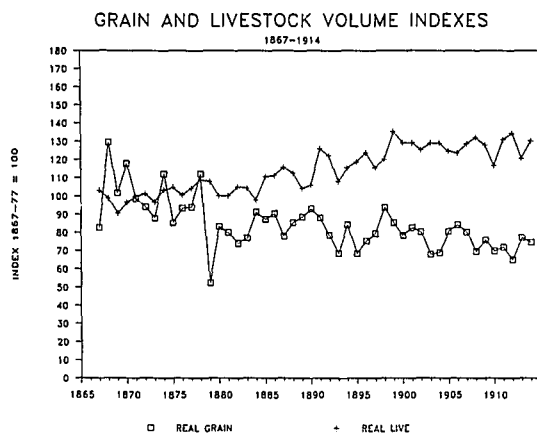


FIGURE 6

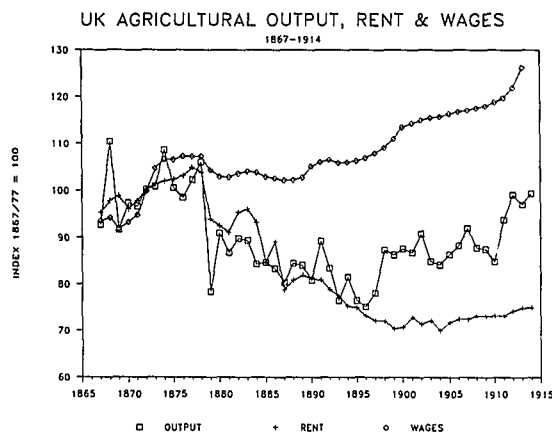


FIGURE 7

from livestock down to the mid-1890s. Thereafter both sectors of agriculture began to recover, the livestock output entirely, but the grains only marginally. We have in these two graphs the interaction of price effects on output. Figure 6 therefore is couched in real volume terms. If we ignore short-term movements we see the continuous expansion of livestock output, and conversely the decrease in grain output. Apart from short-term breaks there are now no obvious turning points in the trend apart from the massive and infamous decline in the fortunes of grain production in 1879. In the sense that last year's price history encourages this year's farming responses, more correctly we should introduce lagging effects into the analysis. This may more appropriately be a lag of two or more years. Given the overall history of the period and the clear switch from grain to animal production, such lagging adjustments, in fact, tell the same tale as we have identified, and point more to a long-term general movement than to short-term temporary changes.

The depression was real enough however, with clear regional implications for farming profits.³⁵ The equation which faced late nineteenth-century farmers, and

grain farmers in particular, was couched in terms of the decline in the value of their output relative to the movements in wages and rents. The history of rent arrears and abatements associated with the depression is well documented at the individual estate level.³⁶ The problem is easily demonstrated if we compare the new nominal agricultural output series with recently constructed nominal rent and wages series, as in Figure 7.³⁷ Wages more or less rose throughout the period, and while both rents and output fell down to the mid 1890s, the output fell more than rents down to the mid-1880s (this is more obvious if we smooth the series, even if only a three-year smooth). After the mid-1890s output rose but rents only modestly recovered. It seems strange that the recov-

³⁵ We have already alluded to this from evidence in Thompson, 'An Anatomy'.

³⁶ For example see R Perren, 'The Effects of Agricultural Depression on the English Estates of the Dukes of Sutherland, 1870-1900', PhD Nottingham University, 1967, especially pp 291-4, 298-301; G Rogers, 'Social and Economic Change on Lancashire Landed Estates during the Nineteenth Century with Special Reference to the Clifton Estate', PhD Lancaster University, 1981, p 390; D B Grigg, 'A Note on Agricultural Rent and Expenditure in Nineteenth Century England', *Ag Hist* 39, 1965, pp 147-54. See also 'Royal Commission on Agriculture 1893-6', BPP, C 8125, 1896.

³⁷ The rent index is a new composite UK index collated in association with Volume VII of the *Agrarian History*. The wages index is a splice of a UK index for 1880-1913 from the '17th Abstract of Labour Statistics', Volume LXI, BPP, Cd 7733, 1916, in conjunction with an England and Wales only index from G H Wood's unpublished *Rates of Wages and Hours of Labour in Various Industries in the UK for a Series of Years, 1907*, and kept in the library of the Royal Statistical Society, University College London.

ery in output which accrued to the farmers was not at least partially or more immediately enjoyed by the landlords as well.³⁸ At any rate, by this stage the damaging effects of relatively rising costs had helped to reshape British agriculture towards animal products, in particular towards milk and other dairy products.

³⁸ My thanks to Professor Patrick O'Brien for drawing my attention to the divergence of the output and rent series after the mid-1890s. The rent index employed here is new, but nevertheless it is heavily influenced by east of England estates. R J Thompson is an important source in constructing this index with his clear concentration on the eastern counties from Lincolnshire to Bedfordshire, 'An Enquiry into the Rent of Agricultural Land in England and Wales in England During the Nineteenth Century', originally published 1907, now reprinted in Minchinton, *Essays*, pp 57-86. Thompson was incorporated into H A Rhee's new rent index of 1946. Although he added to the Thompson index, Rhee's index was still dominated by Thompson. H A Rhee, *The Rent of Agricultural Land in England and Wales*, Central Landowners Association, 1946. The conclusion remains that the index is heavily weighted by the rents of the eastern corn-growing counties. See also Fletcher, 'The Great Depression', p 245n. The wage and output series, in contrast, are based on national estimates. The ESRC is supporting a project for B Afton, J V Beckett and M E Turner to construct a wholly new rent index. This will be more representative, geographically and agriculturally, of English, though not British or UK agriculture. It may yet lead to the revision of the divergent movement of output and rent after the mid-1890s. See A Offer, *The First World War: an Agrarian Interpretation*, Oxford, 1989, p 116 for the standard distribution of wages, rent and farm income, which in turn is based on Feinstein, *National Income*, table 23, p 160. Farm income is not the same as output, but the problem associated with the representativeness of the rent index still applies.

V

In conclusion we can make several important points. A more in-depth inquiry into agricultural output and price movements in the late nineteenth century more clearly exposes the sound logic of the British agricultural industry in adjusting its strategy away from grains and into livestock. Secondly, although there are clear enough turning points in the chronology of price movements it is perhaps too easy for us to adopt those turning point as an interpretation of agricultural production. The construction of a composite price index allows us to use that index as a deflator and assess the impact of price changes on the volume of agricultural output. In large measure the turning points disappear, grain output rhythmically decreased from the late 1860s while livestock output increased (Figure 6). The notion of a national depression is not entirely discredited by these findings, but it requires more sophisticated language than that which we have inherited largely unchanged from the Royal Commissions of the 1890s.

'Bab'ye Khozyaystvo': Poultry-Keeping and its Contribution to Peasant Income in pre-1914 Russia

By STUART THOMPSTONE

Abstract

Recent scholarship has cast doubt on the traditional view that the Russian peasantry experienced increasing impoverishment at the end of the nineteenth century. The extent to which the commune system was a major inhibitor of agricultural progress has also been questioned. By exploring the expansion of poultry keeping, traditionally the preserve of female peasants, this article suggests that in those provinces where the pressures on peasant living standards were most acute, poultry keeping was a buoyant source of on-farm income, which from the 1880s helped to maintain and even improve living standards at a time when peasant earnings from mainstream agricultural activity were experiencing downwards pressure. Despite their alleged conservatism Russian peasants demonstrated a marked awareness of the benefits of improved poultry strains, taking advantage of the greater availability of pedigree birds. Railway development enabled poultry products to make a significant contribution to Russia's export trade.

THE traditional view that the Russian peasantry experienced increasing impoverishment towards the end of the nineteenth century has been challenged in recent years by a number of western scholars and most notably by Professor James Simms. By pointing out that the increase in revenue from direct taxation increased more rapidly than the rate of duty on consumer goods he has sought to demonstrate a rise in per capita peasant consumption. The established pessimistic view has rested heavily on contemporary literary evidence, though not entirely so. It was given much force, for example by Alexander Gerschenkron's interpretation of the relative movement of population and grain production over the period 1870-1874/1896-1900 but, as Stephen Wheatcroft has shown, if the quinquennial base is moved one year either way to include a more typical bad harvest, then the per capita level of grain production net of exports equals or exceeds the rate of population increase.¹ So far the

Russian debate has been focused on the movement in consumption rather than earnings. This is very much to be expected. Satisfactory data on peasant earnings before 1914 are simply not available. The frequency with which male peasants, and indeed female peasants too, moved between work on their holdings and employment as industrial or agricultural workers or in another capacity makes computation of peasant income extremely problematic. What is clear, however, is that non-agricultural forms of employment were dominated by peasants from the Northern half of European Russia. Peasants in the provinces to the South of Moscow had to rely far more on sup-

of 1891: Soil Exhaustion, Technological Backwardness and Russia's Agrarian Crisis,' *Slav Rev.* 1982/2. For a useful summary of the views of Simm's critics see H Rogger, *Russia in the Age of Modernisation and Revolution, 1881-1917*, London and New York, 1983, pp 87-88 and J T Saunders, 'Once more into the Breach Dear Friends', *Slav Rev.* 1984/4. A Gerschenkron's analysis is in the *Cambridge Economic History of Europe*, VI, Pt 2, p 778 and S Wheatcroft's critique in E Kingston-Mann and T Mixter, *Peasant Economy, Culture, and Politics of European Russia, 1800-1921*, Princeton, NJ, 1991. For those acquainted with the standard of living debate in the history of the British working class in the first half of the nineteenth century this Russian debate might well evoke feelings of *déjà vu*.

¹ J Y Simms, jnr, 'The Crisis of Russian Agriculture at the End of the 19th Century,' *Slavic Review*, 1977/3 and 'The Crop Failure

plementing their incomes through seasonal work as agricultural labourers. And since a large proportion of Russia's agricultural producers were net consumers of grain, entry into the labour market or the selling of non-grain agricultural produce was vital to their economic well being.

Rose Glickman's recent study of Russian peasant women has emphasized their economic contribution to family income and the growth in that contribution as Russia's late nineteenth-century industrialization process disproportionately attracted male peasants into wage-earning activity off the land. Peasant women needed to earn money too but their relative lack of mobility arising from their child rearing responsibilities required them to combine their domestic duties with agriculture and other rural based economic activity. On the basis of local government (*zemstvo*) reports Glickman has drawn attention to the wide range of income sources available to peasant women throughout the Russian Empire. Missing from her study, however, is any consideration of poultry keeping's contribution to peasant income.²

It is contended below that this sector of Russian agriculture, which was extremely marginal until the 1880s, subsequently achieved such dynamic growth as to make a significant contribution to peasant living standards in those provinces favourable to its development. Furthermore, its expansion in the 1890s in parts of the Central Agricultural Region, the South-West and the Volga Region was arguably such as to require a minor qualification of the view that 'the poverty of the Russian market and the agrarian system within which the farmer was producing prevented any widespread diversification ...'.³ This traditional branch

of female peasant activity, of 'Bab'ye Khozyaystvo', was by the end of the nineteenth century beginning to acquire a commercial character. Many shortcomings still remained in 1914 but there is no gainsaying the buoyant contribution this subsidiary sector of Russian agriculture was making to Russia's foreign exchange earnings.

I

Until 1876 egg exporting had been carried out on a casual basis but thereafter as the journal *Promyshlennost' i Torgovlya* put it in 1911:

'Poultry from being the "baby" of our agriculture has become one of its largest sectors and a very important staple in our export trade'.⁴

Only oil could match the rate of increase that egg exports achieved in the last quarter of the nineteenth century. And between 1900 and 1913 the value of poultry products exported by Russia was equivalent to over one-third of the value of Russia's wheat exports. In years when wheat exports were low this could rise to 50 and even 58 per cent. It thereby acted as a useful cushion to depressed income from grain cultivation (See Table 1). And given that poultry keeping was much more associated with peasant farming than with estate farming and that the domestic market for poultry products was expanding rapidly by the end of the nineteenth century, the relative significance of poultry keeping to peasant earnings suggested by foreign trade statistics was arguably greater.

For the Russian authorities exports of poultry products were welcomed because they lessened dependence on grain and unlike grain exports they did not fluctuate wildly from year to year. Instead they largely followed a steady upwards trend

² R Glickman, 'Peasant Women and their Work', in B Eklof and S Frank, eds, *The World of the Russian Peasant: Post Emancipation Culture and Society*, 1990, pp 45-63.

³ M E Falkus, 'Russia and the International Wheat Trade, 1861-1914', *Economica*, Nov, 1968.

⁴ *Promyshlennost' i Torgovlya*, (Industry and Trade), June, 1911, No 11.

TABLE I
Russian Exports of Poultry Products, 1872-1914
 (Current Prices in Thousands of Roubles)

Year	(1) Eggs	(2) Live and Dead Poultry*	(3) Total of 1 + 2	Proportion of 3 in Total Exports %	Total as a Proportion of the Value of Wheat Exports %
1872	728	291	1019	0.3	1
1880	948	863	1811	0.3	2
1884	3076	1674	4751	0.8	4
1887	8153	3452	11,605	1.9	8
1898	31,486	7850	39,336	5.4	20
1899	28,829	7899	36,728	5.9	34
1900	31,545	8656	40,202	5.6	39
1901	35,544	9497	45,041	5.9	37
1902	38,804	8999	47,803	5.6	29
1903	51,330	9923	61,253	6.1	28
1904	54,475	9460	63,935	6.4	25
1905	61,070	9546	70,616	6.6	25
1906	56,329	10,867	67,195	6.1	32
1907	53,311	9966	63,278	6.0	41
1908	54,896	10,885	65,781	6.6	58
1909	62,277	12,146	74,422	5.2	19
1910	63,724	13,907	77,632	5.4	19
1911	80,794	14,071	94,865	6.0	37
1912	84,709	14,260	98,969	6.5	51
1913	90,707	16,023	106,730	7.0	47

* Includes feathers and down

Source: *Obzor Vneshney Torgovli*, (St Petersburg, Dept of Customs Collection, annually for appropriate years)

to become in the early twentieth century the Russian Empire's fourth or fifth largest export earner. Their role in converting low value grain into a high value export staple was deemed to be most important. Speaking in the early 1900s about the Russian livestock sector in general, one expert opined that:

'Perhaps the time is not far off when we shall not deliver wheat and rye to the international market but eggs and Siberian butter ...'.⁵

Certainly the provinces most closely associated with poultry production were for the most part either those, where the grain export market was believed to be

under most threat, or where in the late nineteenth century pressure on peasant living standards was considered to be most acute. The small but growing contribution of poultry keeping to peasant income from the 1880s onwards arguably helped to maintain or even improve living standards at a time when peasant earnings from some other sources were experiencing downwards pressure. Indeed, the poorer the peasant family, the higher was the proportion of income likely to come from poultry keeping.⁶ This suggests too that poultry keeping could operate as a risk-minimization strategy, pursued by the

⁵ A Bakhtiarov, 'Yaichnaya i Maslyanaya Birzha v Peterburge,' *Sel'skoye Khozyaystvo i Lesovodstvo*, ('The Egg and Butter Exchange in St Petersburg,' Agriculture and Forestry), 1907/4, p 75.

⁶ S P Urusov, 'Isledovaniye Sovremennogo Ptitsvodstva v Srednom Rayone Yevropeyskoy Rossii,' (Research into contemporary poultry keeping in the central region of European Russia), *Sel'skoye Khozyaystvo i Lesovodstvo*, 1896/11, p 609.

more economically vulnerable households. In Russia poultry farms were a rarity for most of the nineteenth century but for peasant households poultry breeding had long provided an important food source. With the exception of the extreme North virtually every peasant household kept a few hens and as the saying went: 'Without ten hens a peasant is not a farmer'.⁷

It was an activity that involved little effort and almost everywhere poultry was left to forage for itself. Only on rare occasions did owners feed their poultry and with low quality grain waste at that. In some areas peasants would even use horse manure as a constituent of poultry feed. As poultry keeping became more lucrative peasants in areas, where there was a plentiful supply of cheap grain, increased the productivity of their birds by giving them a more wholesome diet. But it was only at the end of the century that any serious attention was given to promoting the use of improved breeds that might better serve the growing domestic and international market. Hitherto peasants had kept mainly non-pedigree hens, and to a lesser extent ducks, geese and more rarely turkeys.⁸ Russian geese breeds, it might be added, were of a reasonable standard. The most widespread breed, the Fighting Goose, was characterized by its prolific breeding and the quality of its flesh. Ribbon Geese common in the southern provinces and Courland Geese, which were widespread in the Baltic region, were noted for their size and fleshiness. Ducks, which were bred in fairly large numbers, were usually of no distinct breed.⁹

Until 1861 those poultry farms which

did exist in Russia were more concerned with breeding birds for show and for cock fighting than they were with improving their commercial qualities. Then with the Emancipation of the Peasantry poultry breeding changed its character. With the end of free peasant labour many poultry farms which had been kept for the interests of the Lord rather than for economic purposes ceased to exist and those that remained were concentrated in the metropolitan provinces.¹⁰ Even so the exotic imported varieties bred by such farms for their decorative rather than their commercial qualities were superior to local breeds and they helped to improve the quality of local stock. Birds whose strain was not quite pure or whose features did not satisfy the high demands of fanciers would be sold off in the markets of the two capitals at prices well within the reach of small poultry breeders. From these pedigree birds there appeared numerous crossbreeds with far higher productivity than the non-pedigree birds previously associated with peasant agriculture. Furthermore, their eggs and meat fetched comparatively higher prices.¹¹

II

Until quite late into the nineteenth century the virtual absence of a domestic market for poultry products and the near impossibility of tapping the international market prior to the improved communications that railway development brought to Russia meant poultry keeping was initially slow to develop commercially. Nevertheless, it was able to benefit ultimately from the heightened interest in improving Russian poultry strains that is

⁷ S P Urusov, 'Ptitsyevodstvo v Rayone Povol'zhya,' (Poultry keeping in the Volga region), *Sel'skoye Khozyaystvo i Lesovodstvo*, 1897/4, p 27.

⁸ Peasants kept mainly non-pedigree fowl plus ducks, geese and more rarely turkeys.

⁹ V Morachevsky in J N Lodijensky, ed, *Russia: Its Industries and Trade*, Glasgow International Exhibition, 1901, p 244.

¹⁰ V S Gulishamberov, *Mezhdunarodnaya Torgovlya Ptitsy i Ptich'imi Produktami* (The international trade in poultry and poultry products), St Petersburg, 1899, p 5.

¹¹ Urusov, 1896/11, *op cit*, p 610. The 'Boytsov' breed came to Russia from England, reputedly sent there by Lord Derby. It was most likely to have been the Old English Game variety.

discernible from the 1880s.¹² The Moscow Poultry Society was established in 1880, to be followed in 1885 by the Russian Poultry Society; in 1886 by the Riga Poultry Society; the Kazan and Kiev Societies in 1891; and in 1897 the South Russian Poultry Society.¹³ But it was the establishment in 1896 of the All-Russian Society of Poultry Farming, which was the most important landmark, since previous societies had not been primarily concerned with the promotion of commercial breeds. By the following year the society had forty branches and it contained within its ranks local people who were familiar with peasant poultry breeding.¹⁴ Paralleling this Society's educational role there were by the mid-1890s a number of commercial poultry breeders, mainly concentrated in the St Petersburg and Moscow regions and in the Baltic provinces, able to supply a wide variety of foreign pedigree birds. Such breeders sought to sell their output throughout the Russian Empire.¹⁵ The most widely available breeds were, as might be expected, dual-purpose varieties such as Cochins, Brahmas, Langshans, Wyandottes and Plymouth Rocks. Layers such as Hamburgs, 'Italians' [Paduas?], 'Spanish' [Andalusians and Minorcas?] and English Red Caps were also on offer, as were table birds such as Dorkings.¹⁶ But how far wide availability reflected popularity is uncertain. In the Moscow region, for example, the first commercially useful breed, the Cochin, only reached there from England in 1845, with the Light and then the Dark Brahma appearing somewhat later. Elsewhere, in the Volga area at least, the breeds most recommended by

specialists were Plymouth Rocks, Langshans and Dorkings, though the most popular with the peasantry were Cochins, Brahmas, Langshans and Minorcas.¹⁷ The drawback with Minorcas, however, was that they easily succumbed to the Russian winter and they were prone to disease.¹⁸

Despite their failure to appreciate fully the requirements of the foreign market they sought to supply, Russian peasants were very conscious of the enormous benefits to be gained by crossing domestic birds with foreign commercial breeds. They had in the opinion of late nineteenth-century Russia's leading poultry expert, Prince S Urusov, 'an absolute faith in the productivity of foreign birds about which they had heard so much from the agents of English firms'.¹⁹ In all probability this market-oriented source of improved breeds dwarfed the contribution made by large landowner poultry breeders to the improvement of peasant poultry strains. But from whatever source improvements flowed, what is so striking is the dramatic increases in output peasants could achieve in a short space of time in response to unfolding market opportunities. By the eve of the First World War the beneficial effects of this transformation were being felt in areas remote from the international market. A priest in Astrakhan province described how in the space of a year poultry rearing in his village was transformed. In 1913 he had bought four Plymouth Rock hens and a cockerel. The peasants bought eggs from him to rear their own birds, encouraged in this by a lecture given by an Astrakhan poultry fancier. In the space of a year poultry breeding there was revolutionized.²⁰

¹² Gulishamberov, *op cit*, pp 5-7.

¹³ Urusov, *op cit*, 1896/11, p 610.

¹⁴ Urusov, *op cit*, 1897/4 p 34.

¹⁵ S T Neyshube, *Torgovlya Domashneyu Ptitseyu i Dichiyn v Rossii*, (The trade in domestic poultry and game birds in Russia), St Petersburg, 1895, pp 3-17.

¹⁶ Urusov, *op cit*, *Passim*.

¹⁷ Morachevsky, *op cit*, p 244.

¹⁸ Urusov, *op cit*, 1897/4, p 22.

¹⁹ *Ibid*, p 20.

²⁰ *Ptitsevodnoye Khozyaystvo*, (Poultry Farming), 1916, No 3.

III

In view of the importance of the market for the development of this branch of agriculture, progress throughout Russia was distinctly patchy with marked variations between and within provinces.²¹ But reliable and systematic data on pre-1914 production levels for the country as a whole, let alone for individual provinces, is non-existent. In northern Russia the severe climate was a constraint on commercial poultry keeping. The impossibility of keeping hens warm in winter unless they were brought inside the house restricted peasants to keeping about ten hens. Elsewhere regional differences and the level of commercialization were to a large extent accounted for by ease of access to markets, domestic as well as foreign. The Western Provinces with relatively speedy rail access to the German market specialized in the production of poultry meat. The Volga Provinces and Malorussia with less easily accessible markets for poultry meat in the Central Industrial Region and in Germany respectively, traded in eggs as well as poultry meat. While the South West and the South, which were more remote from foreign markets, concentrated on the production of eggs. On the eve of the First World War with the more widespread coverage of cold-store facilities and the slowly growing numbers of refrigerated wagons on the Russian railway system, the trend was for all regions to move towards a dual purpose marketing strategy, trading in both poultry meat and eggs.²²

Some idea of the relative importance of regions can be gleaned from railway

statistics, with foreign trade data giving an impression of the trend in aggregate output. Where such data are particularly defective is in indicating the proportion of output either retained on the farm or going for the domestic market. The widely differing estimates produced in the 1890s illustrate this well. The Ministry of Agriculture calculated that in 1895 the output of the poultry sector exceeded 59 million Roubles. Russia then had, it was estimated, 57 million head of poultry producing 4 billion eggs a year. These figures, however, were considered by some contemporary experts to be a gross underestimate. The value of output, for example, was arrived at simply by doubling the value of exports of poultry and poultry products. These data are far out of line with that compiled in 1897 by I I Abozin which suggested that Russia then had no less than 200 million head of fowls, 50 million ducks and 50 million geese; and an annual egg production of 12 billion of which ½ billion were exported. The reduced egg yields implied by Abozin's data suggests that included in his figures were immature birds being prepared for market. Poultry numbers would fluctuate wildly between summer and winter. In the late autumn and early winter birds would be slaughtered for market and numbers would be relatively low until chickens were hatched the following spring. The value of this domestic trade can only be guessed at. One contemporary expert complained that: 'On account of the low value of each individual bird, they were not taken into account in markets and yet their vast numbers mean it is a large scale trade'.²³

The bulk of the marketed eggs and poultry products consumed in Russia were usually taken to market by cart and an unknown quantity of eggs from the Volga

²¹ Urusov, *passim*. [The most valuable survey of pre-Revolutionary poultry breeding in Russia was carried out in 1895 by Prince S Urusov under the auspices of the Ministry of Agriculture and State Domains. Urusov's report graphically describes this agricultural sector in the more important poultry producing provinces at a time when it was expanding rapidly in response to the growing international and domestic market.]

²² M V Kechedzhi-Shapovalov, *Ptitsepromyshlennost' i Torgovlya Produktami Ptitsevodstva*, (The poultry business and the trade in poultry products), St Petersburg, 1912, p 20.

²³ I I Abozin, *Spravochnaya Kniga dlya Ptitsevodov*, (The poultry keepers' guidebook), St Petersburg, 1898, quoted in Gulishamberov, *op cit*, pp 1-9.

TABLE 2
The Distribution of Egg Loads on Russian Railways in 1908

Region	Millions of eggs	Proportion %
VOLGA [Saratov, Simbirsk, Samara, Tver, Penza, Kazan, Nizhgorod and Yaroslav]	750	26.0
CENTRAL AGRICULTURAL [Voronezh, Ryazan, Tula, Orel and Kursk]	672	24.3
SOUTH WEST [Podolya, Volynia and Kiev]	473	16.3
NEW RUSSIA [Bessarabia, Kherson, Taurid, Yekaterinoslav and Don Cossack Region]	433	15.0
MALORUSSIA [Kharkov, Chernigov and Poltava]	190	6.4
POLAND	140	4.6
URALS	136	4.6
CAUCASUS	59	2.0
LITHUANIA	29	1.0
BELORUSSIA	25	0.9
WESTERN SIBERIA	25	0.9

Source: M P Orlov in *Izvestiya Komiteta po Kholodil'nomu Delu*, 1908, No 2.

region both for the home and the export market reached St Petersburg via the River Neva. And despite its failure to record the enormous significance of Moscow province in supplying poultry products to the domestic market, or of the Baltic region, where poultry farming was most advanced, the data on railway freights given in Table 2 above gives a useful, if somewhat distorted, picture of the most important egg producing regions supplying the international market.

In the Moscow Province, which did not cater for the export market, the poultry trade also experienced rapid expansion in the late nineteenth century, thanks to growing demand in Moscow. Chickens, ducks and geese found a ready market and poultry fattening took on a commercial form with small enterprises being set up in and around Moscow to fatten pullets brought in from the countryside. The weekly market of breeding birds on the Trubnaya Square did much to improve the quality of local poultry and by the mid-1890s, the average number of eggs produced per bird was approaching 100 or more a year and weighing between 1.8

and 2.4 ounces.²⁴ The live weight of birds had increased to 5 lb. The weights and egg yields were almost double those of poultry in Tver Province, for example, where poor access to market delayed progress.²⁵

Elsewhere in the Central Industrial Region poultry-rearing was in a similarly backward state, though virtually all peasants kept a handful of hens. In Kaluga hens, ducks and geese were kept but those marketed were usually sent to Moscow for fattening. Similarly in some parts of Yaroslav and Kostroma so-called 'Rostovskiy capons' or 'Rostovskiy pullets' were fattened for the home market in Moscow and St Petersburg. In Vladimir province in the 1890s it was only in the Yur'yevskiy *uyezd* (district) that there was any serious interest in poultry keeping. Prince Urusov's 1895 report ascribed the weak development of poultry keeping in Vladimir Province to the climatic conditions and the fact that this was an industrial province, where the peasants 'lived by seasonal

²⁴ Bakhtiarov, *op cit*, p 85; Gulishamberov, *op cit*, p 32; and Urusov, *op cit*, 1896/11, pp 622-25.

²⁵ *Ibid*, pp 616-7.

work, doing little farming with the result that no one cared for the chickens'.²⁶

Further South in the Central Agricultural Region the stimulus of the international market was readily apparent by the mid-1890s. Cross breeding was the norm and the productivity of poultry was on a par with that in Moscow Province. In Voronezh Province, where 'noticeable improvements' were observed, numerous crosses were to be found with Langshans and Plymouth Rocks being popular. Peasant families kept on average twenty hens apiece and some indeed kept as many as 100 or more hens. Expansion continued with the result that in 1908 this province alone provided 10 per cent of the eggs despatched by rail for the export market.²⁷

Progress in the Volga province of Kazan was even more marked. On the eve of its rapid expansion in the mid-1890s Urusov had described poultry breeding here as:

'not commercially very significant, though of great help to the peasant economy. With growing output it has ceased to be regarded as "bab'ye khozyaystvo" and is being seen as a source of income'.²⁸

If Urusov is literally describing poultry keeping in Kazan as being no longer in the charge of women, this was untypical of Russia as a whole. Russian peasant women continued in the main to have full responsibility for poultry keeping. It is more likely that Urusov was indicating that the income from poultry keeping had become sufficiently large that it was no longer earmarked for the 'woman's box', income which peasant women by tradition had the unconditional right to spend as they wished.

Western dealers like the London firm, Robinson and Peacock, already had collec-

tion centres in the province and local buyers (*Skupshchiki*), who were usually Tatars, toured the countryside buying up eggs. They also obtained them from shops, where peasants frequently bartered them for small items. There was also a 'fairly large demand' from local soap making factories for small eggs unsuitable for the export trade.²⁹ In the mid-1890s 'an enormous quantity of eggs' was despatched from the quays along the Volga and the Kama rivers, partly for the domestic market but predominantly for offloading in Nizhny Novgorod for despatch by rail for the export market. In fact commercial poultry rearing was only weakly developed in Nizhny Novgorod Province and the high level of egg despatches recorded for it in Table 3 originated mainly from Kazan Province and the explosive growth of Kazan as an egg despatch point from 1896 was largely at its expense. In 1908 Kazan Province supplied about 8 per cent of Russia's egg exports and it was claimed in 1913 that the annual turnover for its egg trade was over 12 million roubles, which sometimes exceeded the amount of grain exported from the province.³⁰ Some of the eggs despatched from Kazan would have almost certainly come from other Volga provinces by water but the same could be said for grain despatches too.

By 1913 Kazan had yielded its position as the largest egg despatch station to Rybinsk, not because of any major expansion of egg production in Yaroslavl province, but through it becoming the major collection point for eggs produced in the Volga basin. In the years before 1914 Rybinsk despatched between 800,000 and 1,400,000 poods (one pood = 36.113 lb.) of eggs annually compared with an annual 600-800,000 poods leaving Kazan.³⁰ Much of Rybinsk's trade, however, would have

²⁶ *Ibid*, pp 621-22. Not that poultry-keeping was particularly time consuming. Only those peasants who fattened birds by hand feeding them with specially prepared mashes would have had to devote much time to it. And since this method of feeding was carried out in the late autumn and the early winter, it is unlikely to have caused much distraction from field work.

²⁷ Urusov, *op cit*, 1896/11, pp 635-640.

²⁸ Urusov, *op cit*, 1897/4, p 11.

²⁹ *Ibid*, p 17.

³⁰ N A Kryukov, *Yaytso i Yaichmoye Delo*, (Eggs and the Egg Business), Petrograd, 1915, p 45. Kozlov was by this time in third place, despatching 270-280,000 poods annually.

TABLE 3
Principal Despatch Centres for Eggs Transported by Rail, 1891-1897
(Egg Freights in thousands of Poods)

Railway Station	1891	1892	1893	1894	1895	1896	1897
Kazan	—	—	—	—	10	393	511
Nizhny Novgorod	460	316	373	309	527	311	452
Saguny (SE Railway)	178	90	74	149	347	276	230
Belgorod (Kazan-Kharkov Rlwy.)	40	42	102	158	252	263	226
Kozlov	144	148	120	159	259	256	247
Prokhorovka (Kazan-Kharkov)	236	201	204	271	320	250	219
Voronezh	111	54	58	110	226	194	234
Umary (Moscow-Kazan Rlwy.)	—	—	—	41	93	178	204
Romny	58	100	65	76	152	137	112
Livny (SE Railway)	57	36	50	62	101	85	90
Kel'tsy	118	111	78	99	91	79	81
Syzran	—	—	44	12	48	78	159

Source: S Gulishamberov, *Mezhdunarodnaya Torgovlya Ptitsy Ptich'imi Produktami*, (Dept of Trade and Manufactures, St Petersburg, 1899), p 32

originated in Kazan province. Indeed the rapid rise of Kazan Province as an exporter of poultry products convincingly demonstrates that by the 1890s, provided communications with the international market were adequate, the grain-based agrarian system, within which the Russian peasantry operated, did not necessarily act as a barrier to economic diversification. The growth in egg freights from Belgorod, Kozlov, Voronezh, Livny and Romny suggests the same was true for the provinces in the Central Agricultural Region. And that from Syzran serving Simbirsk province makes the same point for the Volga Region (See Table 3).

IV

Despite its dynamic growth peasant poultry keeping was by no means without its faults. Peasants, though quick to appreciate the benefits of pedigree crosses, were slow to appreciate the need to market their product in a form acceptable to the consumer. Eggs were usually sold to agents of the wholesale firms ungraded and unwashed and at a price which reflected that condition. Contemporary specialist literature roundly condemned

this practice. But this was very much in the interests of the middlemen, who could themselves clean and grade eggs and thereby sell them on at a premium. Russian peasants had 'no conception of the foreign market' and, it is suggested, few in the purchasing system had a vested interest in enlightening them. But it would not be entirely fair to place all or even most of the blame for this on the peasantry. Practical guidance was lacking. It was not until 1911 that instructors courses on poultry-keeping were organized by the Russian authorities.³¹

While foreign exporting firms such as Barselman of London had built up a network of collection centres, backed by cold stores, the Russian railway system was woefully inadequate in its delivery of poultry products to the export ports. It failed to provide adequately ventilated wagons for the transport of live birds with the result that unnecessary losses through suffocation occurred; it had too few refrigerated wagons available for the transport of eggs and dressed poultry in the summer period; its transit times to export points were too long; it took too

³¹ Kechedzhi-Shapovalov, *op cit*, p 4.

little care of the goods in its charge; and its freight rates were considered by the trade to be too high.²⁶ And though a major export port such as Riga had satisfactory facilities for the handling and storage of eggs, export firms were unhappy with the disorganization, neglect and carelessness at one of the busiest egg handling centres, the freight yard of St Petersburg's Nikolayaev Railway. Here one critic complained in the early 1900s that:

'Eggs are unloaded under an awning with sides open to the elements. Pigeons foul them from above and rats, which are abundant here, get at them from below.' Such was the resultant damage and mess, 'a case entered by a rat is no longer suitable for export'.²⁷

Evidently the Russian poultry business had a long way to go to reach its full potential. But despite its shortcomings it provided both a valuable food item for peasants throughout most of the Russian Empire and a growing source of income for those peasants in the chief poultry keeping regions such as the Baltic, the Central Agricultural Region, the Volga Provinces the South West and New Russia. Assessing with any accuracy the proportion of peasant income generated by this sector is, however, problematic. There was a general consensus amongst contemporary observers that the peasantry received half the value of eggs and poultry products exported from Russia.²⁸ To this would need to be added sales to the domestic market which grew from a very low level to become significant by the end of the last century. Of the eggs marketed in the mid-1890s the Ministry of Finance estimated three-quarters went to the home market.²⁹ But since the export trade took only grade one and two eggs, the prices commanded by eggs destined for the home market would have been

about 60 per cent of those for eggs to be exported.³⁰ The proportion of sales of live and dead poultry and of feather and down absorbed by the home market was probably at or above the same level as that for eggs. If that was the case peasant receipts from the poultry sector would have been very approximately in the order of 2½ million roubles in 1880; rising to over 16 million roubles in 1887; to over 56 million roubles in 1900; around 100 million roubles in 1905; and 150 million roubles in 1913.³¹ For important poultry keeping areas as the Central Agricultural Region and the Middle Volga Region this would have meant that annual aggregate receipts from poultry keeping per peasant household would have risen from a few kopeks in the 1880s to 7 and 10 roubles respectively by 1913.³² In 1908 the specialist journal, *Nasha Ptitsevodnaya Zhizn'*, estimated that in Voronezh Province the average annual income of presumably a peasant household accruing from the sale of poultry products was 22 Roubles 59 kopeks, which is not out of line with the above estimates.

Peasants living near to the cold stores of such British egg exporting firms as Barselmans were able to sell eggs and birds to the value of 100 to 150 Roubles a year. It was, the journal observed 'a very significant component in peasant income'.³³ Others made the same point. It was suggested in 1913 that peasants could easily make 1½ to 2 Roubles profit a year from a single hen. And there were small peasant farmers in Podolya and other provinces who were making between 120 and 150 Roubles a year from egg sales, it was claimed, an enormous business for a

²⁶ Bakhtiarov, *op cit*, pp 88-90.

²⁷ A E Kulyzhnyy, *Derevenskaya Kooperatsiya*, (Rural cooperatives), Moscow, 1913, p 110; and Gulishamberov, *op cit*, p 1.

²⁸ Neyshube, *op cit*, p 1.

²⁹ Bakhtiarov, *op cit*, p 79.

³⁰ This is broadly in line with estimates made by the Ministry of Agriculture in 1895. 59 million +, itself regarded as an underestimate. Gulishamberov, *op cit*, p 1.

³¹ These estimates are calculated on the basis of half the value of exports accruing to the peasantry plus 180 per cent of that amount to account for returns from domestic sales.

³² *Nasha Ptitsevodnaya Zhizn'*, (Our poultry farmer's life), 1908/9-10.

small peasant.³⁹ Given that the average annual wage for a seasonal agricultural worker in these regions in the early twentieth century was about 60 Roubles, the economic benefits of poultry keeping would appear to be attractive, the more especially since the outlay of both capital and labour was so insignificant. Such returns become even more apparent when related to an individual peasant farmer electing to keep poultry on a more serious commercial basis. Prince Urusov's 1895 survey made this very clear. He emphasized the dramatic productivity increases that ensued from crossing local non-pedigree birds with West European pedigree strains. The first crosses would produce a bird with a live weight of 5 to 7 lb., laying an annual average of 125 eggs weighing around 2¾ oz. each. That compared with the average weight of native Russian birds of 2½ to 3 lb. and their average annual lay of 75 eggs, weighing an average of 2 oz. each.⁴⁰ In terms of weight of both birds and eggs productivity could be more than doubled in the space of a year. And because the eggs from pedigree crosses were more acceptable to the export market the financial return was correspondingly greater.⁴¹

V

And more extravagant claims were made for the economic potential of poultry keeping. In a self-education book published in 1912, there was a graphic account of high returns this sector of agriculture could yield.⁴² It pointed out that a dozen good hens could give no less income than a desyatina (2.7 acres) of grain. From a desyatina of the best yielding grain (winter wheat) the annual harvest was usually about 50 poods and worth a Rouble a

pood. Eight poods of grain had to be set aside for seed giving 42 Roubles of marketable grain to which could be added a small sum for the value of the straw. On the other hand 12 hens would lay about 1000 eggs from which 200 would need to be subtracted for breakages and hatching. That would give 800 eggs and 120 chickens for the market. Egg sales would yield 13 Roubles 60 kopeks and sales of pullets 60 Roubles, giving a gross return of 73 Roubles and 60 kopeks. After subtracting a sum for feedstuffs the return would be equivalent to that from a desyatina of winter wheat and what is more it was a branch of agriculture that could be carried out on any peasant farm, not even one-tenth of a desyatina of land being required for the purpose. And the figure quoted related to average quality poultry. If better quality birds were kept, it was claimed, the net returns from a dozen hens could be between 175 and 235 Roubles, with each hen giving between 15 and 20 Roubles, which was equivalent to half the income of a desyatina of winter wheat. The income to be gained from keeping 20 or 30 hens, the book enthused, could be double or even treble these amounts.⁴³ Arguably there was an element of hyperbole in the above example but it does serve to illustrate the enthusiasm felt in some quarters for a sector of agriculture that could convert low-value grain into a much more valuable product.

For the vast majority of Russian peasants poultry-keeping remained a subsidiary sector of agriculture, demanding little in the way of capital and only minimal inputs of labour. It had by no means reached its full potential by 1914. Yet in those provinces where poultry-keeping was most advanced it was contributing to family income a sum equivalent to

³⁹ Kulyzhnyy, *op cit*, p 115.

⁴⁰ Converted from zolotnikovs on basis of 1 zolotnikov = .15 oz.

⁴¹ Urusov, *op cit*, 1897/4, p 33.

⁴² Kechedzhi-Shapovalov, *op cit*, pp 6-8.

⁴³ *Ibid*, p 8. The author also waxed lyrical on the qualities of hen manure. It had 4 times the fertilizer value of cow and horse manure and was ideal for use under fruit trees and for grain crops.

between a quarter and a half of that which might be earned by one labourer over the course of a year from seasonal agricultural work. It was, moreover, a contribution to family income which barely featured two decades earlier. And since it was a branch of agriculture that could be carried out regardless of the size of the peasant plot, the possibility remains that it made

a disproportionately larger contribution to the incomes of poorer peasant families. It could operate too as a risk-minimization strategy largely independent of the constraints imposed by the commune system. In any event it is a branch of pre-1914 Russian agriculture and a source of peasant income that ought not to be ignored.

Notes and Comments

CONFERENCES

The Society's 1992 Spring Conference will be held on Monday 13 to Wednesday 15 April at Florence Boot Hall, University of Nottingham. The conference will include a full programme of distinguished speakers and an expedition to the only remaining open-field village in England at Laxton in Nottinghamshire, led by Professor John Beckett who has written extensively on the village in *A History of Laxton, England's Last Open-Field Village*, Basil Blackwell, Oxford, 1989. Further details and booking forms for the conference can be obtained from Professor J V Beckett, Department of History, University of Nottingham, University Park, Nottingham NG7 2RD.

The Society will hold an autumn conference in association with the Centre for East Anglian Studies, University of East Anglia in September 1992. The conference will have a regional orientation and be about the farming and rural history of the Fenlands and East Anglia. The local organizer will be Dr B A Holderness, Department of Economic and Social Studies, University of East Anglia,

Norwich NR4 7TJ. Information can also be obtained by our autumn conference co-ordinator, Dr Richard Hoyle, 13 Parker Street, Oxford, OX4 1TD.

The Society will be holding its one day Winter Conference in 1992 on Saturday 5 December at the Institute of Historical Research in London. The theme will be the forthcoming Vol VII of *The Agrarian History of England and Wales, 1850-1914*. The 1993 Spring Conference will be held at Gregynog Hall, near Welshpool, Clwyd from Monday 5 to Wednesday 7 April. Further details of both these meetings will be announced in future numbers of the *Review*.

40TH ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF THE SOCIETY

This will be held at 9.00 a.m. on Tuesday 14 April 1992 during the Spring Conference at Florence Boot Hall, University of Nottingham. The business will include the election officers and new committee members, as well as important proposed changes to the constitution of the Society (outlined in the last issue, pp 190-1). Members are urged to attend.

'The Spade Might Soon Determine It': the Representation of Deserted Medieval Villages on Ordnance Survey Plans, 1849-1910

By MAURICE BERESFORD

Abstract

From its earliest days the Ordnance Survey had an interest in recording the earthworks of antiquity. For the large-scale plans the information gathered from the surveyors in the field was supplemented by correspondence with knowledgeable local scholars. The earthworks from medieval villages although numerous were generally ignored except for the East Riding of Yorkshire where, largely through the interest of Capt. John Bayly, RE, FSA (1821-1905), the first edition of the six-inch map detailed twenty-five sites. At the revisions of 1890-1909 the interpretation of these earthworks came into question: the replies of local correspondents, surviving in the OS archive, show considerable scepticism but the better-informed invoked documentary sources, while one - in a phrase embodied in the title of this article - urged abitation by excavation, a course which medieval archaeology has eventually followed.

EVEN when the Ordnance Survey maps were produced only on small scales they included certain types of earthwork. The Superintendent's memorandum of 1816 included the instruction:

That the remains of ancient Fortifications, Druidical Monuments, vitrified Forts and all Tumuli and Barrows shall be noticed in the Plans.¹

The officers and other ranks of the Royal Engineers who carried out the survey were not trained in history or archaeology, and in default the Survey proceeded by gathering its archaeological information from those who might be expected to know: landowners, tenant farmers and local antiquarians, the same sources who were employed to ascertain the accepted local names for woods, hills, streams and other natural features.²

In 1865 an instruction from the Director spelt out what had certainly been the practice from the time when the larger

scale 1:10,560 (6 in. to the mile) plans of Great Britain, with their potential for more detail, were initiated in 1840:

the necessity of officers making themselves acquainted with the local history of, and (by personal inspections) with the objects of antiquarian interest in the districts which they are surveying in order that all such objects may be properly represented on the plans and fully described in the Name Books.³

The results were collected in the manuscript *Name Books* in which the finally accepted form for any letterpress on the plans was authorized by an officer's signature or initials, and justified by citing his authority.⁴

It was to be expected that the local

¹ Sir Henry James quoted Ibid, p 174. 'Sir Henry ... laid great stress on personal study of these matters by his officers. He desired that they should read up the histories of their districts': T Pilkington White, *The Ordnance Survey of the United Kingdom*, Edinburgh and London, 1886, p 92.

² The great majority of the surviving Name Books for England and Wales were deposited in the Public Record Office, Kew, in December 1989. The 'Original Name Books' at OS 34 relate to the 1:2500 and 1:10,560 mapping (1855-1866) of the four northern counties of England, plus Hampshire; the 'Object Name Books' at OS 35 mostly range from c. 1890 (with a few earlier insertions) to 1940 and cover England and much of Wales. I am indebted to Mr R T Porter for drawing my attention to this source and thus inspiring this study.

¹ W A Seymour, ed, *A History of the Ordnance Survey*, 1980, p 63.

² Ibid, pp 173-6. The Survey is known to have had a library but the earliest catalogue so far traced (by R H Stotherd, 1884) has only 46 monographs and 11 pamphlets, together with some journals, that would be relevant.

authorities consulted would vary in their knowledge and might not speak in unison. As the distinguished Romanist, FJ Haverfield, wrote in 1906:

Where the Department's reply has been that Mr. So-and-So and the Rev. ABC and Colonel DEF, resident in the district, have told the surveyors, the case is more complicated. For it is quite possible that I may write to Mr. So-and-So (if still alive), and receive from him the answer that he never said anything of the kind imputed to him, and does not take that view.⁵

I

Of particular interest to archaeologists in the mid-nineteenth century, well-known from papers in national and county journals, and objects of curiosity to local excavating amateurs, were barrows, long and round, so that it was some of the smallest visible earthworks which came to be most frequently depicted, being confidently if vaguely recorded as the ubiquitous *tumulus*.

Earthworks comprising groups of features were more problematic to identify, and abandoned settlements of all periods fell into that class: they were most likely to be noted and identified in areas of extensive open grassland such as Salisbury Plain, already the classic area for English prehistoric studies. Elsewhere, grouped earthworks made up of house-sized units were less likely to be noticed, being not always visible from field boundaries and beset with two particular problems, that of interpretation and of assignment to their correct historical periods.

There seems to have been no central direction other than the general instructions cited, and thus it was the field officer responsible for a particular sheet who determined what antiquities were included. The importance of an individual officer's interest is particularly evident in

the case of the remains of medieval villages. In the Midland counties, despite their frequency, the medieval earthworks hardly ever appeared until after the 1951 revision of *Field Archaeology* had drawn the surveyors' attention to recent academic publications.⁶ In one area, however, the first edition of the six-inch plan did include a remarkable number of sites (see Table 1).

II

Deserted medieval villages had occasionally been recognized by cartographers prior to the Ordnance Survey, principally as incidental to unpublished private estate plans. As far as published maps of English counties were concerned Rutland and Warwickshire seem to have stood alone in having a systematic delineation of depopulated places.⁷

However it is noteworthy that the Ordnance Survey officers who were responsible for Warwickshire were totally oblivious of these depopulations, and elsewhere (apart from the East Riding of Yorkshire) village earthworks were virtually omitted, even where their frequency was of the same order as Norman mottes or Roman camps.

The exceptional case of the East Riding seems to have arisen from the antiquarian interest of the officer who was responsible for most of the six-inch sheets covering that part of Yorkshire, Captain John Bayly, RE (1821-1905). He joined the Survey (then under the Board of Ordnance) in 1846 and, from the attributions at the foot of the plans, began work in East Yorkshire in 1849, remaining there

⁶ Ordnance Survey, *Field Archaeology: some Notes for Beginners*, 3rd ed., 1951, p. 54.

⁷ Rutland: symbol for 'olm village' in county map, James Wright, *The History and Antiquities of the County of Rutland* (1684), ex inf. Dr Harold Fox; Warws: lozenge symbol for 'depopulated places' in county map by William Dugdale, *Antiquities of Warwickshire*, 1656; also by Henry Beighton in 2nd ed., 1728. A section reproduced in Maurice Beresford and John G Hurst, eds, *Deserted Medieval Villages: Studies*, 1971, Fig. 8, p. 51.

⁵ FJ Haverfield, 'The Ordnance Survey maps from the point of view of the antiquities on them', *Geog Jnl*, XXVII, 1906, p. 171.

TABLE I
 East Yorkshire Deserted Villages on OS 1:10,560 plans surveyed by Captain John Bayly,
 1849-52

Sheet number and date	Village	Descriptive words	Earthworks surveyed
124 (1850-1)	Sutton	Old Foundations	no
125 (1850-1)	Thirkleby	Sites of Old Buildings [in two places]	
126 (1850)	Swaythorpe	Site of the Village of ...	yes
	Octon	Sites of Old Buildings and Inclosures	yes
	Pockthorpe	Site of the Village of ...	yes
127 (1849-50)	Argam	Site of the Village of ...	yes
	Grindale	Site of the Village of ...	yes
142 (1851)	Thornthorpe	Site of the Village of ...	yes
143 (1850-1)	Wharram Percy	Site of the Village of ...	yes
	Towthorpe	Sites of Buildings	yes
	Croom	Old Banks	yes
		Old Foundations	yes
	Mowthorpe	Old Foundations	yes
	Thoralby	Sites of Old Buildings	yes
	Raisthorpe	Site of the Village of ...	yes
144 (1850)	Cottam	Site of the Village of ...	yes
	Cowlam	Site of the Village of ...	yes
145 (1850)	[Low] Caythorpe	Old Foundations	yes
146 (1849-50)	Hilderthorpe	Old Banks	yes
160 (1851)	Holm [Archiepiscopi]	Site of the Village of ...	no
161 (1850-1)	Eastburn	Site of the Village of ...	yes
179 (1854)	Rotsea	Old Foundations	yes
194 (1851)	Kiplingcotes	Site of the Village of ...	no
195 (1851-2)	Raventhorpe	Site of the Village of ...	yes
197 (1852)	Southorpe	Site of the Village of ...	yes
209 (1851-2)	Gardham	Site of the Village of ...	yes
	Arras	Site of the Village of ...	yes
		Site of Chapel	
225 (1852)	Hunsley	Site of the Village of ...	yes

until the Riding was completed in 1852. Subsequently he moved into Survey administration, heading the Boundary Office from 1864 to 1873 before becoming second-in-command and leaving the Survey in 1878 as Major-General and with a CB. He was a Fellow of the Royal Geographical Society but, more pertinently, was elected a Fellow of the Society of Antiquaries in 1871, although he took no active part in its affairs.⁸

⁸ Memoir in *Royal Engineers Journal*, I, 1905, pp 337-8; *Who Was Who*, 1897-1916, 1920, p 48, however, describes him as executive officer, OS, 1874-82, and so does the very short obituary in *Proc Soc Antiquaries of London*, XX, 1903-5, p 297.

There are village earthworks in this area that Bayly did not survey (notably those at Hanging Grimston and Birdsall) but, compared with the work of his brother officers in the two other Yorkshire Ridings and in the other English counties, his achievement was remarkable. Bayly's contribution was noticed by Phillips, the post-war Archaeology Officer, but by a Freudian (even Oedipean) slip Phillips used the name of his own distinguished predecessor, O G S Crawford:

But there were areas like the Yorkshire Wolds where the personal interest of an officer, in this

case Capt. Crawford RE, ensured a series of deserted village sites which have been much commended in recent years for their accuracy and the perception with which minor but significant detail has been supplied...⁹

It is not possible to ascertain Bayly's sources of information, since the Name Books from that period were lost in the bombing of Southampton. Certainly there were no printed sources, whether journal articles, books or maps, from which all these sites could have been identified, although the earthworks at Argam (which appears to have been the first village site that Bayly surveyed) were already shown on Robert Knox's *A Map of the Country round Scarborough*, together with those at Cottam, Cowlam, Ooton, Bartindale and Swaythorpe; 'foundations' at Rudston and Speeton indicated house earthworks beyond the area of the surviving village, possibly the earliest representation of what would now be called a 'shrunk' village. This map was first published in 1821 and republished with additions in 1849, just at the time when Bayly arrived in the Riding. It was later incorporated in a geological and architectural account of the same area which included larger scale plans of earthworks at Argam, Bartindale, Cottam, Cowlam, and Swaythorpe, and from which we can know how, 26 years earlier, Knox had interpreted these earthworks;

it would seem as if the several deserted villages upon the Wold-hills had been fated together, and led by one fell swoop in desolation either by war or famine, or other direful catastrophe ruinous to man.¹⁰

Although Bayly's surveys were complete before 1855 it is not impossible that, since Knox is known to have been living in Scarborough in 1849, Bayly could have

met him in the field and heard his conclusions.

Bayly could also have known of a survey of the East Riding by Bryant, made in 1827 and 1828, which showed 'Site of Cottam Town', and 'Site of Town' at Eastburn and Cowlam; and if his attention had been drawn to these, then he would have been alerted to the significance of similar earthworks outside the area covered by Knox. There also seems to have been an oral tradition for the fate of Cottam. Edward Anderson's *The Sailor: a Poem* speaks of Cottam:

My forefathers by records it appears,
Were farmers there above two hundred years.
Without his neighbours' knowledge, as by stealth,
One farmer leas'd the whole unto himself;
Then twenty families were in the town,
Nineteen are gone, their houses all pull'd down;
A chapel stands neglected on the hill.¹¹

Cottam's 'chapel' was in fact a parish church, and when Bayly found parish churches alongside the earthworks at Cowlam and Wharram Percy, the conjunction would have made it easier to accept them as 'Village' remains.

III

It is unclear why Bayly made a distinction between earthworks which seemed to be those of a village and others which were simply 'Old Foundations' or 'Old Buildings'. The distinction certainly does not rest on clarity or prominence: those at Towthorpe, for example, are just as distinctly the remains of former crofts, houses, and streets as those at Wharram Percy; nor can the presence or absence of a church have been the only reason: if Towthorpe had no parish church, then neither did Raisthorpe, but the latter was dignified as a 'Village'.

⁹ C W Phillips, *Archaeology in the Ordnance Survey, 1791-1965*, Council for British Archaeology, 1980, p 19.

¹⁰ Robert Knox, *Descriptions Geological, Topographical and Antiquarian in Eastern Yorkshire*, 1855, p 145; the larger plans, dated 1819, form Plates 10 and 11, pp 142 and 144. This has a claim to be the first post-Goldsmith use of the term 'deserted village'.

¹¹ Edward Anderson, *The Sailor: a Poem*, 12th ed, Hull, 1828. I am indebted to Dr Alan Harris for the reference to this work and to Bryant's map. The poem may be as early as 1792.

When the Wolds were re-surveyed for the 1:2500 (25 in. to mile) OS series in 1888 small changes were made to the detail of earthworks at village sites but there was a wholesale re-naming of them with the more cautious 'Site of Ancient Village'. The Name Books from this period have not survived but a page is preserved in the 1909 Name Book which does show that the date of the earthworks had been discussed:

There is a tradition that the old Banks & foundations found near villages in this part of Yorkshire, are the remains of villages that were destroyed by William the Conqueror, in 1069, when the whole of the country from the 'Humber' to the 'Tees' was laid waste, & the whole of the inhabitants were slain.¹²

When the local sheets of the 1:2500 series came to be revised in 1909, the existing varieties of nomenclature were noticed, and an attempt was made to introduce some order by way of the traditional appeal to local authority, raising again the questions: what exactly were these earthworks, these sites of buildings, these signs of old foundations?

Fortunately the Name Books from this period have survived, with the replies from the various local correspondents pasted into them, displaying an interesting anthology of interpretations and revealing the spectrum of knowledge at a time when academic awareness of medieval settlement remains, whether by historians, geographers, or archaeologists, had yet to be aroused.¹³ At one extreme was sheer indifference. G J Brown and Son, London agents for the owner of the site of Cowlam replied:

it is really immaterial whether the wording on the plan 144 East Yorkshire is 'Site of Ancient Village' or 'Site of Cowlam Village'. The Village, if so called, consists only of the Farm House, Church, Rectory and two Cottages.¹⁴

Nearer home, Frederick Handley of York, agent for the Lloyd Greame estate at Towthorpe, replied succinctly, 'I do not know that there ever was a Village at Towthorpe'.¹⁵ Mrs Bosville, wife of the owner of Caythorpe, was more helpful, arranging for the land agent, Thomas Boynton, to meet Corporal Jones of the OS at the site. Boynton accepted 'Site of Low Caythorpe Village' as the correct nomenclature but the landowner added his own agnostic comment at the foot of the entry in the Name Book, 'This may or not be true'.¹⁶

At Raisthorpe the land agent was prepared to leave the question open:

We have no evidence that the *Ancient Village* was called Raisthorpe and that being the case we think the sheets fairly represent the case,¹⁷

while the agent for Wharram Percy declined to answer and referred the question to the local antiquarian, the Rev. E Maule Cole of Wetwang.¹⁸ The Survey had consulted Cole about other local sites, and the Name Book¹⁹ reveals that it was on Cole's authority that 'Site of Wharram Percy Village' was recommended for the revised edition of 1910 rather than 'Site of Ancient Village': in fact, the OS surveyor had already come to a firm opinion on the subject, as his letter to the agent shows:

Sheet 143 designates the site upon which stood the village of Wharram Percy as 'Site of ancient village' Should this not be written as 'Site of Wharram Percy village'?²⁰

Cole's decided preference for the village name led to a similar decision for Raisthorpe.²¹

Cole's letter about Towthorpe, which

¹⁵ *Ibid*, 23 Aug. 1909.

¹⁶ *Ibid*, insert, 27 and 28 Aug. 1909.

¹⁷ *Ibid*, insert, 7 July 1909.

¹⁸ Cole (1833-1911) was rector of Wetwang and a prolific writer on local antiquities: T(homas) S(heppard), 'Two East Yorkshire Antiquaries', *Trans. East Riding Antiq. Soc.*, XVIII, 1911, pp 53-5.

¹⁹ ONB, Yorks. 143SW, p 3.

²⁰ ONB, Yorks. 127SE, insert, letter from G Finch to E Parsons, date obscured.

²¹ *Ibid*, 143SW, p 14.

¹² Note by T Curtis in Ordnance Survey O(bject) N(ame) B(ook) 1:2500, Yorks. 127SE, p 16a, (n.d. but before 17 Jan. 1890).

¹³ Beresford and Hurst, *op cit*, pp 80-4.

¹⁴ ONB, Yorks. 127SE, insert, 26 July 1909.

bordered on his parish, show that he was better informed about the appearance of the site than the owner's land agent:

I feel certain that 'Site of Towthorpe Village' is the truer and more correct designation than 'Site of Buildings'. In the sixteenth century there was a priest there, and 40 houseling people i.e. old enough to receive the Holy Communion. The site of the chapel is visible in the grass. The spade might soon determine it.²²

The information that he cited about the priest and the communicants was available in print in the *Yorkshire Chantry Surveys* published by the Surtees Society in 1894.²³ Had he had access to the landowner's archive, he would have found massive documentary confirmation (including a plan of the remains of the crofts, made in 1772)²⁴.

In a second letter Cole was even more positive in espousing these sites as former villages. His two pages of accompanying notes include references to Kirby's Inquest of 1284 and to the *Nomina Villarum* of 1316 which the Surtees Society had also published²⁵, as well as to Domesday Book.

I decidedly prefer the village name, where it can be shown to be in an ancient manor dating from Domesday. Raisthorpe, Cowlam, Wharram Percy, Swaythorpe and Octon are all in this category and are mentioned in other documents down to 1316 AD. I firmly believe that the mounds... are the sites not of a village but of the actual village of Cowlam etc.²⁶

The veteran field archaeologist, J R Mortimer of Driffeld, was equally certain that the earthworks were villages, but as a prehistorian he was obviously not acquainted with Domesday Book since he placed their depopulation before the Norman Conquest.

I think that the banks, hollows & uneven ground you refer to at Cowlam, Cottam, Towthorpe & other places are undoubtedly the remains of foun-

dations of buildings & garden boundaries of the inhabitants of Ancient Villages, destroyed, most probably, by Danish invasions and afterwards never, or only partially rebuilt. Also the broken ground between Duggleby & Low Mowthorpe (sc. Thoraby) cannot well be anything but the sites of old dwellings or settlements.²⁷

It might be expected that among archaeologists and antiquarians there would not be unanimity. From distant Leeds the historically minded industrialist, E Kitson Clark, was consulted about the nomenclature of Raisthorpe and told of Cole's views. He replied, on his Airedale Foundry notepaper:

I think old Cole is more interested in his personal knowledge than in knowledge itself... 'ancient villages' very often turn out to be surface mines, marling pits etc. & I should be very careful about them... D[omesday] B[ook] was not a geological (sic) survey, it was purely a record of property for the purposes of revenue, a cadastral survey. Local antiquarians are much too cocksure.²⁸

Only one academic appears among the array of consultants, and he was a Romanist in distant Oxford, but although in 1909 there were nearer institutions of higher education at Leeds and Sheffield with historians in post it is unlikely that they could have been any more helpful. Professor Haverfield wrote:

2. Mounds at Towthorpe, Raisthorpe etc. I do not myself know anything about these mounds, nor have I plans of any. But if (as I gather from your letter) there is no proof that they are remains of ancient villages, I should say that you were entirely unjustified in calling them 'Site of Towthorpe Village' or the like. 'Supposed ancient dwellings' is the outside limit of fair naming.²⁹

IV

It is significant that as a result of these enquiries no extra candidates were sug-

²² *Ibid*, 127SE, insert, 23 Aug. 1909.

²³ Ed W Page, *Surtees Society*, XCI, 1894.

²⁴ The Towthorpe archive now forms Hull Univ. Library Archives, DDLG 33, the plan being DDLG 33/152.

²⁵ Ed R H Skaife, *Surtees Society*, XLIX, 1867.

²⁶ ONB, Yorks. 127SE, insert (n.d. but Aug.-Sept. 1909).

²⁷ *Ibid*, insert 17 Oct. 1909. Mortimer set up a private museum at Great Driffeld to exhibit the fruits of his excavations: see his *Forty Years' Researches in British and Saxon Burial Mounds of East Yorkshire*, 1905; and the memoir by Thomas Sheppard, f.n. 18 above.

²⁸ ONB Yorks. 160NE, insert 19 Sept. 1909: see memoir, 'Lieut. Col. E. Kitson Clark' by A S Turberville, *Publications of the Thoresby Society*, XXXVII, 1944, pp 310-2.

²⁹ ONB, Yorks. 160NE, insert 16 Sept. 1909.

gested for inclusion on the revised plans although there were sites such as Riplingham and Hanging Grimston where good quality earthworks could have been seen. The principal result, however, was that the decision was taken to accept the earthworks as 'Villages' whenever they had the proven antiquity of Domesday Book.

There was certainly at least one beneficiary. In April 1948 a young economic historian, fresh from the excitement of discovering deserted villages in the Midlands, began to test the potential for fieldwork around his new northern base. Being used to the Ordnance Survey's indifference to deserted village sites in the Midland counties, however prominent the earthworks, he was astonished to encounter the proliferation of 'Site of the Village of...' in the Wolds. Had they been merely 'Ancient Village' – a designation which was still persisting on the One-inch sheet – he might well have dismissed them as prehistory but before the end of June he was following Captain Bayly and his sappers into the grass fields – the 'Site of the Village of Wharram Percy' – that adjoined the almost disused parish church of St Martin.

Two years later, through the entrepreneurship of the local schoolmaster and the courtesy of the landowner and the tenant farmer, he was able to begin doing what (then unknown to him) Cole and Haverfield had recommended as the final way to decipher and identify what History had left on the ground. Haverfield had looked forward to:

Some future day, when these mounds are properly examined, we shall know what they are & the real names can be given;³⁰

while Cole had used the prophetic words embodied in the title of this article: 'The spade might soon determine it.'³¹

In the first number of this *Review* a biographical note announced the forthcoming *Lost Villages of England*. In it, one Plate set the relevant section of Bayly's survey alongside the newly-available vertical air photograph of the village earthworks, demonstrating the accuracy of Bayly's surveyors. Another Plate showed the exposed wall of the Manor House: the spade had indeed begun to determine.³²

³⁰ *Ibid.*

³¹ ONB Yorks. 127SE, insert 23 Aug. 1909.

³² Maurice Beresford, *The Lost Villages of England*, 1954, pl. 1 (map) and pl. 8 (spade); see also Maurice Beresford and John Hurst, *Wharram Percy: Deserted Medieval Village*, 1990.

Annual List and Brief Review of Articles on Agrarian History, 1990*

By RAINE MORGAN

RESEARCH into the prehistoric economy has again given rise to articles of exceptional quality and interest. Results of micromorphological analysis of buried soils and probable midden deposits are presented by French (71) who uses them to reconstruct neolithic occupation in the Welland Valley and the sequence of landscape change which followed. Applying a similar methodology to Scottish evidence Bennett (14) relates changes in the pattern of woodland to grazing pressure from about 4000 BP, and Macphail *et al.* (121) explain how the study of soils using micromorphology can help establish the past record of cultivation where none is obvious in the field. In this context Evans (62) demonstrates that neolithic long barrows are a valuable information resource in their own right. Soil profiles from three examples provide insights into contemporary land use categories and environment on the English chalkland. Bennett *et al.* (13) examine a charcoal and pollen record for eastern England: although it has been suggested that charcoal reflects natural burning or burning for forest clearance, the results, it is argued, better provide an indication of settlement patterns and the intensity of occupation. This conclusion is supported by Peglar *et al.* (139) who report on a Norfolk case study. Experiments on the effects of charring will have ramifications: Boardman and Jones (17) show that some components, and to a lesser extent, some species of cereals are more readily carbonized, while Smith and Jones (169) further report that charring changes the characteristics of grape seeds from domesticated to those of the wild type.

The question of the transition to farming is widely discussed. Peterson (144) considers current models of the role of hunter-gathers in Ireland in the light of lithic and site evidence. Observations suggest that foragers occupied the same landscape and used the same resources as the colonists, gradually adopting new economic strategies. The

chronological overlap and coexistence is also emphasized by Green and Zvelebil (84) who present the first systematic overview of prehistoric evidence from the south-east of the country. This suggests an earlier date for the transition to farming in Ireland than in Britain by some 400 years. For a clearer understanding of the nature of the English transition Whittle (197) focuses upon a local study area, reconstructing the sequence of settlement and land use in the upper Kennet valley. This suggests that there was a gradual colonization of little-used mesolithic territory, either by offshoots from primary colonizers from abroad, or by part of an indigenous population pressured into change, or both. Stone monuments are coming under increasing scrutiny. Sherratt (165) observes that their distribution in north-west Europe coincided with areas where foragers had achieved considerable density and indeed formed perhaps the major proportion of the first farming groups, and Peters (143) cites Cornish examples which were positioned as if to demarcate different areas of land use. Their agricultural rather than ritual function is also stressed by Ward (191) in his article on an upland site in Wales. On early agriculture Manley (123) describes landscape features on the Denbigh moors which suggest parallels with Dartmoor and the Peak District during the Bronze Age, when a milder climate and rising population encouraged upland farming. The large-scale co-axial field systems are considered by Petersen (145) who raises questions about their chronology and function and Hillman and Davies (99) present results of an experimental approach to the measurement of domestication rates in wild-type einkorn wheat exposed to primitive husbandry. These show that under certain conditions crops could have become completely domesticated within as little as thirty years, without any conscious selection.

Current knowledge on the Roman landscape is usefully summarized by Fulford (72), and Hall (88) analyses a radiocarbon-dated pollen diagram from northern Ireland which dates the introduction of cereal cultivation on heavy soils here to between the 3rd and 5th centuries AD, much earlier than usual for this type of land. Continuing their work on the upper Severn, Allen, and Fulford (2)

* Publications are dated 1990 unless otherwise noted. References to articles or offprints should be sent to the Bibliographical Unit, Institute of Agricultural History, University of Reading. The Master Index containing over 40,000 classified references on British agrarian history and rural society can be consulted by appointment.

describe cultural debris and the landscape evidence which indicates a substantial two-stage reclamation of the tidal wetlands during Roman times. Greene (85) considers different views on Roman technology and argues from recent research that achievements in food production and transport in particular were impressive. The lines of continuity and transformation from Roman Britain to the successor Celtic kingdoms are discussed by Evans (61) who links major socio-economic changes to a collapse in the trading economy.

Settlement studies are breaking new ground. Air photography during recent dry summers has led to the identification by James (108) of a number of defended enclosures whose morphology suggests a new site type. Cunliffe (44) investigated the relationship of hill-forts to linear boundaries in the light of recent excavations in Hampshire. A pattern of change from open settlement to a densely occupied landscape with hill-forts is detected; this Cunliffe believes, followed a transformation from communally-owned land to the individual control of territories. Dyer's detailed local study (54) of a single woodland parish contributes to the wider enquiry into medieval settlement forms, continuity with Romano-British predecessors, and the evolution of a distinctive type of dispersed settlement. In his study of regional differences in European settlement Roberts (154) demonstrates the value of maps as an historical aid.

On primary sources of the medieval period Domesday Book receives most attention. Bridbury (22) stresses that its true purpose was to provide a record of estimated manorial income of tenants-in-chief, based upon hidage ratings, and highlights its limitations. In his own assessment of the source Roffe (157) emphasizes the lack of internal consistency and warns against its study in isolation from earlier material. The common belief that the survey was halted by the Conqueror's death is undermined by Lewis (117). He is supported by Bates (10) who further maintains that Domesday was part of an enquiry into tenurial disputes dating from before the Conquest and the instigator of many more enquiries which began after compilation. The English and Scottish chronicles are described and classified by Gransden (81) who provides an extensive bibliography, and Lawson (116) argues that the levels of tribute they report are not excessively high. This is disputed by Gillingham (79) who points out that they lack confirmation in the numismatic indicators of the time. The technical background of the DEEDS database of medieval charters is described by Gervers *et al.* (74) and Goldberg (80) evaluates the research potential of

urban listings used for collecting the fourteenth-century poll tax.

On medieval farming Witney (205) shows how a rising demand for fuel led to changes in woodland management and distribution. The survival of manors despite their low output is considered by Pretty (150) who concludes that product diversification, co-operation, and the integrated use of resources represented the trading of high productivity for the more valued goals of low risk, stability, and sustainability. Cosgel (40) enters the debate on scattering in the open fields and calls for attention to be focused upon the interaction of lord and peasant in risk avoidance, and in an important study spanning the late medieval and early modern periods Bailey (8) demonstrates that the neglected fifteenth and sixteenth centuries represented a crucial time in the evolution of field systems in west Suffolk and perhaps beyond: contrary to the accepted views about the rigidity of common fields, those in west Suffolk underwent striking changes in productive capacity at this time. On social history Franklin's analysis (70) of manorial records leads him to conclude that Postan's use of feudal payments as a surrogate for demographic trends is fundamentally unsafe. The weakened position of landlords after the Black Death is underscored by Britnell's investigation (24) of estate policy in the Palatinate of Durham. Despite vigorous repression, peasant resistance and economic realism prevailed. The rarity of 'cham-part' or share cropping rent in medieval England is explained by Hilton (100), while evidence derived from the enforcement of labour laws is analysed by Penn and Dyer (140) to provide a picture of work patterns and behaviour. Findings indicate that using wage payments in seigneurial accounts alone to judge living standards can be misleading, since individuals preferred short term employment, were linked to a variety of occupations, and were highly mobile. The impact of the Peasants' Revolt on government is considered by Ormrod (133) and Jewell (110) looks at evidence on women in manorial records which suggests they were politically inactive, legally restricted, and economically disadvantaged.

Notable articles on the early modern period are again few in number with most concerned with property or the landed classes. The rise of the large tenanted farm in England is discussed by Hoyle (103) who links it to economic circumstances and changes in property rights rather than to class oppression by owners and the state (*pace* Brenner). The administration of monastic estates in Wales is examined by Gray (83). Thirsk (180) explores the forces which fashioned the English gentry during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries when they

became actively involved in progressive rural enterprises: classical works on agriculture, social networks, and the exchange of ideas were all potent influences. The strengths of the landowning élite are also emphasized by Jupp (112) who examines their power and adaptability during the period from the 1750s when social and economic changes threatened survival. In an account of a little known type of marriage settlement Erickson (59) shows from probate records how the device was used by individuals as lowly as husbandmen and labourers to preserve a woman's independent interest in property.

On early modern society, Wall (189) examines the personal correspondence of two sixteenth-century women to assess how far their attitudes corresponded with the literary models of deference and domesticity: unexpectedly they opted for a leading role in the management of the family estate. A study into death rates by Dils (49) indicates that the Civil War could have a severe impact: in Berkshire mortality was nearly 30 per cent above the norm due to military activity and deprivation. Bush (31) offers a careful analysis of the fiscal grievances underlying the Lincolnshire uprising and the Pilgrimage of Grace while von Friedeburg (188) assesses the roles of population growth, socio-economic change and the influence of Puritanism on criminality in an Essex village. The mid-seventeenth-century attitudes to poverty are explored by Mulligan and Richards (130) and Cunningham (46) investigates the neglected question of child labour.

The microcomputer revolution in economic and social studies is assessed by Middleton and Wardley (127) who describe the potential of the new technology for history teaching and research. The first issue of *Rural History* is strongly historiographical. Wrightson (207) is critical of the circumscription that he identifies as characteristic of English social history and Howkins (102) provides a fundamental challenge to approaches in the study of labour and the rural poor. The significance of folklore research and oral history for the development of rural studies is considered by Widdowson (198) and Reed (152) raises important questions concerning current research into household producers in nineteenth-century rural England. On the British economy in modern times Hoppit (101) returns to Crafts' estimates of national growth and emphasizes their fragile base. The effect of taxes, including the land tax, on the growth of the English economy is questioned by Beckett and Turner (11), who conclude that by restricting demand they hindered growth in the short term, but since they helped to secure markets abroad there were substantial long-term benefits. On investment,

Thompson (183) scrutinizes the Death Duty registers to determine how commonly the new rich purchased land. Findings show that the majority did buy sizeable estates while most of those that did not lacked heirs. Schmitt (160) uses traditional economic theory in his reassessment of agricultural productivity differences between Britain and France. By treating farms as households rather than as firms he reaches new conclusions on the relative achievements of labour. On the farming economy in England Bowie (19) contrasts the management systems of the northern wolds and Wessex downlands to demonstrate how closely they reflected regional pressures. The growth of the seed trade is traced by Thick (179) who assess its impact on gardening and agriculture. Interest in enclosure persists. Walton (190) discusses the validity of John Chapman's estimates of the acreages involved and Clark and Jones (36,111) debate the relevance of the cost of capital. In a partial rehabilitation of the Marxian interpretation Humphries (105) analyses the links between the loss of common rights and wage dependence amongst women to illustrate the gradual and uneven nature of proletarianization. On the Corn Laws Williamson (201) applies a computable general equilibrium model to determine who paid for the subsidy to grain producers. The answer depends upon whether the terms of trade gains from protection offset efficiency losses. There are numerous studies on population. Sharpe (163) discusses the value of total reconstitution and Post (148) provides a lengthy comparative analysis of mortality patterns in the 1770s. He concludes that the reason England escaped death-related epidemic disease at this time was linked to higher economic development compared with Europe, greater social order and a more advanced welfare system that cushioned the impact of a declining real wage. The particular economic and demographic conditions in Ireland that influenced household formation are explored by Guinnane (86) and in a detailed investigation into the local control of migration in the eighteenth-century Landau (115) relates the abolition of settlement laws to revolutionary changes in the agrarian economy, that rendered control obsolete. In a study of the timing of marriages Gunn (87) finds that the English abroad departed from the usual pattern of their mother country and planned them in accordance with the new seasonal pattern of agricultural tasks. The view that the Gordon Riots were confined to London is challenged by Haydon (94) who lists disturbances in the smaller towns and rural areas, and Mandler (122) charts the development of ideas which ultimately fashioned the New Poor Law.

On rural manufacturing Hudson (104) provides

a valuable summary of current thinking on proto-industrialization. The relevance of this concept to linen-producing households in Ireland in the eighteenth century is considered by Cohen (38) and Solar (172) analyses new data on the linen trade for the pre-Famine period. Hallas (89) focuses on the dynamics of the textile industry in England during the transitional phase from domestic to factory based production and explains the failure of some areas to embrace new methods. Perren's study of the food industry (141) asks why British milling lagged technologically behind her main competitors. He argues that this was not due to conservatism, institutional factors, or a lack of demand. Instead it was the nature of home grown wheats which offered little incentive to innovate. There is a growing number of articles on the recent past. In his study of landownership this century Thompson (182) considers how far the mighty have fallen. Overall he finds little justification for the owners' own perceptions of collapse and catastrophe. Winter (203) provides an historical explanation for the 'voluntarism' characteristic of policy on rural land use, and Jeans (109) charts the gradual emergence of planning controls in inter-war Britain to demonstrate how ideological conflicts and class power underlay the fight for restrictive legislation. The reasons for the post-1945 Labour Government's failure to implement its land nationalization programme are analysed by Smith (170), and Burkitt and Bainbridge (30) provide a damning critique of the Common Agricultural Policy: by creating food surpluses and higher prices membership has reversed British agricultural history at a cost to both producer and consumer.

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Conference Report: 'Rural Society and the Poor' Winter Conference 1991

By JOAN THIRSK

THE Society held its regular winter conference in London on December 7, 1991, in collaboration with the Historical Geography Research Group of the Institute of British Geographers. It attracted over fifty people, and on a frosty day, when some attenders had travelled in cold trains, it generated a welcome, convivial warmth, and stimulated lively discussion. The main theme of the meeting was 'Rural Society and the Poor', but in the event three out of the four papers, and much of the discussion, centred on the work, the sources of livelihood, and the social classification of small husbandmen and labourers. Dr Christine Hallas's paper on 'The Poor and Upland Communities: a Study of the North Yorkshire Dales in the nineteenth Century' kept most closely to the conference theme, and demonstrated how varied were the causes of poverty, the timing of crises, and the scale of necessary poor relief in Swaledale and Wensleydale. The differing geographical situation of the two dales, and the presence of lead in Swaledale and lower Wensleydale, but not in upper Wensleydale, explained much of the varied experience, and led her to divide the two dales into three regions with three separate histories. Wensleydale, and especially Upper Wensleydale, was affected by agrarian cycles of distress whereas Swaledale was more disturbed by depressions in the lead industry. So the periods of worst distress did not usually coincide in all three regions, though they did in the 1820s. Although a number of unions to set up workhouses were formed under Gilbert's Act, relieving the poor in this way cost more than outdoor relief, so numbers lodged in them were kept to a minimum. Outdoor relief was more appropriate, tiding over temporary difficulties, as in Swaledale where leadminers sometimes waited three or six months for payment for their labour. Some outwork, like knitting, eased poverty, but migration, as far as America, was a significant solution in the long-term, especially as leadmining declined in Swaledale, and in Upper Wensleydale no work offered apart from farming. Migration gradually showed its eroding effects on the total population of the area. Dr Hoyle asked about the role of schools, which were seen in the early

modern period as preparing the young for migration. Dr Hallas welcomed this suggestion for further investigation.

Dr Paul Glennie gave the first paper of the day on 'Early Modern English Labourers: Work, Income, Consumption'. His interest in labourers had been prompted by observations in Hertfordshire (published in articles in *Ag Hist Rev*, 36, 1988) which had shown more labour-intensive work being required on farms in the period, 1550-1700, and had set him wondering about its effect on the work, the range of skills, and the living standards of labourers. He had now used probate inventories, and farm and wage accounts in several English counties, as scattered as Hertfordshire, Worcestershire, Nottinghamshire, and Yorkshire, to extract all possible information. He separated labourers from cottage farmers, who were included in Professor Everitt's chapter on labourers in volume IV of *The Agrarian History of England and Wales*. Not much discussion took place after this paper on the validity of this firm distinction, though it arose in the course of other papers. But by confining his analysis strictly to labourers, so-styled in inventories and farm accounts, Dr Glennie was able to show certain clear trends in the period between 1540 and 1790. Labourers' ownership of cows, and their dairying activities steadily declined as did their participation in by-employments. They owned a dwindling number and range of working tools, at a time when the farm equipment, including labouring tools, of farmers was steadily increasing. Dr Glennie saw in this trend evidence that the work opportunities of labourers were severely narrowed, since their lack of tools prevented them offering their labour to a number of different farmers, while the limited range of their tools implied a narrowing of their skills. Evidence of less varied tools is sometimes viewed by historians as a sign of increasing specialization, and hence of a higher level of skill achieved in fewer operations, but Dr Glennie regarded it here as a clue to the deteriorating opportunities for labourers. Much other evidence was adduced, to which this summary cannot do justice, suggesting that labourers steadily came to depend for subsistence on wages and little else, and that their household possessions were meagre. They

included none of the up-to-date consumer goods which artisans, comparable with them in status in the towns, acquired. Dr Glennie's work is still in progress. He will explore more elements in a labouring family's resources in future. In diagrammatic form he showed their full range, including, of course, the labour of wife and children.

Dr Dennis Mills spoke on 'The Peasantry, the Poor, and Population Change in the Context of the Open/Closed Village Model'. Recent publications on open and closed villages, especially that of Sarah Banks in the *Economic History Review*, 2nd ser, XLI, 1988, and the book of Mick Reed and Roger Wells, *Class, Conflict and Protest in the English Countryside, 1700-1880*, had given a new look to an old problem. But Dr Mills maintained that the more refined analysis of the distribution of landownership has much to offer towards an understanding of the long-term development of villages. He reviewed his own work on open and closed villages, which, by uncovering in more detail the distribution of land, had introduced a more sophisticated classification of villages, and he emphasized the value of the concept of open and closed villages to local historians, since it gave them a broader perspective when studying single places. Dr Mills then turned to current debates on the existence of a peasantry in England, maintaining that while their disappearance from the English scene might be affirmed nationally by the nineteenth century, they still existed regionally. Disagreement reigns on the correct definition of a peasant, but he upheld one that allowed the peasant to have a combination of different resources, even on occasion to become a risk-taking entrepreneur. This broader definition was supported in the next paper by Alun Howkins, who had recently attended discussions with Spanish historians whose peasantry rarely owned the land they cultivated, and who took it for granted that they worked seasonally or intermittently for wages. Dr Mills concluded his paper by discussing poor rates and the density of population in relation to open and closed villages, underlining the need for a more careful interpretation of the financial burden. Total costs per parish were misleading when populations varied so markedly. It was essential to compare rates per head, and, moreover, to explain them fully by identifying the role of lords and local vestries in determining the level of assistance given to the poor. Dr Short observed a change in Dr Mills's emphasis on this score. He had formerly focused attention exclusively on measuring the distribution of land, but he seemed now to be examining the quality of power. Dr Mills acknowledged the importance of both elements in the situation. Large landowners who

were non-resident, for example, left a vacuum which others had to fill. A seemingly closed parish could well show a system of poor relief determined not by an all-powerful lord (who did not reside), but by others in the community with a different viewpoint.

Dr Alun Howkins gave the last talk on 'The Intermediate Workforce: Peasants, Labourers and Farm Servants'. He was concerned to retrieve from obscurity a very large group of people standing outside the conventional nineteenth-century division of rural society into landlords, tenant farmers, and labourers. In the whole of Britain the peasant population was large, but it had come to be ignored by economic historians who centred their work on the growth of agricultural production and interested themselves in England alone. The agricultural statistics, in fact, showed a remarkably large percentage of cultivators working 50 acres and less: in some parts of Scotland they represented 90 per cent, in England as a whole 70 per cent, and in Ireland between 78 and 84 per cent. Such peasants produced some food for the market, exchanged goods and services with each other, and worked intermittently for wages. No narrow definition of 'peasant' represented reality accurately. Living-in farm servants, similarly, are said to have disappeared in the nineteenth century, but, in fact, large numbers still existed in certain areas of the country, receiving part, or the bulk, of their payment in kind. Dr Howkins then offered some rough calculations suggesting that in 1880 Britain still had some 800,000 peasant farmers and in 1871 some half a million farm servants. A lively discussion ensued on Dr Howkins's use of 50 acres as the limiting definition of a peasant. Dr Chapman noted that in pastoral areas, the 50-acre peasant often had access to hundreds of acres of common grazing. Dr Broad asked how regionally static was the clustering of peasantry. Dr Howkins favoured the notion of some movement in their local concentrations: fruit and vegetable growing in the later nineteenth century, for example, supported new groups of peasants through a speciality which was seized when opportunity offered.

The different papers generated ideas which, in fact, deepened understanding of all the problems under discussion. Most enduring in memory was the evidence of Britain's rich regional diversity, and the manifold influences at work upon all classes in the social structure. Warm thanks were given to Dr Dewey for organizing so efficiently and hospitably (with wine and sandwiches served for lunch on the spot) a stimulating day. The congenial surroundings were due to the kindness of another agrarian historian, the Director of the Institute of Historical Research.

Book Reviews

D A CROWLEY, ed., *The Victoria History of the Counties of England: A History of Wiltshire*, XIV, OUP for the Institute of Historical Research, 1991. xx+267 pp. Maps; illus. £60.

The successive volumes of the *Victoria History of Wiltshire* appear with commendable regularity, and Volume XIV maintains the high standard established by its predecessors. This volume traces the history of the town of Malmesbury and twenty rural parishes in the north-west of Wiltshire, an area of flat, well-drained land, partly in the light soils of the Wiltshire Cotswolds and partly in the vale of the Bristol Avon. The ancient Benedictine abbey of Malmesbury dominated the whole area throughout the Middle Ages, while the break-up of its 23,000 acre landholding in these parishes at the Dissolution provided the foundation for the gentry estates which remain a major feature of the district. The most notable newcomers were the Howards, Earls of Suffolk and of Berkshire, whose mansion at Charlton Park is one of the grandest in Wiltshire.

Malmesbury abbey was founded in the mid-seventh century, but for the long history of this wealthy establishment and the story of its massive buildings the reader is referred to Volume III which was published in 1956. This latest volume, however, provides a detailed and well-documented study of the walled town and borough of Malmesbury, on its steep promontory between the two branches of the river Avon, and with its medieval castle built by Roger bishop of Salisbury, in c. 1130. By the time of the Domesday Survey Malmesbury was already well developed as a borough, with a mint, markets, burgesses, and active local government, and the town remained important as a cloth-manufacturing centre, but its market declined in face of competition from Chippenham, Tetbury, and Cirencester, while the suppression of the abbey, the constricted site, the absence of major routes and the late arrival of a railway meant that it remained small and commercially undeveloped. As a result the plan and street pattern of the town has changed little since the thirteenth century.

A feature of this volume is the well-chosen illustrations, including numerous examples from the Buckler collection and other early paintings in Devizes Museum, among them several houses and churches which have been demolished. There are also clearly-drawn maps of most of the parishes,

including useful depictions of the topography of Malmesbury. The volume provides a mass of detailed information and valuable references which will be an invaluable source for future local historians.

J H BETTEY

MARTIN INGRAM, *Church Courts, Sex and Marriage in England, 1570-1640*, 1990. xiii+412 pp. 2 maps. £14.95 (pbk).

Martin Ingram undertakes four tasks in this authoritative study of the church courts before the Civil War. He provides a fine description of the practice of the courts, placing his central study of the diocese of Salisbury in the context of existing work on other dioceses and his own comparative examination of the jurisdictions of Ely, Leicester and Chichester. At the same time he defends the courts against charges of incompetence, weakness, and corruption levelled by contemporaries and historians. Third, by focusing on cases on sex and marriage, he seeks not only to measure the courts' effectiveness but also to delineate changing attitudes on these issues. And finally, by setting his study carefully in the economic and social geography of Wiltshire (he excludes the largely independent archdeaconry of Berkshire), Ingram undertakes the commendable project of testing the effectiveness of ecclesiastical justice in different economic and social settings, contrasting the south-east chalklands (manorialized, conservative) with the north-west dairy and cloth villages (more open and unstable).

Ingram almost brings off all of this ambitious programme. Yet one feels not quite convinced. In part this results from the cautious presentation of contradictory evidence and counter-interpretation which sometimes leaves the reader wondering if opposite conclusions might not be equally valid. More problematically, given that the terminal event of his study is the abolition of the courts by the Long Parliament, Ingram's revisionist apology for the courts is neither entirely convincing nor does it help to explain the events of 1640. He argues that the fundamentally effective courts were undermined only by a few minor flaws, exacerbated by unfair Puritan criticisms and a coincidental slight decline in standards of administration in the 1630s. An appearance rate 65 to 75 percent of those summoned was 'respectable', and anyway the courts' effectiveness lay as much in the persist-

ent raising of issues of morality and the like as in reaching a conclusion in a given case. Over all the problems were no worse than was true of the legal system in general, and 'the wonder is, that it was done at all'. But when a quarter to a third of society will not even respond to the summons of a court, to argue that this was little better than any other court of the time seems to suggest a picture of endemic disorder hardly supportive of Ingram's underlying theme of fundamental stability.

Ingram's use of the carefully delineated social and economic context is also unconvincing. His interpretation of the evidence on sexuality and marriage would have been enhanced by more than passing attention to the gender of the persons involved. Economic context also seems to play a surprisingly small role in his interpretation. Little sign of the differences between the chalk uplands and the dairy and clothing regions emerges either in terms of attitudes toward sexuality or in the effectiveness of the courts. We learn that traditional marriage practices persisted longer in the conservative chalkland villages; and that, not unexpectedly, illegitimacy rates were higher in crowded cloth-making areas. Yet overall there is little to choose between chalk and cheese.

Ingram's revisionistic purpose of apology seems to blunt his sensitivity to social and economic contexts. The courts, he argues, were effective primarily with the respectable, stable 'honest householders'. But these middling folk were also almost by definition less likely to be affected by economic change in, say, the cloth industry, or to fall on hard times in agrarian crisis. Ingram's thesis thus leads him to neglect the very members of society who were most sensitive to economic circumstance – the young, the poor, the migrant. He highlights instead the chalky-cheese homogeneity of stability.

Doubtless the church courts were better than their critics believed. Perhaps, too, English society in the first decades of the seventeenth century really was fundamentally respectable and conformable. Perhaps economic context did have little effect. Yet this careful defence of the church courts in such a society leaves one wondering even more about the events of 1640. A revisionist's diet of cautious continuity and coincidence may be a healthy regimen, but like chalky cheese, it leaves the reader hungry for something more.

BARBARA J TODD

SUSANNA WADE MARTINS, *Historic Farm Buildings*, Batsford, 1991, 256 pp, 133 illustrations, £25;
SUSANNA WADE MARTINS, ed, *Old Farm Buildings in a New Countryside*, The Historic Farm Build-

ings Group, 1991. 48pp. illus, £5 + £1.50 p + p from the editor, Centre of East Anglian Studies, University of East Anglia, Norwich NR4 7TJ.

Long and short-term change – mechanization, farm amalgamation, the European market – have in recent decades made thousands of British farm buildings redundant. Their predicament is now a cause of concern for many interests, and these publications focus attention on their historical importance.

Historic Farm Buildings is of direct interest to members of this Society since it seeks to contribute to the debate about the process of agricultural change. In purely architectural terms it covers much of the ground dealt with by other published national surveys, but its new feature is the depth of understanding given by a detailed regional base with buildings and documentary evidence meshed to provide a rounded picture of development. The book is divided into three parts. The first gives a national overview of the development of British agriculture and farm buildings. Being buildings-based, it inevitably concentrates on the post-1750 period, since only from that period do large numbers of farm buildings survive. Evidence from across Britain is used where available, but there is a particular emphasis on Norfolk, the area of the author's own research.

The second part is a detailed study of nine blocks of land in Norfolk, selected to cover a variety of natural conditions and tenurial types. The author is concerned to study the issues of regional variation and of improved agriculture, attempting to get behind the propaganda of agricultural commentators and large estates. Buildings therefore potentially become a primary historical source and can show who first introduced new methods, how widespread they became, and how quickly they were adopted. The author is fully aware of the complex reasons for the pattern of surviving buildings. She shows that early surviving buildings can represent later poverty rather than early wealth and that estate building depended on individual landowners and on whether they also derived income from non-agricultural sources. In addressing these questions, clearly documents play a large part. The discussion is a little marred by the difficulties in picking out the principal conclusions from a mass of detail, and a more thematic treatment instead of the strictly geographical and therefore repetitive one adopted might have presented the historical issues more coherently.

The last part of the book discusses different building types and farm layout. It also summarizes the evidence for landlord involvement in farm building, showing important differences over time, and develops the question of regional variation.

This goes part of the way towards answering the earlier criticism about the approach to these major issues. In summary, the book takes the study of farm buildings considerably forward by showing how architectural and documentary evidence need to be combined and how when given a firm regional base they can contribute to current historical debate. When the author's plea for more detailed regional studies – perhaps on the Norfolk model – has been answered, new light on the development of farming across the country will be provided.

The second book is a collection of papers given at a recent conference. This drew together all sides involved in the issue of farm buildings management – landowners, working farmers, central and local government agencies, architectural historians and others. Its intention was to highlight the historical value of farm buildings and to further the process of developing strategies to deal with the crisis which they face. Papers covered a broad range, presenting the full ramifications – economic, social, environmental – of the present problem. There are, of course, no easy solutions, but this book outlines some hopeful initiatives on the part of individuals, planning authorities, and governmental agencies. It was a thoroughly worthwhile venture and will help to further the process of education crucial to the survival of farm buildings.

COLUM GILES

ELENA PAPAGNA, *Grano e mercanti nella Puglia del Seicento*, Edipuglia, Bari, 1990, xvi + 159 pp. 8 tables; 4 graphs; appendix, L. 24,000.

When Osbert Sitwell visited Apulia in the late 1920s, he remarked that an extraordinary ignorance prevailed about these southern Adriatic provinces, seldom visited by English travellers, with a history clouded in obscurity. And indeed to this day, most English historians are much better informed about the commercial and industrial history of northern Italy than they are about the rural history of the south and the Mezzogiorno.

In the seventeenth century, the region specialized in the monoculture of grain (wheat and barley) and was traversed by a dense network of commercial relations. Landownership was oriented towards individual private property and the regional economy depended substantially on the stimulus of extra-provincial demand. This monograph attempts to reconstruct these developments which define the distinctive characteristics of the modern Mezzogiorno, and in particular to examine the impact of the crisis of the seventeenth century on the market for cereals produced in northern and central Apulia.

The analysis centres mainly on grain exports

from the port of Barletta during the years 1639–1688, for which a remarkable register has survived indicating anchorage and customs duties payable on vessels using the port. It is possible from this material to reconstruct both the changing course of grain exports and the pattern of commercial organization, including the identity of specialist merchants and commission agents. Few Dutch surnames appear yet the majority of the larger vessels employed in the trade are described as 'Flemish' indicating the substantial involvement of Dutch and Flemish merchants who presumably used local commission agents. Northern European domination of the trade petered out during the second half of the seventeenth century as the level of exports declined from its mid-century peak, and Italian merchants reasserted control of a much-reduced volume of trade, principally those of Genoa, Ragusa and to a smaller extent, Venice. Interestingly, the collapse in the region's cereal exports coincides almost exactly with the decline in the Baltic grain trade.

Useful information is also provided on changing regional price levels and seasonality. In common with other Italian centres, the collapse of cereal prices at Barletta in the 1660s was quite marked compared with many Northern European centres. This, together with the contraction of overseas markets induced a severe recession throughout all parts of the region dependent on cereal monoculture. For the farmers of Apulia, the seventeenth-century crisis spelt disaster.

DAVID ORMROD

PAT HUDSON, ed, *Regions and industries: a perspective on the industrial revolution in Britain*, CUP, 1989. xiii + 277 pp. £30.

Although this volume of essays had its ultimate origins in a CORAL conference, it is no mere collection of conference papers. Pat Hudson and her fellow contributors have created a wide-ranging and challenging series of original perspectives on the long-term nature of industrialization in the British Isles – not the 'Britain' of the title – and the social and economic contexts from which it emerged. The result is a book which raises questions about proto-industrialization, the determinants of continuing or truncated industrial development, and the regional experience of deindustrialization.

Its case studies cover the textile districts of Lancashire and the West Riding, by John K Walton and Pat Hudson respectively; the West Midlands (Marie Rowlands); Cumbria (John Marshall); the Kent and Sussex Weald (Brian Short); Scotland (Ian Whyte); and Ulster (Leslie Clarkson). Two other studies examine the themes of the book in

rather different ways: Adrian Randall explores the role of regional culture and custom in explaining the failure of the West of England woollen industry more fully to mechanize; and Neil Evans employs the comparative approach to highlight the critical differences between the great coal-producing regions of NE England and South Wales. The book evidently covers an impressive spatial and temporal range with great economy, and is prefaced by the editor's valuable general survey of the perspectives on development derived from the regional approach.

The quality of these essays is inevitably variable. Some, such as Pat Hudson's study of the West Riding, are effectively surveying areas which have been subjected to intensive modern research, and represent the distillation of its findings; Walton's study of Lancashire, produces the comforting confirmation of the work of earlier historians, primarily Wadsworth and Mann, but within a new conceptual framework; and others, such as the surveys by Short and Whyte, themselves distinguished agrarian historians, penetrate deeply into the interactions of agriculture and industry over several centuries to throw up new agendas for research. Certainly, the simplistic association of industry with upland, pastoral, and sub-marginal farming, which serves well enough in the Pennines, demands wholesale reassessment for Scotland and Ulster, and refinement elsewhere.

Overall, *Regions and industries* may not lead students of the eighteenth century wholly to reject the macroeconomic modelling which has established the new orthodoxy of gradual industrialization, but it does make a powerful case for the study of process over long periods. In that, the specific experiences of regions and localities are critical, and the complex relationships between farming and other sectors of the regional economy correspondingly highlighted. Agrarian historians looking to future research agendas will find much to ponder in this stimulating volume.

J A CHARTRES

ADRIAN RANDALL, *Before the Luddites. Custom, community, and machinery in the English woollen industry 1776-1809*. CUP, 1991. xvii + 318pp. £32.50

E P Thompson regarded the Luddites as 'a manifestation of a working-class culture' or as an industrial workers' sanction against unrestrained capitalism breaking down their community culture, and put the Luddites in a central place in the formative process of class consciousness. Though its impact was big, we have had very few systematic studies on the Luddites including regional differences in community culture.

Comparing the West of England with the West Riding of Yorkshire in the woollen industry, A Randall's work is outstanding in researching the important problems for the study of the Luddites; how the workers' community culture peculiar to a region was made, what characteristics it gave to their reactions against machinery, and why the alienation of workers from industrial capitalism and the state did not necessarily cause clear class consciousness before the Luddites. Chapter I reveals convincingly that differences in industrial organization caused the peculiar community culture to the West of England and to the West Riding. It was due to the *Verlagsystem* with social polarization in the former and to the *Kaufsystem* with social mobility in the latter. The different community culture made the different reactions against the introduction of machinery. In the West of England, the workers' strong resistance led to the delay of the diffusion of machinery and the continuance of the moral economy, while in the West Riding, the early acceptance of machinery led to the polarization of the community in 1802-6 and the violent machine breaking by the radical small producers affected by Jacobinism. Randall proves, however, that such resistance and their constitutional battle against the repeal of the old industrial laws, which was eventually defeated in 1809, did not lead to the making of the new class consciousness, since they held old values and attitudes and 'did not necessarily point in the same direction'. This work also contains valuable analyses of the extent of displacement of workers by machinery, and of the relationship between violent action and trade unionism. Readers may find the interpretation of the moral economy stimulating, while they might wish for a more detailed explanation of the paternalism or the reciprocity between the JPs and workers in the two regions. We need the local sources within parishes to understand workers' communities, but can hardly find them. Randall's arguments are solidly based on the British Parliamentary Papers, the Home Office Papers, and newspapers, and it makes the contrast of the two regions clear and his research successful.

KIYOSHI SAKAMAKI

J E ARCHER, *'By a Flash and a Scare': Arson, Animal Maiming, and Poaching in East Anglia 1815-1870*. Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1990. xii + 282 pp. 2 maps. £35.

Any sense of idyllic rural life is shattered by John Archer's detailed investigation of arson, animal maiming, and poaching in East Anglia between 1815 and 1870. Protest and social crime were not confined to the occasional dramatic, but atypical

outburst of collective unrest. Throughout the period the landed classes were under constant threat from covert, individual crimes motivated by anger at perceived injustices or desire for revenge. The dissimilar acts of arson, poaching, and animal maiming provide a good gauge to measure chronological and spacial change in the incidence of socially motivated crime. They also demonstrate the wide variety of those participating in what was considered by many in authority to be serious criminal behaviour. These ranged from the disaffected labourer getting revenge by firing his employer's barn to the vagrant wandering through the countryside, from the starving father poaching to feed his family to the professional gang selling illicit game to the rich, from the inadequate cowman exerting power over a creature weaker than himself, to the overenthusiastic horseman accidentally poisoning his animal with beauty creams.

Motivation is intrinsically difficult to assess. However, by using a wide variety of primary sources including court records, Home Office papers, Poor Law union records, estate papers, Parliamentary Papers, newspapers, and broadsheets, John Archer has teased out an impressive array of information. This is considered both thematically and chronologically. The survey of incendiarism through first the post-Napoleonic agricultural crisis, then the period of the Swing Riots, and finally the time of general agricultural recovery and High Farming makes it apparent that the focus of the crime changes from grievances on a local level between labourers and farmers to a less personal attack on property in general. From 1851 40 per cent of those convicted were either children or vagrants and tramps who received little benefit from the improvements in conditions and wages. The thematic sections cover the more predictable points such as labourers' wages and the changes in poor law regulations. Also included is a useful discussion of the concept of the altering definition of illegal behaviour and the problems of using terms such as 'social' or 'protest' to discuss actions which were at the time simply seen as offenses against property. The book looks directly at the myth of rural criminal behaviour in order to dispel the idea of a tranquil agrarian counterpart to the violence of the industrial town.

While the emphasis of the book is on exposing the myth of a serene countryside, it helps to perpetuate another. It associates the three crimes too closely with protest behaviour of the labouring classes. Other causes and motives receive only cursory consideration. England today has a comparable problem of unemployment and recession. However, few would generally assume that animal

maiming was symptomatic of protest rather than an indication of psychological inadequacy or the activities of some black cult. Although incendiarism after 1830 was most prevalent during periods of low wheat prices and increased insurance cover, the possibility that a number of fires might have been started in an attempt by farmers to defraud insurance companies receives only one page of discussion. To place too much emphasis on the less advantaged sections of the community is to do them a disservice. It is important to compensate for bias that is inherent both in society as a whole and in the source material produced by that society. This apart, the study is an important contribution to the understanding of rural criminal behaviour motivated by socio-economic conditions.

BETHANIE AFTON

W H CHALONER, ed D A FARNIE and W O HENDERSON, *Industry and Innovation: Selected Essays by W H Chaloner*, Frank Cass, 1990. xiii + 318 pp. £28. Specializing in economic and social history in the History department of Manchester University in the early 1960s, one could not fail to absorb two strands of a perceived common culture: first, the fundamental contribution of 'the Manchester School' to the fashioning of economic and social history as a discipline by such giants as Unwin, Ashton, and Redford; secondly a characteristic methodology which concentrated on people and historical contexts as the proper focus of study. The summation of a series of classic texts in the 1920s and 1930s were two works of synthesis by T S Ashton, one on the Industrial Revolution, the other concerned with eighteenth century England. The preface to the latter volume, in which Ashton recounts his disapproval of economic history derived from 'ism's', serves well as an apologia for the School.

However unfashionable Ashton's views appear today, there is little doubt that Bill Chaloner sat comfortably with such forebears at Manchester, where he spent his entire academic career. So much is made plain in the opening lines of the introduction to the first collection of his essays, *People and Industries*, and underlined, in words redolent of Ashton, in its two concluding paragraphs, reprinted here as a keynote theme. For Chaloner, as for the Manchester School and others such as Toynbee and Mantoux, the human agent was the key to economic change, not the interaction of impersonal market forces.

Chaloner's historical interests were spread wide, and so were his published articles. Many were seminal pieces, for example his essays on the early industrial growth of Manchester – still a strangely neglected subject – and warranted collecting

together from their original scattered publication outlets. The selection of essays contained in this volume well complements those appearing in *People and Industries*. Whereas the former were directed more to a 'popular' audience, typically readers of *History Today*, the items selected here display Chaloner's original researches and erudition. They comprise much of his best and characteristic work, including his studies of John Wilkinson and other engineering innovators, his work on the industrial history of Manchester, and his concern with the social dimensions of industrial change, notably his classic articles on 'The skilled artisans during the Industrial Revolution, 1750-1850', and 'The hungry forties'.

It is fitting that one of the two editors of this volume is Otto Henderson. 'Chaloner and Henderson' were one of the most well-known and enduring 'duos' of British historical writing in the 1950s, typified by their notable, not to say notorious edition of Engels' *Condition of the Working Class*, as well as their translations of Schlöte and Hoffmann. Scholars of quite different, quantitative tradition have good reason to be grateful for their work.

If by the early 1960s the giants of the Manchester School of economic history had, perhaps, passed on, they were followed in the likes of Willan, Chaloner, Henderson, Musson, Farnie by worthy successors. Time tempts one to nostalgia, as does acquaintance with the 'Chaloner memorabilia' emanating from his long association with the British Agricultural History Society. However, reading these familiar essays once again they come across, although inevitably a little dated now, as a valuable contribution to the development of the discipline.

GERARD L TURNBULL

G V DYKE, *John Bennett Lawes: The Record of his Genius*, Research Studies Press Ltd, Taunton, and John Wiley & Sons Inc, New York, 1991. xiv + 482 pp. £69.50.

If the respect of professional historians of science for the publications of retired scientists has in the past twenty years sunk to an all-time low, here is a book that deserves to expose prejudice and reverse opinion. Social and cultural histories, impressive, fascinating and indispensable as they undoubtedly are, not uncommonly minimize the importance of 'internal' developments which, for many scientists, remain the most important and most intriguing elements of the story.

George Dyke has done no more than compile an annotated list of the publications of a redoubtable Victorian man of science. But this has the salutary effect – in the absence, as yet, of the full

biography he first set out to write – of bringing to us, with authoritative informality, the gems to be mined amid the intimidating detail of a vast, and sometimes vastly tedious, life's work. Lawes is accessible at last; for this gift to the historian of agricultural science (or, at any rate, to his library) the author will surely inherit the gratitude of a generation.

The early contributions to the British Association meetings; the bold beginnings of the famous controversy with Liebig and the great series of papers that developed it; the commercial side of the work with artificial fertilizers; the systematizing influence of Gilbert in that extraordinary partnership of more than fifty years; the heroic failure to resolve the problem of legumes; the less well known work in animal chemistry and nutrition; the Woburn experiments; cattle disease, livestock markets, the value of silage, sugar beet, basic slag, thistles, sewage and the agricultural depression; all these, and more, were among Lawes's expert interests and all were contemplated by his tireless pen.

It is a remarkable record of energy and total commitment by a man who hardly reaches the peak of his career till his early 70s. And, at the turn of the century, the octogenarian is still to be found relentlessly at work. And on what? Nothing else of course than, 'Wheat grown year after year on the same land, at Rothamsted ...'. Lawes's enthusiasm never died. This timely commentary will ensure that our own is much enlivened.

STEWART RICHARDS

ROBERT S DUPLESSIS, *Lille and the Dutch Revolt: Urban Stability in an Era of Revolution, 1500-1582*, CUP, 1991. xv + 372 pp. 2 maps: 4 plates. £32.50.

This is an old-fashioned city case study which will be of limited interest to urban historians and minimal value to readers of this journal. Prof. DuPlessis is concerned with answering the question why Lille, one of the major new drapery towns of the Southern Netherlands, failed, unlike many other urban centres, to get swept up in the Protestant revolt against Spain in the late sixteenth century. To account for this Du Plessis looks first at the structural factors determining Lille's outlook and then at the swirl of religious and political events which affected the city from the 1560s. He argues that crucial factors in maintaining political and religious stability in the city included the conservatism of the dominant mercantile élite, the cohesion of the civic magistracy, and the interventionist policy of the authorities, who sought to help the small textile producers and prevent large-scale poverty, particularly among the light-

cloth artisans. The magistracy not only succeeded in maintaining political stability but held the line against Protestant activists, persecuting and harassing them. In essence Duplessis claims that by ameliorating economic and social conditions, city leaders managed to set up a cordon sanitaire against resistance and reform. The detailed chronology of the Revolt reveals episodes of tension and conflict with the Spanish regime, as Lille fought hard to preserve its rights and privileges against Brussels' religious and financial policies. But Lille remained the exception to the iconoclasm and rebellion which enveloped much of the country.

It is all too mechanistic. One would have liked to know more on why the magistracy remained so united against the reform movement. Comparisons here with some of the conservative cities of Northern France might have helped. We also need to hear more about relations with the adjoining countryside where there was much more support for Protestantism and where rural industry was engaged in fierce competition with Lille. How far was the city's Catholicism a response to the latter? Generally indeed very little is said about the city and its hinterland: there is nothing on patterns of migration and almost nothing on agriculture. Where, for instance, did Lille buy the corn for its civic granaries which protected the city from scarcity? Overall the study is curiously untouched by the exciting new work currently being undertaken by Belgian scholars on the cities and towns of the southern Netherlands. A rather strange book only for aficionados of the Dutch Revolt.

PETER CLARK

FLORIN AFTALION, *The French Revolution. An Economic Interpretation*, CUP/Editions de la Maison des Sciences de l'Homme, 1990. xviii + 226 pp. £25 (hbk); £8.95 (pbk).

This is not an economic history of the French Revolution, but rather an attempt to explain its political radicalization, and more specifically the Jacobin terror, as the product of economic factors. In its approach and its conclusions it forms part of the growing revisionist literature on the revolution, for Aftalion clearly rejects the interpretations of the terror offered by the Marxist and republican schools of French history, which see it as the result of internal division and foreign war. Instead he argues that it was the result of bad financial management and builds his case around the economic theories of von Hayek and the school of 'public choice'. Moreover, this is not just a theory confined to revolutionary France, for he believes that the cycle of political crisis, inflation, price controls, nationalization, centralization, and terror to have been the root cause of totalitarian

regimes in our own century too. This is a book with a message.

Aftalion's central argument is that the failure of the National Assembly in the latter months of 1789 to face up to the crucial problem of government debt, which had crippled royal government and precipitated the collapse of authority during the summer months, set the revolution onto the slippery slope to anarchy. It decided to pay off state debts by confiscating and selling church lands, and the value of these, added to the value of land subsequently confiscated from *émigrés* and political suspects, would probably have been sufficient to restore solvency, had the terms of sale not been so generous to the purchasers, allowing them to stage their payments over a twelve-year period. The result, according to Aftalion's calculations, was that up to three-quarters of the potential revenue from land sales was lost to the state, while the purchasers of *biens nationaux* – at least until 1797 – did very well indeed. Inflation was the key to their success, for church lands were to act as the initial guarantor for the issue of paper currency, or *assignats*, which could be used for land purchases and destroyed as they were paid in. However, to tide over the short term budgetary problems, *assignats* were issued in ever increasing amounts and they rapidly devalued. Bad money chased out good, currency became scarce, peasants withheld surpluses from the market rather than accept payment in dwindling paper money, and the market in manufactured goods collapsed. The resultant economic crisis provoked an authoritarian response, which led inexorably to the terror. The only alternative, in Aftalion's analysis, would have been for successive revolutionary assemblies to have controlled their expenditure, and enforced a rational taxation system. Certainly the latter was badly needed, for the tax returns for 1790 and 1791 were more than 50 per cent below target, because inadequate data existed for the proper assessment of land and property, and the vast majority of municipalities were ill-equipped to tackle the complexities involved.

Agrarian historians will find little of specific interest to them in this book, for although Aftalion deal briefly with land sales, and assesses the impact of the revolution on the rural economy in a brief concluding chapter, his main concern is with financial and political matters. In his analysis of these he is both original and provocative. On the question of *assignats*, land sales, and the drift towards a controlled economy, he provides an excellent analysis of the financial problems that the revolution created for itself. There is no clearer account currently available in English, and he fills a gap in the available literature. Yet his claim that

financial problems alone 'can provide a perfectly satisfactory explanation as to why the French Revolution ... degenerated into looting, Terror and dictatorship' clearly stretches his case too far. Revolutionary legislators may have been poor economists, and they often dodged difficult decisions by throwing up a smokescreen of patriotic rhetoric, denouncing non-existent plots and imaginary enemies of the people. Mistaken economic policies clearly played an important part in the radicalization of the revolution between 1790 and 1793. Yet they were far from being the only factors at work. Political divisions, social conflict, ideology and the strains imposed by war, all played an important role too, and it makes little sense to write them off as subsidiary factors, subordinate to the economic. Aftalion has therefore written a stimulating book, but one which gains much of its clarity from reliance on a monocausal argument. Much like the more hard-line Marxist school of history which he criticizes for its reliance on the theory of class conflict, Aftalion squeezes reality into too simple a mould and tells only part of the story.

HUGH GOUGH

GEORGE R BOYER, *An Economic History of the Poor Law, 1750-1850*, CUP, 1990. xiii + 297 pp. £27.50.

This quantitative study is a very useful addition to a field that has too often been dominated by administrative studies of a qualitative nature. It is welcome too for taking a period that covers both the Old and the New Poor Laws, and focusing on the strategic question of the balance of continuities, as against changes, made by the Poor Law Amendment Act of 1834.

The historiography of the poor law may be divided into a traditional or contemporary critique of the Old Poor Law (which concentrated on its economic impact), a neo-traditional analysis (of the causes as well as results of the allowance system), and a recent revisionist 'school' consisting of Blaug, Baugh, and Digby among others (who questioned the nature of the relationship between the poor law and the rural economy). This reviewer must therefore declare an interest in this volume since some hypotheses which George Boyer tests were among those advanced in my own work on the basis of work on archival sources. Boyer provides a substantive contribution to revisionist analysis with his econometric testing of key elements in the discussion. Overall his results support revisionist thinking.

What conclusions are reached which either extend or modify current debate? Boyer aimed to analyse the central economic reasons both for the

adoption of the outdoor allowance system before 1834, and for its persistence after it. His analysis of the reasons for the adoption of outdoor relief rather than of any other is important. Using a model based on a theory of implicit labour contracts, Boyer tested, and found in favour of the hypothesis that contracts containing seasonal lay-offs and outdoor relief minimized costs for agricultural employers in grain-producing, southern areas, where demand for labour was markedly uneven during the farming year. Another question of general interest from the 1830s to the present day has been the economic impact of the New Poor Law on rural labourers. Boyer provides a further impetus to this controversy by disagreeing with the recent work of Keith Snell and others. Boyer concluded that farmworkers' living standards were not adversely affected by the New Poor Law to any great extent - mainly on the grounds that rural labour was more mobile. Poor relief is thus seen as having had much less impact in slowing labour mobility than is often assumed.

These and other arguments are set out in a clear, cogent, and persuasive analysis. The author has also attempted to make his work accessible to the less numerate reader by helpfully stating, 'Non-quantitative historians might want to skip this section and go directly to section ... which summarizes the results obtained from this model'.

When taken together with other recent work on poor relief (particularly that relating to support in old age), this thought-provoking volume will place the poor law squarely on the main agenda of the agrarian, and the economic, historian.

ANNE DIGBY

ALUN HOWKINS, *Reshaping Rural England: A Social History 1850-1925*, Harper Collins Academic, 1991. xiii + 305 pp. £35 (hbk); £11.95 (pbk).

This book arose out of an undergraduate course given by the author. For the 'Reshaping' of the book read 'Remaking' of the lecture course. It must have been rewarding for the students because the variety of experiences of rural life in the period under review are brought vividly to life. This is a well-researched book unspoiled by the rhetoric and exaggerated political stances of so much social history writing. The politics and social theory may be present but they are not worn on the sleeve, and neither is there much time for a romantic appeal to a world we have lost. Let us rid ourselves of the one quibble first. For 'Reshaping Rural England', an active image, perhaps 'Rural England Reshaped', a more passive, matter-of-fact, passing of time image would have been better. This betrays this reviewer's belief that by the late nineteenth century, certainly with free trade in place, the

British economy, especially its agricultural sector, was fashioned less by internal forces and more by externalities. We do not deny that 'men make their own history' (p 222); they do shape or reshape the personal and mainly local collective conditions under which they live to a degree, but the superstructure is surely outside their control. Dr Howkins might counter that his book is more about the bricks than the foundations and the frame.

The long period under review is sub-divided into neat shorter ones. They are mostly, or even entirely, created by economic forces, and less by social change. The first is 1850-75, the period of 'High Farming', though this precise economic description had equally precise rural regional, and technically agricultural, emphasise. Nevertheless, aristocratic, absentee-landlord England was resplendent if insecure. The second period is the partially overlapping years 1872-95. This was 'The Great Depression', and the exposure of class relations in the countryside. The resulting adjustments to agricultural practices, to the blend of factors of production, led to crisis for landlords, tenants and labourers alike in many places. We see in this period an obvious expression of the reshaping of rural England in the form of accelerating rural depopulation. The third and last period is 1895-1925. This embraced the slimmed-down survival of the fit and the rise out of depression into what Dr Howkins calls a 'New Rural England', followed by the relative boom of the Great War, and then the betrayal of agriculture when the Corn Production Act (1918) was repealed in 1921 with the ending of guaranteed prices. The cumulative effects of landed indebtedness and pre-War adjustments in death duties, and other factors, led to the triumph of the farmers over the landed interest in one respect at least. Citing Professor Thompson we learn that 25 per cent of the agricultural land of England was transferred to the farmers (by sale). Ironically they came into their inheritance by a social and economic revolution not of their making or necessarily of their desired timing, and they inherited the crisis of a World glutted by food.

This reviewer describes the chronology in economic terms. Dr Howkins appreciates the forces of economic change but overwrites them with the consequences for social change. This he does skilfully showing that the change was not cataclysmic but attritional. It is the idea of society in a wider sense which is one of the keys to this study, as is the specific and relatively neglected role of women. The new interpretative thread which runs through it is a sense of community. Dr Howkins discovers this sense and in so doing he also discovers the

chronological and spatial variety of rural social relations, and the ways they changed in response to mainly economic forces. It is a study which can be readily recommended.

MICHAEL TURNER

G K NELSON, *To be a Farmer's Boy*, Alan Sutton, Stroud, 1991. xxi + 177 pp. Illus. £14.99.

An appeal through newspapers for autobiographical information from elderly country people brought over 400 written and taped replies to Mr Nelson. This selection aims to 'present a comprehensive picture of farming and country life during the first half of the century from the point of view of farmworkers'. Where the extracts are long enough to give a sense of the contributor, they do give insight: the skill involved in even an everyday operation like using a draw well is revealed as far beyond the obvious flinging down of a bucket and winding it up, for instance. Farm mechanization, a fear of ill-health and concern with education, or a lack of it, are recurring themes. The author's grandfather, for instance, became the steward of a thousand-acre farm though he was illiterate. His wife handled his accounts and letters, a perpetuation of the typical pre-industrial partnership. The photographs are original and worthwhile.

Since contributions were accepted as sent, however, nothing is followed up and expanded, so the book cannot fulfil its intentions. The shorter extracts seem only to be predictable generalizations about life, and enough reminiscences have been published to make these superfluous. It is not belittling contributors to draw out of their reminiscences patterns that they themselves are not aware of, as long as the integrity of the original is respected, or to set their memories in a context for a reader. The introduction and conclusion do not do this: they are more the author's own contribution about his origins in a tied cottage in Norfolk in the 1920s than history. I found most worthwhile the extracts from areas I already knew about, but I was always aware that they could actively mislead others lacking such knowledge, which shows the limitations of this approach.

It is enjoyable if taken for what it really is, a collection of thirteen fragments from rural areas across the country. Three more books are promised, giving the views of women, farmers and children, but if it is preserved in an accessible form the archive Mr Nelson has created would interest academic historians more.

STEPHEN CAUNCE

PAMELA HORN, *Victorian Countrywomen*, Basil Blackwell, Oxford, 1991, viii + 281 pp. 30 plates, £35.

With the recent wide interest in women's history, *Victorian Countrywomen* will be welcomed by both academics and general readers as providing a useful addition to the growing body of publications on the subject. Pamela Horn, in ranging widely through aspects of family life and activities of all classes of countrywomen, provides a wealth of information on the topic. Through the breadth of her examination Dr Horn enables the reader to gain a sense of the disadvantaged existence which the Victorian countrywomen endured. The examples used demonstrate that boredom for the intelligent farmer's wife or the minor gentry woman was, relatively, just as destructive as the drudgery and overwork experienced by the female struggling at subsistence level. The book abounds with many snippets of information which contribute to the vast store of knowledge on Victorian country life. The events portrayed in the narrative implicitly confirm that economic strength was the key to the acquisition of equality or status and that, throughout most of the period, society and the legal system ensured that men retained that strength. A further implicit theme of the book is that of isolation. Given the size of rural communities, women of any class were isolated if they did not conform to the pattern of the majority.

A weakness of the book is that although countless snapshot images of countrywomen are presented, these are not developed and analysed in a manner that would further the present debate on the role and exploitation (or otherwise) of Victorian countrywomen. The widespread use of examples, often in the form of quotations, tends to result in the text being anecdotal rather than analytical and the lack of a coherent analysis of the material leaves the reader feeling somewhat frustrated. Several interesting appendices are included but again their presentation does not enable comparisons to be made, and disappointingly, no meaningful analysis of the data is included in the text.

As is usual with Dr Horn's work, the book is meticulous in its detailed collection of material and in drawing from a wide range of sources both in terms of type and of geographical area. *Victorian*

Countrywomen will take its place as a useful reference book providing a mass of interesting information about this topic.

CHRISTINE HALLAS

DAVID G ADAMS, *Bothy Nights and Days: Farm Bothy Life in Angus and the Mearns*, John Donald, Edinburgh, 1991. x + 90 pp. 20 plates. £7.50.

This fascinating account of life in Scottish farm bothies clears up many misconceptions about them, such as the erroneous linkage with 'bothy' ballads. The heart of it is a composite oral history, with a wealth of detail from men and boys who lived in them. A short introductory essay explains the origins and spread of this distinctive adaptation of the hiring of farm servants and it is aptly illustrated with photographs. Some of these are not only records but a part of bothy culture, consciously parodying the rough conditions with ritualistic set-pieces: axes ready to cut a cheese and oatmeal shovelled into a pot to be stirred with an old stick. Bothy 'chiels' ate oatmeal three times on most days, though Sunday breakfast made a change, with sausages bought the night before from 'mid-nicht' butchers who stayed open specially to serve lads returning to farms after a night out. What a life.

The shame is that the book is not longer and that the context and history of the system is not more thoroughly explored, for what there is whets the appetite for more. That an aggressively horse-oriented system could survive the tractor and persist into the 1970s, shows the tenacity of traditional arrangements when the socio-economic environment is favourable, even though the tradition itself was not ancient, but was created by the increasing use of horse-power from the late eighteenth century. It seems to have been the loneliness of the bothies that finally killed them, once the old comradely groups were not needed by modern farmers. The Scots spellings like 'Eftir the auld neep dreels were ploo'ed and harra'ed ...' seem overdone, however, especially when the author admits they make it harder for the contributors to read their own words, and when the dialect is so strong that no one would mistake the text for standard English.

STEPHEN CAUNCE

Shorter Notices

PETER EDWARDS, *Farming Sources for Local Historians*, Batsford, 1991. 226 pp. Illus. £17.95.

The recent decline in the number of postgraduate students researching agricultural history has been partly offset by increased amateur interest in the subject and by the rising number of those who are studying on a part-time basis. This book will serve very well as a useful introduction to those newcomers who want to look beyond a specialist interest to see what might be done on other topics and for other periods and to form a rounded view of the subject from the Middle Ages to the present day. It gives the amateur a sense of the current concerns of the members of this Society and helps to fill the gap between academic perceptions of the subject and the persistently old-fashioned views of agricultural history that are still widely prevalent.

Above all, it shows the amateur local historian what might be attempted in the sections of a local study that should be devoted to farming. Dr Edwards has bravely included a lot of material on medieval agriculture that will not be immediately accessible to the amateur because of the difficulty of reading, let alone understanding, the records. He faces this and other problems squarely while maintaining a tone of encouragement. His own strength is in the early-modern period and this enables him to convey a feeling of continuity, not only in the ways that people farmed but in the methods employed by historians to study the subject over the centuries.

The text is inevitably compressed, but the references and bibliography point the way to further reading. We should applaud the fact that an active member of this Society has written such a sound and informative guide that will encourage amateurs to make their own contributions to the subject.

DAVID HEY

PAS POOL, *The Field Names of West Penwith*, Treeve House, Connor Downs, Hayle, Cornwall, 1990. 102 pp. 1 map. £5.

West Penwith or Land's End peninsula is the part of Cornwall where the Cornish language survived longest, affecting settlement and field names until its final demise as a living language. The author is well-known for his research on the history of the area, and in an interesting introduction he

gives a brief sketch of the character of the region, and of the slow death of the Cornish language.

Unlike farm names which are recorded in West Penwith from the thirteenth century, not many field names survive from before 1500, and few provide evidence for agricultural history. Many refer to the shape, size, character or situation of the field, and only a few are named after crops. There are several *pillas* referring to the naked oat once extensively grown in Cornwall, and some refer to wheat, clover, flax or rye. Other names are an ironic reflection on the labour required for profitable cultivation especially on the granite uplands, with fields called 'Park Poor', 'Sorry Bargain', 'Hard Struggle', or 'World of Rocks'.

The main part of the book consists of a glossary which records, interprets and comments on the field names of the fourteen parishes of West Penwith. This is an important contribution to the history of the district and will be a useful source for all who are interested in the history of this attractive part of Cornwall.

J H BETTEY

IAN W ARCHER, *The Pursuit of Stability: Social Relations in Elizabethan London*, CUP, 1991. xvi + 307 pp. £30.

Apart from some brief discussion of the regulation of markets and attempts to ensure the maintenance of food supplies during the difficult years of the 1590s there is little here to attract an agrarian specialist, narrowly defined. But no one with a broader interest in the economic and social change of early-modern England can afford to ignore this richly textured study. The central issue – how late sixteenth-century London managed to avoid a social conflagration despite the existence of great tensions – has never been handled more adroitly. The crucial factors turn out to have been the cohesion of the élite and its responsiveness to popular grievances, the absence of a substantial and co-ordinated opposition, and the complex 'matrix of overlapping communities' to which citizens owed allegiance. In arriving at his conclusions Ian Archer has a great deal to say about the nature of local government in the metropolis – from grass-roots parish level to the upper reaches of the city council – about neighbourhood and local society, about standards of living and poor relief, and about criminality. The achievement is magnificent and this book will long command a

prominent place among the literature of Elizabethan England.

DONALD WOODWARD

DAVID EVELEIGH, *The Victorian Farmer*, Shire Publications, Princes Risborough, 1991. 32 pp. Illus. £1.95.

Substantial historical studies of Victorian farmers are few, so it is a brave author who seeks to cover such uncharted territory in a mere 6000 words and 50 illustrations. This particular foray comes off well. There are three main sections to the text: the farmer at work, the farmer at home, and the farmer's wife.

There are deficiencies, inevitably. Differences between regions and different types of farmer, while not ignored, are not conveyed to the full. This is essentially a descriptive and static picture. The period covered, to all intents and purposes ends at about 1875. This is most apparent, perhaps, in the section on the farmer's wife. After describing the making of butter, cheese and bread, the curing of hams, mention that such self-sufficient habits might have been declining in industrializing Britain appears as a tail-end piece.

Shire albums cannot pretend to be more than introductions to a subject. Accept this one as such, at bargain price, and it is not at all to be sniffed at.

JONATHAN BROWN

G E MINGAY, ed, *The Unquiet Countryside*, Routledge, 1989. viii + 136 pp. £30.

The Unquiet Countryside is a collection of eight articles, five of which were newly commissioned for the book together with three which appeared in *The Victorian Countryside* (1981). They create a broad study of unrest and criminal behaviour in agrarian England from the beginning of the seventeenth century through the Victorian Age. A wide variety of activities are explored. These include collective activities such as food and wage riots and machine breaking, the gang crimes like poaching, ship-wrecking and smuggling, and individual, often covert, acts like arson, animal maiming, and assault. Equally important for the balance of the book are the sections on related subjects, including the changing attitudes towards law enforcement and punishment, the formation of labour organizations, and the influence of the aristocracy through positive activities in the fields of education, religion, and housing, and negative ones like shooting and hunting.

While much of this collection is useful, it is difficult to understand why it has been published in this format. Articles in edited volumes are

notoriously difficult for researchers to locate. The overall quality is marred by the reliance on out-of-date secondary sources by several authors. Finally the price is high for only eighty pages of material which has not previously been published.

BETHANIE AFTON

P BOOMGAARD AND J L VAN ZANDEN, *Changing Economy in Indonesia: A Selection of Statistical Source Material from the Early 19th century up to 1940*, volume 10, 'Food Crops and Arable Lands, Java, 1815-1942', Royal Tropical Institute, Amsterdam, 1990. 144 pp. 1 graph; 2 maps. Dfl 48.

The series *Changing Economy in Indonesia* is made up of statistical studies of various aspects of the economy of the Dutch East Indies, and is invaluable for anyone working on that country, or interested in Asian development. Peter Boomgaard was the general editor of this volume on food crops and arable lands, and it maintains the high standards of earlier publications in the series such as volume 4 on rice prices. Particularly valuable are the comments on the work of previous researchers, and Boomgaard points out (p 24) that Clifford Geertz in his famous book *Agricultural Involution: The Process of Ecological Change in Indonesia*, (Berkeley, 1963), makes a fundamental error in calculating the area of land which could be inundated for rice in 1833. This leads him to believe the area was 1,270,000 hectares, when it was actually about half that, 642,000 hectares. As Geertz then says the 1833 figure was about a third of the 1957 figure, when it actually must have been a sixth, it follows that much of what he has to say about agricultural development in the Dutch East Indies is jeopardized. If the base year figure is halved the growth must have been far higher than he implies!

A J H LATHAM

GERALD D NASH, *Victorian School-days in Wales*, University of Wales Press and the Museum of Wales, 1991. 34 pp. Illus. £3.95.

Without knowledge of the provenance of this little illustrated booklet it might be wondered why it was published at all: it is almost entirely derivative, based, apart from material from the Royal Commission on Welsh education of 1847 and some school records (particularly those of the village school of Maestir, Dyfed), on a limited number of secondary works. It is, however, written by an assistant keeper at the Welsh Folk Museum, St Fagans, Cardiff, where Maestir school has been re-erected and the Victorian schoolroom restored. Here modern schoolchildren may take part in a re-enactment of a Victorian school day and become

acquainted with the artefacts of the past. The booklet in fact represents an informative introduction to the history of Welsh education suitable for younger secondary pupils and the general public.

For historians of education it says nothing new, while agricultural historians seeking detailed background data on schooling and educational standards in the varied rural communities, and the relationship between education and the economic, demographic and cultural structure of such communities, will need to look further than this.

W B STEPHENS

SUSAN NEAVE, *Medieval Parks of East Yorkshire*, Centre for Regional and Local History, University of Hull, and Hutton Press, Cherry Burton, 1991. 59 pp. Illus. £4.95.

In this useful and attractive booklet Dr Neave has presented the documentary evidence for about fifty medieval parks in the East Riding. The earliest references date from the twelfth century, the bulk are from the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, and a handful are later. The geographical spread supports the view that the location of medieval parks corresponds closely with the areas of woodland that were recorded in Domesday Book. A large number of the best-documented parks appear to have been created without the approval of a royal licence, prompting the suggestion that a licence was sought only where a proposed park lay close to or within a royal forest.

The evidence is taken from estate papers, supplemented by the printed calendars of material held in the Public Record Office, the volumes of various record societies, and royal surveys of the sixteenth century in the PRO. As many parks were converted to other uses in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, the difficulties of providing a complete catalogue are formidable. Dr Neave suspects that many more parks were created than the surviving documentation allows. She appends a selective list of 20 places where field or farm names incorporate the words 'park' or 'lawn'.

The first park of the booklet contains introductory comments on management and economy, on emparking and the local community, and on the permanent effects on the landscape. (There is little or no evidence that emparking led to depopulation.) This section is followed by a gazetteer, which gives documentary references and plots the larger parks on first-edition six-inch ordnance survey maps. A number of colour illustrations enhance the appeal of a publication that should attract good local sales and the attention of medieval agrarian historians in other parts of the country.

DAVID HEY

M W THOMPSON, *The Rise of the Castle*, CUP, 1991. ix + 205 pp. 115 illus. £19.95.

The medieval castle survives as a potent symbol of aristocratic control in Britain. In 1988 Dr Thompson examined *The Decline of the Castle* between 1400 and 1650; now he has published a handsome 'prequel' concentrating on the period 1050 to 1400, principally in England and Wales. The main theme of his enquiry is the tension between comfort and defence or between the hall/palace and the defensive enclosure. By comparing the situation in Norman England with contemporary developments in France and Germany, he stresses the castle's role as primarily domestic and administrative, relegating military requirements to a secondary concern. He traces the changing balance in emphasis over the next two centuries. The fourteenth-century developments are interpreted as uncomplicated desires to express status in the 'cult castle.'

The author has provided a well-illustrated and well-researched account, drawing upon recent discoveries and making effective use of medieval literary sources. However some plans are reproduced at too small a scale or include extraneous information. The index needs greater attention to detail. Some readers may be disappointed that this survey is more concerned with surviving buildings than with the people who lived in them or constructed them. The chapters on the castles as midwives of monasteries and of towns tend to focus on impersonal structures rather than on vibrant and fluid personal economic forces. There is deliberately little about the mechanics of building or the minutiae of warfare. Yet within his self-imposed constraints Dr Thompson has provided an attractive and readable account.

LAWRENCE BUTLER

F G EMMISON, *Elizabethan Life: Home, Work, and Land*, new impression, Essex Record Office, Chelmsford, 1991. x + 364 pp. £9.95.

This reissue will serve to remind some and introduce others to this most useful but peculiar work. In its own words, its object is 'to present to the economic and social historian, as well as the local historian, a substantial corpus of new evidence' (p viii). This it does, its three sections drawing respectively on wills, quarter session records, and manor court rolls. There is interesting material throughout; that on the regulation of trade in the 1590s might be especially noticed. The book concludes with the best available discussion of the work and jurisdiction of manorial courts in their Indian summer. But at worst the book is a mere compilation from the records and the whole is untroubled by statistics, any sense of chronological change, or

the world outside Essex. It is both a vintage work and period piece, dating from an age when archivists retained historical pretensions. There is no attempt at updating, not even a supplementary bibliography. A book to plunder, rarely to ponder.

R W HOYLE

DON COLE, *Farming, Farmers and Farms in a Yorkshire Parish: Adel, Cookridge, Eccup, Arthington, Breary, 1540-1940*, The Author, 20 Cookridge Avenue, Leeds, LS16 7LZ, 1991. 64 pp. Illus. £3.50 (+ £0.34 p & p).

The parish of Adel, the subject of Don Cole's well-illustrated pamphlet, is an interesting case-study in farming, a zone of relatively recent specialization on the northern fringe of a major industrial city, Leeds, but historically an area of extensive, near-marginal, pastoral agriculture. This pamphlet is intended for general readership, being written for popular sale with the profits dedicated to charity (Action and Research into Multiple Sclerosis), and inevitably there are elements which the specialist rural historian will find unsatisfactory. However, here is an enthusiastic recording of farmsteads, boundaries, and locations, detailing the families and collecting much basic information from the older inhabitants of an area which, from the 1920s, has been rapidly engulfed by sprawling suburbia. Don Cole's interesting compilation perhaps indicates the need for professional, long-term,

studies of farming in the urban fringe. For those with an interest in the area, and its residents, including this reviewer, this pamphlet proved an enjoyable stimulus to further thinking.

J A CHARTRES

NICK LYONS, ed, with maps by Rex C Russell, *Enclosure in Context in North-West Lincolnshire, Commentary and Documents*, Scunthorpe Borough Museum, Scunthorpe, 1988. 130 pp. Illus. £5 (+ £1.50 p and p).

Largely as a result of the painstaking work of Rex Russell and his colleagues a good deal is now known about the individual enclosures of north Lincolnshire. In this volume Nick Lyons attempts to provide an overview of the process, and to place it in a geographical and historical context. It offers a comprehensive review of the literature on the agricultural development of north-west Lincolnshire, and it performs a valuable role in stressing the importance of non-Parliamentary enclosure in the area. The geographical context is rather more scanty, and is not very closely linked to the enclosure material itself. The documents which make up the second half of the volume are an interesting selection, but it seems curious, in view of the title and the avowed aim of providing background for schools, that there is no abstract from an enclosure award or act.

JOHN CHAPMAN

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The AGRICULTURAL HISTORY REVIEW



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Millstones for Medieval Manors
DAVID L FARMER

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Small Farms in a Sussex Weald Parish, 1800–60
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Millstones for Medieval Manors

By DAVID L FARMER

Abstract

Demesne mills in medieval England obtained their millstones from many sources on the continent, in Wales, and in England. The most prized were French stones, usually fetched by cart from Southampton or ferried by river from London. Transport costs were low.

Millstone prices generally doubled between the early thirteenth century and the Black Death, and doubled again in the later fourteenth century. With milling less profitable, many mills in the fourteenth century changed from French stones to the cheaper Welsh and Peak District stones, which Thames valley manors were able to buy in a large number of Midland towns and villages. Some successful south coast mills continued to buy French stones even in the fifteenth century.

RICHARD Holt recently reminded us that mills were at the forefront of medieval technology and argued persuasively that windmills may have been invented in late twelfth-century England.¹ But whether powered by water, wind, or animals, the essential of the grain mill was its massive millstones, up to sixteen 'hands' across, and for the best stones medieval England relied on imports from the European continent. The accounts kept by manorial bailiffs and reeves record the purchase of many thousands of millstones, and in hundreds of cases the accounts name the quarry, village, town or port from which the stones were fetched.² A study of the manorial accounts provides useful information not only on the sources of millstones and the changing pattern of purchases in the fourteenth century, but also on medieval transport arrangements.

English mills obtained their stones from several sources.³ The great majority of

millstones were bought in a port or other town; demesne mills bought relatively few at quarries. The most prized stones came from France, from the Seine basin east of Paris. In later years these were built up from segments of quartzite embedded in plaster of Paris, held together with iron hoops. There is no archaeological evidence that such composite stones were imported before the seventeenth century, but the language of the manorial accounts – for example, references to pieces of millstone, hoops, and repairs with plaster of Paris – and the premium price always paid for French stones both suggest that some medieval imports may also have been of this type.⁴

The other stones imported in quantity from the continent were cut in one piece from basaltic lava in the Niedermendig district of Germany and exported from Cologne; from this city they gained their nickname of 'cullens'. Shipped down the Rhine, they went primarily to the ports of eastern England and were widely used

¹ R Holt, *The Mills of Medieval England*, Oxford, 1988.

² In this paper I use the word 'quarry' to include surface workings.

³ Part of the material for this paper was collected during sabbatical leave in 1983/4, assisted by a grant from the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada. The remainder has been obtained from microfilm sources, and I express my gratitude to St Thomas More College, University of Saskatchewan, for assisting with the costs of purchase. The sources studied include all the Pipe Rolls of the Bishopric of Winchester, and most of the manorial accounts of Glastonbury Abbey, Merton College, Oxford, Durham Cathedral Priory, Norwich Cathedral Priory, Canterbury Cathedral Priory, Exeter Cathedral, Bury St Edmunds Abbey, Westminster Abbey, Crowland Abbey, Osney Abbey, and New College, Oxford; and some of the manorial accounts of Battle Abbey, Ramsey Abbey, St Swithin's Priory, Winchester,

and the earldom of Norfolk. These sources were supplemented with material printed in J E Thorold Rogers, *History of Agriculture and Prices*, Oxford, repr. Vaduz, 1963, II, pp 430–3, III, pp 389–92. Dr John Langdon has kindly given me several important additional references.

⁴ D Gordon Tucker, 'Millstone making in Scotland', *Proc Soc Antiq Scot*, 114, 1984, pp 540–1, states that French composite stones came only in the eighteenth century, but agrees that they were distinctively expensive and that 'Monolithic millstones of French burr ... are very rare outside France.'

in the East and the North.⁵ Their price, characteristically, was between half and two-thirds that of French stones; the higher cost of the latter is therefore a reliable guide to their origin.

Many manors bought millstones cut in British quarries, and these were cheaper still. Wales supplied most of the stones for the Somerset mills of the Bishopric of Winchester and Glastonbury Abbey, and other Welsh stones were carted across England as far as north Hampshire, Wallingford and even West Wycombe. Millstones which probably came from the Peak District provided most of those bought by Thames valley manors in the later fourteenth century. Mills in central southern England obtained stones from the pits at *La Penne*, almost certainly Penselwood.⁶ This was the most frequently-named origin of the millstones bought by Longbridge Deverill (Wilts) and Rimpton (Som), and stones from Penselwood also reached Taunton, and Downton (south-east of Salisbury). Other English quarry sources included Congleton (Cheshire), Rawdon (W Yorks), and Dartmoor, though stones from these areas seem to have moved only to local mills.⁷

The costs of transport were such that bailiffs recorded the places of purchase and the expenses of carrying millstones more frequently than those of most other commodities the manors bought. But the surviving manorial accounts are mainly for

mills in southern England, the Thames valley, Somerset, and East Anglia, and doubtless record only a small minority of the locations where millstones were purchased. Table 1 summarizes the known places of millstone purchases mentioned in these accounts, but should not be taken as representative of the country as a whole. All this information is for demesne mills only: one guesses that the many peasant mills were more likely to get their stones from cheap local sources.

I

Almost the earliest surviving manorial accounts show how diverse were the places from which mills might get their stones. In 1231/2 the bishop of Winchester's Taunton mills bought three stones for 49s including the cost of carriage: one was from overseas, one from Penselwood and one from Wales.⁸ The bishop's Hampshire manors regularly bought expensive French stones in Southampton, while in the thirteenth century his Thames valley mills bought them in London. In 1244/5, for example, Wargrave bought a stone in London for 32s, and spent 31 1/2d more on ferrying it up the Thames to the mill.⁹ In the next decade the bishop's accounts record Chichester as an alternate source of French millstones, and name Bridgwater as the regular conduit for Welsh stones bought by Taunton. Some years Taunton's French stones came from Exeter or Topsham, and the bishop was able to use customary services to carry them.¹⁰ More frequently, though, his bailiff bought them at Wareham: for example, a *mola transmarina* cost 51s 1d to buy in the Dorset town in

⁵ M Watts, *Corn Milling*, Princes Risborough, 1983, pp 19-21; W Foreman, *Oxfordshire Mills*, Chichester, 1983, p 50. A H Graham ('The Old Malthouse, Abbotsbury, Dorset: the medieval watermill of the Benedictine abbey', *Proc Dorset Nat Hist & Arch Soc*, 108, 1986, p 122) found evidence of several of these types at a single site. In correspondence with me, however, Dr Graham has confirmed that these fragments cannot be dated accurately. I must also acknowledge gratefully the advice I have received on several matters from Martin Watts, Esq; I owe to him, for example, the information that German stones formed the majority of those excavated in the medieval village of Wharham Percy, Yorks. For help on geological problems I have turned to my eminent colleague, Prof. W A S Sarjeant, and his friends. None of these scholars should be held responsible for my arguments or conclusions.

⁶ See *VCH Somerset*, I, pp 27, 365-6, and II, p 558.

⁷ PRO, DL28 4/42.

⁸ Hampshire Record Office, Winchester [hereafter HRO], Eccles. 2/159282.

⁹ HRO, Eccles. 2/159287.

¹⁰ HRO, Eccles. 2/159450A, 159311, 159312; *The medieval customs of the manors of Taunton and Bradford on Tone*, ed. T J Hunt, Somerset Rec. Soc. LXVI, Taunton, 1962, p 4.

TABLE 1
Records of millstone purchases at certain towns.*

Place	1208-1300	1300-50	1350-1400	1400-54†	TOTAL
Southampton	60	74	72	21	227
Bridgwater	7	12	48	57	124
London	32	22	7	4	65
Penselwood quarry	9	9	13	5	36
Warcham	14	13	0	0	27
Ipswich	2	10	1	5	18
Bedford	0	5	9	0	14
Portsmouth	0	3	0	7	10
Thame	0	0	9	1	10
Chichester	4	0	3	3	10
Islip	0	0	8	1	9
Tewkesbury	0	8	1	0	9
Lymington	0	6	2	0	8
Cambridge	2	3	0	2	7
Exeter/Topsham	7	0	0	0	7
Banbury	0	2	4	0	6
Oxford	0	4	1	1	6
Yarmouth (Norf.)	3	3	0	0	6
Salisbury	0	5	0	0	5
Whitchurch (Bucks.)	0	0	5	0	5
Witney	0	0	3	2	5
Weymouth	5	0	0	0	5
Brackley	1	3	0	0	4
Colchester	0	0	2	2	4
King's Lynn	0	2	2	0	4

* Figures are for transactions, not millstones.

† Each period runs from 29 September in the first-named year to 28 September in the second-named year.

1270/1, and 10s to cart it to Taunton.¹¹ In total, however, English manorial accounts have more references to millstone purchases in Southampton than in any other place, as may be seen from Table 1 and from the Appendix at the end of this article.

Thames valley manors probably had the widest choice of sources. Witney bought stones in London in 1304/5 and 1319/20, shipping them up the Thames to Henley and Wallingford before carting them on to the mill; it fetched a millstone seventy miles from Southampton in 1320/1, and carried two stones thirty miles from Tewkesbury in 1317/8.¹² Later, however, Witney bought its millstones in neighbouring towns and villages like

Kingham, Islip, Burford, and, almost certainly, in Witney itself. In such places manors were able to buy Welsh and Peak District stones taken there by traders; there is nothing to suggest that demesne mills bought millstones cut from outcrops of Cotswold or other local stone. Brightwell frequently bought stones in London for Wallingford mill, but in 1337/8 purchased one in Tewkesbury and thereafter, like Witney, went to local markets. Up to 1300 Wargrave always bought in London, but carted millstones from Southampton in 1328/9 and thereafter got them in towns like Aylesbury and Thame. Holywell, on the outskirts of Oxford, in 1330/1 bought millstones in London, in Brackley, and in Oxford itself.¹³ Cuxham bought in South-

¹¹ HRO, Eccles. 2/159450B.

¹² HRO, Eccles. 2/159334, 159332.

¹³ Merton College Muniments [hereafter MCM] 4491, 4496.

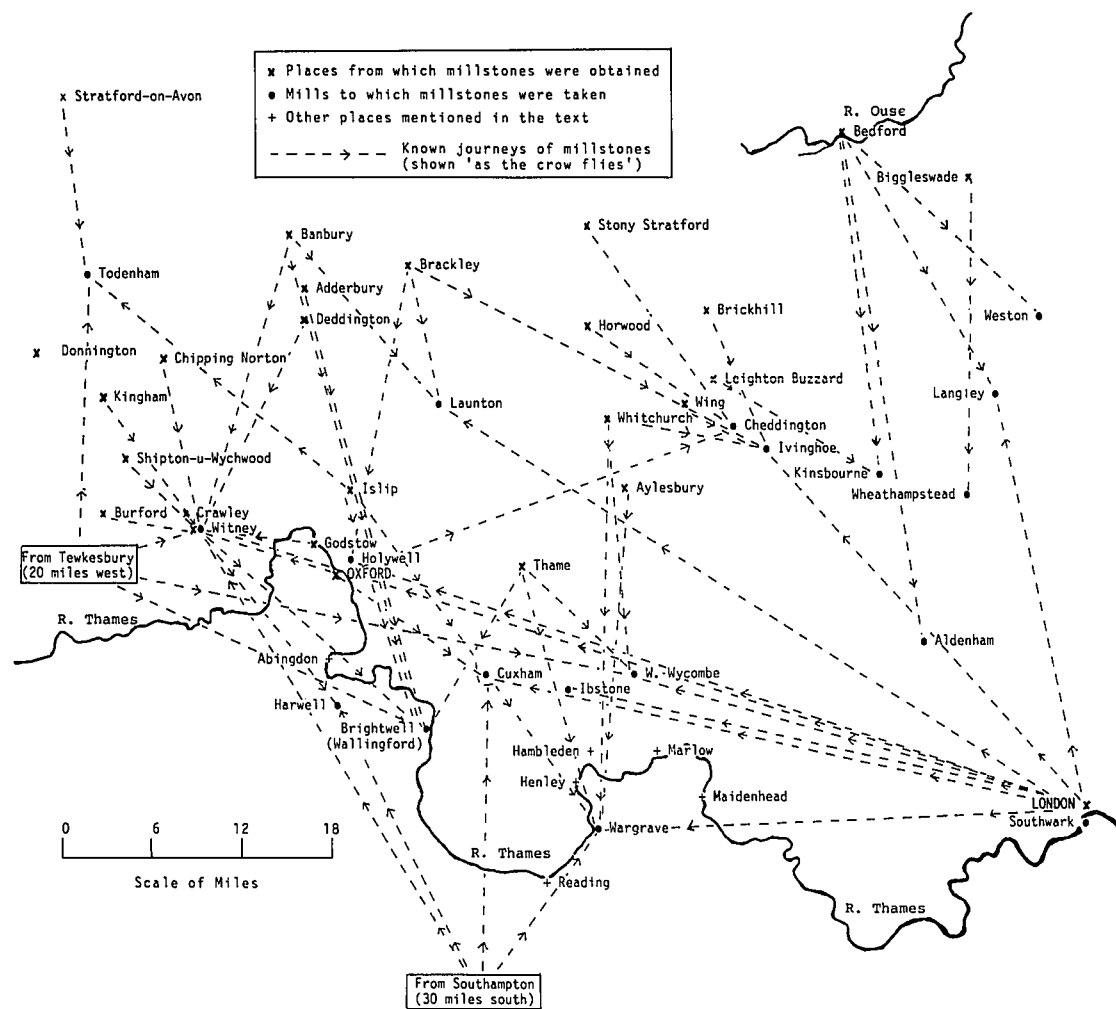


FIGURE I
Places from which millstones were fetched for south Midland mills

ampton in 1305/6, and in London in 1330/1.¹⁴ Launton in 1350/1 bought two stones for stock, and paid nothing for carriage because it purchased them in the village itself *de hominibus venientis de le Peek*; in other years it got stones in Brackley and Banbury, also – one assumes – from the Peak District.¹⁵ Figure I shows that the later journeys to fetch millstones for Thames valley manors were almost always made to towns and villages further north. This makes it much more likely

that unidentified stones came from the Peak District, rather than from Wales.

Ipswich was the source most often mentioned for millstones in eastern England. It supplied manors as far north as Hinderclay, as far west as Chesterford, and as far south as Bocking. Hinderclay also bought stones at Norwich, Lakenheath, Yarmouth and, probably, Beccles. The Essex manors of Birdbrook and Takeley purchased millstones at Colchester, and Takeley also at Maldon. Feering bought stones in London and had them shipped around the coast to Salcote or Maldon.

¹⁴ MCM 5827, 5841, 5853.

¹⁵ Westminster Abbey Muniments [hereafter WAM] 15345.

Norfolk manors most frequently record purchases at Yarmouth and King's Lynn. The few entries in manorial accounts for Kent name as sources London, Folkestone, and Sandwich. Not many of these journeys in eastern England were for more than twenty-five miles.

Cambridge was the usual place for purchasing stones for the mills in its vicinity. Further inland, Bedford furnished most of the millstones bought by Hertfordshire mills, though there are mentions of purchases in London and Leighton Buzzard as well. Buckinghamshire manors, like those of the Thames valley, chose from many sources: Ivinghoe and West Wycombe, from London before the Black Death, and from villages like Whitchurch and Thame after it. Ibstone bought in London, Cheddington at Stony Stratford and Great Horwood. Todenham, on the borders of Gloucestershire, Warwickshire, and Oxfordshire, bought millstones in Tewkesbury in 1307/8, Stratford-on-Avon in 1346/7, and Islip in 1374/5.¹⁶

In addition, there were many local sources for individual stones, as mills sold off those which were seriously worn or damaged. Even the major Winchester manors were willing at times to buy second-hand stones, especially for use as the lower or bedstone. Wargrave, for instance, bought used stones in 1265/6 and 1297/8, and in 1384/5 Farnham paid as much as 40s for one.¹⁷ Burghclere windmill bought two pieces of old millstone in 1335/6 for 3s 4d, and fixed them together with plaster of Paris for an additional 4s.¹⁸ Cheriton in 1345/6 bought two stones to make a bedstone, for 7s including repairs.¹⁹ In the calculations and observations which follow, however, these second-hand stones are ignored.

II

It can be seen from the examples above that millstones from abroad were available for sale in a limited number of major seaports, while those carted from English outcrops, pits and quarries could be bought in a multitude of towns and villages. To deliver the former required an integrated transport system: carts or sleds to carry French stones to the Seine and German stones to the Rhine, barges to move them down river, ships to ferry them across the Channel or the North Sea, perhaps more barges to take them up river from London, Yarmouth, or King's Lynn, and then more carts to deliver them to the mills.

One cannot calculate transport charges for continental stones, but payments for coastal shipping give some idea of the likely scale. Welsh stones bought in Hampshire ports in the mid-fourteenth century cost on average about 21s 6d after what were presumably journeys around Land's End, while those bought at Bridgewater in the same years averaged only 12s. One may guess that the freight cost about 10s a millstone. The charges for the French stones shipped the shorter distance from Le Havre or Rouen would probably have been less. For carrying such stones around the coast from London to Salcote in Edward I's reign, Feering paid 2s 9d, then 3s 6d, and then 4s 6d, not counting wharfage charges; in 1315/6 shipping a millstone from London to Maldon cost 6s 8d.²⁰

At each transfer point there was the difficult task of moving a stone, perhaps weighing nearly a ton, from one conveyance to the other. This is probably why most large stones were taken to ports that had cranes, or at least wharfs that facilitated unloading. In 1453/4 the Taunton mills made a bulk purchase of twelve millstones for £10, and paid in all 6s for

¹⁶ WAM 25938, 25962, 25973.

¹⁷ HRO, Eccles. 2/159297, 159316, 159391.

¹⁸ HRO, Eccles. 2/159347.

¹⁹ HRO, Eccles. 2/159355.

²⁰ WAM 25599, 25600, 25632.

'cranage' at Bridgwater and 20s for carting them from there to Taunton.²¹ Alresford paid 8d a stone in 1430/1 to the *custos* of *la Craan* at Southampton.²² When Havant bought a great millstone at Southampton in 1433/4 for £6, it paid a further 12d for taking it to the crane, 8d in cranage, 6s 8d for a barge to take it to Langstone, and then 12d for carting it to Ashwell mill.²³ By 1440/1 cranage at Southampton cost 12d a stone.²⁴

There were other charges. In 1330/1 Cuxham purchased five millstones in London for £15 16s 8d. It paid 1d in *argento dei* to seal the bargain, and spent 2s 1d, on five gallons of wine to celebrate. Loading cost 5s, with 7½d for wharf dues and 10d for murage. Shipment from London to Henley then cost 11s 2d, with 10d for murage en route at Maidenhead.²⁵ It was at Henley that stones shipped up the Thames were usually transferred to carts, though sometimes the unloading took place at Marlow or Hambleden.

The surviving accounts contain almost no explicit information on the use of rivers for transporting millstones in East Anglia. In 1370/1 Rickinghall bought a stone at King's Lynn, and then carted it from Brandon after what was almost certainly a journey up the Little Ouse, and the same river had probably carried the stones that Hinderclay purchased at Lakenheath in 1306/7.²⁶ Millstones bought at Norwich and Thorpe are likely to have been ferried up the Yare, and those at Beccles up the Waveney. Those landed at Ipswich seem always to have been moved onwards by road.

Equally, one has to infer the importance of the Severn in the west country from the dozens of purchases made at Tewkes-

bury, and a few recorded at Worcester and Berkeley. As the place where the Severn was joined by the Warwickshire Avon, Tewkesbury was better suited than Gloucester for using the waterways to forward millstones to purchasers. As in East Anglia, the final movement of the stone to the mill was usually by cart. The increased importance of horse-drawn carts in medieval transport has been too fully documented by Dr Langdon to need further comment here.²⁷

For the last stage of the journey, manors had two choices: they could use demesne carts with *famuli* and customary tenants to carry the stone from wharf to mill, or they could hire a carter on contract. Farnham in 1373/4 bought two millstones in London, and paid 9s 6d for them to be ferried up river to *Hamme* (perhaps Egham). It then hired a carter for 5s to take one stone to the mill, and allowed 2s for the expenses of six men with the manor cart fetching the other.²⁸

The most detailed list of expenses is probably for the two stones that Holywell bought in Southampton in 1335/6 for a total of £6 1s. The manor spent 10½d on the expenses of the *serviens* and miller going from Oxford to Southampton with two horses, and 14½d on their living costs there for two days. The miller stayed in Southampton for four days to drill the stones, with 4d a day for his board, 2s for the hire of tools, and 6d for the men helping to turn the stones. The *serviens* meanwhile went back to Oxford, at a cost of 8d, to collect reinforcements. With two carts, four more men, and seven cart horses, the expenses of the journey to Southampton came to 23d and those of

²¹ HRO, Eccles. 2/159444.

²² HRO, Eccles. 2/159449.

²³ HRO, Eccles. 2/159432.

²⁴ HRO, Eccles. 2/159436.

²⁵ MCM 5853.

²⁶ British Library, Add. Roll 63544; Joseph Regenstein Library, Chicago [hereafter RLC], Bacon MS 440.

²⁷ J Langdon, 'Horse-hauling: a revolution in vehicle transport in twelfth- and thirteenth-century England?', *Past & Pres*, 103, 1984, pp 37-66; *Horses, Oxen and Technological Innovation*, Cambridge, 1986, pp 76, 114-5, 142-3. The prominence of road transport in moving unwieldy millstones makes me view with caution the emphasis placed on water transport in J F Edwards and B P Hindle, 'The transportation system of medieval England and Wales', *Jnl of Hist Geog*, 17, 1991, pp 123-34.

²⁸ HRO, Eccles. 2/159381.

the long haul back to Oxford 2s 8d, with 6s 4½d spent on the horses for oats, 3s 9½d for horsebread, 10½d for hay, and 7d for shoeing. The *serviens* paid 14d for loading the stones into the carts, 3½d on timber and nails to fasten them securely, and 13d in tolls. Moreover, while the demesne men and carts were away, the manor was forced to hire replacements to help with the harvest.²⁹

The Winchester Pipe Rolls are not so detailed about the costs of carrying French millstones to Taunton, but the expenses recorded in the 1290s included payments of 15s for carriage (partly by sea) from Southampton; 19s 6d and 20s from Wareham; and 22s from Weymouth. On average, between 1290 and 1325, overland transport added about 31 per cent to the price of millstones Taunton purchased at the south coast ports. After 1326/7 it bought no more there.

Such lengthy and costly journeys were exceptional. More typically, Witney paid 40s 3d for a millstone in London in 1304/5, and 13½d for taking it from the wharf to the barge; shipment to Henley cost 2s, with 9d for transferring it to the demesne cart and packing it. The expenses of two men and four horses, for the three days the cart needed for the return trip between Witney and Henley, amounted to 18d, with 4d more paid in toll at Wallingford.³⁰ The immediate transport costs (without making allowance for the costs of the cart and horses, the stipends of the *famuli*, or the sale value of customary labour) increased the millstone's purchase price by a modest 14 per cent.

When the mills in Oxfordshire and Buckinghamshire turned to local sources for their millstones, carriage added only slightly to the total cost. In 1375/6, for example, Witney paid in expenses 6d to fetch a stone eleven miles from Islip,

Wargrave 18d for one from Whitchurch twenty-five miles away, and West Wycombe 20d and Brightwell 2s for bringing stones from Thames, respectively about ten and fourteen miles away.³¹ The average immediate cost added only 5 per cent to the purchase price. As jobbing carters increased their charges sharply after the Black Death, some manors made more use of demesne carts and customary labour, and more use too of the local markets where millstones might be bought. Figure 1 (p 100 above) illustrates some of these movements in the south midlands.

This information confirms that the medieval road system, at least in central and southern England, was adequate even for carting heavy items like millstones. It may have been even more comprehensive than that outlined by Dr Hindle, as many of the journeys recorded would have been difficult if satisfactory roads had not existed in addition to those shown in his maps.³²

III

Buying a millstone was a major expense. A single French stone often cost more than the mill's multure sales yielded, or the manor obtained from its lease, in a whole year. Few tenant millers could afford such expense, so leases normally obliged the lord, not the tenant, to replace a millstone when it was worn out.³³ These costs led lords, as has been shown, to seek cheaper alternatives to French stones; and they also forced lords to be unusually cautious over buying any sort.

²⁹ HRO, Eccles. 2/159456.

³⁰ B P Hindle, *Medieval Roads*, Princes Risborough, 1982, pp 34–51.

³¹ Holt's comment (in *Mills*, p 99) that, outside the eastern counties in the thirteenth century, millstones were the lord's responsibility, is rather too sweeping. The bishops of Winchester bought no stones for Witney's mills between 1321 and 1361; for Farnham's between 1299 and 1353; or Bishop's Waltham's between 1395 and 1454. The leases of East Meon and Burle mills to William Tyre and William Whetham in the fifteenth century, and of the Wolvesey mills to John Arnold in 1406/7 (HRO, Eccles. 2/159410) clearly left it to the tenant to buy new stones.

²⁹ MCM 4496.

³⁰ HRO, Eccles. 2/159408.

As stones were usually bought singly, not in pairs, buyers had to match the new millstone carefully to its future partner. For this reason manors customarily sent both the miller and the reeve or bailiff to make the purchase, the former to select a suitable stone and the latter to negotiate the price and arrange transport.

Choosing the stone was not always easy. In 1336/7 the Downton miller and reeve could not find a satisfactory millstone in Southampton, but were able to get one in Salisbury. After more purchases in Salisbury in subsequent years, Downton transferred its business to Lymington. In 1360/1 the miller made two trips to Lymington without finding a suitable one, and had to go back to Southampton to meet his needs.³⁴ Farnham usually bought its millstones in London, but in 1356/7 had to send its officials 'to Chichester, Southampton, and elsewhere through the sea-coast' to get what it wanted.³⁵ These were war years, of course, and plague mortality among the quarry workers may have made French stones more scarce.³⁶ The Farnham bailiff in 1410/1 ran up expenses of 6s inspecting stones at King's Lynn and Sudbury before making his purchase at Ipswich.³⁷

As with other major purchases, it was common to confirm the bargain with a small payment *in argento dei*.³⁸ This was usually the same whatever the size of the transaction. Cuxham paid a penny in London in 1330/1 on a purchase of over £15, while in 1308/9 Longbridge Deverill paid a penny on a stone bought at Penselwood for 8s, and another penny on a stone bought in Salisbury from Robert

Knogle for 46s 8d. This last is one of the very few entries that name the vendor – in this case a prominent Wiltshire wool merchant.³⁹ Another named dealer was John Gyford of London, who sold stones to Southwark in 1251/2 and probably 1262/3.⁴⁰ There is no record at all of the purchase of millstones at any market or fair; the very irregular nature of the trade and the weight of the stones ensured that they would be sold normally by merchants from their yards or quarries, or, at least, by traders operating outside the rigid framework of formal commerce. Launton's 1350/1 purchase of millstones 'from men coming from the Peak' may show that the producers themselves were active in marketing their stones (perhaps of necessity if the Black Death had disrupted normal trade).

In earlier years the bailiff seems always to have paid cash for the millstones, but in the later fourteenth century lords sometimes preferred to settle directly with the vendor. Bury St Edmunds abbey apparently did so with stones bought for Hinderclay mill at Yarmouth in 1372/3 and at Norwich in 1377/8 and 1384/5.⁴¹ The lords' distrust of reeves was probably the reason. They also rejected inflated claims for freight costs. The Bury St. Edmunds auditor cut from 1s to 8d what the Farnham reeve claimed in 1404/5 for fetching a stone from Brandon. Westminster Abbey in 1323/4 slashed from 8s to 6s the expenses claimed for carrying one from Bedford to Aldenham.⁴²

IV

Even those accounts which record the place of purchase only rarely state whether the stone bought was for milling flour or

³⁴ HRO, Eccles. 2/159348, 159371.

³⁵ HRO, Eccles. 2/159367.

³⁶ During the Napoleonic wars, special permission was given in 1809 to import French burr stones. See J Russell, 'Millstones in wind and water mills', *Trans Newcomen Soc.*, 24, 1943–5, p 55, n 1.

³⁷ Suffolk Record Office, Bury St Edmunds [hereafter SRO], E3/15.6/2.46.

³⁸ See D L Farmer, in Edward Miller, ed, *The Agrarian History of England and Wales*, III, Cambridge, 1991, pp 422–3.

³⁹ MCM 5853; Longleat House, Glastonbury Abbey Documents [hereafter GAD], 9641.

⁴⁰ HRO, Eccles. 2/159447, 159294.

⁴¹ RLC, Bacon MSS 485, 489, 495.

⁴² SRO, E3/15.6/2.42; WAM 26072.

TABLE 2
Highest millstone prices in England, 1290-1410*

Period†	South Coast‡	London	East Anglia	Welsh§	Midland¶	Penselwood
1290-1300	42s 0d	65s 0d	52s 0d	8s 0d	—	—
1300-10	42s 0d	57s 1d	32s 6d	11s 0d	—	8s 0d
1310-20	50s 0½d	62s 0d	39s 0d	12s 0d	16s 1½d	—
1320-30	65s 10d	69s 2d	42s 1d	11s 0d	11s 4d	18s 2d
1330-40	70s 0d	—	66s 8d	12s 9d	16s 0d	18s 2d
1340-50	106s 8d	88s 8d	—	12s 6d	14s 6d	18s 4d
1350-60	116s 8d	71s 1½d	—	19s 0d	20s 0d	30s 1d
1360-70	131s 8d	—	80s 0d	31s 0¾d	—	40s 4d
1370-80	133s 4d	146s 8d	68s 8d	24s 0d	28s 8d	31s 6d
1380-90	133s 4d	—	66s 8d	28s 2d	24s 0d	—
1390-1400	80s 0d	66s 8d	—	27s 2d	33s 4d	—
1400-10	103s 4d	53s 4d	66s 8d	32s 10d	25s 0d	27s 4d

* The price is the highest recorded in each area in each decade.

† Each period runs from 29 September in the first-named year to 28 September in the second-named year.

‡ Ports between Chichester and Lyme Regis.

§ Prices for Welsh stones bought by Taunton mills, normally at Bridgwater.

¶ Stones bought in inland towns north of the Thames (mainly from the Peak District).

for grinding malt, or describe it specifically as a *mola transmarina*, a *mola de Francia*, or a *mola de Wallia*. The price differences, however, are wide enough to help in identifying the source, if not always the purpose, for which a stone was bought.

By a considerable margin, the dearest were the French stones bought in London, the south-coast ports, and East Anglia. Table 2 displays the price, over ten-year periods between 1290 and 1410, of the most expensive millstones purchased in various districts. The contrast in price between these costly stones, and those bought in the Midlands, or from Wales or Penselwood, is obvious.

Table 3 lists the average prices of millstones bought in the same places or from the same sources over twenty-year periods between 1208 and 1454. This table shows the same contrast between south coast and London prices, on the one hand, and prices in the Midlands and for stones from Wales and Penselwood on the other. But the average prices in East Anglia were much less than those on the south coast and in London, even though the prices of the dearest stones were very similar. One may reasonably conclude that the majority of

stones bought in East Anglia were those of German origin and lower price.

Table 3 also shows the long-term changes in the cost of millstones. As can be seen, their price roughly doubled – in those areas for which enough records survive – between the early thirteenth century and the Black Death. It almost doubled again by the early fifteenth century. These changes are fairly consistent for all areas, except that the post-Black Death increase in the price of stones in the Midlands seems rather less.

Some other observations may be offered. Additional transport charges probably explain why the best millstones (that is, the French stones) usually cost a little more in London than in ports like Southampton. Some mills customarily paid prices that were slightly above the average, probably because they were built to take the largest stones available. These included the mills at Southwark, Downton and, in later years, Wolvesey. On the other hand, windmills usually paid prices a little lower than the average; there were sound engineering reasons why these flimsy structures would prefer small stones.

TABLE 3
Average millstone prices in England, 1208-1454*

Period†	South Coast‡	London	East Anglia	Welsh§	Midland¶	Penselwood
1208-20	[23s 0½d]	[29s 2d]	—	[5s 9d]	—	—
1220-40	[30s 1½d]	—	—	[5s 7d]	—	—
1240-60	26s 8d	45s 0½d	—	5s 10d	—	[8s 4d]
1260-80	31s 7½d	40s 2½d	[21s 0d]	7s 1d	—	[19s 1d]
1280-1300	45s 2d	45s 9½d	31s 9¾d	7s 2d	—	[13s 6d]
1300-20	47s 11¾d	53s 8½d	36s 0½d	10s 2d	[16s 1d]	[11s 3d]
1320-40	52s 4¾d	[55s 4½d]	34s 9d	11s 3d	[17s 6d]	15s 6d
1340-60	67s 11½d	[75s 0¾d]	[28s 3d]	12s 8d	[18s 1d]	17s 9d
1360-80	91s 5d	—	—	23s 5d	21s 0d	18s 10d
1380-1400	91s 5½d	[66s 8d]	—	25s 0d	22s 4d	30s 7d
1400-20	91s 6½d	—	[58s 10½d]	24s 11d	24s 2d	[23s 11d]
1420-40	117s 10¼d	—	—	[15s 7d]	[25s 0d]	[24s 0d]
1440-54	98s 4d	[53s 4d]	—	[16s 9d]	—	—

* Price is the mean of the annual average costs of a millstone (without carriage to the mill) in that area in the twenty-year period; where this mean is calculated from fewer than five averages, it is cited in brackets.

† Each period runs from 29 September in the first-named year to 28 September in the second-named year.

‡ Ports between Chichester and Lyme Regis.

§ Prices for Welsh stones bought by Taunton mills, normally at Bridgwater.

¶ Stones bought in inland towns north of the Thames (mainly from the Peak District).

Welsh stones sold in Somerset – identified by name more often than any others – cost mills less than those from other thirteenth-century sources except Penselwood. At Trelech quarry itself, millstones were bought for as little as 1s in 1308 and 1323. At nearby Tintern in the 1290s their price was only 3s or 4s⁴³; at Bridgwater the bishop's officials paid between 6s and 8s for them in that decade. In any one year there was little variety in the cost of Welsh millstones in Somerset; one may deduce that they were of consistent size and weight. Although their price doubled between the early thirteenth century and the 1340s, they were so much cheaper than imported stones that, as mentioned earlier, some Hampshire manors began to buy Welsh stones despite the added cost of transport.

The earliest specific records of Welsh stones in Hampshire are for Fareham's purchases in 1347/8 and 1348/9, at 22s 6d and 18s 0¼d respectively; but occasional low prices paid previously by Fareham's three mills – for example, in 1305/6,

1307/8, and 1338/9 – make it likely that they and other Hampshire mills had sometimes bought them before. Overton in 1339/40 paid the high price of 80s including carriage, almost certainly overland, for two stones from Berkeley in Gloucestershire, and as late as 1421/2 paid 36s 8d for a *Walissheston*, and 4s for transporting it from Wiltshire.⁴⁴

The quarries at Penselwood sold their stones at a wide range of prices. Longbridge Deverill bought a stone there in 1332/3 for 6s 6d, and another in 1333/4 for 18s 2d.⁴⁵ In 1276/7 Taunton paid 37s (including transport costs of about 8s) for a millstone from Penselwood; that year an 'overseas' stone delivered to Taunton cost 61s 10d, and a Welsh one only 8s.⁴⁶ The range of prices at Penselwood implies that it cut stones in a variety of sizes and, perhaps, qualities. While comments on costs therefore need caution, the movements observed elsewhere seem valid for

⁴³ HRO, Eccles. 2/159350, 159423. Martin Watts (*Corn Milling*, p 20) may be incorrect in stating that Welsh stones were 'more local in distribution' than Peak District stones.

⁴⁵ GAD 10602, 10603.

⁴⁶ HRO, Eccles. 2/159303.

⁴³ Rogers, *History*, II, pp 431-2.

Penselwood's prices as well: a doubling by the Black Death, and a similar rise after it.

In contrast, the prices paid in Midland markets seem relatively stable and consistent, though this is partly because there are no records of low-priced thirteenth-century purchases. In later years, these millstones cost Thames valley and nearby manors less than Somerset mills had to pay for Welsh stones, despite the long journeys from the Pennines. For example, two millstones 'del Piek' cost Wheat-hampsted 36s in 1406/7, with 10s 5d more for the cost of carriage from *Dykeleswade* (probably Biggleswade); even in the later fifteenth century a pair of stones could be bought at Yarncliff quarry in the Peak for only 7s.⁴⁷ In the Midland towns after the Black Death the price of a single stone rarely exceeded 20s, and it is not surprising that these millstones largely replaced those fetched from London, the south coast, or Wales. Largely, but not entirely: Ivinghoe in 1451/2 brought four stones from London for its rebuilt mill, and two of the carts that left Southampton in 1478 were carrying millstones to Abingdon and Reading.⁴⁸

V

French millstones, whether composite or unitary, were normally preferred for grinding wheat. One would therefore expect the mills that bought such stones to be the ones that milled the largest quantities and highest proportions of wheat. The mill accounts, which record the quantities retained as multure from what the tenants brought to the mill, seem to disprove this theory. It is possible, though, that demesne mills did some unre-

corded grinding for the lord, and that this work justified the purchase of expensive stones.

Table 4 lists the quantities and percentages of wheat kept as multure by the Bishop of Winchester's mills in two periods, at the end of the thirteenth century and the beginning of the fourteenth, before his northern manors had changed to stones bought in Midland markets and before the majority were leased out to farm. The only mills in the list which did *not* buy expensive stones – explicitly or presumably French – in those years were Bourne mill at Farnham, the South mill at Twyford, and Rimpton mill. The last of these bought cheap stones, probably from Wales or Penselwood; the others no millstones at all in this period.

Wheat formed less than nine per cent of the multure retained by mills with superior stones between 1284 and 1292. The mills at Ivinghoe and West Wycombe, and Park mill at Bishop's Waltham, seem to have ground no wheat at all, and those at Alresford, Cheriton, Twyford, and Wargrave only tiny quantities – even though most of these were communities with established markets. Those handling the highest proportions of wheat were the mills at Havant, Fareham, Farnham, and Wallingford. Close behind these was the mill at Rimpton, which had only the inferior millstones.

Some manors, like Downton and Longbridge Deverill, often recorded whether their new stones were bought for their grain mills or their malt mills. Even here there are puzzling purchases: why did Downton pay the unusually high sum of 53s 4d in Salisbury in 1334/5 for a millstone for malt, or Longbridge Deverill a mere 4s for a stone for its grain mill in 1360/1?⁴⁹ Most manors, though, paid fairly consistent prices for their stones, without discriminating between them. In

⁴⁷ WAM 8931; R Meredith, 'Millstone making at Yarncliff in the reign of Edward IV', *Derbys Arch Journal*, CI, 1981, p 102.

⁴⁸ HRO, Eccles. 2/159442; *The Brokage Books of Southampton for 1477-8 and 1527-8*, ed K F Stevens, Hants Records Series, XXVIII, Southampton, 1985, pp 80, 97.

⁴⁹ HRO, Eccles. 2/159346; GAD 10697.

TABLE 4
Average quantities and proportions of wheat in multure retained by Bishop of Winchester's demesne mills, 1284-92 and 1305-18.

Mill	1284-92		1305-18	
	Quantity	Percentage	Quantity	Percentage
Alresford: New Mill	2b	2	3b	5*
Alresford: Town Mill	1q 3b	2	4b	2*
Bishop's Waltham: East Mill	7½b	5	1q 2½b	11
Bishop's Waltham: Park Mill	½b	0	2b	1
Bitterne	5q 4b	14	2q 5b	9
Brightwell (Wallingford)	9q 6b	22	11q 4b	29
Burghclere	4b	3	1q 7b	10*
Cheriton	3b	2	*	
Downton	10q 5b	12	13q 4b	10
Droxford	3½b	2	*	
Fareham: Hoke Mill	1q 3½b	10	2½b	4*
Fareham: Sea Mill	1q	5	3½b	2*
Fareham: Walton Mill	1q 3b	17	2b	6*
Farnham: Bourne Mill†	3q 2b	9	4q 1b	19
Farnham: Medmill	3q 4b	20	*	
Havant: Ashwell Mill	4q	30	6q	37*
Havant: Brockhampton Mill	8q 3½b	31	9q 4b	15*
Ivinghoe	probably no wheat at all			
Overton: Lynch Mill	4½b	3	2q 1½b	19*
Overton: Odin's Mill	1q 2½b	9	1q 7½b	22*
Overton: Town Mill	4q 6b	12	4q 1b	12*
Rimpton†	2q 3b	18	2q ½b	16*
Twyford: North Mill	1b	2	*	
Twyford: Shalford Mill	1b	4	*	
Twyford: South Mill†	½b	3	[no mention]	
Wargrave:	1b	1	3b	5*
West Wycombe	probably no wheat at all			

* Figures are missing or incomplete because the mill was at farm for all or part of this period.

† Expensive millstones were *not* bought for these mills in these periods.

1452/3 Bishop's Waltham even exchanged the millstones between its grain mill and its malt mill.⁵⁰ One must conclude that many used good stones for grinding malt, and many others used cheap stones for grinding their wheat flour.

Where the manorial accounts record how much grain was taken in multure, they permit some calculation of a millstone's working life and cost to operate. In the first half of the fourteenth century Longbridge Deverill received on average about 27 qr 6 bu in toll grain and malt

every year; in the thirty-nine years for which accounts survive, it bought twenty-two millstones. If it levied multure at the common rate of a half-bushel from every quarter, the annual total milled would have been about 444 qr; each millstone, then, could be credited with grinding about 788 qr of grain or malt before it had to be replaced.⁵¹ On average the manor paid 16s 11d for each millstone, or about one farthing for every quarter milled. In other words, for every quarter

⁵⁰ HRO, Eccles. 2/159443.

⁵¹ These calculations and comments necessarily ignore any unrecorded milling done for the lord.

retained as multure the manor had to set aside about 4*d* towards a new stone.

Manors that always or usually bought French stones had higher costs. Bitterne between 1283 and 1293 received some £59 2*s* in multure sales (including the cash value of grain deliveries to the servants), but it spent £14 3*s* 3*d* on new stones – equivalent to 24 per cent of its income. Downton in the same period collected multure worth £188 14*s* and spent £25 12*s* 2*d* on millstones, about 13.6 per cent of its mill income. At Downton, the replacement cost of stones represented about 0.4*d* for every quarter of grain or malt milled, and at Bitterne about 0.7*d*; at Longbridge Deverill, which got most of its stones from Penselwood, it was only 0.25*d*. It seems to have been more economical for millstone purchasers to buy British.

VI

To examine in detail the financial problems of mills in the later Middle Ages is beyond the scope of this paper.⁵² On all estates, most of the demesne mills were already leased out by the early fourteenth century, and a century later the leasing policy was almost universal. In the process, much of the detailed information disappeared from manorial accounts. The only properties with records stretching into the fifteenth century were, with few exceptions, those of the Bishopric of Winchester; and so the bishop's mills must provide the concluding evidence.

By 1400 many of them had been abandoned, including those at Burghclere, Harwell, and Wallingford; the last of these reported in 1398/9 that the farmer, John Justice, had given it up and refused to hold it longer (though in 1408/9 he began a twenty-year lease of the fishing there

for 13*s* 4*d* a year).⁵³ Wargrave mill was leased with the whole manor; in 1419/20, however, the bishop reduced the rent by £2 because the mill was ruined, and it appears not to have been rebuilt. The bishop had rented out the Woodford mills at Witney for £14 3*s* 4*d* before the Black Death and for £13 6*s* 8*d* in the 1370s; but from 1396/7 until the Winchester Pipe Rolls fall silent in 1453/4 all he could get for them was £7 6*s* 8*d* a year. The bishop had replaced Ivinghoe's often-damaged windmill with a water mill in 1395–7, at the enormous cost of some £130 for the mill and its water-courses, but could get only 53*s* 4*d* in rent thereafter. In 1408/9 he reverted to an earlier technology and built a horse mill in its place; this was at first farmed for 40*s* a year, but by 1449/50 it was being rented to one Hugh Ramsey for a mere 20*s*.⁵⁴ Downton's mills, which before the Black Death had often brought the bishop over £40 a year from the sale of multure, yielded less than half that in the last quarter of the fourteenth century, and in 1411/2 were leased with the eel fishery for an annual farm of £16.

This decline, though, was largely confined to the bishop's northern mills. Those on the south coast, for example, at Havant, Fareham, and Bitterne, earned more money in an average year in the early fifteenth century than in the decades before the Black Death. Mills some way inland, such as those at Bishop's Waltham, Hambledon, and Overton, kept their incomes stable, and Alresford's actually doubled its contribution to the bishop's treasury. Such prosperity explains why these Hampshire manors continued to purchase the most expensive millstones when mills elsewhere had fallen down or, at least, had changed to the cheaper native stones. The 'golden age' of demesne milling may have ended, but, as Holt and

⁵² Dr John Langdon has recently started a major study of this subject.

⁵³ HRO, Eccles. 2/159403B, 159411.

⁵⁴ HRO, Eccles. 2/159402, 159403A, 159411, 159441.

Langdon have already noted, by concentration on larger mills able to make a profit, manorial lords sometimes stayed in the milling business and prospered from it.⁵⁵ And those sources of millstones that had developed in earlier, busier times continued to supply millowners with the essential tools of their technology.

APPENDIX

The list below summarizes the places from which millstones were obtained. Almost all of these are the places where the stones were purchased, but a few may be those where the mill took delivery of a millstone that had been purchased elsewhere. The county names given for identification are those of the pre-1974 counties.

i Ports

King's Lynn: Brancaster, East Wretham (Norf); Fornham, Rickingham (Suff).

Blakeney: Bircham (Norf).

Yarmouth: Ditchingham, Lopham, Walsham (Norf); Bungay, Hinderclay (Suff).

Beccles: Hargrave, Hinderclay, Redgrave (Suff).

Ipswich: Bocking, Claret, Monks Eleigh (Essex); Clare, Fornham, Hargrave, Hinderclay, Lawshall, Rickingham, Stonham, Wood Hall (Suff).

Colchester: Birdbrook, Takeley, Writtle (Essex).

Maldon: Takeley (Essex).

London: Wargrave (Berks); Ibstone, Ivinghoe, West Wycombe (Bucks); Feering (Essex); Child Langley (Herts); Westerham (Kent); Colham, Yeveney (Middx); Brightwell, Cuxham, Holywell, Launton, Witney (Oxon); Farnham, Lambeth, Southwark (Surrey).

Sandwich: Adisham (Kent).

Folkestone: Chartham, Appledore (Kent).

Chichester: Alresford, Bishop's Sutton, Cheriton, Hambledon, Havant (Hants).

Thorney by Chichester: Havant (Hants).

Emsworth: Havant, East Meon (Hants).

Langstone: Alresford, Havant (Hants).

Havant: Bishop's Sutton, Bishop's Waltham, Hambledon, Havant, Wolvesey (Hants).

Hayling: Bitterne (Hants).

Portsmouth: Alresford, Bishop's Waltham, Bitterne, Havant, Overton, Twyford (Hants).

Portchester: Hambledon (Hants).

Fareham: Havant (Hants).

Bitterne: Bishop's Waltham, Burghclere, Fareham, Twyford, Wolvesey (Hants).

Southampton: Wargrave (Berks); Alresford, Bishop's Waltham, Bitterne, Burghclere, Cheriton, Droxford, East Meon, Fareham, Hambledon, Havant, Odiham, Overton, Twyford, Wolvesey (Hants); Cuxham, Harwell, Holywell, Witney (Oxon); Taunton (Som); Farnham (Surrey); Downton, Marlborough (Wilts).

Lyminster: Downton (Wilts); Farcham, Wolvesey (Hants).

Poole: Downton (Wilts).

Weymouth: Taunton (Som).

Lyme Regis: Taunton (Som).

Topsham and Exeter: Taunton (Som).

Bridgwater: Rimpleton, Walton, Taunton (Som).

Bristol: Wrington (Som).

Berkeley: Overton (Hants).

Tewkesbury: West Wycombe (Bucks);

Todenham (Gloucs); Brightwell, Witney (Oxon); Pershore (Worcs).

Worcester: Pershore (Worcs).

ii Inland towns: the South

Blandford: East Knoyle (Wilts).

Chippenham: Wargrave (Berks).

Fonthill: Longbridge Deverill (Wilts).

⁵⁵ Holt, *Mills*, pp 167-8.

Penselwood (quarry): Brent, Rimpton, Taunton, Walton (Som); Downton, Longbridge Deverill (Wilts).
Salisbury: Downton, Longbridge Deverill (Wilts).
Winchester: Alresford, Bishop's Sutton, Bishop's Waltham (Hants).

iii Inland towns: the Midlands

Adderbury: Brightwell (Oxon).
Aylesbury: Wargrave (Berks).
Banbury: Brightwell, Launton, Witney (Oxon).
Brackley: Ivinghoe (Bucks); Holywell, Launton (Oxon).
Brickhill: Ivinghoe (Bucks).
Burford: Witney (Oxon).
Chipping Norton: Witney (Oxon).
Crawley (Oxon): Witney (Oxon).
Deddington: Witney (Oxon).
Donnington: Stone (Oxon).
Godstow: Witney (Oxon).
Islip: Wargrave (Berks); Todenham (Gloucs); Brightwell, Witney (Oxon).

Kingham: Witney (Oxon).
Oxford: Cheddington (Bucks); Cuxham, Holywell, Witney (Oxon).
Shipton [?-under Wychwood]: Witney (Oxon).
Stony Stratford: Cheddington (Bucks).
Stratford on Avon: Todenham (Gloucs).
Thame: Wargrave (Berks); West Wycombe (Bucks); Brightwell (Oxon).
Whitchurch: Wargrave (Berks); Ivinghoe, West Wycombe (Bucks).
Wing: Ivinghoe (Bucks).
Witney: Brightwell, Harwell, Witney (Oxon).

iv Inland towns: the East

Bedford: Aldenham, Child Langley, Kingsbourne, Weston (Herts).
Biggleswade: Wheathampstead (Herts).
Cambridge: Gamlingay (Camb); Chesterford (Essex).
Lakenheath: Hinderclay (Suff).
Norwich: Fornham, Hinderclay (Suff).

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Deer and Deer Farming in Medieval England

By JEAN BIRRELL

Abstract

The deer in the parks, chases and forests of medieval England were managed more actively, and with a greater skill and care, than is perhaps generally realized. Their owners derived considerable benefits from them, not only in the opportunity to hunt, which was often subsidiary, but in venison, a high status meat. Though deer were often privileged, deer farming was generally integrated into other agricultural or woodland activities; deer parks, in particular, were often efficiently managed units fulfilling a number of purposes, so much so that we should perhaps be cautious about dismissing them, as is so often done, as no more than status symbols.

DEER parks have had rather a bad press from medieval historians. They have conventionally been seen as 'obvious luxuries: a manifestation of conspicuous consumption'¹ and 'an unprofitable use of land',² If they were abandoned in the later Middle Ages, this was only 'a sensible economy'.³ But are such judgements justified? Or, to put it another way, do they help us to understand the great wave of park creation of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries? I want to argue in this article that, on the whole, they do not. Part of the problem lies in the difficulty of assessing the importance of the deer which the parks were created to protect, and which alone explain their impressive surrounding banks, ditches, and fences (or hedges or walls). We have long been familiar with the concept of parks as 'larders for live meat',⁴ rather than simply seigneurial hunting reserves, but the deer themselves have nevertheless received relatively little

attention.⁵ The problem is partly documentary. For a number of reasons, deer tend to slip through the usual documentary net, so that their importance is easily underestimated. Another difficulty is that parks served many purposes. Domestic animals might graze alongside the deer inside the park, and park woodland provided timber, wood, and other valuable resources, all of which were, in general, increasingly scarce and valuable as the thirteenth century progressed. The creation of a park tended to increase the owner's power over the resources enclosed within it, as the complaints of many ousted commoners testify. From a broader perspective, this should make us cautious about what might be simplistic judgements about the profitability of parks treated in isolation; more particularly it further diverts attention from the deer, so elusive in the documents, and makes it difficult, not to say unrealistic, to try to identify their specific contribution, or cost, to the park economy.

¹ Colin Platt, *Medieval England*, 1978, p 47.

² Paul Stamper, 'Woods and Parks', in G Astill and A Grant, eds, *The Countryside of Medieval England*, Oxford, 1988, p 146.

³ John Hatcher, *Rural Economy and Society in the Duchy of Cornwall 1300-1500*, Cambridge, 1970, p 184, quoted in both Platt, *op cit*, p 47 and Stamper, *op cit*, p 146.

⁴ O G S Crawford described them as 'enclosures for storing live meat in the form of deer and other animals' in his *Archaeology in the Field*, 1953, p 189; the idea also permeates the work of Professor Cantor, and many others.

⁵ Recent conspicuous exceptions which I have found particularly helpful include Oliver Rackham, especially his *Ancient Woodland*, 1980, pp 188-95, where medieval parks are described as essentially 'a utilitarian enterprise producing meat', p 197; E Roberts, 'The bishop of Winchester's deer parks in Hampshire, 1200-1400', *Proceedings of the Hampshire Field Club and Archaeological Society*, XLIV, 1988, pp 67-86; and P Franklin, 'Thornbury woodlands and deer parks; the earls of Gloucester's deer parks', *Transactions of the Bristol and Gloucestershire Archaeological Society*, CVII, 1982, pp 149-69.

I

However, evidence about the deer exists, even if it has to be sought across a wide range of documents from different places and sources at different periods, and it is on the deer, the ultimate motive for the parks, that this article concentrates. It is clear that parks could and did support considerable herds, and that their owners could draw on them for supplies of venison on a far from negligible scale. This might be for their own household consumption, in particular at festivals when guests were entertained, or simply to serve as gifts, whose importance should not be underestimated in a society where largess and patronage were crucial attributes of lordship. Parks also provided the opportunity to hunt. How often, in practice, lords chose to hunt in their parks is open to debate; it must have depended on the nature and size of the park, as well as on personal preference, and in any case habits no doubt changed over time. The paucity of evidence for seignorial hunting has surprised some writers on deer parks;⁶ it may simply reflect the fact that it happened less frequently than is sometimes supposed. However that may be, hunting there was, on a regular and systematic basis, but by servants, charged with the task of supplying their employers with deer, alive or dead, as required.

It also needs to be emphasized that it was very far from being a matter of erecting fences round a suitable stretch of ground, discouraging poachers, and leaving the rest to nature. Deer were managed in the Middle Ages, skilfully and intelligently, using methods which showed considerable understanding of the animals' habits and needs. Further, though the management of deer reached its most advanced form inside parks, where it can perhaps justifiably be described as 'deer

farming', it was also practised over a much wider geographical area, in the royal forests and chases. These were institutions with an active deer management policy, and cannot be understood without this point of reference. Indeed, deer management was sufficiently widespread, and on a sufficiently large scale, to be seen as a significant aspect of medieval agriculture. There were some seventy royal forests in medieval England, a large number of chases, or forests in private hands – perhaps as many as there were royal forests – and a far larger number of parks – the number has been put as high as 3000.⁷ Not all these parks were in existence simultaneously, and not all of them necessarily contained deer throughout their existence; and, like the parks, the royal forests and chases were not exclusively devoted to deer. But the fact remains that deer were receiving a degree of protection and management over a very wide area, and the history of medieval deer farming needs to be integrated into the agrarian history of medieval England, rather than seen as an unclassifiable and insignificant aberration.

This is not to claim, of course, that deer farming was simply another branch of agriculture, equivalent to, say, sheep farming. Throughout the Middle Ages, it retained a peculiar and ambivalent status, which is in itself not without interest. It is, for example, noticeably absent from the discussions of agricultural methods, estate management, and accounting in the various treatises devoted to these subjects which were compiled in the Middle Ages, mostly in the thirteenth century.⁸ The exception is the *Husbandry*; it briefly mentions parkers, along with haywards and grangers, when discussing estate officers,

⁶ For example, Roberts, *op cit*, p 70; Hatcher, *op cit*, p 184. A study of seignorial hunting on the basis of historical, as opposed to literary, sources would be very useful.

⁷ M Bazeley, 'The Extent of the English Forest in the Thirteenth Century', *TRHS*, 4th ser, IV, 1921, pp 140–72; Stamper, *op cit*, p 140.

⁸ D Oschinsky, ed, *Walter of Henley and other Treatises on Estate Management and Accounting*, Oxford, 1971.

and includes 'any wild beast' (that is, deer) in a list of creatures for which 'one does not render account', apparently on the grounds that 'many people do not have or raise ... them'.⁹ Though perhaps odd grounds on which to base such advice, this was nevertheless an accurate observation, at least for its time: deer farming was widespread, but at the same time confined to an élite. Deer in the royal forest were reserved for the use of the king; only lords of high rank were able to acquire chases; and the majority of parks, especially the larger and more long-lasting ones, were owned by the wealthier lords.¹⁰ Whether this exclusivity was the real reason for the silence of the treatises seems doubtful. They may have been slow to catch up with techniques still in their infancy at the time they were compiled, though this seems unlikely; it is more probable that there was a certain reticence about discussing deer on a par with mundane creatures such as sheep, cattle, and pigs.

It cannot have been the result of a general unfamiliarity with and ignorance about deer. The extensive medieval literature on hunting includes ample discussion of the animals and their habits – their preferred terrain, their eating habits, their behaviour during the rut, when fawning and so on – which is often clearly based on close and accurate observation. However, the hunting treatises do not envisage the management or farming of deer. The Master of Game comments that 'stags ... do not so often slay each other' in woods as in parks, thus recognizing the existence of parks while recording what may have been an observed consequence of confining deer in a relatively small space. But in general, in hunting literature, the beasts were, indeed had to be, wild

animals for the brave and the skilled to seek out and hunt down.¹¹

No such reticence, however, inhibited estate documents. For example, the so-called Tutbury Cowcher of 1415, a survey of the administrative system of the Honour of Tutbury, then part of the duchy of Lancaster, treats deer management in an absolutely matter-of-fact way. Rules for the care of the deer are prominent in the lists of duties of the officers serving in Needwood and Duffield Frith, the two chases on the estate.¹² And some decades earlier, the Black Prince's Register reveals a great lord concerning himself with the welfare of the deer scattered throughout his estate, as a result constituting a mine of information about deer management.¹³

Deer farming is also peculiar in that, though venison was highly prized, it was not, as a rule, produced for the market. Harrison remarked in his *Description of England* that 'venison ... is neither bought nor sold by the right owner';¹⁴ though made in the sixteenth century, the observation applies equally to the Middle Ages. This is not to say that venison was never sold. According to Fitz Stephen, it was on sale in public cookshops in twelfth-century London, though only accessible to the rich. In the thirteenth century, poachers in the royal forests supplied an active black market in venison, prominent in towns situated nearby or with easy access; we know that venison from the Forest of Dean was smuggled to Bristol and Monmouth from ports along the Severn estuary.¹⁵ But owners of forests, chases, and deer parks seem to have

⁹ Oschinsky, *op cit*, pp 441 and 431–2.

¹⁰ L Cantor, *The English Medieval Landscape*, 1982; for park ownership in Staffordshire, see Jean Birrell, 'The Forest and the Chase in Medieval Staffordshire', *Staffordshire Studies*, III, 1990–1, p 35.

¹¹ See, for example, W A and F Baillie Grohman, ed, *The Master of Game by Edward, 2nd Duke of York: the Oldest English Book on Hunting*, 1909.

¹² British Library, Harleian MS. 568.

¹³ *The Black Prince's Register*, especially vols I, 1346–1348; II, 1351–65 (Cornwall); and III 1351–65 (England).

¹⁴ Quoted in E P Shirley, *Some Account of English Deer Parks*, 1867, p 27.

¹⁵ F M Stenton, *Norman London*, Historical Association Leaflet, 1934, p 28; Jean Birrell, 'Who poached the king's deer', *Midland History*, VII, 1982, p 20.

thought solely in terms of producing deer for their households, or, to quote Harrison again, they gave 'away their flesh, never taking penny for the same'; in which case, of course, the gain consisted rather of the status and prestige such gifts conferred. Deer farming was an aspect of medieval agriculture which was taken seriously but which resisted the commercialization increasingly found elsewhere. There were, of course, strong practical considerations militating against the sale by producers of their venison. Too open a market for it would have encouraged poaching and made the protection of deer within parks, forests, and chases even more difficult on practical, not to say ethical, grounds. However, at a deeper level, and probably more importantly, production of deer for the market would have devalued an important aspect of the aristocratic way of life and privilege.

Deer remained 'wild animals' (*ferae*), to use a common medieval expression, and game. They were not amenable to farming in the same way as the usual domestic livestock. They had to be hunted to be killed; also, they were protected. The right to hunt them was strictly restricted, to the king (or his officers or grantees) in the royal forests, and similarly to the private owners of chases and deer parks.¹⁶ Further, lords were able to enforce measures which privileged the deer as against other potential users of the numerous forest or park resources. Special courts existed to enforce the protection of the deer in forests and chases, though lords of deer parks had to resort to a mixture of bullying and persuasion to exclude others from their parks, and, to their chagrin, to rely on the ordinary courts to prosecute park-breakers. Not every owner of a deer park was as unlucky as the lord of Okeover (Staffs), who lost, by his own account,

100 of the 125 deer in his park to poachers in 1441, but his story is a striking reminder of one of the hazards medieval deer farmers had to face.¹⁷ It is no wonder that the job descriptions for officers in Needwood Chase and Duffield Frith in the Tutbury Cowcher devote almost as much attention to measures against poachers as to measures designed to tend the deer.

The peculiar status held by deer and deer farming is one reason why it is so poorly documented, or, at least, so unevenly documented. Manorial accounts, for example, purport to record expenditure on and income from parks but in practice do so only selectively, only rarely recording either total numbers of deer or the number hunted. Hunting and other associated expenses sometimes appear in manorial accounts, but are often missing or incomplete. On some estates, separate deer accounts were kept, which usually record the number of deer hunted, how they were disposed of, associated costs and so on. Unfortunately, series of such accounts seem rarely to have survived. Inquisitions *post mortem* purport to value parks, but seem not to allow for the deer, except occasionally to blame them for low pasture values. The royal forests are plentifully documented, at least for the thirteenth and early fourteenth centuries, but most of the records which survive are of judicial proceedings, and only minimally informative about deer management, though they treat poaching at length. Occasionally, documents which are more analogous to estate documents, such as accounts, survive, which are more informative. It is easy to see why deer farming has been neglected, as evidence of it is so often absent from the documents where one might expect to find it, and though some light is shed on it by a wide range of sources, it remains difficult to treat quantitatively. An approach from

¹⁶ G J Turner, ed, *Select Pleas of the Forest*, Selden Society, XIII, 1889, Introduction; C R Young, *The Royal Forests of Medieval England*, Leicester, 1979.

¹⁷ *Collections for a History of Staffordshire*, new series, VII, pp 51-3.

the perspective of household consumption runs into further problems. In particular, household accounts may underestimate consumption of venison, and often seem to be at odds with the evidence of deer bones found on excavated high status sites.¹⁸

II

However, that a range of measures was widely adopted to preserve and encourage deer is not in doubt. These ranged from very specific practices such as providing cows to suckle motherless fawns (documented at Falkland, Scotland, in the late fifteenth century),¹⁹ to very general but basic measures to protect the deer's habitat. The creation of the royal forests, in which not only the venison but the vert, that is the woodland cover, was protected, was, of course, a means to preserve the deer which was rooted in an appreciation of their need for forage and cover. Whilst the woodland of the royal forests was inevitably eroded over time, there was a consistent attempt, in principle at least, to preserve within the larger forest those areas the deer habitually frequented. For example, inquisitions attempted to establish which woods might be felled or which areas assarted to cause them least damage. Customary activities such as pasturing animals, collecting wood and digging turf might be confined to areas where they would not disturb the deer. Thus, one village in Cannock Forest (Staffs) was amerced for digging turf where it was harmful to the deer at an eyre in 1286, and in the mid-fourteenth century the Black Prince was trying to restrict the

areas where local people could dig turf in his Cheshire forests for the same reason.²⁰

More specific measures reflected the need of deer to be left undisturbed at the two crucial periods of fawning (the 'fence month', traditionally the fortnight on either side of Midsummer Day, for fallow and red deer) and the rut (a month or more in autumn). During the fence month especially, other activities which were normally permitted within the forest were restricted or prohibited. Other animals were sometimes excluded, or rights of way through the forest curtailed.²¹ On the estates of the bishop of Durham, special 'watchers' were brought in during both the fence month and the rut to see that the deer were undisturbed.²² The Black Prince required the foresters on fourteenth-century Dartmoor to make lodges and 'stay more continually on the moor... while the does are fawning and the fawns are tender', to protect them from the shepherds who also needed to be on the moor at that season. However, the practice was clearly not new, as foresters were claiming additional expenses at fawning time on Dartmoor in the late thirteenth century.²³ Fawning is notoriously accompanied by high mortality if adequate cover and fodder are lacking, facts which are quite specifically referred to in a fourteenth-century set of chapters of the eyre; it was an offence, it says, to destroy bracken in the royal forest where this was necessary to the does, where, that

¹⁸ Christopher Dyer, 'Documentary Evidence: Problems and Enquiries' and Annie Grant, 'Animal Resources' in Astill and Grant, eds, *op cit*, pp 25 and 165; see also pp 6-7.

¹⁹ *Exchequer Rolls of Scotland*, IV, p 54, quoted in J Cummins, *The Hound and the Hawk*, 1988, p 60.

²⁰ PRO, E.32/188, m.13; J A Green, 'Forests' in *VCH Cheshire*, II, p 175.

²¹ Turner, *op cit*, p xxvi, see also pp 64 and 126; H E Boulton, ed, *The Sherwood Forest Book*, Thoroton Society, Record Series, XXIII, 1964, p 69, cap. 6; G H Tupling, *Economic History of Rossendale*, Manchester, 1927, p 9.

²² *Boldon Book*, Surtees Society, XXV, pp 28-30, quoted by J L Drury, 'Durham Palatinate Forest Law and Administration, specially in Weardale up to 1440', *Archaeologia Aeliana*, 5th series, VI, 1978, p 88.

²³ *Black Prince's Register*, vol II, p 71; L Margaret Midgley, 'Ministers' Accounts of the Earldom of Cornwall 1296-7 II', *Camden Society*, third series, LXVII, 1945, p 220.

is, they 'mostly fawn and are protected with their fawns'.²⁴

The problem which some modern deer farmers have called 'winter death syndrome'²⁵ was well-known to their medieval predecessors. Deer are on the whole able to fend for themselves over the winter, especially where the density is not too high in relation to resources. However, especially in hard winters, some fail to survive due to a mixture of cold and poor nutrition. The concern to ensure adequate natural shelter has already been noted. This was more likely to be a problem in parks, though they normally contained some woodland. However, on some large estates, the natural park cover was supplemented by the provision of sheds.²⁶ The most common medieval answer to the problem of winter starvation was simply to exclude other stock in order to preserve for the deer whatever meagre food was available. The practice was sometimes called the 'winter heyning'. The precise form such measures took varied from place to place. In Durham and the Forest of Dean, there was a general prohibition of other stock from November to April; in Cranborne Chase, the 'heyning' was declared only in unusually hard winters.²⁷ In Needwood and Duffield Frith, it was one of the duties of the officers to see that parks were cleared of other stock 'in time of snow and hard weather'. In practice, here, as in many other parks, the number of other animals allowed was not only tailored to the needs of the deer during the winter, but all year

round; the deer received priority as and when it suited the lord.²⁸

A more positive policy to counteract winter starvation was often adopted. This was occasionally the case in forests; for example, hay was put out for the red deer at Burnhope in Durham.²⁹ However, the practice of providing additional winter feed was especially characteristic of deer parks, where it was also, of course, more necessary, given the more restricted area in which the animals could roam. The practice was widespread and of long standing. Whilst it was in some cases apparently only an emergency measure, in others it was a regular policy. Oats were occasionally provided,³⁰ but the two most common forms of additional winter feed were browsewood and hay, the latter, according to E P Shirley, the nineteenth-century writer on deer parks, 'the most obvious and natural supplement'. It was common practice to reserve the hay of certain meadows in or near parks exclusively for the deer. If this was impracticable, hay was bought. In the case of one of the favoured royal deer parks, Woodstock, hay was bought annually for the deer from the mid-twelfth century, and hay was bought for the deer in Northampton Park from the 1160s.³¹ By the thirteenth century this was common practice, documented throughout England and Scotland.³² The use of mangers or feeding

²⁴ See, for example, Hatcher, *op cit*, p 180.

²⁵ Drury, *op cit*, p 96.

²⁶ Roberts, *op cit*, p 79; Cummins, *op cit*, p 60. A buck at Longdon, a Staffordshire manor of the bishop of Coventry and Lichfield, was apparently being hand-fed oats in the early fourteenth century; it is tempting to speculate that it was a pet, though it was perhaps being fattened for slaughter, Staffs RO, D.1734/J2057 (1311-12). There are other hints of tame deer: a *cervus domesticus* at Gloucester Castle was killed by a poacher in 1231 (*Calendar of Close Rolls 1227-31*, p 537); another was killed in 1285 in the episcopal park of Rose by poachers apparently frustrated by an unsuccessful expedition in Inglewood Forest (F H M Parker, 'Inglewood Forest, part III', *Transactions of the Cumberland and Westmorland Archaeological and Antiquarian Society*, new series, VII, pp 10-11).

²⁷ *Pipe Roll Society*, IX, 1888, 12 Henry I, p 117; *ibid*, XII, 1890, 14 Henry II, p 50; see also J M Steane, 'The Medieval Parks of Northamptonshire', *Northants Past and Present*, V, 1973-7, p 228.

²⁸ For Scotland, see Cummins, *op cit*, p 60.

²⁴ Boulton, ed, *op cit*, p 84, cap. 13. See also pp 64, cap. 9 and 74, cap. 44; also N D G James, *A History of English Forestry*, Oxford, 1981, pp 43, 15.

²⁵ Of the many works devoted to contemporary deer farming, I have found particularly useful P F Fennessy and K R Drew, eds, *Biology of Deer Production*, Bulletin XXII, Royal Society of New Zealand; for 'winter death syndrome', see p 88.

²⁶ Roberts, *op cit*, p 79; there was a 'deer house' in the Belper Ward of Duffield Frith in 1313-14, PRO, DL.29/1/3, and another in Needwood in the 1470s, PRO, DL.29/372/6202.

²⁷ Drury, *op cit*, p 88; James, *op cit*, p 15; D Hawkins, *Cranborne Chase*, 1980, p 27.

troughs, possibly under cover (which would prevent the hay from spoiling) is sometimes recorded, and suggests a systematic and controlled provision, necessary if all the deer are to benefit.³³

Deer browse, cut from either deciduous or evergreen trees, provided a much cheaper winter feed than hay. Shirley quotes a late eighteenth-century keeper to the effect that cutting browsewood saved three tons of hay a year for every hundred deer in the New Forest.³⁴ Evergreens might be cut as needed, or branches of deciduous trees lopped in summer, stacked, and put out during the winter. This practice, too, is widely documented throughout the country and was sometimes on a substantial scale. G H Tupling pointed out that it cost the equivalent of one man working for between two and three months to cut browsewood in early fourteenth-century Rossendale.³⁵ In Woodstock Park in the thirteenth century, labour services were employed to cut ivy and browsewood whenever snow lay two or three days on the ground.³⁶

The excellent series of records for Needwood Chase show the full range of measures employed to maintain the deer population throughout the winter. In the first place, large quantities of browsewood were cut in the chase every year and put out in winter (and later sold off as fuel). In 1417-18, for example, nearly 400 cartloads were cut in three of the four wards of the forest where deer were found. However, the practice could not be maintained on this scale, and during the course of the century, hay was increasingly substituted for browsewood, at some considerable cost. Several acres of meadow

were regularly set aside for the deer (for example, more than seven acres in 1440-1). The hay was stored in the chase - £1 13s 6d was spent on a barn in the forest for hay for the deer in 1440-1; it often had to be carted several miles across the forest, a further expense. Demesne hay was regularly supplemented by local purchases: five cartloads of hay were bought at a total cost of £1 8s in 1440-1. Deer browse continued to be cut, though in reduced quantities; it was much cheaper than hay. It cost the duchy only ½d per cart to cut the 151 cartloads used in 1440-1, a total of 6s 3d. Lastly, a number of pastures within the chases which were normally leased out were reserved to provide extra grazing for the deer.³⁷ This level of winter provision seems to have been entirely typical of Needwood in the fifteenth century, and is indicative of the extent to which its deer population was dependent on human intervention, as well as of the impact of the deer on the economy of the chase.

Though winter presents particular problems, deer are voracious eaters, and need a good supply of suitable food all year round if they are to thrive and reach a good weight. It has been estimated that red deer in contemporary Scotland will eat the equivalent of their own body weight in fresh forage in a ten- to fourteen-day period.³⁸ Grass is an important element in their diet, and most forests and deer parks contained grassy lawns for them to graze. These were carefully preserved, and, if necessary, improved. At Havering in 1261, for example, a herd of cows was moved into the park to eat off the old grass; in the 1350s, the Black Prince had the grassy lawns of two of his Cornish parks, Restormel and Launceston, temporarily ploughed up in an attempt to

³³ 'Ministers' Accounts of the Earldom of Cornwall', p 159 (Oakhams); Hatcher, *op cit*, p 180; R B Turton 'The Honour and Forest of Pickering', *North Riding Record Society*, new series, II, 1895, p 20.

³⁴ Shirley, *op cit*, p 244, note 2.

³⁵ Tupling, *op cit*, p 9.

³⁶ C J Bond, 'Woodstock Park under the Plantagenet kings: Exploitation and use of wood and timber in a medieval deer park', *Arbicultural Journal*, V, 1981, p 205.

³⁷ PRO, DL.29/368/6166; DL.29/369/6179.

³⁸ *Red Deer Management*, HMSO, 1981, p 18.

rid them of moss.³⁹ Deer also need access to fresh water, and considerable effort was put into improving pools and streams to cater for them. For example, a new pool was made in Needwood in 1476–7 at a cost of £4 5s. At Framlingham (Suffolk), additional ponds were dug in the park in dry summers.⁴⁰

III

The level of care afforded the deer inevitably varied considerably, given the wide range of circumstances in which they were found, from large forests to much smaller enclosed deer parks. It is in the former that it is perhaps appropriate to talk of the 'management' of what were clearly still wild animals leading a largely natural life, that is free to roam and able, to a greater or lesser degree, to survive without human intervention, as opposed to the 'farming' characteristic of deer parks. In parks, the deer were enclosed within fences and dependent on the additional care provided, without which they could not have survived, at least in such numbers. Most of our evidence relates to the parks on large estates, which were, in any case, in a majority, but which may have benefited from the greater resources at the disposal of their owners. Certainly, a considerable investment in labour and materials was sometimes made. The bishop of Winchester spent at least £100 on his Hampshire deer parks in 1332–3, though this sum includes nearly £30 on hunting expenses.⁴¹ Hatcher estimated that the duchy of Cornwall was spending well over £20 a year routinely on its six Cornish parks in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, with as much again,

sometimes more, on occasional large-scale projects such as the complete re-hedging of a park or new lodges, and not including the wages of parkers or other officers.⁴² The lodges, though some were extended and elaborated during the course of the Middle Ages, were often originally not so much hunting lodges as bases within the park – or forest – for the officers responsible for the deer, where hay and browse-wood were stacked, and where keepers spent the night in the fence month or kept watch for poachers.⁴³ Similar sums were spent by the duchy of Lancaster on its parks within Needwood Chase in the fifteenth century. Here, too, there was a regular annual expenditure of some £20, with much larger sums – £30, £40 was not uncommon – spent in the case of some occasional major project such as digging a pool or building a hay barn.⁴⁴

The main regular item was always fencing. Deer are notorious for their ability to jump over any fence which is not high enough (the fencing may need to be as high as eight or nine feet, or even higher, depending on the terrain) and discover and squeeze through any weak points; fencing – its material, method of construction and cost – remains a prime preoccupation of modern deer farmers. The considerable length and high cost of medieval timber fencing emerges clearly in Needwood. Hundreds of perches of fence (a mile, a mile-and-a-half, two miles, even more) were repaired or re-erected every year throughout the fifteenth century. Posts, pales, rails, and shores were all of oak, which was supplied from the estate, though it might have to be transported some miles across the chase. 'Short' fencing cost the Duchy 1½d or 2d per perch to erect in the mid fifteenth century, the

³⁹ M K McIntosh, *Autonomy and Community: The Royal Manor of Havering 1200–1500*, Cambridge, 1986, p 18; *Black Prince's Register*, II, pp 27, 136.

⁴⁰ PRO, DL.29/372/6202; John Ridgard, ed, *Medieval Framlingham. Select Documents 1270–1524*, Suffolk Record Society, XXVII, 1985, p 10; see also Roberts, *op cit*, p 79.

⁴¹ Roberts, *op cit*, pp 79–80.

⁴² Hatcher, *op cit*, p 180.

⁴³ It was noted in the account that a lodge built in the Barton Ward of Needwood Chase in 1322 was for the foresters to spend the night in to guard the deer, PRO, DL.29/1146/11.

⁴⁴ Calculated from the fifteenth-century ward accounts, PRO, DL.29/368–372.

rest – the majority – 2½d or 3d. It comes as no surprise that care of the fencing looms large in the duties of the Needwood Chase foresters. The *Compleat Sportsman* in 1718 emphasized that a keeper must 'daily take a turn round his park', which seems to echo the rule laid down for keepers in Needwood in the fifteenth century; one officer had to carry a hatchet and pale pins in a bag, so that any pales which had blown down could be re-erected on the spot. The procedure to be followed when more major repairs were necessary was also laid down, in considerable detail. It was specified, for example, how the line of the pale was to be established, and how, and between whom, the length of 'new work' and 'tying work' was to be agreed.⁴⁵

The contrast between deer parks and forests should not, however, be pushed too far; it is perhaps rather a question of a spectrum of measures found across a very wide range of circumstances, though applied more often and more intensively in parks. Parks, in any case, were often used as one aspect of deer management within a wider context; this was the case with Havering Park within the Forest of Essex and with the ten or so parks within Needwood Chase. The deer population in such parks was maintained at least in part by deer driven or attracted in from the surrounding countryside, and deer leaps, by which deer could enter but not leave an enclosure, were used as an active management technique, opened and shut as desired.⁴⁶ To protect his own deer, the king routinely forbade deer leaps in such private parks as were permitted in or near the royal forest – as did prudent lords of

chases in similar circumstances⁴⁷ – testimony to their effectiveness. It cost 18s. to construct a new deer leap in Rossendale in 1323.⁴⁸ Its size is not recorded, but a deer leap constructed in the bishop of Durham's Craik Park in 1229, and another at Long Biggin (Northants) in 1321, were both twenty feet long.⁴⁹ Sometimes, they were dispensed with, and the enclosure simply broken, legally or illegally, to allow the deer to pass. Breaks were made in the pale of Hatfield Park in the thirteenth century and labour services employed to drive deer through.⁵⁰ An enterprising local lord who had constructed an illegal park in Feckenham Forest in the late fifteenth century laid a trail of hay near to five breaks in the pale to encourage deer to enter.⁵¹ Steps were also taken to keep up the deer population of unenclosed forests, and men employed to drive deer back into them. In Rossendale, 'moor drivers' were hired for the thirty-one weeks from Michaelmas to May, the period when the deer were likely to stray down from the forest in search of food.⁵²

Parks were also often initially stocked, or periodically re-stocked, with deer brought from outside. The king, with the vast area of royal forest to draw on, was obviously best placed to supply deer for this purpose, and a good proportion of the large number of royal gifts of deer made in the thirteenth century were of this type. Scores of deer, mostly bucks and does, less often harts and hinds, were granted live to favoured deer park owners every year. It seems that the animals were caught in nets and transported in carts,

⁴⁵ The *Compleat Sportsman* is quoted in Shirley, *op cit*, p 231. For useful discussions of park fencing, see L S Cantor and J S Moore, 'The Medieval Parks of the Earls of Stafford at Madeley', *North Staffordshire Journal of Field Studies*, III, 1963, p 42 and Rackham, *op cit*, pp 191–2.

⁴⁶ CCR 1254–6, p 325. Deer leaps, says a recent work discussing deer farming, 'are only just beginning to be recognised as an effective aid to fence maintenance and reduction of damage', R Prior, *Trees and Deer*, 1983, p 39.

⁴⁷ The countess of Warwick, for example, objected in 1247 to a deer leap constructed by Philip Marmion of Tamworth in his park at Middleton within Sutton Chase, *SHC*, IV, 1883, p 107.

⁴⁸ Tupling, *op cit*, p 16.

⁴⁹ CCR 1227–31, p 261; Steane, *op cit*, (gazetteer).

⁵⁰ Oliver Rackham, *The Last Forest. The Story of Hatfield Forest*, 1989, p 54.

⁵¹ R H Hilton, ed, 'Swanimote Rolls of Feckenham Forest', *Worcestershire Historical Society*, 1960, p 40.

⁵² Tupling, *op cit*, p 10.

often over quite long distances. Peas and milk were fed to a deer and two fawns being transported from Islip to Denham in the 1340s. We do not know how many animals survived their journeys, but that the practice continued throughout the century suggests that it had some success. It is further testimony to the skill of medieval deer farmers in handling their animals.⁵³

IV

At some stage it began to be seen as desirable to keep records of numbers of deer, which would today be seen as an essential management tool. This was being attempted in a fairly rudimentary form in the royal forest of Cannock early in the thirteenth century. The officers and knights responsible for viewing the forest in 1235 reported on the number of deer in each of the different sectors or woods within the forest⁵⁴; they were content, however, to make very general statements as to numbers, resorting to phrases as vague as 'a reasonable number'. A century later (1337), the duchy of Cornwall was able to make precise estimates of the number of deer in each of six Cornish parks, in some cases contrasting the actual with the potential number, which suggests that there counting was already an established practice.⁵⁵ By the early fifteenth century, the officers in Needwood Chase and Duffield Frith were required to make an annual census of the deer in the two chases, and the Cowcher laid down some rules as to the conduct of the task; in particular, the count was to be carried out

in March, when cover is still low and the deer relatively stable, still the recommended time today.

Elsewhere, though we have no evidence that a count of the total number of deer was attempted, officers were required to report regularly on the number of deer taken. For example, detailed records were kept of the deer hunted in the royal forests, and when, where and by whom, and these were occasionally incorporated into thirteenth-century eyre rolls.⁵⁶ More comprehensive recording seems gradually to have developed. In the forest of Pickering, for example, in the early fourteenth century, not only was the number of deer taken by the various keepers and others on orders or with permission recorded, plus the number given in tithe, but also the number of deer found dead of murrain.⁵⁷ Such record-keeping became common during the fifteenth century; in Sutton Chase by the end of the century, for example, the keepers accounted for deer 'killed this season', that is, deer poached, hunted on orders, or found dead of disease, all carefully distinguished as to type, age, and sex with the locations specified.⁵⁸

According to an old practice, carcasses of deer found dead in the forest were hung from trees; the duty to hang stags dead of murrain on a certain forked tree (gallows?) was attached to a thirteenth-century serjeanty in Exmoor, and the practice is documented in other forests in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries.⁵⁹ This may have been regarded as a precaution against the spread of disease,

⁵³ D Farmer, 'Marketing the Produce of the Countryside' in Edward Miller, ed., *The Agrarian History of England and Wales*, III, Cambridge, 1991, p 387. For 'stress and postcapture myopathy' as a factor in contemporary deer farming, see Fennessy and Drew, *op cit*, especially pp 65 ff.

⁵⁴ PRO, C47/11/123. 'The need to count' is still being urged on deer farmers in Scotland (*Red Deer Management*, p 37).

⁵⁵ P L Hull, ed., *The Caption of Seisin of the Duchy of Cornwall (1337)*, Devon and Cornwall Record Society, new series, XVII, 1971, pp 2 and 24.

⁵⁶ For example, for the Forest of Dean in 1282, PRO, E.32/30, ff 16-16d.

⁵⁷ Turton, *op cit*, pp 121-5 and 130-140.

⁵⁸ A D Watkins, 'Society and Economy in the Northern Part of the Forest of Arden, Warwickshire, 1350-1540', unpublished PhD thesis, Birmingham University, 1989, and Middleton Collection, University of Nottingham Library, MiM. 134/17 (I am grateful to Dr Watkins for lending me his xerox of this document); Hilton, ed., *op cit*, pp 47-50; W R Fisher, *The Forest of Essex*, 1887, pp 217-19.

⁵⁹ E T MacDermot, *A History of the Forest of Exmoor*, 1911, reprinted, 1973, p 28; see also Turner, *op cit*, p 109; Turton, *op cit*, p 132.

although it was perhaps also at least in part a practice designed to keep a check on officials. Perhaps more helpfully from the point of view of preventing the spread of infection, diseased carcasses were sometimes removed or burnt. The king issued orders for the removal of putrid carcasses of deer (and pigs) from Havering Park in 1251, for example.⁶⁰ According to the Tutbury Cowcher, deer dead of murrain in Needwood or Duffield Frith must be burned. The imprecise catch-all term 'murrain' continued to be widely used throughout the fifteenth century and different types of disease were not distinguished, at least in the documents, until the sixteenth century. A document drawn up in 1515 at Framlingham distinguishes the *wyppys*, the *garget* and, more comprehensibly, the *rotte* amongst causes of death.⁶¹ But an awareness of all the principal causes of deer mortality – disease, exposure, starvation, mortality immediately after birth – was apparent at an earlier date.

V

The point has already been made that forests, chases and parks existed both to provide their owners with an opportunity to hunt and a supply of venison. In practice, there was often no rigid line between these two aspects. On many estates we can observe both regular hunting by servants and occasional and sporadic forays (sometimes very sporadic, perhaps every few years, or even less frequently) for sport by the lord, his guests or other privileged persons, and this was probably the normal pattern. But whatever the frequency of the seigneurial hunt, servants hunted on a regular basis, and the organized and routine nature of this activity needs to be emphasized. Some

large estates employed permanent huntsmen;⁶² others took on a huntsman for the season. For example, the bishop of Salisbury employed a huntsman, page, and fewerer (the servant responsible for greyhounds) for the period October–February 1406–7.⁶³ Miscellaneous hunting expenses can often be traced, sometimes tucked inconspicuously away in the expenses section of a manorial account, sometimes recorded in separate deer accounts.⁶⁴ Larders, too, were often employed on a seasonal basis to butcher and salt the meat. For example, a larderer was employed at Tutbury for five weeks in 1370–1 at a daily wage of 1½d.⁶⁵ The meat might then be packed into barrels to be despatched to distant households – venison from Cornwall was shipped to the duke of Cornwall in London in 1347⁶⁶ – or stored locally. There were seventeen carcasses in the larder at Tutbury at Michaelmas 1313, thirty-one at the end of the year.⁶⁷

The huntsmen concentrated on the larger red and fallow deer, rather than the roe, and observed two hunting seasons. Harts and bucks were mainly caught in the summer months preceding the autumn rut, when they were 'in grease', that is carrying most venison and fat in preparation for the rut and the winter. The season usually began in June, though male deer were sometimes hunted earlier, and usually ended on 14 September, some-

⁶⁰ Rackham, *op cit*, 1980, p 193.

⁶¹ This document is printed as Appendix II, pp 260–5, in Cummins, *op cit*, p 63. See also Rackham, *op cit*, 1980, p 193.

⁶² Roberts, *op cit*, p 72. For the royal huntsmen, see Cummins, *op cit*, pp 183–4 and F Barlow, *William Rufus*, 1983, pp 124–7.

⁶³ C M Woolgar, ed, *Household Accounts from Medieval England*, Part 1, British Academy, Records of Social and Economic History, ns 17, 1992, pp 416–7.

⁶⁴ For example in the Master-Forester of Needwood's Deer Account, PRO, DL. 29/1/3, and in the reeve's account for Petworth, in L F Salzman, ed, *Ministers' Accounts of the Manor of Petworth 1347–1353*, Sussex Record Society, LV, 1955, pp 37, 51.

⁶⁵ He used three quarters of salt on twenty-four carcasses, PRO, SC.6/988/14, which seems to have been the norm on this estate. Rather more salt was used at Petworth, Salzman, ed, *op cit*, pp 37, 51; see also the late fourteenth-century French hunting account printed in Cummins, *op cit*, Appendix 1, p 255, where 2 bushels of salt per hart was the rate.

⁶⁶ *Black Prince's Register*, I, p 92.

⁶⁷ PRO, DL.29/1/3.

times a little later. For example, when, (in a letter dated 12 September 1238), the king ordered a number of stags and bucks to be caught in various parks and forests, the hunt was conditional on there being enough time left 'before Michaelmas in the due season'.⁶⁸ Hinds and does were mostly taken from late November to early or mid-February, though again the season was sometimes, in practice, stretched a little at either end.⁶⁹

Lords frequently specified in advance what deer were to be taken and how they were to be disposed of. However, it was also often left to the local officers and huntsmen to determine the number that could reasonably be hunted. The Black Prince adopted both policies on occasion. Whilst he issued frequent orders for a specified number of deer to be hunted for particular purposes, he also sometimes ordered a more general cull at the appropriate time of year. For example, in August 1347, the constable and parker of Berkhamstead were ordered to take 'this season's grease' in the park, 'as shall seem best for the prince's profit', have it 'well prepared', and claim their expenses.⁷⁰

So a body of farming practice and management existed which was widespread and which seems to have developed further as the Middle Ages progressed; it involved considerable labour and investment as well as a range of skills and a knowledge of deer. It is hard, at this state of our knowledge, to be precise about its chronology. Some of the techniques described above are documented for the mid- or late twelfth century, whilst others

are first mentioned – to my knowledge – at a later date; they may, of course, be older. We know of the existence of a handful of deer parks by the time of Domesday Book, but almost nothing about how they were managed.⁷¹ Deer parks were being created throughout the twelfth century, though the majority of medieval parks date from the following century.⁷² They are often associated with fallow deer, introduced by the Normans soon after the Conquest, which spread rapidly, and were thought to be more biddable and suited to parks than the native red and roe deer, though red deer were – and are – kept in deer parks.⁷³ The systematic management and even farming of deer probably went hand in hand with the increasing importance of the park deer population, and the need to husband deer within the shrinking royal forests.

VI

How 'successful' was medieval deer farming? How many deer were there in the parks, chases and forests, and on what scale was the 'harvest' of venison? It is difficult to generalize usefully about numbers of deer in forests and parks, not only because figures are hard to come by, but because the number of deer inevitably varied not only over time but depending on the terrain and on the nature and volume of other competing activities. However, we can point to some figures which make plain that quite large herds of deer could be supported within parks and chases. For example, the duchy of Cornwall had 887 deer in six parks in 1337; this included two parks with only very small populations (of 15 and 42), and

⁶⁸ CCR 1237–42, p 102. See also J C Cox, *The Royal Forests of England*, 1905, p 47; Fisher gives Holy Rood Day (25 September) as the close of the season in Essex, *op cit*, p 221. In Bernwood Forest, hunting was to cease on 28 September in 1265 (CCR 1264–8, p 72). See also P A Stamper, 'The Medieval Forest of Pamber, Hampshire', *Landscape History*, V, 1983, p 48.

⁶⁹ The season was usually regarded as lasting from Martinmas (11 November) to 2 February, but Fisher quotes 25 September–14 February. The roe buck, according to the *Master of Game* 'has no season to be hunted, for they bear no venison', p 42.

⁷⁰ *Black Prince's Register*, I, p 117.

⁷¹ Rackham, *op cit*, 1980, pp 188–91; see also Della Hooke, 'Pre-Conquest Woodland: its Distribution and Usage', *Ag Hist Rev*, XXXVII, 1989, pp 126–9.

⁷² Cantor, *op cit*, pp 76–7.

⁷³ In contemporary New Zealand, red deer are regarded as more suitable park beasts than fallow, Fennessey and Drew, eds, *op cit*, especially p 295.

two – Restormel and Launceston – with populations of 300 and 200 deer respectively.⁷⁴ The bishop of Durham had 540 deer in his four main parks in 1457.⁷⁵ Dr McIntosh has estimated that Havering, an unusually large royal park of well over a thousand acres, had a herd of some 500 deer in the fourteenth century.⁷⁶ Most parks were smaller than Havering, often much smaller, and probably normally contained fewer deer. The herd of 125 deer in Okeover Park in the mid-fifteenth century, referred to above, was perhaps more typical. Allegations of the theft or slaughter of deer give us at least minimum figures for some seigneurial parks. Of course, the plaintiffs may well have exaggerated their losses, but the figures had to have some local credibility, and so deserve some credence. For example, the knightly lord of Colton (Staffs) claimed that 140 deer had been poached from his park in 1378; some 80 deer were said to have been taken from another Staffordshire park, Heley, property of the baronial family of Audley, in 1322; it was alleged that 82 deer had been stolen from the duke of Buckingham's park of Redleaf at Pen-shurst in 1451.⁷⁷ It seems reasonable to assume much larger deer populations in forests and chases. Records of several hundred deer found dead of murrain in royal forests in epidemic years certainly imply large total populations; it was claimed that 350 deer died in Sherwood in 1286, 560 in Melksham and Pewsham over three years in the 1480s, as many as 2200 in Clarendon in 1470.⁷⁸

The figures we have hardly lend themselves to generalizations about trends over time, but a few tentative remarks may be made. It seems likely that the deer popu-

lation of the royal forests diminished during the thirteenth century, principally because their habitat was, overall, being steadily reduced. Certainly, royal grants of deer were fewer towards the end of the century, and royal huntsmen were not always able to take as many deer as they had been instructed. At this period, parks must have helped preserve the deer population. Later in the Middle Ages, when pressure on land was less, and old arable often reverted to pasture, some parks were enlarged, and park ownership seems to have extended further down the social scale.⁷⁹ On the other hand, some parks, perhaps never really viable, were abandoned. The royal forests were reduced to a shadow of their former glory, largely broken up and disafforested. The fates of old deer preserves differed, depending on what other possibilities offered in changed circumstances. In Needwood Chase, with its fine grassland and timber, the deer parks and deer farming, integrated into a wider pastoral economy, flourished in the later Middle Ages. In Sutton Chase, the deer survived, but perhaps concentrated into two chief surviving wooded areas.⁸⁰ No general pattern can be detected. Overall, the deer population may have increased.

It is also difficult to generalize usefully about how many deer, or how much venison, lords of parks, chases and forests took on a regular basis. However, a useful approach is to quote a few figures from different types of terrain in order to give some idea of the scale of consumption, and in so doing show how productive well-managed parks and chases could be. Firstly, some reliable figures survive for the two chases of Needwood and Duffield Frith at several points in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. A deer account for 1313–14 tells us that ninety deer were

⁷⁴ Hatcher, *op cit*, p 179.

⁷⁵ Drury, *op cit*, p 97.

⁷⁶ McIntosh, *op cit*, p 18.

⁷⁷ SHC, XIV, part 1, p 146; *ibid*, IX, p 99; R Virgoe, 'Some Ancient Indictments in the King's Bench referring to Kent 1450–1452', *Kent Records*, XVIII, 1964, pp 254–5.

⁷⁸ James, *op cit*, p 39; Cox, *op cit*, pp 28–9.

⁷⁹ Christopher Dyer, 'The West Midlands' in Miller, ed, *op cit*, p 236.

⁸⁰ Birrell, *op cit*, 1991, p 46.

hunted in Needwood that year, and eighty-seven in Duffield. Forty deer were taken in Needwood in 1370-1.⁸¹ In 1434, Tutbury Priory noted that it had received twenty-four deer from Needwood and twenty from Duffield Frith in tithe, suggesting that the very high total of 440 deer had been taken in the two chases that year. This was exceptional; the note goes on to say that the priory usually got only twelve, thirteen, or sixteen in tithe (apparently from Needwood alone), figures which still suggest a substantial regular cull.⁸² These figures make no allowance for deer taken illegally or for deer hunted by licence. On the one hand, we know that poaching in the chase was persistent, though not on what scale; on the other, we know of privileges such as that granted to one longstanding officer to take six bucks in summer and six does in winter annually in Needwood Chase in the mid-fourteenth century.⁸³

Some indications of the sort of yield to be expected from other chases survive. The bishop of Coventry and Lichfield consumed twenty-four deer from his Staffordshire estate (mostly from Cannock Chase) during four months spent at Lichfield in 1461.⁸⁴ It is particularly unfortunate that we are so ill-informed about the yield in deer from the duchy of Cornwall, especially since we know how many deer its Cornish parks contained in the mid-fourteenth century. However we do know that the Black Prince ordered forty does from his Cornish parks in 1351; if we assume, not unreasonably, that a similar number of bucks was taken, we can conclude that he may have got some eighty deer from these parks overall annually, compared with the total park population of 887 deer.⁸⁵ Interestingly, a fairly similar

ratio between total number and annual cull is suggested for Havering Park, where the figure of forty-four deer a year hunted compares with an estimated herd size of about 500. Of course, the average smaller deer park would yield fewer deer; twenty-one deer were hunted in the Petworth park belonging to Sir Henry Percy in 1348-9, which we may perhaps regard as more typical.⁸⁶

We also have a quite a lot of figures for deer production in the royal forests. Rackham has calculated that the king was getting an average of 607 deer a year from all the royal forests and parks together in the middle years of the thirteenth century.⁸⁷ A count using the same methods, that is of the one-off gifts of deer, alive or dead, recorded in the Calendar of Close Rolls, suggests that these were peak years, and that fewer deer were given annually earlier – in the region of 300 a year in the period 1227-31 (over 2000 beasts), and even fewer later, 181 a year in the period 1273-86 (2358 deer).⁸⁸ Similar calculations have been made for individual forests. For example, Paul Stamper has calculated that the king received 140 deer from the relatively small forest of Pamber in the decade 1260-70, but fewer in the earlier and later decades.⁸⁹ The fairly large but relatively remote forests of Cannock and Kinver (Staffs) provided something like 260 and 180 beasts for the king in gifts in the thirteenth century, mostly in the period 1220-1300, and a minimum of a further 140 and 200 deer for the royal household.⁹⁰ However, these figures probably underestimate the total numbers of deer hunted in the royal forests, for example under-recording both the num-

⁸¹ PRO, DL.29/1/3; SC.6/986/14.

⁸² SHC, fourth series, IV, p 257.

⁸³ SHC, 1911, p 357; for other venison or hunting privileges in Needwood, see the Tutbury Cowcher.

⁸⁴ SRO, D1734/3/3/264.

⁸⁵ *Black Prince's Register*, II, p 15.

⁸⁶ Midgeley, *op cit*, pp 37 and 43.

⁸⁷ Rackham, *op cit*, 1980, p 181.

⁸⁸ See also Jean Birrell, 'La chasse et la forêt en Angleterre médiévale' in André Chastel, ed, *Le Château, La Chasse et La Forêt*, Les Cahiers de Commarque, Luçon, 1990, pp 74-5.

⁸⁹ Stamper, *op cit*, 1983, p 48, though he believes the enrolment to be incomplete for the later period.

⁹⁰ Birrell, *op cit*, 1991, pp 27-8.

ber of deer hunted for the royal households and concessionary hunting by privileged locals and officers, not to speak of beasts poached.

In any case, medieval deer farmers were not so much concerned to maximize the production of venison as to ensure that they had enough for their needs as they perceived them, whether for household consumption, for gifts, or for hunting for sport. A nice example of how a very modest quantity of venison could have a quite disproportionate value comes from the household accounts of the bishop of Salisbury. Between November 1406 and March 1407, 21 carcasses of venison, some salted, some 'recent', were consumed; not a very large number, but the four occasions when they were served were the Feast of All Saints, Easter, Christmas, and the New Year, all meals at which guests were entertained.⁹¹ The venison here was clearly more than just another sort of meat, but part of a certain level and type of hospitality, a way of showing honour to guests. Interestingly in this context, the description of the Cornish parks of the duchy of Cornwall drawn up in 1337 includes the comment that in four of the six parks the number of deer, with the season's fawns, was 'sufficient'.⁹² Nor would it necessarily have been wise to have greatly increased densities of deer in medieval parks. On the one hand, this would have increased the animals' vulnerability to disease and malnutrition; on the other, a lower density would bring benefits in greater carcass weight and probably also fecundity.⁹³

⁹¹ Woolgar, *op cit*; see also Christopher Dyer, *Standards of Living in the Later Middle Ages*, Cambridge, 1989, pp 60-1.

⁹² Hull, *op cit*, p 141.

⁹³ 'Most deer populations appear to respond to increasing density by a reduction in fecundity and an increase in mortality' according to R Putnam *The Natural History of Deer*, 1988, p 169.

VII

Lastly, in the light of this, should we be content to see parks simply as status symbols, and examples of conspicuous consumption? It seems to me that this is not so much wrong as inadequate, and as a result potentially misleading. First, it does not allow for the wide range of activities found in parks and chases, a full study of which would go well beyond the scope of this article. However, it should be emphasized that part of the skill of medieval deer farmers lay in their ability to integrate deer farming into a wider context. They had the power to privilege the deer, and often did so, but in practice a sort of balance was struck between often conflicting interests. This might change over time and was not everywhere the same, but parks did not so much lock land up in an unprofitable way as allow lords to exercise a degree of choice and control over the use of the land and resources within them. If, with the interests of the deer primarily in mind, parks helped preserve woodland and pastures in the thirteenth century, this was perhaps no bad thing, hard though it was on those who coveted the land for arable, or found their access to pastures and woods curtailed or ended. Secondly, to dismiss parks as status symbols encourages us to neglect the wide range of skills developed and practised by medieval deer farmers; and it even underestimates the real benefits deer parks brought to their owners, not just in the prestige and status automatically conferred by possession, but in the form of the venison which they could consume themselves, offer to guests at table, or give away.

Small Farms in a Sussex Weald Parish 1800–60

By JUNE A SHEPPARD

Abstract

The Sussex Weald is an area where many small farms survived into the nineteenth century, and their fate in Chiddingfold parish between 1800 and 1860 is explored. They thrived up to 1815; between 1816 and 1842, nearly half were lost, many of the remainder changed from owner-occupancy to tenancy, and a few additional ones appeared on newly-enclosed land; after 1842, changes were few. The timing points to the post-Napoleonic agricultural depression as the fundamental cause of change, mediated by a range of personal and holding characteristics that resulted in varying ability to withstand economic pressure. Changes were greater during this depression, than during those of the early eighteenth and late nineteenth centuries, because the small farmer's cash outgoings, especially in paying his poor rates, frequently exceeded his income.

THERE HAS long been an interest in the timing and circumstances of the decline in numbers of small farms in England, manifested in studies that range in scale from national through regional to local.¹ It is now accepted that the arable farming areas of eastern and southern England saw the earliest and most severe decline, starting in the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries, whilst in western and northern England the decrease did not start until the follow-

ing century and was less rapid.² Within this broad regional pattern, however, there was much local diversity of timing, and about this we are far from fully informed, on account of the patchy cover of existing studies. One area for which more detail is required is the Weald of south-east England, for despite the existence of several general and numerous small-scale studies dealing with its agrarian history, there is little work specifically concerned with small farms.³

The limitation of our present knowledge to only certain districts may result in an incomplete understanding of the reasons for the decline. Further studies are unlikely to alter the view that the fundamental factor was the need to adapt to an expanding capitalist economy. But economic pressure was everywhere mediated or augmented by a range of lesser influences that varied considerably from place

¹ H Levy, *Large and Small Holdings: a study of English agricultural economics*, Cambridge 1911; G E Mingay, 'The size of farms in the eighteenth century', *Econ Hist Rev*, 2nd ser XXIV 1961–2, pp 469–88; D Grigg, 'Small and large farms in England and Wales', *Geography*, XLVIII, 1963, pp 268–79; F M L Thompson, 'Landownership and economic growth in England in the eighteenth century', in E L Jones and S J Woolf, eds, *Agrarian Change and Economic Development*, 1969, pp 41–60; David Grigg, 'Farm size in England and Wales from early Victorian times to the present', *Ag Hist Rev*, 35, 1987, pp 179–89; E Davies, 'The small landowner, 1780–1832, in the light of land tax assessments', *Econ Hist Rev*, 1, 1927, pp 87–113; Margaret Spufford, *Contrasting Communities: English villagers in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries*, Cambridge, 1974, Part 1; M E Turner, 'Parliamentary enclosure and landownership change in Buckinghamshire', *Econ Hist Rev*, 2nd ser XXVIII, 1975, pp 565–581; J R Walton, 'The residential mobility of farmers and its relationship to the Parliamentary enclosure movement in Oxfordshire', in A D M Phillips and B J Turton, eds, *Environment, Man and Economic Change*, 1975, pp 238–252; J M Martin, 'The small landowner and Parliamentary enclosure in Warwickshire', *Econ Hist Rev*, 2nd ser XXXII, 1979, pp 328–343; J A Yelling, *Common Field and Enclosure in England 1450–1850*, 1977, Ch 6; Dennis Mills, 'Early land tax assessments explored: (1) Rutland, Cambridgeshire and Lincolnshire', in Michael Turner and Dennis Mills, eds, *Land and Property: the English land tax 1692–1832*, Gloucester, 1986.

² C G A Clay, *Economic Expansion and Social Change: England 1500–1700 Vol I*, Cambridge, 1984, pp 92–99; J V Beckett, *The Agricultural Revolution*, Oxford, 1990, pp 48–53.

³ Julian Cornwall, 'Farming in Sussex, 1560–1640', *Sussex Arch Coll*, 92, 1954, pp 48–91; Brian M Short, 'The changing rural society and economy of Sussex 1750–1945', Ch 8 in *Sussex: Environment, Landscape and Society*, Gloucester, 1983; Brian M Short, 'The south-east: Kent, Surrey and Sussex', in Joan Thirsk, ed, *Agrarian History of England and Wales V i*, Cambridge, 1985, Ch 8; Peter Brandon and Brian Short, *The South East from AD 1000*, 1990, pp 170–85, 203, 212–26, 322–30.

to place. Beckett has detailed these for Cumbria, several authors have discussed the role of enclosure in the Midlands, and Wordie has examined the part played by policy decisions in one large estate.⁴ It is probable, however, that in other localities there existed other factors as yet unrecognized.

Among the mediating factors about which relatively little is known are the characteristics of individual farmers and holdings. We may postulate that the personal factors included the farmer's age and temperament, and the size and composition of his family, and that holding variables encompassed size, layout, and tenure, but it is difficult to know precisely how these operated. Detailed local studies are needed to evaluate their influence, but so far as the earlier stages of small farm decline are concerned, relevant data have rarely survived in sufficient quantity to support reliable conclusions. It is not as a rule until the nineteenth century that extant records naming individual farms and farmers occur in sufficient abundance to warrant analysis of the role of personal and holding variables, but by this time small farms had already disappeared from many regions of England. In the Weald, however, many such farms survived into the twentieth century, making the choice of a parish in this region appropriate. The aims of the study that follows are to identify all the small farms in the chosen parish, together with the changes they experienced during the first six decades of the nineteenth century, to explore the reasons why many farms disappeared at this time, and to throw light on the personal and holding characteristics that influenced the response of individual farm families to economic difficulties.

⁴ J V Beckett, 'The decline of the small landowner in eighteenth- and nineteenth-century England: some regional considerations', *Ag Hist Rev*, XXX, 1982, pp 97-111; J R Wordie, 'Social change on the Leveson-Gower estates 1714-1832', *Econ Hist Rev*, 2nd ser XXVII, 1974, pp 593-609; Turner, *op cit*; Martin, *op cit*; Yelling, *op cit*.

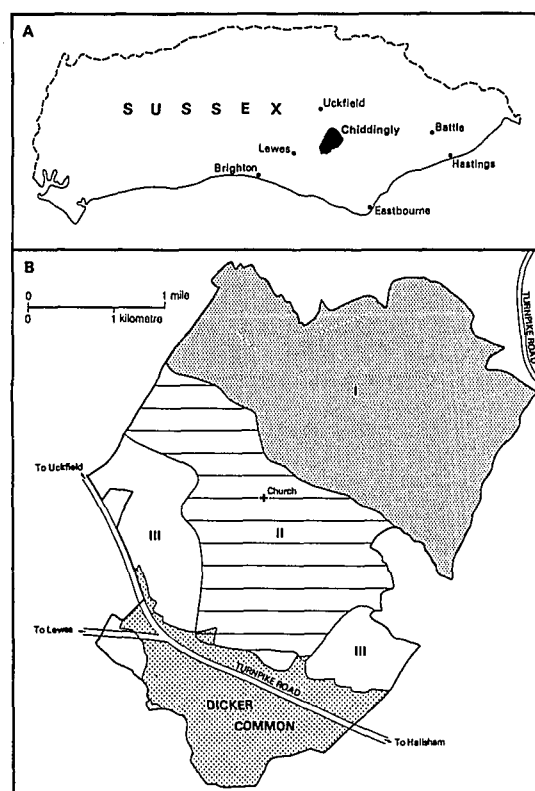


FIGURE 1
Chiddingly parish: A. location; B. broad divisions and turnpike roads

I
The parish chosen for this study is Chiddingly in Sussex, about eight miles (13 km) east of Lewes; its 4477 acres (1812 ha) straddle the junction of the High and Low Weald (Fig. 1). The choice of this parish was determined by the possession of a corpus of data collected for a different purpose, but Chiddingly appears to have been reasonably representative of the farming practices of the Sussex Weald. The northern part of the parish (I on Fig. 1B) has the least favourable environment, with steep slopes, poor acidic soils and an extensive woodland cover. The south and south-west (III) is low-lying with heavy and poorly-drained soils derived from Weald Clay. Between lies a belt of somewhat more favourable undulating country (II) with soils ranging from medium loams

to silty clays.⁵ Prior to an 1817 Enclosure Award, tracks widened here and there into small irregularly-shaped greens that attracted squatter settlement, while an extensive common known as the Dicker covered much of the Weald Clay tract in the south.

In addition to having to cope with relatively unfavourable soils, Chiddingly farmers had problems of access to market, since many had to negotiate some of the notoriously narrow, winding, and muddy Sussex lanes, described by Young as among the worst in the country.⁶ Two turnpike roads offered easier movement once reached (Fig. 1B). One crossed the northern fringes of Dicker common, linking the parish westwards to Lewes and Uckfield, and eastwards to Hailsham and Battle. The other ran north-south just beyond the eastern boundary of the parish. No railway has ever penetrated Chiddingly territory, and the nearest station during the period under consideration was at Berwick, on the line opened in 1846 from Lewes to Eastbourne, and about three miles (5 km) beyond the southern boundary of the parish.

Like most of its Wealden neighbours, Chiddingly was an 'open' parish with many landowners.⁷ The 1839 tithe survey listed ninety-nine owners, nine of whom, each with between 250 and 500 acres, owned about two-thirds of the parish. Excluding woodland, seven of these nine properties comprised a single large farm (plus in most instances a few smaller holdings), with three of the owners occupying their own farm; one other owner-occupier possessed one tenant farm in addition to his own holding; while the remaining owner had two medium-sized tenant farms. Almost all the remaining

land of the parish was divided among eighty-nine properties of under 75 acres (twenty between 20 and 75 acres, and sixty-nine under 20 acres). Some of the smaller owners were Chiddingly residents, while others lived in neighbouring parishes or in Lewes.

This ownership pattern was reflected closely by the farm size distribution, with a small number of what were locally considered to be large farms alongside a large number of smaller holdings. The definition of small farms suggested by Grigg and Mingay, i.e., those between 20 and 100 acres (8 and 40 ha), has been adopted to ensure comparability with other work, although in practice virtually all had fewer than 75 acres (30 ha).⁸ The appropriateness of the 20-acre lower limit is open to question, in that it cuts across a continuum of holding sizes, but it does appear to correspond roughly with the point on the continuum below which farming was never the main source of family income. Some small farms had already disappeared before 1800, nevertheless the survivors still occupied around 30 per cent of Chiddingly's enclosed farm land in the early years of the nineteenth century.

II

Before changes are examined, it is useful to start with a snapshot of the situation c 1840, the one occasion during the six decades for which there is comprehensive evidence relating to acreages, tenures, and farm family composition, derived from the tithe survey of 1839 and the census enumerators' books for 1841.⁹

In 1839, there were twenty-eight holdings in Chiddingly that met the 20-acre

⁵ M G Jarvis et al, *Soils and their Use in South-East England*, Soil Survey of England and Wales, Bulletin No 15, Harpenden, 1984; R D Lake et al, *The Geology of the Country around Lewes*, 1987.

⁶ Revd A Young, *General View of the Agriculture of the County of Sussex*, 2nd Edition, 1813, reprinted Newton Abbot, 1970, p 417.

⁷ Short, *op cit*, 1983, p 155; Brandon and Short, *op cit*, p 318.

⁸ Grigg, *op cit*, 1963; G E Mingay, *Enclosure and the Small Farm in the Age of the Agricultural Revolution*, 1968.

⁹ Chiddingly Tithe Map and Award 1839, PRO, IR 35/59 and East Sussex Record Office (ESRO), TD/E 105; 1841 Census Enumerators' Books, PRO, HO 107/1118.

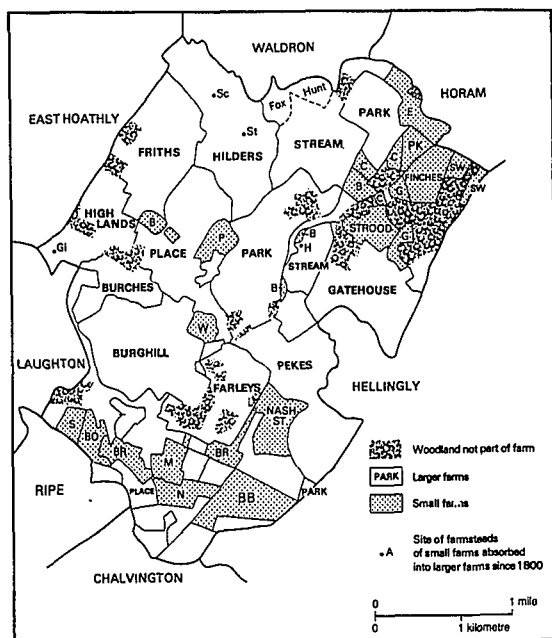


FIGURE 2

Chiddingly farms in 1839. Small farms: B = Beards; BB = Black Barn; BO = Broad Oak; BR = Brays; C = Charity; E = Easterfields; G = Gun; M = Millhouse; N = New House; P = Parsonage; PK = Pickhill; S = Stuckles; SW = Swansbrook; W = Willets. Small farms absorbed: Gi = Gildridge; H = Hale; Sc = Scotland; St = Stockers

minimum to qualify as a farm. One, which was in effect part of a large farm in the adjoining parish of Chalvington, has been discounted, and woodland has been excluded from the acreages of the remaining twenty-seven. This leaves seven farms with between 200 and 330 acres, four with between 100 and 200 acres, and seventeen with between 20 and 100 acres. The large farms occupied roughly 48 per cent and the small farms 19 per cent of the non-wooded land of the parish. Farms in the 100–200 acre group covered a proportion of the parish (17 per cent) similar to that occupied by the 115 holdings of less than 20 acres (16 per cent). Comparison of Figures 1 and 2 shows that most of the small farms were located in the zones of least favourable soils, either in the north-east of the parish, or around the former Dicker common. Four were

being worked with an adjacent larger unit, and two (with a combined area of 58 acres) were held by the same person, leaving twelve independent small farms. Of these, three can be classed as owner-occupied, six were tenanted, and three had a nucleus of owned land supplemented by rented plots.¹⁰

The tithe award indicates that farms of all sizes had between 50 and 85 per cent of their land under arable, with the single exception of a 31-acre holding with 32 per cent. The typical arable rotation was fallow, wheat, oats, and seeds (clover and ryegrass), left down for two or three years. The majority of farms in zones I and II, but none in zone III, had a small hop field which in certain years could be the source of considerable profit. Most of the remaining land comprised poor quality permanent grassland which provided summer grazing for cattle, whilst in winter downland sheep might be agisted. The traditional Wealden cattle-farming system, which involved the retention of all male calves, their use as plough oxen between the ages of three and six, followed by fattening for the butcher, may still have been practised, c 1840, on some of the larger farms in the northern part of Chiddingly parish. These farmers found the abundant supplies of manure which the winter stall-fed cattle provided very beneficial for their hop fields. By this date, however, horses had replaced oxen as plough animals on many farms and the emphasis of the cattle economy had shifted

¹⁰ Charity Farm has been included among the wholly rented independent units, although this status lasted only from 1838 to 1841; Chiddingly Highways Account Book 1835–50, ESRO, PAR 292/39/1. The owner-occupied category includes farms being worked by a member of the family other than the owner, and those where the owner was elderly and the land was worked by an unrelated small farmer. In a few instances, land in a neighbouring parish may have been worked along with a Chiddingly farm, but records need to be checked thoroughly before it can be assumed that identical names referred to the same individual. The author initially assumed that William Guy of Chiddingly and William Guy of Laughton, whose lands adjoined and who rented from the same landowner, were one person, but later discovered this was not the case.

towards rearing and dairying. Wheat, hops, store cattle, and butter were thus the principal cash products on the large commercial farms.¹¹

These basic products were supplemented or replaced on many small farms by clover seed, table poultry, and eggs.¹² In addition, many small farmers and their families would have undertaken seasonal or occasional paid employment for larger farmers (both local and in other regions like the South Downs), or in the wood-coppice industries.¹³ In the three instances where the 1841 census enumerators' books record an additional occupation (blacksmith, brickmaker, and innkeeper), this no doubt brought in a large share of the family income. Farmers with small acreages were thus not necessarily those with the smallest incomes, and some at least are likely to have adopted a capitalist economy. On the other hand, others retained an essentially peasant way of life, selling or bartering what they could, but otherwise subsisting on their own produce.¹⁴

Table I represents an attempt to classify all occupied small farms in Chiddingly c 1840, according to their social and economic characteristics. The three farmers with known non-agricultural occupations, together with David Guy of Parsonage Farm, who also shared in the running of his father's 232-acre Place

Farm, have characteristics commensurate with reasonable prosperity and a place in a capitalist society; all four heads were young or middle-aged, they had households of between seven and eleven persons, and most of their land was rented. The remaining nine farmers with no specified non-agricultural sources of income had households of six or fewer persons. This group appears to subdivide with the age of the farmer: the seven with heads aged 50 or over are those most likely to have retained a peasant economy, but the economic status of the remaining two, with farmers in their twenties or early thirties, remains uncertain.

III

In spite of some shortcomings, land-tax records provide the best evidence for year-by-year changes between 1800 and 1860 in the number and tenure of Chiddingly's small farms.¹⁵ Assessment lists are available for every year during the period, apart from 1839, 1843, and 1850-58, and except during the years 1840-45 these covered all properties, including those where the tax had been redeemed. From 1816 onwards, most farms are named, and almost all can be traced back before 1816 by their unchanged rentals and assessments. However, one (Stuckles) could not be identified before 1810, a second (Beards) comprised two blocks in 1839 that were difficult to identify earlier, and a further four were partly or wholly omitted from the lists either on account of charity status (Charity) or because they occupied land on the former Dicker common which appears never to have been subject to land tax (Black Barn, Brays, and New House).¹⁶ The latter five farms

¹¹ Chiddingly tithe file, PRO, IR 18/0283; John Farncombe, prize report 'On the farming of Sussex', *JRASE*, XI, 1850, pp 81-85; Young, *op cit*, pp 70, 226-250; James Caird, *English Agriculture in 1850-51*, 1852, 2nd edition, 1968, pp 123-127; J P Boxall, 'The Sussex breed of cattle in the nineteenth century' *Ag Hist Rev*, XX, 1972, pp 19-22; S Hawes, 'Notes on the Wealden Clay of Sussex and its cultivation', *JRASE*, XIX, 1858, pp 182-198.

¹² Hawes, *op cit*, p 198; B Short, 'The art and craft of chicken cramming; poultry in the Weald of Sussex 1850-1950', *Ag Hist Rev*, XXX, 1982, pp 17-30; BPP 1836, VIII, Select Committee on Agriculture, second report, p 6.

¹³ M Reed, 'The peasantry of nineteenth-century England: a neglected class?' *History Workshop J*, XVIII, 1984, p 63; W A Armstrong, 'Labour I: rural population growth, systems of employment, and incomes', in G E Mingay, ed, *Agrarian History of England and Wales*, VI, Cambridge, 1989, pp 678-9.

¹⁴ Reed, *op cit*, 1984, pp 33-76; M Reed, '"Gnawing it out": a new look at economic relations in nineteenth-century rural England', *Rural Hist*, I, 1, 1990, pp 83-94.

¹⁵ ESRO, LT Chiddingly and LLT Chiddingly; Michael Turner 'The land tax, land and property: old debates and new horizons', in Turner and Mills, *op cit*, Ch 1.

¹⁶ For the exemption of charity land see John Broad, 'The land tax and the study of village communities', in Turner and Mills, *op cit*, p 62.

TABLE 1
Small farms and their households c 1840

Farms	Acreage farmed in Chiddingly 1839		Additional sources of of income	Farmer's age 1841	Household size 1841
	owned	rented			
Millhouse	—	31	brickworks	54	7
Gun	—	32	inn, hops*	45-49	8
Willetts	2	22	smithy†	47	11
Parsonage	—	36	joint tenancy of Place Farm	26	9
Easterfields with Pickhill	38	18	hops	58	6
Strood	—	47	hops	50-54	6
Finches	61	—	hops	58	4
Beards	31	—	poultry	63	6
Broad Oak	30	—	—	55-59	5
Nash Street	—	68	‡	60-64	6
New House	—	37	—	60-64	2
Brays	18	45	§	24	6
Black Barn	—	75	—	30-34	1

* possibly additional land in Hellingly.

† rent from 1.5 acres.

‡ farmed with a larger unit in 1839, but separate by 1841.

§ rent from 11 acres.

had therefore to be omitted from this part of the analysis, leaving seventeen for which it is possible to identify tenurial changes (Fig. 3). The approximate size of farms that had disappeared before 1839 was estimated from tithe award evidence.

The changes can be conveniently grouped by three phases of differing agricultural prosperity.

1800-1815: Details are available in 1800 for sixteen farms; seven were independent tenanted units, while nine were occupied by their owners. Among the tenanted farms, two (Parsonage and Foxhunt) saw no significant tenurial changes during this period; three (Willetts, Gildridge, and Nash Street) were purchased by their tenants, and a fourth (Scotland) was acquired by a local man who allowed the sitting tenant to remain until 1811, when the owner began to farm it himself; the remaining one (Stockers) was purchased by the owner of the adjacent large farm

(Hilders), and absorbed into the larger holding. Of the nine owner-occupied farms, seven saw no significant changes, whilst Hale and Swansbrook were acquired by an absentee landlord in 1811 but continued to be occupied by local families. The overall picture thus mirrors trends noted in earlier studies, with small farmers flourishing and owner-occupancy increasing.¹⁷

1816-1842: The period of agricultural distress that followed the Napoleonic wars lingered on in the unfavourable environment of the Weald until the 1840s (1842 was selected as the arbitrary terminal date for this period in order to encompass all changes of similar type). Figure 3 reveals

¹⁷ David Grigg, *The Agricultural Revolution in South Lincolnshire*, Cambridge, 1966, pp 85-88; J V Beckett, 'Landownership and estate management', in Mingay (ed), *op cit*, Ch 6, p 558; A H John, 'Farming in wartime', in E L Jones and G E Mingay, eds, *Land, Labour and Population in the Industrial Revolution, 1967*, pp 44-5; E J Hobsbawm and George Rudé, *Captain Swing*, 1969, p 33.

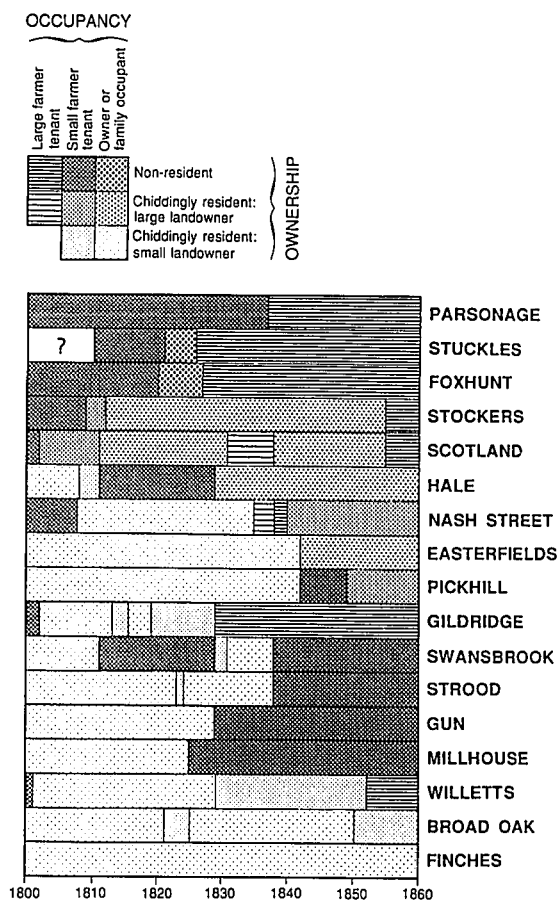


FIGURE 3

Chiddingly small farms: tenurial changes 1800 to 1860

that this was the time of greatest change. It is also a reminder that the c 1840 description of the previous section relates to the situation after most changes.

The three small tenant farms that still survived in 1815 all saw their tenants depart between 1819 and 1825, and only one (Parsonage) had a replacement tenant who lasted until 1836. The other two (Foxhunt and Stuckles) remained unlet for several years, reflecting the difficulty of attracting tenants during a time of depression; they were subsequently leased to adjacent large farmers.¹⁸ Parsonage experienced a somewhat similar fate from

1837, when it was leased to David Guy, who also shared the working of his father's Placc Farm. Changes among the eleven owner-occupied farms of 1815 started rather later, in 1824. In five instances, owner-occupancy was replaced by leasing from an absentee landlord; two farms were acquired by the owner-occupier of a large Chiddingly farm (Robert Reeves of Stream), who worked nearby Easterfields himself until 1860 but leased Nash Street back to its 1839 owners; Gildridge, after some vicissitudes, was acquired by the Earl of Chichester and incorporated into his adjacent 130-acre tenant farm of Highlands. Thus by 1842, of the seventeen small farms covered by Figure 3, eight had been absorbed by (or linked with) an adjacent large farm, six survived as independent but tenanted units, and three (compared with eleven in 1815) remained the property of owner-occupying families.

1843-1860: During this final phase, when the economic environment was improving, changes were few. One of the three surviving owner-occupied farms (Willetts) was sold during the 1850s to an absentee owner who leased the land to a nearby large farmer.¹⁹ By 1860 only two small farms were owner-occupied and only Finches was worked by the same family as in 1800.

To sum up, all seventeen farms under consideration (except possibly Stuckles) were independent units during the first decade of the century. By 1860, nine remained independent, of which only two were owner-occupied, compared with thirteen at the peak date for this tenure in 1809. In the process of these changes, the role of peasant farming in Chiddingly's economy was inevitably reduced.

Attention must now turn to farms omitted from Figure 3 because they escaped the land tax. A private Act of Parliament in 1813 sanctioned the enclos-

¹⁸ G E Fussell, *op cit*, p 90; G E Mingay, *op cit*, 1961-2, p 475; B Short, 'The turnover of tenants on the Ashburnham estate 1830-1850', *Sussex Arch Coll*, CXIII, 1975, pp 157-174.

¹⁹ ESRO, RAF 74.

ure of 790 acres of common waste in Laughton manor, among which the most extensive tract was the Dicker common in Chiddingly parish. The common had previously been used for grazing livestock by tenants of Laughton manor in Laughton, Chiddingly, East Hoathly, Waldron, Chalvington, and Ripe parishes, some of whom lived up to five miles away. The enclosure award of 1817 allocated several sizeable parcels to the lord of the manor and a few large freeholders, but the majority of the land was granted to the remaining hundred or so claimants in the form of plots of under five acres in size.²⁰ It was no doubt small size and large numbers that militated against the inclusion of these plots in the land-tax valuation.

The creation of so many small plots remote from their parent holdings provided an opportunity for the exchange, sale, and leasing of land, which in turn led to the expansion of some former fringe smallholdings, and the establishment of some completely new farms. A comparison of maps for 1822 and 1839 shows that this process had made considerable progress in the interval.²¹ Short-time renting and sub-renting, however, allowed considerable fluctuations in farm boundaries from year to year; smallholdings expanded and then contracted again, making the precise number of small Dicker farms at any date other than 1839 very difficult to establish. Probably four or five was the usual number, suggesting that only half as many new farms were added on the Dicker, as were lost on the old-enclosed land of the parish through absorption into larger units. Nevertheless, the Dicker was the part of the parish where the ethos of peasant farming survived most strongly

during the middle decades of the nineteenth century.²²

IV

It is generally recognized that the post-Napoleonic agricultural depression was a feature especially of areas of heavy clay soils in eastern England, including the Weald.²³ Wealden farmers by this time depended on wheat for a considerable part of their cash income, and when wheat prices fell more sharply than costs in the post-war years their prosperity evaporated.²⁴ The problem arose primarily from the intractable soils which made it difficult to achieve the improvements leading to increased yields that were taking place in other districts. Income from other products was less volatile, and the evidence of distress offered to Parliamentary Select Committees may have been exaggerated.²⁵ Nevertheless, there is little doubt that the whole period from 1816 to c 1840 was a time of difficulty for Wealden farmers, with the two phases of particularly low wheat prices in 1821–23 and 1833–36 being especially testing.²⁶ It is against this background that the contemporary changes among the small farms of Chiddingly parish need to be set. Explanation requires consideration of both the general trend, and the variety of response in individual cases.

Small tenant farms succumbed mainly during the earlier of the two phases of low wheat prices, no doubt because several

²⁰ ESRO, CHR 1/15, 16.

²¹ MS map of Laughton Manor 1822, surveyor Walter Figg, ESRO, SAS A1/4/30; Tithe map of Chiddingly 1839, PRO, IR 35/59, and ESRO TD/E 105.

²² T Horsfield, *The History, Antiquities and Topography of the County of Sussex*, 1835, Vol I, p 355; Reed, *op cit*, 1984, p 57.

²³ J D Chambers and G E Mingay, *The Agricultural Revolution 1750–1880*, 1966, pp 127–8; B A Holderness, 'Prices, productivity and output' in G E Mingay, ed, *op cit*, 1989, Ch 2, p 102.

²⁴ BPP, 1821, IX, 1, Minutes of Evidence taken before the Select Committee on the Distressed State of Agriculture, p 51; H G Hunt, 'Agricultural rent in South-East England, 1788–1825', *Ag Hist Rev*, VII 1959, pp 98–108; A H John, 'Statistical appendix', in G E Mingay, ed, *op cit*, 1989, pp 975, 999.

²⁵ J Phillip Dodd, 'Agriculture in Sussex and the Corn Law lobby', *Southern History*, 11, 1989, pp 53–68.

²⁶ Chambers and Mingay, *op cit*, pp 110 and 127; John, *op cit*, 1989, pp 794–5.

years of successive loss had left their occupants badly in arrears with rent. Unless there was a mortgage on the property, the average owner-occupier would have had smaller outgoings than a tenant farmer, but more capital tied up in the farm itself. He could therefore survive a longer spell of unfavourable prices by cutting down on repairs and maintenance, increasing the level of family self-sufficiency, and making greater use of credit and barter.²⁷ For essential cash payments such as rates and taxes he might be able to draw on savings accumulated during earlier years of prosperity. It is therefore not surprising to find change delayed until somewhat later among small owner-occupied properties, with the precise timing showing no obvious correlation with wheat prices.

On the Dicker, enclosure during the early years of the depression favoured small farms. The many new plots that became available for leasing at a time when demand was depressed must have encouraged the setting of low rents, thereby providing opportunities for smallholders round the fringes of the former common to acquire extra plots. Even the two entirely new Dicker farms were modest in size, and one still lacked a farmhouse in 1839. The Dicker thus remained an oasis of small farms and smallholdings up to 1860 and later.

Within this broad pattern of reactions to agricultural depression, however, the variety of individual responses, particularly among owner-occupiers, suggests the existence of mediating factors to which attention must now turn. Two sets of factors need consideration: first, the characteristics of the farmer himself, including the timing of his career in relation to the onset of depression, the size of his family in association with local customs of inheritance, and his skills and

initiative; and secondly, the attitudes of other members of the community and outside purchasers towards small farms. Evidence on these matters is not as full as might be wished, but there are some clues.

Most of Chiddingly's owner-occupying small farmers survived to old age and had sizeable families.²⁸ It was usual for one son to inherit the farm, with all remaining property being divided more or less equally among all the children, except in cases where they had received an equivalent portion earlier. Large families thus resulted in the son who inherited the farm starting with only small capital reserves. As farms went through a cycle of capital accumulation and dissipation, each in turn became especially vulnerable to outside economic influences at the time when ownership had recently passed from one generation to the next. The fewer the offspring, the smaller the danger, with the ideal being one or two surviving children, including one son ready to take over the farm. At the other extreme, childlessness or the absence of an heir willing to take over gave rise to the sale of the property on retirement or death. Hence in families at both extremes of size, change was most likely to occur at or within a few years of the death of the head of the family.

These relationships can be illustrated from several Chiddingly small farms. Finches, the only farm that was retained throughout the whole period by the same family, demonstrates the advantages of few offspring. John Holman owned and farmed it until 1810, when recently-married Samuel Holman became tenant at the age of twenty-seven, with John remaining owner until 1832. Samuel's family comprised just two sons, of whom

²⁷ Reed, *op cit*, 1984.

²⁸ Where not otherwise noted, this section is based on (i) census listings for 1821 (ESRO, PAR292/37/1), 1841 (PRO, HO107/1118), 1851 (PRO, HO107/638), and 1861 (PRO, RG 9/569); (ii) Chiddingly Parish Registers, ESRO, PAR292/1/2/1, PAR292/1/3/1, PAR292/1/5/1; (iii) Land Tax Assessments, ESRO, LT and LLT Chiddingly; (iv) Chiddingly Tithe Map and Award 1839, PRO, IR 35/59 and ESRO, TD/E 105.

the younger was trained as a shoemaker, while the elder, David, joined his father in running Finches from 1843, and became owner after his father's death in the 1850s. Since Samuel's wife was only twenty-three when her younger son was born, we appear to have here an instance of family limitation; was this perhaps with an eye to inheritance? The fact that David Holman too had a small and well-spaced family of two daughters followed by two sons increases the suspicion. Survival may also have been aided by the timing of family events; Samuel had been farming for a few years before depression struck, while David took over when the economic environment was improving.

An apparently childless small farmer was Richard Pelling, who owned and occupied Strood from 1824 to 1838. In the latter year, when he was sixty-three, he retired with his wife to the nearby village of East Hoathly and sold the farm to an outsider, though he retained the lease of a second farm, twenty-six acre Charity, until 1841. Thomas Davies of Willetts was not childless, but the only son of whom there is evidence had moved away from Chiddingly. Davies retired from farming in 1830, at the age of sixty-five, when he continued to occupy the same house but leased the land to his blacksmith neighbour. The property was inherited by Davies's absentee son in 1845, and sold by him in the 1850s, after the death of the lessee.²⁹

Two examples of farms sold soon after the death of the head of family can be examined. Strood (the same farm that childless Richard Pelling subsequently acquired) was owned and farmed by John Barnes until his death in 1818. There followed a brief occupancy by his widow before the property passed to their youngest son Richard, aged thirty-two in 1821. John Barnes's will reveals that all his pos-

sessions apart from the farm and its implements were to be shared in the traditional way amongst his nine children.³⁰ Richard Barnes thus started to farm Strood with relatively limited financial backing during the worst phase of the depression, when he would almost certainly have been forced to draw on capital. A requirement in the will that he should pay his eldest sister an annuity of £17 10s must have seemed the last straw. It is not surprising that he was forced to quit in 1824.

No will has been located for the second example, Easterfields, but the circumstances appear to have been similar. James Funnell, senior, owned and farmed Easterfields until 1829 when his son James Funnell, junior, took over the management. James senior remained the owner, and also continued to farm adjacent Pickhill jointly with John Funnell, perhaps a brother. Both James senior and John died in 1837. Pickhill was sold immediately to a Hellingly family, with James Funnell junior becoming tenant, while at the same time he now owned as well as occupied Easterfields. The size of James Funnell senior's family is not known, but it is likely to have been sufficiently large to have left James junior short of capital; his own outgoings on his eleven children, including several apprenticed to craftsmen, must have been substantial. It is therefore no surprise to find Easterfields passing in 1842 into the hands of a large neighbour, Robert Reeves of Stream. James Funnell junior survived as tenant of Pickhill for a few more years, before finally disappearing from the Chiddingly scene.

Investigation along these lines for all of the owner-occupied small farms of Chiddingly is not feasible, but such evidence as is available supports the contention that most changes followed the death of the family head. Each farm would have experi-

²⁹ ESRO, RAF74.

³⁰ ESRO, A73, p 309.

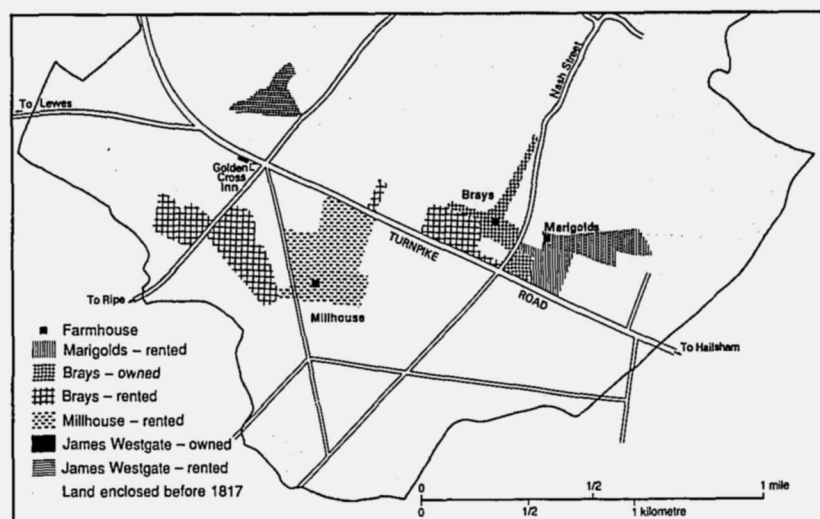


FIGURE 4

Former Dicker Common: selected small holdings and small farms, 1839

enced the potentially dangerous stage in the family cycle once a generation, and since different families were at different stages of their cycles, the changes among Chiddingly owner-occupied farms were not surprisingly spread throughout the eighteen-year period from 1824 to 1842.

Although personal ability and initiative must have played some part in determining the fate of particular farm families, evidence for its role is extremely difficult to identify. Since the Dicker was the district that offered most scope for initiative, the most promising approach is to look for evidence among men who acquired land there. Thomas King became the owner of the eighteen-acre smallholding called Brays in 1833, when, assuming that his age as recorded in the 1851 census was accurate, he was sixteen years old; by 1839 he was renting an additional forty-five acres of Dicker land in Chiddingly, plus a few acres in Ripe (Fig. 4). We glimpse here a young man who had sufficient success on the bottom rung of the farming ladder to move on to a larger farm, for the census enumerators' books for 1851 recorded him as living on a 110-acre farm in Hellingly. William Thorpe

(b. 1793), the illegitimate grandson of a prosperous Chiddingly shoemaker, was described in the early 1820s as an agricultural labourer. After two years as governor of the parish workhouse, he appears in the 1827 land-tax assessment as tenant of the nineteen-acre smallholding known as Marigolds (Fig. 4).³¹ By 1835 he was paying highway rates for a much larger acreage, almost certainly the result of renting an additional forty or fifty acres on the Dicker.³² He too must have flourished, for in 1839 he moved to the 114-acre Burches Farm. James Westgate, in 1841 aged forty, and a carrier from the Golden Cross Inn to Lewes, was in 1839 renting just six acres of land (Fig. 4). By 1851 he was described as farmer of forty acres, and by 1861 he was also the innkeeper.

Such men could not have flourished without ability and business acumen, but possession of a certain amount of capital may have been just as significant. William Thorpe had received a fourteenth share of his grandfather's estate in 1819; James Westgate no doubt invested the profits

³¹ Chiddingly Vestry Minute Book, ESRO, PAR292/12/1.

³² Chiddingly Highways Account Book 1835-50, ESRO, PAR292/39/1.

from his carrying business; and young Thomas King must surely have started with an inheritance or parental backing.³³ Who can say whether other Dicker-fringe smallholders like Thomas Townshend of Deanland or John Richardson of Holmes Hill might not have flourished equally if they had possessed comparable financial resources? By bringing into their small farms capital generated outside the farming economy, King, Thorpe and Westgate would have been able to invest in enough improvements to allow their holdings to pay their way. In contrast, the majority of smallholders and small farmers lacked capital and had no means of escaping from the traditional semi-subsistence economy – even if they had wanted to. Personal qualities alone were not sufficient to ensure success, or even survival.

Turning now to the second set of mediating factors, attitudes towards small farms are equally difficult to evaluate in the absence of direct comment, but assumptions can be drawn from indirect evidence. Prior to 1815, any small farm put up for sale had found a ready market among the non-inheriting sons of local farming families. During the first decade of the depression, some such purchasers still existed, encouraged no doubt by low prices. Richard Pelling, who acquired Strood in 1824, probably came from such a background. In the same year, Edward Weston, son of a Chiddingly millwright, purchased Broad Oak, where Westons remained for the next quarter century. By the late 1820s, however, this source of purchasers had dried up, and all subsequent new owners were either large local landowners or non-resident investors. Those investors whose place of residence can be identified lived either in nearby rural parishes or in towns like Lewes and Brighton. The impression is that many became owners by default,

when a mortgager was unable to service his debt, a good example being Millhouse, where a Lewes solicitor became the owner in 1825.³⁴ No doubt such new owners were prepared to accept a regular rent income as a substitute for mortgage payments, hence they acquiesced to their new role, while probably taking little positive interest in the property.

Except in the case of Gildridge, the landowners who acquired small farms were all Chiddingly owner-occupiers. During the earlier part of the period, owners of some middle-sized holdings acquired adjacent small farms in order to reach a more economic size; Hilders for instance grew from about 180 acres in 1812, to 284 acres in 1839 by absorbing Stockers and Scotland. But once a large farm had reached what appears to have been the local optimum of around 250–300 acres, the owner's attitude to the fate of the remaining small farms may have changed. Robert Reeves of Stream Farm (278 acres) became the owner of Hale in 1830, which he incorporated into Stream to give him a total of 353 acres (including 52 acres of woodland) in the 1839 tithe award. In 1842 he became owner of Nash Street and Easterfields, and in the 1850s of Pickhill, but Nash Street and Pickhill continued as independent tenant holdings, while Easterfields was restored to tenant status in 1860, after Reeves had farmed it himself for eighteen years. Little is known about how large and small farms normally interacted in the Weald, but work in other regions has revealed reciprocal arrangements that may well have had parallels in this district.³⁵ Large Chiddingly farmers like Reeves may therefore have viewed the survival of at least some small local farms as conducive

³³ ESRO, A73, p 547.

³⁴ Laughton Manor Court Book, ESRO, A2327/1/10, pp 14, 58.

³⁵ Daniel Jenkins, *The Agricultural Community in South-West Wales at the Turn of the Twentieth Century*, Cardiff, 1971; Ian Carter, *Farmlife in Northeast Scotland 1840–1914*, Edinburgh, 1979; Barry Reay, *The Last Rising of the Agricultural Labourers*, Oxford, 1990.

to their own prosperity, whether as sources of labour, young cattle, or some other product that could be obtained most cheaply and conveniently this way.³⁶

The impression as a whole is thus not of aggressive action on the part of the new owners of small farms, but rather of somewhat reluctant involvement, by default or perhaps in the process of attempting to help a small neighbour.

V

The conclusion that the post-Napoleonic depression was the occasion for major changes among the small farms of Chiddingly parish raises further questions. It is reasonable to assume that any period of low prices for agricultural products would provide testing conditions for small farmers requiring cash for rent, taxes and essential purchases. So, how did Wealden small farms fare during other periods of depression, notably those of the early eighteenth and late nineteenth centuries? If changes were more modest than those in Chiddingly between 1815 and 1842, what was it that made the early nineteenth century a time of greater vulnerability?

Evidence for a decline in the number of small farms in one part of the Weald during the eighteenth century is provided by Grover's study of seven parishes located in Hastings Rape.³⁷ His tables, based on early land-tax records, indicate that the number of occupiers assessed at between £2 and £10 (roughly corresponding to small farms as defined in this article) fell by 33 per cent between 1702 and 1781, while the number of proprietors in the same assessment range declined by 20 per cent. This points to a greater loss of small tenant farms than of small owner-

occupied properties. Grover's work does not tell us precisely when the changes occurred, hence we do not know whether they were concentrated into the main depression years of 1725 to 1750.³⁸ Even if they were, a decline of 33 per cent in 25 years would still have been less severe than the Chiddingly decline of 47 per cent between 1815 and 1842. Far more detailed work is necessary before the precise impact of the eighteenth-century depression can be evaluated, but this limited comparison suggests that its overall effect on Chiddingly's small farms was probably smaller than that of its early nineteenth-century counterpart. It is interesting to note however that where evidence has been encountered for pre-1800 losses in Chiddingly, the farms concerned were located mainly on the somewhat better soils of zone II.

The differing impact on small farms of the two periods of depression seems likely to have been a corollary of the increasing market orientation of Wealden farming with the passage of time. The eighteenth-century decline of small farms on the better soils of Chiddingly's zone II may signify an infiltration of capitalist farming into the more attractive parts of the Weald, whilst a peasant economy survived on soils less amenable to improvement. The late eighteenth-century price rises led to an even deeper penetration of market forces along with an expansion of the acreage devoted to wheat; this generated on the one hand renewed interest in engrossment among larger landowners, and on the other a greater reliance on produce for sale amongst small farmers. But whilst the small farmer's cash income rose, so too did his outgoings in the form of rent or mortgage payments, essential

³⁶ Beckett, *op cit*, 1990, p 52.

³⁷ R Grover, 'Early land tax assessments explored: (2) Kent and Sussex', in Turner and Mills, eds, *op cit*, pp 204-18.

³⁸ Joan Thirsk, ed, *Agrarian History of England and Wales V i*, 'Introduction', p xxii. Mingay, *op cit*, 1961-2, p 482, note 2, quotes evidence that in Laughton manor, which included part of Chiddingly parish, the main period when farms increased in size was between 1740 and 1760.

purchases, rates, and taxes. Most significant was the steady rise in poor rates after c 1750; in Chiddingly the rate exceeded 12s per pound of assessment every year between 1809 and 1833, rising to a peak of 22s in 1819.³⁹ Some farm and household needs, and sometimes even rent, could be paid for in kind or by barter, but rates and taxes had to be paid in *cash*. A small farmer during the early eighteenth-century depression needed only small amounts of cash for this purpose, at a time when the prices he was receiving for the products he took to market – butter, cheese, eggs, the occasional animal – fell only modestly.⁴⁰ His counterpart living through the post-Napoleonic depression required several times more cash, in absolute terms, when his income, derived from much the same products as earlier, plus wheat, may have been at best only twice that of c 1750. In these circumstances, it is hardly surprising that small farms were far more vulnerable to change during the second of the two depressions.

The secondary literature contains little information on how small farms fared during the late nineteenth-century depression, and it is difficult to tell precisely how those of the Weald were affected. By 1924, holdings between 5 and 100 acres in the whole of south-eastern England occupied a slightly larger percentage of the total area of crops and grass than in 1885, but the regional figure may disguise significant local variations.⁴¹ A detailed study of size and tenurial changes in the Weald is required before definite conclusions can be drawn; in the meantime, the continued survival of many small farms into the twentieth century suggests that late nine-

teenth-century losses were minimal.⁴² Discussion will proceed on this assumption.

The problems of the late 1870s and the 1880s affected principally cereal growers. Prices had been falling steadily, especially for wheat, and the situation was exacerbated for farmers in areas like the Weald, where little underdraining had been undertaken, by a series of wet seasons.⁴³ Many of the larger Wealden farmers, who still relied on wheat for a sizeable proportion of their cash income, saw their returns so seriously reduced as to lead to some relinquishment of farms and bankruptcy.⁴⁴ Small farmers were better placed to survive as they were more dependent on dairy and poultry products, fruit, and hops, for which demand was rising and market organization improving, hence their modest incomes experienced less fluctuation.⁴⁵ At the same time, there was no significant increase in outgoings, and even some rent reductions.⁴⁶ The result seems to have been considerable resilience, ensuring small farm survival.

Such evidence as is available thus appears to support the view that the post-Napoleonic depression saw greater changes among small farms than occurred during the other two periods considered. Throughout the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, most small Wealden farmers sold only as much produce as was necessary to support their simple life-style, and they

³⁹ Chiddingly Vestry Minute Book, ESRO, PAR292/12/2, Nov 1835, list of Overseers and poor rates from 1804 to 1835.

⁴⁰ Peter J Bowden, Appendix III 'Statistics', in Joan Thirsk, ed., *Agrarian History of England and Wales*, V ii, 1985.

⁴¹ Grigg, *op cit*, 1987, p 187.

⁴² A D Hall, *A Pilgrimage of British Farming*, 1913, pp 47–8; J D Sykes and G P Wibberley, *Profits and Problems of Farming in South-East England*, Wye College Department of Agricultural Economics, 1956, p 13; Ian G Reid, *The Small Farm on Heavy Land*, Wye College Department of Agricultural Economics, 1958, p 6.

⁴³ C S Orwin and E H Whetham, *History of British Agriculture 1846–1914*, 1964, p 266 and Chart V; A D Hall and E J Russell, *A Report on the Agriculture and Soils of Kent, Surrey and Sussex*, 1911, p 128; A D M Phillips, *The Underdraining of Farmland in England during the Nineteenth Century*, Cambridge, 1989, especially p 119.

⁴⁴ P J Perry, 'Where was the "Great Agricultural Depression"? a geography of agricultural bankruptcy in late Victorian England and Wales', *Ag Hist Rev*, 20, 1972, pp 30–45; Boxall, *op cit*, p 19.

⁴⁵ Hall, *op cit*, p 47; Brandon and Short, *op cit*, p 327.

⁴⁶ Charity Farm in Chiddingly provides an example of rent reduction: from £30 per annum in 1875, it had fallen to £18 18s by 1898, ESRO, PAR254/24/3.

could normally withstand a period of lower prices by adopting a range of well-trying strategies – so long as cash outgoings did not increase. What made the post-Napoleonic depression exceptionally testing for them was the requirement to pay regularly, in cash, the high poor rates that then prevailed. Wealden parishes, like most open parishes in southern England, had seen a marked growth in the number of persons dependent on parish relief during the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, with a corresponding increase in poor rates.⁴⁷ The charge fell on all occupiers of land roughly in proportion to the acreage held, so small farmers paid less than large ones. However, the larger farmers were in a sense also beneficiaries, for many of them employed each summer a number of casual labourers whom they could leave the parish to support during the winter.⁴⁸ Small farms worked largely by family labour gained little from this pool of casual labour, yet were still required to contribute to parish relief.⁴⁹ Year after year, the small farmer's cash and savings were drained away, and his traditional resilience undermined. Blaug's view, that it is impossible to separate the burden of poor rates from the many other difficulties that afflicted smallholders in the years of deflation after Waterloo seems unduly cautious, for it was almost certainly this special feature of the post-Napoleonic period that made the small farms of Chiddingly more vulnerable to change at this time than during other periods of depression.⁵⁰

VI

Two main conclusions can be drawn from this study. First, it confirms the need in any consideration of small farm survival to take into account the role of unavoidable cash outgoings, since the average small farmer had insufficient financial flexibility to enable him to withstand a heavy outlay for more than a few years. This factor is likely to have had a significant influence in those parishes of southern England, particularly subject to high poor rates during the early nineteenth century, but needs to be included among the range of possible influences in all studies of small farm decline. Secondly, the principal mediating factors that determined a farm family's resilience were the amount of capital or supplementary income available, the stage in the family cycle, and, when the family head died, the number of children among whom the inheritance needed to be divided. These mediating factors are likely to be of general application, supplemented by others particular to their place and time.

Further work is required to set the analysis presented here in its wider temporal and spatial context. The early nineteenth century has been revealed as a major period of change in Chiddingly, but a study covering a longer period of time is needed before its comparative significance can be accurately measured. Furthermore, since no parish is a perfect microcosm of its region, there is room for a more general analysis of the history and character of the small farms of the Weald. But for such temporal and spatial studies alike, the experience of Chiddingly's small farms between 1800 and 1860 provides a yardstick against which other changes can be evaluated.

⁴⁷ D A Baugh, 'The cost of poor relief in south-east England, 1790-1834', *Econ Hist Rev*, 2nd ser XXVIII, 1975, pp 50-68; J P Huzel, 'The labourer and the Poor Law 1750-1880', in Mingay, ed, *op cit*, 1989, pp 760-69; both are concerned with per capita expenditure rather than poor rates *per se*.

⁴⁸ N Gash, 'Rural unemployment, 1815-34', *Econ Hist Rev*, VI, 1935, pp 90-93; R Wells, 'Rural rebels in southern England in the 1830s', in C Emsley and J Walvin, eds, *Artisans, Peasants and Proletarians 1760-1860*, 1985, p 130.

⁴⁹ BPP 1834, HC XLIV, Report of the Royal Commission on the Poor Law, Vol III, evidence for Chiddingly Parish.

⁵⁰ M Blaug, 'The myth of the old Poor Law and the making of the New', *J Econ Hist*, 23, 1963, reprinted in M W Flinn and T C Smout, eds, *Essays in Social History*, Oxford, 1974, p 142.

Beadoc – the British East Africa Disabled Officers' Colony and the White Frontier in Kenya

By C J D DUDER

Abstract

Beadoc was an attempt to found a co-operative settlement of disabled British officers in the Highlands of Kenya after the First World War. It was designed both to reward ex-soldiers who had lost their health in the service of the Empire, and to provide Britain with supplies of a vital material, flax, from within the confines of the Empire. Under-capitalized, grossly mismanaged, and located on unsuitable land, Beadoc collapsed with the end of the 'flax boom'. Its importance to the agricultural history of white Kenya, is that it illustrated the futility of placing comparatively large numbers of Europeans, with comparatively little capital, on the land as farmers. Kenya was a rich white man's country, which ultimately meant that it would not be any kind of white man's country.

ONE of the much advertised attractions of Kenya for the intending British emigrant was that it was a country eminently suited to the former public school boy, trained not actually to do work, but to supervise the work of others. With cheap African labour to take his orders, the public school man would be able to utilize this training which found little scope in the older Dominions of the Empire. The First World War enormously expanded this pool of potential emigrants to Kenya by creating thousands of men who could not, rather than would not, compete in the labour markets of the Empire. Particularly important in this regard were ex-officers. Men who had lost their health in the service of the Empire would 'only be required to supervise labour', in a setting in which their distinct social status as ex-officers could be maintained by their position at the top of Kenya's racial hierarchy. The first private scheme for settling disabled men on the land in Kenya was received by the Colonial Office in London in 1916.¹ There-

after, a steady stream of proposals for the settlement of those suffering from the effects of gas attacks, neurasthenia, and tuberculosis, and the disabled, in general arrived at the Colonial Office, from private individuals, the YMCA, and the British Ministry of Pensions. None, however, got beyond this stage. White settlement in Kenya had only started on any scale after the Anglo-Boer War, and whether white people could live in the Highlands of Kenya while exposed to the vertical rays of the equatorial sun was still a much debated question, particularly among the Colony's medical fraternity. The general consensus, however, was that 'East Africa is a country for fit men'.² As well, most of the schemes depended on Government grants of land and substantial financial aid to place the disabled on viable farms. Britain's Colonial Empire was still governed by the Treasury's rule that all Colonies and all economic development within Colonies should be self-supporting, and without government financial assistance.

¹ Lord Cranworth, *Profit and Sport in British East Africa*, 1919, pp 244-247; Public Record Office (hereafter PRO) CO533/176, No 48737, Memo. by Jesse Archer, 12 Oct 1916.

² PRO CO533/192, no 57481, Lord Leitrem to Colonial Office, 20 Nov 1917; CO533/203, no 40067, Ministry of Pensions to Colonial Office, 17 Aug 1918; CO533/199, no 62308, Bowring to Long, 23 Dec 1918.

I

Beadoc, or to give it its full title, the British East Africa Disabled Officers' Colony, however, was based on a question of great importance to Britain, the current world 'flax famine', and one which was vital enough to overcome the normal obstacles to settlement of the disabled. Before the First World War, Britain had imported more than 90 per cent of its flax requirements. The War expanded these requirements in the form of uniforms, tents, and especially for the burgeoning aircraft industry. At the same time, the traditional sources of supply, north-western Europe and Russia, were cut off by German occupation, and then by the upheavals of the Russian Revolution. The result was to send flax prices skyrocketing to £252 a ton by July 1919. Faced with soaring costs for a vital raw material, the British Government, in this as in much of its experience of the First World War, moved from a *laissez-faire* to a collectivist and interventionist attitude. Within Britain, the Flax Production Branch of the Board of Agriculture was established to stimulate domestic yields by Government flax production. In addition, and again duplicating much of the British reaction to the First World War, the British Government looked to the Empire to supply domestic needs. The Empire Flax Growing Committee of the Board of Trade was established in February 1918 to co-ordinate the Empire's contribution to Britain's needs. The Committee considered that even after the end of the War, the problem of flax would 'not cease to be the cause of grave anxiety and considerable expense until a safe and satisfactory supply can be secured within the British Empire'.³

One of the Colonies which most

impressed the Committee with its potential for flax was Kenya. Settler production of the crop had started in 1912 and as flax prices soared in the War so did settler interest in it. Flax seemed ideal for Kenya. It demanded masses of cheap labour, which the Colony's Africans could supply, whether they wanted to or not, and as a semi-manufactured crop it needed capital investment in machinery and detailed supervision of both labour and machinery, which white settlers could provide. Moreover, the very high prices for flax made it seem ideal for 'small men', individual settlers with comparatively small capital resources. Ever since white settlement had started, Kenya had enjoyed the dubious reputation of being a 'big man's frontier'. The high capital requirements of such typical products of settler agriculture as coffee and cattle had made Kenya the home of ex-Indian Army colonels and aristocrats, rather than 'the ordinary British emigrant'. Flax, with its quick returns, offered white Kenya a staple crop suitable for comparatively dense white settlement, a vital need for any true 'white man's country'. Existing settlers were so excited about the prospects for flax at the end of the First World War that some had begun pulling up young coffee trees in order to plant acreage.⁴ Beadoc sought to take advantage of Kenya's opportunities for both the disabled ex-officer and the production of flax.

A scheme, involving the placing of some fifty-five disabled or wounded 'ex-officers and men of the Public school type' on 25,000 acres of land in Kenya was first submitted to the Colonial Office by Lt.-Col. Hughes Ridge in December 1918. The fundamental basis of the scheme was that 'Flax growing in East Africa is not a speculation, it is a certainty'. Hughes

³ *Cmd. 281*, Interim Report to the Board of Trade of the Empire Flax Growing Committee on the General Supply and Immediate Prospects of Supply in April 1919, 1919, p. 3; Alfred S Moore, 'Facing the Flax Famine', *World's Work*, March 1919, p. 352; *Cmd. 1208*, Final Report of the Flax Production Branch, 1921, p. 12; *Cmd. 281*, p. 5.

⁴ I D Talbot, 'The Kenya Flax Boom', *Kenya Historical Review*, II, No 1, 1974, pp. 59-66; Cranworth, *Profit and Sport*, p. 141; Kenya National Archives (hereafter KNA), Ukamba Province, Annual Report, 1919-1920.

Ridge estimated that Beadoc would be able to clear and plant 5000 acres of flax within eighteen months of starting. The £87,000 in revenue this would produce would enable Beadoc to pay off all the capital invested in it. This capital, which Hughes Ridge estimated at £50,000, would be provided by the British Government, while the Colony's Government would provide Beadoc's land. The scheme appeared to offer something for everyone. The Empire Flax Growing Committee specifically recommended Beadoc as part of its larger task of securing Imperial flax supplies. Fifty-five ex-officers who had been disabled in the service of the Empire would get rewarding careers in the Empire. Kenya would get new settlers and new Government-provided capital. This last item was especially welcome to existing settlers, who greeted news of Beadoc as the 'thin edge of the wedge of a larger measure of financial help' for all the settlers. The Colonial Governor of the time, Sir Edward Northey, was then engaged in starting a far larger soldier settlement scheme for a thousand ex-soldiers on a million acres and quickly earmarked 25,000 acres near Kericho in South West Kenya for Beadoc. An ex-soldier himself, Northey was always eager to help other ex-soldiers, even if it meant harming Kenya's African inhabitants. It was later revealed that over 4000 acres had been illegally excised from the Kipsigis Native Reserve to provide Beadoc with some of its land.⁵

The British Colonial Office and the Ministry of Pensions, however, which were to supply Government approval and Government funds for Beadoc, were both hesitant. Partly, this was due to the demand for Government financing, but

mainly it was due to distrust of the scheme's organizer. Lt.-Col. Hughes Ridge was a sometime dentist whose expertise in flax was based on his work as Chief Crop Supervisor with the British Flax Production Branch. He had left a none too savoury reputation behind him, after he had been dismissed for being 'slack and casual', with little real knowledge of growing flax. Hughes Ridge, however, neatly side-stepped both objections by revising his scheme. Beadoc was recast as a friendly society consisting of seventy-five wounded or disabled ex-officers. Each would contribute £500 in share capital and loan stock. The sole financial contribution of the Imperial Government would be training grants and increased pensions for the ex-officers to enable them to survive until returns were made on flax. Hughes Ridge was able to secure the subscriptions of thirty-seven ex-officers at a meeting in London in June 1919, and with men, money and scheme all provided, the Colonial Office gave its official approval in September 1919. Fifty-five ex-officers passed a Government selection board. Any ex-officer with a wound gratuity or disability pension was eligible for the scheme. One Beadoc member had lost a leg in the War, but the fact that this was mentioned both in newspaper reports at the time and in later memoirs, may indicate a general lack of visible disabilities. Possibly more typical of Beadoc's members was Lt. W G Searle, who received a pension for malarial attacks and an anal fistula acquired in the British campaign against German East Africa. An initial party of thirteen arrived in East Africa in December 1919, while the remainder attended training courses in flax production in Britain.⁶

⁵ PRO CO533/205, no 61443, Memo by Hughes Ridge, Dec 1918; CO644/219, no 10783, Board of Trade to Colonial Office, 27 Feb 1919; *East African Standard* (hereafter EAS), leader, 19 Apr 1919; CO533/207, no 55201, Northey to Milner, 8 Mar 1919; CO533/280, no 43481, Northey to Churchill, 31 Aug 1922.

⁶ PRO CO533/228, no 39610, Dale to Bottomley, 27 Jul 1910; CO533/221, no 30309, Memo by Hughes Ridge, Jun 1919; CO533/222, no 50416, Colonial Office to Ridge, 23 Sep 1919; EAS, 31 Jul 1920; Rhodes House, Oxford, (hereafter RH), MSS Afr. s. 504, 'Recollections of Kenya by Mrs M W Dobbs'; CO533/224, Beadoc to Colonial Office, 3 Dec 1919.

II

The initial appearance of Beadoc members in the Kericho district of Kenya came as a considerable shock to local administrators, none of whom had been consulted about the project.⁷ C M Dobbs, the local District Commissioner, organized parties of Government porters to clear bush on Beadoc's land, carry in members' baggage, and pitch tents for them. This was just the start of Government aid to Beadoc. In the world of post-war Kenya, white settlers who were disabled ex-officers had special claims on the time and hearts of colonial administrators. Technical advice was provided by the Departments of Agriculture and Forestry, a road was constructed to tie Beadoc's land with the rest of Kenya's primitive transportation system, and Beadoc was favoured with a visit from the Governor in 1920. More concrete, and probably more useful, help, was given by the District Commissioner's wife, who baked enough bread to keep the first Beadoc party from starving. A second party of twenty-two arrived in March 1920, and a final group of seven-teen appeared in January 1921.

Most of these individuals needed all of the help they could get. Many were utterly without experience of Africa, their knowledge of the continent based on popular novels of the period, and the wives especially had to deal with a new world in which one washed clothes in a chamber-pot because there were no buckets. Kenya, despite the invitations to tea from the District Commissioner's wife, was still an unfamiliar frontier for urbanized settlers. One Beadoc member built his own house of earth and corrugated iron. It fell down the first night after completion, and member and wife

returned to their habitual tent. Kenya had compensations, however, even for Beadoc members. The ability to shoot a water-buck from a dining room window was matched by Beadoc's enthusiasm for dances. According to one survivor, it was considered nothing to ride five miles in full evening dress to dance away the night on a mud floor to the sound of a gramophone. Much of this was typical of the early days in any white-settler district in Kenya. What was unusual about Beadoc was its attempt to apply military methods to land settlement. The Colony was organized on quasi-military lines with individual officers in charge of Works, Transport, Labour, and Agriculture and, if reports are correct, Beadoc regulated its working day by bugle calls. It was magnificent, but it was not agriculture.

Here, Beadoc ran into any number of problems. Some were inherent in all European settlement in Kenya, many others were self-inflicted. Beadoc's land was covered in dense African bush and Kenya's Survey Department had found this one of the most difficult areas of the Colony even to survey. Clearing this bush was far more difficult. The Beadoc land was not reached by a proper road until 1921. In addition, the agricultural expert whom Hughes Ridge had imported, at a high salary, was a soil expert and of little value in flax production. Hughes Ridge himself proved as 'slack and casual' in Kenya as he had been in Britain, and awarded himself a salary of £1000 a year. In the event, Hughes Ridge did not last long in the new surroundings.

Major Trevor Hill arrived at Beadoc in March 1920 with the second party of members. In the first general meeting after his appearance, Hughes Ridges was dismissed, and Trevor Hill was appointed general manager. Hughes Ridge returned to Britain, owing Beadoc £1500 and leaving Beadoc's finances 'in a hopeless muddle'.

⁷ Information in this and the following paragraph is chiefly derived from RH, MSS Afr. s. 504, the unpublished memoirs to Mrs M W Dobbs, the wife of the local District Commissioner. Mrs Dobbs included reminiscences of Beadoc by two wives of Beadoc members, Mrs A H Daly and Mrs N Birkett, in her work.

After his departure, Beadoc imported five surplus army tractors to aid in clearing the land, but, by the end of 1920, only 800 acres of flax were being cultivated, instead of the 5000 Hughes Ridge had forecast. Beadoc started to branch out its activities. A clearing and forwarding agency, a contract post office, and a store were established in nearby towns. These last activities made money for Beadoc; farming did not.⁸

It was just as Beadoc was preparing to harvest its first flax crop in 1920, that the flax market 'became suddenly paralyzed and flax was almost unsaleable'. Overproduction, the end of Government aircraft contracts, and consumer resistance to extremely high prices ended the flax boom. Flax prices in Kenya plummeted from £590 a ton to £80 a ton, far below even the cost of production. The collapse of the market was particularly disastrous for Beadoc, which had been counting on a quick return on its capital if it was to survive. Flax was especially unfortunate in that, as a semi-manufactured crop, it demanded expensive processing machinery which was virtually useless for any other purpose. Beadoc had spent £5000 on a flax mill, and by the end of 1920 was in debt to the amount of £27,231. Most of this money was due to its own members in the form of unpaid interest on their loan stock, but a bank overdraft of £7000 was especially serious.⁹

Trevor Hill sailed to Britain in August 1920 to negotiate a loan from the Officers' Association, a private organization of ex-officers, which Hughes Ridge had said was promised to Beadoc. Typically, the loan had not in fact been promised,

but under Trevor Hill's urging, the Association agreed to provide Beadoc with £10,000 in quarterly instalments. Trevor Hill arrived back in Kenya in January 1921 with the loan and the last party of Beadoc members, to discover that yet another general meeting had been held in his absence, and Major G L Dymott had been appointed to replace him as general manager. Hill left Beadoc 'vowing vengeance', and initially this seemed to take the form of representations to the Officers' Association that it should cease payments of its loan. The Association was, in any case, becoming nervous about its unsecured advance and, starting another trend in Beadoc's troubled history, asked the Colonial Government for a guarantee of repayment. Northey, still the Governor, was sympathetic to Beadoc, but had to refuse. There were many settlers, many of them ex-soldiers, in financial difficulties because of the collapse of the flax, and the general post-war recession which was affecting the entire Imperial economy. Government guarantees for loans to one group of settlers would lead to endless demands from other settlers for the same treatment and Kenya's always shaky finances could not afford the strain. The Officers' Association stopped payment after £5000 had been paid to Beadoc.¹⁰

III

On the ground, Beadoc had decided to continue with the development of flax, in hopes that the market would recover. It did not, and by the end of 1921 Beadoc had 800 acres of unusable flax, and 200 acres of maize under cultivation. Both

⁸ KNA: Kericho District, Annual Report, 1921; PRO CO533/246, no 37804, Memo. by C Turner, encl. Overseas Settlement Office to Colonial Office, 24 Jul 1920; CO533/235, no 43093, Northey to Milner, 28 Aug 1920; EAS, 17 Apr 1920; KNA: Lumbwa District, Annual Report, 1920-1921.

⁹ Cmd. 1208, p 12; Elspeth Huxley, *White Man's Country*, II, London, 1935, p 57; PRO CO533/259, no 33654, Memo. by Beadoc, encl. Northey to Churchill, 30 Mar 1921.

¹⁰ PRO CO533/247, no 58636, Officers' Association to Colonial Office, 20 Nov 1920; EAS, 8 Jan 1921; CO533/291, no 10586, minute by Bottomly on Sir Hugh Daly to Colonial Office, 3 Mar 1922; CO533/271, no 11488, Churchill to Northey, 10 Mar 1921; CO533/265, no 59004, Northey to Churchill, 26 Jul 1921; CO533/272, no 63301, Officers' Association to Colonial Office, 21 Dec 1921.

were devastated by a drought in the Kericho area in 1921. By now, Beadoc's lack of cash meant that it could not afford experienced, and expensive, Luo labour, and had to resort to 'raw' Africans, with a consequent loss of efficiency. Beadoc, unlike other settler operations, could not simply endure hard times and wait for things to improve. The demands of debts and simply the need to find occupations for its members forced further expansion. After a visit from the Kenya Coffee Officer, it was planned to plant 2000 acres of coffee. Coffee, however, took four years to achieve returns. In the meantime, Beadoc established a sawmill, workshops, and a maize mill on its property, and members set up two labour-recruiting agencies for other settlers. One Beadoc member helped the Colonial Administration to hand out maize and onion seeds to local African farmers, as Beadoc hoped to build up a trade in these products. These activities probably increased Beadoc's financial difficulties as inexperienced newcomers tried to compete with established interests. Beadoc opened a store in the town of Lumbwa. It succeeded in capturing sympathetic European trade, but inexperienced Beadoc members lacked the patience and the prices to attract African customers away from Indian shops.¹¹

By early 1922, Beadoc's financial affairs were approaching a crisis point. Flax was dead, the entire Kenya economy was in a recession, local creditors refused further advances, and the training grants and increased pensions, which many Beadoc members had been living on, were due to end in March. Another general meeting was held. Dymott was authorized to sail to Britain and try to raise £25,000 in debentures on Beadoc's land. Beadoc also

ended its existence as a co-operative colony and was transformed into a limited company. As a part of this financial restructuring, Beadoc was put on 'a proper business basis' by ridding it of most of its members. Only seventeen were to be retained on staff, nineteen had already left, and the remaining members were left 'free to take outside employment', although Beadoc would still retain the capital they had invested in it. A last, suitably bitter meeting in February 1922 approved the plan and Dymott sailed to Britain. His efforts were fruitless. The Officers' Association, British banks, and rich individuals such as the Duke of Westminster were all approached for funds and declined, at least in the absence of any guarantee by either the British or Kenya Governments that the money would be repaid. The Colonial Government did its limited best to help Beadoc. At the start of 1922, the Governor ordered that Beadoc's 25,000 acres be given free of charge to the organization. Beyond this, however, it could not go. This left Beadoc very firmly in the lap of the Colonial Office.¹²

Beadoc had been warned from the start that 'Financial assistance cannot be given in any circumstances', but not for the first or the last time, the Colonial Office discovered that official approval for schemes involving individuals with a high political profile, such as disabled ex-officers, usually entailed uncomfortable consequences. The officials in the Colonial Office were genuinely sympathetic to Beadoc's plight, and the thick files Beadoc accumulated in the Colonial Office archives are testimony to the time and effort that they gave to trying to aid Beadoc, through private sources or with government money. None of the private sources would advance funds without a government guarantee and here the Colonial Office ran into a

¹¹ KNA: Kericho District, Annual Report, 1921, Handing Over Report, c. 1921; PRO CO533/291, no 20769, Holm to Colonial Office, 30 Apr 1922; CO533/291, no 10586, Daly to Colonial Office, 3 Mar 1922.

¹² PRO CO533/279, no 22747, Northey to Churchill, 19 Apr 1922; CO533/291, no 10586, Daly to Colonial Office, 3 Mar 1922; CO533/275, no 1943, Northey to Churchill, 10 Jan 1922.

wall of opposition from the British Treasury. The Treasury, never notably sympathetic to human suffering at any time, still remained the repository of Gladstonian rectitude and refused help. Neither personal approaches through the then Secretary of State for the Colonies, Winston Churchill, nor a direct assault on the Treasury's opposition, through an appeal to the Government's Law Officers, succeeded in loosening the purse strings. In the middle of these bureaucratic endeavours, in September 1922, Beadoc itself went into liquidation. The Colonial Office continued its efforts to find some financial aid for a resurrected Beadoc, but the collapse proved to be final.¹³

Beadoc left liabilities of some £62,200 on its demise, including £10,000 to the National Bank of South Africa, another £10,000 to the Officers' Association, and £2,500 in unpaid salaries to employees, and £35,000 to its own members. There ensued an intricate legal ballet of three years' duration between the Liquidator, the Bank, the Government of Kenya and the Colonial Office over the disposition of Beadoc's only real asset, its land. This eventually provided something of a happy end to the history of Beadoc. Its land was in the centre of what was to become Kenya's thriving tea industry. The Liquidator sold the Beadoc land to the Brooke Bond and Findley Muir tea companies in 1925 for a price of £3 10s an acre, an operation which should have brought in almost £90,000. The Liquidator was able to pay off all of Beadoc's creditors in full, even including some of Beadoc's former African employees, who had remained unpaid for three years. Each surviving Beadoc member received £800 from the sale and those still in the area in 1926,

when final payments were made, declared themselves satisfied.¹⁴

IV

There had been a general dispersal of Beadoc's members as early as February 1922 when its restructuring occurred. The European population of Kenya's Nyanza Province, in which Beadoc was located, dropped by ninety with its collapse. Some members returned to Britain, others stayed in Kenya to work on railway construction, and a few tried to find work in flax production through newspaper advertisements. Some members did remain in the Kericho area and apparently very successfully. Captain T N Derby organized the first tea plantings on the former Beadoc lands for the large companies in 1926. The first small tea crop, grown by private settlers in the area, was purchased by H B Hine, a Beadoc member who had taken over its store at Lumbwa. The most successful of Beadoc's members was W H Billington. Recognized very early as one of Beadoc's members who was 'very good with natives', Billington had managed Beadoc's labour recruiting agencies. After Beadoc's end, he became one of the chief labour recruiters in Kenya and eventually a labour consultant for international firms which invested in Kenya.¹⁵

Individual success stories and the successful liquidation of Beadoc, however, could not disguise the fact that Beadoc as an experiment in land settlement had been a complete failure. The immediate effects of this failure on the broader community

¹³ PRO CO533/222, no 50416, Colonial Office to Ridge, 23 Sep 1919; CO533/287, no 47893, minute by Churchill, on Treasury to Colonial Office, 22 Sep 1922; CO533/282, no 47490, Bowring to Churchill, 22 Sep 1922. Because this was an Inter-Departmental controversy, the Beadoc affair accumulated vast amounts of paper of interest only to historians of bureaucracy.

¹⁴ PRO CO533/292, no 11325, Cornydon to Devonshire, 29 Jan 1923; *House of Lords*, 184, Joint Select Committee on Closer Union in East Africa, (1931), memo. of Sir Humphrey Leggett, p 51; KNA: PC/NZA, 3/21/15, Chief Native Commissioner to Provincial Commissioner, Nyanza, 14 Sep 1925; *EAS*, 18 Sep 1926.

¹⁵ KNA: Nyanza Province, Annual Report, 1923; RH, MSS Afr. s. 504. KNA: Kericho District, Annual Report, 1921; A Clayton and Donald C Savage, *Government and Labour in Kenya*, 1974, p 150.

of white settlement in Kenya were probably minimal. Other settlers maintained a discreet silence on Beadoc's demise and its fate was usually assigned to the collapse of the flax boom or as one settler, Elspeth Huxley, historian, put it, 'a second breaking on the wheel of world events outside their control'. Governmental losses on the scheme were comparatively minor. Imperial aid to Beadoc was confined to the training grants and free passages provided to Beadoc members, a total of approximately £4600, but both grants and passages were available to all ex-service personnel under Britain's demobilization plans. The main loss for the Kenya Government was the loss of revenue when Beadoc's land was given free of charge to the organization, but it is likely that if the land had not been assigned to Beadoc, it would have been used for other soldier settlers, all of whom received their land for free, or have remained in the hands of the Africans who had owned a large part of it. As usual in the history of Kenya, it was Africans who paid the price for settler folly. The Kipsigis never received their land back.¹⁶

The causes of Beadoc's failure were legion. Speculating on flax was, to put it mildly, an unfortunate choice for a staple crop. It is difficult, however, to believe that there was any alternative. Tea or coffee both required substantial amounts of capital and time to produce profits and Beadoc had neither time nor enough money. The heavy debts Beadoc incurred are evidence that the scheme was undercapitalized from the start. Leadership was one of Beadoc's weakest points. The constant internal friction it provoked at the very least distracted attention from agriculture. The real reason for Beadoc's failure, however, lay not in its crops or its

leadership, but in the number of its members. There were simply far more Europeans on the land than it could support. The economics of European plantation agriculture in Kenya meant that having ten white men supervise the work which one white man could have supervised was both inefficient and costly in the extreme. Beadoc's constitution as a co-operative society complicated the problem. The members, having invested their £500, would then have to be fed, housed, and employed at a European standard of living. Doing this meant ever greater expansion of activities, which in turn meant debts, as £500 was insufficient to establish a white man on the land in Kenya. Debts to the bank entailed either bringing in more members to provide more capital, or more development to pay off the debts; in short, it was an endless circle leading inevitably to failure.

What Beadoc illustrated was that Kenya was fundamentally a 'big man's' country. Ever since large-scale white settlement had begun in the Colony, it had been characterized by the dominance of a few 'big men', individuals with large capital resources undertaking the development of large areas of land and living a pseudo-aristocratic life on their broad acres. Indeed, from its first days, Kenya attracted real aristocrats, the Lords Delamere, Cranworth, and Hindlip, who set much of white Kenya's social tone. From its first days, however, white Kenya, even the 'big men' themselves, disliked this fact. These were white settlers who were determined to make Kenya into another 'white man's country' on South African, if not Australian, lines, and there was an uneasy awareness that this would be difficult to do with pseudo- or even real aristocrats. The 'small man', or the individual farmer with limited capital on small acreage would provide a denser white farming population and a more solid foundation

¹⁶ *EAS*, 7 Oct 1922, forms one of the few mentions of Beadoc's failure in the local press; Huxley, *White Man's Country*, II, p 57; PRO CO533/351, no x. 8429, Crown Agents to Colonial Office, 23 Dec 1926.

for white self-government.¹⁷ Entirely by accident, Beadoc was an attempt to place 'small men', with only £500 of capital, on a comparatively small area of about

350 acres per member of Beadoc; and it failed totally. The limited capital and small area turned out to be a recipe for financial disaster. Much as they might wish otherwise, Kenya was going to be a 'big' white man's country, which would ultimately prevent it from being any kind of white man's country.

¹⁷ Vide M P K Sorrenson, *Origins of European Land Settlement in Kenya*, Nairobi, 1968, for a fuller discussion of these themes in Kenya prior to the First World War.

Notes and Comments

CONFERENCES

The Society will be holding its joint one-day Winter Conference in association with the Historical Geography Research Group on Saturday 5 December 1992, at the Institute of Historical Research, University of London, Senate House, Malet Street, London WC2. The title will be 'Rural Trade and Industry' (not the title announced in the last issue of the *Review*). A booking form is included with this issue of the journal and further copies can be obtained from Dr Peter Dewey, Department of History, Royal Holloway and Bedford New College, Egham Hill, Egham, Surrey TW20 0EX.

The 1993 Spring Conference will be at Gregynog Hall, near Welshpool, from Monday 5 to Wednesday 7 April. A booking form and details of the programme will be included with the next issue of the journal.

PROFESSOR M W BARLEY (1909-91)

Maurice Willmore Barley, who died in June 1991, pioneered the study of rural housing in England. Brought up in Lincoln, he read History at Reading University. In 1935 he was appointed assistant lecturer in History at Hull University, and after spending the war in the Ministry of Information he moved to Nottingham University in 1946 as organizing tutor for Adult Education. In 1962 he was appointed lecturer in Archaeology, and in 1971 he was promoted to a personal chair. He retired in 1974.

In 1955 Maurice Barley published a paper in the *Economic History Review* outlining the use of probate inventories in studying rural housing in the early modern period. This led directly to two commissions; one from Routledge for a book on the subject, and one from H P R Finberg for a substantial chapter to be included in the planned volume of the *Cambridge Agrarian History of England and Wales*, covering the period 1500-1640. The book, *The English Farmhouse and Cottage*, was published in 1961. With the publication of the *Agrarian History* in 1967, Maurice Barley estab-

lished himself as the pioneer authority in the study and interpretation of specific buildings in the context of surviving documentary sources, particularly probate inventories. He went on to write a further substantial chapter for Volume V of the *Agrarian History*, covering 1640-1750, and in 1990 his chapters were reprinted in *The Buildings of the Countryside 1500-1750*. Maurice recalled of these chapters that 'I was trying to write social history rather than to convey the results of archaeological work'.

A NATIONAL SURVEY OF FARMSTEADS

The Royal Commission on the Historical Monuments of England (RCHME) will shortly commence a three-year project on the buildings of historic farmsteads. The project is intended to raise awareness of the historical significance of farm buildings, and to enhance understanding of this seriously threatened class of monument. The Royal Commission will seek to establish a methodology for the recording of surviving buildings with an emphasis on recovering information related to the development of farming systems. It is proposed that widely differing areas of the country should be selected for detailed fieldwork, and that the results of the survey should be made available both through the National Monuments Record (NMR), RCHME's public archive, and through publication.

During the course of its survey, RCHME will seek to encourage other individuals and organizations to record farmsteads and, wherever possible, to deposit their records in NMR. As an initial stage in this process, RCHME would like to establish contact with individuals and organizations who already undertake such recording, in order to compile a register of existing material. Anyone who is involved in making records of farmsteads and who wishes to have further details of the programme is invited to contact Colum Giles or Janet Atterbury at RCHME, Shelley House, Acomb Road, York, YO2 4HB (Tel. 0904 784411; Fax 0904 795348).

The Golden Sheep of Roman Andalusia

By A T FEAR

Abstract

The classical evidence for this 'breed' of sheep are discussed, followed by an examination of the various modern explanations for the its existence. It is suggested that a genetic trait is the most probable solution to the problem.

THE WEALTH of the Roman province of Baetica (present-day Andalusia and southern Extremadura) lay predominantly in its production of high-class olive oil, as the Monte Testaccio in Rome, literally a hill composed almost entirely of olive oil amphorae from the region, graphically demonstrates. Nor was Rome the only recipient of the region's produce: an amphora containing Baetican olives has recently been found in Thames estuary in southern Britain.¹

Nevertheless we must not forget the contribution of Baetica's other agricultural sectors to the province's income. Among these, the rearing of livestock, and in particular that of sheep, was especially important.

I

Baetican sheep were raised primarily for their wool, which had a high reputation in the ancient world.² The Greek geographer Strabo (fl 20 BC) remarks on the high prices commanded by Turdetanian (Andalusian) sheep and the beauty of their wool,³ while a later Hispano-Roman poet, Martial (fl 80 AD), suggests that Baetican wool would be as equally suitable a gift for a lover as expensive perfume.⁴

It is interesting that Martial's potential

gift is Baetican wool rather than any specific garment made from it. This perhaps implies that the production of wool remained a primary industry in Baetica, and that no major textile industry developed in the province. Such a view finds support from Strabo, who comments that whereas previously Baetican garments, ἔσθητες, had been imported to Rome, in his day (i.e., in the reigns of Augustus and Tiberius 31 BC–21 AD) only the fleeces, ἔρια, were brought there.⁵

Martial makes a single reference to a Baetican garment; in a short epigram to a *lacerna*, or cloak.⁶ However we cannot tell from the context of the passage whether the cloak was made inside the province itself or simply made from Baetican wool at Rome. The latter solution is perhaps suggested by a further poem, where the poet speculates on the origin of the wool of a toga given to him by Parthenius, and includes Baetican wool amongst the possibilities.⁷

The best reference we have to a garment made in the province is in a letter written by St Jerome to a wealthy admirer, Lucinius Baeticus.⁸ In it the saint refers to two short cloaks, *palliola*, and a woollen mantle, an *amphimallum*, sent to him by Lucinius as gifts. Although there is no explicit reference to the origin of the garments it is reasonable to assume that they were made in the province.

¹ P R Sealey and P A Tyers, 'Olives from Roman Spain: a unique amphora find in British waters', *Antiquaries' Journal*, 69, 1989, pp 53 ff.

² On the unimportance of rearing sheep for meat in general see Columella (fl 60–65 AD), *De Re Rustica* 7.3.13, 12.13.

³ Strabo, 3.2.6.

⁴ Martial 12.65.5.

⁵ Strabo, *op cit*, n 3.

⁶ Martial, 14.133.

⁷ Martial, 8.28.

⁸ Ep. 71.7, written in 397 AD.

Similarly there are virtually no attestations of textile workers found in the province. The epitaph of Caesia Celsa found at Martos, the ancient Tucci, describes her as an outstanding spinner, *lanifici praeclara*.⁹ This could be seen as implying that spinning was Caesia's profession. However the context of the phrase, found within a list of Caesia's virtues, suggests that this was not the case. Spinning was a stock virtue of the Roman woman as the well known trope, *lanam fecit, domum servavit*, 'she spun her wool and kept her house' shows.¹⁰

Another industry connected with clothing, dyeing, is better attested, though the number of inscriptions involved, a maximum of 4, is still not great. An *infector* is attested at Porcuna (the ancient Obulco),¹¹ and an *offector* at Alcorruen (the ancient Sacili).¹² Two further inscriptions, one from Córdoba, the other from Cádiz, may refer to refer to *purpurarii*, or purple dyers.¹³

Solinus (fl 200 AD) tells us that the Spaniards of his day dyed wool red using a dye manufactured from the *coccus* berry, which is in fact the scale insect *kermes vermilio* Planch.¹⁴ From the Elder Pliny (fl 70 AD) we know that this dye was manufactured in the province of Lusitania, near its provincial capital at Mérida.¹⁵ However, according to the arabic historian Al-Maqqarī, the dye was also produced near Seville in Andalusia, so

Solinus' note may well refer to Baetica as well as Lusitania.¹⁶

We can see therefore that some dyed cloth was produced in the province. Nevertheless the fame of the province's wool lay in its natural colour, which was held not to require dyeing. Our sources distinguish at least two, and probably three, differently coloured Baetican wools. A clear distinction is made between a dark and a golden wool; and the dark wool appears to have had two varieties, one being of a redder colour than the other.

Columella (fl 60 AD) speaks of the *pulli et fusi*, i.e. 'dark-coloured', sheep of Córdoba, whose wool fetched a good price.¹⁷ Martial applies the unique term *Baeticatus*, 'Baeticizer', to the hypocritical pervert Maternus precisely because he preferred dark clothing and praised natural, as opposed to dyed, colours.¹⁸ From Nonius Marcellus (fl 310 AD), we learn that *nativus*, 'native', was the name given to a dark Spanish wool, and it is probably this wool to which Martial is referring in his epigram.¹⁹ Strabo's Turdetanian wool, mentioned above, is described as raven-black.²⁰ Pliny may also be referring to this wool in the eighth book of the *Natural History* where he speaks of black Spanish wools.²¹

Pliny seems to mention a second, red-coloured variety of dark wool. Such a colour would be genetically brown as in the case of 'red' deer, or possibly dark tan. The two names he gives to it, *rutilus* and *Erythaeus*, certainly imply this colour.

⁹ *Corpus Inscriptionum Latinarum* (hereafter, *CIL*), 2.1699.

¹⁰ Cf. the emperor Augustus' wearing of homespun clothes. Suetonius, *Vit. Aug.* 73. See also J P V D Balsdon, *Roman Women*, 1962, p 270.

¹¹ *CIL*, 2.5519, *Liberalis infector* ..., 'Liberalis the dyer ...'.

¹² *Ephemeris Epigraphica*, 9.248, *Faustus, offector* ..., 'Faustus the dyer ...'.

¹³ *CIL*, 2.2235, (from Córdoba), *Diocles Purpurarius* ... 'Diocles? the purple dyer? ...'. The possibility that 'Purpurarius' is part of Diocles' name rather than his profession cannot be discarded entirely. *CIL*, 2.1743, (from Cádiz), *Bebia Veneria* [... *pur?* / *peraria* ...], 'Bebia Veneria? the purple dyer?'. Clearly here *Purperaria* is only one of several possible restorations.

¹⁴ Solinus, 23.4. For the use of the *coccus* see J and Ch Cotte, 'Le Kermès dans l'antiquité', *Revue Archeologique*, 6, 1918, pp 92 ff, and I C Beavis, *Insects and other Invertebrates in Classical Antiquity*, 1988, pp 108 ff.

¹⁵ Pliny, *Natural History*, 9.141.

¹⁶ Al-Maqqarī, *Nafḥat-ṭīb min guṣn al-Andalus al-raṭīb*, translated by P Gayangos as *The History of the Mohammedan Dynasties in Spain*, 1840, bk 1, ch 3, p 57 & n 8.

¹⁷ Columella, *RR*, 7.2.4.

¹⁸ Martial, 1.96.

¹⁹ Nonius Marcellus, 549.30, *pullus color est quem nunc Spanum vel nativum dicimus*, "'pullus' is the colour which we now call Spanish or 'native'".

²⁰ Strabo, 3.2.6., ἔριτα ... τῶν κοραζῶν. 'Raven-black' appears to have been a relatively common term to describe dark wool in antiquity, see, for example, Vitruvius, 8.3.14, who refers to *Coracinus* flocks.

²¹ Pliny, *NH*, 8.191, *Hispania nigri velleris praecipuas habet*, 'Spain has outstanding sheep with black fleeces'.

He also mentions that it was similar to the wool of Asia.²²

There may be passing references to this type of wool in work of the poets Catullus (*fl* 60 BC) and Virgil (*fl* 25 BC) both of whom refer to garments which are described as *ferrugo Ibera*, 'rusty Iberian', in colour.²³ St Isidore (*fl* 600 AD), when referring to the relevant passage of Virgil's *Aeneid*, glosses the colour involved as a 'darkish purple', *purpura subnigra*.²⁴

Martial too may be thinking of this wool in his epigram on a Baetican cloak.²⁵ Most commentators have assumed that Martial here is referring to a third sort of Baetican wool, the golden variety.²⁶ However the epigram compares the Baetican *lacerna* favourably to one from Tyre, a city famous for its purple dyes. Martial underlines the natural colouring of the Spanish cloth, as opposed to the dyed garment from Tyre. Clearly the epigram would have more poetic force if the two cloaks were of the same colour, and so it seems likely that Martial is referring to the dark-red, rather than the golden, variety of Baetican wool here. A breed of sheep, known as *La Guirra*, with dark red wool, still exists today on the Mediterranean coast of the modern-day Spanish province of Valencia opposite the Balearic islands; perhaps these animals are descendants of the red sheep of Baetica.²⁷

II

The most famous of the Baetican wools, however, was the golden variety. Martial at the beginning of his epigram on a Cordoban house speaks of the Tartessian lands where 'yellow fleeces are pale in their native gold and living gilding covers

the flocks of Hesperia'.²⁸ In another poem he describes a girl whose hair is blonder than the wool of Baetica, the hair of the Germans, or the *nitellus*, i.e., the field-mouse.²⁹ Finally in a poem addressed to the river Guadalquivir (the Baetis), he speaks of the river's gleaming waters dyeing sheep's fleeces a golden colour.³⁰ It also seems likely that this is the wool Martial toyed with giving to his lover.

What was the reason for this variety in colours? Our sources are insistent that all three colours were natural to the wools concerned, and not produced by dyeing. Although there are many breeds of sheep which naturally produce dark and reddish wools (e.g., the *La Guirra* cited above), the production of a yellow or 'golden' fleece it seems much more difficult to account for. It appears unlikely that this was merely a reference to the quality of the wool rather than its appearance, as our ancient sources make a firm point of comparing it with other light-coloured objects.

Martial, as we have seen, attributed the colour to the properties of the river Guadalquivir, and in this seems to be echoing a commonly-held view.³¹ These comments tell us in passing that the sheep concerned must have been pastured not in the highlands of the province, but along the banks of the Guadalquivir itself, and so provide us with evidence that many

²² Martial, 9.61.1-4.

*In Tartessiacis domus est notissima terris,
qua dives placidum Corduba Baetis amat,
vellera nativo pallent ubi flava metallo
et linit Hesperium brattea viva pecus.*

'There is a famous house in the Tartessian lands
Where wealthy Corduba loves her gentle Baetis
where yellow fleeces are pale in their native gold
and living gilding covers the flocks of Hesperia'

²³ Martial 5.37.7-8.

*quae crine vicit Baetici gregis vellus
Rhenique nodos aureamque nitellum*

'whose hair surpassed the fleeces of Baetican flocks, the topknots of the Germans, and the golden field-mouse'.

²⁴ Martial, 12.98.1-2, *Baetis ... aurea qui nitidis vellera tinguis aquis*, 'Baetis you who dye the golden fleeces with your gleaming waters'.

²⁵ See, for example, Juvenal, *Satire* 12.41-2; cf. Virgil's red sheep produced by eating *Sandyx*, [Madder?], Virgil, *Ecloues*, 4.42-5.

²² Pliny, *NH*, 8.191. For the application of these terms to Asian wool see Columella, *RR*, 7.2.4.

²³ Catullus, 64.227; Virgil, *Aeneid* 9.581.

²⁴ Isidore, *Etym*, 19.28.6.

²⁵ Martial, 14.133.

²⁶ e.g. M. Dolç, *Hispania y Marcial*, Barcelona, 1953, p. 41.

²⁷ M L Ryder, *Sheep and Man*, 1983, pp. 437-8, fig. 8.36.

Roman estates here must have practised mixed farming, rather than solely the cultivation of the olive.

III

The nineteenth-century historian Costa believed that the golden wool was a product of cross-breeding,³² a view which has been unanimously followed by modern scholars.³³ This science was certainly practised in antiquity in general,³⁴ and, more specifically, we have an example from Baetica itself. Columella tells us how his uncle, Marcus Columella, a native of Cádiz, bought some wild rams with fleeces of wondrous colour, 'mirus color', imported from Mauretania, to cross with Tarentine ewes.³⁵ The wool of resulting offspring retained the colours of their sires, while being of the same high quality of that of their mothers.³⁶

Varro (*fl* 40, BC) perhaps lends some support to this argument, when he argues that the Golden Apples of the Hesperides were, in reality, sheep and goats brought from northern Africa. The misunderstanding arose, according to Varro, through a confusion of the Greek *μήλον*, or sheep, with the Latin *malum* or apple.³⁷

Nevertheless Columella does not specify the fabulous colour of his uncle's rams, which is strange if it was the golden hue for which the wool of the province was famous. In addition, Marcus Columella's remark that the offspring of such cross-breeding retained 'whatever appearance' (*qualiscunque species*) the African rams had tends to suggest that more than one colour was involved.

Moreover, the insistence of our ancient sources that the golden fleeces were produced by the climate of the province and river Guadalquivir in particular seems to imply that the colour was not a product of human intervention. Selective breeding therefore cannot be said to be the definitive solution to this problem.

What alternatives does this leave? One is to go along with the ancient view that the colour was a product of dietary factors. This would have the advantage of making the phenomenon appear much more 'natural', than if the golden colour of the wool had been produced by cross-breeding. A recent theory about the nature of the legend of the Golden Fleece suggests that this effect was brought about by a discolouration of the fleece caused by liver damage caused by over consumption of oleanolic acid present in olive leaves.³⁸

As we have seen, the golden sheep of Baetica were raised alongside the Guadalquivir river, an area of intensive olive production. The sheep would have been left to graze amongst the olive groves. Here they would have fed mainly on olive leaves, though they would have also helped to keep the groves clear of unwanted vegetation, and provided a ready source of fertilizing manure. This sparse pasturing might also have increased the quality of their wool.³⁹ In winter they were probably stall-fed; the most ready

³² J Costa, *Estudios Ibéricos*, 1891, XV.

³³ e.g. J M Blázquez, *Ciclos y temas de la Historia de España, La Romanización* **, 1975, pp 128, 208; A Cabo, *La Historia de España Alfaguara*, 1, 1973, p 330.

³⁴ See, for example, Virgil, *Georgics*, 3.387 ff, although this is to produce white wool.

³⁵ Columella, *RR*, 7.2.4, *ex vicino Africae*, 'from the neighbouring part of Africa', in this context clearly Mauretania. Ryder's assertion (*Sheep and Man*, p 169) that Columella meant Carthage is based on a category error, confusing political 'Africa', i.e. the Roman province of this name, with the general geographical term 'Africa', which then as now referred to the entire continent, see Pliny, *NH*, 5.1.1-2. The breed of these rams remains a mystery, but they must have been impressive animals as Columella tells us they were not brought to Cádiz for agricultural reasons, but to fight in the arena.

³⁶ Columella, *RR*, 7.2.4-5.

³⁷ Varro, *RR*, 2.1.6. *ut in Libyam ad Hesperidas unde aurea mala, id est secundum antiquam consuetudinem capras et oves [quas] Hercules ex Africa in Graeciam exportavit. Eas enim [a] sua voce Graeci appellant mela*, '... as in Libya by the Hesperides whence come the golden apples: that is to say according to the ancient usage the goats and sheep which Heracles brought from Africa to Greece, for these are called "mela" by the Greeks in their own language'.

³⁸ G J Smith, 'Jason's Golden Fleece explained', *Nature*, 327, 1987, p 561.

³⁹ Ryder, *Sheep and Man*, p 165.

fodder to hand would have been once more olive leaves.

Given the circumstances in which the Baetican sheep were raised, it is easy to see how the process sketched out above may have occurred in the province producing the golden fleeces for which it was famous. The golden wool of Baetica could therefore have been an accidental, albeit happy, by-product of olive cultivation.

However such a solution brings its own problems. The possibility of such poisoning has been challenged on purely physiological grounds.⁴⁰ Moreover, as Ryder has pointed out, there is a pragmatic objection: sheep are frequently raised under olives in the Mediterranean. If the liver poisoning theory were correct, we should expect a far wider spread of yellow fleeces than we actually have, which would in turn negate this characteristic as an identifying mark of the sheep of the Guadalquivir valley.⁴¹

Is there any other more satisfactory solution to this problem? One further possibility might perhaps meet the objections raised against both the solutions posited above. The golden sheep could have been flocks of sheep having the genetic colour 'light tan'. This solution would

allow us to posit that there existed in the Guadalquivir valley healthy, naturally 'golden' sheep, which would not have had to have been the product of selective breeding. Some support to this hypothesis of a golden race of sheep is given by a breed of goat mentioned by Ryder which, is genetically light tan in colour and interestingly called the 'Golden Guernsey'.⁴² It is understandable that antiquity when confronted with this phenomenon sought an explanation for it and came up, erroneously, with the properties of the Guadalquivir's water as a solution.

IV

What happened to the golden sheep of Andalusia remains a mystery. There are no references to them, to the present author's knowledge, beyond the Roman period. Perhaps they survived the collapse of Roman Spain, but did not affect the Visigothic and Arabic aesthetic sensibilities in the same way as they had the classical mind, and hence this simile was no longer used. On the other hand the breed may have perished entirely in the upheavals of the post-Roman world. In all events Spain had to wait for the arrival of the Merino in the Middle Ages to regain her reputation for fine wool, which this time was firmly white in colour.

⁴⁰ P Moyna and H Heinzen, 'Why was the fleece golden?', *Nature*, 330, 1987, p 28.

⁴¹ M L Ryder, 'The last word on the Golden Fleece Legend?', *Oxford Journal of Archaeology*, 10.1, 1991, p 57 ff.

⁴² *op cit* n 41.

INDEX TO THE AGRICULTURAL HISTORY REVIEW

VOLUMES I-XXXV, 1953-87

The consolidated Index to the *Agricultural History Review*, volumes I-XXXV, 1953-87, issued to subscribers, is now available from the Treasurer. This volume consists of 76 pp, and is available from Dr E J T Collins, Treasurer BAHS, Institute of Agricultural History, The University, PO Box 229, Reading RG6 2AG at a price of £13 (including postage). Please make remittances payable to the Society.

Some reservations on Dr Ward on the 'Rental Policy of the English Peerage, 1649-60'

By R W HOYLE

A RECENT issue of the *Review* contained an article by Dr Ian Ward on 'Rental Policy on the Estates of the English Peerage, 1649-60'.¹ The purpose of the present note is to take issue with Ward's article, both to point out that it overestimates the ease with which the alterations in rental policy could be implemented and to show that, at a purely evidential level, the paper is marred by an unacceptable level of factual inaccuracy.

In the first place, it is none too clear what the article is about. Its starting point is a demonstration that at the beginning of the Interregnum, some of the wealthiest English peers were heavily indebted. Whilst they both sold and mortgaged lands, the solution to this problem is seen by Ward as lying on the income side of the aristocratic balance sheet rather than on the expenditure side. Retrenchment is never mentioned. The improvement of rental income turns out to be no more than the conversion of copyholds to leaseholds and it is with this that the remainder of Ward's article is concerned. By the end Ward has adopted the tones of the hired spokesman of the landowning class: 'by 1649 the copyhold tenancy was economically, socially, and legally untenable'. He is clearly not a supporter of peasant proprietorship. Then he continues, 'and with their minds concentrated by the particular economic and social pressures of the 1650s, the landowning peerage of England clearly had no compunction in laying it

[copyhold] to rest', a conclusion which is quite at variance with his own finding that in 1672, three-quarters of the tenants of the Seymour estates in Wiltshire, Somerset, and Hampshire *still* held by copy.²

Ward follows a long line of legal commentators on copyhold in failing to appreciate the fundamental distinction between copyhold for lives and copyhold of inheritance, and that the possibilities for improving copyhold tenure were contingent upon the character of the tenure by which the tenants held.³ In copyhold for lives, there was no obligation on the lord to make a new copy to the present copyholder's heir. A lord could, if he wished, allow the existing copy to expire and then make a lease for a fixed term, or indeed, for lives, to the sitting tenant or a stranger. A lord could also grant a copy or lease in reversion to a stranger rather than the heir. It was therefore very much in the interest of the sitting tenants, if they wished to retain a copyhold for lives in their family, to seek a new grant well in advance of the expiration of the one by which they held. There is every

² Ward, 'Rental Policy', pp 37, 32.

³ Cf the lack of any separate discussion in C Watkins, *A Treatise on Copyholds*, 2 vols, 1825. That not all copyholds conferred a estate of inheritance was recognized by Calthorpe in his readings on copyhold given in 1575-6, British Library, Harl. Ms 738, fos 290v-91v (of which I am preparing a new edition). For the distinction in practice, see Salisbury's instructions to Crown stewards, *Directions for commissioners with the steward of each manor to assess fines of copyholds* ..., 1608. For a modern discussion, E Kerridge, *Agrarian Problems in the sixteenth century and after*, 1969, pp 35-8; R W Hoyle, 'Tenure and the land Market in early modern England: or a late contribution to the Brenner Debate', *Econ Hist Rev*, 2nd rev, 43, 1990, pp 6-8, 12-15.

¹ *AgHistR*, 40, I, pp 23-37.

sign that lords were willing, if not actually eager, to encourage this practice, for it increased the frequency with which they received fines. They could also invite tenants to buy a copy in reversion of their tenements at times when they needed to raise money; this was to anticipate income in the same way as felling timber. It would not be too surprising if landlords carrying debts of the dimensions that Ward describes were not doing this in the 1650s.

The landlord's freedom towards a copyhold of inheritance was much more circumscribed. He could not refuse to admit the heir, nor could he demand a fine so large as to bar the heir from entering. Of course, it may be true that some lords successfully did both; but throughout Elizabeth's reign, Chancery would intervene to restrain the lord and protect the rights of a copyholder by inheritance on the tenant's petition. On manors where custom allowed the inheritance of copyholds, the lord's rights over his tenants were frequently defined in the century before 1640 either by private agreement or by suit in Chancery. Even before such a final step was taken, the lords of copyholders of inheritance had only the most limited freedom to amend the tenure by which their tenants held. This is well known.⁴ It is also appreciated that copyholds for lives were found in the south of England, in western England, and in a band running through Gloucestershire into Staffordshire, while copyhold of inheritance occurred in the rest of the country.

Now Ward does not admit this elementary distinction. But his argument that copyholders could be converted to leaseholders more or less at whim, and with substantial gains in rental income, appears to be based on examples from those parts of England where we would expect to

find copyholds for lives. His account is only applicable to a limited region within England, but his failure to acknowledge this suggests that he believes that this freedom was general. It was not, and to suppose it was is merely to mislead. Moreover, there seems to be the assumption that copyhold could be broken at will and that the reform of estates could be achieved within a very short time-span. If this was so, it rather begs the question of why lords had not undertaken this modernization before, and it further raises the problem of how lords interrupted their copyhold tenants' tenancies in the middle of their terms and obliged them to accept new tenancies which were grossly disadvantageous. On these general grounds alone, Ward's case cannot be accepted.

Evidentially, the article is extremely weak. It is littered with unsupported claims.⁵ We do not see a single tenant exchanging his copy for a lease at a higher commercial rent. Nor does the paper offer rental evidence in support of Ward's contention that this was actively going on. That such a change was afoot is inferred from the rent receipts from estates, which as Ward admits, are an extremely 'treacherous source'.⁶ In the case of the earl of Northumberland's estates, the figures cited are not rents received (which is not the same as rental), but are a consolidated figure for rents and arrears of rents received. The inclusion of arrears makes the figures — if they were in any case

⁴ Kerridge, *Agrarian Problems*, chs 2-3, *passim*; Hoyle, 'Tenure and the land market', pp 12-15. The frequency with which tenants sought the aid of equity and with what success is the subject of the writer's current research.

⁵ So, we read 'a Chancery action brought by the Petworth copyholders to preserve their tenancy rights in 1659 suggests that [the earl of] Northumberland was trying to enforce a transfer to leaseholds' (p 35). This is a remarkably weak and inexact statement even if it were correct. Ward is unaware of the long dispute between the ninth earl of Northumberland and his copyholders at Petworth which resulted in the confirmation of their copyhold in Chancery in 1596 (described at length by P Jerrome, *Cloakbag and Common Purse*, Petworth, 1979). The printed description of the document cited offers no support for Ward's inference, but this description is itself erroneous: the document is a copy of a copy made in 1659 of the decree of 1596. (I am grateful to West Sussex Record Office for supplying photocopies of the manuscript.) So are canards erected.

⁶ Ward, 'Rental Policy', p 36.

correct – quite unsuitable to prove the case Ward tries to make. It is simply not possible to distinguish between any secular trend in rental, and fluctuations in the gross sum received, because of arrears in the limited time span that Ward employs. But even figures for rents received net of arrears cannot be used to demonstrate changes in tenancy. Increases in rent receipts may also arise from increases in the rents of those sections of the estate, his demesnes, where the lord had the discretion to charge a market rent, or through the leasing of lands previously kept in hand, for instance, parks, or perhaps from the commercial development of the estate, for instance, mines. The evidence presented in the paper does no more than suggest that tenurial change may possibly explain some of Ward's figures, but this cannot ever be conclusive until confirmed by rentals, surveys, and leases.

If the quality of the evidence is generally unsatisfactory, that offered from the estate of the tenth earl of Northumberland is untrustworthy. The Yorkshire estates of the earls have been the subject of previous work (not cited by Ward) by, amongst others, Professors Bean and Batho, and the central estates were treated at length in a pioneering thesis by Dr E J Fisher. The first point to be made is that these estates never knew copyhold. In the sixteenth century they were held by a custom called the custom of Cumberland, in effect a form of tenancy contingent upon the life of the lord and the life of the tenant. It has already been described in the literature how this customary tenancy was superseded by twenty-one-year leases granted c 1590 by the ninth earl of Northumberland. He recorded that these leases were made at undervaluations at a time when he was desperate for income to pay debts, but when they were renewed in 1609–11, the opportunity was taken to charge rents at a market valuation. The

tabulations offered by Dr Fisher suggest that the rents current in the late 1650s, after, in Ward's analysis, a period of tenurial reorganization, had actually been achieved by 1618.⁷ There was no conversion to leasehold on these estates during the 1650s.

Yet Ward has offered us figures in his Table 4 which show absolutely spectacular increases in rent receipts between 1645 and 1660. Now collectors of curiosities will notice that none of the columns of this table add up to the figures for total receipts offered at the bottom, but whilst the receipts from the seven named manors are approximately the same as the total receipts for the years after 1656, in 1645 they account for only £562 out of £3456 (16.2%) and in 1654 £1693 out of £3760 (45.0%). The figures for gross receipts overall show no substantial increase. What, then, is going on? An inspection of the manuscripts cited by Ward reveals (as was previously mentioned) that the all figures offered (errors of transcription apart) are for rents and arrears and therefore fluctuate from year to year. Moreover, the figures in Ward's Table 4 under the head of 1645 are actually taken from the book of receipts of 1646, where they are clearly marked as being a list of compositions with the tenants of these manors for arrears. They are not a list of rents at all. The figures for 1654 have met an equal mishap: the figure for total receipts given is for receipts at Lady Day and Michaelmas 1654; the figures for the indi-

⁷ J M W Bean, *The estates of the Percy Family, 1416–1537*, 1958, pp 62–4; G R Batho, 'The finances of an Elizabethan nobleman, Henry Percy, ninth earl of Northumberland', *Econ Hist Rev*, 2nd ser, 9, 1956–7, pp 431–50; E J Fisher, 'Some Yorkshire Estates of the Percies, 1450–1650', Unpublished PhD thesis, University of Leeds, 1954, a copy of which is available in the library of the Yorkshire Archaeological Society, Leeds; and most recently, Barbara English, *The Great Landowners of East Yorkshire, 1530–1910*, 1990, *passim*. G B Harrison, *Advice to his son by Henry Percy, ninth earl of Northumberland*, 1930, pp 82–3. Rents over a long period are shown in Fisher, 'Some estates', II, conclusion, graph B.

vidual manors are for rents received at Lady Day *alone*.⁸

Having discovered this distressing shambles, it seemed appropriate to look at the figures that Ward offers for the earl's manor of Tynemouth (Northumberland). This was a Crown manor until its sale to the earl in 1636. Here Ward finds an increase in rents from £581 in 1656, to £695 in 1657, and £1006 in 1658. It has escaped Ward's attention that the Crown confirmed the copyhold tenure of the tenants of the manor in 1610, and so if copyhold was converted to leasehold in the 1650s, we need to discover how it was possible.⁹ No such explanation is necessary. Ward's sources show that the rents and arrears of Tynemouth ran at around £600 between 1655 and 1659; there was no obvious increase. The improvement that Ward has noticed is quite simply that his figures for 1657 and 1658 include exceptional payments of £264 and £240 for fines, and that there was an increasing income from mining royalties and the rent of a colliery. In

1655, £539 was received from rents and arrears, in 1658, £654 was received from rents and arrears and £352 from fines, mine royalties and the colliery rent: in 1659 the figures were respectively £569 and £124.

There are good grounds for being sceptical of Ward's case. It assumes a wholly improbable discretion on the part of lords. The particular instance of the Northumberland estates turns out to be plain wrong: an improbable structure has been erected on a foundation of misread figures which in any case cannot be used to deduce alterations in tenure. Ward and I would agree that the conversion of customary tenures paying fines and ancient rents to rack-rented leaseholds is of the utmost importance. But the restraints on lords did not permit them to make this change by *force majeure* or within the space of a decade or less. Conversion clearly occurred over a long period of time — indeed, we tend to forget that copyhold survived into this century — and there is no evidence in Ward's paper or elsewhere that it accelerated during the 1650s. Ward's paper is too unsound to make any contribution to our understanding of a central but neglected issue in English agricultural history.

⁸ Alnwick Castle, MSS of His Grace the Duke of Northumberland, C. 1. 3a, seen as British Library, department of Manuscripts microfilms 365-6, with the kind permission of His Grace's solicitors, May, May, and Merriman.

⁹ H H E Craster, ed, *Northumberland County History* 8, Newcastle-Upon-Tyne, 1907, pp 239-40.

Social History and Agricultural History*

By ALUN HOWKINS

SOCIAL history, as David Cannadine pointed out in a review of these volumes in the *TLS*, has come a long way since Trevelyan or the old saw that it is 'history with the politics left out'. We have a Social History Society, two internationally-recognized journals devoted to the area and several other publications, pre-eminently *Past and Present* and *History Workshop Journal*, whose subject matter is frequently seen to be 'social history'. Yet in all this, there is a remarkable lack of an agreed sense as to what social history actually is. To many, particularly those outside the academy, it is still what was called in the 1950s 'the history of everyday things', and that has many virtues as a definition. Most however would follow, consciously or unconsciously, a notion derived from its more recent origins and conclude that social history is somehow a kind of historical social science – after all much of our funding comes from the ESRC! In this view social history is a question of methodology as well as subject matter. Put simply it is concerned not only with everyday things but with particular ways of looking at them. In his editorial preface to these volumes Thompson is well aware of this when he writes 'social historians draw widely on concepts from historical demography, social anthropology, sociology, social geography and political science, as well as from economics'.¹ This is of considerable importance for how social history is written in that it determines the way in which questions are asked and what materials and problems are the subject of inquiry. Yet this creates a different set of difficulties. Sociology or anthropology have set rules and theoretical structures which appear more or less coherent. When transferred to history this apparent coherence is seldom questioned by historians. More often, as Tony Judt has argued with great vigour, they are accepted as giving a 'scientific' value to language, and structures, and methods which are at best weak and at worst downright misleading. The uncritical use of concepts like 'modernization' or 'urbanization' or the wholesale adoption of 'systems' of explanation

derived from the social sciences not only make for 'bad history' but mark, for Judt, 'a complete loss of faith in History'.² Similarly, many social historians seem oblivious to the critiques by sociologists, like Ken Plummer, of the limitations of quantitative methods as applied to sociology,³ and continue to search with computer and data for the philosopher's stone of the ultimate 'series' which will provide a scientific proof. Yet, as Lawrence Stone wrote nearly twelve years ago, 'economic and demographic determinism has collapsed in the face of the evidence...Structuralism and functionalism have not turned out much better. Quantitative methodology has proved a fairly weak reed which can only answer a limited set of problems'.⁴

But social history in some of its forms clearly has enormous strengths. Plummer advocates a 'humanist' and qualitative social science, not the abandonment of the social sciences. In a different way Stone points to its enormous appeal, especially outside the 'profession', because of its subject matter which is 'concerned with the masses rather than the elite. [It is] more "relevant" to our own lives than the doings of dead kings, presidents and generals'.⁵ It is this facet of the subject which has also 'politicized' social history. Feminist history, radical and socialist histories are often centred on social history precisely because of their interest in those who had no voice in the normal historical texts. Nor would all historians accept the strictures of Judt or Cannadine. Keith Snell, in a characteristically robust review of the *Agrarian History of England and Wales*, Volume VI, 1750–1850, berates many of its contributors for ignoring precisely the kinds of work, both in quantification and in other aspects of the social sciences, which Judt or Stone criticize.⁶

This point is particularly important for agrarian

* A review article of F M L THOMPSON, ed, *The Cambridge Social History of Britain 1750–1950*, CUP, 1990. 3 volumes: Volume 1, *Regions and Communities*, xv + 588 pp, £45; Volume 2, *People and their Environment*, xv + 373 pp, £40; Volume 3, *Social Agencies and Institutions*, xiii + 492 pp, £40.

¹ Vol 1, p xiii

² Tony Judt, 'A Clown in Regal Purple: Social History and the Historians', *History Workshop Journal*, 7, 1979, pp 66–94. For a similar view from a very different perspective see David Cannadine, 'British History: Past, Present and Future?', *Past and Pres*, 116, 1987, pp 169–191

³ Ken Plummer, *Documents of Life. An Introduction to the Problems and Literature of a Humanistic Method*, 1990

⁴ Lawrence Stone, 'The Revival of Narrative: Reflections on a New Old History', *Past and Pres*, 85, 1979, p 19

⁵ *Ibid*, p 15

⁶ K D M Snell, 'Agrarian Histories and our Rural Past', *Jnl Hist Geog*, 17, 1991, pp 200–201

history. Agrarian history has lived for many a long year under the umbrella of economic history. This obviously has many strengths, which are shown time and again in the pages of the *Review*. Not the least of these is rejection of the seductive power of nostalgia which is all too present in much 'country writing' which often passes for social history. Yet is also has many weaknesses. It has an intellectual arrogance which denies the qualitative and the non-schematic any place in historical explanation. There is seldom a human face seen in a subject which often describes the complex and varied experience of farm labour as a 'factor of production' or, all too often, equates wage rates with the standard of living.

I want, therefore, to address these volumes primarily from the point of view of a social historian of the rural areas. From this viewpoint it has to be said immediately that as a whole these volumes are much weaker here than they are for the urban areas. It could be argued that this approach is unfair, since much social history has been urban in direction, and agrarian history has not been 'social'. Yet, at the most basic level for at least half the period covered, Britain was a rural nation. In terms of localities even the 'classic' areas of industrialization like Lancashire, Yorkshire or the north-east contained substantial and complex rural societies. One would expect, therefore, that the social history of the countryside would figure large even if it did not dominate the texts.

Much of the obviously 'rural material' is concentrated in Volume 1, *Regions and Communities* in the regional surveys, and in Alan Armstrong's sixty-eight page chapter, 'The Countryside'. The regional surveys are, with the exception of those on Wales and Scotland, very weak indeed, looked at from the point of view of rural social history. For a start, much of rural England is simply not covered. The West Country, the Midlands or East Anglia are not covered in separate chapters, and as a result great areas simply vanish, I assume because they fell between the areas of interests of particular writers. Yorkshire is not in the index of Volume 1 at all, nor is Lincolnshire or Cumberland. Norfolk occurs under 'Towns and Cities' via its duke who lived in Sussex, and one reference to its population which is anyway in the section on the countryside. Even where counties are looked at, as with Northumberland, they are often discussed with practically no reference to rural social history. Indeed, through the whole of the volume economic history seems to control the text in a very familiar way. Thus, we get pages of discussion of 'growth', of 'output', of 'machinery', of 'trade cycles', but practically nothing on rural social structure, the family farm, hiring practices,

regional variations in farming structures, discussions of settlement patterns in relation to social structures, or most of the questions which would be basic to a social history of rural areas. In the three 'English' regional chapters totalling about 190 pages there are less than twenty on the rural aspects of those regions.

In contrast, the chapters on Wales and especially Scotland are excellent. The Welsh chapter by D W Howell and C Baber begins with a sixteen-page survey of the social history of rural Wales up to the 1930s which stresses the diversity and complexity of Welsh rural society. Although much of the material and the general interpretation is familiar from Howell's earlier work, it is nevertheless a very useful introduction which is what, in a way, one looks for in this kind of book. Equally important, key social institutions for Wales, like nonconformity and the Welsh language, are dealt with in both urban and rural contexts. Scotland gets two chapters, the first covering the period up to 1850 by Rosalind Mitchison, the second by T C Smout taking the story up to 1950. Both are aware of social history's debt to other subject disciplines in a way none of the other regional chapters are. Discussions of economic growth are here, as they have to be, but so are discussions of 'clanship', crofting, and the social structural difference between highland and lowland, especially in Mitchison's chapter. Smout gives more weight to the urban experience, which is not surprising given his period, but never loses sight of the central importance of the rural to the Scottish experience. These three chapters come near to what I would expect such a book to contain. They survey the literature and arguments carefully and impartially; they stress social structure and social relations at the expense of the economic and political, but never degenerate into simple listing of quaint social facts. I would give them to any undergraduate student or beginner in these areas to introduce them to the subject without any fear that the reader would come away with a simplistic sense of history.

Rural social history is the central concern of Alan Armstrong's chapter on the countryside. The general tenor of Armstrong's account will be familiar to many readers of this journal through his work on farmworkers and his contribution to the *Agrarian History of England and Wales*, Volume VI, 1750-1850, as indeed will the criticism of this position. As a result it is difficult to come to this cold. The questions of enclosure and of social conflict in the eighteenth century get short shrift, and these, along with the crisis of the 1820s and 1830s, are discussed in terms that will do little to placate Armstrong's critics. In all these discussions

there is little sense of the growing complexity of the nature of rural disorder which some historians have seen in this period. The millenarianism of Bossenden Wood; the belief in lost rights which fuelled support for Cobbett as well as gave legitimization to wood stealers; the residual power of the customary economy; the persistence of ideas of the right to relief or work long after the end of the Old Poor Law; and the black-faced rioter who looks more like a folk-lore performer than a revolutionary find little space here. Swing is written about largely from the economic and therefore easily-criticized work of Hobsbawm and Rudé, which will soon celebrate its silver jubilee, the Old Poor Law from the standard essays of the 1960s and 1970s, enclosure largely from Chambers and Mingay. That these books and articles are old is not necessarily a criticism – but there is newer material which at least casts doubt on some of these arguments.

As a general survey the material on the mid- and late nineteenth century is difficult to comment on. It is woefully short of regionality, but if that was supposed to be elsewhere in the book one can hardly blame Armstrong for its neglect. At times the account is breathless in its coverage and in the linkages made from one area to another but, as someone who has also tried to write a 'general account', he has my sympathy here. Yet again, there are extremely odd moments. Arch's Union is given the same space as the dockers' attempts to unionize the farm labourers of the Home Counties in the 1890s, and both are seen as somehow outside and 'disrupting' influences, whereas recent work shows that many of the unions of the 1870s were deeply local, even if they were aware that they were breaking what the elite saw as sacred bonds. Later trade unionism, especially during and just after the Great War, gets better coverage; indeed, much of the material on the 1930s and 1940s is extremely useful as it is not easily available elsewhere. As always, and how often do we need to say it, there is very little here on women as workers, be they servants, labourers, members of the productive unit of the small farm, or, given that this is social history not a history of labour, half the human race. An aside on gangs and a few lines on dairying are simply not adequate to the huge amount of material produced in the last ten years, even on the rural areas.

The second volume, *People and their Environment*, is based around topics or themes like demography, the family, religion, work, and looking at them over the period and the country as a whole. For the rural social historian these chapters are a bit of a curate's egg. As one would expect, the chapters on demographic change by Michael And-

erson, the family by Leonore Davidoff, food, drink, and nutrition by D J Oddy, and leisure and culture by Hugh Cunningham are models of their kind, presenting their material clearly and well, while also stimulating a wish to follow up ideas and arguments. Yet all show how detailed work is shaping general perceptions in an almost random way. Davidoff's chapter, for instance, shows just how little we really know about the social history of the family once we move beyond broad generalities. This is especially true of the middling ranks of artisans, tradesmen, and for the rural areas farmers and even, rather surprisingly perhaps, the gentry. This is no reflection on Davidoff; rather it shows the way in which the subject has been studied until now. Putting on the hat of a rural historian I am less happy with the chapters on housing by M J Daunton, and work by Patrick Joyce. Daunton, like many contributors, effectively ends the rural with the beginning of the nineteenth century. Again, this maybe defensible in some ways, but it is very disappointing in a 'general' history. This is even more true of Joyce's chapter. Like all his work, it is tense, sophisticated and always intellectually challenging. He presents in his 'introduction' a fine picture of the complexities of the labour market which was produced by the 'diverse and irregular development of industrial capitalism over the period'.⁷ Yet its very brief discussion of agricultural work, while more revealing in two pages than many a survey at ten times the length, is really not adequate to the subject.

The third volume is entitled *Social Agencies and Institutions*. As a collection I found this more useful, perhaps because its subject matter is more clearly defined. Institutions, however described, do have more or less clear boundaries. Again familiar names produced excellent surveys. Pat Thane and José Harris cover the state and society in two chapters, Thane up to 1914 and Harris after. Gillian Sutherland does the same for education and Virginia Berridge for health and medicine. James Obelkevich provides an excellent chapter on religion, though again those interested in the rural world should also go to his earlier work on Lincolnshire. More than that though, parts of this volume show social history at its creative and prickly best. V A C Gatrell produces a provocative account called 'Crime, Authority and the Policeman-State', which transcends the urban nature of much of its source material by offering a powerful and general argument about the changing nature of crime, criminality and the forces of law and order.

In a different way the chapters by F K Prochaska

⁷ Vol 2, p 148

and R J Morris also demonstrate the real strength of social history. Prochaska creates in his contribution on 'philanthropy' a new way of looking at very diverse social 'acts'. Bringing together the bonding of neighbourhood with the powerful structures of deference on the one hand and charitable societies on the other, he shows how a notion of social form and structure can illuminate historical materials by simply bringing them into a relationship. This is also true of R J Morris's piece on 'Clubs, Societies and Associations'. Morris shows how 'as society became more complex'⁸ different groups created a huge range of organizations separate from the family, neighbourhood, household, firm, and work group. Again this approach of taking a social form and looking at its different manifestations shows the real strengths of social history. It is also worth noting of this volume, and to a lesser extent of Volume 2, that the amount of space given to women and women's activities is much greater than in Volume 1. This may have something to do with the subject matter, though I cannot see why, but it is perhaps cynical

to note that four out of the eight contributors to Volume 3 are women while all the contributors to Volume 1 are men.

It has been suggested that these volumes mark social history's 'coming of age', or at least its acceptance as a 'proper' subject. If that is so then I am a bit worried. It seems to be male, urban and still reliant on its economic history father for much of its support. It also lacks, in many essays in these volumes at least, a cutting edge. Social history in its youth was a rebel, enraged, and angry at the history it uncovered, a history largely of poverty and waste. With one or two exceptions, particularly Gatrell's chapter, that is not true of these volumes at all. Indeed several contributors go out of their way to remove class and conflict from their accounts altogether. Yet there are good things here. I have already used some of the articles in my own writing and my students have benefitted from more. No doubt many others will find the same. But, to return to my original point, it is still a loss that with agrarian history so firmly wedded to the economic these volumes offer relatively little to balance the books. We still have to wait for a full social history of rural Britain.

⁸ Vol 3, p 395

Professor W G Hoskins – a Memoir

By MAURICE BERESFORD



PROFESSOR W G HOSKINS, c 1973
Photograph courtesy of Mr M A Havinden

HE was born at Exeter on 22 May 1908 and died at a nursing home in Cullompton on 11 January 1992. A founder member of the British Agricultural History Society, he was its President in 1972–4, and a frequent contributor to this *Review*. In recent years his *Who's Who* entry concluded with 'Recreations: quietly remembering'. He had much to remember, as do we. His CBE and his FBA together with many honours, public and academic, recall that he was more than once capped for England, but some spectators will aver that he played at his best for his two counties, Devon and Leicester.

Devon was his first and enduring love. An earlier 'Recreation' entry was 'parochial explorations'. These began when a schoolboy in Exeter. Devon was for many years his home, then later a place of refuge, and finally a resting place in his last afflictions, some of which – like the much-quoted 'despair' of 1968 in which he ended his Leicester professorship – were self-inflicted. *Devon* was the title of his largest book, a heroic effort at a one-man county history; to write it he claimed

to have set foot in all 450 parishes, and no one would dispute it.

Devon's county town, where scholarships took him to grammar school and University College, was the subject of his MSc Econ. thesis (1929) from which arose his first book (1935). In 1963–4 he was briefly and unhappily a Liberal member of the city Council.¹ It was some recompense that his first honorary degree was from Exeter. In his last years, at Stoke Canon in a bungalow looking across the Exe meadows, a photograph of that ceremony was one of the few objects in his sickroom apart from family photographs: for all his maps and books, even the *festschrift*, had been sent to the saleroom in an earlier fit of depression.²

¹ 'I got in as a Liberal with the largest majority in the City': WGH to Beresford, 21 May 1963; 'I am much oppressed at law by a threatened libel action ... I came up against what I am sure was a horrible conspiracy and the thugs are now ganged up to finish me financially and in every other way': WGH to J G Hurst, 27 May 1964.

² His annotated copy of the one-inch Ordnance Survey sheet 122 (Melton Mowbray) was found in August 1989 in a remainder box of an Exeter bookshop.

His other county, by adoption, was Leicestershire, to which he went in 1931 as Assistant Lecturer in Commerce at the University College. His letter of application explained that he wanted 'time to pursue research, because at Bradford teaching duties took up the whole of his time'.³ He had been a lecturer in business studies at Bradford Technical College, a year so searing that he omitted it from his entry in *Who's Who*. At Leicester his duties were mainly to teach Economics for the London BSc Econ, a syllabus familiar to him from his undergraduate days at the University College of the South West, and from some tutorial teaching while a postgraduate.⁴

Economic history papers were few, but it is likely that they included the Tudor special subject for the Tawney and Power syllabus. The development of his lectures on that theme can be seen in *The Age of Plunder, 1500-47* which appeared tardily in 1976.⁵ The title shows that he followed Tawney in sympathy for the underdog and the dispossessed, and even at the peak of his fame he was disdainful of the Establishment.

Between 1929 and 1936 a London PhD thesis, 'The Ownership and Occupation of Land in Devonshire', was being written, bringing him into closer contact with Tawney, who was to become his enthusiastic referee in more than one subsequent promotion. It was also his first serious incursion into rural history, a subject which had first aroused his interest as a schoolboy on holiday at his cousin's near Crediton.

That the thesis is available in print only through a short paper in *Devon and Cornwall Notes and Queries* indicates the indifference to serious local history at that time in the publishing and academic worlds, an attitude which he was to meet again when his researches at Leicester produced a model history of the suburban village of Wigston Magna, where he was living. Refused by publishers at that time, it was recommended by Tawney (its dedicatee) to Macmillan's in the days of his later fame – although even then nervously re-titled *The Midland Peasant*, causing Herbert Finberg, his friend, collaborator and successor, to fantasize a threat of a rival village history, 'The Other Midland Peasant'.

However, there was the consolation of a more appreciative audience in Leicester itself. His day-time duties were tied to the London BSc Econ syllabus which, despite Eileen Power's own books

and Tawney's legendary injunction to muddy the historian's boots, gave no opportunity to interest students in exemplars from local history. Hoskins was fortunate to find nocturnal compensation. In Vaughan College the city had a flourishing centre for adult education. As one of its directors has written, 'he began his researches in Local History and Historical Archaeology ... in response to the needs and interests of his adult students',⁶ although in 1932-4 the courses were in economics and civics. In the autumn of 1934 he began a course called 'Local History', 'illustrated throughout with lantern slides', with one evening on 'the importance of field survey'. These continued and developed in 1935-40 alongside classes in political economy and government.⁷

The College prospectuses show that he sometimes had different courses on three nights of a week. The printed syllabuses, and Hoskins' own lecture notes show that by 1939-40 these students were hearing what the outside world would eventually know as *The Heritage of Leicestershire* (1946), *The Making of the English Landscape* (1955), and *Fieldwork in Local History* (1967). They were also able to participate in field excursions at the frontier of knowledge: 'I was taking adult students in the early summer of 1940 to see sites on the ground – at Ingarsby, Great Stretton and Knaptoft'.⁸

The Making of the English Landscape was to conclude with the quotation, 'Seeing England presents thee with so many Observables', and it is clear that nearly twenty years earlier the 'observables' and the archives of Leicestershire were already the twin pillars of his discipline, and he was partnered by a skilled photographer and friend, the College Principal since 1932, F L Attenborough, whose photographs, like passages in Hoskins' own prose, succeeded in catching the elusive and unspectacular beauty of Midland fields and hedgerows.

Another receptive audience during Hoskins' pre-war period at Leicester was the county Archaeological Society to whose *Transactions* he contrib-

³ Ex inf, Geoffrey Pyrah, Hon Archivist, University of Leicester, 11 April 1988.

⁴ Ex inf, Michael Havinden, University of Exeter, 20 February 1992.

⁵ It was begun in 1956 and was originally advertised as covering the period to 1640; as late as 1973 it was hoped to make two volumes: WGH to Beresford, 13 September 1973.

⁶ A J Allaway, *Vaughan College, Leicester, 1862-1962* Leicester, 1962, p 82; see also J Simmons, *New University*, Leicester, 1958, pp 116, 127 and 155. Negatives of the Attenborough photographs are now alongside the Hoskins MSS in the Department of English Local History, University of Leicester.

⁷ Ex inf, A E Brown, Department of Adult Education, University of Leicester, 17 June 1991.

⁸ 'I had a good working knowledge of English archaeology (even lecturing on the subject)'; lectures at Vaughan College on 'The Archaeology of Leicestershire' were given in the summer of 1937, in 1938-39, and from 1946 to 1949: WGH to J G Hurst, 24 March 1969. Extracts from this long autobiographical note will be found in M W Beresford, 'A Draft Chronology of Deserted Village Studies', *Annual Report of the Medieval Settlement Research Group*, i (1986), pp 18-23.

uted eleven papers. He even persuaded the Society to devote a whole volume in 1948 to *Studies in Leicestershire Agrarian History*, and to make a separate hardback book of it. His own contributions began, as did his Vaughan College courses, with archaeology in the traditional sense of Roman and Pre-historic (1935), before moving to 'The fields of Wigston Magna' (1937), thence via parish histories to the pioneer surveys of deserted villages, yeoman wealth, and the Great Rebuilding.⁹

He had had no formal training in archaeology, and conducted no excavations, but he taught himself to apply locally what could be learned from Hadrian Allcroft's *Earthwork of England* (1908).¹⁰ It is also possible that in his Bradford year he had learned from Arthur Raistrick, whom he acknowledged later as 'that great authority on Northern England and on the practical side of local history in general', and to whom, when he was General Editor of the Hodder and Stoughton 'Landscape' series, he entrusted the *West Riding* volume (1970). Raistrick certainly believed he had been a beneficent influence. In 1987, hearing that Hoskins was seriously ill, he wrote, 'I had both friendship and respect for him ... on two occasions he joined one of my local history classes ... [in] comparative studies of Linton and Heptonstall. Both these he used in his books'.¹¹ Against Hoskins's Preface in a presentation copy of *The West Riding*, he had pencilled, 'not quite the pioneer he claims to be'.¹²

In 1941 Hoskins left Leicester for 'nearly five years imprisonment' of 'civil servitude in the Great Wen'. It was not all loss, for intervals in fire-fighting and other Civil Defence duties were used to digest and analyse the massive collection of notes from archives that he had gathered for his Vaughan College classes and the summer field courses.

The two decades following the return from exile in January 1946 were indeed the Glory Glory years, with rapid academic promotion, the creation of a separate Department of English Local History, a steady flow of books together with book reviews and broadcast talks, and the membership of the Royal Commission on Common Lands (1955-8)

to whose *Report* he contributed a comprehensive 'History'. He left Leicester for the Oxford Readership in Economic History in 1951.

There is no need to repeat here the ample biographical and bibliographical data included in the *festschrift*, which Christopher Chalkin and Michael Havinden edited in 1974.¹³ By that time he had returned to Leicester to take a Chair, and then early retirement in 1968, and he had made his first TV appearance in 'Horizon'. To the biography and bibliography in the *festschrift*, subsequent years added two more honorary degrees and two books: *The Age of Plunder*, and *One Man's England*, an illustrated text of his second BBC TV series (1978). Revised editions of *Fieldwork in Local History* (1982), and *The Making of the English Landscape* (1988), were mainly the work of Christopher Taylor, 'my one-time pupil', one of many craftsmen who acknowledge debts of apprenticeship from the master's Oxford days. He had been frustrated by the small amount of economic history in the undergraduate degree, but his appointment diaries in those years are a record of the postgraduate talent that knocked on his door.

He had always displayed a tendency to quarrel with people and institutions whom he had once loved, not least of all with himself. As Joan Thirk put it in the best of the press obituaries, 'He had strong pleasures and prejudices ... in earlier days a beaming smile moderated the indignation'.¹⁴ Careful readers will find mocking entries that aired his prejudices hidden in his indexes at this period – in *Midland England* 'Lunacy, modern, *passim*, lies between 'Luffenham, South' and 'Luton'.

Twentieth-century industrial society was certainly not to his liking, but he did not appreciate – and certainly did not acknowledge – what twentieth-century technology had enabled him to achieve, whether in the motor cars driven by his wife, Jane, that facilitated his parochial explorations; the fast trains that enabled him to live in Exeter and work in Oxford; paperback publishing which enabled him to tutor the leisured middle class in their own explorations; broadcasting which enabled him to preview a number of his themes on the Third Programme and thence in *The Listener*; and then in the Indian Summers of 1976-78, the helicopter and television cameras which enabled him to bring muddy boots into the living rooms of an audience numbered in millions, introducing them painlessly to economic history through a selection of those local exemplars that he had visited in his days as an active researcher. Some flavour of these can be gained from the two

⁹ His use of 'medieval archaeology' in a lecture title (April 1937 and January 1938: Notebook 'J', Hoskins MSS) may be the earliest use of this term as now understood; R L Bruce-Mitford, 'Medieval Archaeology', *Arch News Letter*, i, 1948, n 6, pp 1-4.

¹⁰ 'My "excavation" at Hamilton is best forgotten. It was simply ignorant enthusiasm and produced nothing': WGH to J G Hurst, 24 March 1969.

¹¹ Raistrick to Beresford, 25 August 1987; later conversations with both men were unable to elicit the exact date of their first contact.

¹² R F G Hollet & Son, *Occasional List* no 47, Settle, 1991, note on item 702; also corrections to Hoskins' *English Landscapes* noted in item 428.

¹³ C W Chalkin and M A Havinden, eds, *Rural Change and Urban Growth*, 1974, pp xix-xxvi and 342-50.

¹⁴ *The Independent*, 14 January 1992.

magnificently illustrated books published by the BBC, although they do not quite catch the ruddy complexion under the grey locks which must have caused many viewers to wonder if they ought not adjust the colour button on their receiver.

'Observables' was one of his favourite words, and he was indeed the Great Observer – of townscapes as well as landscapes, and he held his audiences, professional and amateur, by the vividness of his language which itself derived from the acuteness of his observation. The ease of movement over the landscape and the flow of happy examples may have concealed from some, not only the hard physical effort of exploration, which has its acres of misses for every square yard of hits, but long hours of research in archives.

The quality of his published work also took strength from the discipline of many years of teaching economics and economic history. At Leicester he had taught all periods of economic history, and his local studies were always designed to illustrate general economic history topics, and more than once to illuminate where there was still darkness, as with late-medieval depopulation and the implications of post-medieval rural building, from parsonages to farmhouses.

His early study and teaching in economics – at a time when it was arithmetical but not yet algebraic – gave him a firm respect for quantities. He enjoyed counting, and half-apologized in the Preface to *The Age of Plunder* for facing the reader with so many quantities. He was a pioneer in the use of probate inventories as also of taxation

assessments. His study of rural wealth in Devon, like that of sixteenth-century towns, was based on an exercise in ranking taxation data, while the studies of post-medieval harvest fluctuations in this *Review* were essentially research in measurables, a quite different Hoskins from him of the observables.

In recent years, whatever the ravages of the body, the mind was clear and tranquil. He had not the energy, he said, to finish an autobiography but he knew what title it would have had: 'A Provincial Life', a declaration of contentment with that lot, with echoes of the title of one of his several volumes of reprinted essays, *Provincial England*.¹⁵ Certainly it embodied a relief that he had dwelt so little in a metropolis, and he would certainly have relished emphasizing that his years in Oxford were spent in a place that was as much a part of the English provinces as Leicester or Exeter.¹⁶

¹⁵ In conversation in August 1990 he claimed that its manuscript had been destroyed by the manager of a nursing home who feared revelations in it, but this may have been a distorted recollection from a troubled period.

¹⁶ I am grateful to those named in the footnotes for information supplied, and to Professor Phythian-Adams and Dr Harold Fox for access to the Hoskins MSS; the Hurst correspondence cited is now with the archive of the Medieval Village Research Group in the National Monuments Record (Royal Commission on Historical Monuments); that with Beresford, Ms 910 in the Special Collections of the Brotherton Library, University of Leeds. WGH himself would have wished others to learn of the financial and other help that he received in recent years from a former American student who wishes to remain anonymous.

List of Books and Pamphlets on Agrarian History 1991

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Brynmor Jones Library, University of Hull

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Notes on Contributors

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JEAN BIRRELL was for many years Deputy Regional Director of the Open University in the West Midlands, and is now an Honorary Fellow of the Institute of Advanced Research in the Humanities, in the University of Birmingham. She has published several articles on aspects of royal forest and woodland history.

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DR RICHARD HOYLE is a British Academy post-doctoral research fellow at Magdalen College, Oxford. He is a member of the Executive Committee of the Society and acts as organizer of the its autumn conferences. He has interests in many aspects of the economic and social history of the early modern period. The collection of essays he edited, *The Estates of the English Crown, 1558-1640* CUP, has just appeared: amongst continuing projects is a study of the role of the equity courts in the regulation of tenurial change before 1640.

DR ALUN HOWKINS is a Senior Lecturer in History in the School of Cultural and Community Studies at the University of Sussex, where he has taught since 1976. He is the author of *Reshaping Rural England 1850-1925*, 1991, and *Poor Labouring Men*, 1985.

Conference Report: Spring Conference 1992

By JOHN R WALTON

FLORENCE Boot Hall, set amidst the green expanses of the Nottingham University campus, afforded a congenial venue for the 1992 Spring Conference. This year's meeting saw innovations in the number of papers and in their scheduling. But it was that traditional aspect of the conference programme, the field excursion, which in some senses occupied pride of place. Laxton, England's last open-field village, has long been held in affectionate regard by agricultural historians. In view of recent uncertainties concerning its future, and the part played by Professor John Beckett (University of Nottingham), this year's organizing secretary, in bringing Laxton and its problems to wider notice, Laxton was a highly appropriate, not to say inevitable conference theme and excursion destination.

The paper sessions followed a chronological trajectory from medieval to modern, beginning on the afternoon of 13 April with Professor Christopher Dyer (University of Birmingham) talking on 'Agrarian History 1042-1500: Where Do We Go From Here?'. Professor Dyer's point of departure was the recently-published Volumes II and III of the Cambridge Agrarian History of England and Wales. The speaker noted that these volumes proffered no 'big idea' analogous to that of the wood-pasture economy in Volume IV. Indeed, we appeared to have reached a stage where the excitement which once characterized the treatment and presentation of topics like the peasants' revolt, village desertion, or the golden age of labour had given way to an altogether more sober, circumspect and diffuse approach to the period and its themes. Although historians of medieval agrarian society and its institutions might now be united in favouring environmental as opposed to ethnic explanations, on other important matters, like the validity of the Postan thesis or the significance of declining seignorial power, there was no agreed position.

At risk of adding further to present pluralistic uncertainties, Professor Dyer outlined several new approaches which might appeal to any editor or editors minded to repeat the exercise at some future date. The list included closer attention to the productivity of pastoral farming, possible inter-

action with the practitioners of cliometrics, inclusion of material on popular mentality and culture, further consideration of response to market demand, a more rigorous approach to the identification of regional farming types, and possible inputs from environmental archaeology. The lack of prominence of these themes in the present volumes reflected the difficulty of incorporating the most recent thinking into large-scale collective studies with their unavoidably long gestation times.

After dinner, attention turned to Laxton, with Robin Mulholland, the agricultural estates manager for the Crown Estate Commissioners, presenting 'The Landlord's Viewpoint'. Mr Mulholland began with an outline of the history of the Crown Estate, and a survey of its present functions and activities. From this, it was clear that the Crown Estate's acquisition of Laxton following the Ministry of Agriculture's enforced sale in 1981 was not consistent with the Estate's statutorily-defined investment objectives, effective though it may have been in defusing criticism of the sale. Current management policies were designed to ensure the long-term viability of open-field farming, even though this would mean negligible returns to the landlord for at least as long as the present general crisis in farm incomes persisted. In effect, Laxton must remain a village of small farmers, since any further amalgamation would reduce the numbers involved in open-field farming and its institutions below the point where they were viable. With amalgamation within the open-fields ruled out, the Crown Estate had to suggest other means of boosting the household incomes of farmers. Some improvement might be achieved by replacing the current seeds course within the three-course rotation with oilseed rape, or by the increased intrusion of winter cereals into the spring cereals course. But income increases on the required scale demanded solutions which lay outside the detailed management of the open fields. Of the various possibilities, part-time farming was the solution most favoured by the landlord, although in a lively and extended discussion, members of the audience were prepared to argue the merits of a host of others.

Once the business of the Annual General Meeting had been tidied away, the following morning's proceedings began with a paper by David Hall of the Fenland Project on 'Recent Research on Midland Open Fields'. *Pace* Kerridge, the speaker was in no doubt that the greater proportion of Midland ridge-and-furrow was of medieval origin and represented a landscape survival of open-field agriculture. Although subsequent ploughing has sometimes rendered ridge and furrow itself indistinct, it has rarely obliterated the substantial earthworks built up by soil cleaned from the plough at the end of the strip. The resulting linear banks of earth define former furlong boundaries, enabling furlong maps to be constructed where no detailed maps otherwise survive. A sequence of slides, largely relating to Northamptonshire, demonstrated what was possible by combining field survey and documentary research. For township after township, the speaker provided detailed reconstructions of open-field arrangements. In general, what was most striking was the way individual systems had evolved without their early logic becoming wholly opaque. Regular tenurial cycles were common, the strips of any one tenant always being adjacent to those of the same neighbours throughout the fields; the number of lands in a furlong was often a multiple of the yardland rating for the vill; and the yardland rating could itself be related to the Domesday fiscal assessment.

Having contemplated the landscape of medieval Midland open field, the conference then turned its attention to some of the consequences of eighteenth-century enclosure. In her paper 'The Value of Common Right: the Eighteenth-Century Debate', Dr Jeanette Neeson (York University, Toronto) analysed hitherto neglected literary evidence which revealed that many of the late eighteenth century's great and famous had debated the arguments for and against the loss of common right. In disinterring this polemic, Dr Neeson emphasized that there was no disagreement about the consequences of enclosure: all accepted that enclosure turned commoners into labourers. The argument concerned the relative merits of each class. For defenders of the commons, like Richard Price, enclosure brought undesirable effects: the conversion of arable to pasture, the impoverishment of small farmers and commoners, and a diminishing supply of manpower. By contrast, advocates of enclosure, like John Howlett, saw the consequent increase in proletarianization and dependence as a boon. The destruction of the common-right economy brought to an end the indolence and want of deference to higher authority which access to the waste encouraged. However, it was Dr Neeson's view that the enthusiasts'

advocacy of the moral advantages of the new social order was rooted in an excessively narrow vision of the old commons-based society which they wished to see destroyed.

Fortified by lunch, the conference then set forth to Laxton. The weather promised no positive contribution to the pleasantness of the proceedings, which comprised three elements, of which participants were invited to choose two. Professor Michael Jones (University of Nottingham) provided guided tours of the motte and bailey and the church. John Severn, a local architect, Ken Shepherd, one of the Laxton farmers, and Graham Beaumont of the Nottinghamshire County Council Historic Buildings Division gave tours of the village and its buildings. And Professor John Beckett and Reg Rose (farmer and clerk to the Gaits and Commons), assisted by Edmund Rose as tractor driver, mounted guided tours of the West and Mill Fields from the back of a trailer thoughtfully furnished with bales and awning, the latter not wholly effective in keeping out the worst of the weather. A half-time tea break in the Dovecote Inn gave everyone an opportunity to dry out, and to talk to Colin Cree, Vaughan Godson, and the other Laxton farmers, who in general did not share their landlord's conviction that part-time farming was the solution to Laxton's problems. The visit ended with a tour of the museum currently being developed by Reg Rose in the outbuildings of Lilac Farm. Back in Nottingham, the day concluded with a sherry reception and the Annual Dinner. There being no evening paper session, Professor Michael Thompson, the retiring president of the Society, was induced to deliver a more extended and illuminating sequence of after-dinner anecdote than has been customary hitherto.

The last morning of the conference offered two papers. In 'Towards a National Rent Index', Professor Michael Turner and Bethanie Afton (University of Hull) gave a progress report on their ESRC-sponsored project, undertaken jointly with John Beckett, to develop an English rent index for the period 1690 to 1914. Michael Turner surveyed the information which was already available in print or in unpublished dissertations. Bethanie Afton then presented the results of her work on the 29 estate archives so far visited. Her diagrams, showing long-term trends in rent and arrears, and rent levels by region and farming type, hinted at the likely scope of the completed project. Discussion focused on the problems arising from the unanticipated level of beneficial and customary leaseholds, the implications of the general move towards more efficient accounting procedures *circa* 1730, and the weighting which may

be needed to produce an index suitable for national income accounting.

Finally, Dr Lionel Frost (La Trobe University, Melbourne) explored the open-ended theme of 'Modern World Agriculture as Future History'. Notwithstanding the recent decoupling of industrial and manufacturing growth from the growth of agricultural demand, and the general assumption among development economists that they had nothing to learn from history, Dr Frost suggested that several aspects of present world agriculture

would be of interest to future historians. These included the impact of the green revolution on Third World agriculture, protection in the developed countries, overurbanization in the Third World, and the environmental costs of intensive production. Perhaps the most provocative observation in a discussion which ranged far and wide was the thought that if food production was to become an increasingly insignificant function of farming, then agriculture in effect became agricultural history, no more.

Notes and Comments

(continued from page 150)

REQUESTS FOR HELP

As part of our service to readers, from the next issue (Vol 41, Part I) NOTES AND COMMENTS will include a section under this heading. This is designed for all members of the BAHS, but particularly those who are not attached to an academic institution. We hope this will provide assistance for two types of problem: firstly, those thinking of carrying out research and who have chosen a topic, but are not too sure where to begin, or want to know who else has worked on that particular subject; and secondly, those who are well into a project but need further information to fill in gaps, or require advice on methodology. From time to time we have published lists of research in progress, but as there are intervals of some time between their appearance it is hoped this spot will fill the gap where someone wants information in the short term. This service is open to all members and if you feel it would be of some help you are urged to send your name and address, along with your request, to the Secretary of the BAHS, Dr Richard Perren, Department of History, University of Aberdeen, Taylor Building, King's College, Old Aberdeen, AB9 2UB.

THE VETERINARY HISTORY SOCIETY

The Veterinary History Society was founded in 1962 to foster all aspects of veterinary history and

its membership is open to all and not confined to veterinary surgeons. In the 1970s the BAHS held a joint Winter Conference with the Veterinary History Society. It publishes its journal, *Veterinary History*, twice a year and is always pleased to consider historical articles on farm animals that have a veterinary content. Contributions to *Veterinary History* should be addressed to the editor, Mr Tony W Johnson BVSc, MRCVS, 140 Lovelace Drive, Pyrford, Woking, Surrey GU22 8RZ. Individual Membership of the Society is £6 a year and includes a subscription to *Veterinary History*. Subscriptions for non-members are £4 a year. Correspondence on membership and subscriptions should be addressed to Mr E Barbour-Hill, BVSc, MRCVS, Tan-y-Coed, High Street, Penlon, Bangor, Gwynedd LL57 1PX.

OXFORD PEASANT STUDIES GROUP

An informal symposium on *transitions to rural capitalism in ancient medieval and modern societies* will be held in Oxford on 25 and 26 March 1993. If you are interested in attending and would like further information please write to Ralph Evans, 31 William Street, Oxford OX3 0ES.

Book Reviews

ROBIN FLEMING, *Kings and Lords in Conquest England*, CUP, 1991. xxi + 257 pp. 34 maps and figures. £30.

Robin Fleming has produced an extensive study of the eleventh-century English nobility in the age of two conquests. Although her studies of tenurial change across 1066 encompass a broad section of that nobility, the book focuses on the great lords; the ealdorman and earls, especially the Godwine family pre-1066, and Corbett's Class A nobles post-1066. Its central argument is that there were two revolutions in land-holding in eleventh-century England, a slow but inexorable one after 1016, and a rapid and far-ranging one after 1066. The first destroyed the balance between king and nobles, the 'institutionalized amity' of the tenth-century polity, creating an overmighty nobility which culminated in the inordinate power of the Godwine family on the eve of 1066. The second restored, or created, a new balance between a powerful monarchy and a reduced and thus co-operative nobility 'united in purpose and interests'. In the process this second revolution in landholding reached down to village and settlement level, dividing and disrupting agricultural units, altering not only estate patterns but, in the short term at least, land values themselves. Antecessor/successor transfer after 1066 was only one of the principles on which land changed hands, chronologically the earliest; territorial transfers in which the Old English system of hundred and shire was used as a means of mopping up the land of lesser thegns into the greedy maws of great Norman barons predominated after 1075. In addition much land changed hands by simple theft or pressure in a private enterprise conquest of 'barn-burning and belligerence' creating a 'kleptocracy' in which Tom Paine would have easily recognized his band of Norman banditti.

Fleming's work provides important proof of the landed dominance of the Godwine family over other nobles and over the king himself by the 1060s. Her chronology of dispossessions after 1066 significantly extends our understanding of an unfolding, changing conquest and of the motivation of rebellion against it. She successfully questions some long-standing generalizations, showing, for example, that estates of late Old English great nobles were more geographically scattered than those of their Norman successors. This study will be a necessary starting point for any further work.

But her argument for a tenurial revolution fundamentally disrupting landholding is important but debatable. Her picture is based primarily on East Anglia and the south-east Midlands. These areas lacked great royal and ecclesiastical estates, such a force for continuity elsewhere, whilst their abundance of undertenants and free tenants attached in various ways to different lords does not simply mean that disruption here is likelier, but also raised problems both in the transfer of land and in the recording of tenancies and lordship in Domesday which may mislead. Domesday was a legal and political document whose formulae often hide conflicting claims and may present a 1066 situation to suit the 1066 victor. It is not an easy document from which to read off the pattern of land transfer, especially in an area of disputable lordship. It is remarkable that even in these areas the proportions of apparent non-antecessorial succession to land never exceeded 33 per cent and were normally much lower. Moreover, her contrast between the pre- and post-1016 polity is too sharp. The tenth-century nobility and their estates were already fluctuating and changing as a result of unification, advancing royal power and large-scale ecclesiastical endowment. Her amicable polity bound by kinship was already stressed by royal patronage, forfeitures and local separatism. By the 990s it and its estates were not much older than the 'rootless elite' which later faced 1066; the responses which muted resistance to William had doused the fires of tenth-century succession dispute. It is important to realize that the estates of the English nobility were not static; but they were in a state of change from 1066, 1016, 954, 899 ...

PAULINE STAFFORD

BRUCE M S CAMPBELL, ed, *Before the Black Death: Studies in the 'Crisis' of the Early Fourteenth Century*, Manchester University Press, Manchester, 1991. viii + 232 pp. £35.

Most chapters originated as papers given at the Historical Geography Research Group's 1989 conference organized by Bruce Campbell, the book's editor. First, though, comes a survey by Barbara Harvey, who presided over the symposium at which they were presented. Examining the nature and extent of the crisis ('more than a mere fluctuation', but 'less than a turning-point'), she summarizes and rejects – as a sufficient explanation in itself – each of the rival theories on the shaping

of the pre-plague economy. Postan's Malthusian thesis, Brenner's Marxist argument, even the claims of monetarists and marketeers, fail because they are essentially endogenous and often do not fit the chronology of the English experience. One welcomes the calm sanity of an essay that recognizes how many endogenous and exogenous forces were at work.

Richard M Smith's study of demographic developments in England also deserves praise for modesty and caution in interpreting recent research. He leans, though, towards the higher estimates for population around 1300: it 'most probably exceeded 6.0 million' (p 49), a total not reached again until the 1760s. It remains obscure how far demographic changes before the Black Death reflect social factors like birth control or higher age at marriage, and how far outside forces like disease and war; Smith is hopeful that more studies of court-roll evidence would show 'the short-run responsiveness of mortality (and possibly nuptiality) to variations in harvest quality' (p 76).

Mavis Mate's chapter concentrates on developments in Kent and in Sussex, two counties with advanced agriculture but marked social and topographical differences. Such variations in adjacent counties emphasize how hazardous it is to generalize for the whole country. This reviewer questions Dr Mate's comment that the wage rate for mowing was 'always the most sensitive to changing economic conditions' (p 95), and is puzzled by the statement (p 104) that the money supply was eased by 'the introduction of a gold coinage and the minting of silver pennies and halfpennies'. Does she mean the minting of *lighter* pennies, as a result of the changes in 1344, 1346, and 1351?

J H Munro's essay on the textile trade notes the near-disappearance of worsted and other cheaper cloths from northern and Mediterranean markets, to be replaced with dearer 'new draperies' and high-priced Italian fine woollens. This, he contends, does not show that more people could afford expensive textiles (an interpretation hard to reconcile with economic decay), but that wars, piracy, and greater transaction costs bore more heavily on the cheaper cloths. This change, therefore, was crisis-driven. Munro is certainly right to stress the international nature of fourteenth-century problems; yet he slips across the Channel too readily and also strays into the post-plague period where it becomes impossible to disentangle the earlier crisis from the mid-century catastrophe.

Mark Ormrod's contribution, 'The Crown and the English Economy, 1290-1348', provides much revisionary data and is the most useful for the general historian. He lists the crown's receipts from lay subsidies, clerical subsidies (and the equally

lucrative kick-backs from papal taxation), customs and maltolt revenues, and the income from taxes in kind, most notably the three wool levies early in the Hundred Years War. Ormrod concludes that 'military activity in the first half of the fourteenth century drained away potential investment capital, depleted capital resources, disrupted internal trade and currency circulation, and reduced productivity' (p 182). But one notes that the clergy's especially heavy tax burden did not inhibit the rebuilding of many cathedrals and countless churches in this period.

Finally, Mark Bailey examines the effects of storms and sea-inundations, which damaged many eastern areas between 1275 and 1350. Bad weather not only eroded cliffs, washed away houses and mills, and ruined pastures with sea-water; it also imposed, for raising sea-walls and renewing drainage, costs that became unbearable when agriculture became less profitable. Bailey's essay typifies the great strengths of this book: careful research, and lucid, non-dogmatic exposition of the interplay of internal and external factors on the economy. The book's weaknesses are an emphasis on material from eastern England, and a certain vagueness about when the crisis did (or did not) happen. The editor let through an awfully obscure long sentence on page 36, an awfully ungrammatical one on page 108 ('A tenant ... could freely sell or give their lands to whoever they wished ...'), and a number of punctuation errors. There are also three mistakes in the quotation from Hallam cited on page 41.

DAVID L FARMER

L R POOS, *A Rural Society after the Black Death: Essex, 1350-1525*, CUP, 1991. xv + 330 pp. 34 figures; 29 tables. £35.

This study draws together the evidence relating to a wide range of economic, demographic and social changes in central and northern Essex during the late Middle Ages. The region is fortunate in having good evidence for population trends – evidence that Prof. Poos published in 1985. This evidence is restated here, with a full set of graphs for different manors, in chapter 5. To this is now added a reasoned and carefully nuanced analysis of the determinants of population changes through the later Middle Ages, paying careful attention to constraints on fertility. This highly original analysis concludes that social constraints on marriage brought about low fertility rates. The survey includes important new assessments of the employment structure, examining the demographic significance of the absolute and relative numbers of servants (living in their employers' households) and labourers (living in households of their own).

Chapter 10 discusses the availability of work for day-labourers and concludes that it was chiefly seasonal. In chapters 11–13 Poos also examines the characteristics of social conflict, the incidence of disaffection with the church and the extent of literacy amongst the different ranks of rural society.

The strength of Poos's work lies partly in his judicious use of current analytical techniques and partly in the importance of the questions he tackles. In both respects he has orientated himself as much to the work of Laslett, Kussmaul, Schofield, Wrightson and others on early-modern societies as to the studies of earlier periods by Razi and Smith. The background reference of the book is correspondingly broad. The evidence implies that in all essential respects – births, marriages, deaths, migration – the region's demographic parameters in the late Middle Ages were those of Early Modern England. We do not need to call upon some distinctly medieval demographic system to account for the prolonged failure of population figures to recover from the catastrophes of the fourteenth century.

Medieval Essex was in many respects distinctive, so that the conclusions to be drawn from its evidence will not inevitably be relevant elsewhere. The book draws out these differences where possible. The rural economy was highly commercialized by medieval standards, and the occupational distinction between market towns and ordinary villages was perhaps unusually weak. The proportion of smallholders remained constant through the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, and the sources of employment were exceptionally varied. Chapter 3 is a valuable survey of the rural cloth industry that characterized the region. Occupational diversity had a direct bearing on the exceptional propensity of Essex men to engage in rebellion, as in 1381, 1413–14, 1450 and 1471. The accounts of these events here stress the multi-faceted character of rebellion and the variety of different interests involved. The occupational character of the region also has some bearing on the growth of Lollardy, though the evidence does not suggest that craftsmen and retailers were more literate than farmers; Lollardy was more likely to be the spur to literacy.

The peculiarities of Essex man in the fifteenth century will no doubt become a matter for debate. In some respects what was happening there was much the same as elsewhere – as, for example, in the movement of land values (chapter 2) and wages (chapter 10). Although it is possible to show some respects in which Prof. Poos has been lucky with his source material, the excellence of this study is chiefly owing to the talent that has been exercised in questioning and analyzing the evi-

dence. We may surely hope that comparable enquiries from other parts of the country will sooner or later enable us to say just how distinctive Essex really was.

R H BRITNELL

MAURICE LÉVY-LEBOYER and FRANÇOIS BOURGUIGNON, *The French Economy in the Nineteenth Century. An Essay in Econometric Analysis*, translated by Jesse Bryant and Virginie Pérotin, CUP and Editions de la Maison des Sciences de l'Homme, Paris, 1990. xv + 369 pp. £45.

One of the fondly-held expectations in the early years of cliometrics was that the construction of historical series of national aggregates would make possible quantitative macro-economic models of long- and medium-run economic change. The reasons why these hopes have remained unfulfilled are exemplified by this inventive essay on the quantitative history of the nineteenth-century French economy, the joint product of a professional economist and an eminent economic historian. Readers unversed in the arcana of macro-economic modelling, where big results often turn on a small hypothesis, will be no doubt relieved to learn that the failures are not hidden in the intricacies of economic modelling, but instead flow directly from the inability of imprecise and incomplete data to sustain elaborate arguments quantitatively.

The authors view French economic development between 1820 and 1914 as having been characterized by three phases: steady growth to about 1865, a slowdown and possibly a reversal during the next thirty years, followed by recovery in the two decades before the outbreak of World War I. Students of British economic history will find the chronology vaguely familiar, but here the climacteric is presented as a peculiarly gallic event. The authors argue that in the boom years between 1830 and 1870 to 1875, France's rural population literally ate too much of their real income gains and as a consequence consumed too few industrial goods, depriving French manufacturers the kind of market opportunity that might have caused them to invest and innovate more vigorously. As a consequence, French industrial development remained small-scale and geographically dispersed. In the second phase following the Cobden-Chevalier Treaty the French industrial structure found itself unadapted to world markets and had to go through drawn-out restructuring at a time when farming was having to adjust to drastic decline in the prices of the main agricultural staples. One consequence was to make investment outside France more appealing to French savers than investment at home. The surge in industrial

output before the First World War was not enough to make up previous losses and France entered the twentieth century with a relatively backward economy.

The underlying historical model is haunted by the nightmare of Vichy and implicitly aims at explaining why the French economy could not keep up with Britain and Germany. That the French economy somehow 'failed' is taken as self-evident. This unexamined vision leads the authors to project a stereotyped account of the economy as the sum of two sectors: traditional agriculture, suspiciously peasant-like, and modern heavy industry, which they take to be the natural site of nineteenth-century economic progress. Their model thus adapts dual-economy development economics that flourished in the 1960s to nineteenth- and early twentieth-century Europe. Such analytical compression leaves no room for the complexity of France's rural sector in the nineteenth century, large parts of which were as advanced as England's by the middle of the nineteenth century, nor for the variety of its market relationships with the non-agricultural sectors and the outside world. France had many regional agricultures, some quite advanced and other relatively isolated. It is not obvious that much is gained by aggregating them into a homogeneous peasant sector to serve as a basis for modelling the behaviour of rural people.

The annual estimates of Gross Domestic Product and its major components are the most valuable by-product of this essay. Critical evaluation of the individual series has been slow to appear in France, so the series must be used with considerable caution. The annual estimate of agricultural product does not seem to this reviewer to represent a major advance over Toutain's older construction based on the more complete information provided by agricultural censuses. For most historical problems, the advantages of annual estimates are offset by the reduction in statistical resolution caused by the more narrow base of original information. The series are not adjusted for territorial changes, which make it impossible to assess the timing of agricultural change in the critical period between 1865 and 1880. One clear improvement over Toutain's estimate of agricultural value added in the late nineteenth century is the authors' recognition that Toutain's estimate of general overhead expenses, which he uncritically accepted from undocumented statements in the agricultural surveys of 1882 and 1892, is too generous and results in an estimate of agricultural output in the 1880s and 1890s that is too low. Their revision raises agricultural output in the last two decades of the century by 7.5 per cent. Taken as a whole, however, the

construction of the agricultural series is too poorly documented to be considered reliable. While the sources of data are indicated, precise details of the construction of the series are not, and it does not seem as though the underlying data were subjected to rigorous critical testing. There is simply no substitute for the painstaking reconstructions of national income that are the glory of recent American, Canadian, and British economic historiography.

Nevertheless, this is an important book and its authors have done signal service to the profession. Its hypotheses are sufficiently well-articulated to provide the basis for the next generation of scholarship on the French economy. All history is provisional, and in this respect the authors have provided us with a new and more elevated staging point.

GEORGE GRANTHAM

J R RAVENSDALE, ed, *A Peasant's Voice to the Landowners, by John Denson of Waterbeach, 1830*, Cambridgeshire Records Society, IX, Cambridge, 1991. xxii + 129 pp. £9.50.

'A pamphlet on the Poor Laws', observed Sidney Smith, 'generally contains some little piece of favourite nonsense, by which we are gravely told this enormous evil may be perfectly cured. The first gentleman recommends little gardens; the second cows; the third a village shop; the fourth a spade'. Denson's pamphlet falls into both the first and last categories, and there is little that is original about it. The value of *A Peasant's Voice* is that it is exactly that: the work of a copy- and freeholder who farmed some three acres at Waterbeach, eight miles north of Cambridge.

Enclosed during the Napoleonic Wars (the only lacunae in the otherwise exemplary editorial material is that we are not told exactly when), Waterbeach was the parish where Denson and before him his father had lived out their lives in a not-always comfortable subsistence. He recalls a three-year struggle to repay money borrowed to meet a copyhold fine, whilst when his family were young and his holding smaller, Denson had on occasion to present himself to the parish who set him to work in a local gravel pit. From his early adulthood, however, Denson recalls an essentially contented society, capable of supporting modest social mobility. Convivial social intercourse between farmers and their labourers was the norm, with May Day (Denson's vivid vignette will particularly interest cultural historians and folklorists) the high point of the community calendar.

Enclosure, though catastrophic in its implications for the smallholder and labourer, is presented as the culmination of a twenty- to thirty-

year period during which local agriculture became increasingly capitalized. Denson specifies as constituents of this process the erosion of wages, engrossment, 'the infernal thrashing machine', and increases in child and female labour and the use of horses.

A Peasant's Voice, however, is not merely a lament but a call for action by landowners to provide allotments for spade cultivation by the agricultural labourer. The latter, in close parishes especially, is 'worse off than the West Indian slave'. The blame for this, as for the collapse of the organic community recalled from the 1790s, is laid squarely on the tenant farmer. It thus follows that the tenantry cannot be trusted to alleviate the condition of agricultural labourers. All of Cobbett's familiar demonography is here, including the pianoforte in the parlour, without which it seems no self-respecting post-war agriculturalist could be without. The pamphlet is itself interesting evidence for the dissemination of Cobbett's ideas, and it is noteworthy that Denson was also a pioneer cultivator of 'Cobbett's Corn' (i.e. maize), on which he read a paper (reprinted here) to the Cambridge Horticultural Society in 1829. His enthusiasm for spade husbandry was born of practical experience, subsequently reinforced by learning of experiments by the Tyneside nurseryman Falla, possibly encountered by Denson in reading Robert Owen whom Falla also influenced.

A Peasant's Voice is one of the liveliest examples of its genre, and this reprint deserves a wide readership. It is accompanied by the earliest history of a Cambridgeshire parish, Robert Masters' *Short Account of Waterbeach*, printed in an edition of only twenty-five copies in 1795. Read alongside the editor's judicious selection of relevant diocesan records it gives an excellent insight into pre-enclosure land management in the parish.

MALCOLM CHASE

B A HOLDERNESS AND MICHAEL TURNER, eds, *Land, Labour and Agriculture, 1720-1920: Essays for Gordon Mingay*, The Hambledon Press, 1991. xxiv + 262 pp. 36 tables; 11 figures; 2 appendices. £35.

To review edited books composed of free-standing chapters can be notoriously difficult. Such difficulties can be compounded with a *festschrift* as contributors are often chosen (or omitted) exclusively for reasons of their relationship to the person honoured. Former students, past and present colleagues, earlier collaborators and friends might all expect a place. On the other hand, publishers with potential purchasers in mind might push editors to recruit only those whose collective effort would ensure some coherence of content. Such tensions

can be magnified many times when the book is for one of the stature of a Gordon Mingay who has so greatly influenced several generations of students and scholars and who has been so free and generous with his help and advice.

Dr Holderness and Prof. Turner are to be congratulated on successfully squaring this difficult circle. This is an important book for agricultural historians as it does contain new ideas, new interpretations and new facts on eighteenth- and nineteenth-century landownership and landed society, rural labour, and agrarian change. These themes provide a tight focus for the book as they have for Prof. Mingay's own scholarly research and writing. There are essays from two (of the *very many more*) of his research students, from four of his LSE and University of Kent colleagues, but by far the greatest proportion (eight in number) are invited pieces from his friends and peers in his own sub-discipline of agricultural history. The editors have selected wisely and organized carefully over the five years that the volume was in the making. Many of the contributors attended a symposium in Gordon's honour convened in 1988 by Prof. John Beckett and this can only have helped establish a focus for their writing.

A delightful appreciation of Mingay's life and work thus far by Theo Barker and a bibliography of his writings, mainly but not exclusively in agricultural history, compiled by J Whyman are followed by twelve substantive essays. On landed society there is Turner on the Bridgewater estates in Hertfordshire and Buckinghamshire, Donald Ginter reviews the land tax as a source of evidence, and J V Beckett re-evaluates the Hammonds' thesis on the disappearance of cottagers. There are essays on rural labour by T L Richardson and Edwina Newman and on rural society in Kent during the First World War by W A Armstrong. High Farming as a concept, landlord investment in farm buildings as a capital improvement, and innovation dissemination in farming are examined by Holderness, A D M Phillips, and Nicholas Goddard respectively. Three essays review salient elements of agricultural change over the whole of the two centuries: Robert Dilley on livestock in Cumberland to 1870, F M L Thompson on the period 1870-1914 and Peter Dewey on the First World War itself.

Each of the essays is innovative and important; taken together the collection is of a value much greater than the sum of its parts. It is indeed a fitting tribute to the past and present contribution of Gordon Mingay to the study of English agrarian history. Though a single book cannot hope to emulate completely the contribution of the man, this fine *festschrift* should stand the test of time

well – as does so much of Gordon Mingay's own scholarship in agricultural history.

ROGER J P KAIN

R H CAMPBELL, *Owners and Occupiers*, Aberdeen University Press, Aberdeen, 1991. xx + 200 pp. 5 maps. £14.95.

As Professor Campbell points out in his introduction there are major gaps in recent research on the history of agriculture and rural society in Scotland. Compared with England, where regional studies have long been in vogue, Scottish economic and social history has lacked a strong regional dimension within either the Lowlands or the Highlands. Moreover, the study of agricultural change in Scotland has tended to emphasize the arable east rather than the pastoral west, while within the eastern Lowlands the Lothians have been given undue prominence. It is also true that the focus of research on agricultural change in Scotland since the seventeenth century has been on the era of the Improvers with the implicit assumption that there were few significant changes in farming or rural society from about 1850 until well into the present century. After 1914 the long-established estate structure of Scottish farming began to break up. In 1914 only 10 per cent of the improved land in Scotland was owner-occupied, but by 1939 this had risen to 39 per cent and by 1987 to over 60 per cent. The origins and the social impact of this revolution have received little attention. Professor Campbell breaks new ground in all these fields by focusing on south-west Scotland, an area with a distinct concentration on dairying, from the later eighteenth to the early twentieth centuries. The first section sets the scene by examining the south-west as a peripheral region, particularly in terms of communications, industry and population trends. The second section looks at agriculture. It shows how the rise of specialist dairying helped to shelter the south-west from the worst effects of the changing patterns of world trade in foodstuffs which brought depression to many rural areas further south. The final section looks at elements of social stability and change over the same period through the medium of landownership. Landowners came under increasing pressure in the later nineteenth century from a declining economic situation, rising estate expenditure, higher taxation and, from 1894, death duties. At the same time conditions were deteriorating for the tenantry who were increasingly critical of their landlords. Professor Campbell examines the case for and against the landowners and demonstrates how the origins of the social changes which occurred after 1914 were well established before the war. It is a pity that the book ends abruptly without a postscript

following the changes through to the inter-war period but this is nevertheless an important study in terms of its topic, period and scale of focus.

IAN D WHYTE

LEAH LENEMAN, *Fit for Heroes? Land Settlement in Scotland after World War I*, Aberdeen University Press, Aberdeen, 1989. x + 244 pp. £17.50.

With the Highland Clearances still a live and bitter memory, land hunger in the Highlands and Islands of Scotland was intense in 1914. Wartime recruiting promises of land for all when victory was won revitalized the crofters' determination to get the land back. Legislation to provide smallholdings for ex-servicemen was enacted during the war and the return of battle-hardened men from France made it impossible to back track in the 1920s, for military life had shaken traditional deference. Land raiding, a minor affair before the war, became widespread and a serious threat to the rule of law. In the Lowlands smallholdings were to be a cure for unemployment and rural depopulation, and the Board of Agriculture was given the thankless task of cobbling together land settlement schemes throughout Scotland, in most cases by forcing landlords to split existing farms. As if insufficient funds, a legal framework seemingly designed to be inoperable, and a bureaucracy of mind-numbing complexity and slowness were not enough of a handicap, it also faced ferocious hostility among landlords.

The financial stringency of the 1920s ensured that there was never any chance of meeting all demands and in the Highlands the Board was reduced to a fire brigade policy, responding to raids or the threat of raids with elephantine slowness. Isolated and unsuitable estates were often the only sites available and the Board seems to have been the despair of the Treasury since costs invariably soared, but political considerations usually left no option but to proceed. The civil servants were locked into a policy no-one seems to have been happy with, though apparently as pressures eased in later years a workable system did emerge. Leah Leneman clearly left no file created by the Board unperused and used oral history to give the settler's experience. The book begins and ends with attempts to understand land settlement as a whole, and these sections are admirable, especially in showing the importance of community co-operation in this type of farming, with some new settlements thriving while others could never cohere. Unfortunately its central core is a succession of intimately observed administrative case studies of the selection and acquisition of sites, organized on a geographical basis, each of which really stands alone. I found

this overwhelming even as administrative history, especially as the actual settlement process and later performance are usually not covered. This detracts from what otherwise is a fascinating subject.

STEPHEN CAUNCE

STUART WOOLF, ed, *Domestic Strategies: Work and Family in France and Italy 1600–1800*, CUP, 1991. viii + 207 pp. £25.

This volume of essays emanates from a research project financed by the European University Institute on the nature of work in pre-industrial Europe, in which labouring families are perceived as central actors on the economic stage. Novel methodological approaches drawn from a variety of disciplines complement an ideological framework which departs from the tendency to dismiss the social agent as either passive or defensive.

Each study in this collection illuminates an aspect of the relationship between work and the development cycle of the family, through the imaginative reinterpretation of familiar sources. The south-eastern region of France and north-central Italy provide the geographical context, and a representative sample of rural and urban locations is studied. In East Liguria, Raggio discovers commercial relationships in the oil trade regulated by local kinship and friendship links. The resolution of conflict among these groups, however, involved the participation of complex networks of non-local political alliances. His research further reveals the vital role of even the most economically disadvantaged areas in the process of exchange because of highly-developed social organizations. That economic transactions constituted social relationships is also indicated in Fontaine's essay on peddling in the eighteenth-century upper Alpine valley, where such strategies of trading families as transmission of property, efficient resource use, and development of distant external markets explain the survival of an under-endowed society. Within an urban context, Poni creatively reconstructs the market relationships between three Bolognan guilds, experimenting with a method informed by anthropology and economics. The activities of his chosen trades (butcher, tanner, and shoemaker), integrated by an exchange of skills, illuminate the nature of early modern transactions and their operation within a coherent structure of rules and practices. These regulations, designed by leading families, and suggesting a hierarchy of privileges, in fact reflected the principles of a moral economy in safeguarding the positions of less powerful social groups. Cornelli's original analysis of the Turin tailor's guild emphasizes the rarely considered yet possibly widespread distinction between the practising of a craft and the guild

representing the trade. Because the tailor's guild constituted a social group rather than a trade organization, the vicissitudes of the guild were influenced more by the experiences of political institutions and processes than by fluctuations in the economy. The interaction of urban institutions, the family life cycle and the labour market is explored by Cavallo through the vehicle of the relief of poverty in eighteenth-century Turin. The aim of the fundamentally paternalist charitable activities of the Ospedale was the maintenance of 'normal' living standards by targetting relief at particular families in difficult moments of the life cycle. Thus poor relief provision, influenced by bonds of protection, and thereby favouring some sections of the poor more than others, only partially reflected the structure of poverty.

Each contribution to this innovative volume fulfils the objectives outlined in Woolf's elegant introduction which provides a welcome coherence to the whole. The overall vision of the approach brings an originality of thought and direction to the study of pre-industrial structures and institutions. Received wisdom is likely to be more fundamentally challenged by a methodology informed by ideas rather than technique; and through the employment of such a methodology, this collection revises conventional understanding of pre-industrial social and economic processes. Further, by redefining the meaning of work and repositioning the active agents within a broad context embracing social, political and cultural forces, conclusions are reached that confirm the limited perspective provided by earlier mechanistic approaches. The potential that this collection suggests for rewriting the history of work and especially the interaction of the family and the labour market in both the pre-industrial and the industrial period is enormous. The next installment from the participants in this project and those they have influenced is eagerly anticipated.

KATRINA HONEYMAN

P BONNASSIE, *From Slavery to Feudalism in South-Western Europe*, translated by J. Birrell, CUP, 1991. xii + 352 pp. 2 maps. £35; P FREEDMAN, *The Origins of Peasant Servitude in Medieval Catalonia*, CUP, 1991. xx + 263 pp. 3 maps. £35.

The common ground shared by these two books is Catalonia, that land so called from the early twelfth century from the major institution of southern feudalism, according to Bonnassie, the *castlania*. This term is defined as 'a fief, composed of lands sited within the castellany [*castrum*] and, above all, of revenues ... belonging to it, a fief granted as remuneration for custody of the castles'.

'Northern' historians are warned that the *castlania* never included the fortress. Already, then, we northerners are introduced to one of the many novelties of this region, another of which is the astonishing wealth of archival material even from the early medieval centuries. Of this we were given a foretaste by the same author back in 1964 in an article featuring an upstart peasant family from a village near Barcelona (*Annales du Midi*, LXXVI). Both books impress the reader indelibly with their rich harvest of historical detail.

This common ground, however, is associated with two quite different open fields. Bonnassie's comprises ten chapters, all but one of which were published in article form at some point between 1968 and 1990 inclusive, while the exception comes from the author's magisterial thesis of 1976. This body of material has been translated sympathetically from the French, but the fact that it has not been reworked as a book means that the theme suggested by the title is not addressed consistently or even coherently. The contradistinction between slavery and feudalism is unsatisfactory. A slave is here defined anthropologically as 'a de-socialized being whose production and reproduction were entirely under the control of another', whereas Mediterranean feudalism is seen (following P Toubert) 'both as a system of institutions and as a structure of production and profit'. The single institution of slavery is pitched explicitly against a mass of institutions representing feudalism, including presumably serfdom, with the result that an implicit transition is not, and cannot be, resolved under such a title. Even the critical period that saw the decisive disintegration of public authority in Catalonia, described at one point as 'the years of the feudal revolution', is given variously as 1020-60 (p 108), 1010-40 (p 146), and 1030/40-60 (p 156). This unstable period of civil war was preceded by another secular change soon after the millennium - the extinction of slavery linked, it is suggested (again citing Toubert), with agrarian expansion that 'was, to a large extent, the achievement of the small proletariat of the enfranchised'. The period from c 950 to c 1025 is depicted as an interlude between slavery and feudalism, though the gulf between the *potentes* and the *pauperes* remained as wide as before. Public authority (Latin *bannum*) was shared out between castle-owning barons, their castellans, and their knights, so that 'the birth of chivalry corresponded to the new servitude; the two phenomena are contemporary and inseparable'. High medieval serfdom was not therefore a direct continuation of early medieval slavery and it was to affect a much larger number of people. For them 'alienation, humiliation and

subjection to arbitrary power ... seem to constitute the sombre triptych which best depicts servitude'.

Freedman picks up the story in the ninth century and takes it down to the formal abolition of servitude that resulted from the remarkable peasants' war of 1462-86. Enserfment was characteristic of Old Catalonia east of the river Llobregat, a land of dispersed habitat with no manors, little demesne exploitation, and few fortified villages. Peasants tended to be both serfs and hereditary proprietors, so that 'oppression and autonomy existed side by side'. Accordingly, 'the context for the growth of servitude ... was a pattern of small, often fragmented holdings, matched by a diffuse lordship among many institutions and individuals within the same area'. In contrast with England, lords in Catalonia came into contact with their peasants mainly as recipients of produce and other dues; they were interested primarily in rent extracted by political compulsion. This process, combined with a 'hegemony of small-scale production', lay at the heart of the feudal system of land tenure. The decisive period for the entrenchment of serfdom in Catalonia was from the late twelfth century to the legislation of 1283, which completed the legal structuring of the *remença* (Latin *redimentia*) system. When in 1283 parliament enacted a law of redemption fines for unfree tenants who left seigneurial lands to settle on royal ones, redemption became the key component of servile tenure. There was no uniformity, however, and serfs and free men lived side by side both east and west of the Llobregat.

The eventual revolt in the fifteenth century was not simply for personal freedom, but also for the right to remain on the traditional family holding as a free tenant. It was at the same time the product of an unusually prolonged economic crisis, in which lords used their jurisdictional and political authority to defy market forces and increase the price of redemption. Peasant resistance is detectable from the 1380s but, since demesne farming had never been important in Catalonia, lords were still permitted by the legislation of 1202 (the *ius maletractandi*) to coerce and to dispossess without explanation or justification. Lords won the long war of attrition against an estimated 15,000 to 20,000 *remença* households and the first armed uprisings occurred in 1450. When the *ius maletractandi* was abolished in 1462, the 'bad customs' (*mals usos*) that had been routinized only in the thirteenth century (but whose origins lay in the provisions of Visigothic and Carolingian law) now became the main target of peasant opposition. In the end personal servitude was itself extinguished, but rents, services, and seigneurial taxes were left intact. A radical programme had been successfully

implemented by a traditionalist peasantry backed up, to some degree, by an equally traditionalist royal court. As this excellent book demonstrates, social status matters and the law tends to legitimate both power and exploitation.

H B CLARKE

GRUPO DE ESTUDIOS DE HISTORIA RURAL, *Estadísticas Históricas de la Producción Agraria Española, 1859-1935*, Ministerio de Agricultura, Pesca y Alimentación, Madrid, 1991. 1231 pp. No price stated.

Historical statistics which relate to Spanish agriculture were always generally acknowledged to be far from trustworthy. A classic example of their shortcomings, frequently cited by historians, is provided by official figures on wine production in the third quarter of the last century. While in 1857, the authorities calculated total Spanish output at 5.4 million hectolitres, twenty years later production was put at almost 30 million hectolitres! Even the Statistical Commission of the Realm, charged with collecting data on Spanish agriculture in the late 1850s, recognized that its findings were hopelessly unreliable and refused to publish them. More than a century later, such qualms did not prevent ambitious scholars from incorporating this dubious raw material into their own investigations. Fortunately for future generations of researchers, over the last two decades, a collective of agricultural historians who go under the name of the Rural History Studies Group have painstakingly amassed, refined and analyzed series of data on just about every aspect of agricultural production over the period 1859-1935. Their findings, which have previously appeared in journals, collected essays and monographs, are now published in a mammoth tome under the imprimatur of the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food.

This definitive and indispensable work for economic historians of modern Spain is divided into two sections. The first part consists of a succinct essay of seventy-five pages in which the authors discuss the origins of statistical gathering in the Spanish countryside, methods of elaboration and how closely the Spanish collectors followed the recommendations of international bodies. The Group themselves are, as always, refreshingly modest about the reliability and significance of their data. Thus their statistics on arable farming, beginning in 1891, are stated to be 'usable', especially with regard to the so-called Mediterranean trilogy of wheat, wine and olives, upon which the original agricultural engineers expended most of their energies. In the case of forestry, any data which they offer researchers needs to be supported by further quantitative evidence, at least before 1900. Their

judgement on twentieth-century data presented here is that it is 'good'. As far as livestock is concerned, this is the least reliable of the three sectors in statistical terms. Official figures collected in 1865 are deemed 'acceptable' while those of 1891 are 'not in the least reliable'. A continuous series of livestock production for 1906-25 was described by the Ministry of Agriculture itself as deficient. There follow over a thousand pages of data, sensibly arranged by province rather than product. Whatever their recognized defects, these figures surely represent the closest we are going to get to the truth. As Josep Fontana maintains in his prologue to this impressive volume, we have reached the point where attempts at further refinements of existing statistical evidence are likely to yield ever diminishing returns.

JOSEPH HARRISON

DAVID W SABEAN, *Property, Production, and Family in Neckarhausen, 1700-1870*. CUP, 1990. xxiii + 511 pp. £37.50 (hbk); £12.95 (pbk).

Numerous studies have appeared that employ the methodology of anthropology to interpret the past. The orientation of the discipline toward the study of small communities has resulted in most of these efforts being devoted to individual villages or relatively homogeneous rural areas of limited extent. The central concern of anthropology with personal relationships - within the family, kinship grouping and community - involves an area that is among the least accessible to historians employing the 'traditional' methodologies of the discipline. However, certain doubts remain from an historian's perspective as to the outcome of such research. The most important of these reservations concerns whether or not the results are really history. Whereas the central concern of the historian is the study of change over time, there is a tendency in the anthropological sort to present at best a series of static pictures of particular points in time. Beyond that there is the issue of the significance of many of the findings that are presented. The work under review, a study of a single village in the state of Württemberg, Southwest Germany, brings both of these concerns to mind.

The author's limited knowledge of agricultural history is illustrated at numerous points in the introductory chapters where the socio-economic background is considered. To take one example: the reader is informed that 'The great crises of 1816-17 and 1846-47 were due not so much to inadequacies of agricultural practices (the harvest failure of 1816 only brought a shortfall of 16 per cent) as to state policies and to the specific structure of village inequality'. Sabean appears to be

unaware that the post-Napoleonic wars agricultural depression was universal and that potato blight in the mid-1840s had a devastating effect, particularly in areas of predominantly small peasant farming like Württemberg. A shortfall of 16 per cent in 1816 would also have had a disastrous impact in a society where the majority of the population lived at the margin of subsistence even in relatively good years. Moreover, he fails to explain how the policies adopted by the state of Württemberg could produce such remarkable results or how the persistent 'specific structure of village inequality' (presumably social inequality within villages) could generate short-term crises.

The work is otherwise concerned with relationships between husbands and wives and between generations, as well as kinship and the process of transfer of property. Other than the latter, this reviewer lacks the anthropological training to give a considered critique. However, it may be pertinent to ask whether the effort has produced much of significance. Again, for reasons of space, one example will have to suffice. In a section devoted to abusive language in parent-child relations, we are informed that the use of such words as "ass-hole", "cunt", "snot", and words suggesting noisy communication [an odd reticence here] model social relations by use of bodily entrances and [sic] exists' (presumably "exits").

The concluding chapters on property transfer, a subject of interest to agricultural historians, present an extraordinarily detailed analysis of that process for an area of partible inheritance. Unfortunately, it offers little by way of explanation for the adoption of that form of inheritance. The author assumes the casual relationship to run from the development of intensive agriculture, in this case viticulture, whereas plenty of examples exist in Germany where partible inheritance stimulated intensive farming and domestic industry.

Perhaps the major deficiency of the book is the lack of a conclusion drawing together the findings of the research and their relationship to earlier work. This stems from its essentially ahistorical nature and an almost total obsession with the minutiae of life in Neckerhausen.

JOHN PERKINS

PÉTER GUNST, *Die Bäuerliche Gesellschaft Ungarns in der Zeit Zwischen den Beiden Weltkriegen*, Akadémiai Kiadó, Budapest, 1991. 247 pp. \$32.

Péter Gunst's excellent book is well translated into German by Lohanna Till. He writes about the peasants of Hungary: land owners and all who live by farming. He deals with multiple grades of peasants and labourers, their income and main life styles between 1918 and 1939. He uses an unexpec-

tedly large amount of official statistics: though defective, they are more detailed than those of richer countries. He has chosen a strategic moment after Hungary's truncation at the end of the First World War. He is dealing with a country only partly and slowly industrializing, having few outlets other than emigration (and disease) to prevent further rural overpopulation. Before 1918, the nation was overwhelmingly rural. Even in 1939 it could hardly be called a modern state.

Gunst looks at the complexity of this rural society, most farm owners having tiny farms, every man seeking some land or a bit more of it, and with a dozen types of farm worker. It is a sad story of extreme poverty, a tiny minority only living at ease. Of this Gunst provides a detailed and subtle analysis, illustrated, for example, by the description of large families crowded into a single room, and of a deficient agriculture, and illiteracy. They had few doctors, and a frighteningly large death and birth rate, but numbers increased. More children were wanted to give security in old age; fewer because of poverty.

This is not a folklore history of rural society. It rests on statistics alone. It shows a Hungarian population on the brink of modernity. Gunst explains how poverty, the lack of a few pengös to buy a small garden plot or modern farm implements, compelled them to be conservative. But statistics show young men going to the cinema, and the radio prizing open young minds, with the Second World War yet to extend the horizons of the young.

The map is too small, and our atlases can do no better. A book to be sold abroad should contain a brief account of the controlling geography of Hungary and the main agricultural systems. Some would have liked an interpolation of individual anecdotes on the straitened conditions of the peasants, but Gunst, probably advisedly, relying on his amazingly-detailed statistics, has produced a powerfully-true book.

D J DAVIS

VALD M MIKKELSEN, *Borrelyngen on Bornholm, Denmark: A Heath on Rocky Ground. Exploitation and Vegetation from Antiquity to the Present Day*, Biologiske Skrifter, 38, Royal Danish Academy of Sciences and Letters, Copenhagen, 1991. 51 pp. Illus. DKK100.

Pollen analysis, archaeological evidence, maps, and records give information on the vegetation and exploitation of the area from antiquity to the present day. The island of Bornholm was forested until about AD 1200 when deforestation and sheep grazing led to the replacement of trees by shrubs, heaths and pastures. Between 1890 and 1945 sheep

grazing was severely reduced and there was a considerable recovery of the vegetation including the spread of pine trees. Since 1979 parts of the area have been managed as a nature reserve and sheep were reintroduced to maintain the heath communities, though some areas were fenced to keep the sheep out. From that time very detailed records were kept of changes in the vegetation, soil depth and, particularly, soil moisture.

The paper goes into great detail about soil characteristics and vegetation but leads to relatively few conclusions. The style of writing does not make for easy reading and it must be said that the paper is of mainly local interest. The main conclusion is that vegetation types are strongly correlated with soil depth and moisture. However, there are some observations of interest to those concerned with the management of heaths and nature reserves. For instance where *Calluna* (ling) grows on thin soils it is likely to suffer severe damage or death in extremely dry summers. This may lead to an increase in *Deschampsia flexuosa* (wavy hair-grass) or, if trampling occurs, soil erosion may be severe. It appears that a greater intensity of sheep grazing is needed to preserve the *Calluna* dominated heath but at the same time that is likely to lead to greater erosion of the thin soils. This is a classic dilemma of conservationists but it might be argued that the granite laid bare by the erosion enhances the scenic value of the reserve and adds to the diversity of habitat.

DAVID D BARTLEY

RAY ABRAHAMS, *A Place of their Own*, CUP, 1991.

xi + 210 pp. 10 figures; 10 plates. £25.

The *talonpoika* or *bovise* – the land-owning farmer (all too commonly miscalled ‘peasant’) – has been the backbone of Finland’s society and economy for centuries. Although contemporary Finnish society is essentially urban and the service economy prevails, rural values and links with the land remain strong. Farm ownership was broadened by legislation after Finland became independent as well as through the resettlement programme after the Second World War. Furthermore, a high living standard coupled with low population density has favoured a stake in the land through no less than 450,000 summer residences, all of which keep the urban Finn in touch with his rural roots.

Within this setting, Ray Abrahams analyses the character of family farming in a community in eastern Finland with which he is intimately familiar. Vieki lies in an area which was for long on the physical frontiers of settlement. Its forests have only been drawn into the commercial economy within living memory and its agricultural practices have been slow to benefit from the technological

transformation that has characterized much of post-war Finland. *A Place of their Own* looks in detail for the first time in English at the complex relationships between land-owning, marriage, retirement, pensions and inheritance. It employs Finland’s distinctive range of records to help construct the genealogies of the families investigated and returns regularly for illustrations to the grass roots of the homesteads studied. It traces the patterns of cooperation in a community where the availability of labour is less than the availability of land, examines the influence of local institutions as agents of change, reflects upon the problems of agricultural surpluses and identifies the shifting grounds of government policies.

The bibliography ranges over a broad field of Finnish publication, the volume of which multiplies with such speed that it is almost impossible to keep abreast of it. Thus, the introductory section of the study might usefully have employed the agricultural folios 231 and 232 of the fifth edition of the *Atlas of Finland* (Helsinki, 1986). Although reference is regularly made to them, it might also have been interesting to reproduce a sample map or maps of land reorganization, excellent documents all too little known outside Finland.

Ray Abrahams suggests that he had possibly conducted a self-indulgent exercise into (what a Finnish businessman called) ‘a dying art form’. In fact, the results of his socio-anthropological study of Vieki might be repeated if similar investigations were conducted in many Finnish rural communities. The ‘art form’ as represented by the family farm will not die because of the ‘human factor’ – as the Finnish agricultural economist Nils Westermarck constantly reminds his colleagues. Finns retain an ideological commitment to the land; while, irrational as it may sound, as Ray Abrahams discovered, the influence of *maahenki* (the ‘earth spirit’) defies extinction.

W R MEAD

E KINGSTON-MANN and T MIXTER, eds, *Peasant Economy, Culture, and Politics of European Russia, 1800–1921*, Princeton UP, 1991, xviii + 443 pp. 4 maps; 14 tables; 21 plates. \$69.50 (hbk); \$19.95 (pbk).

In the history of the Russian peasantry significant contributions by Western scholars have been few and infrequent. Valuable Western studies in the past there have undoubtedly been but not until the 1980s did the Russian peasantry begin to attract widespread scholarly attention outside the Soviet Union. This collection of essays, which is underpinned by solid archival research and which skillfully fuses together the economic, the cultural and the political dimensions of peasant life, is one of

the first fruits of this new found interest. While the book lays no claim to being a comprehensive study of the Russian peasantry, its emphasis on the regional dimension, its challenges to some accepted interpretations and its raising of new issues, make it both a valuable contribution to the subject and a stimulus to future research.

Esther Kingston-Mann's thought provoking essay on the peasant commune and economic innovation challenges much conventional wisdom on the retarding effects of repartitional agriculture. She presents evidence to show that neither tenure issues nor peasant attitudes towards change weighed as heavily as other factors, where questions of innovation and productivity increase were involved. Moreover, though innovations were often initiated by freehold peasants, they spread more quickly in commune districts. Communes too had clear advantages when undertaking major projects as swamp drainage and in spreading the risks and dangers of grass roots rural development. Her findings echo those of Gordon Mingay with respect to British agriculture, namely that open fields were far more flexible and progressive than used to be supposed.

Jeffrey Birds explores the impact on village communities in the Central Industrial Region of the growth in urban migration and the strategies they evolved to secure a proportion of the migrant's earnings for the benefit of the village. He suggests that the role of the so-called kulaks, rich peasant/moneylenders in the village needs to be reappraised, asserting that they performed functions crucial to the economic wellbeing of the entire village community. More solid evidence than that presented by Birds will need to be adduced to clinch this particular argument.

Elvira Wilbur's examination of peasant poverty in Voronezh, one of Russia's poorest and most backward provinces at the end of the nineteenth century gives a 'bottom up' perspective of peasant society. She questions the traditional view of the peasants as hopeless victims, seeing the peasant family instead as a flexible and resilient institution. In her view the traditional reasons cited for rural poverty have been overstated. Her data reveal that 'demographic failure', such as the failure of a family to produce the two sons needed to maintain the minimum labour supply of four adults, was the largest cause of peasant immiseration.

Stephen Wheatcroft makes a significant contribution to the debate on Russia's late nineteenth-century agrarian crisis. His comparative regional approach to Russia's grain production statistics is masterly. While he recognizes the shortcomings of Russian livestock data, his survey of livestock production highlights the need for further research

in this area. How far livestock numbers per head of population can be used as an indicator of changes in peasant income is questionable. More important surely is the change over time in the value and volume of livestock products per head of the population, entering the market or consumed on the farm. Quite apart from the marked increases in Russian exports of pig products and dairy produce from the end of the nineteenth century mainly from Siberia, and the buoyant deliveries to the Moscow market of pigs from the Mid-Volga and the Black Earth provinces over the same period, what needs to be taken into account is increases in the size and productivity of Russian livestock.

From at least the 1880s Russian agricultural journals emphasized the benefits of crossing Russian breeds with West European stock: with Simmentals, Charollais, and Shorthorns in the case of cattle; and Yorkshires and Berkshires in the case of pigs. One journal (*Khozyain*, 1900, No 4), for example, describes how pig breeding in many Russian regions had been dramatically improved by the introduction of English breeds. It is conceivable that improvements in livestock quality and size mitigated the effects of the decline in livestock numbers per head of population, which Wheatcroft finds so grim.

In the field of peasant culture essays by Christine Worobec and Samuel Ramer advance our understanding of the values and attitudes prevailing among Russian peasants in widely differing regions of European Russia. Worobec reappraises the role of women in the patriarchal system, dominating Russian peasant agriculture. Ramer compares peasant attitudes to traditional healers and to modern medicine. It is a pity perhaps that this comparative approach is not applied as well to his subsidiary theme of the role of witchcraft and magic in peasant life. Here comparison with the alternative services of the clergy in blessing livestock and crops, as described, for example, in Engel'gardt's celebrated letters, could have provided a useful foil.

The final section of the book considers the political dimension to peasant life. Rodney Bohac's detailed research into everyday peasant resistance to serfdom on a single Russian estate in the early nineteenth century; David Christian's exploration into the significance of the 1858 - 1859 protests against the liquor trade; Timothy Mixter's analysis of the conflict in values between migrant labourers and employers in the southern steppe grain belt; Scott Seregny's account of Peasant Unions in 1905; and Orlando Figes's consideration of peasant responses to the Revolution, collectively demonstrate a degree of sophistication in peasant responses

to external events and opportunities that has hitherto been insufficiently recognized.

This pioneering book will prove invaluable both to historians and students of late Imperial Russia alike.

STUART THOMPSTONE

ORLANDO FIGES, *Peasant Russia, Civil War. The Volga Countryside in Revolution (1917-1921)*, Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1989. xix + 401 pp. 5 maps; 41 tables; 13 plates. £40.

There are two moments in Dr Figes's study that remain in the memory. Plate 12 shows the reality of benighted Russia in those terrible years. It shows a group of peasant cannibals snapped with the remains of their victims during the famine in Samara province. Russia has always been hungry. Secondly, Dr Figes describes how the rural communes took control of the gentry estates: 'The peasants loaded on to their carts the contents of the barns and led away the cattle, excepting the property which had been left for the use of the landowner and his family. Pieces of large agricultural machinery, such as harvesters and winnowing machines, which the peasants could not move or could not use on their small farms, were usually abandoned or destroyed'. Then as now: waste and destruction in the midst of hunger. There are many more uncannily modern notes struck in these absorbing pages. What is described here led on inexorably to the first collectivization a few years later, which sounded the death knell for both farming and the countryside in what the Russians themselves now call 'the tragic experiment of communism'.

This is the first detailed non-Soviet history of the peasantry during 1917-21. Historically it is an interesting specimen, seen in the context of the opening of Soviet archives to foreign scholars. Dr Figes has used a wealth of primary sources in the central state archives, in provincial archives and from the local press. The study concentrates on the heart of Russia, the Volga region, meaning by that the Samara, Saratov, Simbirsk, and Penza provinces, together with the Autonomous Republic of Volga Germans - an area the size of the West Germany that was. In 1920 the population was getting on for ten million, of which the rural population comprised eight and a half million.

In the first part Dr Figes examines the breakdown of state power in the countryside and the transformation of agrarian relations during 1917. The rural population dismantled the old regime and, on its own initiative, i.e. the Bolsheviks were ineffectual, started on the tasks of the Revolution, as it understood them, chiefly the redistribution of the land. He next examines this system of

'peasant rule' during the first six months of 1918. Then he examines why the Volga peasantry failed to rise against the Soviet regime. In the second half of the book Dr Figes deals with aspects of the relationship between the peasantry and the Bolsheviks during the Civil War (1918-21), i.e. the period known as 'war communism'.

Peasant Russia, Civil War is impeccably and exemplarily researched. Despite its formidable scholarly apparatus - chapter three alone has 294 footnotes, and the others are the same - it has a smooth and stimulating narrative.

COLIN JOHNSON

V P DANILOV, *Rural Russia under the New Regime*, translated and introduced by Orlando Figes, Hutchinson, 1988. xii + 351 pp. £25.

Reforms which emerged in the USSR under Gorbachev have led to a revival of interest in small-scale agriculture and that of peasant agriculture of the 1920s in particular, partly because of its relevance for current agrarian reform as well as for the possibilities this suggested for an alternative path of agricultural development, based on voluntary cooperatization, to that of forced collectivization instituted under Stalin.

Decades before Gorbachev's rise to power, and contrary to the then current trend of Soviet orthodoxy, V P Danilov had begun to redirect the focus of rural studies towards the peasant village commune, a process which led him to suggest modification of the rigid marxist-leninist periodization of the agrarian revolution of 1917-21, and which ultimately led to his disfavour with the authorities. In the early 1960s the logic of his work led him to question whether the historical and technical basis of agriculture was sufficiently developed for collectivization, thereby challenging the Stalinist interpretation and virtually ensuring that he became *persona non grata* as far as Western researchers were concerned.

The re-emergence of this doyen of Soviet rural scholars under Gorbachev was a welcome event. By late 1987 Danilov was elected Head of the Soviet Peasantry Sector of the Institute of History of the USSR (the post he had been forced to relinquish at the end of the 1960s), while the climate of 'glasnost' and 'perestroika' permitted him to resume his studies in the USSR and made possible the present publication of Danilov's work in the West, the first in the recently launched Second World series, under the general editorship of Teodor Shanin. The series translates into English for the first time major Russian works, most of which are or have been controversial or pathbreaking and aims 'to let the Soviet authors and their historical predecessors in tsarist Russia speak with

their own voices about issues of major significance to us and to them'.

Rural Russia under the New Regime is an abridged version of volume 1 of a two-volume study in Russian of the Soviet countryside before collectivization. A third volume is also promised. The English title seems deliberately chosen to follow G T Robinson's classic study of the pre-1917 Russian countryside, *Rural Russia under the Old Regime*. While lacking the breadth of the latter, Danilov's work nonetheless provides an in-depth analysis of a much shorter period of history. Well quarried by Western scholars working on the 1920s, many of the book's findings and conclusions have already found their way into the Western literature and will be known indirectly to non-Russian readers. The same cannot be said about the second volume which is, as yet, untranslated. We can only hope that this is to be a future project.

The book is divided into three large sections covering the rural population of the 1920s (based mainly on the 1926 census); peasant land use; and peasant economy under NEP. The first section covers the structure and distribution of the population, employment and occupations. The second covers land and the peasantry from the October land decree of 1917 to the eve of collectivization, touching on: the land commune and communal land use; 'bourgeois' and 'socialist' trends in peasant land use (meaning for Danilov, individual and collective forms of tenure respectively); and land reorganization. Part three examines the number and size of peasant households, their demographic and socio-economic aspects (including partitioning) together with their productive capacity, the role of peasant economy in agricultural production and the kolkhoz in the 1920s. An all too brief conclusion rounds it off.

While generally being well translated and capturing the essence of the original, a few niggles remain. It seems unnecessarily confusing for the reader to have *uezd* translated as 'district' and *volost* as 'rural district', when parish might be a more meaningful (and now more common) translation of the latter for the English reader. Horse vet is surely preferable to horse-doctor (p 77), 'culture farms' (p 97) and 'collective economies' (p 101) are unclear in English, 'census souls' (p 113) surely require a word of explanation (in a note), while the occasional infelicity creeps in (such as, deprivation on p 97).

What then is Danilov's view of the 1920s? His view of the outcome of the agrarian revolution of 1917-20 is dualistic, emphasizing both positive and negative features. On the one hand, the levelling tendencies had created a largely subsist-

ence peasantry that could flourish under the freedom of NEP, developing a variety of tenurial forms from peasant communal to individualistic – the private households farms or *khutora* – with a variety of collective forms in between. This produced a more diversified agriculture together with increasing output and productivity; by 1929 per capita agricultural output was greater than that in 1913. Danilov illustrates how the new land commune (which was essentially the old peasant *mir*) survived because it continued to serve customary needs: it protected the less well to do (p 110). During the revolution, we are told, the *mir* flourished because of 'the peasantry's egalitarian and just ideals'; there was simply no alternative (pp 141, 143). On the other hand, the persistence of the *mir* retarded peasant farming, it restricted innovation, continued land redivisions and their accompanying economic evils, increased household partitions, broke up more prosperous households and created weaker ones, and threatened increasing productivity.

Ultimately, argues Danilov, there was no future for the *mir* in a developing society (especially a socialist one) and such an agriculture could not evolve in an economically-progressive direction. This well illustrates the straightjacket of Soviet orthodox thinking. Under the NEP, agriculture could only develop one way: along either a capitalist path, destroying the commune and the peasantry as a social stratum, (manifested in bourgeois trends in peasant land use, namely, private land enclosures) or a socialist one, which would transform the peasants into collective farmers via peasant cooperatives. With the former being politically unacceptable, Soviet orthodoxy demanded that he conclude that there was no choice: collectivization with its economies of scale and the application of advanced technology was the only solution. Such a conclusion, moreover, ignored his reservations based on his own evidence. This suggested there were other options.

Danilov's own statistics (see especially ch 3), for instance, reveal that collective farms were increasing in number from the early 1920s and that as early as 1925 the government took measures to foster and encourage collective farms. Such farms revealed higher average yields and a stronger market orientation than other peasant farms. Such gradual and voluntary progress suggests force was not necessary. Yet Danilov never confronts this issue. In fact, neither the grain crisis of 1927/28 nor forced collectivization from 1929 is considered; nor are possible continuities between customary peasant systems of land use and organization and socialist ones.

As indicated above, there is also abundant evi-

dence in the book of substantial increases in agricultural productivity during the 1920s. The NEP gave unprecedented opportunities for rural development and Danilov's evidence demonstrates the rapid recovery of peasant agriculture from revolution and civil war. This runs against the grain of his conclusion which argues that peasant farming within the framework of communal land tenure had little chance of ameliorating the low productivity of agriculture in the 1920s. Towards the end of the book the mir becomes 'a victim not a means' of rural transformation (p 203).

The book will thus doubtless prove useful for a non-Russian reader looking for information on land use and agricultural production during the 1920s. Yet the analysis of the dynamics of change within peasant society is at odds with the prevalent view in the West. As a product of the Brezhnev era; the book (first published in 1977) presented the facts: any interpretation was left to others. This explains the brief conclusion (3 pages out of 300). The original work now sits somewhat awkwardly alongside his current writings on the 1920s and collectivization which reflect the considerable political upheavals during the last decade. Now he argues that the simplest agricultural cooperatives (TOZY), which would form the genuine socialist path of cooperative collectivization, emerged spontaneously in the mid-1920s. At the latter time these were also championed by Chayanov who is now being widely rediscovered in his own country but, in 1977, was still mentioned only disparagingly as a 'bourgeois specialist' and a 'neo-Populist'. The entire account is also full of Bolshevik class analysis of the peasantry, making it appear very dated (see, for example, pp 66, 95, 107, 113, 134, 142-3). While the introduction usefully places this work within Danilov's other research and writings, it curiously omits discussion of how it differs from Danilov's current views and from changing Soviet historiography. An extended conclusion, incorporating some of Danilov's more recent thinking on collectivization, would be a worthwhile consideration for a second edition. It is irony indeed that for many radicals today Danilov's stance on such matters as collectivization is viewed as conservative. From swimming against the tide only a decade ago, he is now finding it difficult to keep abreast of the flow.

JOHN CHANNON

RALPH GIBSON and MARTIN BLINKHORN, eds, *Land-ownership and Power in Modern Europe*, Harper Collins, 1991. v + 265 pp. £40.

The dozen essays in this volume originated in a 1987 conference at which the Lancastrian concept of social history as a theory-free and unmodelled

but disciplined exercise in empiricism enjoyed a spirited gallop through a series of regional case studies drawn from France, Germany, England, Ireland, Italy, and Spain, all falling within the period from the French Revolution to the mid-twentieth century. These essays are pulled together by a powerful introduction by the editors, which not only identifies the key features of the individual contributions but also incorporates a very useful discussion of much of the recent literature on the histories of these countries which bears on questions of the distribution of political and administrative power; for good measure, the introduction also refers to the literature on the sociology of power, but for the excellent reason that the editors have not found the theories of any modern sociologists 'ideally suited to our purpose' this literature is not subjected to sustained scrutiny. Mercifully, therefore, we are spared any convoluted observations of universal, or at any rate European, validity about the exact relationship between owning land and wielding power, where the variables are property rights, estate size, property values and incomes, inheritance customs and dynastic fortunes, institutional structures, and the nature and concept of power itself, none of which is an unproblematic term. So what do we get, aside from twelve case studies most of which are well worth having for their own sakes?

The introduction starts with the confident declaration that 'this book is about the exercise of power'. This is, perhaps, more of an assertion of editorial intent than a statement of fact. The editors stick closely to this brief, which is not altogether surprising, and produce a cogent agenda, or taxonomy, for the analysis of power in rural societies. This does not distinguish as clearly as one could wish between the identification of the possession of power, of the means by which it was maintained and exerted, and of the sphere in which it operated – over the estate population, over a wider local district or region, or over the state apparatus – but it is an admirable, concise, guide to a subject of great interest to all political, social, and agricultural historians of modern western Europe. Given the subject, it is slightly curious that there is no real engagement with Arno Mayer's *The Persistence of the Old Regime* (1981), which is simply noted in a footnote, but it could be argued that the volume is concerned with the grassroots rather than the commanding heights of power. At the grassroots level the questions of landlord authority and its legitimacy, of brute coercion and more or less willing deference, and of the impact of the relative bargaining strengths in the market place of owners, farmers, peasants, and labourers, are fully discussed. The sheer volume of recent literature which is

brought to bear on this discussion, down to an article on 'Property and wood theft' (in modern Germany), rather colours an initial assertion that while there is a massive literature on conflict in rural society there is little on the actual exercise of power.

Turning to the case studies it is apparent that the attention of some of the individual contributors has wandered away from the editorial objectives, again not surprisingly. Several of them do not get much further than an analysis of landownership by estate-size groups within separate communes, drawn from cadastral records. Such data are very interesting for specialists, but they tell us very little about the presence or absence of large landowners let alone about the degree of their authority and power over peasants, labourers, or local communities, when the biggest separately distinguished properties are those of 50 hectares and over, or possibly 100 hectares and upwards. When it is considered that pre-1900 Britain has been characterized as very much an aristocratic society and polity when perhaps one-quarter of the land was held in great estates of 10,000 acres (roughly 4000 hectares) and over, and less than half in estates of 3000 acres (roughly 1200 hectares) and over, it is at once apparent that the measurement of power and influence requires a long scale of estate-sizes, and that power and influence, although dependent on a landed-estate base, extended far beyond the confines of that base. It did so through complicated networks of family, institutional, and traditional connections, which transmitted and radiated influence outside the acres owned. While some of the studies which do look at the large landowners of their regions remain inward-looking, for the good reason that the owners or head-tenants of latifundia in Apulia or in Badajoz were preoccupied with retaining their possessions and crushing, bloodily, peasant-labourer discontents, others include this external dimension. Here, there are contradictory indications. In Prussia the Junkers were preserved as large landowners largely because they captured the state power through filling the civil service and army; in Ireland the large landowners lost authority, legitimacy, and ultimately their estates, in part because they filled the civil service, army, and police, and the growing state power became increasingly autonomous and distanced itself from being the executive arm of landlordism. In many rural communities isolation from contacts with towns and 'subversive' ideas was a major component of lordly power; in Lancashire and Cheshire lordly power flourished, until the 1880s, in precisely the opposite kind of economic and ideological environment.

Underneath the well-ordered and persuasive

introduction lies a rich, turbulent, and much more anarchic feast of individualistic dishes that deserve to be savoured one by one. Clear thinking about their significance may be helped, according to taste, by the reminder that wine was of paramount importance to the economy of the Bavarian Palatinate.

F M L THOMPSON

PETER MATHIAS and JOHN A DAVIS, eds, *Innovation and Technology in Europe from the Eighteenth Century to the Present Day*, Blackwell, Oxford, 1991. vii + 192 pp. £29.95.

This volume of nine essays comprises papers originally presented at the economic history summer school at the University of Warwick in 1986. It is the second volume of a series on industrialization; a later volume deals with agriculture which is largely excluded from this collection.

This is an extremely diverse collection of essays in style, approach and subject matter, written around the theme of technology and industrialization. In the first and final chapters, O'Brien and Stoneman examine theoretical approaches to technological advance and the process of diffusion. The other chapters present either general interpretations or specific case studies. Amongst the former, Mathias stresses the importance of resources for industrial advance especially, in the British case, cheap coal. In a polemic and entertaining essay, Berg attacks the conventional gradualist interpretation of modern industrialization, lumping together Mokyr, Williamson, Crafts and others and accusing them of undue adherence to dualistic development models as well as excessive aggregation. It seems highly unlikely that her perceived adversaries would find themselves totally in agreement about such matters, nor is it made clear why the conventional wisdom is at variance with her exposition of technical and organizational change at a microeconomic level. Aldcroft also traverses ground he has covered before in describing the links between changes in technology and general economic development from the late nineteenth century onward.

The case studies deal with less familiar topics. Davis describes the late industrialization of Italy in the nineteenth century, emphasizing imported technology, and cheap labour which implied weak demand. Lewis describes the successful attempts of the *ancien régime* to thwart mining development in pre-revolutionary France, demonstrating non-economic constraints on industrialization. In the twentieth century, Berghahn traces the varying reaction of German industrialists to American production methods. Whipp, in a very good paper, draws a sharp contrast between British and Amer-

ican motor manufacturing as manifest in speed of structural evolution towards concentration of production and technological maturity.

All these papers pay tribute to the importance of technological change, several reiterating what their authors have written elsewhere. Many interesting issues are raised but, in this collection, few substantive answers are provided.

C H LEE

WILLIAM N PARKER, *Europe, America, and the Wider World: Essays on the Economic History of Western Capitalism, Volume 2, America and the Wider World*, CUP, 1991. xvii + 372 pp. £45 (hbk); £17.95 (pbk).

The second volume of William Parker's collected essays, despite the title, mostly addresses domestic American issues. It contains seventeen essays from the 1970s and 1980s, seven of which are original or unpublished conference papers. The remainder are republished articles or chapters from various sources such as *Agricultural History*. There is a rough chronological and thematic order. First comes 'American civilisation: the impulse from Europe'; then follow sections on the South, the rural North, the Industrial North, and 'American values in a capitalist world' which comes up to the present. There are two 'annex' essays briefly summarizing Parker's views on agricultural productivity and cliometrics.

Parker emphasizes the importance of unquantifiable but well defined rural values especially middle income Protestantism in American growth and culture. Hence the South might have developed differently if the slaves had been given small farms in 1789, but remained poor post 1865 because of its pre-existing structure. The Old North West was exceptional because of the strength of its family farm society which enabled rapid exploitation of the huge new resources available and led naturally to 'The industrial civilisation of the Mid West'. Until 1930 this was the heart of the American system, but by 1950 a new – but in some ways inferior – balance had been created which included the revived South and Far West.

Parker, along with a small band of fellow cliometricians, has helped revolutionize American agricultural history. Yet an important sub-theme is the limits on cliometric history which misses both 'intimate questions of causation' and 'large phenomena of massive change ... huge shiftings of the clouds'. Hence as well as the expected counterfactualization and quantification, there is much terse intuitive analysis of the deeper implications of social change. Collections of this sort inevitably lack continuity, and risk – perhaps too much here – duplicating work easily available

elsewhere, but it is useful to have all these essays in one place, and throughout there are many fascinating insights on US agricultural history.

J R KILLICK

P D CURTIN, *The Rise and Fall of the Plantation Complex: Essays in Atlantic History*, CUP, 1990. xi + 222 pp. 22 maps. £27.50 (hbk); £9.95 (pbk).

Over the last quarter century, Philip Curtin has been one of the most influential writers on Africa, the slave trade and the impact of the plantation system on the lives of Africans and Europeans. In this present book, he seeks to survey the history of European involvement with the sugar plantation system from the time of the Crusades to the late nineteenth century. Relying purely on secondary sources, he traces the beginnings of European contact with sugar in the eastern Mediterranean in the twelfth century, then considers briefly the migration of the plantation system via Cyprus, Madeira and São Tomé to Brazil, and finally discusses its development in its fullest and most celebrated form in the British, French, and Spanish colonies in the Caribbean between the 1640s and the mid-nineteenth century. In the course of his analysis, he reminds the reader of the dependence of the American sugar plantation system upon regular supplies of slave labour from Africa; this arose from the fact that the indigenous population in most Caribbean societies died out rapidly on contact with Europeans and the imported slave labour force usually failed to sustain itself through natural reproduction. He also considers the impact of the traffic in slaves upon West and West-Central Africa and of the whole plantation system upon western European, particularly British, economic development. In both cases, he inclines to the view that their impact on Africa and Europe has been exaggerated by some historians, and goes on to conclude, somewhat surprisingly perhaps given the persistence over three centuries of the American sugar plantation system and the European resistance to the abolition of slavery and the slave trade, that 'European slave traders and planters en masse may have gained very little' (p 205) from the plantation complex. As Curtin has so well documented, maintaining this particular system of commercial agricultural production was extremely wasteful of human life. To be told, therefore, that the sacrifice of life associated with the production of sugar in America for consumption in Europe ultimately failed to make more than a marginal contribution to wealth accumulation in eighteenth- and nineteenth-century western Europe may, for some at least, be hard to believe. As a result, it seems likely that this volume of essays

on the rise of the American sugar plantation system and its ramifications will prove to be just as provocative as some of Curtin's earlier books on the Atlantic slave trade and Africa. It is a very welcome addition to the extensive literature in its field.

DAVID RICHARDSON

TIMOTHY SILVER, *A New Face on the Countryside: Indians, Colonists, and Slaves in South Atlantic Forests, 1500-1800*, CUP, 1990. xii + 204 pp. 15 figures. £29.95 (hbk); £11.95 (pbk).

Before any readers of this journal pass on after reading the title of the book under review here, they should be told that it is not about the forests of Brazil or Angola. Though published by an English press, the term 'South Atlantic' is used in an American sense to define what was the English South, an area bounded by the Atlantic Ocean, the lower Susquehanna, the Appalachians and the Okefala swamp which encompasses the former colonies of Virginia, the Carolinas and Georgia, the principal area of English settlement in the south.

The time span chosen is from 1500 to 1800, Dr Silver deciding that the invention of the cotton gin, which changed the nature of agriculture in the Old South and led to the creation of the Cotton Kingdom, provides a better dividing line than any of the political changes in the later eighteenth century. As the result of the impact of Europeans and their African slaves on land which had previously been inhabited by Indians, the area had begun, in the words of the itinerant Anglican minister, Charles Woodmason, who travelled in the Carolina backcountry in the 1760s, to 'wear a New Face'. Appearing in a series of 'Studies in environment and history', this book attempts to measure human impact on the chosen area, based on printed works without recourse to manuscript material. Dr Silver contrasts the different attitudes of the Indians and the Europeans. The Indians hunted animals, fished, grew crops, and harvested wild fruit to provide for their sustenance but did not keep livestock. They used wood for housing, for canoes, and for firewood, using fire to clear land, to facilitate travel, and to provide protection by destroying cover for marauding animals and human enemies. The Indians had no notion, as Hugh Jones of the College of William and Mary commented in the early eighteenth century, of providing for futurity but nevertheless within the context of their culture, their belief systems, and the forest they inhabited were able to provide for their survival.

With the Europeans came a different attitude. They found it less easy than they expected to

import Old World agriculture though they were able to establish animal husbandry and came to adopt indigenous crops, notably corn. But they wanted marketable goods which turned out to be tobacco, timber (and such derivatives as tar and turpentine), rice, indigo, and skins. The most serious impact was on the forests which were drastically reduced by the action of Europeans and their negro slaves. In their turn Indians were influenced by European imports, by guns, alcohol, and European diseases which reduced their numbers. It is now widely recognized that early America was not an unspoiled wilderness ravaged by Europeans; rather that the 'changed face' of the land was the product of the activities of the Indians and Europeans and the Africans they imported and the interaction of their cultures with the environment. To this story Dr Silver provides an effective introduction.

WALTER MINCHINTON

BARBARA L SOLOW, ed, *Slavery and the Rise of the Atlantic System*, CUP, 1991. viii + 355 pp. £35.

In the past quarter of a century the study of slavery and the slave trade has been advanced by the publication of monographs such as those by Philip Curtin, Joseph Miller, Seymour Drescher, Johannes Postma, Jay Coughtry and others, and by the compilation of collections of papers presented at conferences at Colby (Maine), Waterloo (Ontario), Aarhus and Bellagio amongst others. Though *Slavery and the Rise of the Atlantic System*, with its over-ambitious title, does not confess to its origins, it does in fact consist of a dozen such papers, headed by an introduction by Barbara Solow, read at a Harvard conference in 1988. The topics are therefore not those which would be chosen to illustrate the title – and, as the index shows, the slave trade bulks as large as slavery – but are those which, with the aid of a grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities, could be extracted from a group of peripatetic scholars who are known to have interests in the general field. The papers range from a review of 'Slavery and Colonization' and 'The Old World Background of Slavery in the Americas' to a study of 'Exports and the Growth of the British Economy from the Glorious Revolution to the Peace of Amiens' (without dates) to a presentation of 'some scraps of data' on 'Credit in the Slave Trade and Plantation Economies'. Some papers cover a century or more and are general in approach while others, like that on 'The Slave and Colonial Trade in France just before the Revolution', are densely numerical and cover little more than a handful of years. Nor is the order in which the papers are printed chronological: 'The Portuguese Southern

Atlantic Slave Trade in the Eighteenth Century' is item six while 'Economic Aspects of the Growth of Slavery in the Seventeenth-Century Chesapeake' is essay eleven. For those interested in particular topics, the footnotes of individual essays will provide useful bibliographical guides. But the tendency of some contributors to refer to inaccessible sources is to be deplored. Footnote 35 to the paper on 'Precolonial Western Africa and the Atlantic Economy' reads 'For a full discussion of this paradox and a rather different resolution to that suggested here, see [Stefano] Fenoalta', apparently, as another footnote reveals, a paper entitled 'Europe in the African Mirror: the Slave Trade and the Rise of Feudalism'. Could not the editor have found space for this paper, written in 1988 but still unpublished, in this volume? For the agricultural historian there are some snippets of information but little that is not available generally in the literature. It is nice to have the papers in this moderately-priced well-produced volume available but, like many another collection of essays, whether it can be commended to purchasers unequivocally is doubtful.

WALTER MINCHINTON

DONALD H AKENSON, ed, *Canadian Papers in Rural History*, VII, Langdale Press, Gananoque, Ontario, 1990. 406 pp. C.35.

The contents of the seventh volume of *Canadian Papers in Rural History* show some marked contrasts with recent predecessors in the series. Almost half of the 406 pages is taken up by an extended study by William N T Wylie of 'The Blacksmith in Upper Canada', which in its highly detailed exposition of the smith's tools and techniques, and its numerous illustrations, constitutes virtually a separate book in itself. It will be of very great value and importance to historians of rural crafts on both sides of the Atlantic.

Two of the other contributions to the volume will also be of much interest to historians generally, and particularly to those with a special interest in Irish history and the study of migration. Ruth-Ann Harris writes on seasonal migration between Ireland and England prior to the Famine, and D H Akenson (the editor of the volume), offers a most interesting discussion of letters penned by Irish emigrants to Australia, New Zealand and North America.

Five of the remaining six pieces deal with Canada: studies of handloom weaving in eastern Ontario, of the nature and control of markets and technology in Ontario, British Columbia and Alberta, and of family limitation in central Canada in the mid-nineteenth century. However, of most interest to readers of this journal may be the sixth

article, one by Colin A M Duncan on the historical position of English agriculture in the economy.

Mr Duncan's stance is to argue that new light is thrown on English agricultural development if it is seen, not as an adjunct to modern industrialization, but as the primary basis of the economy, one that was independent of industrialization, and 'was early on deeply modern, was possessed of a radically innovative social structure even'. This helped account for the special position enjoyed by agriculture after the onset of rapid industrialization; but its very success in expanding production with a rapidly shrinking proportion of the country's resources led eventually to its loss of its central position in the economy.

This extremely bare summary does not begin to do justice to the rich complexity of Mr Duncan's treatment, but nevertheless it does not seem that his re-interpretation will appear very radical to British agrarian historians. Moreover, some of the elements of his argument rely for detailed support on some long outdated sources, and are marked by a degree of exaggeration – an unjustified confidence in the prevalence and effects of long leases, for example—while the inevitable consequences of the enfranchisement of a rapidly expanding urban population are neglected. Nevertheless, it is a piece which offers many insights and is well worth pondering over. It alone is a very good reason why this volume should not be overlooked by British agrarian historians.

G E MINGAY

SARAH CARTER, *Lost Harvests: Prairie Indian Reserve Farmers and Government Policy*. McGill-Queen's UP, 1990. xi + 323 pp. Illus. £33.20.

Confronted by a dwindling buffalo population Canada's Prairie Indians during the final decades of the nineteenth century were for the most part more than happy to abandon a hunting way of life and take up an agricultural mode of production, capitalizing on an existing knowledge of farming that had been gleaned from neighbouring Indian groups and White Settlers. For their part, the Canadian government, anxious to open up the West for the benefit of the national economy, were more than happy to encourage and assist the Indians to take up farming, not least because a hunting way of life was construed by the Victorians as wild and uncivilized. This book describes very well how, notwithstanding this apparent convergence of interests, things went, for the Indians, horribly wrong.

With the focus on the Plains Cree in the period 1870–1896, in what today is southern Saskatchewan, the author documents the starvation, poverty, and low levels of productive output

which were associated with the Indians' introduction to farming, in spite of the government making available implements, animals, and Euro-Canadian instructors – the result being that by the end of the period Indian productivity compared most unfavourably with that of their White homesteader neighbours. Not surprisingly, from the Prime Minister down to the humblest Indian, people asked, 'Who is to blame?'

This book considers two main possibilities, which were heavily debated at the time. First, the opinion of officials in the higher echelons of government, that Indian efforts in the farming scene were fatally compromised by their ignorance and indolence – traits, it was said, which would inevitably ensure that draught animals got eaten, implements neglected, and surpluses traded for alcohol. Then, second, the view of the Indians themselves, shared by many 'local-level' officials, that the Indians were enormously enthusiastic for agriculture but that government policy frustrated their endeavours at every turn.

Sarah Carter argues, convincingly in the main, that the facts support the second view, and provides a context to the debate by exposing the government's hidden agenda whose aim was to deprive the Indians of their reserve lands and assimilate the people into western culture. In parallel with the debate itself there is a measure of repetition in the way the author puts her points which makes the first half or so of the book rather slow going; moreover there is a certain idealization of the Indian, who never ever seems to be in the wrong. The book becomes more compelling in the second half when the unfolding ecology and social organization of prairie dry-farming is described, and indeed becomes positively gripping when Hayter Reed, the Deputy Superintendent General of Indian Affairs, takes centre stage: a true villain, he sees it as his task to obstruct Indian-style development at every turn, and in the bizarre subsistence farming policy he imposes on the Indians, produces a nightmare that must be read about to be believed.

DAVID RICHES

KOSMAS TSOKHAS, *Markets, Money and Empire: The Political Economy of the Australian Wool Industry*, Melbourne University Press, Carlton South, 1990. viii + 235 pp. 6 figs. \$29.95.

The central task of Kosmas Tsokhas is to take issue with what he describes as the myth of Australia's domination and exploitation by Great Britain. His study of the Australian wool industry focuses on relations between London and Canberra between World War One and 1950, and on the role and behaviour of the Australian and Anglo-Australian

pastoral companies engaged in the financing and marketing of the wool crop.

He argues that in peacetime wool markets were too diversified for Britain to exercise exclusive buying power, and that even in wartime when imperial purchasing agencies were established, London failed to exploit its position. Since wool was of such huge importance to the Australian economy, securing good prices was high among the priorities of Australian politicians involved in wartime negotiations, and their bargaining power was enhanced by control of information about crops, prices and costs. British power was weaker not only because their negotiators lacked information but more importantly because interests were conceived in global/strategic terms which made it worthwhile to make financial concessions if this resulted in Australian co-operation with the military aims of the imperial government. Pursuing his theme of antipodean strength and autonomy, the author argues that in the 1930s the Australian government acted in an 'assertive, confident manner'. Nobody who has examined Anglo-Australian economic relations between the wars will wish to dispute that judgement, nor probably to take issue with the general theme. Really more surprising is the author's claim to originality in suggesting that it may have been Britain that was exploited by Australia.

Nonetheless Dr Tsokhas's case is well substantiated, and he has used not only Australian government archives, the papers of prominent Australian politicians, British Colonial and Dominion Office material, but also the records of trade interests, notably those of the major pastoral companies, both Australian and Anglo-Australian. Fresh light is thrown on intergovernmental negotiations in war and peace. Company records provide sometimes fascinating detail about how companies reacted when their clients defaulted on their debts in the crisis of the 1930s. Taking over or selling the sheep stations was seldom an attractive option for the creditors, so instead they exercised tight and what must have been humiliating control over their clients' farm operations and personal expenditure. A number of Australian Mercantile's clients were restricted to £200 per month: graziers were banned from using motor vehicles, having to make do with their horses instead. Children had to be taken out of private schools. Other companies insisted on giving their permission before livestock was purchased, wells bored or fences mended. Debtors were pressed to draw on financial support from other family members.

The documentation does give authority to Kosmas Tsokhas's theme, but outside six footnotes in chapter one only six secondary works are

featured in the remaining 458 footnotes. This is ungenerous to other scholars, but, worse, is perhaps reflected in a lack of perspective in the book. The study often lacks context, and the reader's nose is kept too close to events. There is little sense of developments in the fortunes of the industry beyond a few charts which are weakly linked to the text, or much mention given to the volume of production, movements in the price of wool or in the distribution of exports.

That said, this is an impressively documented study which adds substantially to our knowledge of the Australian wool industry.

TIM ROTH

M MORNER and T SVENSSON, ed, *The Transformation of Rural Society in the Third World*, Routledge, 1991. xii + 320 pp. £35.

Most of the chapters contained in this volume are revised versions of papers presented at the 1987 Nordic Historical Congress, and the book illustrates the difficulties of fashioning a coherent collection from such a variety of contributions. While the editors have sought the lowest common denominator in 'rural change', the book lacks a unifying perspective or theoretical framework that would facilitate analysis and comparisons between otherwise diverse regional agrarian histories. Following an interesting prologue on the mythological construction of the 'Third World' and an editorial introduction, the task of developing some explanatory model falls to Hettne in Chapter Two. Here we are presented with a review of Wallerstein's world-system project as offering a possible framework in which global and local level changes can be linked and analysed in conjunction. The case is far from convincing especially if, as Hettne proposes, the complex process of transition is simply reducible to two highly functionalist paths: towards either capitalist or socialist agrarian relations. Such abstract categories obscure, rather than reveal, the richness of rural struggles against domination and incorporation.

Chapter Three critically examines the 'new orthodoxy' of agrarian change, in which the virtues of peasant production, including efficiency, responsiveness to market conditions, and labour absorption capacity, are emphasized. This gives a flavour of the rather stale debates presented in this book for the current orthodoxy amongst rural scholars tends toward the view that it is not especially helpful to speak of peasant production as if it was a universal constant that throughout history conformed to the same characteristics. Moreover, it is surprising that most of the authors in the volume continue to approach the study of rural change in the Third World in terms of

comparison with the original agrarian transition in NW Europe.

The remaining eight regional chapters are highly disparate in subject matter and focus: two deal with Indonesia; three with Africa (of which the best is a study of agricultural systems in late pre-colonial Tanzania); one with contemporary China; and two with Latin America. The most satisfactory is that by Lundahl and Vedovato on poverty and landownership in Haiti and the Dominican Republic, the only chapter in the volume to address the problems of resource scarcity confronting rural households. Ultimately one is left feeling that there is little that ties this collection together beyond the Nordic origins of the contributors. It is a pity that more was not made of this to offer a more distinctive perspective on issues of rural change in the South.

COLIN SAGE

LOREN BRANDT, *Commercialization and Agricultural Development, Central and Eastern China, 1870-1937*, CUP, 1989. xiii + 232 pp. 2 maps. £30.

This thought-provoking study takes issue with much of the conventional thinking about Chinese farming between 1870 and the outbreak of war with Japan in 1937. Where most scholars believe that the commercialization of Chinese agriculture impoverished and polarized the villages, Brandt argues that the benefits of commercialization were evenly spread and that before 1937 farm output grew at least twice as quickly as the population. She also challenges the prevalent view that because of the small size of China's foreign trade and high transportation costs, the international economy barely influenced Chinese farming. She finds on the contrary that markets for farm products became inseparably tied to the world, thanks to China's old and cheap system of water transportation and to the introduction of trains, steamers, and modern means of transmitting price information. The main effect of this integration was to change the structure of domestic prices and thus to speed agricultural commercialization and specialization. According to Brandt, these developments did not (contrary to common belief) reduce but actually drove up productivity and income; in that respect China was no different from Japan. This rise in well-being was evenly spread; there was no increase in the concentration of land-ownership, and households of all sizes used the markets effectively.

Brandt relates her findings to the crisis of agriculture under Mao, who imposed highly restrictive commercial policies, including local self-sufficiency, on the villages. In her view, the high growth rates of output and factor productivity in

farming since 1978 are simply a resumption of China's earlier course, interrupted by war and Mao's experiments.

Time will tell whether Brandt's promotion of Adam Smith over Karl Marx as the saviour of Chinese agriculture is right. (For an opposite view, see William Hinton's *The Great Reversal*.) Her explanation of the past will stand or fall with her data, which are stronger on the integration of markets than on productivity and the distributive consequences of commercialization.

GREGOR BENTON

Azania: Journal of the British Institute in Eastern Africa, xxiv, 1989, special issue on the 'History of African Agricultural Technology and Field Systems', Nairobi, Kenya, 1989. 124 pp. £10.50.

This is a special edition of the annual journal of the Nairobi-based British Institute in Eastern Africa. It embodies a compilation of the papers given at the Institute's two-day Colloquium on 'The History of African Technology and Field Systems' which was held at the Pitt Rivers Museum in Oxford during the summer of 1988. This in turn followed on from the 1981 Canberra conference on 'Prehistoric Intensive Agriculture in the Tropics' where much attention was devoted to the countries of South-east Asia and the Pacific but little to Africa. The eleven contributors, drawn from the sixty participants at the Colloquium, are mostly university based African specialists from a variety of countries that include Britain, Sweden, Germany and Japan as well as Africa itself.

One of the main purposes of the discussion, borne out by the papers, was to publicize and encourage multi-disciplinary approaches to the study of African agriculture. It is not just a matter of looking at cultivation techniques or of analysing seed remains from archaeological digs. Such methods, it is suggested, have an important place but have too often been used in isolation and resulted in the denigration of 'traditional' and apparently unchanging agricultural systems as primitive and backward. Rather, the whole social and economic environment, combining the full range of oral and written sources as well as the physical evidence on the ground, should be drawn in to give a fuller picture of the cultural context within which agricultural systems operated.

All the papers have extensive bibliographical notes attached and so render the *Journal* a valuable reference point for pursuing this subject. The overall impression is of the great variety, complexity and sophistication of the agricultural systems operating across the Continent in the pre-colonial period. Above all, far from being

immutable, they were changing and adapting over time to meet new conditions and circumstances. With the problems of famine in Africa now so often in the headlines, it is suggested more than once in these pages that relief agencies and others involved would do well to take a longer look at the historical perspective of African agriculture before jumping to perhaps over simplistic solutions to present difficulties.

ROY BRIGDEN

MICHAEL WILLIAMS, ed, *Wetlands: A Threatened Landscape*, Basil Blackwell, Oxford, 1991. x + 419 pp. Illus. £70.

It is far from easy to define wetlands. They have an importance out of all proportion to their area. Even with the loosest of definitions, they cover only about 6 per cent of the earth's surface. Ubiquitous, they are found in nearly every climatic zone and continent. Almost invariably, they are intermittent and local in their occurrence. It is, therefore, hardly surprising that they have attracted so little research interest – that is, until recently, when the threat to their continued survival has encouraged studies of their soils and plant and animal life, and their manifold contributions to human well-being.

Michael Williams begins by outlining what is known as to the processes and functions that characterize these areas which are neither sound land nor good water. Chapters follow on their hydrodynamics and sedimentation, soils and ecology, and the wealth of evidence as to their diversity and human use in the past (Bryony Coles). Examples drawn from the Netherlands and Fens that fringe the North Sea, the wet prairie and Mississippi bottomland and hardwoods of the United States, and the swamps of the south-east of South Australia, illustrate both the causes of wetness, and the technical steps taken to overcome that wetness, in the temperate world. Despite the obvious differences in experience, both geographically and in the timing of the drainage effort, common threads emerge.

A further case study of the agricultural impacts of drainage is provided by a chapter (John D Richards) recounting the evolution of three of the most important deltaic zones in South and South-east Asia, namely the Ganges-Brahmaputra, the Irrawaddy, and the Chao Phraya (in Thailand).

Chapters review the losses of wetlands brought about by port industrialization and urbanization, and the conflicts and policy issues arising from the burgeoning recreational use of wetlands. The volume concludes with an overview of the losses and gains sustained during the past few decades, and

the prospects for greater care and protection being conferred on so valuable a resource in the future.

For once, a publisher's blurb is right to extol a book as being the most comprehensive to date in its coverage of a complex, yet important, topic. For British readers, it appears at a fascinating time. The future of intensively-farmed lands, which were once 'wetlands', is undergoing fundamental appraisal. Rather than maintaining flood defences

at very high cost, it might make better sense for the land to be restored to a more extensive form of farming, in which greater account could be taken of the visual and wildlife elements of the countryside and opportunities for outdoor recreation. There are many pertinent historical and global perspectives to be gained from this well-illustrated book.

JOHN SHEAIL

Shorter Notices

JOHN WILLIAMS-DAVIES, *The Craft of the Blacksmith: Llawr-y-Glyn Smithy*, University of Wales Press, National Museum of Wales, Cardiff, 1991. 35 pp. Illus. £3.95.

In common with his colleagues elsewhere in Europe, the Welsh blacksmith enjoyed an exalted position in rural society since medieval times. His craft, hedged about with all manner of arcane, if not mystical lore, was absolutely essential to the basic functioning of everyday country life until the horse ceased to be the primary source of power on the land. If he was concerned, first and foremost, with farriery tasks, the smith also fashioned the whole gamut of agricultural tools and domestic impedimenta; from ploughs and waggon fittings to candlesticks and doorknockers. In the days before those expensive necessities, the veterinary surgeons, were common in the countryside, the smith frequently doubled as a horse-doctor, while the smithy itself, a warm and friendly place, became a haven of retreat and repository of gossip for local denizens with little better to do. Visitors to the forge of John Williams of Llanddeusant, who achieved some local reputation as a dentist, could witness the discomfiture of his miserable patients, while John Owen of Moelfre in Clwyd would provide haircuts for an appropriate fee.

In this brief, and generously illustrated booklet, John Williams-Davies provides a detailed description of the tools and the trade of the blacksmith with particular reference to the Llawr-y-glyn smithy in the Trannon Valley in west Montgomeryshire, which actively functioned until 1963 before being dismantled and eventually re-erected at the Welsh Folk Museum. Using the accounts of Andrew Humphreys, who operated the smithy in the 1860s, Williams-Davies illustrates the enormous variety of the blacksmith's craft and demonstrates the extent to which payments in kind and mutual obligations between farmers and blacksmiths cemented the latter into the tightly-knit system of cooperation characteristic of much of Welsh rural

life in the years preceding the Great War. He subsequently discusses the ways and means by which the blacksmith adjusted to the development of mechanization and preserved the essentials of the craft of farriery in readiness for today's equestrian renaissance.

Few readers will quibble at spending £3.95 on Mr William-Davies' admirable production. On completing the booklet, however, they may reflect on just how inadequate is the scholarly literature on this all-important subject – to which the author's suggestions for further reading bears witness. The National Library of Wales and other repositories on the Principality contain abundant documentation and Mr Williams-Davies would perform a signal service to historians of rural Wales (and elsewhere) if he were to forge a full length scholarly work from this promising material.

R J MOORE-COLYER

PATRICK EYRES, ed, *The Wentworths. Landscapes of Treason and Virtue: The Gardens at Wentworth Castle and Wentworth Woodhouse in South Yorkshire*, New Arcadian Press, Leeds, 1991. 170 pp. Illus. £25.

This unusual book is described by the editor as a compendium of text and image and is published as number 31/32 of the *New Arcadian Journal*. The first section, by Michael Charlesworth, considers the way in which Jacobite and Hanoverian politics are represented in the gardens of Wentworth Castle and Wentworth Woodhouse. The second main section, by Patrick Eyres, examines the extent to which the Wentworth Woodhouse estate can be seen as an exemplar of a Whig landscape of improvement. The final section is an essay by Wendy Frith on the career of Lady Mary Wortley Montagu concentrating in particular on contemporary views of her travels in Turkey and her introduction of smallpox inoculation to Britain.

The first two sections are based upon very close readings of the garden buildings and ornaments

and their inscriptions. These are linked to the political careers of the estate owners and the rivalry between the two estates. Charlesworth examines how certain garden buildings were the direct forerunners of the Panorama which developed as an entertainment during the 1780s and 1790s. Eyres considers the views of Arthur Young and Humphry Repton on Wentworth Woodhouse. He also discusses the development of model mining villages by earl Fitzwilliam in the late eighteenth century. Wendy Frith's fascinating essay is notionally connected to the rest of the volume because the Sun Monument built at Wentworth Castle in the 1740s was dedicated to Lady Mary Wortley Montagu. She attempts, convincingly in my opinion, to gain an understanding of what it meant, in 1720 'for a woman to instigate a major medical development, and one moreover that originated in Turkey'. Little indication, however, is given as to why this particular monument should have been built at Wentworth Castle.

This eclectic collection is very fully illustrated with 164 drawings by eight artists. The drawings include panoramas of the estates together with many architectural details. Unfortunately the maps do not clearly show the relationship between the two estates. The book, which lacks both a table of contents and an index, is a welcome and very enjoyable addition to the literature on garden design and landscaping in the eighteenth century.

CHARLES WATKINS

DAVID IREDALE and JOHN BARRETT, *Discovering Your Old House; How to Trace the History of Your Own Home*, Shire Publications, Princes Risborough, 1991. 112 pp. Illus. £3.50.

This little book is a completely re-written version of one produced by David Iredale in 1968 in the early days of the admirable series of Shire Publications. There are 112 pages of small format but with closely packed material illustrated by new photographs and appropriate drawings. About half the book is a summary of vernacular domestic design and construction and the remainder is a summary of the sorts of library and archive material available about houses in general or, conceivably, about the reader's own house. The book covers Great Britain but with some Irish references also.

Inevitably the book has the defects of its virtues. Some material is over-compressed: the reference to *scarf joints* on page 24 would test an expert let alone a beginner; and some could be misunderstood as for example the reference to the distribution of *clay lump* on pages 18 to 19. But the authors have compressed a great deal of infor-

mation useful to the beginners in domestic vernacular architecture in a small and handy compass.

R W BRUNSKILL

PAUL GLENNIE, *'Distinguishing Men's Trades': Occupational Sources and Debates for Pre-census England*, Historical Geography Research Series, 25, Cheltenham, 1990. vi + 141 pp. £7.95.

It is widely recognized that accurate information about long-term historical and geographical shifts in occupational structure would not only illuminate a wide range of debates about economic, social and cultural change in 'pre-industrial' England but would also influence the form and nature of the debates themselves. Unfortunately, pre-industrial England was also pre-census England: historians are confronted not with comprehensive statistics but with a plethora of incidental information gleaned from historical documents of varying accuracy and utility. As a result it is extremely difficult to generalize and the detailed local studies which are gradually accumulating offer only random shafts of light.

It is the intention of this monograph to direct readers along theoretical and conceptual paths that will eventually locate these isolated studies within a systematic framework. The first chapters provide a critical assessment of pre-census occupational sources, mainly from the early-modern period, and of the various methodological issues involved in working with them. The stress laid on their inherent age- and gender-biases is commendable and so are the frequent reminders in the remainder of the text that what are being discussed are indeed 'men's trades' rather than the occupational structure of the entire workforce. The second main section emphasizes the value of the militia ballot lists and other defence lists compiled in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, illustrating their usefulness by a county study of occupational change in Hertfordshire between 1759 and 1851. Hertfordshire may have been a special case since it is the best documented of all English counties but Glennie's advocacy of his pet source is persuasive, especially when the possibilities of applying nominal linkage techniques to the records are taken into account.

This critical survey of the sources, methods and conclusions of recent work on occupational structures and change is a valuable introduction to the topic and may well succeed in its stated intention of providing an illustrative stimulus to further research.

JOYCE ELLIS

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