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CONTENTS

Notes on contributors		iii
Forthcoming conferences		v
Productivity in arable farming in the sixteenth century: evidence from the Eastern Mediterranean	PINAR CEYLAN	1
Domestic production and consumption in English pauper households, 1670–1840	JOSEPH HARLEY	25
The forms, functioning and influence of common rights on society and forest management in the feudal system of Austrian Galicia, 1772–1848	JOACHIM POPEK	50
No money, no farm? Mobilizing resources for land purchase by migrants in post-emancipation Estonia	KERSTI LUST	73
The dynamics of indigenous farming in western Nigeria from the 1850s to the 1920s	AYODEJI OLUKOJU	97
Taskscapes and community dynamics in rural Yorkshire, *c.*1920–1965	JANE ROWLING and STEFAN RAMSDEN	111
Annual list of publications on Agrarian History, 2019	PETER MCSHANE	132

Book Reviews

Rosamond Faith, *The moral economy of the countryside: Anglo-Saxon to Anglo-Norman England*	STUART PRACY	146
David Stone and Richard Sandover (eds), *Moor medieval. Exploring Dartmoor in the middle ages*	PHIL NEWMAN	147
Joan Briggs, John Smith, Jennifer Tindall, Ann Tumman and Xenia Webster (eds), *Sunderland wills and inventories, 1651–1675*	JANE WHITTLE	148

Emily Sloan, *The landscape studies of Hayman Rooke (1723–1806). Antiquarianism, Archaeology and Natural History in the Eighteenth Century*	CHRISTOPHER DONALDSON	149
Amanda L. Capern, Briony Mcdonagh and Jennifer Aston (eds), *Women and the land, 1500–1900*	CHARMIAN MANSELL	150
Honor Lewington (ed.), *Stoke Mandeville: Wills and inventories, 1552–1853*	JOHN E. DAVIES	151
Eric L. Jones, *Landed estates and rural inequality in English history: from the mid-seventeenth century to the present*	ALAN WADSWORTH	152
John E. Davies, *The changing fortunes of a British aristocratic family, 1689–1976: The Campbells of Cawdor and their Welsh Estates*	LOWRI ANN REES	154
Roderick Floud, *An economic history of the English garden*	SOPHIE GREENWAY	155
Simon Townley (ed.), *A history of the County of Oxford*, XIX. *Wychwood Forest and Environs*	CHRISTOPHER DYER	156
Andrew Connell, *'There'll Always Be Appleby' – Appleby Gypsy Horse Fair: History, mythology, evaluation*	DAVID M SMITH	157
Sophia Davis, *Island thinking: Suffolk stories of landscape, militarisation and identity*	GARY WILLIS	158
Angela Cassidy, *Vermin, victims and disease: British debates over Bovine Tuberculosis and badgers*	PETER J. ATKINS	160
Christopher Kissane, *Food, religion and communities in early modern Europe*	RACHEL WINCHCOMBE	161
Jonathan Finch, Kristine Dyrmann and Mikael Frausing (eds), *Estate landscapes in northern Europe*	HENRY FRENCH	162
David Moon, *The American Steppes. The unexpected Russian roots of Great Plains agriculture, 1870s–1930s*	MICHAELA RIFE	164
Sarah Hamilton, *Cultivating Nature: The conservation of a Valencian working landscape*	ANDREAS JÜNGER	165
Fernando Collantes, *The Political Economy of the Common Agricultural Policy: Coordinated Capitalism or Bureaucratic Monster?*	ALAN SWINBANK	166

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Forthcoming conferences

British Agricultural History Society Winter Conference, 2021

This conference will (provisionally) be held at
the Institute of Historical Research, University of London,
on Saturday 4 December 2021.

British Agricultural History Society Spring Conference, 2022

This conference will (provisionally) be held at
Harper Adams University, Shropshire,
on Monday 4 to Wednesday 6 April 2022.

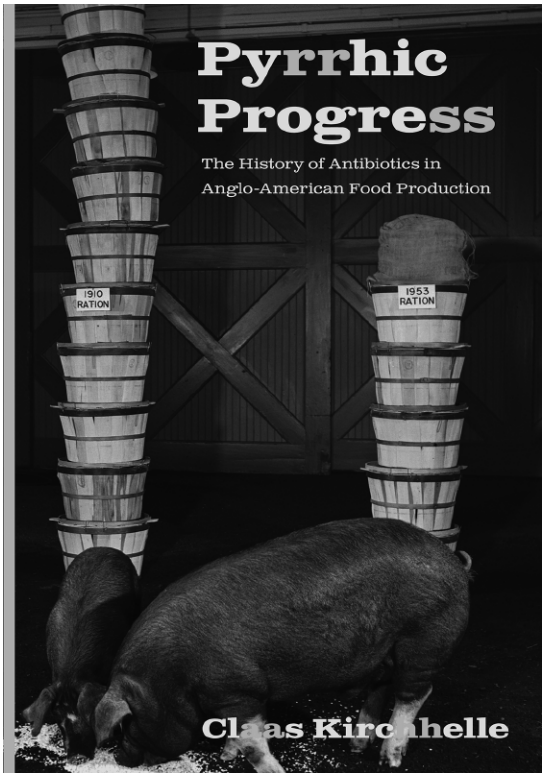
Rural History 2021

The fifth biennial conference of the
European Rural History Organisation (EURHO), Rural History 2021,
will take place in Uppsala, Sweden.
This conference has been postponed to Monday 20 to Thursday 23 June 2022.

Further details of all these conferences will be available from the Society's web site at www.bahs.org.uk

Joan Thirsk Memorial Prize

The Joan Thirsk Memorial Prize was awarded at this year's Spring Seminar to Claas Kirchhelle for his book, *Pyrrhic Progress: the history of antibiotics in Anglo-American food production*, published by Rutgers University Press.



On presenting the prize, Paul Brassley, the President of the Society, said: 'The year 2020 will be remembered for several bad things, but among the good things that happened was the emergence of a larger crop of Thirsk Prize candidates than ever before: ten books, with authors from six different countries, on topics ranging from early medieval pigs to the problems of the Common Agricultural Policy. It is never easy to decide upon the best in such a diverse field, but in a plague year it was always going to be difficult to ignore a book that deals with the history of a potentially major factor in the next pandemic, given the significance of antimicrobial resistance. Consequently, this year's Thirsk Prize has been awarded to Claas Kirchhelle for *Pyrrhic Progress*, a meticulously researched and compelling analysis of the differences between Britain and the USA in the use and control of antibiotics in agriculture.'

Productivity in arable farming in the sixteenth century: evidence from the Eastern Mediterranean*

by Pınar Ceylan

Abstract

This paper focuses on a perennial subject in agricultural history: land and labour productivity and how they evolve during periods of demographic growth. It provides per capita, per worker, and per hectare output estimates from a region in the pre-industrial Eastern Mediterranean and investigates whether the demographic growth of the sixteenth century brought about a subsistence crisis in Ottoman Anatolia, as many historians have argued. As observed in this study, the evolution of output per worker and per sown area in the Western Anatolian district of Manisa in the early- and late-sixteenth century lends support to the Boserupian view by revealing a negative association between land and labour productivity. Arable acreage remained largely stable in Manisa over the sixteenth century, but agricultural output nevertheless expanded considerably. While labour productivity declined as population grew, land productivity increased, facilitating output levels that could sustain a relatively high population density in the region.

Ample empirical evidence shows us that in many regions of Europe in the pre-industrial period where arable land could not be further expanded, population increases stabilized and then decreased the productivity of agricultural labour, as per the law of diminishing returns. Conversely, labour became more productive in periods of demographic contraction resulting from exogenous shocks, such as epidemics and wars.[1] Scholars have proposed this as the main mechanism behind the periodic fluctuations in agricultural incomes and stagnant, if not declining, levels of agricultural income in the long run.

It was only the agricultural economies of the North Sea area, particularly England and the Netherlands, which succeeded in escaping from this trap. The move towards modern capitalist agriculture in this area was indicated by a rise in labour productivity. In contrast to the general

* This research is part of the GINI project ('Economic Growth and Inequality. Explaining Divergent Regional Growth Paths in Pre-industrial Europe, Late Middle Ages–19th century'), supported by Ghent University and conducted jointly by the Economics and History Departments.

[1] E. Thoen and T. Soens, 'Contextualizing 1500 years of agricultural productivity and land use in the North Sea area. Regionally divergent paths towards the world top', in Thoen and Soens (eds), *Struggling with the environment: Land use and productivity* (2015), pp. 455–99.

tendency to increase labour input per unit of land to sustain the rising population, English and Dutch agriculture took a more capital-intensive path and benefited from economies of scale, which enabled higher levels of production of agricultural output while also enhancing labour productivity.[2]

While there is a wide consensus among economic historians regarding the falling productivity of agricultural labour in the face of demographic expansion prior to the nineteenth century, the question of how the productivity of land evolved in response to the rising demand for food remains a controversial issue. The interpretation of classical economics suggests that population growth should have resulted in the extension of cultivation to marginal lands and soil exhaustion. Thus, in the absence of capital intensification and technological change, output per worker and per surface area should have declined, eventually leading to a subsistence crisis.[3] In contrast, the Boserupian view claims that an increase in output per unit area, which became possible through intensification (increased labour input per unit area and land-saving agricultural techniques), partly compensated for the declining output per worker. Thus, the agricultural output levels resulting from a series of 'innovations', could sustain considerable levels of rural and urban population without culminating in a Malthusian crisis. According to this more optimistic line, the opposite movement of land and labour productivity in response to demographic growth – an increase in physical productivity at the expense of declining labour productivity – appears as a typical feature of intensive smallholding economies.[4]

The sixteenth-century Eastern Mediterranean under the Ottoman rule is a fertile ground to test these arguments. According to the traditional historiography, which is largely influenced by neo-Malthusian interpretations, the mid-sixteenth century marks the beginning of a decline in the Ottoman rural economy, following two centuries of expansion.[5] The introduction of the Ottoman land regime in regions that fell under Ottoman control from the fourteenth century onwards resulted in the replacement of the pre-conquest landlords with a new landlord class, as well as the reorganization of agricultural production within a new institutional environment, although traces of the previous institutional setting were not completely eradicated. As in the Balkans, Syria, and Palestine, peace and better protections for peasants under this new regime in Anatolia fostered substantial increases in cultivated arable land, population, and urban development.[6] In the mid-sixteenth century, it is argued, the Ottoman rural economy reached its limits. As a result of rapid population growth during that century, peasant landholdings became increasingly fragmented and the number of landless peasants rapidly climbed, while per capita grain production dropped, leading to a 'subsistence crisis' in the Malthusian sense that affected different regions to different extents.[7]

[2] Ibid. For a critique of this view, see G. Clark, *A farewell to alms: A brief economic history of the world* (2007).

[3] B. Chiarini, P. Malanima, and G. Piga, *From Malthus' stagnation to sustained growth: Social, demographic and economic factors* (2012).

[4] E. Boserup, *The conditions of agricultural growth: The economics of agrarian change under population pressure* (1965).

[5] M. Akdağ, *Celâlî isyanları [Celali Rebellions] (1550–1603)* (1963).

[6] H. İnalcık, 'State, land, and peasant', in İnalcık and D. Quataert (eds), *Economic and social history of the Ottoman Empire* (1994), pp. 103–78.

[7] M. A. Cook, *Population pressure in rural Anatolia, 1450–1600* (1972).

In fact, the argument of a 'subsistence crisis' in the Ottoman countryside in the late sixteenth century largely relies on Ottomanists' interpretation of the era of social unrest that followed, rather than on empirical evidence. Several historians cite a late-sixteenth century economic crisis, which occurred as a result of 'population pressure', as the reason for the early seventeenth century attacks, invasions, and plundering by bandits, mercenaries, and landless peasants that led to large-scale depopulation in Anatolian villages. But there is no direct evidence suggesting that there were chronic food shortages in urban or rural areas in the Ottoman realm in the later part of the sixteenth century.[8] Moreover, the account of a rural economy in decline throughout the century is quite inconsistent with several other economic indicators: the well-documented spurt in urban growth, the wave of migration to towns, the emergence of an advanced elite culture, commercial expansion, and market development. Although crude estimates of per capita grain production from fiscal surveys suggest a fall, all these developments point to agricultural output levels that were high enough to sustain large non-agricultural populations and considerable volumes of marketed agricultural surplus.

İslamoğlu-İnan was the first to suggest that Ottoman peasants responded to the increased demographic pressure on natural resources with Boserupian innovations, meaning intensification was underway in sixteenth-century Ottoman Anatolia.[9] She was critical of Cook[10], who claimed, '[Ottoman] peasants were reaching the limits of cultivation as defined by their physical environment', based on his findings suggesting that the expansion of arable acreage trailed population growth from the late fifteenth century onwards.[11] Within Ottoman historiography İslamoğlu is perhaps the scholar who defended most explicitly and convincingly the idea that the limits to peasant production in pre-industrial societies were not physical or technological but institutional. Still, the quantitative basis for this line of thought in Ottoman rural historiography remains weak despite the unique opportunity provided by the Ottoman fiscal surveys of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. These sources report on both the productive resources – land and labour – and tithes, from which agricultural output levels can be estimated, on a village-by-village basis. As such, they enable us to observe how *both* output per surface area and per worker evolved at a particular location in response to demographic trends.

While quite limited in number, there have been attempts to estimate land and labour productivity and output per capita in the Ottoman countryside based on these sources.[12]

[8] Ibid.

[9] H. İslamoglu-İnan, *State and peasant in the Ottoman Empire, agrarian power relations and regional economic development in Ottoman Anatolia during the sixteenth century* (1994), pp. 149–55.

[10] Cook, *Population*.

[11] Ibid., pp. 21–2.

[12] The tedious work such endeavours required, particularly in the absence of contemporary data management tools, is more than impressive. See M. Öz, '16. Yüzyılda Anadolu'da tarımda verimlilik problemi [The problem of productivity in agriculture in sixteenth century Anatolia]', in *XIII. Türk tarih kongresi, Ankara 4–8 Ekim 1999, kongreye sunulan bildiriler II. cilt* [Thirteenth Turkish history congress, Ankara October 4–8, 1999, proceedings presented at the congress vol. 2] (2002), pp. 1643–51; E. Ş. Batmaz, 'XV–XVI. yüzyıl kanunnamelerine göre Osmanlı Devleti'nde tahıl üretimi [Grain production in the Ottoman State according to the fifteenth and sixteenth century law codes]', *Ankara Üniversitesi Dil ve Tarih-Coğrafya Fakültesi Tarih Bölümü Tarih Araştırmaları Dergisi* 23 (2004), pp. 35–41; N. Beldiceanu and I. Beldiceanu-Steinherr, 'Recherches sur la province de Qaraman au XVIe siecle. Étude et actes', *J. Economic and Social Hist. of the Orient* 11 (1968), 1–129; R. Murphey, 'Population movements and labor mobility in Balkan contexts: A glance at post-1600 Ottoman social realities',

However, most of these attempts arrive at somewhat pessimistic conclusions regarding the robustness of the results and the potential for Ottoman fiscal registers to assist quantitative research, mainly because of the unrealistically high figures resulting from their calculations. After pointing out numerous limitations and problems associated with using fiscal surveys to estimate land and labour productivity, Orbay argues in a methodological paper that these sources are insufficient and unreliable and that it is not possible to quantitatively demonstrate the levels and trends in agricultural productivity in the Ottoman realm.[13]

This paper, however, argues that, despite several shortcomings and problems highlighted in the relevant literature, data from fifteenth- and sixteenth-century Ottoman fiscal surveys are no less reliable than most other sources that scholars have used to examine agricultural productivity in Europe. Indeed, it is possible to accurately detect changes in output per unit area and per worker by employing data from fiscal registers if we follow an astute sampling strategy, take into account possible scenarios, and rely on our knowledge of other pre-industrial agrarian settings.

Building upon the methodologies of the existing studies – while making some corrections in the process – this paper looks at how both the output per unit area and output per worker moved in Western Anatolia in the sixteenth century, not only in response to the rapid population growth, but also in relation to each other. In doing so, it aims to address questions that are directly linked to current debates in the field of rural history: How did land and labour productivity respond to the population increase in a pre-industrial rural context in which land reclamations were no longer possible or remunerative? Did Ottoman Anatolia experience a subsistence crisis in the late sixteenth century as a result of Malthusian mechanisms?

This study concentrates on the Ottoman district of Manisa (Magnesia). In the sixteenth century, Manisa was the centre of the Ottoman province of Saruhan in Western Anatolia. The administrative district covered an area of around 250,000 hectares, and comprised around 150 villages. Boasting fertile valleys and rich river basins, Aegean Anatolia has been a prosperous and densely populated region since ancient times. Rich agricultural production, as well as a geographical position that facilitated close trade relations with other parts of the Mediterranean, shaped the region's economy over many centuries. After the Ottoman conquest, the region supplied the imperial capital with grain and other foodstuffs, while also exporting significant quantities of wheat, cotton, raisins, figs, alum, carpets, wool and hides to European markets.

As observed in this study, the evolution of output per worker and per sown area in early and late sixteenth century Ottoman Manisa lends support to the Boserupian view by revealing a negative association between physical yields and labour productivity. Arable acreage remained largely stable in Manisa over the sixteenth century, but agricultural output nevertheless expanded considerably. While labour productivity declined as population grew, land productivity increased, facilitating output levels that could sustain a relatively high population density

Note 12 *continued*
in *Studies on Ottoman society and culture, 16th–18th Centuries* (2007), pp. 275–98.

[13] K. Orbay, 'Osmanlı İmparatorluğu'nda tarımsal üretkenlik üzerine tetkikat ve notlar [Investigation and notes on agricultural productivity]', *Belleten* 81 (2007), pp. 51–120.



MAP 1. The Ottoman Empire in 1580, showing the location of Anatolia

in the region. The findings, thus, do not suggest any Malthusian crisis in Manisa in the late sixteenth century.

The first section explains the methodology adopted in estimating land and labour inputs and agricultural output from Ottoman fiscal surveys. Section II meanwhile, presents and discusses the results. Section III provides a comparative perspective on the level of physical yields and tries to understand where sixteenth-century Manisa fits into the Mediterranean region in terms of output per unit area and how it compared to north-western Europe.

I

Periodic fiscal surveys and registers (*tahrir defters*), through which the Ottoman government obtained information on the empire's sources of revenue, were essential to the functioning of the land regime. These documents included detailed information on taxpaying subjects and taxable resources on a village-by-village basis.[14] The *tahrir defters* were used for a variety of purposes; they served as official registers to establish legal claims to land, assess the empire's expected tax revenues, and to allocate the revenues among military and administrative officials.[15]

Employing data from two sets of registers dated 1531 and 1575, this study calculates *gross agricultural output per worker (as male adult equivalent) and per sown hectare* and *disposable*

[14] M. Coşgel, 'The economics of Ottoman taxation' (University of Connecticut Department of Economics Working Paper Series, 2004).

[15] İnalcık, 'State, land, and peasant'.

agricultural output per capita (net of seed, taxes, and loss in milling) for the early and late sixteenth century.[16] Here, the data available in Ottoman fiscal surveys is deemed largely reliable, since agricultural tax revenue constituted the most essential source of income for the Ottoman state and collecting accurate information was of vital importance for state finances. That said, problems and limitations associated with using Ottoman fiscal surveys to estimate land and labour productivity, which Orbay summarized in an article in which he declared these sources useless for this purpose, should not be dismissed altogether.[17] These include difficulties in converting the *çift*, an Ottoman surface measurement controlled for soil quality, and other local units of volume and weight to standard units; the lack of some information required for estimations, such as tax rates, household size, seed productivity, and amounts lost in milling; the use of official prices in calculations in fiscal surveys, which are different than current market prices and price fluctuations; fluctuations in output; and more. In what follows, I address most of these issues and propose some possible solutions.

First, however, I will underline more general points regarding how data from fiscal surveys can reliably shed light on productivity in arable farming in the Ottoman Empire. Almost all the limitations highlighted by Orbay and others concern difficulties that are associated with estimating absolute levels, rather than trends. Thus, for instance, even in the absence of accurate information concerning household size, rough estimates can help construct output per worker indices to examine change over time at a particular location or differences across regions, so long as no major changes over time or regional differences are expected in household size. Another way to deal with these problems is to make upper and lower estimates that take into account alternative scenarios. Ultimately, closer engagement with these primary sources suggests that sampling is necessary. To my knowledge, no existing research on Ottoman fiscal surveys has employed sampling as a strategy to cope with the problems presented by these sources. Datasets include all the village entries belonging to a district or province. However, some of these village entries are not usable for a number of reasons, and these should be excluded from the sample. For instance, some entries contain obvious miscalculations, others include uninhabited hamlets – whose tax revenues (tithes and land taxes) are given together as lump-sum amounts – and many others report the existence of private holdings, the extent of which are unclear. In some villages, tithes imply the existence of agricultural production, even though the records indicate no inhabitants or land tax. In most of these instances, what is missing in the registers is the information on the extent of the land under cultivation, while relevant output levels are generally reported and thus, included in the calculations. As might be understood from this brief note, if we do not exclude such cases underestimating the extent of the arable land becomes inevitable – something that typically clouds such attempts in the existing literature.

In light of these considerations, the present study constructs a two-period sample (1531 and 1575) that uses the same 67 tax units in both periods, and presents lower and upper estimates

[16] *Mufassal tahrir defteri* [*detailed tax register*], TD165, (h. 937/1531), Ottoman Prime Ministry Archives [hereafter OPMA], pp. 1–91; Evkaf defteri [*waqf register*], TD398, (h. 934/1527–8), OPMA, pp. 1–60; *Mufassal tahrir defteri,* TD115, (h. 983/1575), Land Registry Archives [hereafter LRA], 3b–81a; Evkaf ve emlak defteri [*waqf and private property register*], TD544, (h. 986/1575–6), OPMA, 2a–29a.

[17] Orbay, 'Osmanlı İmparatorluğu'nda tarımsal üretkenlik'.

of the output per unit of sown area and per worker. Considering the wide gap between lower and upper estimates for the output per worker, these are not reported as absolute levels, but rather as index numbers. As will be seen below, in terms of index numbers, these two estimates produced almost identical results.

Agricultural output is traced back from output and input taxes reported in the fiscal registers at the village level, following a procedure commonly used by previous studies.[18] To compute the total output for output-taxed products, I multiplied the nominal tithe values[19] given for different agricultural products by the inverse of the relevant taxation rate[20] and then added them together to obtain the amount of annual gross agricultural product in nominal terms. Estimating the total output of input-taxed products (grapes, fruit from trees, nuts, olives, animal products, and output from orchards and gardens etc.) posed some difficulty because of the absence of direct information that would enable us to match the tax amounts to the total output of these products.[21] For output from vineyards, orchards, and gardens, I used Coşgel's estimate of eight (which he arrived at by combining the fiscal data with more recent information about the productivities and production processes of some of the items listed in the registers). I then added the gross nominal total figures for input and output-taxed products and converted this amount to metric units, obtaining *gross agricultural output as wheat equivalent in tons* for 1531 and 1575.[22]

To calculate the *disposable agricultural output*, I subtracted the amount of seed (for input taxed products only); agricultural taxes; and loss in milling (for grains) from the total gross output. Agricultural taxes amounted to 12 per cent of the gross agricultural product. Loss in milling

[18] B. W. Mcgowan, 'Food supply and taxation on the Middle Danube (1568–1579)', *Archivum Ottomanicum* 1 (1969), pp. 139–96; Coşgel, 'Taxes, efficiency, and redistribution: Discriminatory taxation of villages in Ottoman Palestine, Southern Syria, and Transjordan in the Sixteenth Century', *Explorations in Economic Hist.* 43 (2006), pp. 332–56.

[19] Among alternative ways to aggregate output of different crops, this study preferred conversion to wheat equivalent by using historical price weights. An important cause of overestimation of agricultural output in most past studies is the use of the twentieth-century price weight of 0.70 in the conversion of legumes and non-wheat grains to wheat equivalent. Indeed, the aggregate ratio (0.58) based on the prices reported in the registers is considerably lower than this figure. Although tithes were collected in kind, the monetary values were also recorded separately for each crop aside from the quantities. In these calculations, a single average price for each crop was used for all villages in the district, rather than regionally variant market prices. Because these official prices are used here for the purpose of aggregation, what matters is the robustness of relative prices (price of other products relative to wheat) rather than the absolute value. It is assumed that the relative official prices reflected relative market prices, and there is no reason to believe otherwise. That said, using relative prices to aggregate the output of different crops might distort the results when looking at the trends if relative prices show sharp fluctuations over time. No such change is observed in sixteenth-century Manisa, as the relative prices of crops remained largely constant.

[20] While the fiscal survey themselves do not indicate the rates at which agricultural output were taxed, this information is included in the provincial agricultural codes, most of which were compiled in Ö. L. Barkan, *XV ve XVI. asırlarda Osmanlı İmparatorluğu'nda ziraî ekonominin hukukî ve malî esasları, I: Kanunlar [Legal and fiscal foundations of the agricultural economy in the Ottoman Empire in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries]*, 1943. The agricultural code of the province of Saruhan is among the few codes missing. Yet, the conventional view – also confirmed by alternative sources such as court registers – is that the tax rates in Saruhan were the same as those indicated in the agricultural codes in practice in the neighbouring province of Aydın.

[21] Coşgel, 'Taxes, Efficiency, and Redistribution'.

[22] 1 *kile* of Manisa (1 Manisa *kilesi* = 3 Istanbul *kilesi* = 76.98 kg).

amounted to 10 per cent for grains, although some historians have deemed this figure too high. A seed to yield ratio of 1:4.5 for wheat and 1:5 for overall grains and legumes is assumed.

The lower estimate of 1:3 raised by some historians might be valid for drier, inner parts of Anatolia in the sixteenth century but does not appear possible for one of the most fertile areas of the Ottoman realm (See Table 1 for alternative seed productivity estimates). Murphey, Öz, Şafakçı, and Pamuk mention higher figures of 1:4, 1:5, and 1:6 for the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries.[23] Given the lack of reliable information for this period, this study adopts data from the early and mid-nineteenth century for Manisa here, recognizing that the introduction of revolutionary agricultural techniques to boost seed productivity is unlikely to have occurred in Ottoman Anatolia before the second half of the nineteenth century. Based on documents dating 1824 and 1856, Nagata mentions a seed productivity of 1:4.5 and 1:4 for wheat and 1:10 for cotton in this region.[24] In calculating the net output, I relied on an assumption of productivity of 1:4.5 for wheat, and 1:5 for output taxed products overall, considering that grains other than wheat and cotton had a much higher seed to yield ratio.

The study computed and separately reported animal products net of taxes. I computed the number of sheep (ovine-breeding rather than cattle-breeding was the dominant form of livestock husbandry in Manisa) owned by regular peasants from the relevant tax (1 *akçe* per 2 sheep) and subsequently estimated the amount of meat and milk from the sheep herds in their possession as a wheat equivalent, following McGowan.[25]

For estimating the *population*, the number of regular peasant and semi-nomadic households in villages are multiplied by a hypothetical household size and then the number of bachelors is added to this figure. The *labour force* is then computed by taking into account differences in effective labour between adult males, females and children, as well as the participation of women, children, semi-nomadic groups and landless peasants to the agricultural workforce. Considering the fragility of the assumptions, upper and lower estimates were provided for the population and agricultural workforce.

Two alternative figures – 5 and 4.17, respectively – proposed by Barkan and Göyünç, are employed as upper and lower estimates for the household size.[26] Following Coşgel, an average of one member of the family is assumed to have been ineligible to work because of age or other restrictions, leaving us with a multiplier of 4 and 3.17.[27] In estimating the household labour supply as adult male equivalent, for the upper estimate, adult male and female labour supply are considered to be equal, while child labour totalled about half the adult labour. For the lower estimate, both the female and child labour supply were assumed to be around half the adult male labour supply.

[23] Murphey, 'Population movements', pp. 95–6; Öz, '16. Yüzyılda Anadolu'da tarımda verimlilik', p.1644; H. Şafakçı, '16. Yüzyılda Siristad [Siristad in the sixteenth century]', in *Uluslararası sempozyum: Geçmişten günümüze Bozkır [International symposium: Bozkır from past to today]* (Konya, 2016); Ş. Pamuk, *Osmanlı-Türkiye İktisadî Tarihi 1500–1914* (2007), p. 38.

[24] Nagata, *Tarihte Âyânlar: Karosmanoğulları Üzerine Bir Inceleme [Notables in history: an inquiry into Karosmanoğlu family]* (1997), p. 123.

[25] Mcgowan, 'Food supply and taxation'.

[26] Ö. L. Barkan, 'Tarihi demografi araştırmaları ve Osmanlı tarihi [Studies on historical demography and Ottoman history]', *Türkiyat mecmuası* 10 (1953), pp. 1–26; N. Göyünç, '"Hane" deyimi hakkında [On the concept of household]', *Tarih dergisi* 32 (1979), pp. 331–48.

[27] Coşgel, 'Taxes, Efficiency, and Redistribution'.

TABLE 1. Seed productivity, sowing seed and output per sown hectare (gross of seed) estimates

Region	*Date*	*Sowing seed* kg/ha	*Seed-to-yields ratio*	*Output per sown hectare (gross)* kg/ha	*Source*
Anatolia	Before 1800	75–115	1:3 (grain)	350	a
Anatolia	Before 1800	95–115			b
Karaman (Central Anatolia)	Mid-sixteenth century			420	c
Anatolia	Fifteenth–sixteenth century		1:3 (grain)		d
Anatolia	Before 1800	110–160	1:2 on poor-quality soil; 1:3; 1:4 on medium-quality soil; 1:6 or 1:7 on high-quality soil (grains)		e
Anatolia	Before 1800		1:5 or 1:6	800	f
Anatolia	Before 1800	140–175	1:4	630	g
Anatolia			1:3		h
Siristad (South-West Anatolia)	Sixteenth century	175	1:5	870	i
South Morea	1715		1:5 (wheat); 1:6 (barley); 1:6.25 (oat); 1:11 (maize)		j
Anavarin (South-West Morea)	1716	60–160	1:4 to 1:7 (wheat); 1:10, 1:15 (maize)		k

Sources:

a. E. Ş. Batmaz, 'XV–XVI. yüzyıl kanunnamelerine göre Osmanlı Devleti'nde tahıl üretimi [Grain production in the Ottoman State according to the fifteenth and sixteenth century law codes]', *Ankara Üniversitesi Dil ve Tarih-Coğrafya Fakültesi Tarih Bölümü Tarih Araştırmaları Dergisi* 23 (2004), pp. 35–41, at p. 41.

b. Y. Koç, 'Zirai tarih araştırmalarında ölçü-tartı birimleri sorunu: Bursa Müdü örneği [The problem of measurement units in historical agrarian research: the example of Müd of Bursa]' in *Uluslararası Kuruluşunun 700. Yıldönümünde Bütün Yönleriyle Osmanlı Devleti Kongresi [International congress on Ottoman Empire with all aspects on 700th anniversary of its establishment*] (2000), pp. 541–47, at p. 544.

c. N. Beldiceanu and I. Beldiceanu-Steinherr, 'Recherches sur la province de Qaraman au XVIe siecle. Étude et actes [Research on the province of Qaraman in the sixteenth century]', *J. Economic and Social Hist. of the Orient* 11 (1968), pp. 1–129, at p. 22.

d. M. A. Cook, *Population pressure in rural Anatolia, 1450–1600* (1972), p. 15.

e. M. Öz, '16. Yüzyılda Anadolu'da tarımda verimlilik problemi [The problem of productivity in agriculture in sixteenth century Anatolia]', in *XIII. Türk tarih kongresi, Ankara 4–8 Ekim 1999, kongreye sunulan bildiriler II. cilt* [Thirteenth Turkish history congress, Ankara October 4–8, 1999, proceedings presented at the congress vol. 2] (2002), pp. 1643–51, at p. 1644.

f. Ş. Pamuk, *Osmanlı-Türkiye İktisadî Tarihi 1500–1914* (2007), p. 38.

g. R. Murphey, 'Population movements and labor mobility in Balkan contexts: A glance at post-1600 Ottoman social realities', in *Studies on Ottoman society and culture, 16th–18th Centuries* (2007), pp. 95–6.

h. H. İslamoglu-İnan, *State and peasant in the Ottoman Empire, agrarian power relations and regional economic development in Ottoman Anatolia during the Sixteenth Century* (1994), p. 40.

i. H. Şafakçı, '16. Yüzyılda Siristad [Siristad in the sixteenth century]', in *Uluslararası sempozyum: Geçmişten günümüze Bozkır [International symposium: Bozkır from past to today]* (Konya, 2016), at p. 249

j. S. Parveva, 'Agrarian Land and Harvest in South-West Peloponnese in the Early 18th Century', in *Village, Town and People in the Ottoman Balkans 16th–mid-19th Century* (2009), pp. 61–110, at p. 88.

k. F. Zarinebaf, J. Bennet, and J. L. Davis, *A historical and economic geography of Ottoman Greece: The Southwestern Morea in the eighteenth Century* (2005), p. 195.

Landed regular peasants were not the only rural producers, and in the context of Manisa, semi-nomadic or settled groups with clan status, as well as landless peasants, comprised an important part of the agricultural workforce. There is no direct evidence of how these landless peasants and their families lived. It is generally assumed that at least most landless peasants and semi-nomadic or settled populations with clan status made a living by cultivating the land in neighbouring uninhabited villages (which were numerous in Manisa both in the early and late sixteenth centuries) under the status of outsider peasant.[28] It is possible to assess the considerable share of the land cultivated by these groups in Manisa through the huge amounts of land taxes levied on such land. It is also highly likely that these groups engaged in labour-intensive agricultural production activities – such as cotton cultivation or viniculture – as wage-labourers and sharecroppers. The lower estimate assumes a participation in the agricultural workforce by one-third of these groups; the upper estimate assumes a participation of three-quarters.[29]

The land was cultivated under a number of different landholding contracts, the most important being the *tapu*, which granted peasants hereditary usufruct rights over a plot. The land under each legal category is computed in a different way, using a variety of information from the registers and then summed up.[30]

After calculating the total *arable area* in metric units, we need to estimate the share of fallow within arable land to compute the *sown area*. This, however, is a challenging task due to the lack of evidence. Some studies assume a share as high as 1:2 for fallow land. However, this does not seem to be a reasonable figure, at least for sixteenth-century Manisa, given that the share of fallow land in medieval Europe was around one-third and declined considerably during the early modern era thanks to innovations in agricultural techniques. In fact, a fallow-to-sown land ratio of 1:2 would not enable the agricultural output levels achieved in the sixteenth-century Ottoman realm given the limited output per unit of sown area in pre-industrial societies. Alternatively, Öz's estimates of land productivity relies on the assumption that at any one time, five-eighths of the regular peasant holdings were allocated for staple food production, while the remainder was allocated as fallow land and garden, orchard, and vineyards (which corresponds to a ratio of approximately one-third for fallow land).[31] This study retains Öz's assumption that one-third of the arable land was fallow.

In a further step, this study calculated *wheat crop area* as a percentage of the *sown area*. Wheat comprised around half of the total agricultural output in value. Ottoman agricultural surveys from the early twentieth century suggest that the share of the area allocated to wheat production equalled, or slightly surpassed, its relative importance within agricultural production. Based on this fact, this study made lower and upper estimations based on assumptions that 50 per cent and 60 per cent of sown area was allocated to wheat production, respectively.

When measuring land productivity, there are different ways of relating agricultural output to land input, depending on the alternative forms of variables used.[32] For the purpose

[28] O. Özel, *The collapse of rural order in Ottoman Anatolia: Amasya 1576–1643* (2016), p. 16.

[29] Ibid.

[30] The appendix explains in detail the procedures followed in the estimation of these figures.

[31] Öz, '16. yüzyılda Anadolu'da tarımda verimlilik'.

[32] For a formulation, see M. Overton, *Agricultural revolution in England: The transformation of the agrarian economy 1500–1850* (1996), pp. 70–4.

of comparison with other pre-industrial settings, this study adopts the most commonly used measure of *gross output per unit of sown area* and provides estimations of both total agricultural output and wheat output per sown hectare. For this, I divided output – the gross of seed and expressed as wheat equivalent – by the total area sown (which is obtained by subtracting fallow from the total arable area). As stressed by Overton and others, comparisons merely based on this indicator suffer from significant shortcomings and risk hiding the real across-space differences in the productivity of arable land if differences in field systems and in the share of fallow are ignored. First, 'a farm with a relatively large fallow area might have higher yields per sown cereal acre but much lower yields per unit of arable [land] than a comparable farm with a lower fallow proportion'.[33] Second, this approach ignores the differences in seed yields, which exhibited a high geographical variability and represented a significant source of differences in returns to land. Furthermore, areas of high seed yields were also areas of limited use of fallow, thus, these two biases are highly likely to act in the same direction, widening the impact of a possible distortion.

Similarly, the indicator used here for labour productivity, i.e., output per worker as adult male equivalent, has its own limitations. Estimating the agricultural labour input is much more complicated than estimating total output and the extent of arable land. It requires a number of assumptions concerning household size; agricultural labour input by households (including the participation of women and children in the workforce and the number of days and hours that workers laboured); and participation in the agricultural workforce by groups with clan status, as well as landless peasants. For the sixteenth-century Ottoman Empire, there is no empirical data available on these variables other than some estimations of household size.

Because of the dearth of information about the annual number of hours and days that workers laboured in the agricultural sector, this study examines *gross output per worker* (gross total agricultural output expressed as wheat equivalent divided by the number of workers as adult male equivalent), like many other studies on the subject. One significant problem is that this variable is only a rough proxy for the productivity of agricultural labour, and, as Thoen and Soens state, reveals nothing more than a relationship between population level and output.[34] One of the arguments I would like to test is whether, during periods of demographic expansion, peasant households increased labour input per unit area by adopting more labour-intensive agricultural practices in order to increase agricultural output in the face of land shortages and rising demand for food. However, the absence of data regarding effective labour input by peasant households and, in particular, how labour input in agricultural activities at the household level was accommodated over time to respond to changing relative scarcities, hides exactly what we are interested in when studying productivity: the decline in the productivity of labour due to the shift towards more labour-intensive cultivation. Still, this seems to be the best indicator that we can construct based on the available data.

Finally, I look at *disposable agricultural output per capita*; that is, total agricultural output, net of seed, taxes, and loss in mill, divided by the producer population in the villages under

[33] Ibid., p. 73.

[34] Thoen and Soens, 'Contextualizing'.

study. My main motivation here is to assess the changes in the living standards of the rural producer class throughout the sixteenth century, and whether the latter faced a subsistence crisis as a result of population growth.

II

An exceptionally fertile region throughout its history, Manisa is located in the area known as the 'Lower Gediz Basin' and its topography comprises lowlands along the Gediz river and its tributaries (Kumçayı and Nif); and mountainous areas with hills of 1000–1500m altitude: Spil in the south west, Yundağı in the north west, and Çaldağı in the east[35]. Manisa is endowed with fertile soil (alluvial deposits in the river basins carried by streams and floods; calcareous brown soil; and non-calcareous brown forest soil), and ample assets of water with the main river Gediz, its tributaries, and several streams feeding these. A distinctive hydrogeological feature, the shallow aquifer system accessible by water wells only a few meters deep, that Kuru draws attention to, should also be mentioned.[36] The area is in general under the influence of the Mediterranean climate, with hot and dry summers, and mild and wet winters and a highly fluctuating precipitation regime. The higher altitudes exhibited features of the drier continental climate.

With 12.1 inhabitants per square kilometre in 1531 and 16.8 in 1575, sixteenth-century Manisa had a population density that was considerable by pre-industrial standards.[37] And, like other regions in Anatolia and the Balkans, the district witnessed a rapid population growth throughout the sixteenth century. The rural population (regular peasants, semi-nomadic groups with clan status, and landlords living in villages) in the 67 tax units in the sample increased by about one-third from around 10,500–12,500 in 1531 to 14,000–16,000 in 1575, with an annual growth rate of 0.55 per cent. Table 2 presents the estimates of arable land, population, and agricultural output in Manisa.

Despite the considerable demographic expansion, the extent of arable land remained almost constant (15,700 hectares in 1531 and 16,100 hectares in 1575), with only a marginal (3 per cent) increase. When compared with Cook's results regarding the provinces of Aydın and Hamid, located in Western and South-Western Anatolia, for about the same time period, this is rather a striking finding.[38] For these provinces, Cook suggests an increase in the extent of arable land of one-third and one-quarter, respectively. The most reasonable explanation seems to reside in the intensity of land use in Manisa. In the sixteenth century,

[35] Aşılıoğlu and Çay's study on the central district of Manisa today, suggests that about eight tenths of the area covered by fields had an altitude of 18–500 m, one tenth, 500–750 m, and the rest was above 750 m. See F. Aşılıoğlu and R. D. Çay, 'Reclaiming idle agricultural areas on periphery of cities: Case study of Manisa', in *IV International Conference 'Ecology of Urban Areas' Proceedings* (Zrenjanin, 2014), pp. 401–14.

[36] M. Kuru, 'A magnificent climate: Demography, land and labour in sixteenth century Anatolia', in O. İnal and Y. Köse (eds), *Seeds of power: Explorations in Ottoman environmental history* (2019), pp. 35–57.

[37] These figures are slightly below the European average, which was 13.6 inhabitants per square kilometre in 1500 and 18.3 inhabitants per square kilometre in 1600, and higher than Spain, Portugal, Poland, and the Balkans. See S. Capasso and P. Malanima, 'Economy and Population in Italy (1300–1913)', *Popolazione e Storia* 8 (2012), pp. 15–40.

[38] Cook, *Population*, p. 86.

TABLE 2. Land, labour and output estimates from 1531 and 1575 fiscal surveys

	Tax units	*Total agricultural output as wheat equivalent*	*Wheat output*	*Arable land*	*Population of producers*		*Workforce (Adult male equivalent)*	
		(Tons)	*(Tons)*	*(ha)*	*(Lower)*	*(Upper)*	*(Lower)*	*(Upper)*
1531	67	11,499	5,045	15,676	10,250	12,164	3,852	6,816
1575	67	12,844	5,908	16,082	13,525	15,805	5,039	9,086

Source: Manisa fiscal registers. Number semi-nomadic households and bachelors in villages is taken from F. M. Emecen, *XVI. asırda Manisa kazası* [*Administrative district of Manisa in the sixteenth century*] (1989), pp. 158–221.

arable acreage accounted for slightly less than one-tenth of the total surface area. Given that as late as the first decade of the twentieth century, arable land made up around 11 per cent of the surface area in the Western Anatolian provinces,[39] and that most of the mountainous areas in the north of the district were completely unsuitable for arable farming, Manisa's agricultural economy in the sixteenth century seems to have been characterized by a significantly intense land-use pattern, particularly on the plains in river basins. Thus, the most likely explanation for the lack of expansion in arable acreage during a period of rapid population growth is that the agricultural economy in this region, which has been densely settled since ancient times, had reached its limits imposed by the physical environment and pre-industrial technology by the early sixteenth century and that reclamations were no longer possible or remunerative.

Evidence from surveys also points to efforts throughout the sixteenth century to limit grazing in favour of arable land, such as the spread of barley, maize, and legumes, all of which were sometimes used as fodder crops to reduce the need for pastureland.[40] Furthermore, the decrease in the number of sheep per capita indicates an overall decline in husbandry amid the population increase. Such findings support Huang, who argues that 'high population density on a given amount of land will eventually drive out animal husbandry in favour of a crops-only economy' because, 'at a given level of technology, a unit of land under crops can support more people than one under livestock (to support people through meat, milk, cheese)'.[41] Still, the impact of such efforts seems to have been very limited and might have only ensured a marginal increase in arable acreage.

Rice cultivation in riverbeds is another indicator of high intensity in land use in sixteenth-century Manisa. Alfani suggests that in the context of early modern Italy, 'the importance of rice does not lie mainly in its yield per hectare, but in the fact that it contributed to the elimination of fallow and limited the excess of irrigated meadows that had developed during

[39] T. Güran, 'Osmanlı tarım ekonomisi, 1840–1910 [Ottoman agricultural economy, 1840–1910]', in *19. yüzyılda Osmanlı ekonomisi üzerine araştırmalar [Studies on Ottoman economy in the nineteenth century]* (1989), pp. 63–131.

[40] İslamoglu-İnan, *State and peasant.*

[41] P. C. C. Huang, 'Development or involution in eighteenth-century Britain and China? A review of Kenneth Pomeranz's "The greater divergence: China, Europe, and the making of the modern world economy"', *J. Asian Studies* 61 (2002), p. 506.

TABLE 3. Index of agricultural output based on figures reported by Emecen

	1531	*1575*
Grains and legumes	1.00	1.28
Cash crops	1.00	1.03
Output from vineyards, orchards, gardens	1.00	0.72
TOTAL	1.00	1.20

Source: as for Table 2, pp. 239–65.

the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries'.[42] In sixteenth-century Manisa as well, rice cultivation was widespread – in 70 of around 150 villages – and occurred largely in riverbeds unsuitable for other arable farming. Thus, rice cultivation helped put land that would have otherwise remained unproductive under cultivation.

Since we know that the extent of land under cultivation remained largely constant while the population grew, we can now ask how agricultural output evolved. Estimates based on the sample suggest an increase of 12 per cent in total output as wheat equivalent, whereas for the whole district involving around 120 tax units, the figure is somewhat higher (20 per cent). The breakdown of the total agricultural output into categories presented in Table 3 reveals a visible expansion in staple food production (25 per cent in wheat, 30 per cent in barley, and 28 per cent in grains and legumes overall), as well as a stagnation in cash crops. The output of cotton, the most important cash crop in the district, decreased by 8 per cent in volume, but, in terms of its nominal value as wheat equivalent, an increase in the relative price compensated for this decline. However, viniculture and fruit and vegetable cultivation, which featured prominently in overall output early in the century, particularly in areas around the urban centre of Manisa, experienced a considerable drop (28 per cent) (mainly due to the transformation of vineyards and orchards into grain-producing land in parallel to rising food demand).

Table 5 presents indices of output per hectare and output per worker. Overall, sixteenth-century Ottoman Manisa seems to have shared the destiny of many pre-industrial European areas in which it was not possible to expand arable land further, by first stabilizing and then decreasing agricultural labour productivity. In both datasets, output per worker declined by about 15 per cent. That notwithstanding, as discussed above, increased labour input by households (in the form of increased participation of children and women in the agricultural workforce and increased hours of agricultural work per worker) would imply that output per worker figures presented here underestimate the real extent of the decline in the productivity of labour (measured in terms of an hour of adult work).

With regards to physical yields, the findings lend support to the Boserupian view by revealing the increase in land productivity and the negative association between output per hectare and output per worker. The expansion of the agricultural output against stagnant

[42] G. Alfani, 'Population dynamics, Malthusian crises and Boserupian innovation in pre-industrial societies: The case study of Northern Italy (ca. 1450–1800) in the light of Lee's "dynamic synthesis"', in Chiarini and Malanima (eds), *From Malthus' stagnation to sustained growth* (2012), p. 42.

arable acreage implies that the increase in agricultural production was achieved through an increase in land productivity thanks to intensification. The aggregated agricultural output per hectare increased by about one-tenth from 1531 to 1575, partly compensating for the decline in the output per worker.

At this juncture, I must address a puzzle pointed out by Kuru: the relatively slower increase in agricultural output in coastal regions, which have been the most productive parts of Anatolia throughout history, in contrast to the spectacular growth rates in semi-arid inner Anatolia.[43] With an increase of one-fifth in total output and a rise of one-third in grain and legume output over half a century, Manisa – which is located not far from the Aegean coast – seems to confirm this pattern given that in almost all the districts studied by İslamoğlu-İnan in North-Central Anatolia, the output growth was much greater than in Manisa, reaching rates of 200 per cent over the same period.[44]

According to Kuru, the extraordinary climatic conditions of the sixteenth century – namely, very high precipitation that turned semi-arid inner Anatolia into a well-watered area and Mediterranean coasts into almost a sub-tropical zone – accounts for this pattern. While climatic conditions should have contributed to slower growth rates in the coastal areas, as Kuru proposes, it seems more likely that regional differences in growth rates reflected to a greater extent, differing levels of population density and intensity of land use in the initial period. Here, it is suggested that the coastal regions had already reached the limits of their physical environment at the turn of the sixteenth century due to their historically high population density. Therefore, the output growth rates observed in coastal areas during this period mostly resulted from increased land productivity, rather than from the expansion of arable land. In inner parts of Anatolia, by contrast, there was still space to expand arable acreage in the early sixteenth century, and a considerable amount of land was duly brought under cultivation throughout this period. Thus, the high increases in agricultural output in such areas mainly reflected the extensification process, although intensified cultivation was not completely absent in inland regions as well. A comparison of sixteenth-century figures with statistics from the early twentieth century provides us a picture of regional differences in the intensity of land use between coastal and inland Anatolia. Among others, İnalcık states that Anatolia witnessed a general expansion of arable land and settlement in the marginal lands of the highlands and lowlands in the period 1470–1570. Still, evidence from fiscal surveys suggests that this view requires nuance.[45]

Fiscal surveys do not allow us to directly observe the changing agricultural practices – that is, the practices of intensification through added labour input or land-saving techniques – which enabled this increase in output per hectare. Unfortunately, no data is available on most crop management practices (seeding rate, crop rotation and fallowing practices, alteration of soil conditions through manuring, irrigation, drainage, and the like). Yet, some information from the surveys – such as data on crop composition or notes about floods making arable land along the rivers uncultivable – give us important clues as to how the agricultural economy sustained a high population and how it responded to further demographic growth throughout the sixteenth century.

[43] Kuru, 'A magnificient climate'.

[44] İslamoglu-İnan, *State and peasant,* p. 180.

[45] İnalcık, 'State, land, and peasant', p. 159.

It is clear that the physical environment in this part of Western Anatolia required a large labour input to ensure the continuity of arable farming. The region's rivers and rivulets, especially the Gediz, tended to overflow their banks every year, particularly in autumn and spring when precipitation was at its highest, flooding nearby agricultural lands. Sixteenth-century tax surveys recorded several instances in which peasants could no longer cultivate the land because of floods, meaning they had to abandon their settlements and could not pay their taxes. As a result, only a portion of the large fertile lands along the riverbanks in this area was available for cultivation at a particular moment. In such areas, the availability of agricultural lands depended on the constant efforts of peasants to reclaim flooded lands. Furthermore, although there is no reference in the fiscal surveys to irrigation facilities and techniques, the considerable importance in the agricultural economy of the region, of truck gardening,[46] viniculture, fruit growing, and cotton production – all of which require irrigation – suggests the existence of improved irrigation facilities, as in the case of North-Central Anatolia.[47] Thus, large amounts of capital, as well as human and perhaps animal labour, should have been used to construct canals, dams, ditches, etc.

Moreover, the crop composition in the region, particularly in the densely populated south, reveals a choice in favour of labour-intensive crops such as grapes, rice, and, especially, cotton. Manisa was one of the most important cotton-producing regions in Ottoman Anatolia,[48] and cotton was very prominent in the agricultural output of the district. Cotton cultivation necessitated female and child labour, particularly during harvest time, as skills were required to pick the bolls from cotton plants. Apart from the work of the women and children in picking, cotton required about twice, and rice about one-and-a-half times the number of labour-days per hectare as wheat.[49] Owen's estimates of the cost of production, value and the profit of various Egyptian crops per units area *c.*1800, show that although production costs were much higher than for wheat and barley, cotton and rice cultivation was more productive and, accordingly, profitable per unit area compared to staple food.[50] Although I cannot estimate output per unit area for rice and cotton due to the lack of data on how much arable land was allocated for the cultivation of these crops, the same was likely true for sixteenth-century Manisa, and the net agricultural value created per unit area was greater than for grains.

Not much is known regarding fallowing practices and crop rotation systems and possible attempts to intensify land use in Western Anatolia. The conventional view is that prior to

[46] Fruit and vegetable production for urban markets, often in gardens and orchards in proximity of the towns, was a common agriculture activity in the Ottoman Anatolia. Unlike arable land allocated for grain production, these gardens and orchards were subject to private property. Registers suggest that in the sixteenth century the area around the town centre of Manisa was intensively engaged in truck gardening and fruit growing.

[47] İslamoglu-İnan, *State and peasant*, p. 154.

[48] Some 68 per cent of cotton production in Manisa occurred on imperial domains and relied on sharecropper labour, meaning it was generally associated with higher levels of exploitation (Y. Nagata, '16. Yüzyılda Manisa köyleri. 1531 tarihli Saruhan sancağına ait bir tahrir defterini inceleme denemesi [Villages of Manisa in the sixteenth century. An attempt to examine a tax survey of the province of Saruhan dating 1531]', *Tarih Dergisi*, 32 (1979), p. 753). Unlike sharecropping practices elsewhere in Anatolia, the landlord did not provide the seeds, so he only received one-third of the output. Nagata argues that state policies encouraged nomads to settle on these lands and produce for the market.

[49] Huang, 'Development or involution'.

[50] R. Owen, *The Middle East in the world economy 1800–1914* (2009). p. 31.

the nineteenth century, fertilizers were rarely used in Anatolia because animal manure was especially needed for fuel in areas that lack forests, such as interior regions. This made it necessary to maintain the fertility of the soil by leaving fields fallow for two years out of three or through a two-field system, with only one half of the land under cultivation in any one year. Whereas substantially higher ratios of fallow-to-sown-land were a general pattern in large parts of semi-arid inland Anatolia, farm workers in the coastal Mediterranean region and other areas, which enjoyed favourable hydrogeological features or high-quality soil, could well have implemented shorter fallow periods or a three-part rotation system. For instance, a report submitted by Domenico Gritti provides evidence for the existence of a three-part rotation system in late seventeenth-century Morea, with chief grains (wheat, barley, oats, rye, and flax), lesser grains (millet, maize, and cotton), and fallow land.[51]

The Gediz Valley, and especially Manisa, which is endowed with many rivers and rivulets, alluvial soil in its river basins, and groundwater close to the surface, was probably one of the regions where shorter fallow periods or a three-crop rotation system occurred. In the Middle Eastern pattern, grains were generally planted in late autumn and harvested in spring or early summer; in contrast, cotton was a summer crop that was planted in spring and picked in autumn. Thus, a three-crop system of wheat-cotton-fallow as described by Gritti is possible. Considering the importance of husbandry in the region, it is also likely that manure was used as fertilizer and became more widespread throughout the sixteenth century. Similarly, in response to population growth in the sixteenth century, the favourable features of the physical environment could have enabled intensified land use through a decrease in the share of the land left fallow.

The only evidence in the surveys in this regard is the substantial increase of 62 per cent in the production of legumes (chickpeas, lentils, broad beans, and dolichos) and the tripling of maize during this period. As Boserup indicates, peasants cultivated legumes as a method of soil fertilization.[52] By binding nitrogen from the atmosphere, legumes in a crop rotation system improved the grain yields per unit area. On the other hand, the production of maize, a crop known for its high yields that was introduced to the Anatolian agricultural economy in the early sixteenth century, tripled from 1531 to 1575 in Manisa. Malanima suggests that maize was the most important innovation in early modern Italy regarding calories, since its productivity was double that of other grains. Moreover, maize was associated with new forms of crop rotation that eliminated the need for fallow land in seventeenth-century northern Italy.[53]

A further point is the change in crop composition in favour of staple food, whose share in the total agricultural production of the district rose from 75 per cent to 81 per cent. Kuru explains the decline in viniculture and fruit growing and stagnation in cotton production in Western Anatolia during this period as a consequence of exceptionally high precipitation – citing, in particular, the harmful effects of wet summers on cotton production and viniculture – without mentioning whether this resulted from a drop in yields or the abandonment of agricultural

[51] F. Zarinebaf, J. Bennet, and J. L. Davis, *A historical and economic geography of Ottoman Greece: The Southwestern Morea in the eighteenth Centur*y (2005), p. 193.

[52] Boserup, *The conditions,* pp. 37–9.

[53] G. Federico and P. Malanima, 'Progress, decline, growth: Product and productivity in Italian agriculture, 1000–2000', *EcHR* 57 (2004), pp. 437–64.

activities in favour of grains.[54] While this is not beyond the realm of possibility, a more likely and direct explanation is that cultivators replaced vineyards, orchards, and gardens with grain-growing fields in response to the rising commercial demand for staple food. While the rising prices of grains relative to non-staple goods should have provided an important motivation for this shift, it is also very likely that in a period of rising food demand, the central government directly intervened to boost grain production in Western Anatolia, a major supplier to the giant imperial capital.

We have seen that during this period, the expansion of output fell visibly behind demographic growth, which implies a decline in agricultural output per capita. Nevertheless, the estimations reveal no sign of a subsistence crisis, which according to many historians, occurred in late sixteenth-century Anatolia. For producers, the total agricultural production per capita net of seed, taxes and mill loss (for grains) equalled around 530 kg of wheat in the early sixteenth century, and regressed to 450 kg in the later part of the century, representing a decline of 15–16 per cent. Grain production per capita, meanwhile, decreased only by 7–9 per cent, falling from 335 kg to 310 kg. Alongside agricultural production, animal products (meat and milk) from sheep-breeding equalled about 30 kg and 20 kg of wheat per person, respectively, in the early and late sixteenth century. Considering that the annual minimum requirement of wheat consumption per person was 250 kg, it would not be wrong to argue that Manisa's agricultural economy provided direct producers with an average living standard that was well above the subsistence level even in the late sixteenth century. This also suggests that peasants themselves were left with a considerable agricultural surplus to exchange on the markets after taxation and consumption. Thus, in the last quarter of the century, per capita net agricultural output was still high enough to not only sustain the region's rural and urban population but also to supply Istanbul with grain, cotton, and other agricultural goods. Still, these findings also highlight the limits of pre-industrial agricultural economies. Although the estimations lead us to reject the arguments of a Malthusian crisis, it is clear that the rather moderate gains in land productivity achieved during this period far from completely compensated for the losses in labour productivity. Thus, it seems highly likely that there was a decline in the producer classes' living standards during periods of population growth in pre-industrial contexts in which the extension of arable acreage was not remunerative or possible.

III

Recently, an increasing number of studies have measured and compared labour productivity across pre-industrial Europe within the context of the Great and Little Divergence debates. The most important stylized fact from these studies was that apart from the Low Countries, there were no significant differences across Europe in terms of labour productivity in 1500. By 1800, however, there was a sharp regional differentiation, as north-western Europe displayed a clear superiority over the southern part of the continent. This implied that regional differences in the productivity of agricultural labour and thus, in incomes across Europe, largely stemmed from the agricultural revolution that occurred in England and the Netherlands somewhere

[54] Kuru, 'A magnificient climate'.

TABLE 4. Land, output, labour population indices (1531 = 1.00)

	Arable land	*Output*	*Population of producers*	
			(Lower)	*(Upper)*
1531	1	1	1	1
1575	1.03	1.12	1.32	1.3

Source: Table 2.

TABLE 5. Land, labour population indices (1531 = 1.00)

	Output per unit of sown land	*Output per worker (Lower)*	*Output per worker (Upper)*	*Output per capita (Lower)*	*Output per capita (Upper)*
1531	1	1	1	1	1
1575	1.09	0.84	0.85	0.86	0.85

Source: Table 2.

between the mid-seventeenth century and the mid-eighteenth century. Empirical evidence on physical productivity is much more limited, consisting mostly of rough estimations of national averages.

Allen suggests that the pre-industrial rural world was, in general, characterized by low physical yields (around 700 kg/ha, but often much lower).[55] The most important exception to this pattern was the North Sea area, with physical yields above 1000 kg/ha for wheat and rye. In many areas in the Low Countries, such as Friesland, Groningen, and Zeeland, output per hectare rose as high as 1200 to 1750 kg even in the late Middle Ages.[56] In terms of seed productivity as well, the region stood out. Seed-to-yields ratios were generally above 1:10, and even ratios close to 1:20 were not unusual.[57]

In contrast, low yields-to-seed ratio and grain output per unit area characterized the agricultural economy of southern Europe (especially the Mediterranean) prior to the nineteenth century. Empirical evidence for this area is scarce, but not completely absent: In Iberia, the yield rate was roughly 5 to 1 (4.5–6 to 1 or more in Andalusia); and 3–4 to 1 in Provence.[58] In Italy, from the late medieval period until the second half of the nineteenth century, average yields for wheat revealed long-term stability at around 500 kg per hectare.[59] Spain's average in wheat yields in the eighteenth century is estimated at 470–480 kg/ha.[60] Similarly, in Southern

[55] R. C. Allen, *Enclosure and the yeoman: The agricultural development of the South Midlands 1450–1850* (1992).

[56] The figures of output per hectare given in this section are gross of seed, unless otherwise stated.

[57] Thoen and Soens, 'Contextualizing'.

[58] F. Tabak, *The waning of the Mediterranean, 1550–1870: A geohistorical approach* (2008), p. 119.

[59] Capasso and Malanima, 'Economy and population'.

[60] M. Á. B. Gutiérrez, *La productividad de los factores en la agricultura Española (1752–1935) [Factor productivity in Spanish agriculture]* (2000); C. Santiago-Caballero, 'Trapped by nature: Provincial grain yields in Spain in the mid-18th century', *Revista de Hist. Economica* 31 (2013), pp. 359–86.

TABLE 6. Wheat output per arable and sown hectare (kg/ha) from 1531 and 1575 fiscal surveys

a. Wheat output per *arable* hectare

	Gross of seed		*Net of seed*	
	Lower	*Upper*	*Lower*	*Upper*
1531	540	640	420	500
1575	610	730	470	570

b. Wheat output per *cropped* hectare

	Gross of seed		*Net of seed*		*Seed per hectare*	
	Lower	*Upper*	*Lower*	*Upper*	*Lower*	*Upper*
1531	800	970	620	750	180	220
1575	920	1100	720	860	200	240

Source: Table 2.

France, yields below 750 kg/ha were almost the norm even in 1830, and levels as low as 520 kg/ha[61] were also observed.[62]

Whereas a significant gap in physical productivity (for grains) between north-western and southern Europe in the pre-industrial period seems to be a well-established fact, this should not hide the substantial regional differences within each area. Thoen and Soens suggest that within the North Sea area, there were 'high-productivity' and 'low-productivity' regions with levels of gross output per sown hectare ranging between 950–1600 kg for the first and 640–800 kg for the latter (for wheat), such as England (a latecomer to the 'high-productivity' club) before the seventeenth century.[63] A similar categorization can also be made for southern Europe. Santiago-Caballero's study of mid-eighteenth-century Spain reveals a high regional variability (from 230 kg/ha to 940 kg/ha) in yields – provinces to the north of Castille reached the maximum values (840 kg/ha on average, with 940 kg/ha in Pontevedra) and the south-east posted the lowest production per cultivated unit of land (below 500 kg/ha).[64] In a similar fashion, physical yields in Southern France on the coastal arc extending from

[61] H. Clout, *Agriculture in France on the eve of the railway age* (1980).

[62] In between these two ends of the yields spectrum were India, Latin America, Canada, Australia, and the United States, with average grain yields of around 700 kg/ha (Allen, *Enclosure and the yeoman,* p. 131), and Germany, Ireland, the Yangtzi Delta, and the Nile Basin, with yields close to 1,000 kg/ha (R. C. Allen and C. Ó Gráda, 'On the road again with Arthur Young: English, Irish, and French agriculture during the industrial revolution', *JEcH* 48 (1988), pp. 93–116; Thoen and Soens, 'Contextualizing'; G. P. H. Chorley, 'The agricultural revolution in Northern Europe, 1750–1880: Nitrogen, legumes, and crop productivity', *EcHR* 34 (1981), pp. 71–93; R. C. Allen, 'Agricultural productivity and rural incomes in England and the Yangtze Delta, c.1620–c.1820', *EcHR* 62 (2009), pp. 525–50).

[63] Thoen and Soens, 'The low countries, 1000–1750', in Thoen and Soens (ed.), *Struggling with the environment*, pp. 221–58.

[64] Santiago-Caballero, 'The rain in Spain? Climate versus urban demand as causes of agricultural stagnation in Eighteenth-Century Spain', *European Rev. of Economic Hist.* 17 (2013), pp. 452–70.

Bouches-du-Rhone to Aude were close to 1000 kg/ha, whereas in the inner regions of Lozère, Aveyron, Ardèche, and Tarn, the output per hectare hardly reached 600 kg/ha as late as 1830.[65]

It would not be wrong to assume that there were high-productivity regions in southern Europe as well and that these achieved levels of gross output per sown hectare (between 700 to 1,000 kg/ha) that were on a par with the low or even modest productivity of regions in north-western Europe. That said, we should recall that productivity per sown hectare alone is not a good proxy of the productivity of land unless we take into account the intensity of land use i.e., how much of the total land stock was under cultivation and, more importantly, how much of the arable was sown at any one time. As mentioned above, there might be a considerable gap in net output per unit of arable between two regions with the same level of gross output per unit of sown area. Thus, in terms of net yields per arable hectare, north-western Europe should have been much superior historically – or at least since the Middle Ages – considering that the agricultural economy in southern Europe was characterized by a higher share of fallow land in arable areas and lower seed yields, even in the most fertile areas. This implies that gaps in physical yields for grains across Europe preceded the agricultural revolution, and improvements achieved in physical yields in the Netherlands and England from the seventeenth century should have widened these gaps.[66]

So, where do the results of this study place sixteenth-century Manisa in this picture? Endowed with large plains of alluvial soil along rivers and rivulets, Manisa seems to rank among the high productivity regions of southern Europe, with a gross output per sown hectare of around 885 kg in 1531 and 1010 kg[67] in 1575 – a level, which was clearly above the Mediterranean average of 500 kg.[68] At this point, an argument for the revisionist perspective on the debate of lagging Mediterranean agriculture deserves attention. Perez Picazo suggests that while low grain yields per unit area in the Mediterranean are widely perceived as a sign of agricultural backwardness, the comparative advantage of the region, which lay in viniculture and the cultivation of other labour-intensive non-grain crops, often went unnoticed.[69] Until now, I have focused on wheat yields in this comparison because this was the most common indicator of land productivity in the existing literature. But Perez Picazo's argument is supported by the fact that the aggregated output per sown hectare in arable farming (estimated at around 1100 in 1531 kg/ha and 1200 kg/ha in 1575) was considerably higher than wheat output per sown hectare in Manisa. In particular, viniculture and cotton production, which had higher productivity as wheat equivalent than grains, accounted for the difference. This suggests that it is highly likely

[65] Clout, *Agriculture in France*.

[66] This however, does not necessarily mean that the physical environment determined land productivity, although both climate and physical environment were important. For the decisive role of social organization through its determinant impact on the development and implementation of labour- and land-saving technical knowhow, see Thoen and Soens, 'Contextualizing'.

[67] The figure of 1010 kg is an average of upper and lower estimates.

[68] My estimates of wheat output per sown hectare in the early twentieth century for the same region are 1100–1500 kg, which implies an increase of at least one-tenth and, very likely, more. Such an improvement in physical yields is to be expected considering the emergence of large commercial estates producing for world markets from the seventeenth century onwards.

[69] M. T. P. Picazo, 'Essor de la production et gains de productivité agricole dans une région Méditerranéenne au XIXe siècle. Le cas de la province de Murcie ['Boom in production and agricultural productivity gains in a Mediterranean region in the 19th century. The case of the province of Murcia]', *Histoire et Mesure* 15 (2000), pp. 217–32.

that differences in aggregated agricultural output per arable hectare between north-western and southern Europe were smaller than the gap in net grain yields per arable hectare.

IV

The present study has revealed that in sixteenth-century Manisa, where land reclamations were no longer possible or remunerative, land and labour productivity moved in opposite directions. In response to rapid population growth, output per worker declined, yet this decrease in labour productivity – and, thus, in agricultural incomes – was partially compensated by an increase in output per sown area. Although only scant and indirect evidence exists regarding changing agricultural practices in response to rising food demand and the fragmentation of land holdings; it is highly likely that the increase in output per sown area became possible thanks to a shift towards more labour-intensive forms of cultivation and some land-saving techniques.

As a result, even in one of the most densely populated areas of sixteenth-century Ottoman Anatolia (which also witnessed a considerable demographic expansion throughout the century), population growth did not usher in a subsistence crisis, as many Ottomanists have argued. In the late sixteenth century, agricultural output per capita, net of seed, taxes and loss in milling, was well above the subsistence level of 250 kg wheat equivalent. In fact, the findings suggest that after taxation and consumption, peasants in Manisa were left with a considerable agricultural surplus to exchange on the market.

Overall, findings from the fiscal surveys suggest that Boserupian innovations were underway in Manisa, and at least, in this part of sixteenth-century Anatolia, 'agriculture could keep pace with the population increase to a large extent, beating the Malthusian traps'.[70] However, this does not imply that such mechanisms were in play in other parts of Ottoman Anatolia during the same period, or – even if they were – succeeded in preventing a subsistence crisis. In sixteenth-century Northern Italy, Alfani points to the coexistence of a variety of situations: namely, areas that experienced Boserupian and non-Boserupian (not related to the needs associated with demographic expansion) innovations and those that did not, as well as areas that could, at least in the short run, avoid a Malthusian crisis and those could not. Further regional studies on sixteenth-century Ottoman Anatolia are likely to reveal a similar story.[71]

[70] Thoen and Soens, 'Contextualizing', p. 464.

[71] Alfani, 'Population dynamics'.

Appendix

This paper calculated the extent of arable land as the sum of the amount of land held under different legal categories:

(a) The level of personal taxes paid by regular peasants depended on the marital status and the amount of land in their possession. Therefore, Ottoman tax registers reported the number of taxable landed peasants in every village, according to categories referring to the size of the plots they held. These categories were expressed as the multiples of *çift*[72] (three *çifts*, two *çifts*, one *çift*, etc.) There were also two categories for those who possessed plots smaller than one *çift* – *nim-çift* (half-*çift*) and *bennak* (smaller than half-*çift*). This study, thus, estimated the extent of the land held by the regular peasants under a *tapu* agreement from this frequency distribution, multiplying the number of peasants under each category by the relevant plot size expressed in *çift* before adding these together. In doing so, I assumed one *bennak* to have possessed 0.3 *cift*.

(b) In sixteenth-century Manisa, semi-nomadic groups holding clan status, landless peasants, and poor peasants cultivated a considerable amount of land under simple tenancy agreements. This agreement stipulated the payment of a *resm-i dönüm/zemin* (land tax) in proportion to the size of the land cultivated (33 *akçe* per *çift*). From the amount of this tax, we can easily calculate the extent of land held under this type of contract.

(c) *Zemins* were plots which were previously held under *tapu* and which were, at the moment of survey, hired by poor or landless peasants without *tapu* on the basis of the *resm-i dönüm/zemin* because their previous holders left no heir. The total extent of *zemins* is calculated the same way as (b).

(d) There were also a small number of *hassa* holdings located in sixteenth-century Manisa. As a less regular practice, authorities allocated these holdings for the personal use of small *tımar* owners, who often employed landless or poor peasants acting as sharecroppers to cultivate the land. The average size of *hassa* farms is considered to be 1 *çift* in the calculations.[73]

(e) The extent of private holdings was, in many cases, reported in the registers in terms of *çifts*. Entries involving private holdings whose extent was not indicated are excluded from the sample.

(f) In a number of entries concerning uninhabited villages, I encountered notes stating that outsider peasants cultivated a certain amount of land, yet no corresponding land

[72] *Çift* is an Ottoman surface measurement controlled for soil quality. Ottoman agricultural codes specified the extent of a peasant holding of one *çift* as a piece of land that could be cultivated by family labour and a pair of oxen in an agricultural season. Rather than being a standard unit, it denoted an ideal plot size that could meet the needs of a peasant household. Accordingly, it varied significantly across regions based on the fertility of the soil. In the Western Anatolia, one *çift* ranged between 5.5 hectares on first quality soil and 13.8 hectares on low quality soil.

[73] In a number of entries, *bennaks* were recorded with the amounts of land in their possession, ranging between 20 and 45 *dönüms*. Based on this, *bennaks* are assumed to have held land of 0.3 *çifts*.

tax is indicated. In such cases, I added up the amounts mentioned in *çifts* to reach the total.

In converting to standard measurement units, I assumed an average *çift* as 100 *dönüms* (9.2 hectares), as conventionally assumed in the literature.[74] This figure seems quite reasonable, considering that different scenarios of soil distribution in Manisa based on fertility gave estimations that ranged between 95 (8.7 hectares) and 105 *dönüms* (9.7 hectares).

[74] Öz, '16. Yüzyılda Anadolu'da tarımda verimlilik'.

Domestic production and consumption in English pauper households, 1670–1840*

by Joseph Harley

Abstract

This article uses over 450 pauper inventories from Essex and Norfolk to examine domestic production and consumption in the homes of paupers. It finds that as the dependent poor obtained more consumer goods from the 1770s, their households became diverse spaces that contained a wide range of small-scale domestic industries such as baking, farming, and spinning. This evidence suggests that there are limits to Jan de Vries' 'industrious revolution' theory, which claims that households specialized and moved away from modest domestic ventures to acquire new consumer goods over the eighteenth century. Pauper inventories indicate that it was only from the early nineteenth century, when numerous consumer goods had already entered the homes of the poor, that domestic production became less prevalent in pauper homes. In doing this, the study also has important implications on other influential historiographical debates, such as the demise of the old poor law, the role of consumer demand, standards of living, and women and children's work.

Probate inventories – which record the goods that people owned at death for the purposes of adminstering their estates – have been extensively used by historians to research consumption and domestic production. These studies have revealed that with each generation the middling sort and elite acquired more and better goods over the early modern period. People's accumulation of possessions accelerated from the late seventeenth century, as burgeoning numbers of individuals procured novel items such as tea goods, chests of drawers, clocks, looking glasses and pictures.[1] Diversity and self-sufficiency was routine in the early modern household and many homes continued to be involved in brewing, textile manufacture, agriculture and other activities as they acquired these new belongings from the market. In Mark Overton *et al.*'s study of Kent, for instance, it was found that there were major changes in people's material

* I would like to thank Paul Warde, the anonymous reviewers and my former eighteenth-century colleagues at the University of Derby who commented and offered feedback on the piece. I am also grateful to the audience members who asked prying questions when I presented the research at various conferences and events.

[1] See for instance, Lorna Weatherill, *Consumer behaviour and material culture in Britain 1660–1760* (2nd edn, 1996); Mark Overton, Jane Whittle, Darron Dean, and Andrew Hann, *Production and consumption in English households, 1600–1750* (2004), pp. 87–120; Carole Shammas, *The pre-industrial consumer in England and America* (1990); Joanne Sear and Ken Sneath, *The origins of the consumer revolution in England: From brass pots to clocks* (2020).

culture as they continued to involve themselves in by-employment and production for use within the home between 1600 and 1750.[2] Others, however, moved away from these various forms of domestic production as new goods entered their homes. Although the material wealth of people in Cornwall paled in comparison to that of Kent, people there specialized and moved away from by-employment over the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, as small numbers obtained new items of furniture and tableware.[3]

The role of the poor has largely been overlooked in these studies, since probate inventories are much more difficult to locate for indigent populations compared to the middling sort and elite. Lorna Weatherill's classic study of consumer behaviour, for example, only included 28 labourers' probate inventories out of a total sample of 2902 inventories.[4] As a result of better archival cataloguing, Craig Muldrew and Ken Sneath have helped to address this issue by using large samples of labourers' probate inventories to examine consumption and production in labouring households.[5] However, their results are open to question as numerous academics have argued that probate inventories taken of labourers' goods are atypical.[6] Church courts, for example, could not charge a fee if the inventory value was less than £5, meaning that there was a financial disincentive to appraise the goods of poorer people.[7] The need for further research on the destitute becomes ever more important when one considers that the 'poor' (defined in their broadest sense) made up the majority of the eighteenth-century population,[8] and that it was only through their labours that the consumer goods of the Industrial Revolution were produced. Such a large group also had the potential to stimulate and drive demand for products. Finally, owing to an overreliance on probate inventories, numerous studies do not cover the second half of the eighteenth century onwards since probate inventories tend to fade out for the period after 1730.[9]

Studying the poor's domestic production and consumption allows one to critique aspects of important theories regarding the role of demand in the Industrial Revolution, particularly

[2] Overton *et al.*, *Production and consumption*.

[3] Ibid.

[4] Weatherill, *Consumer behaviour*, p. 168. Similarly, also see Overton *et al.*, *Production and consumption*; Anthony Buxton, *Domestic culture in early modern England* (2015); Shammas, *Pre-industrial*.

[5] Craig Muldrew, *Food, energy and the creation of industriousness: Work and material culture in agrarian England, 1550–1780* (2011), esp. pp. 163–207, 246–59; Ken Sneath, 'Consumption, wealth, indebtedness and social structure in early modern England' (unpublished PhD thesis, University of Cambridge, 2008). Also see Sear and Sneath, *Consumer revolution*.

[6] For instance, Joseph Harley, 'Consumption and poverty in the homes of the English poor, *c.*1670–1834', *Social Hist.* 43 (2018), pp. 81–104; Weatherill, *Consumer behaviour*, pp. 191–4; Barry Coward, *The Stuart age: England, 1603–1714* (3rd edn, 2003), p. 55; Peter King, 'Pauper inventories and the material lives of the poor in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries', in Tim Hitchcock, Peter King and Pamela Sharpe (eds), *Chronicling poverty: The voices and strategies of the English poor, 1640–1840* (1997), pp. 156, 176; Sebastian A. J. Keibek and Leigh Shaw-Taylor, 'Early modern rural by-employments: A re-examination of the probate inventory evidence', *AgHR* 61 (2013), pp. 259, 261.

[7] Shammas, *Pre-industrial*, p. 19; Keibek and Shaw-Taylor, 'By-employments', pp. 259, 261; Margaret Spufford and Susan Mee, *The clothing of the common sort, 1570–1700* (2017), p. 5.

[8] Peter H. Lindert and Jeffrey G. Williamson, 'Revising England's social tables, 1688–1812', *Explorations in Economic Hist.* 19 (1982), pp. 385–408; Robert C. Allen, 'Class structure and inequality during the industrial revolution: Lessons from England's social tables, 1688–1867', *EcHR* 72 (2019), pp. 88–125.

[9] There are some exceptions to this such as Sear and Sneath, *Consumer revolution*, and Sneath, 'Consumption', Muldrew, *Food*.

the thesis of an 'industrious revolution' proposed by Jan de Vries. His theory places changes in the household's allocation of labour centre stage in economic development and emphasizes the importance of work effort (industriousness) and consumer behaviour. De Vries argued that households reallocated their time away from household tasks for personal use such as bread making and worked harder for longer hours in more specialized lines of work, to earn a cash income which could be used to purchase market-produced goods during the long eighteenth century (*c.*1650–1850). This could be done in several ways, such as through increased participation in wage labour outside the home, or by intensifying household production for exchange in a particular area such as textile manufacture. The ultimate reason that people made these changes at the level of the household was to gather enough resources to engage in the consumption of a wide range of goods.[10]

Historians have studied the numerous factors underpinning the industrious revolution (such as working hours, domestic production, and consumption) to uncover the extent to which the concept holds up to empirical scrutiny.[11] Probate inventories are important for uncovering the types of consumer goods that people owned and whether domestic production changed over the long eighteenth century as de Vries suggested. However, as noted above, probate inventories largely do not capture the material lives of the poor and studies have found contrasting results regarding domestic production. Research being undertaken at the University of Cambridge has made the issue even more complicated, by suggesting that historians have regularly over-estimated the importance of by-employment due to an overreliance on probate inventories.[12] Clearly there is little unity among historians and an alternative approach is needed.

This article addresses these issues by examining Essex and Norfolk pauper households using the largest sample of pauper inventories ever assembled. It is argued that as many paupers increasingly acquired a wider range of household possessions from the 1770s, their households were often diverse spaces which contained a range of domestic activities for personal use such as baking, farming, and spinning. Pauper inventories cannot be used to argue conclusively on the merits or not of the industrious revolution thesis, since they tell us little about working hours and wage labour outside the home. However, the results from the sources appear to call into question particular aspects of the theory. The inventories indicate that poor households were diverse spaces and did not specialise when new goods entered their homes as de Vries contended. It was only from the early nineteenth century, when many consumer goods were more ubiquitous, that these industries in the domestic sphere appear to have declined. This suggests that it was not the desire for consumer goods that drove changes at the level of the household. Rather, it is reasoned that pauper households adapted their activities as a way to combat growing levels of poverty from the late eighteenth century.

[10] Jan de Vries, *The industrious revolution: Consumer behaviour and the household economy, 1650 to the present* (2008).

[11] For example, see Gregory Clark and Ysbrand van der Werf, 'Work in progress? The industrious revolution', *J. Economic Hist.* 58 (1998), pp. 830–43; Hans-Joachim Voth, *Time and work in England, 1750–1830* (2000); R. C. Allen and J. L. Weisdorf, 'Was there an "industrious revolution" before the industrial revolution? An empirical exercise for England, c.1300–1830', *EcHR* 64 (2011), pp. 715–29.

[12] Keibek and Shaw-Taylor, 'By-employments', pp. 244–81.

I

This piece takes a regional perspective by focusing on pauper inventories drawn from Essex and Norfolk. This is important to do as aggregate studies can sometimes overlook or obscure regional diversity.[13] Textile production was in terminal decline in Essex and Norfolk over the period and by the late eighteenth century most producers struggled to earn a living as manufacturing relocated to the north of England. Other industries such as silk production and lace embroidery helped to fill this void, but they never employed as many people as the worsted industries did. Following this, the populations of Essex and Norfolk became increasingly reliant on wage labour in agriculture.[14] Similar numbers of people were on poor relief in Essex and Norfolk according to the Parliamentary returns and both counties were relatively well connected to the rest of the country through road and water networks.[15] Residents of Essex, however, had a number of advantages over their counterparts in Norfolk. Some of the highest densities of retail outlets were found in the Home Counties. Owing to Essex's proximity to London and fairly swift urban growth in the county, the labouring poor in Essex could also expect to earn higher wages than in Norfolk and the population had greater access to myriad goods and trends that arose from the capital.[16]

Pauper inventories were made by poor law officials to record the possessions that a pauper owned at one point in time. The paupers would then continue to use their goods and at a later date, usually when they died, the goods would revert to the parish when they would then be sold, given to other paupers as relief in kind, or be used to furnish the parish poorhouse/workhouse. This means that in most cases pauper inventories record the possessions of people who were still alive and the goods were not in transit when they were appraised. The pauper inventories are structured very similarly to one another. Most start by detailing to whom the goods in the inventory belonged, who inventoried the goods, and where and when it was made. The household goods are then listed one by one and occasionally rooms or valuations of the goods are recorded.

Two hundred and twenty-eight pauper inventories have been found for Essex and 230 for Norfolk from 1670 to 1834. Of these, four inventories have been omitted from this study as they mainly list linen and clothing or are heavily damaged. Each of the pauper inventories have been cross-referenced to additional parochial sources to confirm that the subjects were on poor relief and to reconstruct familial backgrounds. Seventy-seven and 80 per cent of the

[13] Emma Griffin, 'Diets, hunger and living standards during the British industrial revolution, *Past and Present*, 239 (2018), pp. 76–8.

[14] Pamela Sharpe, *Adapting to capitalism: Working women in the English economy, 1700–1850* (1996); Steven King and Geoffrey Timmins, *Making sense of the industrial revolution* (2001), pp. 33–66; Maxine Berg, *The age of manufactures 1700–1820: Industry, innovation and work in Britain* (2nd edn, 1994), pp. 89–96.

[15] In 1801–03 around 16.4% and 15.2% of the Essex and Norfolk populations were on poor relief. Karel Williams, *From pauperism to poverty* (1981), pp. 149–50; Michael Freeman, 'Transport', in John Langton and Robert J. Morris (eds), *Atlas of industrializing Britain, 1780–1914* (1986), pp. 80–93.

[16] Hoh-Cheung Mui and Lorna H. Mui, *Shops and shopkeeping in eighteenth-century England* (1989); Weatherill, *Consumer behaviour*, pp. 43–69; E. A. Wrigley, 'A simple model of London's importance in changing English society and economy 1650–1750', *Past and Present* 37 (1967), pp. 44–70; Lena Cowen Orlin (ed.), *Material London, ca. 1600* (2000); K. D. M. Snell, *Annals of the labouring poor: Social change and agrarian England, 1660–1900* (1985), pp. 411–17.

Essex and Norfolk samples respectively were on regular relief in the form of a pension when their goods were appraised by the parish, while the remainder were on casual relief which generally took the form of intermittent cash and rent payments or the giving of items in kind such as clothing and food.

Most people had their goods appraised by the parish after prolonged periods of receiving poor relief, rather than having their possessions inventoried on day one. In total, 36 per cent of the pauper inventories were made when people started receiving regular or casual relief and 64 per cent were made of the belongings of people who were already receiving support.[17] This is potentially problematic, as it stands to reason that those who had just started relief may own more goods than those who had been receiving it for long periods of time. In spite of this, levels of ownership are remarkably consistent across the two sets of paupers. This strongly suggests that the selling of goods was common among people who received poor relief and the labouring sort before they became dependent on parish assistance. Large numbers of working-class autobiographies offer evidence to support this supposition. For instance, while a struggling shoemaker John James Bezer 'lived upon mother's pauper allowance' and was forced to sell 'the *last* two old chairs … for 1s. 9d' around 1834.[18] The writings of the vagrant Mary Saxby, the labourer Joseph Mayett and others show that non-paupers also regularly sold and pawned their things.[19] Pauper inventories thus record the possessions of people after most had sold some of their goods to make ends meet. Once individuals' belongings were inventoried by the parish, most would have found it difficult to sell and pawn their possessions to stay solvent. Officials could punish paupers who were found to be selling goods by withholding relief and others branded indigent items with the initials of the parish to limit this practice.[20]

It is difficult to assess pauper inventories from one county as a single collection, as systems of poor relief varied from parish to parish and local practice was dependent upon the economic, legal, and cultural features of the respective settlements. This problem is compounded by the fact that there was no statute or case law which allowed parishes to inventory and later take paupers' goods in return for support.[21] Despite this, most of the pauper inventories record the belongings of comparable *types* of paupers. Officials tended to appraise the possessions of people who were on poor relief due to misfortunes of the life-cycle such as old age, the death of a partner, and illness. Paupers who needed help due to economic pressures such as unemployment and underemployment were generally helped through other short-term methods such as casual relief, Speenhamland, and the roundsman system. The ages of only 14 paupers from the sample have been found, yet the results reveal an average age of 59, indicating that older parishioners

[17] 'Already on relief' is defined as receiving relief for two months or more before the pauper inventory was made. Most people in this category, however, had been on some sort of relief for years.

[18] John James Bezer, 'The autobiography of one of the Chartist rebels of 1848', in David Vincent (ed.), *Testaments of radicalism: Memoirs of working class politicians 1790–1885* (1977), p. 176. Also see, Jack Ayres (ed.), *Paupers and pig killers: The diary of William Holland a Somerset parson, 1799–1818* (1984), p. 278.

[19] Mary Saxby, *Memoirs of a female vagrant* (1806), pp. 14–15, 25–8, 50–2 and Ann Kussmaul (ed.), *The autobiography of Joseph Mayett of Quainton (1783–1839)* (Bucks. Record Soc. 23, 1986), pp. 57, 59, 65.

[20] On the branding of paupers' goods, see Joseph Harley (ed.), *Norfolk pauper inventories, c. 1690–1834* (2020), pp. 20–2

[21] Ibid., pp. 11–14.

were a priority of parishes when it came to inventorying people's goods. Of the 14, no one was in their 20s, one person was in their 30s, two were in their 40s, and most were in their 50s or above.[22] This means that the results from the inventories are potentially problematic, since most of the paupers in the sample were likely to have been less able-bodied and possibly less inclined to participate in domestic production than younger parishioners. Relief was, however, rarely enough to live off and so some form of domestic work was probably necessary to make thrift.[23] Furthermore, throughout the old poor law the elderly were one of the largest and most expensive groups of the dependent poor across the country,[24] meaning that the results will be illuminating for this important subsection of the population at the very least.

It is possible that parishes only inventoried the goods of people who were materially rich or formerly of the middling sort that had fallen on hard times. Yet, there are numerous reasons to suppose that pauper inventories are representative of the approximate ten per cent of the English population that were in receipt of poor relief during the long eighteenth century.[25] For example, of the twelve people who had inventories made of their goods in Martham, Norfolk between 1758 and 1772, only four or five were made of the goods of people who had previously paid rates or had spouses who had done so, and in each case the amounts that they paid were small (*c.*2–3*s.* in rates for the year) and generally irregular.[26] The median and mean number of goods listed in each inventory from the entire sample is 37 and 48 items respectively. Appraisers valued the goods of paupers in 71 of the inventories. Of these, the possessions were worth a mean of £3 16*s.* 6*d.* in total, with a range of £20 and 3*s.* Of course, these figures are imperfect, but they nonetheless indicate that we are not looking at an atypical group and that the inventories are representative of paupers more widely. Statistically, around two-fifths to half of the long eighteenth-century population would end up on poor relief at one stage or more in their lives, and so the sources can potentially be used to understand households at the point in the lifecycle when they turned to the parish.[27]

Pauper inventories from female-headed households were most common from the late seventeenth century to the third quarter of the eighteenth century, but after this date male-headed pauper inventories became more common (Figure 1). At least 83 per cent of the women who had their goods inventoried were widowed or single. The picture is less clear

[22] Ages have been found for a further nine pauper inventories from Dorset and Kent. Used alongside the inventories from Essex and Norfolk, the average age remains high at 62.

[23] This point is developed further later in this section.

[24] Among others, see L. A. Botelho, *Old age and the English poor law, 1500–1700* (2004); Susannah R. Ottaway, *The decline of life: Old age in eighteenth-century England* (2004).

[25] On the numbers of paupers in England, see Lindert and Williamson, 'Revising', pp. 385–408; Allen, 'Class', pp. 88–125; BPP, 1777, IX, Second report. Reported by Thomas Gilbert, pp. 249–96; BPP, 1777, IX, Report from the committee appointed to inspect and consider the returns made by the overseers, pp. 297–539; BPP, 1803–4, Abstract of answers and returns … relative to the expenses and maintenance of the poor in England, p. 175; Williams, *Pauperism*, pp. 148–50.

[26] Norfolk Record Office [hereafter NRO], PD 710/68.

[27] For example, see the findings in: Harley, 'Consumption and poverty', pp. 81–104; Tim Wales, 'Poverty, poor relief and life-cycle: Some evidence from seventeenth century Norfolk', in Richard M. Smith (ed.), *Land, kinship and life-cycle* (1984), pp. 351–404; Steven King, *Poverty and welfare in England 1700–1850: A regional perspective* (2000), p. 80; Henry French, 'How dependent were the "dependent poor"? Poor relief and the life-course in Terling, Essex, 1752–1834', *Continuity and Change* 30 (2015), p. 201.



FIGURE 1. Distribution of Essex and Norfolk pauper inventories by gender, 1670–1834

with men, but where marital status could be determined, around 18 per cent were widowers or bachelors and 82 per cent were married. The proportions of men and women who received support inevitably varied from parish to parish, but these samples broadly reflect the relief profiles of numerous other parishes in the south and east of England over the long eighteenth century.[28] At least 25 per cent of the men and women from the pauper inventories lived with children.[29] This figure is likely to be an under-representation since it came from assessing wider overseers' papers where children were not always mentioned. Nevertheless, around 54 per cent of households which had children were headed by a woman and 46 per cent by a man.

In Norfolk most inventories were made during the 1720s and 1770s, whereas in Essex coverage is strongest during the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century. Some decades in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries are therefore inadequately represented here (Figure 2). Most of the inventories were made in rural parishes meaning that studying urban trends is problematic.[30] With the gender, geographical, and chronological spread of the inventories being uneven, it is important to stress that the results are not comprehensive and for some decades they are necessarily tentative. Despite this, the numbers are sufficient to assess broad trends and reveal new insights into the rural domestic practices of the poor.

[28] King, *Poverty and welfare*, pp. 164–70.

[29] Children are defined as 15 years old or younger.

[30] If one classes 'rural' areas as possessing fewer than 1000 people and 'urban' areas as having more than this, then approximately three-quarters to four-fifths of the inventories can be categorized as rural and one-quarter to one-fifth urban. Most of these 'urban' spaces, however, were relatively small. Only ten of the inventories (2%) were made in settlements with a population of more than 2500 people. For more information on this definition, see Joseph Harley, 'Material lives of the English poor: A regional perspective, c.1670–1834' (unpublished PhD thesis, University of Leicester, 2016), pp. 232–5.

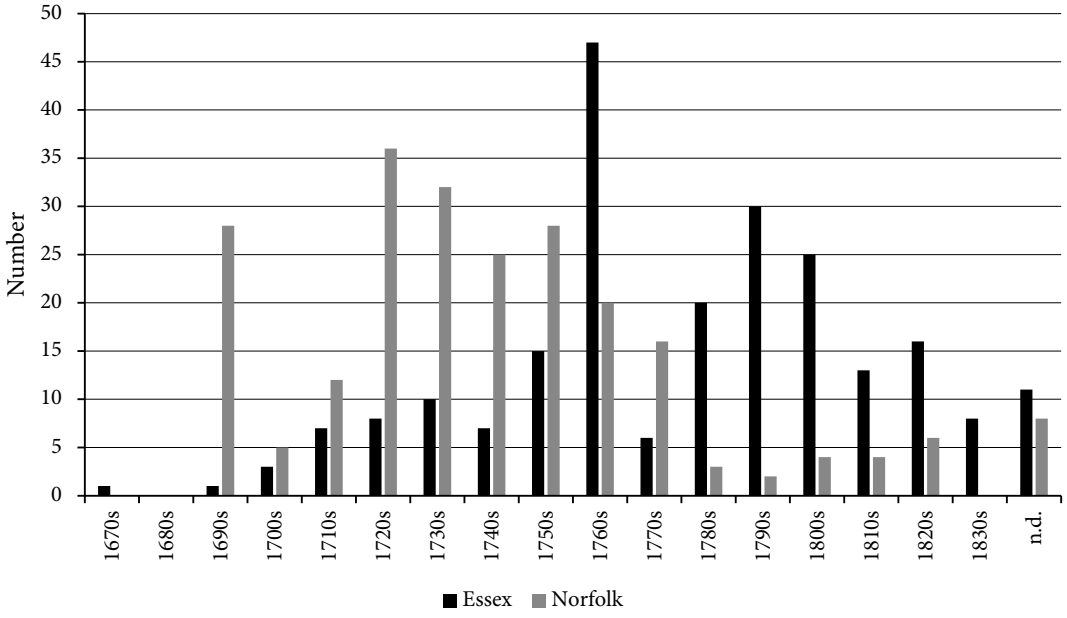


FIGURE 2. Chronological distribution of Essex and Norfolk pauper inventories, 1670–1834

The results are also divided by period and gender where necessary to show the reader relevant nuances in the data.

By quantifying the goods recorded in the pauper inventories, this article examines how often people participated in various forms of domestic production.[31] There are problems with this methodology. First, one should not use pauper inventories with the assumption that they are complete. Overseers tended to make surprise visits to parishioners' homes when they appraised their goods, but some paupers may have had the foresight to hide a few possessions in advance.[32] The goods in the inventories were often sold or recycled around the community after the pauper died, meaning that most appraisers probably neglected smaller items of little financial and utilitarian value. This means that items related to sewing and carding, as well as to craft industries such as button making and straw plaiting, are under-recorded in the inventories. People could have access to working tools which do not appear in the inventories, as they were borrowed from employers, hired, or communally owned. The laundering of neighbours' clothes, nursing, and taking in of lodgers could also be forms of domestic work and provide important earnings for the family economy,[33] but they are rarely found in the inventories since the tasks generally did not involve specialized tools.

[31] This is the same methodology used in probate inventory studies. See Overton *et al.*, *Production and consumption*, esp. pp. 33–86, 181–4; Buxton, *Domestic culture*, esp. pp. 95–117.

[32] For example, see Elizabeth Melling (ed.), *Kentish sources:* IV: *The poor* (1964), p. 104. On the hiding of goods, see Harley, *Norfolk pauper inventories*, pp. 67–9.

[33] Jane Whittle, 'A critique of approaches to "domestic work": Women, work and the pre-industrial economy', *Past and Present*, 243 (2019), pp. 35–70; Nicola Verdon, *Rural women workers in nineteenth-century England: Gender, work and wages* (2002), pp. 164–95.

Second, generic tubs, pails, and barrels could have been used for a range of tasks such as dairying, brewing, and food preservation, but unless adjectives are used to describe the items their use cannot be distinguished. Products like bread could also be made with unspecialized items such as earthenware pans, but if their use is not noted these items cannot be taken to reflect baking. The findings from the pauper inventories should thus be viewed as baseline figures rather than comprehensive statistics.

Third, it is possible that changes in production may stem from the poor buying more specialized items which are easier to identify in the inventories, rather than actual shifts in levels of participation. Changes in baking frequencies in the inventories, for example, may stem from people's growing use of kneading troughs.[34] While this is to some extent true, the results cannot be solely explained away for these reasons. Kneading troughs can be found in inventories from the late seventeenth century, and generic containers such as pails, barrels, and tubs, which can be linked to numerous activities, remained common or grew in ownership throughout the long eighteenth century.[35]

Fourth, it is difficult to analyse the scale of production and amount of time that people spent on various activities using inventories. For instance, somebody who just owned a spinning wheel in theory could produce as much yarn as someone who owned a multitude of spinning-related items if they worked intensely enough. It is also important to note that not all large-scale ventures were necessarily for commercial use and not all small operations were necessarily just for personal consumption. Most notably, it is not possible to determine how long was spent on domestic production compared to wage labour outside the home, which was probably the chief means by which the poor had supported themselves since the seventeenth century.[36] It is conceivable, for instance, that households continued to maintain levels of domestic production, while working more hours outside the home. Such findings would indicate that households had become increasingly industrious, but this change is undetectable in the inventories. This article thus only offers a partial insight into domestic work and there is a limit to how far one can take these arguments with regards to the industrious revolution theory. Yet, some cautious deductions and observations can be drawn about the scale and intensity of production by examining the types and numbers of productive items people owned.[37]

Finally, it is possible that some of the productive goods recorded in the pauper inventories were no longer in use and were left over from earlier periods in paupers' lives when they were younger and more able-bodied. While this is true in some cases, it is important to remember that poor relief was never intended to fully support people and that authorities expected individuals to use other means to supplement their incomes. On average, paupers in this sample from Essex and Norfolk who collected pensions received, respectively, 2*s*. 2*d*. and 1*s*. 7*d*. per week between 1670–1769, and 4*s*. 0*d*. and 3*s*. 1*d*. a week between 1770–1834. This would not have been enough to

[34] This issue is commonly noted in probate inventory studies. For example, Overton *et al*., *Production and consumption*, p. 58.

[35] Barrels, firkins, pails, and/or tubs, for instance, are found in 49% of the inventories dated 1670–1769 and 52% of the inventories from 1770–1834.

[36] De Vries, *Industrious revolution*, p. 82; Shami Ghosh, 'Rural economies and transitions to capitalism: Germany and England compared (c.1200–c.1800), *J. Agrarian Change* 16 (2016), pp. 255–90.

[37] For more information on measuring scale of activity, see Overton *et al*., *Production and consumption*, pp. 35–6.

live off, meaning that most paupers probably continued to produce goods at home even though they were deserving of relief and many were no longer as strong or dexterous as they once were.

II

This section seeks to establish when paupers increasingly owned a greater range of consumer goods. The data from the pauper inventories broadly suggests that between the late seventeenth century and the first half of the eighteenth century, the homes of many of the poor were relatively bare and contained few items (Table 1). Essex paupers tended to own more items of furniture such as chests of drawers, chairs, and tables than their counterparts in Norfolk during this period, but paupers from both counties generally owned few non-necessities such as looking glasses, fenders, and saucepans. It was during the second half of the eighteenth century when we see the most significant changes in Essex and Norfolk, indicating that this was the key period of change when the poor intensified their interaction with the market. There are, of course, exceptions as the consumption of some items such as beds was ubiquitous throughout the entire period, while the ownership of clocks/watches and feather beds was relatively low in Norfolk compared to Essex before the later eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. In addition, owing to the small sample size of inventories from Norfolk during the final decades of the old poor law there are a few peculiarities in the data. For instance, table ownership in Norfolk was 88 per cent for the 1770s, but then it dipped to 70 per cent for 1780–1809, and increased to 100 per cent for 1810–1834. Notwithstanding these issues, the results overall suggest that the most notable change was during the 1770s, as this was the point when paupers increasingly owned a much wider range of items such as chests of drawers, tea goods, glassware, fenders, pokers, saucepans, and looking glasses. It is possible that the paupers had owned these items for long periods of time before their possessions were inventoried by the parish, meaning that the increase in items during the 1770s actually reflects the increased acquisition of goods in the previous decade or so. While this will be true in some cases it seems unlikely that most households followed this pattern, particularly considering that the same upward trends around the final quarter of the eighteenth century can also be found in alternative studies.[38]

We pause now to look at two important implications that these findings have on economic history, before examining production in the homes of paupers. First, many scholars now argue that Britain industrialized as a result of a series of long-term changes and have moved away from viewing the late eighteenth century as a unique turning point in economic and social development.[39] The sample size for the 1770s is only small, but the results indicate that the

[38] For example, King, 'Pauper inventories', pp. 155–91; Adrian Green, 'Heartless and unhomely? Dwellings of the poor in East Anglia and north-east England', in Joanne McEwan and Pamela Sharpe (eds), *Accommodating poverty: The housing and living arrangements of the English poor, c.1600–1850* (2011), pp. 69–101; John Styles, 'Lodging at the old bailey: Lodgings and their furnishings in eighteenth-century London', in John Styles and Amanda Vickery (eds), *Gender, taste, and material culture in Britain and North America, 1700–1830* (2006), pp. 61–80.

[39] For instance, prerequisite commercial and agricultural changes can be dated back to the sixteenth-seventeenth centuries. Joan Thirsk (ed.), *The agrarian history of England and Wales*, IV, *1500–1640* (1967); Shammas, *Pre-industrial*, pp. 76–118; Overton *et al.*, *Production and consumption*, pp. 7–8, 87–120.

TABLE 1. Percentage of Essex and Norfolk pauper inventories which record various consumer goods, 1670–1834

		c.1670–1749	*1750s*	*1760s*	*1770s*	*1780–1809*	*1810–1834*
Bed	Essex	100	100	100	100	99	97
	Norfolk	99	100	95	100	100	100
	All	99	100	98	100	99	98
Feather bed	Essex	53	53	11	67	51	46
	Norfolk	11	7	10	13	40	60
	All	20	23	11	27	49	49
Chest of drawers	Essex	21	27	26	33	40	49
	Norfolk	6	25	45	50	30	40
	All	9	26	32	45	39	47
Chair	Essex	95	93	76	100	91	97
	Norfolk	73	75	95	94	90	100
	All	78	81	82	95	91	98
Table	Essex	89	100	83	83	91	97
	Norfolk	66	79	80	88	70	100
	All	71	86	82	86	88	98
Tea-related items	Essex	1	13	17	33	71	77
	Norfolk	5	11	25	69	70	70
	All	2	12	20	59	71	76
Glassware	Essex	16	0	7	17	16	17
	Norfolk	4	7	15	19	30	10
	All	6	5	9	18	18	16
Saucepan	Essex	0	0	4	17	29	34
	Norfolk	2	4	5	6	0	30
	All	2	2	5	9	26	33
Fender	Essex	8	0	7	17	23	23
	Norfolk	0	0	0	13	0	30
	All	2	0	5	14	20	24
Poker	Essex	3	0	9	17	29	26
	Norfolk	0	7	15	19	10	10
	All	1	5	11	18	27	22
Looking glass	Essex	16	20	7	33	32	34
	Norfolk	15	7	10	44	20	40
	All	15	12	8	41	31	36
Clock/watch	Essex	3	0	7	33	23	29
	Norfolk	0	0	0	0	10	30
	All	1	0	5	9	21	29
Sample size		180	43	66	22	85	45

decade should still be considered as important in discourses of the Industrial Revolution.[40] With the poor increasingly appearing to engage with the consumer market during these years, this is likely to have had a considerable knock-on effect and stimulated production and activity in the wholesaling, retailing, and transport of various commodities. Many of the goods that the poor owned were probably acquired through informal markets and the second-hand trade, but such a significant increase in the range of consumer items in poor households was likely to have had some influence on the wider economy. This suggests that more credence should be given to the role of demand from the poorer sorts during the second half of the eighteenth century.[41]

Second, these results have important repercussions on our understanding of standards of living and consumption during the Industrial Revolution. Research on the working hours of the labouring sort has tended to paint a pessimistic picture, as empirical data has indicated that people worked longer hours and gave up more of their leisure time between 1750 and 1800 to make ends meet. With wages typically stagnating between the same dates, it has been supposed that material standards barely rose.[42] The results in Table 1 are in direct contradiction of this. Pauper inventories represent people who were dependent upon the ratepaying population and so show the material goods of some of the poorest in society. The fact that this group increasingly owned a greater range of belongings from the 1770s suggests that material standards were increasing and indicates that there were major changes in the material culture of the poor. Of course, some of the goods that paupers owned were probably kept from more prosperous times and poor law sources remind us that it was not uncommon for people to be lacking money, clothing, food, and fuel.[43] Moreover, probate inventory investigations show that the middling sort generally saw the same material advancements around a century earlier.[44] But to paint an entirely negative picture is clearly incorrect. Even if wages were stagnating from the second half of the eighteenth century, the poor were able to acquire goods through a considerable range of means, such as poor relief, the second-hand market, theft, and inheritance. Economic historians have long acknowledged the importance of wages and working hours, but greater efforts are needed to consider the informal economies that the poor used to make shift.[45]

[40] Further to this, I have 204 pauper inventories from Dorset, Kent, Leicestershire, Rutland, and Lancashire for the long eighteenth century which also indicate that the 1770s was a key turning point. These findings will be published in my forthcoming monograph, *At home with the poor: Consumer behaviour and material culture in England, c. 1650–1850*.

[41] This idea is not new; for example, see Elizabeth W. Gilboy, 'Demand as a factor in the industrial revolution', in R. M. Hartwell (ed.), *The causes of the industrial revolution* (1967), pp. 121–38. But historians have tended to emphasize supply and downplay demand, for instance, Joe Mokyr, 'Demand vs. supply in the industrial revolution', *JEcH* 37 (1977), pp. 981–1008.

[42] Allen and Weisdorf, 'Was there', pp. 715–29, 722; Voth, *Time and work*, p. 271; Hans-Joachim Voth, 'Living standards during the industrial revolution: An economist's guide', *American Economic Rev.* 93 (2003), pp. 223–4.

[43] For example, see the pauper letters in Thomas Sokoll (ed.), *Essex pauper letters, 1731–1837* (2001).

[44] For instance, the most common adjective used to describe looking glasses in the pauper inventories is 'small', whereas probate inventories show that the middling sort often owned highly decorative and expensive looking glasses. On middling consumption, see Weatherill, *Consumer behaviour*, pp. 25–42; Overton *et al.*, *Production and consumption*, pp. 87–120; Shammas, *Pre-industrial*.

[45] This is not to say that all studies neglect these factors, but that more is needed on non-wage, non-monetary sources of income and consumption. See here:

TABLE 2. Average number of activities recorded in Essex and Norfolk pauper inventories, 1670–1834

	1670–1769	*1770–1834*	*All years*
Essex	2.0	1.7	1.9
Norfolk	0.9	1.8	1.1
All	1.3	1.8	1.5
Sample size	294	152	454

III

We start to examine domestic production in pauper homes by quantifying the number of activities that could be ascertained from the inventories and measuring how this changed over the long eighteenth century (Table 2).[46] The inventories are split into two periods – 1670–1769 and 1770–1834 – as 1770 is the key decade when the possession of consumer goods in poor households increased most significantly (see above). The results show interesting regional differences. In Norfolk, the figures suggest that as people increasingly consumed more goods over the period, households diversified and engaged in a wider range of productive endeavours. On average, Norfolk pauper households participated in an extra activity from 1770 compared to 1670–1769. The inventories from Essex suggest that paupers were involved in a greater number of productive tasks than the poor of Norfolk. However, in contrast the results indicate no significant change over time, with the inventories dated 1670–1769 showing evidence of 2.0 activities on average and the inventories of 1770–1834 recording a mean of 1.7.

Tables 3 and 4 have been constructed to more precisely measure how domestic production changed over the long eighteenth century. The results show that between the late seventeenth and late eighteenth centuries the mean number of domestic industries in Norfolk pauper households was relatively low (0.7–1.1 per household), but that between the 1770s and 1800s each household participated in around an extra activity on average (1.8–2.0 per household). Between the same dates only 17–20 per cent of Norfolk households showed evidence of no domestic production. These results are based on inventories which should never be assumed to be complete, yet they nevertheless suggest that Norfolk households branched out. In Essex, there are much fewer inventories dated 1670–1749 (37) compared to Norfolk (138), and so the results for these decades are highly tentative. Nonetheless, they indicate that household production peaked between 1710–29 and then gradually declined. However, domestic production clearly remained important in Essex as pauper households participated in 1.8–1.9 activities on

Note 45 *continued*
Craig Muldrew and Steven King, 'Cash, wages and the economy of makeshifts in England, 1650–1800', in Peter Scholliers and Leonard Schwarz (eds), *Experiencing wages: Social and cultural aspects of wage forms in Europe since 1500* (2003), pp. 155–80; Steven King and Alannah Tomkins, *The poor in England 1700–1850: An economy of makeshifts* (2003); Griffin, 'Diets', pp. 71–111; John Hatcher and Judy Z. Stephenson (eds), *Seven centuries of unreal wages: The unreliable data, sources and methods that have been used for measuring standards of living in the past* (2018).

[46] This includes activities such as spinning, weaving, sewing, carding, baking, brewing, food preservation (e.g. salting), shoemaking, cider production, dairying, distilling, coppering, and arable/pastoral farming.

TABLE 3. Average number of activities related to domestic production recorded in Essex and Norfolk pauper inventories, 1670–1834

	1670–1709	*1710–29*	*1730–49*	*1750–69*	*1770–89*	*1790–1809*	*1810–34*
Essex	1.4	2.7	2.2	1.9	1.8	1.8	1.5
Norfolk	0.7	0.8	1	1.1	1.8	2	1.5
All	0.8	1.2	1.3	1.5	1.8	1.8	1.5
Sample size	38	63	75	109	46	61	45

TABLE 4. Percentage of Essex and Norfolk pauper inventories which do not record evidence of domestic production, 1670–1834

	1670–1709	*1710–29*	*1730–49*	*1750–69*	*1770–89*	*1790–1809*	*1810–34*
Essex	20	7	6	8	15	24	24
Norfolk	64	46	37	20	20	17	30
All	58	37	29	14	17	23	22
Sample size	38	63	75	109	46	61	45

average between 1750 and 1809. Only around one-fifth of the inventories showed signs of no domestic production between the same dates. Thus, households in Essex were clearly still diverse and busy spaces despite domestic production possibly being on the decline. From the early nineteenth century, households in both counties appear to have become less varied and participated in fewer forms of domestic production.

The fall in domestic production from the 1810s may stem from problems with the sample. As explored above, authorities took more inventories of households headed by men from the third quarter of the eighteenth century and the number of inventories that survive for Norfolk significantly declines from the 1780s. Yet, the larger number of inventories for Essex from the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century show a similar decline in domestic production to Norfolk. When the sources are separated into inventories which are male- and female-headed, the results also show similar patterns over time, with there being a noticeable increase in the number of activities recorded in the inventories between the 1750s–1800s and a decrease by the nineteenth century (Table 5).[47] More troubling, it could be argued that there was not a decline in domestic production in the early nineteenth century, as households increasingly moved to cottage industries such as straw-plaiting and glove making,[48] which are harder to detect in

[47] The greater number of activities in male-headed households probably stems from the fact that these homes tended to have more people in them than female-headed ones. It is beyond the means of this piece to analyse these gendered differences in the detail that it deserves.

[48] Verdon, *Rural women*, pp. 133, 141–61; Deborah Valenze, *The first industrial woman* (1995), pp. 113–27.

TABLE 5. Average number of activities recorded in male- and female-headed pauper inventories, 1670–1834

	1670–1709	*1710–29*	*1730–49*	*1750–69*	*1770–89*	*1790–1809*	*1810–34*
Male-headed	1.1	1.6	1.4	1.8	2.0	2.0	1.7
Female-headed	0.5	1.0	1.1	1.3	1.6	1.6	1.0

the inventories. This issue is difficult to overcome, but it is important to remember that, as Maxine Berg has argued, such industries were generally 'smaller and poorer than their great predecessors' such as spinning and 'sometimes not real replacements at all'.[49] There is also good reason to think that the inventories reflect a real decline in domestic production when we focus on trends in women and children's work.

Over the nineteenth century the male-breadwinner household gradually became the norm and opportunities for female and juvenile employment gradually declined. But during the early years of industrialization women and children appear to have been an important part of the workforce and increasingly looked outside of the home for work at the expense of domestic production.[50] Though often dependent upon regional circumstances,[51] farming remained a vital occupation employing around a third of all women at the turn of the nineteenth century.[52] A wide variety of textile industries including worsted, cotton, silk, and lace manufacture employed high proportions of female workers.[53] The numbers of women in domestic service increased from the eighteenth century, meaning that they outnumbered men in the sector by approximately nine to one in the mid-nineteenth century according to census data.[54] From the late eighteenth century growing numbers of children also worked outside the domestic sphere at younger ages,[55] resulting in less spare time and declining inclinations to help in the production of homemade commodities. Girls tended to learn how to make yarn, cheese, beer

[49] Berg, *Manufactures*, p. 94.

[50] Ivy Pinchbeck, *Women workers and the industrial revolution 1750–1850* (1985; reprint of 1930 edn); Sara Horrell and Jane Humphries, 'Women's labour force participation and the transition to the male-breadwinner family, 1790–1865', *EcHR* 48 (1995), pp. 89–117; Joyce Burnette, *Gender, work and wages in the industrial revolution* (2008), pp. 16–71, 306–26; Maxine Berg, 'What difference did women's work make to the industrial revolution?', *Hist. Workshop J.* 35 (1993), pp. 22–44; Berg, *Manufacturing*, pp. 117–44. This view is not without issue. Emma Griffin, for instance, argued that opportunities for women outside the home were declining during the industrial revolution. However, this claim is based on the analysis of only a dozen working-class autobiographies, of which many do not cover the early years of industrialization. Emma Griffin, *Liberty's dawn: A people's history of the industrial revolution* (2013), pp. 84–106.

[51] For example, circumstances were particularly difficult for rural female workers in East Anglia compared to parts of East Riding of Yorkshire. Verdon, *Rural women*; Sharpe, *Adapting*, pp. 71–100.

[52] Burnette, *Gender*, pp. 50–7. See also Sharpe, *Adapting*, pp. 71–100; Verdon, *Rural women*; Pinchbeck, *Women workers*, pp. 7–110.

[53] Burnette, *Gender*, pp. 39–44; Pinchbeck, *Women workers*, pp. 111–201; Sharpe, *Adapting*, pp. 19–70.

[54] Bridget Hill, *Women, work and sexual politics in eighteenth-century England* (1994), pp. 125–7.

[55] Sara Horrell and Jane Humphries, '"The exploitation of little children": Child labour and the family economy in the industrial revolution', *Explorations in Economic Hist.* 32 (1995), pp. 485–516; Jane Humphries, *Childhood and child labour in the British industrial revolution* (2010), pp. 172–209; Griffin, *Liberty's dawn*, pp. 59–60.

and so on from their mothers,[56] and so with both parties spending more time outside the home these skills were lost across the generations. Coupled with the mechanization of industries such as spinning, intensifying regional specialization, and the rendering of customs such as gleaning and wood gathering as illegal, domestic industries appear to have declined as they became less competitive and feasible to undertake by the early nineteenth century.[57]

Taken as a whole, these results are particularly important. They show that as people increasingly bought more consumer goods from the 1770s, households diversified or continued to engage in myriad forms of domestic production. It was only in the early nineteenth century, when many consumer items had become more common and less novel, that households across the counties started to move away from diverse forms of domestic production and perhaps specialized. The next three sections will examine the main types of household activities that paupers were involved in and how they changed over the long eighteenth century.

IV

Textile manufacture could be an important way for women and children to contribute to the family economy. By making yarn oneself and getting a local weaver to produce the cloth, clothing could be produced for a family much more cheaply than it could be purchased from retailers.[58] Or, alternatively, families might be involved in textile manufacture through the putting-out system, whereby middlemen supplied the raw materials and marketed the finished product, while women organized the production at home in exchange for a piece rate.[59] Some historians have claimed that the amounts of money generated from these networks could be sizable. Craig Muldrew, for example, estimated that a wife and two daughters could contribute 42 per cent of the total family income through spinning.[60] More commonly, however, scholars have argued that spinning was poorly paid and not very productive.[61] In either instance, the pauper inventories show that textile manufacture was important in pauper households as 45 per cent of the inventories show some sign of the industry (Table 6). The results suggest that weaving was relatively uncommon in pauper households. In Essex and Norfolk only 2 and 3 per cent of the inventories respectively recorded looms or other weaving-related items.

[56] Berg, *Manufactures*, pp. 140–2.

[57] The literature on mechanization and regional differences is vast, but the main findings are neatly summarized in: Nigel Goose, 'Regions, 1700–1870', in Roderick Floud, Jane Humphries and Paul Johnson (eds), *The Cambridge economic history of modern Britain*, I, *1700–1870* (2014), pp. 149–77; Robert C. Allen, 'Technology', in Floud, Humphries and Johnson, *Cambridge economic history*, pp. 292–320. On gleaning and other customs, see Peter King, 'Customary rights and women's earnings: The importance of gleaning to the rural labouring poor', *EcHR*, XLIV (1991), pp. 461–76; Sharpe, *Adapting*, pp. 80–5; Verdon, *Rural women*, pp. 180–6; Valenze, *Industrial woman*, pp. 29–47.

[58] John Styles, *The dress of the people: Everyday fashion in eighteenth-century England* (2007), p. 142.

[59] Valenze, *Industrial woman*, pp. 71–5; Berg, *Manufactures*, pp. 180–203; Alice Clark, *Working life of women in the seventeenth century* (1982; repr. of 1919 edn), pp. 93–149; Ivy Pinchbeck, *Women workers and the industrial revolution, 1750–1850* (1985; repr. of 1930 edn), pp. 111–56.

[60] Craig Muldrew, '"Th'ancient distaff" and "whirling spindle": Measuring the contribution of spinning to household earnings and the national economy in England, 1550–1770', *EcHR* 65 (2012), p. 510.

[61] For example, Jane Humphries and Benjamin Schneider, 'Spinning the industrial revolution', *EcHR* 72 (2019), 126–55; Clark, *Working life*, pp. 93–149; Pinchbeck, *Women workers*, pp. 138–47.

TABLE 6. Percentage of Essex and Norfolk pauper inventories which record textile producing goods, 1670–1834

Textile manufacture (any type)	Essex	43
	Norfolk	48
	All	45
Preparation (i.e. carding/combing)	Essex	3
	Norfolk	<1
	All	2
Spinning	Essex	43
	Norfolk	47
	All	45
Weaving	Essex	2
	Norfolk	3
	All	2
Sewing	Essex	1
	Norfolk	<1
	All	1
Sample size		454

TABLE 7. Percentage of Essex and Norfolk pauper inventories which record spinning-related items, 1670–1834

	1670–1709	*1710–29*	*1730–49*	*1750–69*	*1770–89*	*1790–1809*	*1810–34*
Essex	0	60	56	69	42	29	9
Norfolk	33	44	56	58	60	33	20
All	16	48	56	64	50	30	11
Sample size	38	63	75	109	46	61	45

The preparation of textiles (such as combing and carding) is probably underrepresented in the inventories since it involved the use of inexpensive items such as combs. Archaeological evidence and sources such as diaries also suggest that sewing was much more common than the inventory data shows.[62] Most notably, the results show that hand spinning was prominent in eighteenth-century East Anglia. Domestic spinning grew in importance from the late seventeenth century in Essex and Norfolk and by the middle decades of the eighteenth century around half of all pauper households contained spinning-related items (Table 7). By the 1790s, however, domestic spinning was clearly in decline as the industry moved to the north. Between 1810 and 1834 only around one in ten inventories recorded spinning-related items. The last spinning wheel found in the sample was from an inventory dated 1821.

[62] Mary C. Beaudry, *Findings: The material culture of needlework and sewing* (2006); Maureen Day Goggin and Beth Fowkes Tobin (eds), *Women and the material culture of needlework and textiles, 1750–1950* (2009).

It is most probable that spinning only generated small amounts of money, which was not enough to live off or was used on an ad hoc basis for personal consumption. Out of the 173 pauper inventories which record spinning wheels, 98 households only had one and 44 had two. Moreover, the average number of spinning wheels per household appears to have gradually declined over the long eighteenth century.[63] Of course, a number of the pauper inventories record the possessions of single/widowed individuals or elderly people whose children had long moved out meaning that additional wheels were not needed. People could have also hypothetically earned a decent income from labouring on a single wheel by working long enough hours. Nevertheless, these numbers suggest that most people would not have been able to generate anything more than small amounts of cash. Additionally, none of the inventories record materials such as flax, hemp, or wool, suggesting that most people worked with small quantities that were not worth noting by appraisers. People may have used materials supplied to them by middlemen which would not appear in the inventories; but the complete lack of materials nonetheless indicates that most people only produced small quantities of thread. Furthermore, when materials were given to paupers by parochial officials they generally only appear in small quantities, indicating that most indigent individuals were only given enough materials to supplement their incomes or produce apparel for their family. For example, William Catt who had his goods appraised by Ightham (Kent) parish in 1726, only received 1*s*. worth of 'wooll and Carding' in around 1728.[64] Finally, while paupers worked on spinning wheels they appear to have laboured in other forms of domestic production, which would have probably distracted them from working long enough hours to earn high wages making thread.

V

With large parts of Essex and Norfolk being committed to agricultural production and the majority of the inventories being made in rural areas, it is probable that most of the paupers in this sample were involved in some form of agricultural work. But to what extent was this on smallholdings or larger farms of their own? The pauper inventories overall indicate that it was not unusual for the poor to be involved in some sort of domestic farming activity, but that in most cases this production would have taken place on commons (if available) or in gardens (Table 8). Livestock was found in only 4 per cent of the pauper inventories, but items connected to animal ownership such as butchering, dairying, and feeding items increased, suggesting that the pauper inventories may underrepresent animal ownership or that people used to own animals in earlier life. In all likelihood it is the latter, since animals had high financial and utilitarian value and so there is no reason why appraisers would neglect to note livestock if present. Crops are also rarely recorded in inventories, but when one looks at the ownership of tools such as spades, scythes, sickles, and so on, it is probable that many more people were involved in some form of arable farming. Between 1770–1834, for example,

[63] The averages are as follows: 1670–1709 2.0 wheels per household (38 inventories); 1710–49 1.6 wheels per household (138 inventories); 1750–89 1.7 wheels per household (155 inventories); and 1790–1834 1.3 wheels per household (106 inventories).

[64] Kent History Library Centre P202/12/2.

TABLE 8. Percentage of pauper inventories which record arable, pastoral, and outdoor-related activities, 1670–1834

		1670–1769	*1770–1834*	*All years*
Animals (actual)	Essex	7	5	7
	Norfolk	2	5	2
	All	3	5	4
Animals (actual and potential)	Essex	14	26	21
	Norfolk	5	19	7
	All	9	24	14
Crops	Essex	4	2	3
	Norfolk	3	0	2
	All	3	1	3
Agricultural/ outdoor tools	Essex	38	41	39
	Norfolk	16	35	19
	All	23	39	29
Sample size		294	152	454

TABLE 9. Mean and median number of agricultural- and outdoor-related items recorded in Essex and Norfolk pauper inventories, 1670–1834

		1670–1769	*1770–1834*	*All years*
Mean	Essex	4.4	6.7	5.6
	Norfolk	3.3	5.2	3.8
	All	3.9	6.4	5.0
Median	Essex	3	4	4
	Norfolk	2.5	6	3
	All	3	5	3
Sample size		294	152	454

39 per cent of pauper inventories recorded agricultural/outdoor tools compared to 23 per cent in the proceeding period.

It is most likely that the poor worked outdoors on a small scale to provide the family with food or fuel. Where livestock is recorded, it is generally only a single animal for food that is noted.[65] In fact, out of the 20 inventories that recorded livestock only nine of these recorded more than one animal. Of these, four people had poultry; two had bees; one had two pigs; one had a cow, three sheep, and one lamb; and one owned a cow, pig, and ass. Such small numbers

[65] Animals for transport were relatively uncommon. Horses were not found in any of the inventories and asses were noted in three of the 20 inventories which recorded animals.

of livestock did not need much land to graze on and so is highly suggestive of paupers using their gardens.[66] These animals may have also been kept on commons, but with enclosure sweeping through the south, access to this land was drying up over the period.[67]

Crops of some sort are only mentioned in twelve inventories and these too indicate that the scale of production was small. The pauper inventory of Widow Norton's goods in Hingham, Norfolk recorded 'Wood & Corn' worth only 3*s*.[68] Widow Tutell of Gissing, Norfolk owned '2 bushels of weate'; Susan Burrows of Redenhall with Harleston and Wortwell, Norfolk had 'some wheat'; and in John and Ann Hudgill's Aveley, Essex garden in 1826 there were potatoes and beans growing.[69] The produce recorded in the inventories did not even always come from paupers' own land. John Bruster's buttery in Mashbury, Essex, for instance, included 'Large parcels of Wheat Gleans', suggesting that the crops were gleaned off a local farmer's lands.[70] Tables 8 and 9 indicate that the percentage and mean/median numbers of agricultural/outdoor tools that people owned increased over the eighteenth century, implying that the growing of food was more common than the crop figures suggest. The vast majority of these tools, however, were hand tools such as spades, hatchets, and hoes, and they were largely only owned in enough numbers for one or two people to maintain a small plot of vegetables in a garden of some sort. The words 'garden' or 'gardening' appear more often in the inventories than 'wheat', 'hops', or 'corn', further indicating that the tools were primarily used in a domestic setting.[71] These implements could also be used to collect fuel. Six of the inventories from central and eastern Norfolk, for instance, recorded flag spades which were probably used to dig up peat from the Fens in the west or wetlands in the east of Norfolk. Axes and hatchets, which would have primarily been used to maintain grounds or collect firewood, were found in 36 per cent of the inventories which noted agricultural/outdoor tools. These results clearly indicate that large-scale agricultural production was beyond the means of paupers using their own lands or commons. Instead they engaged in arable and pastoral production on a much more modest scale to produce small amounts of food and fuel for personal consumption. These results correspond well to several other studies which show that around one-quarter to one-third of the rural poor were involved in the small-scale growing of vegetables and that animal ownership was relatively low among the poor by the late eighteenth century.[72]

[66] Overton *et al*., *Production and consumption*, pp. 40–1. Although these numbers are small, livestock could still be highly important to people. See Jane Humphries, 'Enclosure, common rights, and women: The proletarianization of families in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries', *JEcH* 50 (1990), pp. 24–31.

[67] Michael Turner, *English parliamentary enclosure: Its historical geography and economic history* (1980); Roger J. P. Kain, John Chapman and Richard R. Oliver, *The enclosure maps of England and Wales, 1595–1918* (2004); J. M. Neeson, *Commoners: Common right, enclosure and social change in England, 1700–1820* (1993); Snell, *Annals*, pp. 138–227.

[68] NRO, PD 575/128.

[69] NRO, PD 50/44; NRO PD 295/102; Essex RO [hereafter ERO] D/P 157/18/10.

[70] ERO, D/P 57/18/1.

[71] 'Garden'/'gardening' are noted 12 times, whereas 'wheat', 'hops', and 'corn' are recorded five, two, and one times respectively.

[72] Among others, see Griffin, 'Diets', pp. 88–9, 99–100; Ian Gazeley and Sara Horrell, 'Nutrition in the English agricultural labourer's household over the course of the long nineteenth century', *EcHR* 66 (2013), pp. 762–4; Frederic Morton Eden, *The state of the poor*, I–III (1797); David Davies, *The case of labourers in husbandry* (1795); Leigh Shaw-Taylor, 'Labourers, cows, common rights and parliamentary enclosure: The evidence of contemporary comment c.1760–1810', *Past and Present* 171 (2001), 95–126; Snell, *Annals*, pp. 174–80.

TABLE 10. Percentage of Essex and Norfolk pauper inventories which record various food processing activities, 1670–1834

		1670–1719	*1720–59*	*1760–89*	*1790–1809*	*1810–34*	*All years*
Baking	Essex	67	65	63	40	54	56
	Norfolk	4	5	35	33	60	15
	All	18	20	53	39	56	35
Brewing	Essex	58	23	10	24	3	17
	Norfolk	18	9	28	3	10	15
	All	26	12	16	23	4	16
Dairy work	Essex	0	10	1	4	6	6
	Norfolk	2	2	13	0	0	3
	All	2	4	5	3	4	5
Food preservation	Essex	8	3	3	13	6	6
	Norfolk	2	2	0	0	0	2
	All	4	2	2	11	4	4
Sample size		57	161	112	61	45	454

VI

In this section we focus on the turning of raw produce into food and drink. Overall, the pauper inventories suggest that food processing was less common than textile production and farming, and that the poor in Essex engaged themselves in a slightly wider range of activities than their counterparts in Norfolk (Table 10). Evidence of baking (generally bread) was found in around half of the Essex pauper inventories throughout the entire period. In Norfolk, on the other hand, the prevalence of baking items significantly increased from 4–5 per cent between 1670–1759 to 60 per cent between 1810 and 1834. Food preservation, such as salting and pickling, was found in only 6 and 2 per cent of inventories from Essex and Norfolk. Only 5 per cent of inventories showed evidence of butter, cheese, or milk processing, indicating that dairying was relatively uncommon in both counties. The distillation of spirits could not be ascertained in any of the sources and only two inventories showed evidence of cider production, probably owing to the fact that cider was primarily drunk in south-west England.[73] The drinking of beer and ale was conversely more common elsewhere in England, with brewing being found in 17 and 15 per cent of Essex and Norfolk inventories respectively. In Norfolk brewing was found in 28 per cent of inventories 1760–89 and declined in the decades after this. In Essex, on the other hand, brewing appears to have peaked during the late seventeenth and early eighteenth century and then declined.

Most of the objects connected to food and drink production were owned in small numbers, suggesting that these activities were primarily for personal consumption. This is not to say that the selling of surplus beer, cheese, or other produce did not happen and was not important

[73] Henry French, *The middle sort of people in provincial England, 1600–1750* (2007), pp. 53, 72.

where present, but it is to say that this was probably not the main purpose of these activities. Large quantities of finished foodstuffs such as beer or butter, for example, are rarely noted in the inventories. Most of the people who owned brine or powdering tubs for preserving meats and other food only owned one. No one owned more than three tubs. More than half of the inventories that record dairying goods recorded only one item connected to milk, butter, or cheese production. In contrast, research on labourers' probate inventories – which likely record the goods of the labouring sort who were wealthier than most – indicates that such activities were much more common than in pauper inventories.[74] Muldrew, for instance, found that 29 and 37 per cent of his sources recorded dairying and brewing equipment respectively during the eighteenth century.[75]

Collectively, the results from the pauper inventories indicate that domestic production of food and drink was important in some indigent households, but that it was generally conducted on a small scale. Where and when the activities were of importance also varied considerably. Brewing, for instance, appears to have peaked in Essex in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth century and in Norfolk it reached its zenith during the 1760s and 1780s. With the exception of baking, most households had clearly started to move away from domestic food processing by the early nineteenth century. The last inventory to record evidence of dairying in Norfolk was dated 1773. Brewing and food processing were only found in 4 per cent of inventories between 1810 and 1834. The next section will consider how the results from the pauper inventories cast light on the thesis of an 'industrious revolution'.

VII

Inventories (of any kind) only offer limited evidence to confirm or disprove the industrious revolution theory. They allow one to study consumption and domestic production, but they fall short of telling us how hard people worked and how long families were occupied with these various forms of domestic production compared to wage labour. Consequently, it is important to stress that the findings are only tentative and that further work is needed to confirm (or disprove) these claims. Nevertheless, the sources do reveal several warning signs which undermine the theory. In order for an industrious revolution to have happened in pauper households, we might expect the inventories to show a decline in small-scale domestic activities for personal consumption as people focused on work which could earn them money; or we would expect households to specialize and scale-up one form of domestic production to make produce which could be profitably sold to others. The paupers in this sample were often elderly and consequently not as industrious as they might have been, yet while they were involved in new patterns of consumption from the late eighteenth century they also appear to have still been engaged in various domestic activities. This runs counter to de Vries' idea that households specialized to acquire new consumer goods. There are two possible reasons why pauper households continued to be diverse spaces. First, paupers may have continued to have

[74] Harley, 'Consumption and poverty', pp. 81–104; Weatherill, *Consumer behaviour*, pp. 191–4; Coward, *Stuart age*, p. 55; King, 'Pauper inventories', pp. 156, 176; Keibek and Shaw-Taylor, 'By-employments', pp. 259, 261.

[75] Muldrew, *Food*, p. 255.

been occupied in domestic production as a method to reduce costs and thereby save money which could be used to purchase consumer goods. Alternatively, households simply continued to work in myriad ways to make ends meet.

There can be little doubt that the poor were interested in acquiring consumer goods. Numerous contemporaries, for instance, wrote disdainfully about how the poor were apparently becoming preoccupied with frivolous and demoralizing goods such as tea, gin, white bread, readymade clothing, and luxury goods.[76] To claim that numerous poor households continued to labour with domestic production to obtain various consumer goods, however, seems unlikely. The poor witnessed some of the most challenging circumstances that they had faced in generations during the eighteenth century. Real wages appear to have stagnated for many men from the late eighteenth century and it was not until several decades into the nineteenth century when they recovered.[77] The food of agricultural workers was nutritionally poor and expensive, taking up around three-quarters of their incomes.[78] Populations were growing exponentially and textile work increasingly moved to the north, resulting in widespread unemployment and underemployment in the south.[79] Levels of pauperism and costs for ratepayers increased on an unprecedented scale as a result of these new challenges. In Essex and Norfolk 16.4 and 15.2 per cent of their respective populations were on poor relief at the turn of the nineteenth century, compared to a national average of 11.4 per cent.[80] With the poor facing these issues, it seems most likely that changes in domestic production came from the basic need to make ends meet and not the desire to acquire additional belongings.

VIII

When probate inventories have been analysed by wealth, it has generally been found that poorer households engaged in fewer forms of domestic production compared to wealthier homes between the late seventeenth and mid-eighteenth century.[81] However, because probate inventories generally record the possessions of more affluent people and fade out over the eighteenth century, these results are open to question and we do not know what happened in

[76] Jonathan White, 'Luxury and labour: Ideas of labouring-class consumption in eighteenth-century England' (unpublished PhD thesis, University of Warwick, 2001).

[77] Charles H. Feinstein, 'Pessimism perpetuated: Real wages and the standard of living in Britain during and after the industrial revolution', *JEcH* 58 (1998), pp. 625–58; Gregory Clark, 'Farm wages and living standards in the industrial revolution: England, 1670–1869', *EcHR*, 54 (2001), pp. 477–505; Gregory Clark, 'The condition of the working class in England, 1209–2004', *J. Political Economy* 113 (2005), pp. 1307–40; Robert C. Allen, 'Pessimism preserved: Real wages in the British industrial revolution' (unpublished working paper, Oxford University Department of Economics, 2007). However, it is important to note that wage and costs of living series have recently come under sustained criticism regarding their accuracy. Most notably by Hatcher and Stephenson, *Unreal wages*.

[78] Griffin, 'Diets', pp. 82–91; Gazeley and Horrell, 'Nutrition', pp. 757–84; Shammas, *Pre-industrial*, pp. 121–56; Robert Fogel, 'New sources and techniques for the study of secular trends in nutritional status, health, mortality, and the process of aging', *Historical Methods* 26 (1993), pp. 5–43; Roderick Floud, Robert W. Fogel, Bernard Harris and Sok Chul, *The changing body: Health, nutrition, and human development in the western world since 1700* (2011).

[79] King and Timmins, *Making*, pp. 33–66; Berg, *Manufactures*, pp. 89–96, 162–222.

[80] Williams, *Pauperism*, pp. 149–50.

[81] Shammas, *Pre-industrial*, pp. 34–40; Overton *et al.*, *Production and consumption*, pp. 137–53; Sneath, 'Consumption'.

poor households over the Industrial Revolution. This article has helped to address this problem. Using pauper inventories, it has been found that as paupers increasingly acquired a wider range of consumer goods during the second half of the eighteenth century, their households were engaged in a number of activities including breadmaking and agricultural work, as well as more established forms of production such as spinning. These activities are likely to have primarily been for personal consumption and modest pots of money, as they appear to have generally been small in scale. It was only decades after various items had entered pauper homes that households became less work-orientated.

The findings raise questions as to whether the industrious revolution theory needs revising and how applicable it is in different settings. It is important to note that it is not my intention here to resolve fully whether the concept is ultimately correct or inaccurate. Little can be said about how people split their days between domestic and external work using inventories. Moreover, numerous other studies have offered convincing evidence that people did, indeed, work longer hours from the eighteenth century.[82] Yet, the results indicate that aspects of the theory – namely how households apparently specialized and moved away from small-scale production before consuming various new goods – are problematic. While these facets of the theory have been successfully applied to certain contexts such as Friesland in the Netherlands,[83] this piece reminds us that the move from a largely rural self-sufficient society to a more market-orientated capitalist economy can vary considerably and take different paths depending upon local and regional context.

This study also has key implications on other influential historiographical debates such as the demise of the old poor law, women's work, and consumer behaviour. From the late eighteenth century, the poor laws reached their 'crisis' years as the numbers of people on poor relief and costs of the system increased substantially. The decline in domestic production has often been connected to this,[84] yet little work has been conducted to analyse the nature, extent, and date of this change. This research shows that the decline in domestic production started around 1810 in Essex and Norfolk. Because this date closely coincides with some of the largest increases in poor relief expenditure and when parishes increasingly experimented with new policies such as the roundsman system, it is probable that this decline in domestic work had some part to play in this 'crisis'.[85] The literature on women's labour is complex and often contrary as some writers choose to emphasize the new opportunities for work that some women had, while others stress the long-term decline of their presence in the workforce and the rise of the male-breadwinner household.[86] This article far from resolves this debate, but since women were often the main producers of goods in the domestic sphere the research reveals fresh insights into female roles and agency. Clearly women of the period were not passive and would adjust what was produced

[82] For example, Voth, *Time and work*.

[83] Jan de Vries, 'Peasant demand patterns and economic development: Friesland, 1550–1700', in William N. Parker and Eric L. Jones (eds), *European peasants and their markets: Essays in agrarian economic history* (1975), pp. 205–66.

[84] For example, George R. Boyer, *An economic history of the English poor law 1750–1850* (1990).

[85] This is not to say that this was the main reason for the 'crisis' of the old poor law. Other factors include the loss of common rights, war, harvest failures, and rising food prices. Peter Dunkley, *The crisis of the old poor law in England 1795–1834: An interpretive essay* (1982).

[86] This extensive debate is well summarized in: Verdon, *Rural workers*, pp. 7–39.

in the home in accordance to their needs and levels of poverty. Finally, the research allows us to understand the material culture of poverty more fully. It has shown that one needs to look beyond wages and prices and examine the second-hand trade, poor relief, credit, theft, and myriad other informal economies, to understand how people bypassed their low incomes to consume more goods over the eighteenth century. Additionally, the inventories show that the poor were not just consumers of items in the late eighteenth century, but could also be important producers of goods such as food, drink, and textiles. Research on consumption and production is often polarized with scholars talking past each other and not researching the two topics together.[87] This article shows that to understand the domestic sphere a greater awareness of both consumption and production is needed.

[87] There are, of course, exceptions including: Overton *et al*., *Production and consumption*; Shammas, *Pre-industrial*; Muldrew, *Food*.

The forms, functioning, and influence of common rights on society and forest management in the feudal system of Austrian Galicia, 1772–1848*

by Joachim Popek

Abstract

Based on source materials primarily held in Lviv, Ukraine, this article examines how common rights over land and forests became established, functioned, and evolved in those Polish lands incorporated into the Austrian Habsburg monarchy at the end of the eighteenth century, and until the dissolution of the feudal economy. An afterword looks at the abolition of common rights in the latter part of the nineteenth century. It presents research on the impact of forest and pasture common rights on forest culture and management, the role of common rights in the economies of different social groups, the legal and institutional forms through which they were managed and contested, the impact of the removal of rights on peasant farms, the Austrian authorities' impact on relations between social groups, and how the actions of the central legislature affected to access to and management of resources. A brief comparison is made between the fortunes of commons under the Austrian administration and those in the Prussian and Russian parts of partitioned Poland.

Historically, common rights played an important role in socio-economic relations in the Polish lands. The functioning of these rights clearly influenced both the standard of living and relations between social groups. They also affected historical processes such as the pauperization or modernization of entire provinces, and contributed to mass antagonisms and social conflicts. The research presented in this article aims to increase historical knowledge about common rights in the Polish lands incorporated into the Habsburg Monarchy at the end of the eighteenth century, the area which was known as the Kingdom of Galicia and Lodomeria, or simply Galicia. The timeframe is 1772–1848 when the feudal economy remained in place. The main research problem is to identify the nature and extent of common rights to land and forests, and the influence of changes to them on modernization processes in Galicia; that is, changes in agrarian society, the modernization of agriculture, and the management of forests.

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The paper also seeks to address difficult and sensitive issues of development, the consequences of which can be seen in the modern pattern of forest ownership in Poland. The Roman legal codification and definition of '*servitutes praediorum*', which survived until the publication of the Austrian Civil Code of 1811, serves as a starting point of the study. The creation of land and forest common rights, the forms they took and their significance for Poland's economy until the fall of the state at the end of the eighteenth century are also considered.

The main part of this article considers the forms and functioning of land and forest common rights in Galicia's feudal economy until the agrarian reforms that began in 1848. Most of the examples in the sources pertain to the northern part of Galicia (the so-called 'forks of the Vistula and San'). These were more densely populated areas, resulting in a greater need and emphasis on acquiring raw materials. This contributed directly to the more intensive use of forest resources and led to more frequent tensions and social conflicts. Nevertheless, analysis of the sources has also been undertaken for areas in eastern Galicia, including the Lwów, Tarnopol and Sambor districts, as well as in western Galicia, a region with large forest complexes (Podhale and the Tatra Mountains). The latter in particular are used to show the contrasts and diversity of the forms of common rights in places with a smaller population and larger expanses of forest.

The Kingdom of Galicia and Lodomeria was a Crown land and province of the Habsburg Empire located in the central-eastern part of Europe in 1772–1918 (Map 1). It was the fragment of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth's territory (part of the Kraków, Sandomierz, Ruthenian, Bełsk, Podolskie and Volhynia voivodships) incorporated by Austria in 1772, with an area of 81,900 km^2 and 2,650,000 inhabitants. Colloquially known as Galicia, it was a densely populated area with a mixture of nationalities and denominations. Most were Poles (mainly Catholics), but the areas east of the river San were more densely inhabited by Ukrainians (of Orthodox and Greek Catholic denominations). A significant share of the population were Jews (mainly concentrated in the cities). The few Germans beyond Silesian Cieszyn were the descendants of colonists from the Middle Ages and in the reign of Emperor Joseph II, lived in settlement groups no bigger than the aforementioned colonies (villages). Galicia's economy was primarily geared towards agriculture with contrasting social and economic inequalities – rich mansions and poor villages.[1]

The region was notoriously poor. It was afflicted by overpopulation, economic backwardness, extensive agriculture, alcoholism, and natural disasters.[2] Difficult living conditions, misery and poverty were familiar sights in the Galician village; famine (caused by poor harvests or epidemics) and food shortages, especially before the harvest,[3] worsened the situation.

[1] S. Grodziski, *Historia ustroju społeczno politycznego Galicji 1772–1848* (1971), pp. 27–30; W. Tokarz, *Galicya w początkach ery józefińskiej w świetle ankiety urzędowej z roku 1783* (1909), pp. 193–4; B. Limanowski, *Galicya przedstawiona słowem i ołówkiem* (1892), pp. 36–47; W. Kalinka, *Galicya i Kraków pod panowaniem austriackim* (1853), pp. 1–3.

[2] K. Stauter-Halsted, *The nation in the village: The genesis of peasant national identity in Austrian Poland, 1848–1914* (2001), pp. 21–3; J. Szewczuk, *Kronika klęsk elementarnych w Galicji w latach, 1772–1848* (1939), pp. 3–204.

[3] This refers to the period between the end of the winter and the first harvest, when food stores were running low. Poorer people were forced to go hungry and prepare meals using anything edible (food that had gone off, weeds, bread made from couch grass). J. Słomka, *Pamiętnik włościanina od pańszczyzny*



MAP 1. Galicia with the administrative division and the main towns in 1867 with (inset) The Kingdom of Galicia and Lodomeria in the Habsburg Monarchy in 1815

Not without reason, Galicia was called the poorest region in the Habsburg monarchy and in Europe as a whole. After the first partition of the Polish lands, the Austrians did not pay much attention to the development of the province, treating it as an uncertain and temporary acquisition. Galicia served primarily to provide taxes and recruits for the army. Reforms during the reigns of Maria Theresa and Joseph II aimed to improve the situation of the peasants as the largest and poorest social group living in servile oppression and serfdom. After the death of Joseph II, his successors abandoned his reforming efforts and annulled some of his laws. Acting on the maxim *divide et impera*, the authorities used the poor relations between the peasants and the landowners, making the latter responsible for collecting taxes and recruiting men for the army. The peasants did not distinguish between tributes paid to the state and those for the manor. This strengthened mutual dislike, which culminated in the revolt (the 'Galician Slaughter') of 1846. The 'myth of the good Emperor', the defender of the peasants, also emerged in these circumstances.[4]

Note 3 *continued*
do dni dzisiejszych (1912), pp. 68–9; J. Bąk, 'Opieka społeczna nad sierotami w krakowskim Towarzystwie Dobroczynności w latach, 1816–1916', *Rocznik krakowski* 46 (1975), p. 104.

[4] R. Łubieński, *Nieurodzaj i głód w Galicji. R., 1879–1880* (1880), pp. 21–2; S. Szczepanowski, *Nędza Galicyi w cyfrach i program energicznego rozwoju gospodarstwa krajowego* (1888), pp. 1–12; Grodziski, *Historia ustroju*, pp. 30–9; R. Frucht (ed.), *Eastern Europe.*

This article will define and assess the Austrian legislature's influence on changes in common rights in Galicia, the influence of these rights on culture and forest management, and evaluate whether restrictions on rights contributed to the pauperization of peasant farmers, as the largest social group. The article also touches on the question of modernization, as understood by decision-makers at the time (primarily landowners) who saw the functioning of common rights as an unfair burden, a restraint on the rural economy, and detrimental to the improvement to their own property. The negative impact of common rights on the environment was one of the arguments used in favour of removing or regulating rights. As a result, 'modernization' was interpreted as a departure from the multi-functional forest and the establishment in its place of a forest economy producing timber for sale, which generated profits for the landowners. The nineteenth-century literature repeatedly encouraged the introduction of 'scientific forestry' in line with modern principles. The debate on common rights (including in the *Sejm* (parliament) of Galicia and Lodomeria at the start of the 1860s) was dominated by landowners who concentrated on clarifying the structure of property by abolishing common rights as quickly as possible. The social dimension addressed in this article is no less important. It focuses on the impact of common rights on relations between those entitled to common rights and those owners bound to respect those rights; above all, between the servile population and landowners.

The concept of common rights was well known across Europe. Conditions in different regions led to the use of specific descriptive terms and legal norms, but they shared a common feature: the land was used by multiple people or households at a given time. The most frequently encountered forms of common rights can be divided into three groups: common grazing after the harvest; the cutting of straw and hay; and grazing on permanent grassland and gathering wood from the forest.[5] The 'common rights' in Austrian Galicia were similar common rights in England. They included common of pasture, common of piscary (right to fishing), common of turbary (right to dig turf), the right to dig coal, minerals or stones, and common of estovers (or just 'estovers'), and the right to gather wood.[6] There were also similarities in the rights over common land use in other countries (including Flanders).[7] Nevertheless, in the Polish lands, we must distinguish between common lands used by several communities (rural or urban), or a community and the manor, encompassing common pastures and meadows (called in Latin *rustical* commons, for which tax was liable from those communities), and forests (*dominical* commons, where the tax liability fell on the landlord). Moreover, in contrast to countries in western Europe, peasants' common rights in the Polish lands in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries were directly linked to the system of serfdom ('second serfdom').

Historians have studied the agrarian reforms in Galicia, but the question of common rights over land and forests has not been researched or written about comprehensively. Works on

Note 4 *continued*
An introduction to the people, lands, and culture (2005), p. 20; J. Purchla, 'Małopolska or Galicia: Cracow's dilemmas in central Europe', in T. Hayashi and F. Hiroshi (eds), *Regions in central and eastern Europe, past and present* (2007), p. 263.

[5] M. De Moor, L. Shaw-Taylor and P. Warde (eds), *The management of common land in north-west Europe, c. 1500–1850* (2002), pp. 18–19.

[6] W. Blackstone, *Commentaries on the laws of England in four books with an analysis of the work* (1832), pp. 24–7.

[7] M. De Moor, 'Commons and common rights in Flanders', in De Moor *et al.* (eds), *Management of common land*, pp. 117–21.

agrarian change characterize common rights in general terms and devote little space to them.[8] In the case of Galicia, as well as the other Polish lands during the partitions, there has been no study showing systematically the role of common rights over land and forests in the system of serfdom present until 1861 in the area of the old Kingdom of Poland.[9] Compared to the interest in western European countries,[10] the subject of common rights in the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth has not been considered as a separate issue worthy of analysis.

Manuscripts from the Central State Historical Archives of Ukraine in Lviv played an invaluable role in the research. These sources are housed in the C. K. ('imperial and royal') Galician Governorship collection,[11] which contains several thousand references relating to the area. The files contain a wide variety of documents: applications and requests to the C. K. Galician Governorship, proxies for rural and urban settlements, complaints, petitions, applications, appeals, maps showing separated forest equivalents, lists of people authorized to collect raw materials from forests, reports from meetings regarding common rights,[12] income tables (detailing revenues), the testimony of witnesses, and correspondence with the district administration. This documentation remains fragmentary, and this research has selected materials from specific landed estates.

I

The common rights that existed in Austrian Galicia during the period in question had their roots in Roman legal codifications. This governing legal framework had emerged during the rule of the Polish commonwealth. Lawyers at the time defined the term *servitutes*, distinguishing between two main types: common rights to land (*praediorum*) and personal common rights (*personarum*).[13] The term *servitutes praediorum* refers to a circumstance in which the owner of

[8] Important contemporary works include Piotr Guzowski's article on commons in the Polish Commonwealth in the late medieval and early modern period. He characterizes both the subordinated population's common rights that allowed them to use natural resources located on manorial land and rural commons serving inhabitants, including as a commons for grazing cattle. P. Guzowski, 'The commons in late medieval and early modern Poland: An unattended historical phenomenon', in. P. Guzowski, 'The commons in late medieval and early modern Poland: An unattended historical phenomenon', in N. Grüne, J. Hübner and G. Siegl (eds), *Ländliche Gemeingüter: Kollektive Ressourcennutzung in der europäischen Agrarwirtschaft* (2016), pp. 52–9.

[9] S. Ogilvie and A. W. Carus, 'Institutions and economic growth in historical perspective', in P. Aghion and S. N. Durlauf (eds), *Handbook of economic growth* (2014), p. 417; S. Ogilvie, 'Communities and the "Second Serfdom" in early modern Bohemia', *Past and Present* 187 (2005), pp. 69–119; J. Nichtweiss and G. Seward, 'The Second Serfdom and the so-called "Prussian Way": The development of capitalism in eastern German agricultural institutions', *Review (Fernand Braudel Center)* 3 (1979), pp. 99–140; A. Kamiński, 'Neo-serfdom in Poland-Lithuania', *Slavic Review* 34 (1975), pp. 253–68.

[10] H. R. French, 'Urban common rights, enclosure and the market: Clitheroe Town Moors, 1764–1802', *AgHR* 51 (2003), pp. 40–68; P. T. Hoffman, *Growth in a traditional society: The French countryside, 1450–1815* (1996), pp. 21–34; L. Shaw-Taylor, 'Labourers, cows, common rights and parliamentary enclosure: The evidence of contemporary comment, *c.* 1760–1810', *Past and Present* 171 (2001), pp. 95–126; G. Clark and A. Clark, 'Common rights to land in England, 1475–1839', *JEcH* 61 (2001), pp. 1009–36.

[11] Central State Historical Archives of Ukraine in Lviv [hereafter CSHAUL], corps 146/64.

[12] Covering lists of rights, and estimated values of common rights.

[13] W. H. Hunter, *Introduction to Roman Law* (1864), pp. 59, 64–7; J. Pieńkos, *Praecepta iuris* (2010), pp. 82–5;

the property was entitled to dispose of the common right to the property. Acting in accordance with the principle of bringing benefits to immovable property, the law was assigned to a specific ruling property and applied regardless of its owner. The definition of *servitutes* had a practical equivalent in medieval Polish law, but the terms changed in the adoption of Roman law. The rights were based on a rule that referred to the Roman definition, but the legal relationship that emerged and the different terms used allow us to say that they were common rights. They were referred to as *libertates* or simply commons, as well as *unus*, the burden that the owner of the property subject to the law had to bear.[14] They were defined precisely by Jan Wincenty Bandtkie-Stężyński: 'This can include details that did not have a separate name in Roman law, since their nature agreed with the Roman theory of servitutes'.[15] Przemysław Dąbkowski's position corresponds with this view. Transcending semantics, he ascribed a greater importance to the name, indicating that – unlike Roman law – common rights in Polish law privileged the rightsholder. This meant that, most of the time, specific names were used, e.g. *wrąb* (the right to fell wood) or *zbiór żołędzi* (the right to gather acorns).[16] It is extremely important to define the terminology used in relation to common rights precisely because both local terms characteristic of the Polish language and those used by the Austrian legislation were used in eighteenth- and nineteenth-century Galicia. During this period, all common rights that were part of the feudal system were referred to as *służebności* or *serwituty*;[17] in most cases, these were understood as rights to resources on the property owned by the manor. From the Austrian authorities' perspective, Galician common rights were referred to as *Servituten*. This term is present in historiography written in German, as well as in legislation.[18] It was precisely defined by William Henry Hall, who wrote that 'In connexion with the *roboth* [corvée labour] was the system "servituten", or common rights of the lord and commune, respectively. These referred principally to collecting firewood and cutting down timber, and pasturing cattle on meadow lands.'[19]

According to Dąbkowski, the main reason why common rights were established in the time of the Commonwealth was the need to allow the population to use other people's property at a period of demographic growth and economic development. Peasants, townspeople, and clergy acquired the right to use common[20] and estate lands, in both private and royal properties.

Note 13 *continued*
A. Fermus-Bobowiec and I. Szpringer, 'Przegląd sposobów powstania służebności – od prawa rzymskiego do współczesnego prawa polskiego', *Studia z Dziejów Państwa i Prawa Polskiego*, 13 (2010), p. 12.

[14] P. Burzyński, *Prawo polskie prywatne napisane i poświęcone pamięci ubiegłych w roku 1864 pięciuset lat istnienia Uniwersytetu Krakowskiego* (1871), p. 440; R. Hube, *Prawo polskie w wieku trzynastym* (1874), p. 114; M. Warciński, *Służebności gruntowe według kodeksu cywilnego* (2013), pp. 30–3; K. Szczaniecki, *O służebnościach ziemskich podług prawa rzymskiego* (1862), p. 20.

[15] J. W. Bandtkie-Stężyński, *Prawo prywatne polskie napisane i wykładane przed r. 1830 w b. Warszawskim Aleksandryjskim Uniwersytecie* (1851), p. 299.

[16] P. Dąbkowski, *Prawo prywatne polskie* (2 vols, 1911), II, pp. 254–5.

[17] R. F. Leslie, A. Polonsky, J. M. Ciechanowski, Z. A. Pelczyński, *The history of Poland since 1863* (1981), p. 9; E. Till, *Prawo Prywatne Austryackie* (5 vols, 1884–1902), II, pp. 324–5.

[18] Kaiserliches Patent, […] über die Regulirung und Ablösung der Holz-, Weide- und Forstprodukten-Bezugsrechte, dann einiger Servituts- und gemeinschaftlichen Besitz- und Benützungsrechte festgesetzt werden, 5.07.1853; *Die Grund- und Servituten-Streitigkeiten in Galizien* (1862), pp. 3–24.

[19] W. H. Hall, *Polish experiences during the insurrection of 1863–4* (1864), pp. 92–3.

[20] Forests, meadows, pastures, stubble fields, fallow land, rivers, and lakes.

Areas over which common rights existed allowed the owner of the property to exercise rights such as hunting, tree felling,[21] fodder,[22] river-rafting, transport, fishing,[23] moving along roads and routes, digging clay or lime from the ground (among other materials), harvesting fruit, and cutting the branches of trees that intruded onto an adjacent property. An individual or a whole group of people, such as peasants from a given village, had the right to use the area covered by a specific right. There was no universal formula for ascribing the legal basis. In most cases, it resulted from local conditions and needs.[24]

Land and forest common rights created relationships between the entitled and obligated parties. The commoners were mostly peasants, townspeople, and clergy using parts of the manorial estates. However, there were situations in which landowners used the right to graze cattle on pastures and meadows that remained in common ownership of villages. This led to many conflicts over ownership and attempts to appropriate property. There was a dispute of this kind between the owner of Mielec, Jan Pieniążek, and its inhabitants in the first half of the nineteenth century. The dispute arose out of Pieniążek's attempt to prove that the village's common was his property.[25]

The circumstances in which common rights to land were established on the Polish lands varied. Most often it happened in one of two ways: in accordance with the intention of the owner of the manorial property, or contrary to his will. The first way refers to grants of all kinds often made as part of the acts founding new urban and rural settlements, acts establishing a parish, contracts, and donations.[26] Common rights that were established and shaped later in the second way were characterized by a relationship of sovereignty and serfdom – above all the sovereignty of the manor over peasants. These formed the largest group of rights. They survived for centuries until they were formally abolished in the nineteenth century. Common rights could also be established regardless of the obligated party's will. They included all rights resulting from manorial verdicts or laws. The nobility often exploited the latter, as the entitled party. In the early modern period, a rule was adopted that owners of private property adjacent to royal property had the right of the so-called right of 'entrance' (*prawo wstępów*). This allowed them to take wood from forests and fish from waters that belonged to the king.[27]

The vast majority of common rights over land and forests operating in the Polish lands were linked to the manorial economy and serfdom. The biggest beneficiaries of the rights were the peasants and the townspeople. Required to perform servile work for free on manorial lands, the subordinate population received access to natural resources on lands owned by the feudal lord as a from of compensation. Common rights therefore resulted directly from the power relationship between the owner of the natural resources and the subordination of the people

[21] Entering and collecting timber from the forest on specific terms.

[22] Cattle grazing on fallow land, fields of stubble, pastures, and forests.

[23] In water common rights, also washing and watering cattle, soaking hemp, washing clothes, and bathing in rivers, brooks, ponds, and lakes.

[24] J. P. Himka, *Galician villagers and the Ukrainian National Movement in the nineteenth century* (1988), pp. 36–7; Burzyński, *Prawo polskie prywatne*, pp. 440–3; S. Inglot, *Historia chłopów polskich* (3 vols, 1972), II, p. 245.

[25] CSHAUL, corps 146/64, vol. 5982.

[26] Dąbkowski, *Prawo prywatne polskie*, II, pp. 256–7; W. Woyzbun, *O służebnościach leśnych* (1867), pp. 6–7.

[27] Dąbkowski, *Prawo prywatne polskie*, II, p. 260.

living on their property.[28] The best example of the dependence of peasants' common rights on their servile status occurred in 1846 during the Galician Slaughter.[29] During the revolt peasants refused to perform the duties of serfdom. Landowners responded by ceasing to respect their common rights and forbidding them from using manorial forests, meadows, and pastures, further harming relations between the village and the manor. Poor relations, mutual dislike and distrust resulted from the landowners' irresponsible policy of increasing the burdens of serfdom and strengthening the subordinate relationship.

Peasants were subject to the lord's authority in a personal, administrative, judicial, and economic sense. The scale of the problem and manors' abuse of their subordinates were not exposed until the urbarial surveys made in Galicia during the reign of Emperor Joseph II towards the end of the eighteenth century.[30] The Habsburg reforms had a very positive influence on the personal and economic position of the peasantry. Labour services were limited to three days per week, the ability to lodge complaints with the state administration about manorial abuse (especially humiliating corporal punishment) was introduced and, above all, the distinction between land used by the peasants *(rustical* lands) and land that was part of manorial demesne farms (*dominical* lands) was introduced.

In the context of common rights, it was considered of particular importance to introduce a ban on the eviction of subordinates from farms they had hitherto worked, and to forbid the incorporation of *rustical* common land used for the common grazing of cattle (such as pastures jointly owned and used by the village and the landowner) into the *dominical* areas of the manor.[31] An analysis of the sources indicates that, on the territory where the 1846 Galician Slaughter took place (including the Tarnów, Jasło and Rzeszów districts), there had previously been numerous social conflicts. These arose out of the displacement of peasants from farms, manorial appropriation of common land, unjustified abuse of the peasants (including their corporal punishment), the imposition of additional serf duties and extraordinary work (for

[28] Hall, *Polish experiences*, pp. 92–3; J. Broda, *Historia leśnictwa w Polsce* (2000), p. 110.

[29] The Galician Slaughter was a peasant uprising in Austrian Galicia in 1846 which directly targeted the excessive burdens of serfdom and the nobility. The slaughter mainly covered lands in western Galicia. The Austrian authorities exploited it as an instrument for punishing the nobility for organizing the anti-Austrian uprising (the Kraków Uprising), which ultimately only covered the area of the Free City of Kraków. The peasant uprising had an exceptionally violent character. Peasants attacked and plundered manorial property, murdered nobles, and their servants, and caught insurgents involved in the Kraków Uprising, passing them directly to the Austrian authorities (around 430 manors were robbed and around 1100 people were murdered, often in a cruel way). Ultimately, the peasants were suppressed by the army and forced to do serf work. T. W. Simons, 'The peasant revolt of 1846 in Galicia: recent Polish historiography', *Slavic Rev.* 30 (1971) pp. 795–817; J. Sieradzki, C. Wycech, *Rok 1846 w Galicji* (1958), pp. 13–30; S. Dembiński, *Rok 1846. Kronika dworów szlacheckich* (1896), pp. 14–43; S. Kieniewicz, *Ruch chłopski w Galicji w 1846 r.* (1951), pp. 103–4; A. Polonsky, 'The revolutionary crisis of 1846–1849 and its place in the development of nineteenth-century Galicia', *Harvard Ukrainian Studies* 22 (1998), pp. 443–69; K. Daszyk, T. Kargol and T. Szubert, *Rok 1846 w Krakowie i Galicji : odniesienia, interpretacje, pamięć* (2016).

[30] An Urbar was a register of rights and rentals pertaining to a feudal lordship.

[31] J. Blum, *The end of the Old Order in rural Europe* (1978), p. 222; M. Weber, *General economic history* (1961), pp. 88–9; P. M. Judson, *The Habsburg Empire. A new history* (2016), p. 70; K. Ślusarek, *Austria wobec polskiej szlachty w latach 1772–1861*, pp. 189–90; Rozdolski, *Stosunki poddańcze w dawnej Galicji* (2 vols, 1962), I, pp. 77–80; Kalinka, *Galicya i Kraków*, pp. 138–9; Himka, *Galician Villagers*, pp. 1–9.

example, on Sunday during the harvest), as well as landowners introducing or raising charges for collecting natural resources from manorial property as part of common rights.[32] A similar pattern can be perceived in 1848 during the Spring of Nations when serfdom was abolished throughout the whole Habsburg monarchy. When the labour services required from peasant serfs were abolished in May of that year, landowners again ceased to respect their subordinates' common rights. This naturally led to disputes, conflicts, violent attempts to use manorial forests and pastures, as well as the theft of timber and the destruction of forests. The problem primarily concerned private goods in Galicia, despite the Austrian authorities' order that all common rights were to remain in place until regulated by a separate legal act.[33]

II

Common rights to land and forests in the early Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth operated on varying principles. For obvious reasons, they were defined by the provisions that established the rights, but the conditions for exercising that right could later change. This was particularly important in the case of forest and pasture rights. Entitled persons could use forest resources and graze cattle either freely and without restrictions or under certain conditions. For example, the town of Leżajsk had a common right which entitled them to free use of the forest. In 1524, alongside the town's founding charter, townspeople received the 'freedom to fell the forests for fuel and construction for free'.[34] This right was confirmed in the inventory of lands and rights made by the Leżajsk district office in 1664.[35] Nevertheless, restrictions on the exercise of the common rights were being imposed here in the eighteenth century.

Attempts to regulate the use of forests by commoners had a long history. Franciszek Bujak has described how, by granting the Bishop of Wrocław the right to use the forests, Prince Henry the Bearded (reigned 1232–8) also defined the rules for exercising this right. The first initiatives aimed at protecting forest areas against unjustified felling appeared in the fourteenth century.[36] The modern historian of Polish forestry Józef Broda noted that, in many parts of the Commonwealth, there was a conviction that forest resources were inexhaustible and indestructible. This was especially the case in densely forested areas, where the uncontrolled use of natural resources led to ravages, disordered logging, and the degradation of tracts of forest. As an example, he pointed to the nature of forest management on the vast *Żywiec* property in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. In addition to collecting materials from the forest for their own needs, the peasants sold timber, charcoal, and forest fruit collected from manorial forests. The landowner received a commission on the transaction or the lease of a specific area of forest in the form of cash or the equivalent amount of collected products. In the second half of the seventeenth century, the owner of the *Żywiec* property sought – to the maximum extent possible – to limit the right of peasants to free logging in manorial forests

[32] CSHAUL, corps 146/64, vols. 4699–4703, 5234. Inglot, *Historia chłopów*, II, pp. 203–4.

[33] CDIAUL, f. 146, o. 64, spr. 319, 343, 4692–4704, 5092, 5182, 8741, 8774, 11014; W. F. Reddaway, J. H. Penson, O. Halecki and R. Dyboski (eds), *The Cambridge history of Poland* (1941), p. 432; Himka, *Galician villagers*, pp. 36–7.

[34] CSHAUL, corps 146/18, vol. 2724.

[35] CSHAUL, corps 146/87, vol. 73.

[36] F. Bujak, 'Studya nad osadnictwem Małopolski', *Rozprawy Akademii Umiejętności*, 22 (1905). pp. 197–8.

and to trade in timber. Officially, manorial actions sought to protect forests from overuse, but the main motive was generating additional income by removing peasant intermediaries and establishing a monopoly on the supply of timber.[37]

Unlike in the Polish lands – where forests were owned by the nobility, monarchy, or clergy – in parts of western Europe forest areas could be owned by communities. Residents paid more attention to controlling people exercising their common rights; regulations that limited those rights (to sell timber, among other things) or restricted the use of natural resources, resulted from disputes and conflicts between different social groups.[38]

The practice of introducing limits on the use of forests is also seen on crown properties. In the eighteenth century, the townspeople of Horodło exploited their felling rights to an excessive degree and caused too many trees to be cut down and destroyed. This led to limits being placed on their entitlement.[39] The example of Horodło reflects the general tendency for limits to be imposed as an ad hoc response to over-exploitation. Nevertheless, it would be mistaken to think that supervision of forests and efforts to introduce effective forest management were not introduced until the nineteenth century. An undoubted breakthrough came with plans to manage forests by separating forest areas from agricultural land; that is, treating forests as a separate branch of the manorial economy (by planning total felling, renewal, and long-term wood management plans). Initiatives of this kind mainly appeared on the large noble estates, including the Zamoyski, those in Kock and Siemiatycze owned by the Jabłonowski family, and the Radziwiłł estate in the Wilno Region (*Wileńszczyzna*) during the second half of the eighteenth century.[40] Dąbkowski has shown how, at the time that common rights were granted, payment for their use was envisaged; for example, people using the royal forests paid fees defined as forest, grove, or foraging fees.[41] A similar solution was also used in Galicia in the late eighteenth century, when peasants were obliged to participate in paying a forest tax. In the nineteenth century, though, setting limits on the exercise of particular rights was common practice (for example, by demarcating common forest areas).[42]

Parish priests and their supporting household members – both Roman Catholic and Greek Orthodox – also had common rights. In most cases, they were established when the parish was being formed: they could survive unchanged until common rights were abolished. This was the case in the parish of the Holy Trinity in the village of Babice by the river San. From its establishment in 1792 until the second half of the nineteenth century the parish priest's household had the right to fell trees freely in the manorial forests for fuel, repairs, and building; fish freely from the San, all manorial ponds, and lakes; and graze cattle and pigs freely in manorial forests and pastures.[43] The Greek-Orthodox parish of the Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary in Wasylkowce had similar rights. An inventory from 1805 shows that the parish had the right to graze cattle on both manorial and communal lands. Unlike other parishes, though, it did not refer to old grants but rather to customary law and long-term use.[44]

[37] J. Broda, *Gospodarka leśna w dobrach żywieckich do końca XVIII w.* (1956), pp. 46–50.

[38] P. Warde, 'Fear of wood shortage and the reality of the woodland in Europe, *c.*1450–1850', *Hist. Workshop J.*, 62 (2006), p. 41.

[39] Ossoliński National Institute [hereafter ONI], vol. 2847/II.

[40] Broda, *Historia leśnictwa*, pp. 16–18.

[41] Dąbkowski, *Prawo prywatne polskie*, II, p. 255.

[42] CSHAUL, corps 166/118, vol. 44.

[43] ONI, vol. 4884/III.

[44] ONI, vol. 7214/III.

III

After the First Partition of Poland in 1772, the way common rights to land and forests in Galicia operated did not change fundamentally. There were, however, attempts to limit some of the rights, especially the rights of those residing on Austrian state property. The authorities' first attempt was the patent of 16 October 1772,[45] which primarily aimed to counter the destruction of the forests. However, Roman Rozdolski has noted that the rule limiting rights did not come into force. The first patent actually removing some rights to wood was enacted on 28 January 1773. Entitled persons could continue to gather firewood from the forests, but lost the right to fell timber freely for building or sale. Encouraged by the authorities' actions, landowners started acting similarly, guided by freedom in the interpretation of legal provisions.[46] The forest law of 20 September 1782, which aimed to regulate forest use, had a similar fate. The manorial authorities' arbitrary understanding of the rules led to the restriction of peasants' rights on private estates.[47] One of the rules stated that the days of the week on which subjects, assisted by rangers or gamekeepers, could enter the forest and collect materials they required, had to be defined. This led to the custom colloquially referred to as *wolnice*,[48] which survived until common rights were abolished in the second half of the nineteenth century.[49] The sources show that after this date the right of peasants to enter forests freely was restricted. They could still collect firewood, but the provision of wood for building became the owner's responsibility. In this way, manorial authorities repeatedly tried to make up for the 1781 reduction of serfs' labour services to three days a week.[50] A similar practice was also used in the first half of the nineteenth century. Peasants who carried out their responsibilities as serfs required permission to fell timber. In return for wood or grazing cattle, they were required to do additional work on manorial land. The problem of manorial abuse resulting from the forest law was noticed by the Austrian authorities. In a patent issued on 12 January 1784, they ordered that the common rights of peasants (who had enjoyed them without restriction) be maintained and that their right to collect wood be based on the decree of 1782. The patent also allowed the owners of certain landed property to retain the right to fell trees for sale, as long as the landowner could prove they had granted peasants permission to use the forest, and as long as the living standards and viability of the farms of any so entitled persons would not suffer if they were thereby deprived of the opportunity to sell wood.[51]

In 1789, the authorities began implementing a long-intended cadastral reform. Ultimately, it did not come into force because the monarch died, and his successor scrapped most of the reforms. Still, some of the changes, such as limiting serfdom, had a positive impact on subjects' living conditions.[52] One of the direct effects of the reform was the formation of so-called urbarial descriptions. The burdens on serfs were carefully documented and, information recorded on the

[45] T. Kargol, 'Lasy i gospodarka leśna w Galicji w świetle austriackich aktów normatywnych przełomu XVIII i XIX wieku', *Studia i Materiały Ośrodka Kultury Leśnej*, 15 (2016), pp. 80–1.

[46] Rozdolski, *Stosunki poddańcze*, I, p. 218.

[47] Kargol, '*Lasy i gospodarka*', p. 91.

[48] Free trading or weekly days when prices were lowered.

[49] CSHAUL, corps 146/64, vol. 4694, 5124, 7793.

[50] Blum, *End of the Old Order*, p. 222.

[51] Stefanyk National Scientific Library of Ukraine in Lviv [hereafter LNNLU], corps 9, vol. 3822.

[52] Grodziski, *Historia ustroju*, pp. 71–81.

new ones that would be introduced once the reforms came into force.[53] The sources also describe peasant common rights over land and forest. Determining whether the village had use-rights over manorial land, and what those rights were, formed an integral part of the enquiry.

The manuscripts reveal the importance of forest rights. If a given landowner had a forest then – usually – his subjects and clergy exercised rights to take wood in a defined part of it. The descriptions emphasized that, without these rights, the subjects would be forced to buy fuel and building materials from nearby estates. That was already the case with the towns of Tyczyn and *Łańcut*, along with the village of Bzianka, among others.[54] The descriptions provided those settlements with a common forest or meadow with a written confirmation of their rights, which they would repeatedly invoke later. In the case of the rights to wood, the urbarial descriptions defined the type of rights and the conditions for exercising them. The example of places such as Leżajsk and Bratkowice confirms that subjects residing on Austrian state landed property were in a privileged position when compared to the inhabitants of private estates. The descriptions often emphasize that 'from the imperial forests […] the subjects had wood for fuel, construction, and farm utensils free of charge'.[55] The right of fodder on pastures, fallow land, meadows, and forests operated on similar rules. Peasants grazing cattle in common areas could be charged a natural or cash payment that depended on the number of cattle.[56] The levy was also imposed on people living in the territory of a town who had the right to graze cattle on a pasture or meadow owned by another village or town. Tensions over charges, the number of cattle grazed, and property rights frequently led to conflicts between entire villages and towns. However, it should be noted that the urbarial descriptions show a considerable diversity of common rights in Galicia and these could change over time.

Pressure from landowners was the main source of change over how rights operated. Common rights could evolve through separate contracts, judgments, and manorial decisions. This happened in the village of Białobrzegi. In 1712, Prince Franciszek Lubomirski struck an agreement with his subjects, which stated that the village could graze cattle on manorial pastures. In the second half of the eighteenth century, peasants from Białobrzegi who wanted to continue exercising their grazing rights were compelled to accept four days of additional serfdom during the harvest season.[57] The practice of restricting common rights was most often used in private estates. A classic example are the efforts of Jerzy Tyszkiewicz, the owner of the Kolbuszowa property, who fell out with the townspeople in the 1810s over rights of ownership and the use of the town common. After years of lawsuits at all levels of Galicia's judiciary, the people of Kolbuszowa won the dispute and the count had to pay the court's costs.[58] Some of the cadastral descriptions also contain additional peasant obligations, enclosed as a separate declaration. In these, they confirmed the rules and quantity of the materials gathered from manorial forests. In return for the listed rights, they accepted certain obligations. These included additional days of corvée

[53] K. Ślusarek, *Drobna szlachta w Galicji 1772–1848* (1994), p. 20; id., 'Dwór, wieś i plebania w zachodniej Małopolsce w końcu XVIII i na początku XIX wieku w świetle najnowszych badań', *Galicja Studia i Materiały*, 1 (2015), p. 55.

[54] CSHAUL, corps 146/18, vol. 2601, 2734, 2842.

[55] CSHAUL, corps 146/64, vol. 2600, 2724.

[56] CSHAUL, corps 146/64, vol. 2665.

[57] CSHAUL, corps 146/18, vol. 2610.

[58] State Archive in Rzeszow [hereafter SAR], corps 416, vol. 3.

labour (whether on foot or whether peasants had to provide their own teams and gear) over the course of the year, rent, or work on the dykes and roads as unpaid labour.[59]

Emperor Joseph II's urbarial reform also proposed imposing a forest tax on the peasantry. This is indicated by annotations in the urbarial descriptions, which mention that the inhabitants of every village or town (both private and state) who were entitled to gather materials from the forest had to pay a new tax. This provision was annulled in a circular dated 29 October 1789.[60] Nevertheless, the projected charges were maintained on many landed estates, and owners arbitrarily sought to introduce new burdens in return for subjects' continued access to manorial forests and pastures. One example is the conflict with the Targowisko dominium over ownership of a 20-*morgen* (11–12 ha) pasture between the village of *Łężany* and the manor at the start of the nineteenth century. The peasants ultimately lost the dispute and subsequently had to pay for access to the resources. A literate peasant who had been helping the village to write complaints was accused of causing unrest among the peasantry and threatened with punishment.[61]

Restricting common rights or introducing charges for using natural resources located on manorial property or common land had real consequences for peasant families and the condition of their livestock. They included decreased living standards and quality of life, material status, and the reduced ability of the wealthier category of serfs (*pańszczyzna sprzężajna*) to perform work on manorial lands (if, for example, they lost their cattle). Any restrictions on the peasants' ability to graze cattle on manorial meadows and pastures therefore directly affected their ability to keep livestock.[62] The cow was seen as the nourisher of the family (through dairy production), while oxen and horses enabled the farm to be run. Restrictions on the right to collect raw materials from the forest were equally damaging. Wood was used for heating and cooking while forest litter, moss, and undergrowth made up for the lack of straw in barns and stables, and were commonly used to insulate buildings from the outside. This meant that collecting natural resources from the forests was vital for the peasants and that restrictions placed on it could impoverish and undermine their basic living conditions.[63] Small, fragmented peasant farms (often unable to keep a family fed over an entire year) were dependent on the manor in many respects. Until 1848, the peasants were unable to exercise control over the land they were using without the landowner's permission. It was not until serfdom was abolished in the mid-nineteenth century that peasants were granted property rights to their land.[64] For this reason, the use of manorial property and the collection of natural resources from it – as part of common rights – was extremely important for the peasants. The numerous small farms that had to pay taxes to the state, and provide the manor with work and tributes, did not have their own forests, pastures, and meadows, and most of the land used was for agriculture. The exception were pastures and meadows,

[59] CSHAUL, corps 146/18, vol. 3956, 4089, 4261.

[60] Rozdolski, *Stosunki poddańcze*, I, p. 220.

[61] CSHAUL, corps 146/64, vol. 5145.

[62] ONI, vol. 7217/III.

[63] *Sylwan*, 18 (1842), pp. 77, 443–4; W. Tyniecki, 'Uwagi o ściółce leśnej w zarysach', *Rozprawy C.K. Galicyjskiego Towarzystwa Gospodarskiego*, 29 (1861), pp. 161–70; M. Dembińska and W. Hensel (eds), *Historia kultury materialnej Polski w zarysie* (6 vols, 1978), I, p. 102.

[64] J. Jedlicki, *A suburb of Europe: Nineteenth-century Polish approaches to western civilization* (1999), p. 19; J. Sperber, *The European revolutions, 1848–1851* (2005), p. 144; K. Grzybowski, *Galicja, 1848–1914* (1959), pp. 28–30, 123–4; Inglot, *Historia chłopów*, II, pp. 200–2.

that is, *rustical* land used in common by the whole rural or urban community. During the feudal period, repairing buildings, heating cottages, cooking meals and keeping cattle was therefore based on common rights, as well as the manor's grace and good will. Landowners' refusal to respect common rights after the end of serfdom in May 1848 meant that in most cases peasants and townspeople were forced to buy raw materials and pay charges for grazing cattle on manorial pastures and meadows, which had a negative impact on their economic situation. Moreover, in the face of the loss of free labour and famine (1846–48), landowners often used common rights as an effective bargaining chip. In exchange for access to manorial forests and pastures, peasants worked on farm land (for instance, one day a year for a load of firewood). As a result, until common rights were purchased and regulated in the second half of the century, peasants and townspeople were still mostly dependent on the will of landowners seeking income from the sale of natural materials.

IV

The Austrian Civil Code of 1811 permitted urban and rural common rights (*Servituten*). However, the terms 'urban and 'rural' did make a clear-cut distinction, as the latter included rights that townsfolk and even town magistrates could use. Rural rights were defined in Article 477, which encompassed water, hunting, mining, and road rights as well as forest and pasture common rights commonly found in Galicia.[65] However, these rights functioned without a generally accepted regulation that would have defined the time, place, means, and extent of their use; as a result, they were seen as damaging and an impediment to the running and development of forest holdings.[66] Documents record precisely show the rights exercised by subjects in villages and towns, as well as by the clergy, schools, magistrates, foundations, and other institutions in Galicia. The sources also describe the owners of estates subject to common rights. Above all, this group included the Austrian state, as the administrator of state goods, landowners, and the clergy,[67] as well as villages and cities whose ownership and use of land were listed as *rustical* in the Galician cadastres.

Serfs living in rural and urban settlements constituted the largest group in possession of common rights over land and forests. Entire rural or urban settlements, defined groups (such as categories of farmer) or individual farmers could be entitled to exercise a certain right. Villages that were part of dominiums usually possessed rights that their general inhabitants could use. One of the most important common rights was the possibility to collect firewood from manorial forests, which was done in many ways. Entering the forest on chosen days of the week sometimes required manorial dispensation. The basic unit for measuring collected firewood was the so-called *fury*.[68] Poorer farmers wrapped branches or brushwood in canvas, which they carried out of the forest by hand. Firewood usually referred to dry branches

[65] *Allgemeines Bürgerliches Gesetzbuch* § 477; *Księga ustaw cywilnych wszystkim niemiecko-dziedzicznym kraiom Monarchyi Austryackiey powszechna* (1811), p. 82.

[66] B. K. Kiraly, 'The emancipation of the serfs of east central Europe', *Antemurale,* 15 (1971), p. 64; Till, *Prawo Prywatne*, II, p. 335; K. Ślusarek, *Uwłaszczenie chłopów w Galicji zachodniej* (2002), pp. 160–1.

[67] Parishes, religious congregations and episcopal states.

[68] A horse or cattle cart.

that were lying around or brushwood. In certain cases, manorial authorities allowed green branches to be collected when they had been cut as part of more extensive forest clearance. The restriction was on the thickness of the branches. Selected farmers could also have the right to use axes and to dig up stumps. The collection of wood for building, which was much more valuable, usually required a clear dispensation from the owner of the forest, who estimated how much the farmer needed and assigned the necessary amount and type of building material.[69] The felling took place in the presence of the manorial forest wards, with transport and the processing of the wood the farmer's responsibility.[70] Wood for building, as its name indicates, was used to erect and repair all sorts of buildings, farm equipment and public infrastructure, such as roads, pavements, bridges, canals, signposts, and passenger and freight ferries.[71] The right to collect forest litter[72] for cowsheds – to make up for the shortage of straw – constituted a special form of land and forest right. The fertilizer obtained this way, in the form of manure, helped keep farmland in better condition.[73] The final group of forest common rights encompassed the right to collect various forest products and fruit. Authorized persons could collect tree resin, beech nuts, acorns, wild fruit,[74] tinder, mushrooms, herbs, and flowers. Forest products also included mowing and collecting dry hay from forests and meadows.[75]

Different common rights could be granted to selected groups of farmers or individual property owners. This was the case with the mountain villages in Podhale. The vast Tatra forests were private property, while the mountain meadows and adjacent clearings used by shepherds belonged to the inhabitants of the villages (for instance those of Zakopane, Kościelisko, Witów). Based on ancient privileges, the owner or co-owners of particular alpine meadows (*hal*) had the right to use the manorial forests. The form of common rights in the Tatra Mountains resulted primarily from the pastoral character of the high-altitude farms, which granted shepherds the right to collect wood from the forest to make bonfires while guarding sheep, to build summer huts and fences around their meadows. They could also collect forest litter and graze sheep in forests and clearings.[76]

Alongside the right to collect raw materials from the forest, fodder rights were common; that is, the right to graze cattle in forests, on pastures, fallow land, stubble, meadows, and in bushes. In Galicia, the largest group of entitled persons were subjects and clergy with livestock, for whom manorial land was the common area. As was the case for wood harvesting, there were designated grazing areas in forests and other areas, and a maximum number of days a year that animals could graze. In some cases, accurate cattle registers were drawn up for every farm, stating how many animals there were, along with their species, weight, and age. The lists were primarily used to control and ensure the transparency of the right being exercised and, in

[69] Such as the diameter and type of tree.

[70] CSHAUL, corps 166/118, vol. 20.

[71] CSHAUL, corps 146/64, vol. 11766.

[72] Foliage with needles.

[73] CSHAUL, corps 146/64, vol. 2971.

[74] Raspberries, blackberries, wild strawberries and blueberries.

[75] L. Biegelmajer, *Ustawy dla posiadaczy dóbr ziemskich w Galicji we względzie politycznym, sądowym i finansowym potrzebne* (1858), pp. 130–1.

[76] CSHAUL, corps 146/64, vol. 6999, 7068; P. Bąk and M. Guzik, 'Obraz dóbr zakopiańskich w 1889 r. na podstawie map katastralnych, ksiąg gruntowych i operatu urządzania lasu', in A. Liscar, M. Sarkowicz and Z. Ładygin (eds), *Działalność Zamoyskich w dobrach zakopiańskich* (2010), pp. 33–6.

special cases, were used to impose obligations on serfs. Whether right was exercised for free or fees were collected – in the form of money[77] – depended on local relations and resulted from old privileges and prevailing custom.[78] The common area was usually owned by the manorial authority, but in many cases hamlets and villages had their own pastures or forests, where farmers in neighbouring towns might have the right to graze their cattle. Problems arose when a pasture or glade where animals grazed together was jointly owned by several villages, or a single village and a landowner. Attempts to appropriate property, change the class of land or impose unjustified charges caused many disputes and conflicts; not just during the feudal economy but, above all, during the agrarian reforms when common rights in Galicia were abolished in the second half of the nineteenth century.[79]

Selected common rights could be regulated by negotiations between the commoners and the area's owner. Changes usually resulted from disputes over the form and limits of rights. Complaints from commoners were in the first instance addressed to the manorial authorities, exercising patrimonial jurisdiction. If there was a conflict of interest, the village or town had to appoint proxies to represent the village's interests in negotiations with the manor. An agreement could be concluded to improve mutual relations. Otherwise, subjects had the right to appeal to the higher-instance Austrian authorities.[80]

For every particular right, the owner of the estate subject to rights allocated so-called common areas; specific plots of land from which authorized persons could collect raw materials or graze cattle.[81] In terms of manorial forest management, designating specific areas for common rights was important because it allowed for a properly managed economy to be maintained in the remaining forest space. Some historiography and archival sources were critical of the impact of common rights on forest culture, noting the negative consequences of disorderly collection and felling, the undercutting of branches, the depletion of forest resources, the destruction of young trees by grazing cattle, the raking of litter (which dried out and sterilized the soil), and – above all – theft, devastation, overstepping of rights, appropriation of property, and the exchange of devastated forests for other classes of land, such as pastures or arable fields.[82] Figure 1 shows an example of forest common areas in Odrzykoń. Using the cadastre and manuscripts from the first half of nineteenth century, it was possible to determine, which parts of the forest were common areas. The map shows the practice, commonplace for Galician villages, whereby the area of forest designated for common use was significantly larger than the forest belonging exclusively to the manor. In such cases, the landowner assumed that allowing the peasants to gather fuel from the greater part of the forest would not cause as much damage as when a confined area was intensively exploited by the village's inhabitants. This solution was particularly successful in places where

[77] Serf contributions or natural items.

[78] CSHAUL, corps 166/118, vol. 31; C. A. MacArtney, *The Habsburg Empire, 1790–1918* (2014), p. 68.

[79] SAR, corps 416, vol. 3; CSHAUL, corps 166/118, vol. 12; Rozdolski, *Stosunki poddańcze*, I, p. 222.

[80] CSHAUL, corps 146/64, vol. 368, 370.

[81] CSHAUL, corps 166/118, vol. 68, 70.

[82] Woyzbun, *O służebnościach*, pp. 13–14; J. Miklaszewski, *Lasy i leśnictwo w Polsce* (1928), pp. 182–3; K. Wodzicki, *Własność i służebnictwa w Galicji* (1867), p. 35; H. Strzelecki, *Gospodarstwo lasowe* (1874), p. 60; L. Pączewski, *Lasy, Przemysł i handel drzewny w Polsce* (1924), pp. 11–12; Z. Mazurek, 'Walka chłopów Ordynacji Zamojskiej o prawa serwitutowe w końcu XIX wieku', *Annales Universitatis Mariae Curie-Skłodowska*, 12 (1957), pp. 200–3, 209.

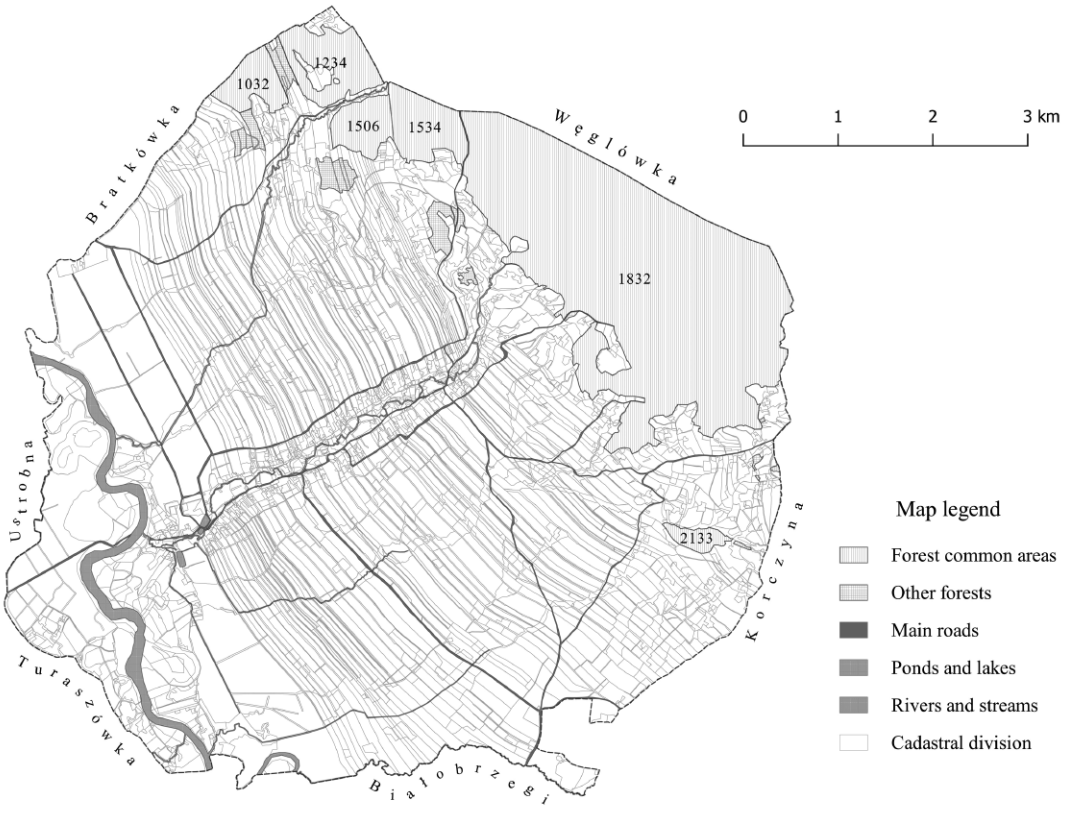


FIGURE 1. Forest common areas in Odrzykoń

Source: Created by the author in QGIS 3.4.4, based on sources from State Archive in Rzeszow, corps 1313, col 2665.

the tensions between the community and the manor were fewer, and the theft of firewood, conflicts, and misunderstandings were infrequent.

V

The impact of land and forest common rights on the natural environment features repeatedly in the historical literature. The relatively small amount of literature on forests in the Polish lands dating from the first half of the nineteenth century discusses common rights as one of the many aspects of the multi-functional forest of larger land holdings. The focus was primarily on the principles of the correct and fair execution of rights, minimizing their unfavourable influence on plant ecosystems and guidelines – when and where cattle could be grazed and raw materials from the forest collected. This was an attempt to reconcile the subordinated population's rights with a proper plan for managing the forest.[83]

[83] F. A. L. Burgsdorf, *Umiejętność lasowa czyli Rękoksiąg dla właścicieli lasów i ich leśniczych* (2 vols, 1810), II, pp. 214–16; A. P. Schwestka, *Theoretisch-praktisches Forst-Handbuch für Galizische Forstbeamte, Gutsbesitzer und*

A broader discussion of the problem of common rights over land appeared in the Galician press after serfdom was abolished. The heated polemic between Kraków daily *Czas* (representing the landowners' perspective) and the Viennese press (echoing the authorities' decisions) has been described by the historian Krzysztof *Ślusarek*. The discussion in *Czas* argued for the abolition of common rights. The articles' authors argued that common rights had a detrimental impact on the natural environment, and cited numerous cases of abuse by peasants. They showed that every form of usage carried the risk of damaging meadow, pasture, and forest vegetation. This, however, articulated the landowner's point of view.[84]

There were more reliable attempts to assess the actual impact of land and forest common rights during the period of Galician autonomy (1867–1918). Nevertheless, most of the literature from this period remained critical of common rights, treating them as part of the feudal system that limited landowners' freedom to manage the forest. It is worth noting that the authors were often representing the perspective of associations and institutions for the development and protection of forests in Galicia, which makes their attitude towards common rights unsurprising. The most eloquent exposition of this viewpoint was a paper presented by Ignacy Szczerbowski at the First General Congress of Polish Foresters in 1907, in which he stated outright that common rights were a 'disaster and obstacle [to] farm development'. His firm opinion coincided with the views of other authorities on 'scientific forestry', including Henryk Strzelecki and Cyryl Kochanowski.[85] The raking of forest litter and grazing cattle in young woodland were considered the most damaging activities. These authors drew attention to people exceeding their rights and grazing in closed areas, which led to the trampling of young plants and the stunting of whole groups of trees (by biting off the tops and young shoots). Raking forest litter should only be allowed when rejuvenating groups of trees or thinning out the thick layer of litter that prevented seeds from germinating. In other cases, collecting litter (leaves, pine needles, moss, heather, and bilberry) was treated as harmful because it deprived the forest of the layer that forms humus and maintains moisture.[86]

Discussion of common rights in the Diet of the Kingdom of Galicia and Lodomeria in the 1860s was also heated. Peasant deputies had the opportunity to present their perspective in this forum which was undoubtedly a breakthrough on their path to empowerment and politicization. Nevertheless, the central part of the discussion concerned speeding up the process of repurchasing and regulating common rights, as well as resolving the many disputes and conflicts between the village and the manor.[87]

Note 83 *continued*
alle Jene, welche sich vorzüglich der Forstkultur widmen wollen: in zwey Theilen (1820), p. 4; A. Cotta, *O uprawie lasów* (1838), p. 89; K. F. G. Henke, *Nauka urządzania, szacowania i oceniania lasów* (1846), pp. 27, 79, 329–34.

[84] Ślusarek, *Uwłaszczenie chłopów*, pp. 160–4.

[85] I. Szczerbowski, *Pogląd na rozwój polskiego leśnictwa w XIX wieku – w Galicyi. Referat przedłożony na ogólnym zjeździe polskich leśników w Krakowie, dnia 18 sierpnia 1907 roku tematu 1 C* (1907), p. 55; H. Strzelecki, 'O rozwoju leśnictwa w Galicyi w ostatnich pięćdziesięciu latach i o służebnictwach leśnych (Die Fortschritte der Forstwirtschaft Galiziens in den letzten fünfzig Jahren und die Ablösung der Servituten)', in *Geschichte Der Österreichischen Land-Und Forstwirtschaft und ihrer Industrien 1848–1898* (1901), p. 231; *Sylwan*, 24 (1906), pp. 462–9.

[86] T. Choiński, *Urządzanie lasów. Podręcznik dla obywateli ziemskich* (1873), pp. 29–36; E. Till, 'O reformie ustawy leśnej', *Rolnik, Czasopismo dla gospodarzy wiejskich*, 20 (1877), pp. 9–10.

[87] *Sprawozdania stenograficzne z posiedzeń Sejmu krajowego galicyjskiego we Lwowie odbytych od dnia 15. do 26. kwietnia 1861 r.* (1861), pp. 298–367.

The negative assessment of land and forest common rights in terms of their detrimental impact on the natural environment contained in the nineteenth-century literature continued into the Second Republic (1918–39). That part of independent Poland which had previously been in the Russian partition contained many complicated common rights which had not been regulated or abolished in the mid-nineteenth century. As a result, the problem of common rights was the subject of heated discussion both in the literature[88] and in the Polish parliament, which moved to abolish rights that were being used and revise those that had already been regulated.[89] Moreover, in the communist-era literature after 1945, the question of common rights was repeatedly treated as an ideological argument in support of the theory of class struggle (between peasants and landowners). There was considerable interest in peasant themes but, in the context of common rights, the focus was mainly on economic questions and the struggle of peasants to secure their rights, which meant that the impact of common rights on the environment was pushed into the background, or bypassed entirely.[90]

The principles of forest management developing elsewhere in Europe show similarities with the tendencies emerging in Galicia in the second half of the nineteenth century. One example is the introduction of 'scientific forestry' by legal means. In Galicia, the forest laws of 1782 and 1852 regulating the general rules for grazing cattle, as well as publications recommending rules for running forest holdings, favoured the production of timber, which was incompatible with people grazing cattle. However, it is worth noting that in the second half of the nineteenth century, most forests in Galicia were owned by private landowners who sought to produce timber for profit. The common rights of peasant and townspeople were therefore a natural obstacle for forest owners. As in western Europe, arguments about damage to vegetation can be treated as part of a strategy to have those rights regulated. In Galicia, however, the factor of serious timber shortages was not considered; mainly because it was an agricultural region with very poorly developed industry, where demand for firewood was much lower and usually intended for everyday needs.[91]

VI

Until the agrarian reforms in Galicia, the conditions in which land and forest common rights operated did not change fundamentally. However, there was no legal rule that meant that uniform practices were applied throughout the province. In addition to the provisions on collecting forest resources in the law of 1782, the extent and scope of benefits largely depended

[88] S. Janicki, *Stosunki rolnicze Królestwa Kongresowego* (1918), p. 80; Miklaszewski, *Lasy i leśnictwo*, pp. 182–200; Z. Ludkiewicz, *Podręcznik polityki agrarnej* (1931), pp. 54, 138, 175–6, 180–1; W. Kawecki, *Lasy Żywiecczyzny, ich teraźniejszość i przeszłość* (1939), pp. 136–9.

[89] Książnica Cieszyńska (scientific library), vol. TR 078.051.

[90] B. Radlak, *Socjaldemokracja Królestwa Polskiego i Litwy w latach 1893–1904* (1979), p. 19; H. Brodowska, 'Spory serwitutowe chłopów z obszarnikami w Królestwie Polskim w drugiej połowie XIX wieku', 63 (1956), pp. 283–98; Z. Stankiewicz, 'Serwituty w dobrach rządowych Królestwa Polskiego przed reformą uwłaszczeniową', *Przegląd Historyczny*, 41 (1959), pp. 45–68; Mazurek, 'Walka chłopów', pp. 197–220.

[91] Warde, 'Fear of wood shortage', pp. 35–9; Kargol, 'Lasy i gospodarka', pp. 88–9; J. Radkau, *Nature and power. A global history of the environment* (2008), pp. 138–42.

on local conditions, including old laws that remained in force, the size and condition of the forests in noble ownership, relations between the village and the manor, and the nature of the property, whether private or state. Archival documents provide information on the state of common rights in specific localities. Detailed provisions in the 1853 patent laid out how to estimate the right, amount, and value of compensation based on annual income and the prices of raw materials in 1836–45.[92] Registers from this period on managing manorial forestry also refer to the forms and rules for all authorized commoners' rights, as well as the additional feudal obligations levied in exchange for raw materials from the forest. The register of fund forests owned by the Congregation of the Sisters of Mercy, who ran a hospital and an orphanage in Moszczany from 1820, is an example of these surveys. The list shows that firewood was regularly and freely issued to subjects and the parish priest as a jumble of dry branches. In exchange for wood for building, the peasants committed to provide an extra day's labour service that year. They were less likely to pay cash for access to the forest's resources.[93] In special cases, landowners allowed timber for building to be felled for free. Following natural disasters, victims were granted permits, the details of which, such as the name of the farmer, the reason, and the amount of raw materials granted, were recorded in separate books by the manorial administration.[94] Landowners made sure that forestry operated properly, and that forest products (timber, firewood) was used in accordance with their conditions. There were many disputes and conflicts at this level. Peasants who exceeded their common rights were documented in the form of detailed lists of so-called forest and land pests – lists of people who used the manorial grounds without the dominium's permission. The most common forms of damage included stealing logs, tops, fuel, forest litter, brushwood, and even entire trees, as well as the unauthorized grazing of cattle in forests and pastures.[95]

Disputes and antagonisms over common rights were common in Galicia in the first half of the nineteenth century. The peasants usually responded to every attempt to limit their rights with complaints to the district authorities, courts, and even the Emperor himself. If the state administration did not act on their demands, they tried to exercise their rights by force, which the manor [*dwór*] treated as a crime. For example, in 1810 there was an attempt to exercise common rights in the village of Kobylany, which provoked a clash with the manorial servants. In a complaint to the authority of the Jasielski district, a witness wrote: 'Today, a steward, forester, ranger, leaseholder, and peasants, blocked subjects of the undersigned – travelling with wood on a public road in Kobylany – taking their things away from them by force'.[96]

The peasants' complaints against the manorial authorities were not limited to violence committed by officers of the court or the restriction of their rights. There were cases of the manorial officials committing damage in forests or pastures belonging to villages, like in the village of Desznica in 1813, when the owner of the dominium ordered his servants to fell a dozen or so trees in the village's forest. The village's representatives complained to the Austrian authorities and asked them to intervene.[97] There were many similar occurrences in

[92] S. Inglot (ed.), *Maurycego Kraińskiego Regesty materiałów do historii zniesienia stosunku poddańczego w Galicji* (1948), pp. 46–7.

[93] CSHAUL, corps 146/64, vol. 11474, 11475, 11476.

[94] CSHAUL, corps 146/64, vol. 1836.

[95] CSHAUL, corps 146/64, vol. 310.

[96] CSHAUL, corps 146/64, vol. 5153.

[97] CSHAUL, corps 146/64, vol. 11584.

Galicia, with many landowners treating the areas used by their subjects – defined as village or municipal property in cadastres from the reigns of Francis I and Joseph II – as their unconditional property that they could dispose of as they pleased. The number of disputes in the sources shows that they most often concerned pastures, such as town commons.

Subjects residing on Austrian state property were not subject to the same pressure on and loss of rights as those on private estates. However, changes could take place when these properties were sold. In the first half of the nineteenth century, the process of selling state land by auction began.[98] Before the transaction, the interested party could familiarize itself with the state of the farm, existing rights, and revenues. As a rule, at the time of sale the new owner accepted their new subjects' existing rights and undertook to respect them in future. A commitment of this kind was signed by Karol Nitsche as the purchaser of the Raniżów property, a former state estate, in 1833. However, he had no intention of maintaining serfs' existing obligations or respecting common rights in the long term. Within a few years of his acquisition, conflicts between the manor and its subjects began. Peasants from several localities complained to the authorities about the imposition of additional duties on the serfs and demands for extraordinary work and other forced labour. However, their main complaint was their exclusion from the manorial forests where they had exercised the right to take wood for construction and heating, along with forest litter. They also invoked the words of the state commissioner, who – at the time of sale – had guaranteed that the existing common rights would be inviolable.[99] Nitsche's actions were not an isolated case; they reflected a general tendency throughout Galicia. Landowners were rarely indulgent, as common rights symbolized a fundamental conflict of interest. Peasants' exercising of rights went against the efforts of manorial estates to establish regular forest management, which generated a real profit. The logic of the dispute was best illustrated by Władysław Reymont in his novel *Chłopi* ('Peasants') of 1904 although this was set in the region of Poland assigned to Russia in the partition. The common forest that the rural population collected wood from was going to be cut down, which obviously led to a deep conflict between the village and the manor. Nevertheless, instances in which landowners sought to reach an agreement with subjects after purchasing new property were not unusual, as the example of the good relations between count Alfred Potocki and the inhabitants and magistrate of Leżajsk in the first half of the nineteenth century confirms.[100]

VII

The agrarian reforms in 1848 provided for the purchase of common rights by the commoners. However, in the minds of Galician landowners, the abolition of serfdom – which deprived them of free labour – also brought to an end their subjects right to common on manorial land. This led to massive antagonism between the village and the manor which took the form of disputes over the peasants' right to common and the introduction of fees for their use in 1848. These disputes – which lasted many years – were fought before all the administrative and judicial authorities, from the manorial [*dwór*] authorities to Emperor Franz Josef I, via district

[98] K. Czemeryński, *O dobrach koronnych w byłej Rzeczypospolitej* (1870), pp. 50–68.

[99] CSHAUL, corps 146/64, vol. 4713.

[100] CSHAUL, corps 146/64, vol. 11766, 11768.

courts, local authorities, the Lemberg governor's office, and the Ministry of the Interior in Vienna. There were also attempts to exercise forest and pasture rights by force, which led to clashes with the manorial service that sometimes had to be pacified by the army.[101] The law abolishing common rights, which was not published until 1853, did not immediately lead to actions to buy or regulate them. This was only allowed by provisions and instructions for the implementation of the law issued a few years later, which meant that the problem only really started being resolved in the late 1860s.[102] However, the law's provisions did not anticipate a *general* abolition of common rights but abolition only on the petition of an interested party. Moreover, the rule for implementing the patent offered compensation for the abolished rights in the form of money or the physical equivalent in forests or pastures. The rights could also be regulated (defining the conditions of use precisely), but only when there was no possibility of purchase, or when doing so could significantly worsen the community's material situation. The sources clearly show that peasants and townspeople preferred to regulate the rights and continue to use manorial land in the way they had before 1848, seeing this as the best way to maintain access to natural resources and ensure that their farms could continue to function. In the vast majority of cases, the local commissions rejected requests for regulation and forced the peasants to purchase their rights. This led to fundamental conflicts of interest linked to the form of compensation. Rural and urban communities, as well as landowners, were aware that purchasing the rights for monetary compensation could expose peasant farms to impoverishment over time and would make them dependent on the purchase of timber from forest owners again. Compensation for the abolished rights in the form of a physical equivalent was therefore an opportunity for peasants and townspeople to free themselves from the manor's monopoly, improve their material status and keep a larger number of cattle.[103] Nevertheless, the transfer of tracts of forest to villages was not free from criticism. Representatives of 'scientific forestry', including Henryk Strzelecki, condemned the practice.[104] He argued that villages receiving forest used it primarily to rake forest litter, which damaged vegetation, leading to the deforestation of entire areas and the changing their character from wood to pasture. His opinion probably stemmed from the belief that landowners were the best protectors of forests but contemporary accounts of communal forests and land communities (formed with the purchase of common rights) shows that his fears were exaggerated.[105]

As a result, the process of purchasing and regulating land and forest common rights in Galicia led to the formation of communal forests and community land, which were separated from manorial land. Most of them have survived to this day (in the regions of Subcarpathia

[101] Stauter-Halsted, *Nation in the village*, p. 61; Ślusarek, *Uwłaszczenie chłopów*, pp. 159–60; C. Kochanowski, 'Uporządkowanie ciężarów gruntowych w Małopolsce', *Sylwan*, 3 (1923), pp. 55–7; A. Kudłaszyk, *Myśl społeczno-polityczna Bolesława Wysłoucha, 1855–1937* (1978), p. 33; P. R. Magocsi, *A History of Ukraine* (2010), p. 450.

[102] P. Pajakowski, 'Dynamics of Galician Polish Conservatism in the late nineteenth century', *Jahrbücher für Geschichte Osteuropas*, 1 (1995), pp. 24–5; B. Danckelmann, *Die Ablösung und Regelung der Waldgrundgerechtigkeiten* (1888), pp. 115–16; *Allgemeines Landes-Gesetz- und Regierungs-Blatt […]* (1853), pp. 430–42.

[103] Inglot, *Maurycego Kraińskiego Regesty*, pp. 22, 44–7; Ślusarek, *Uwłaszczenie chłopów*, pp. 158–66.

[104] Henryk Strzelecki (1819–1901) – one of the greatest Polish foresters, co-founder of the Galician Forest Society.

[105] Strzelecki, 'O rozwoju leśnictwa', p. 230.

and Lesser Poland in present-day Poland). Until 1880, the total monetary compensation for the abolished rights amounted to 1,206,497 Gulden. In terms of separated land provided in compensation, this amounted to 123,868 ha, including 61,581 ha of forest areas.[106] The abolition and regulation of common rights in Galicia gave hope for further reforms on the path to a healthy agrarian structure. This was also a necessary condition for dismantling the mechanisms of social conflict and improving relations between landowner and village. The snail-like process of abolishing common rights, and the many conflicts this engendered, meant that some of the reforms were never implemented. The separation of common land was also sluggish; only a symbolic area of land was consolidated. Accordingly, the problematic chessboard of land plots and fragmented farms survived until modern times, and is part of the landscape in south-eastern Poland to this day.[107]

Elsewhere in Poland there were clear differences in the economic and social development of the regions of Poland determined by their treatment in the years when the country was partitioned. In Prussia reforms abolishing the feudal system began as early as 1807 with an edict abolishing serfdom. The abolition of serfdom and the granting of property rights to peasants was linked to the end of the fragmentation of peasant farms, the enclosure of common lands, the consolidation of agricultural areas (still clearly visible in the size of farms in modern Greater Poland) and the radical liquidation of common rights to land and forests by the law of 1823. This led to the development of a more effective agrarian structure and, most importantly, it removed those activities and rules that had given rise to social conflict between manor and village. The situation in the parts of Poland annexed by Russia was completely different. In contrast to the 'Prussian Way', the Russian authorities were in no hurry to abolish serfdom; reforms did not come until the 1860s. Furthermore, the granting of property rights to peasants and abolition of serfdom was not accompanied by a consistent process of abolishing the chessboard of land plots and fragmented peasant farms. Most land and forest common rights were left in place. As a result, after the First World War, the parts of the Polish Second Republic that had been in the Russian partition had the highest concentration of complicated common rights (around 10,000 villages had various rights).[108] It may therefore be held that Hapsburg Galicia represents a middle way between the early and comprehensive agrarian reforms of the Prussian state and the late and incomplete agrarian programme of the Russians.

[106] Strzelecki, *Gospodarstwo lasowe*, p. 61.

[107] P. Leń, 'Analiza rozdrobnienia gruntów indywidualnych na przykładzie powiatu Brzozów', *Infrastruktura i Ekologia Terenów Wiejskich / Infrastructure and Ecology of Rural Areas*, 1 (2010), pp. 65–7; J. Janus and J. Taszakowski, 'Wybrane parametry rozdrobnienia gruntów w powiecie myślenickim', *Infrastruktura i Ekologia Terenów Wiejskich / Infrastructure and Ecology of Rural Areas*, 1 (2010), pp. 679–80.

[108] W. Mędrzecki, *Mechanizmy modernizacji wsi polskiej do zakończenia I wojny światowej*, in P. Grata (ed.), *W drodze ku niepodległej. Przemiany modernizacyjne na ziemiach polskich w II połowie XIX i na początku XX wieku* (2019), pp. 248–56; S. Kalembka, *Studia z Dziejów Polskiej Myśli Politycznej*, *Polska myśl polityczna w dzielnicy pruskiej w XIX w.* (2 vols, 1990), II, pp. 61–2; W. Jakubczyk, *Uwłaszczenie chłopów w Wielkopolsce w XIX w.* (1951), pp. 94–8; W. Arczyński, 'Zagadnienie zniesienia służebności oraz świadczeń i danin', *Polska gospodarcza*, 20 (1939), pp. 284–93; F. Brodowski, *Zasady Ustawodawstwa Agrarnego w Królestwie Polskim, 1864–1915* (1920), pp. 24–36.

No money, no farm? Mobilizing resources for land purchase by migrants in post-emancipation Estonia

by Kersti Lust

Abstract

This article evaluates the role of family ties and social networks in mobilizing financial resources for land purchase and conveying information about migration destinations in nineteenth-century Estonia. It complements the existing body of literature on the non-institutionalized forms of borrowing and providing information in environments where markets were inefficient by extending the geographical scope to the eastern part of Europe. The study helps us to understand how peasants who had only recently started to pay money rent instead of labour dues and marketed a small portion of farm products could manage to purchase a farm, which normally meant paying 25–30 times the annual rent as a purchase price. Besides growing flax and becoming tenants prior to the purchase, it was family and communal networks that proved crucial to their success. Family members and relatives provided larger credit than non-family members, but larger social networks facilitated access to information.

Land purchase typically requires substantial financial resources and migration also requires access to information. In most research, it is asserted that social networks enable better access to resources and improve outcomes for their members.[1] It is also believed that features of the network such as the strength of ties determine to a great extent what kind of resources a person within that network receives – that the strongest ties give access to finance and that weaker ties can still be important channels for information. Social networks, it is argued, ease information flows and create trust by fostering shared norms. Historians generally prefer an 'arbitrary metaphorical use' of the term 'social networks' and have been reluctant to adopt rigorous quantitative forms of network analysis.[2] On this basis, information that in the sources indicates the form and performance of a network is usually examined through narrative. Such an approach has resulted in deep qualitative analyses of individual relations or interconnections within manageable small groups, which serve as examples for larger contexts.

[1] For a definition of social network, see Andreas Gestrich and Martin Stark, 'Introduction', in Andreas Gestrich and Martin Stark (eds), *Debtors, creditors, and their networks: Social dimensions of monetary dependence from the seventeenth to the twentieth century* (2015) (2015), pp. 4–5.

[2] Matthias Bixler, 'Historical network research: Taking stock', in Gestrich and Stark (eds), *Debtors, creditors,* p. 54.

In pre-modern rural societies, most buying and selling was done on credit, which created local or widespread and intertwined networks of credit.[3] People were involved in webs of economic and social dependency based on mutual trust. Access to credit was provided by various forms of familial, neighbourly, or economic networks, and social relations facilitated mutual lending.[4] During the nineteenth century, it has been argued, personal trust was largely replaced by institutional trust, while the importance of traditional family and kinship ties for economic transactions diminished.[5]

Personal networks and migratory chains have become a key explanation of mobility since Torsten Hägerstrand's pioneering work. Hägerstrand, a Swedish geographer, emphasized personal contacts and the circulation of information: pioneering migrants ('primary migrants') remained in contact with relatives who had stayed behind, which led to increases in the migratory flow by creating new, privileged areas where information, people, and goods could circulate.[6] Migration information was shared by kin, friends, and acquaintances.

Current migration research emphasizes social networks in various stages of the migration process, including the decision to migrate and the direction and persistence of migration flows.[7] Recently, however, Georg Fertig has pointed out the ambivalent role of social networks in migration. Loose information networks created by recent migrants from the same village or region reduced insecurity in migrant destinations, but closely knit village communities

[3] Studies from different parts of Europe: Craig Muldrew, 'Interpreting the market: The ethics of credit and community relations in early modern England', *Social Hist.* 18 (1993), pp. 171–4; Craig Muldrew, *The economy of obligation. The culture of credit and social relations in early modern England* (1998); Gabriele B. Clemens (ed.), *Schuldenlast und Schuldenwert. Kreditnetzwerke in der europäischen Geschichte* 1300–1900 (2008); Phillipp R. Schofield and Thijs Lambrecht (eds), *Credit and the rural economy in North-Western Europe, c.1200–c.1850* (2009); Sheilagh Ogilvie, Markus Küpker, Janine Maegraith, 'Household debt in early modern Germany: Evidence from personal inventories', *J. Economic Hist.* 72 (2012), pp. 134–67; Mats Olsson, Patrick Svensson, 'Production and credits: a micro level analysis of the agrarian economy in Västra Karaby parish, Sweden 1786–1846', in Ellen Hillbom and Patrick Svensson (eds), *Agricultural transformation in a global perspectiv*e (2013), pp. 206–28; Tracy Dennison, 'Contract enforcement in Russian serf society', 1750–1860', *EcHR* 66 (2013), pp. 715–32; Gestrich and Stark, 'Introduction'.

[4] Daniel Reupke, 'Credit markets in the nineteenth-century countryside: A comparative study in a rural border region', in Gestrich and Stark (eds), *Debtors, creditors,* p. 142.

[5] Anna-Carolina Vogel, 'Credit, trust, and social networks: Mortgage credit in the industrializing town of Esslingen (Württemberg, Germany)', in Gestrich and Stark (eds), *Debtors, creditors,* p. 79.

[6] Torsten Hägerstrand, 'Migration and area. Survey of a sample of Swedish migration fields and hypothetical considerations on their genesis', *Lund studies in geography, Series B, Human geography* 13 (1957), pp. 27–158.

[7] Relational aspects of migration have been either included in multivariate, quantitative models or described in more qualitative, micro-studies of families or places. See, for example, Claire Lemercier, Paul-André Rosental, 'The structure and dynamics of migration patterns in 19th-century Northern France', 2009. ffhalshs-00450035v3ff (accessed 5 Aug. 2019); Paul-André Rosental, 'Between micro and macro: Theorizing agency in nineteenth-century French migrations', *French Historical Studies* 29 (2006), pp. 457–81; Martin Dribe, Christer Lundh, 'People on the move. Determinants of servant migration in nineteenth century Sweden', *Continuity and Change* 20.1 (2005), pp. 53–91; Noël Bonneuil, Arnaud Bringé, and Paul-André Rosental, 'Familial components of first migrations after marriage in nineteenth-century France', *Social Hist.* 33 (2008), pp. 36–59; Georg Fertig, 'Balancing, networking, and the causes of emigration: Early German transatlantic migration in a local perspective, 1700–1754', *Continuity and Change* 13.3 (1998), pp. 419–42; Yukari Takai, 'The family networks and geographic mobility of French-Canadian immigrants in early-twentieth-century Lowell, Massachusetts', *J. of Family Hist.* 26 (2001), pp. 373–94.



FIGURE 1. Estland and the Estonian part of Livland, nineteenth century

at home were often an important part of the hostile social environment that emigrants were seeking to escape.[8]

This article evaluates the role of family ties and social networks in mobilizing financial resources for land purchase and conveying information about migration destinations in nineteenth-century Estonia (Figure 1). A rich body of international literature already exists on the non-institutionalized forms of borrowing and lending and providing information in environments where markets are inefficient.[9] In a wider context, this article presents a case study demonstrating the importance of social networks in gaining better access to resources.[10] This micro-study of migrant farm purchasers complements that literature by extending the geographical and temporal scope to the eastern part of Europe in the era of agricultural transformation.

[8] Fertig, 'Balancing, networking', p. 438.

[9] In the contemporary context: Kaivan Munshi, 'Labor and credit networks in developing economies', *Handbook of social economics* (2011), vol. 1B, p. 1224. In the historical context, Juliette Levy, *The making of a market: Credit, henequen, and notaries in Yucatán, 1850–1900* (2012).

[10] The theoretical framework is provided, for example, by Pierre Bourdieu, 'The forms of capital', in Imre Szeman, Timothy Kaposy (eds), *Cultural theory: An anthology* (2011), pp. 81–93; Meltem Odabaş, Fikret Adaman, 'Engaging with social networks: The Bourdieu-Becker encounter revisited', *Forum for Social Economics*, 47 (2018), pp. 306–14.

In some European regions, nineteenth-century reforms leading to peasant emancipation and the redemption of peasant land or feudal dues considerably increased the need for credit, which in turn gave impetus to the establishment of rural credit institutions.[11] In the case under study, it took several decades for such institutions to emerge and as the government did not provide a helping hand to purchasers of land, the latter had to look for other options (i.e. informal credit). Because of the peculiar circumstances of the emancipation in the Baltic provinces, which were also unusual within eastern European history, a large amount of land became available to peasants at market prices. The outright purchase of farms was a process of buying peasant land from the noble landlords or from the state government after the emancipation of the serfs took place in the three Russian Baltic provinces in 1816–1819. Unlike in Russia proper (Great Russia), Poland, Lithuania, and Prussia, peasant farmers in the Russian Baltic provinces did not receive a title to land along with emancipation. It was only several decades after they achieved their personal freedom that Baltic peasants were able to purchase land and transform tenancies into freeholds. In most other territories with a manorial system, the reforms gave the current tenants direct ownership of land (e.g. in return for giving up parts of land) or the right to purchase the ownership of the land at regulated prices.[12] In territories without 'demesne lordship' (*Gutsherrschaft*), feudal duties could be redeemed, usually in terms of a multiple of annual rents (15–25 times annual rent).[13] Therefore, the intensive migration of land purchasers triggered by the transformation of tenancies into freeholds can only be studied in the Baltic provinces.

Noble land ownership was also extensive in Sweden. As in Sweden, manorial lords in the Baltics were not forced to sell parts of their holdings, and if this happened, it took place through sales at market prices. In Scania in the south, and the three counties around the capital Stockholm, tenant farmers on noble land largely disappeared over the course of the nineteenth century, as landlords initiated evictions and increased their own direct control of farmland, although large shares of noble land were also taken over by peasants.[14] In the Baltic provinces of Russia, by contrast, mid-nineteenth century reforming legislation restricted peasant land for peasants' use only. Therefore it was impossible for large manorial estates to continue expanding the share of their land under direct management. Instead, the landlords typically sold it to peasants. Analysis of peasant engagement in the credit market in the era of agricultural transformation in Sweden has shown that most of the loans were small and that borrowers used the informal credit market principally to solve short-term financial problems.[15] Swedish peasants also took out mortgage loans to invest in their production. In addition, specialized lenders – peasant bankers – participated in the credit market, but their role has been highlighted in connection with investments

[11] Johannes Bracht, *Geldlose Zeiten und überfüllte Kassen. Sparen, Leihen und Vererben in der ländlichen Gesellschaft Westfalens (1830–1866)* (2013), p. 144.

[12] Juhan Kahk, 'Die baltischen Agrarreformen des 19. Jahrhunderts in neuer historischer Perspektive', *Zeitschrift für Ostmitteleuropa-Forschung* 45.4 (1996), pp. 544–55; Kathryn Gary and Mats Olsson, 'Business as usual. Nobility and landed estates in Sweden', *Essays in economic and business history* 35.1 (2017), pp. 149–71.

[13] Friedrich-Wilhelm Henning, *Landwirtschaft und ländliche Gesellschaft in Deutschland*, II, *1750 bis 1986* (1988).

[14] Gary and Olsson, 'Business as usual', pp. 149–71; Patrick Svensson, 'Land market, property rights, and agricultural transformation in southern Sweden, 1680–1870', in Gerard Béaur and Phillipp Schofield (eds), *Property rights, land market, and economic growth in Europe (13th–19th centuries)* (2013), p. 462.

[15] Patrick Svensson, 'Peasants and entrepreneurship in the nineteenth-century agricultural transformation of Sweden', *Social Science Hist*. 30.3 (2006), pp. 413–19.

in enclosures, land reclamation, and drainage rather than in connection with turning noble or crown land into freeholds. In Sweden as well as in Finland, tenancies on crown land were turned into freeholds by legislation that gave tenants the right to purchase their leased farms. The price set for crown land was usually lower than the general price level and Swedish crown peasants could afford this using the surplus from their farms and, if needed, through loans from neighbours and relatives, or later during the nineteenth century, from a bank.[16] Finnish crown tenants, who occasionally lacked resources to buy their farms, sold their pre-emption rights. The migration of farm purchasers has not been observed or studied in these two Nordic countries. In the Baltic provinces, tenants on state lands also bought their farms outright on favourable terms, and the process did not trigger in-migration.[17]

Research on migration in nineteenth century Europe normally considers how poor areas produced migrants who gravitated towards wealthier areas. This article, by contrast, examines the migration of the members of farming families and former landholding peasants and, to a lesser extent, the migration of farmhands from the wealthiest regions to less developed areas.

The Baltic provinces of the Russian Empire were rural economies that experienced a capitalist transformation in the nineteenth century. The peasant economy was characterized by the transition to money rents, the transformation of tenancies into freeholds, the consolidation of the farmsteads into amalgamated lots, and the enclosure of common pastures. New crops, crop rotation and improved tools also appeared, increasing yields and agricultural output. In addition to providing for their own needs, farms also started to produce for the market. Tenants' incentives for long-term investments were diminished by the insecurity of their tenancies: leases were short-term, and the rent increased with each new contract; the estate owner could easily terminate the contract if the tenant did not comply with its terms, and tenants had no prerogative to renew the contract after the term of the contract. Secure tenure and control over farm succession were vital economic incentives for pre-industrial tenant farmers; noble politicians were concerned that if the farmers were afraid of losing their land, they would not make long-term investments in farm production and would neglect the farm. The capitalist transformation of the farm economy occurred in tandem with the transformation of tenancies into freeholds.

The major cash crop in Livonia was flax, which the manorial lords generally avoided, as it was an exhausting crop that depleted the soil. In the first half of the nineteenth century, the export of flaxseeds and fibres through Riga – one of the main ports in the eastern Baltic – rose steadily.[18] England was the main importer of flax. When the American Civil War broke out in 1861 and cotton supplies were cut off, the demand for flax increased in Europe, thus driving

[16] Svensson, 'Land market', pp. 461–2.

[17] Kersti Lust, 'How permanent were farms in the manorial system? Changes of farm occupancy in the nineteenth-century Russian Baltic Provinces of Estland and Livland', *Continuity and Change* 35 (2020), p. 224.

[18] Juhan Kahk, 'Mesto Rossii na mezhdunarodnom sel'skokhozjaistvennom rynke v pervoi polovine XIX v.', in *Feodal'naja Rossija vo vsemirno-istoticheskom processe. Sbornik statej* (1972), pp. 99–100; e.g. out of Riga's total exports in 1862 (valued in roubles), 57% consisted of flax and flaxseed; in 1872, 43.5%, respectively. In terms of quantity, the export of flax reached its apogee in 1870 (49% of the total value of exports in roubles): *Material zu einer allgemeinen Statistik Livland's and Oesel's* (1863); *Der Rigasche Börsen-Comite in den Jahren 1866–1872, nebst Sammlung der auf Handel und Schifffahrt bezüglichen Verordnungen, Instructionen und Taxen* (1873), pp. 319–21.

up prices. In Livland the price nearly tripled.[19] Flax production was commercialized, but in general, farmers' production for market was limited until the late nineteenth century, when dairy farming became an important agricultural activity. Until the late nineteenth century, it was not so much the growth of local towns that created greater demand for cash crops but rather the growth of the distilling industry (run by the landlords) using increasing quantities of grain and potatoes. Laws and decrees limiting relocation to other peasant communities and towns restricted migration until the 1860s.

By combining court records with microdata from parish registers, this article focuses on the mobilization of resources by the most successful group among the farm purchasers in Estonia – the Mulks, i.e., residents of the fertile southern parts of Estonia's Viljandi and Pärnu counties. In densely populated and economically advanced Mulgimaa (Figure 1), the purchase of farms gained full momentum earlier than elsewhere.[20] This region saw little purchase-triggered in-migration but, more importantly, produced numerous migrants heading to less-developed parts of the country from the 1850s to the 1880s (Figure 2). This massive outflow of prospective farm purchasers was unique in the Baltic context.[21] Migration within or between parishes for the purpose of purchasing farms took place in other parts of the country as well, but a large-scale migration that extended far beyond parish borders took place only from Mulgimaa.

The outright purchase of farms has been thoroughly studied in Estonian historiography but completely neglected outside it. Researchers have dealt with the creation of the laws governing farm sale and purchase, the speed of the process and regional variations in it, land prices, the attitudes of landlords and peasants towards farmstead sale and purchase, changes in who headed the farms, and the changes the sale brought about in rural society.[22] Curiously, the migration of Mulks was, until recently, the best-known but least-studied aspect of the multifaceted process of the sale of peasant land in Estonia. Published memoirs, fiction, oral tradition, and newspaper articles established knowledge of the Mulk 'threat' – the influx of rich and astute Mulks to various places throughout mainland Estonia. A recent article by this

[19] Juhan Kahk, *Talude päriseksostmisea aegu [When the farms were bought in perpetuity]* (1993) p. 64.

[20] It is thoroughly described in Mati Laur *et al.*, *Talude päriseksostmine Liivimaal (Pärnumaa andmestiku põhjal) [Purchasing farms in perpetuity in Livland (based on data from Pärnu County)]* (2013).

[21] In Kurland, four-fifths of tenants on noble manors bought their farms in perpetuity within a short period of time and thus the sale did not trigger a large-scale migration (Laur *et al.*, *Talude päriseksostmine Liivimaal*, pp. 113–14). By contrast, in Livland the process lasted over eighty years.

[22] Eduard Bodisco, *Der Bauerland-Verkauf in Estland und Materialen zur Agrar-Statistik Estlands* (1902); Kahk, *Talude*; Artur Vassar, 'Eesti talurahva vaated maavaldusele XIX sajandi teisel poolel [Estonian peasants' attitudes towards land]', in Ea Jansen, Juhan Kahk (eds), *Eesti talurahva sotsiaalseid vaateid XIX sajandil* (1977), pp. 124–82; Priit Pirsko, 'Talud päriseks: protsessi algus müüjate ja ostjate pilgu läbi [The start of the process of farms sales from the perspective of the sellers and buyers]', in Ea Jansen, Jaanus Arukaevu (eds), *Seltsid ja ühiskonna muutumine: talupojaühiskonnast rahvusriigiks [Societies and changing society. From a peasant society to a nation state]*, (1995), pp. 97–117; M. Laur *et al.*, *Talude päriseksostmine Liivimaal*; Kersti Lust, *Pärisorjast päriskohaomanikuks: talurahva emantsipatsioon eestikeelse Liivimaa kroonukülas 1819–1915 [Emancipation of state peasants in the Estonian part of Livland (1819–1915)]* (2005); Kersti Lust, 'Eestikeelse Liivimaa talupoegade suhtumine talude päriseksostmisse 1863–1882 [The attitudes of peasants towards the purchase of land in the Estonian-speaking part of Livland]', *Eesti Ajalooarhiivi Toimetised* 18(25) (2010), pp. 239–52; *ead.*, 'Kas Eestis osteti päriseks oma esivanemate talud? Taluperemeeste vahetumisest 1840–1889 [Did Estonians buy the farms of their forefathers for perpetuity? Changes in tenancy, 1840–1889]', *Tuna* 69 (2015), pp. 33–55.

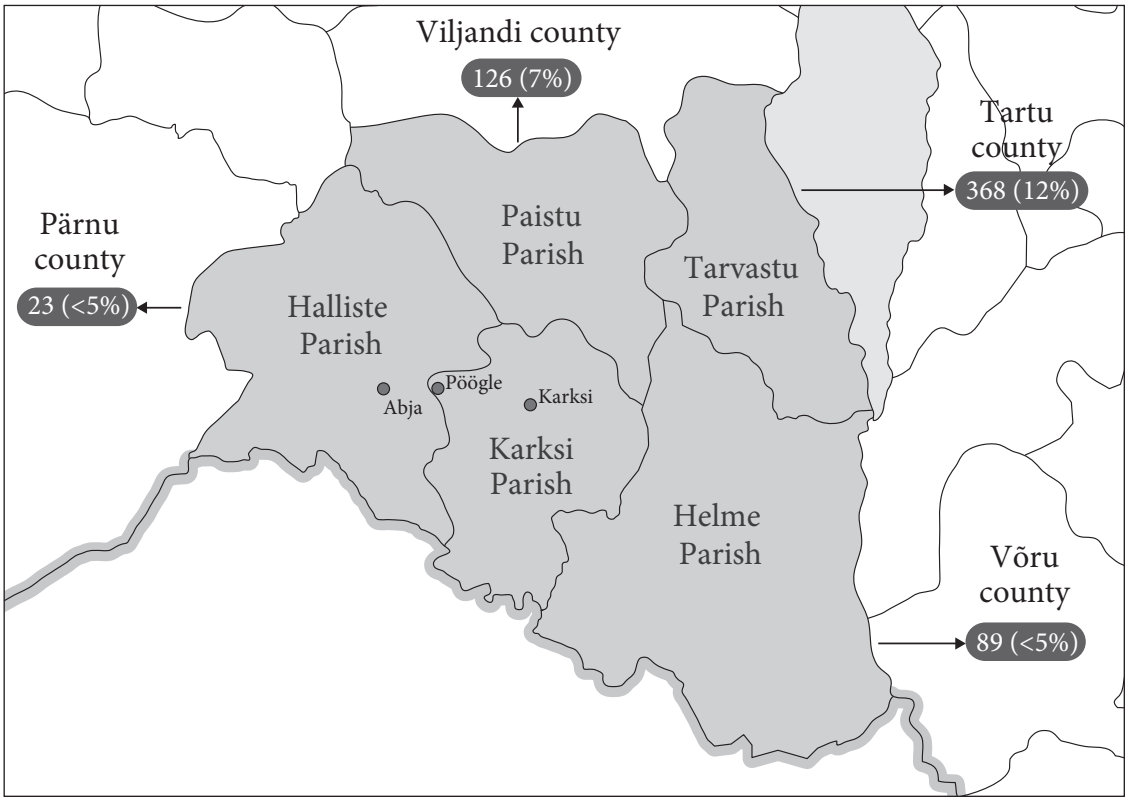


FIGURE 2. The number of farms sold to Mulks outside Mulgimaa in southern Estonia, 1850–1889.

Note: the percentages are of farms bought by Mulks in the respective county.
Source: The author's own calculations based on purchase contracts, church records, and civil registration of migrants.

author has explored when they migrated, from where and to where they migrated, and the push- and pull factors involved in their migration.[23]

The rest of the article is structured as follows. An introduction to the sources and methods is followed by a description of the institutional setting of land purchase. Thereafter, migrants' individual characteristics, such as marital and socio-economic status, will be considered. The main sections discuss various strategies, either used separately or in combination, to mobilize resources for farm purchase outside Mulgimaa. The article seeks to determine whether the migrants were connected as kin, acquaintances, or fellow villagers and how information related to migration was shared among them. The last section sheds light on credit relations. Baltic scholarship has paid very little attention to the question of how land purchase was financed and how credit networks evolved. The study helps us to understand how peasants who had only recently started to pay money rent instead of labour dues and marketed a small portion of farm products could manage to purchase a farm, which normally meant paying 25–30 times

[23] Kersti Lust, 'Mulgi hädaoht ehk kuidas mulgid võõrsil talusid päriseks ostsid (kuni 1889) [The Mulk threat, or how Mulks bought farms outright outside Mulgimaa]', *Tuna,* 64 (2014), pp. 44–63.

the annual rent as a purchase price.[24] Under the previous system of corvée, opportunities to accumulate savings were limited. In the period under study, peasants had almost no access to credit from the formal sector – savings and small credit banks. The manorial lord could transfer part of the manor's mortgage loan to the farmstead, but on average, it covered only about one-third of the purchase price. Private credit relations were often built around personal networks.

I

As a first step in this research, a dataset was created covering all farm purchases in southern Estonia until 1889.[25] The study ends with the year 1889 because in that year, the system of registering land properties changed, and the records kept thereafter make it far more complicated for researchers to follow sales of farmland by landlords. However, by the late 1880s the process of turning farmland into freehold land in southern Estonia was mostly over, as was the heyday of Mulk migrants buying farms outright.

In the second step, the geographical origin of buyers was identified on the basis of church records (mainly registers of parishioners), poll tax lists ('soul revision' lists), and listings of migrants. Lutheran registers of parishioners present data on births, migratory moves, marriages, and deaths of all family members in the same place. The registers were in use for 10-, 20- or 30-year periods and allow us to follow families over time. The actual number of Mulk land purchasers might be somewhat higher than indicated in Figure 2, as in several cases the place of origin could not be identified. The problem of identification pertains mostly to purchasers who did not, in fact, settle into the community and leased out the farm(s), as well as to members of the Russian Orthodox Church, as this church did not keep registers of parishioners.

By tradition, Mulks are the residents of five parishes – Halliste, Karksi, Tarvastu, Paistu, and Helme, home to *c*.43,000 people in 1850 (Figure 1).[26] In the following, a 'Mulk' is defined as a person who was born in one of these five parishes. This method does not allow us to distinguish clearly between those who migrated to seek ownership and those who migrated with the general hope of becoming a farmer (head of the farm). These two migrations, however, were closely interrelated, and in order to understand the evolution of the out-migration over time, both should be considered.

In the third step, registers of parishioners, birth and death registers, and poll-tax lists were used to identify buyers' socio-economic and marital status. A person's socio-economic status often changed over the course of his or her life. On noble estates, farms frequently changed hands; those born into a tenant's family could become farmhands by the time they got married and vice versa.[27] Where possible, I established buyers' socio-economic status in the years

[24] Laur *et al.*, *Talude päriseksostmine*, p. 65.

[25] Farm purchase contracts preserved in the land registry archives in Rahvusarhiivi Ajalooarhiiv [National Archives of Estonia, hereafter, RA, EAA]: f. 2381, f. 3416, and f. 3760.

[26] Calculated on the basis of 1850 poll tax lists. It includes those living on manor as well as on peasant land before the allocation of 'quota land' to the noble lords. The 'Parish' was the church parish. Parish courts operated in a number of parishes (in court districts). Parish court was headed by a nobleman, assisted by two peasant assessors.

[27] Lust, 'Kas Eestis osteti', pp. 46–9.

just before their migration from Mulgimaa, rather than at the time of their birth.[28] Since determining the socio-economic origin of purchasers from the vital events data of the whole family is painstaking work, this study limits itself to 18 examples from about 46 communities in Mulgimaa (Table 1). By tradition, parish registers from Mulgimaa mention farm names, but in most other places they record only the community's (and the village's) name. As a result, studying marriages does not help us to establish whether, when a purchaser was marrying a local woman, it was the farmer's daughter from the farm he eventually bought outright, or some other woman.

The inconsistency, heterogeneity, and fragmentary nature of the available sources make quantitative analysis of networks impossible. For the study of credit relations, I was able to make use of land registry documents, including data on bond and mortgage loans and court files concerning failed credit relations. Thus we have data on cases in which either the borrower left loans unpaid and the creditor sued the debtor, or the farm went into bankruptcy, or the buyer (the farm owner) took bond loans (normally only large loans). Most oral and written loan agreements went unrecorded in official documents and thus remain out of reach to us. The court records concerning failed credit relations allow us to identify the lenders and show how lenders and borrowers were related to each other. This kind of information on interpersonal links would usually be impossible to reconstruct from other types of sources. The community and parish court records give us enough evidence to assert that informal credit played an important role in the success of Mulks and, more generally, in the process of buying farmsteads outright. I will look more closely at the community of Kavastu, located east of Tartu (Figure 1), where more farms were bought outright by Mulks (35 in all) than anywhere else in Estonia, and where Fritz Karro acted as an agent in the in-migration to the community. Karro represented a new type of peasant, active and mobile both socially and geographically, self-confident and full of initiative.

II

The institutional setting: Peasant land and farming

In accordance with the laws emancipating serfs in the three Baltic provinces (in 1816 in Estland, in 1817 in Kurland, and in 1819 in Livland), legal ownership of all farmland belonged either to owners of manor, who were mostly Baltic German noblemen, or to the crown.[29] Until the mid-nineteenth century, estates in state ownership, as well as noble estates, were large-scale agricultural enterprises based on corvée. Each estate was divided into two areas: the estate land (*Hofsland*), which was partly farmed directly with corvée or hired labour, and partly leased to peasants in small or large lots, and the peasant land (*Bauerland*), which was held by farmers and was not available to the manorial lord. Noble estates had a third type of land: by the peasant law of 1849 (in Livland), the lord was allowed to take one-fifth of the peasant land

[28] Birth registers include father's occupation. Usually, I identified family's status from the vital records of the children, born closest in time to the departure from Mulgimaa.

[29] For an overview, see Andrejs Plakans, *A Concise History of the Baltic States* (2011), pp. 184–98, 217–21. Kurland is a historical region in western Latvia.

(known as 'quota land' or *Quotenland* in German) under his or her own management. On noble estates, the peasants had only weak rights of tenure and inheritance.

The peasant laws of 1849 (in Livland), 1856 (in Estland), 1863 (in Kurland) and 1865 (in Ösel, today Saaremaa), favoured money rent over labour rent by limiting the maximum amount of labour dues but leaving the level of money rent unregulated.[30] The peasant laws also governed land sales to peasants who could buy the farmsteads through long-term mortgages. Peasant land was brought onto the market through its transformation into freehold land. Although the purchase and sale of peasant land continued to take place under free-market conditions, tenants in Livland (in 1865) as well as in Kurland (in 1863) were given the pre-emptive right to land purchase with a four-week period granted for decision-making.[31] On noble estates, the farm purchasers were involved in purchase agreements of several years and in loans from owners of manors and noble credit associations,[32] usually at an annual interest rate of five or six per cent. The purchase contract specified the sums and dates of redemption payments: the down payment; payments liable at the signing of the contract, start of the farming, and registering the property; and at later dates. From the purchaser's point of view, timely payment of the sums specified in the contract was more important before the registration of the purchase contract in the court than afterwards.[33] Normally, two to three years elapsed between the signing of the contract and its registration. If the purchaser remained in arrears before the registration, he often lost the farm, which was resold by the manorial lord.[34] The lists of debts, as well as court and land registry records, indicate that after the purchase contract was registered in the court, the sellers (manorial lords) were often flexible regarding timely redemption, and on some occasions they did not put forward payment claims until decades after the deadlines had expired. For example, in Kavastu, one-third of the farm purchasers of Mulk origin still owed redemption payments to the manorial lord in 1891, although in most cases, these were due to be paid by the end of the 1870s.[35] In exceptional cases, arrears to the lord could amount to four-fifths of the redemption payments due after the contract's registration.[36]

As mentioned above, long-term mortgages covered only about one-third of the price, and there were no financial institutions offering small loans to peasants.[37] Therefore, farm purchasers' only options were to borrow from kin,[38] acquaintances,[39] friends, or fellow

[30] Lust, 'How permanent were farms', p. 223.

[31] Ibid.

[32] A credit institute for the provincial nobility. Membership was voluntary. The credit association issued mortgage bonds to manor owners that were secured not only by the debtor's manor on which they were engrossed, but by all the manors that joined the institute.

[33] Land registries started to operate from 1889. Before that, county courts were in charge of registering immovable properties.

[34] Community court minutes and parish court files: RA, EAA, f. 3556, n. 1, s. 5, fos. 41v, 47, 48, 72–72v (9 Feb. 1868, 21 Mar. 1868, 8 Apr. 1868 and 25 Jul. 1869); EAA, f. 3987, n. 1, s. 8, fos 47v–48, 28 Mar. 1867; EAA, f. 924, n. 1, s. 981, EAA, f. 926, n. 1, s. 1219.

[35] RA, EAA, f. 1427, n. 1, s. 28, fos. 99–102: lord of Kavastu manor to the Land Council of Livonian nobility, 1 Aug. 1891.

[36] RA, EAA, f. 2381, n. 2, s. 7015; EAA, f. 1427, n. 1, s. 28, fo. 101.

[37] In the early 1880s, a savings bank in Põltsamaa started to offer bond loans to farmers. Few farm buyers in the vicinity of Põltsamaa used this new opportunity.

[38] RA, EAA, f. 928, n. 1, s. 92; EAA, f. 931, n. 1, s. 703, fo. 1.

[39] RA, EAA, f. 931, n. 1. s. 692.

villagers. There were three ways in which informal credit was provided. Individuals provided open-ended bond loans, normally at an annual interest rate of five to six per cent. Either side could claim the repayment of the principal of the loan with six months' notice. The second type of loans was promissory notes. The third and by far the most common type was a verbal or written agreement, sometimes concluded in the presence of witnesses. It allowed for deferment of payment, but the risks were high, as it relied largely on the debtor's credit, and the community and parish courts in charge of contract enforcement proved to be rather inefficient at debt collection. On the one hand, the wide use of insecure forms of loans reflects practical concerns, as they offered substantial room for negotiation of repayment terms and interest arrangements, and peasants did not have to follow a formalized procedure of registration at the local court. On the other hand, it shows that social networks truly created trust.

The laws fixed the minimum size of peasant farm holdings on noble manors; a new farm could be set up either on the manorial lord's initiative or with his approval.[40] Peasant laws also discouraged the dividing up of a farm and allowed only one heir to inherit it. Generally, the eldest son inherited the parents' holding, and other successors received compensation for their portions in livestock, goods, or cash. If no male siblings survived, the farm succession continued down the female line, but the husband took control of farm management.

No money, no farm: tenants' difficulties with buying farms

On noble manors, the shift from labour to money rents and from tenancy to freehold took decades and was subject to the approval of a landlord. Most farms transitioned to money rent only in the early 1860s.[41] Transformation of peasant land into freehold land started in Livland very slowly between 1830 and 1860. At that time, the vast majority of Estonian peasants still did not have the money to buy land on the terms set by the manorial lords. Among the purchasers were many town burghers. Purchasers of peasant origin were often wealthy people whose gainful activities lay outside farming. The year 1864 became a turning point in the process of buying the farms; from that year onwards, the Livonian noble credit association allowed the transfer of part of the manor's mortgage loan to farmsteads, which caused sales to mushroom. In the early 1880s, the proportion of farmland sold was higher in Mulgimaa than in most other parishes.[42]

Earlier historiography has established that on noble manors, many tenants were unable to buy their farms outright.[43] For example, in three parishes in southern Estonia (Helme, Saarde and Viljandi), at least one-quarter of the tenants on most manors lost their farms.[44] The vast amount of court records, complaints, and supplications from all over Estonia testifies to the

[40] Lust, 'How permanent were farms', p. 224.

[41] At the beginning of the 1860s, only one-fifth of farms on peasant lands paid money rent: Fr. v. Jung-Stilling. *Statistisches Material zur Beleuchtung Livländischer Bauer-Verhältnisse* (1868), p. 8.

[42] By the early 1880s, 98 per cent of peasant land was bought in perpetuity in Halliste and Tarvastu, in Helme 90, in Karksi 84, and in Paistu 80 per cent: Friedrich von Jung-Stilling, *Materialien zur Kenntniss der livländischen Bauer-Verhältnisse* (1883), pp. 129–34.

[43] Kahk, *Talude*, p. 87; Vassar, 'Eesti talurahva vaated', p. 142; Kersti Lust, 'Talude päriseksostmine Saaremaa eramõisais aastatel 1905–1915 [Purchase of farms on the noble estates of Saaremaa, 1905–1915)]', *Eesti Ajalooarhiivi Toimetised* 7(14) (2001), pp. 124–5.

[44] Lust, 'How permanent were farms', pp. 232–5.

lack of money to buy farmsteads outright.[45] Whether former tenants could buy their farms in perpetuity depended primarily on local circumstances. The time of sale, the landlord's attitude and the price he wanted for the farm, competition from neighbours and migrants during the sale, and the percentage of previously in-migrated farmers, purchases of farms, and expansion of demesnes in the surrounding areas all played a role. Evictions of tenants in one community could trigger similar events in other communities, as some of those evicted moved and bought farms outright in other communities. This kind of domino effect, however, occurred only in Mulgimaa and, to a lesser extent in the parish of Viljandi bordering on Mulgimaa. In other regions of southern Estonia, dispossessed tenants were less successful at becoming farm owners outside of their home communities. In many places, tenants asked the landlord to delay the sale so that the farms could be improved or so that the tenants could at least take a loan. There were some manorial lords who agreed to wait for a decade or more, and others who refused to wait even a year.[46]

III

'When money jingles in a Mulk's purse …'

In keeping with general migration patterns, economic differentials between the point of origin and point of arrival led to the migration of Mulks. Peasant farmers in Mulgimaa were among the first to reform farming practices and to increase their incomes. The economic advantage of Mulgimaa, which featured large and scattered farmsteads, manifested itself in the greater mobility of money, people, and information, and the more widespread practices of paying money for farm rental and purchasing farmsteads.[47] Landowning farmers had much more success with growing flax than tenant farmers, whose attempts to increase the cultivation of flax were severely limited. The manorial lords eagerly sued tenants who grew more flax than the rent contract allowed.[48] For example, the tenant farmers in Pöögle had to pay the landlord a fine of 25 roubles per bushel of land (0.37 ha), and depending on how excessive the growing of flax was, their fines ranged from 13 to 300 roubles in the mid-1860s.[49] The importance of flax is further supported by the fact that outside Mulgimaa, farm purchasers of Mulk origin first enhanced its cultivation.[50]

In the five Mulgimaa parishes, there were about 1750 farms. Until 1889, landlords sold about 8100 farms on peasant land in southern Estonia (outside Mulgimaa); over 600 of them were bought by Mulks. On average, each Mulgimaa farm produced 0.35 purchasers of a farm outside Mulgimaa in southern Estonia. As the Mulks also bought farms outright in the province of Estland (today northern Estonia) as well as in the southern part of Livland (today northern

[45] Hans Kruus, 'Eesti talupoegade palvekirjade-aktsioonid 1860-ndail aastail [Petition campaigns of Estonian peasants in the 1860s]', in *Eesti ajaloost XIX sajandi teisel poolel. 60–80-ndad aastad* (Tallinn, 1957), pp. 9–87; Lust, 'Eestikeelse Liivimaa', pp. 239–52.

[46] Lust, 'How permanent were farms', p. 232.

[47] As a rule, large farms are those over 20 *thaler*. The *thaler* was a fiscal measure of the farm's capacity to give production (in grain), not a square measure. Jung-Stilling estimates, however, that one *thaler* in the area of investigation was about 2.2–3.3 ha of agricultural land.

[48] RA, EAA, f. 924, n. 1, s. 284.

[49] RA, EAA, f. 3556. n. 1, s. 5, fos 19–20, 22, 25–25v, 40v–41: community court minutes, 1 Mar., 22 Mar. and 1 May 1867, 9 Feb. 1868.

[50] Laur *et al.*, *Talude päriseksostmine*, p. 57.

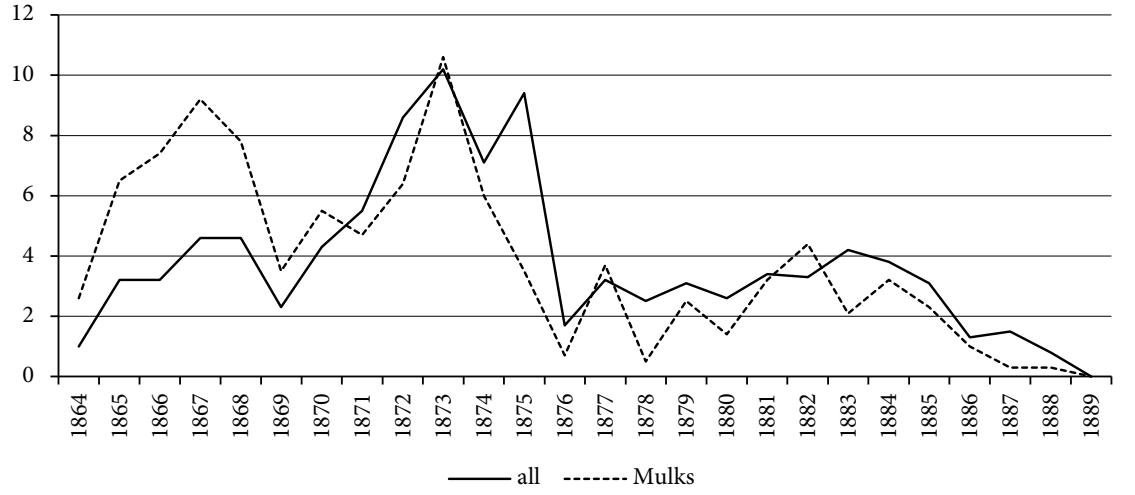


FIGURE 3. Farms bought outright in southern Estonia (excluding Mulgimaa) from 1864 to 1889, percentages by year: all purchasers and the Mulks*

Number of purchased farms from 1864 to 1889 = 100%

Latvia), the average rate of purchasers produced per Mulgimaa farm was even higher.[51] The sale of peasant land on noble manors led to considerable mobility in Estland and Livland (though there were large regional differences), but typically the outsiders were from nearby communities (manors) in the same parish.[52] As stated above, such a large-scale out-migration of purchasers that extended far beyond parish borders took place only from Mulgimaa and a few manors in the Viljandi area. In this respect, Mulks clearly stood out among migrant purchasers.

The overall number of farms sold to Mulks outside Mulgimaa in southern Estonia is presented in Figure 2. Until 1889, they bought outright about seven per cent of the peasant farms in Viljandi County and 12 per cent in Tartu County, while in two other counties of southern Estonia, their share was negligible. Purchasers of Mulk origin bought farmsteads outright on 115 noble manors outside Mulgimaa, and on 16 manors, they bought outright at least ten farmsteads.[53] In all counties, they gravitated towards the areas close to Mulgimaa, which suggests that geographical proximity was an important factor in deciding where to move. From Figures 3 and 4, it appears that in the mid-1860s, Mulks were especially active in buying farms outright in southern Estonia in general, and in Tartu County in particular. Their success irritated the local people, who started calling the migrants 'Mulks', a nickname that was initially pejorative but later had positive connotations. The ethnonym 'Mulk' arose through the well-known pattern of contrasting one's own people with outsiders.[54]

[51] Livland was divided by a linguistic boundary: the Northern spoke Estonian, while the Southern spoke Latvian.

[52] The question has not been addressed in Estonia but the claim is based on my own research.

[53] Lust, 'Mulgi hädaoht', pp. 50–51.

[54] Farm purchasers, however, accounted for a small proportion of the Mulks who migrated to many areas.

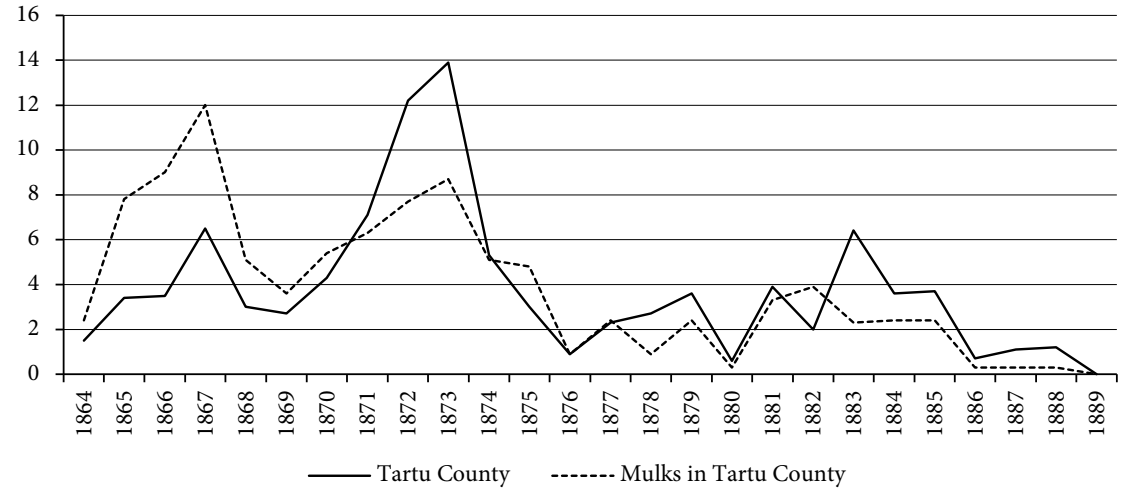


FIGURE 4. Farms bought outright in Tartu County from 1864 to 1889, percentages by year: all purchasers and the Mulks*

Number of purchased farms from 1864 to 1889 = 100%

Mulks were often wealthier than peasants outside Mulgimaa. A proverb from that time stated: 'When money jingles in a Mulk's purse, the Tartu farmer trembles in his farmhouse'.[55] If the tenants in Tartu County refused to buy their farms outright on the terms set by the manorial lords, then, to use a popular contemporary metaphor, 'a thousand Mulks were standing at their door'.[56] The average down payment placed by farm purchasers of Mulk origin, however, was roughly comparable to that placed by farm purchasers who were not Mulks (on half of the manors, they paid larger down payments, and on the other half, they paid smaller ones).[57] Moreover, on average, the price they paid for the land was the same that other purchasers paid on the same manor. In some places, they snapped up the largest farms, but this was not the prevalent pattern.

The most well-off group among Mulk migrants was that of former (evicted) tenants. Evictions happened not only because tenants lacked the means to buy their farmsteads but also due to conflicts with the manorial lords and the allocation of one-fifth of farmland for the use of the manorial lords.[58] Many dispossessed tenants whose farms were attached to estate land sought a new farm outside Mulgimaa.[59]

Three examples of early migrants illustrate how increasing revenues fed the tenants' self-esteem and increased their self-confidence, which led to conflicts and out-migration. Juhan Kolberg (b. 1809 in Pöögle) was one of the first three Mulks to buy farmsteads outside Mulgimaa. In Karksi he leased two farms but was evicted in 1857 for 'damaging' them. He had

[55] Anne Hussar, Arvo Krikmann, Ingrid Sarv, Harri Kõiva (eds), *Vanasõnaraamat* (1984), no. 556.

[56] The metaphor derives from a comedy by Juhan Kunder, *Mulgi mõistus ja tartlase tarkus. Nali ühes järgus [Mulk's wit and wisdom of a Tartu man. Comedy in one act]* (1881), p. 9.

[57] Lust, 'Mulgi hädaoht', p. 55.

[58] Livländische Agrar- und Bauern-Verordnung (1850), §§ 8–12.

[59] RA, EAA, f. 931, n. 1, s. 675, 689, 711, 735.

sown five times more flax than allowed (on 40 bushels of land instead of eight), cleared land and shrunk pastures, and raised 65 cattle, even though the rent contract did not allow more than twenty.[60] In 1855, the manorial lords turned him in to the police for selling cheap vodka from home.[61] Innkeeping was a privilege of the manorial lords, and Kolberg's activities considerably reduced the lords' incomes from their inns. The Kolberg case vividly demonstrates how constrained the enterprising peasants were, if they were tenants, in their attempts to change traditional farming and take up new activities. In June 1859, Kolberg bought two neighbouring farms in Väike-Konguta in Tartu County.[62] The price was 6240 roubles, including an immediate down payment of 4000 roubles. As a farm owner, he bought flax from peasants and sold it to merchants in Tallinn, Tartu, and Pärnu; locals bought Baltic herring and other goods from him.[63] Kolberg's three younger daughters married sons of Peter Ottas, an arriviste who had bought outright five farms in the Tartu area and several houses in the town of Tartu.[64]

Jaan Tamberg was the first Mulk to purchase a farm outright in Kavastu. When his tenant farm was put on sale in Abja, he asked that the down payment be reduced and did not pay it on time. As a result, the landlord sold his farm to someone else. Jaan Tamberg actually had a great deal of money, and according to the bailiff of Abja manor, Sarri, 'everyone in the community knew this'.[65] In March 1862, Jaan's sons Jaan and Henrik Tamberg immediately paid 3359 roubles of the 6709-rouble price for the two Viru farms (114 ha) in Kavastu.[66] It was an extraordinarily large down payment, over six times more than was normal in terms of absolute value from the 1860s to the 1880s.

In 1864, the lord of Veelikse manor, Paul von Stryk, evicted Peeter Sitska. Lord von Stryk considered him quarrelsome, disobedient, and thieving.[67] Court records reveal that Sitska, like many other farm heads, had harvested timber without the landlord's permission and that, unlike the other farm heads, he had not diligently carried out the landlord's orders.[68] In 1865, Peeter Sitska bought a farm outright in Tali, Saarde parish (Pärnu County), becoming the first farm buyer of Mulk origin there. Sitska paid 7900 roubles, including an immediate down payment of 1975 roubles. In Tali, he was soon elected the head of the community court, and his farm became the centre of social life. Sitska, however, was also tried for lying and for black-market trading of alcohol and cigarettes.[69]

[60] RA, EAA, f. 931, n. 1, s. 669.

[61] RA, EAA, f. 952, n. 1, s. 2535. Kolberg was fined with 100 roubles.

[62] Formally, Kolberg did not buy the farms outright, as it had been done by Könn two years earlier. Könn, however, was actually a shadow buyer, which is confirmed by the fact that he did not move there. All other buyers in Väike-Konguta were migrant moneybags, which further supports the assumption that Könn was a shadow buyer: RA, EAA, f. 2381, n. 1, s. 1236; EAA, f. 1264, n. 1, s. 251, f. 290.

[63] RA, EAA, f. 924, n. 1, s. 3088; EAA, f. 996, n. 3, s. 717; EAA f. 1001, n. 1, s. 1712; EAA, f. 923, n. 1, s. 3217. Court disputes with merchants Koch, Kurrikoff and Adler reveal that his flax transactions amounted to thousands of roubles:

[64] RA, EAA, f. 2381, n. 1, s. 1232; EAA, f. 2381, n. 1, s. 1239; EAA, f. 925, n. 1, s. 3609. Peter Ottas was from Tartu County (i.e., not a Mulk).

[65] RA, EAA, f. 931, n. 1, s. 686, fos. 3–4: Sarri to the parish court of the 3rd district in Pärnu County, 13 Mar. 1863.

[66] The father bought the farms but the property was registered in the names of the sons, who both were under 20 in 1862. Contract was signed on 16 May 1864.

[67] RA, EAA, f. 931, n. 1, s. 695: Stryk to the parish court of the 3rd district of Pärnu County, 8 Dec. 1864.

[68] RA, EAA, f. 3990, n. 1, s. 10.

[69] RA, EAA, f. 951, n. 2, s. 1014: police investigation file.

TABLE 1. Socio-economic status of the migrant farm purchasers from Mulgimaa

	No. of communities (manors)	*No. of farms on peasant land*[a]	*No. of purchasers*	*Members of farm head's family (%)*	*Farmhands (%)*	*Other*[b] *or unknown (%)*
Noble manors	14	481	161	60.9	28.6	10.5
State estates	4	255	67	43.3	49.2	7.5

Notes:
[a] In the early 1850s, before the allocation of 'quota land' to the noble lords.
[b] The category 'other' includes teachers, bailiffs, innkeepers, blacksmiths, and others.
Source: The author's own calculations based on the purchase contracts, church records, and civil registration of migrants. The sample includes 18 manors out of 46 in Mulgimaa. From six manors, no farm purchasers outside Mulgimaa are known. Data on the manors of Helme, Holdre, Jõgeveste, Patküla, Riidaja, Hummuli, Leebiku, Lõve, Taagepera, Holstre, Morna, Pahuvere, Saaremõis, Vooru, Pöögle, Kaubi, Pornuse and Vana-Kariste.

Socio-economic and marital status

Farm purchasers of Mulk origin formed a socially diverse group. Their social origins ranged from manor bailiffs to farmhands, from innkeepers to conscripts' sons. However, the vast majority were farmers and their family members. Many more buyers were born into servant (i.e. farmhand) families, but since then they had improved their social status over that of their parents, and buying land did not raise their social status further. The large share of former farm heads, evicted from their farmsteads, as well as farm heads' sons and brothers (Table 1) reflects the importance of the resources they amassed or were provided by other family members. Sons of farmers benefitted from a large inheritance and could expect financial support from their family members. Landholding peasants also followed property-related marriage strategies so that the partner was able to bring assets into the marriage.

Marriage was a strategic decision for prospective farm purchasers. It involved the question of whom to marry to get access to economic resources, expand kin networks, and move upwards socially. Most migrant farm purchasers were married, and most of them also travelled with their families (i.e. their wives were usually Mulks) (Table 2). Marrying the farm's heir – a farm head's widow or daughter – in the area of destination was not a common way of becoming a farm proprietor. In one such case, a conscript's son (whose status put him at the bottom of the village hierarchy) from Taagepera managed to marry a young widow in Krüüdneri and thus become a proprietor. We may assume that the information network functioned well and that earlier migrants from Taagepera gave him suggestions. Another opportunity that landless men had for upward mobility was to marry a young woman from a well-to-do farming family, either from Mulgimaa or from the destination area. This strategy was followed by about half of the men of landless origin who bought a farm outright outside Mulgimaa.[70] The relatively small proportion (Table 2) might be explained by the fact that many prospective purchasers

[70] Based on the data from Holstre, Taagepera, Vooru, Leebiku, Riidaja, Patküla, Jõgeveste, Lõve, Morna, Pahuvere, and Kaubi.

TABLE 2. Marital status of the farm purchasers from Mulgimaa at the time of signing the purchase contract and the geographical origin of their wives

No of communities (manors)	*Marital status*			*Geographical origin of wives*		
	married	*purchase year = marriage year (+/–1)*	*single*[a]	*Mulk*	*local*	*other*
10	66	16	10	49	21	12

Note: [a] excluding minors
Source: The author's own calculations based on the purchase contracts, church records, and civil registration of migrants. Data on the manors of Helme, Holdre, Holstre, Jõgeveste, Leebiku, Lõve, Patküla, Riidaja, Pornuse and Vooru.

had left Mulgimaa years before they bought a farm, and becoming a tenant farmer did not require a great deal of resources.

The role of networks in choosing a migration destination

The migrant's destination was often influenced by information obtained from social networks (including previous migrants). Kavastu, Kaagjärve, and Krüüdneri attracted the most farm purchasers of Mulk origin (Figure 1). Fritz Karro (1830–1895) was the primary migrant who passed on information that created a migration stream between Pöögle and its neighbouring communities in Mulgimaa and Kavastu (about 130 km from Pöögle) in Tartu County. By the time Karro arrived in Kavastu in 1865, the lord of the manor, Arthur von Richter, had managed to sell 22 farms out of 128 (mostly to locals). Karro came up with the idea of becoming a negotiator between the landlord and peasant farm buyers and earn a commission. In 1872, A. von Richter denied any such agreement but acknowledged that Karro had, for his own benefit, convinced his acquaintances in Viljandi County to come and buy farms in Kavastu, and he had promised to pay a commission on each successful deal.[71] From the mid-1860s to the early 1870s, Karro arranged purchase deals with at least 25 Mulk migrants in Kavastu. Eleven of them came from his home community, Pöögle, and one was a brother of a farmer (Karel Tilk) from Pöögle. Karel's brother, Henrik, born in Kaubi, bought outright a farm in nearby Alatskivi. As a result, all farm purchasers of Mulk origin came to Alatskivi from Tilk's native community, Kaubi. Several farm buyers of Mulk origin in Luunja (west of Kavastu along the Emajõgi River) were probably also related to this network of migrants.[72] The land purchasers of Mulk origin in Kavastu included Karro's relatives by blood and marriage (e.g., his brother-in-law and two of his relatives, the brother of the other brother-in-law), fellow villagers, friends, and business acquaintances.[73] Karro's role as a negotiator in farm purchase deals was unusual in Estonia,

[71] RA, EAA, f. 918, n. 1, s. 380, fos. 12, 16–17v: Richter to Tartu County Court, 27 Feb. and 12 Dec. 1872.

[72] For example, there were family members among them.

[73] Kersti Lust and Tõnis Türna, 'Pärisperemees ja pärishärra moderniseeruvas Eestis: Kargova Fritz Karro ja Saverna Jaak Kissa [Fritz Karro of Kargova and Jaak Kissa of Saverna: the farmer and the landlord in modernizing Estonia]', *Ajalooline Ajakiri* 3/4 (2011), p. 327.

although not unique. For example, the lord of Kuremaa manor, Eduard von Oettingen, also employed an agent of peasant origin in spring 1863 to look for and negotiate with buyers, and paid him 1.5 per cent of the purchase price for each successful deal.[74] Kuremaa (55 km north of Tartu) also attracted Mulk migrants.

The arrival of a number of purchasers from one community to another, located dozens of kilometres away from their original homes, within a short period of time or in successive waves, reveals networks and the sharing of information. For example, 11 out of 19 land purchasers originating from Taagepera bought farms in Krüüdneri (75 km from Taagepera) between 1879 and 1882. The first family from Taagepera arrived there in the early 1850s, and the next ones came in the 1860s and 1870s.[75] Kaagjärve presents a similar pattern: the future purchasers from Helme parish first came in the late 1850s and were followed by others in the next couple of decades. Those migrants who did not buy land in the first community to which they moved, to but moved several times before buying land, often became acquainted with each other in the places where they stopped. For example, in Lota, five farm purchasers out of six came from Pöögle.[76] Two of them were born in nearby Abja, six or seven kilometers from Pöögle, and had moved to Pöögle as farm tenants in the 1850s. Most migrants from Pöögle, both natives and those who came later, bought farms outright in two communities: Lota (about 60 km from Pöögle) and Kavastu.

Not only migrant peasants but also lords owning two or more manors in different parishes spread information about available farms. Jõgeveste and Uniküla manors belonged to the same owner and all Mulk farm purchasers in Uniküla were from Jõgeveste. Seven out of ten Mulk farm purchasers in Vana- and Uue-Pärsti originated from Riidaja, all three manors owned by Friedrich von Stryk.

As shown above, in the 1860s and 1870s, Mulks arrived in several communities in a single wave of migration and were associated with one another either by kin ties or as fellow villagers. On the other hand, there were a number of communities where migrant purchasers of farms seem to have been, for the most part, unconnected. In two such communities, however, their final destination was the result of a series of random moves, and the sources do not reveal whether they had got to know each other on their way.

The role of information and social networks in migration is further evinced by the fact that the parishes of Halliste and Karksi provided more migrants than the other three.[77] Likewise, there were many migrant farm purchasers from almost all the manors in these two parishes, including privately owned and state-owned manors, manors where farmsteads were sold very early and those where the sales happened a decade or two later, and manors where farms were mostly sold to locals and those where locals often lost their farms to newcomers. Thus the importance of personal connections in increasing the momentum of migration, where the

[74] RA, EAA, f. 1388, n. 1, s. 403, fo. 17: contract with Jaan Märtsin, 7 May 1863. Märtsin earned 1518.36 roubles.

[75] This and the following examples are all based on the farm purchase contracts in the land registry archives (RA, EAA, f. 2381, f. 3416, and f. 3760). The geographical origin of buyers was identified on the basis of church records, poll tax lists ('soul revision' lists), and listings of migrants.

[76] On this small manor, all farms well sold to Mulks.

[77] The number of migrant purchasers divided by the number of farms in the community of origin.

contacts created by migration between the areas cause additional migration, partly explains the advantage of Halliste and Karksi parishes over the other three.

Mobilizing resources outside Mulgimaa

In about 25 per cent of the cases, migrant farm purchasers left Mulgimaa at least a decade before purchasing the farm. However, agreements could have been concluded many years before the purchase contracts were signed.[78]

In Livland, written rent contracts became obligatory in 1853, and many contracts expired in 1859, as farms were normally rented to peasants on a six-year contract. This enabled many industrious Mulk migrants to set up themselves as tenants in several different communities. If they managed farms skilfully, it paved the way for them to become a landowner.

Becoming a tenant several years prior to the purchase gave migrants a chance to amass savings for farm purchase. It also required considerably smaller initial investments (deposits were much smaller than down payments) and enabled able-bodied workers to rise into the group of tenants. The latter was partly facilitated by the fact that the 'iron inventory' of the farm (the fixed amount of grain, livestock, and tools of each farmstead, which were the property of the estate owner) meant there were basic means to keep the household going. Over half of the prospective farm purchasers of landless origin had migrated out at least six years before the purchase and had set themselves up as tenants either in the target community or elsewhere. The end of corvée – unpaid labour the tenants owed to the manorial lord – made many farmhands superfluous on the large farms, which had previously brought together many inhabitants and encouraged out-migration. For example, 80 per cent of the landless migrants from the Holstre state estate had lived at least six (and often more than ten) years in the community where they bought farms outright.[79] State peasants who started to pay money rent earlier, in the late 1840s or early 1850s, seem to have been in an advantaged position, as former corvée workers could move out somewhat earlier and set up themselves as tenants elsewhere.

Becoming a tenant several years before the manorial lord put the farms up for sale, however, also entailed a serious risk: the lord could evict the tenants for contrariness, non-compliance with the provisions of the rental contract, or other reasons. In 1867, four Mulk migrants in Restu (Sangaste parish in Tartu County) protested the increase in rent and defeated the owner of the manor in court. Three of them managed to stay there until they bought the farms outright in 1883.[80] By contrast, at the same time, several Mulk tenants in Laatre (Sangaste parish) failed in their attempt to protest unfavourable contracts and were evicted for excessive growing of flax, expanding fields at the expense of pastures, and other such activities.[81]

[78] Lust, 'Mulgi hädaoht', pp. 45–52.

[79] See note 75.

[80] RA, EAA, f. 924, n. 1, s. 621.

[81] RA, EAA, f. 924, n. 1, s. 284: minutes of the parish court of the 3rd district of Tartu County, 17 Feb. and 21 Mar. 1866; EAA, f. 924, n. 1, s. 292, fos. 1–2, 6–6v: Engelhardt to the parish court, 12 May 1867, and minutes of community court, 14 Jun. 1867.

No money? Borrow it

Although revenues from selling the major cash crop – flax – were often considerable,[82] the preserved court records suggest that farm purchasers often borrowed money from various people.[83] Those with limited funds readily took risks. A newspaper commentator wrote: 'The Mulk came with tens of or a few hundred roubles in his pocket and plans in his head for making money from flax production. He boldly bought the farmstead'.[84] Such men even bought large and expensive farms. Some cases suggest opportunism, as a farm purchaser could burden his property with huge loans amounting to thousands of roubles and exceeding the market value of the farm.[85] In 1865, Count Georg Mellin, the lord of Pöögle manor, managed, after several attempts, to evict Fritz Karro from Metsaleeli farm. Mellin accused him of fraud, 'major immorality', and having an 'extremely negative impact' on the others.[86] He was in debt to the manorial lord, communal granary, and fellow villagers and was frequently sued.[87] In the words of a member of Abja community court, Karro was – 'as is generally known' – 'in debt and constantly financially strapped' and without 'any assets'.[88] Nevertheless, he bought one of the biggest farms (*c*.104 ha) in Kavastu in Tartu County for 5364.5 roubles in 1864. In order to make the payments that were due before the registration of the farm purchase contract, he borrowed small amounts of money. In his will, dated 4 April 1895, he bequeathed to his daughter Reet Gross, along with Kargova farm, all his debts.[89] During his career as a farm owner of Kargova, Karro took loans he later renounced and left unpaid; he was in debt to the manorial lord and private creditors and submitted unfounded claims for damages; he swindled and stole, drank alcohol excessively, and had served time in jail.[90] A bond loan of 1000 roubles from Gustav Nitov saved him from bankruptcy in 1874. Karro's monetary loans from 1864 to 1876 are presented in Table 3. Aside from loans in money, he also took loans in kind (e.g., in flax seed).[91]

Fritz Karro was not just an indebted man; he also had ties to well-established families and developed a large social network. Family and kin provided a certain reputation or status, which expanded his financial opportunities. In 1848, Fritz married Made Piir, a farmer's daughter from Abja. His brother Ott and father Juhan were tenant farmers in Pöögle (later, Fritz's brother Juhan took over their parents' farm). However, both of Fritz's brothers, Ott and Juhan, were later evicted. Fritz could count on support and loans from the families of his sisters, two

[82] In the 1860s, for example, Juhan Loorberg in Helme sold flax and flax seed for about 800 roubles a year, whereas for other farm products (oxen and grain) he got altogether ten times less: RA, EAA, f. 934, n. 1, s. 1151: Loorberg to the parish court of the 6th district of Pärnu County, 1866.

[83] RA, EAA, f. 931, n. 1, s. 697, 702; f. 928, n. 1, s. 92; Lust and Türna, 'Pärisperemees ja pärishärra', pp. 312–5; Lust, 'Eestikeelse Liivimaa talupoegade', pp. 242–9.

[84] *Eesti Postimees*, 30 May 1873.

[85] Lust and Türna, 'Pärisperemees ja pärishärra', pp. 312–34, Tiit Rosenberg, 'Talude päriseksostmisest Sangaste kihelkonnas [Buying of farms in perpetuity in the parish of Sangaste]', in *Künnivaod* (2013), p. 212.

[86] RA, EAA, f. 919, n. 1, s. 1633: Count G. Mellin to the parish court of the 3rd district of Pärnu county, 22 Oct. 1860.

[87] Lust and Türna, 'Pärisperemees ja pärishärra', p. 311.

[88] RA, EAA, f. 931, n. 1, s. 2241; f. 919, n. 1, s. 4278, fo. 1: minutes of the parish court of the 3rd district of Pärnu County and Pärnu County Court, 24 Nov. 1864.

[89] RA, EAA, f. 2381, n. 2, s. 5869.

[90] Lust and Türna, 'Pärisperemees ja pärishärra', pp. 310–43.

[91] RA, EAA, f. 3566, n. 1, s. 5, fo. 5v: Pöögle community court minutes, 8 Jun. 1866.

TABLE 3. Fritz Karro's loans (in roubles), 1864–1876[a]

Family	sum	*Mulks*	Sum	Kavastu	Sum	Other/unknown	Sum
Jaak Gross	2500	Tõnis Kaasik	500	Karl Elken	100	Gustav Nitov	1000
		Henn Järv	89.65[b]	Märt Reili	100		
		Juhan Järv	30				
		Juhan Kalling	60				

Notes:
[a] It includes bond loans and only those verbal loan agreements recorded in the court records.
[b] Debt unpaid from a bigger loan as of 12 Oct. 1874.
Source: RA, EAA, f. 2381, n. 2, s. 5869; EAA, f. 931, n. 1, s. 2568.

of whom were married to farm purchasers in Tartu County. One of his brothers-in-law, Jaak Koger, was a speculator who bought a farm in Lota in 1868 and sold it for almost twice the price in 1874. Meanwhile, Koger acquired a by-manor (*Beigut*) of Kaagjärve (Sēļi) and even tried to acquire a noble manor (Burgas), promising the manorial lord a deposit of 1000 roubles in cash and 14,000 roubles in bonds. That deal failed, as he could not raise that sum.[92] At least two of Fritz's three daughters married well-to-do men – one a farm owner in Kavastu and the second a farm owner in Pöögle (the third married a blacksmith).[93] Fritz's son-in-law, Jaak Gross, lent him 2500 roubles in 1876. In Pöögle, besides farming, Fritz Karro had engaged in small-scale trade, buying flax from other villagers and selling them salt, sugar, coffee, honey, hats, boots, and other goods. This enabled him to develop a large network of various people (including Juhan Kolberg).[94] In Kavastu, as mentioned above, Karro became a negotiator between the manorial lord and peasant farm buyers. In 1867, Richter forgave 418.5 roubles of Karro's purchase debt for arranging purchase deals.[95] By inviting men from Pöögle and other communities to Kavastu, he helped many (including dispossessed tenants) to become heads of farms. Karro combined a wide variety of resources. His creditors included, for example, Tõnis Kaasik from Karksi, who, as an assessor of the parish court, occupied one of the highest positions in the peasant hierarchy. In other historical contexts, it has been shown that loans were granted on the basis not only of means, but also of the borrower's reputation.[96] Reputation meant reliability in repaying debts. The Karro case demonstrates another social aspect of credit relations in rural face-to-face societies: position in the village hierarchy and connections with various people was at least as important as a good reputation.

[92] A *Beigut* or By-manor was a smaller economic unit within a larger manor complex. Owners of by-manors, however, also had the voting right at the provincial Diet (if they were members of the noble corporation). EAA, f. 2381, n. 2, s. 6358; EAA, f. 2381, n. 1, s. 1253; EAA, f. 918, n. 1, s. 4932. In 1858, he was an inn-keeper in Pöögle. Very probably he bought outright also two farms in Kaagjärve.

[93] RA, EAA, f. 1256, n. 1, s. 624, fo. 333v.

[94] Lust and Türna, 'Pärisperemees ja pärishärra', pp. 310–43. A court file concerning Gross' dispute with Karro contains a flax trader's (Karro's or plaintiff's) account book which includes dozens of names of sellers from seven communities (RA, EAA, f. 931, n. 1, s. 2237). It shows how extensive were flax trader's business contacts.

[95] Lust and Türna, 'Pärisperemees ja pärishärra', p. 326.

[96] Gestrich and Stark (eds), *Debtors, creditors*, 'Introduction', pp. 3–4.

Besides Fritz Karro, two other purchasers of Mulk origin in Kavastu, who were severely in arrears, retained their farms and bequeathed them to their descendants.[97] Their creditors included Mulks from various communities (and in one case, also family members like a brother and a brother-in-law). Out of 35 farms sold to Mulks in Kavastu, only one went into bankruptcy before 1889.[98]

Farm purchasers of Mulk origin could easily find creditors among other Mulks, either residents of Mulgimaa or migrants. In nineteenth-century Kavastu, for example, in two-thirds of the cases when farm purchasers of Mulk origin took bond loans, the creditors were Mulks.[99] Several well-off Mulks became moneylenders, normally charging interest of five to seven per cent. Court records give evidence of many such men who provided credit to farm buyers both in Mulgimaa and beyond.[100] For example, Henn Riit from Abja-Vanamõisa gave credit to at least four other farm buyers on three different manors.[101] Buyers often borrowed from several people.[102] It was not only successful farmers who provided credit; so too did leaseholders of manors.[103] The contract register of the community of Abja, a place that produced – in absolute terms – the most farm purchasers of Mulk origin outside Mulgimaa, reveals that the amount of purchase-related loans ranged from hundreds to thousands of roubles, and lenders were often family members.[104] For example, in 1868, Juhan Puusemp in Abja borrowed for farm purchase 3000 roubles from his father and 250 roubles from a local farm owner.[105] The biggest recorded loan amounted to 5000 roubles. Loan arrangements were also common between fellow community members and men who had built contacts in the course of the flax trade. Normally, family members provided big loans, but others also entrusted large sums in the form of bonds (this practice became more common starting in the 1880s). Creditors were often flexible regarding timely repayment and were willing to wait for years to get the loans back.[106] Not only did migrants seek credit from their native community, but the opposite also occurred – locals borrowed from migrants in order to buy a farm in their original home.[107]

[97] RA, EAA, f. 2381, n. 2, s. 6342; EAA, f. 2381, n. 2, s. 6334.

[98] RA, EAA, f. 2381, n. 2, s. 6339.

[99] RA, EAA, f. 2381, n. 2, files no-s 5863, 5869, 6334, 6349, 6329, 6323, 6342, 6476, 6434.

[100] Community court minutes from Abja, Abja-Vanamõisa, Pöögle, Pornuse, Kaubi, and Laatre: RA, EAA, f. 3987, n. 1, s. 6, fos. 40v, 49, 56, 16 Feb. and 28 Sept. 1867, 20 Jun. 1868; EAA, f. 3987, n. 1, s. 8, fos 83v–84, 14 Jun. 1867; EAA, f. 3556, n. 1, s. 5, fos. 112v, fo. 128v, 26 May 1872, 5 Feb. 1873; EAA, f. 3556, n. 1, s. 6, f. 27, 8 Feb. 1874; EAA, f. 4709, n. 1, s. 10, fos. 16, 17–18v, 28 Feb. 1864 and 24 Apr. 1867; EAA, f. 4712, n. 1, s. 6, p. 29, 10 May 1865; EAA, f. 4710, n. 1, s. 2, fos. 50–50v, 16 Dec. 1866; EAA, f. 3990, n. 1, s. 10, fo. 52v, 1 Aug. 1862; EAA, f. 931, n. 1, s. 2568 (parish court dispute between Juhan Järv and Juhan Kalling, 1873). RA, EAA, f. 925, n. 1, s. 4468; EAA, f. 2381, n. 2, s.7288; EAA, f. 2381, n. 2, s. 7398.

[101] RA, EAA, f. 4709, n. 1, s. 10, fos. 28v–29, 27 Nov. 1868; EAA, f. 1275, n. 1, s. 557, p. 130; www.ra.ee/apps/talumaad/ (last access 2 Aug. 2019)

[102] Our fragmentary sources allow to identify up to five private creditors (besides the seller).

[103] RA, EAA, f. 2381, n. 2, s. 6360; EAA, f. 1275, n. 1, s. 551, f. 91; EAA, f. 1275, n. 1, s. 473, f. 16.

[104] RA, EAA, f. 3987, n. 1, s. 6, f. 36: entries from 27 and 31 May 1866. Very few contract registers annotating oral agreements between community members have been preserved from this period. Richness of data in the register of Abja is exceptional. For more, see also loan related court disputes between family members: RA, EAA, f. 3987, n. 1, s. 8, fos. 65v–66, 131v–132, 11 May and 23 Nov. 1867. For Laatre, see for example, EAA, f. 3990, n. 1, s. 25, fo. 28v, entry from 20 Feb. 1876.

[105] RA, EAA, f. 3987, n. 1, s. 6, f. 56v–57, 59 v, Jun. 1868.

[106] E.g., 8 or 14 years: RA, EAA, f. 4709, n. 1, s. 10, fos. 16, 34, 43v.

[107] RA, EAA, f. 3987, n. 1, s. 6, fo. 61, 5 Dec. 1868.

Aside from credit relations, the flax trade connected the family members who stayed put with those who migrated.[108]

V

Was it true, then, that no money meant no farm? The short answer is yes, in general – but as shown in this study, a shortage of money could be overcome. Tenants who did not have sufficient funds to buy their farms outright normally lost them to those who had money. Land prices, farm sizes, and the timing of the sales process varied considerably across Estonia, and this triggered large-scale migration. Until 1889, the most successful migrants were Mulks, who bought outright about seven per cent of peasant farms in the non-Mulk communities of Viljandi County and 12 per cent in Tartu County.

Mulks used various strategies to mobilize financial resources. Their major source of support was the family. Members of farming families – farmers' brothers and sons, and former tenants – decisively dominated the group of migrant purchasers from Mulgimaa. Members of farming families not only had more savings of their own and received a larger inheritance but also had better chances to mobilize a family network in order to raise money for the purchase. The finding that, especially in the early phase of the process, family members tended to provide much more credit than acquaintances or fellow villagers confirms the view that family connections retained a powerful effect on financial behaviour in times of modernization.[109] Expanding networks by marrying a member of the local elite in a new place was occasionally part of the reason for success, but two-thirds of the migrant purchasers arrived with a wife from Mulgimaa. Marrying a farmer's daughter who would bring a substantial dowry into the marriage and help to expand networks would have been an option for farmhands to raise money. Half of the farm purchasers of landless origin followed this course of action. First becoming a tenant in the area of destination, amassing financial resources for years, and only thereafter buying a farm outright was a strategy that also kept the initial investment threshold low for farmhands. However, this approach was not without risks. Tenants could make good money by selling flax, but many manorial lords limited its cultivation on peasant farms and punished those who disobeyed. Farmers and innkeepers were able to earn money in their home communities, although this sometimes led to conflicts with the local manorial lords.

In most cases, family was the main source of credit, but in several others, wider networks and interpersonal relations helped to overcome the money problem. Mulgimaa's economic advantage manifested itself, among other things, in the accumulation of capital in the hands of some of the more prosperous farm heads, who provided credit opportunities for men who did not manage to save up as much themselves. Even if they were seriously indebted in their home community and faced constant lawsuits, Mulks who purchased farmsteads could stay afloat if they mobilized their social networks. This capacity depended on the person's position in the village and the extent of networks. Networks favoured trust and therefore ensured loan

[108] RA, EAA, f. 3987, n. 1, s. 7, fos. 4v–5, 21 Jul. 1866.

[109] Vogel, 'Credit, trust', pp. 95–96.

contract enforcement. Credit relationships among the Mulks supplemented poorly functioning markets that left peasants without almost any access to formal institutions of credit. The increased access to credit also encouraged risk-taking among purchasers who, in some cases, burdened their properties with huge loans. It appears that for a farm owner, continuous borrowing could be a sustainable lifestyle, due to the rapid rise in land prices.

Besides credit, social networks provided highly valuable information on available farms and, through it, influenced the choice of migration destination. For well-off and less well-off migrant land purchasers alike, information about possible migration destinations, where farms were on sale or vacant, where locals did not buy them and manorial lords looked for migrants as well as rent and price information, was of key importance. It was significant because the manorial lords' sale policies differed: some put farms on sale years or decades earlier than the others; some favoured current tenants or at least locals, whereas others eagerly welcomed migrants.

The dynamics of indigenous farming in western Nigeria from the 1850s to the 1920s*

by Ayodeji Olukoju

Abstract

This paper highlights changes in the agricultural economy of western Nigeria between the 1850s and the 1920s, a period that witnessed the transition from indigenous rule to British colonial rule. It focuses on differential access to land, types of agricultural labour, the size of individual farm plots, and the type and destination of farm produce. Examining farm sizes in the indigenous agricultural system of western Nigeria, the paper demonstrates that continuity and contrasts in agricultural practice in the era of indigenous rule and under colonial domination may be explained by changes in the political economy, and the cost of, and access to, land and labour. These changes also accounted for the steady reduction in the average farm size since the pre-colonial period.

During the opening decade of the twentieth century, a major debate took place in official and business circles in British West Africa about the desirability of establishing European-style and expatriate-owned plantations in the region. One prominent advocate of the idea was William Hesketh Lever, founder of Lever Brothers, a major player in the palm produce export business between West Africa and the United Kingdom.[1] The debate was finally decided against Lever and his supporters by Nigeria's colonial governor, Hugh Clifford, who declared his preference for peasant, smallholder agricultural practice. Clifford stated *inter alia* that

> though many of [the plantations] … have proved enormously successful under European management, they always remain and must continue to be *exotic and artificial creations*, with which the indigenous population has little connection.[2]

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[1] K. Dike Nworah, 'The Politics of Lever's West African Concessions, 1907–1913', *International J. African Historical Studies* 5 (1972), pp. 248–64.

[2] National Archives of Nigeria, Ibadan (NAI), CSO 1/32/53, Hugh Clifford to Lord Milner, dispatch 408, 29 May 1920. Italics added for emphasis. A study of

However, one of Clifford's successors contended that his argument in favour of the 'efficiency in production' of peasant production as against the plantation system had been 'exaggerated'.[3] That said, Clifford's decision was a milestone in official policy and in the agricultural history of colonial Nigeria.[4]

The literature on the agricultural history of Nigeria and, specifically, western Nigeria, the homeland of the Yoruba (see Map 1), has dwelt largely on agricultural policies, the introduction of new crops, labour and entrepreneurship in the sector.[5] While some studies have focused on particular communities Ibadan and Ijaye in particular,[6] Hopkins and Agboola examined agricultural changes in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, but with respective emphases on innovations in the colonial context and the introduction of exotic crops during the transition from indigenous to British colonial rule. This essay takes an alternative approach. It situates the subject in the twin contexts of the political economy and ecology of western Nigeria between the 1850s and the 1920s.[7] It calls attention to the overarching political economy of slaveholding, subsistence farming and empire-building during the pre-colonial period, and modernization and export crop production during the colonial period. In the latter context, the discussion engages the diversity of the ecology, ranging from forest and swamp to the savanna. It thus differs from existing studies by covering the two epochs, instead of treating them separately, highlighting both changes and continuity in farm sizes, labour and agricultural practices across time and space.[8]

Note 2 *continued*
plantation agriculture in Nigeria is R. K. Udo, 'Sixty years of plantation agriculture in southern Nigeria, 1902–62', *Economic Geog.* 41 (1965), pp. 356–68.

[3] NAI, CSO 1/34/44, Confidential 'B', Bernard Bourdillon to MacDonald, 5 Apr. 1939.

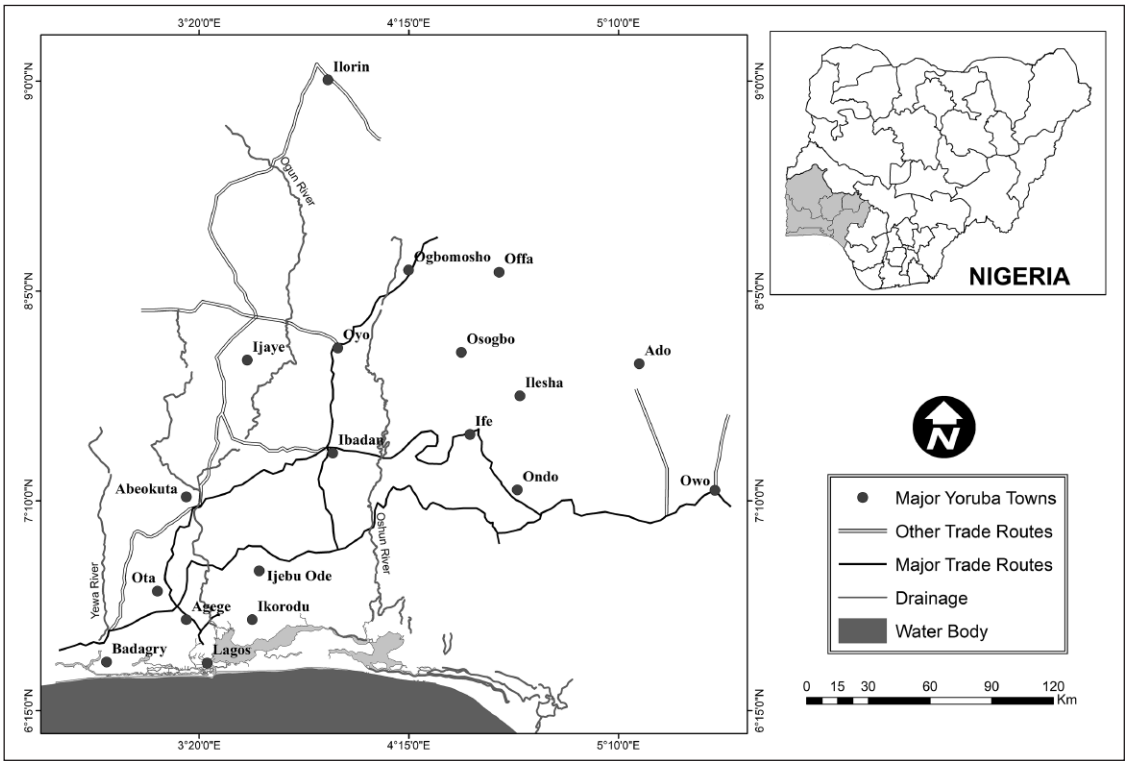
[4] Udo, 'Sixty years of plantation agriculture'; Tom Forrest, 'Agricultural policies in Nigeria, 1900–78', in J. Heyer, P. Roberts and G. Williams (eds), *Rural development in tropical Africa* (1981), pp. 222–58; Ayodeji Olukoju, 'The Faulkner "Blueprint" and the evolution of agricultural policy in inter-war colonial Nigeria', in Adebayo Oyebade (ed.), *The foundations of Nigeria: Essays in honor of Toyin Falola* (2003), pp. 403–22.

[5] S. A. Agboola, 'Agricultural changes in western Nigeria, 1850–1910', in I. A. Akinjogbin and S. O. Osoba (eds), *Topics on Nigerian economic and social history* (1980), pp. 128–45; A. G. Hopkins, 'Innovation in a colonial context: African origins of the Nigerian Cocoa-farming industry, 1880–1920', in Clive Dewey and A. G. Hopkins (eds), *The imperial impact: Studies in the economic history of Africa and India* (1978), pp. 83–96; and B. A. Agiri, 'The development of wage labour in agriculture in southern Yorubaland, 1900–1940', *J. Historical Soc. Nigeria* 12 (1983–84), pp. 95–107.

[6] Bolanle Awe, 'Militarism and economic development in nineteenth-century Yoruba country: The Ibadan example', *J. African Hist.* 14 (1973), pp. 65–77; Toyin Falola, *The political economy of a pre-colonial African state: Ibadan, 1830–1900* (1984) and id., 'The construction and destruction of the economy of Ijaye, *c.*1832–1862', *Afrika und Ubersee* 74 (1991), pp. 21–37.

[7] Julian Clarke, 'Households and the political economy of small-scale cash crop production in south-western Nigeria', *Africa* 51 (1981), pp. 807–23, is a study of the political economy of small-scale farming in a south-central Yoruba community in the 1970s.

[8] A recent study of African agriculture over the long durée is Vibeke Bjornlund, Henning Bjornlund and Andre F. Van Rooyen, 'Why agricultural production in sub-Saharan Africa remains low compared to the rest of the world – a historical perspective', *International J. Water Resources Development* 36 (2020), pp. S20–S53. An illuminating study of indigenous farming practices in Nigeria is N. O. Adedipe, P. A. Okuneye and I. A. Ayinde, 'The relevance of local and indigenous knowledge for Nigerian agriculture', paper presented at the International conference on bridging scales and epistemologies: Linking local knowledge with global science in multi-scale assessments, Alexandria, Egypt, 16–19 Mar. 2004, www.millenniumassessment.org/documents/bridging/papers/adedipe.nimbe.pdf, accessed on 26 Feb. 2021.



MAP 1. Olukoju Map of Yorubaland, 1850s–1950s

It contests the underlying assumption in Clifford's assertion that plantation-style, extensive farming was 'exotic' or 'artificial' in the Nigerian context. This erroneous view has been echoed by Agboola, who claimed that 'the plantation idea was alien to Yoruba agriculture'.[9] This is debunked in this paper by copious references to contemporary evidence for the existence of extensive servile and free labour-run nineteenth-century farm settlements belonging to Yoruba warlords in Ibadan and Ijaye. To be sure, the family farm or smallholder farm has been the dominant feature of west African agriculture. Toulmin and Guèye have stated that 'farming in West Africa remains overwhelmingly in the hands of smallholders'.[10] 'West Africa,' they noted, 'exhibits a diverse array of family farms, in terms of size, assets, market orientation, income, diversification of activities, reliance on migrants' earnings and vulnerability to risk'.[11] This is exemplified by agricultural practice in colonial Gambia (contemporaneous with our case study), where, in most places, 'farmers cultivated peanuts on small-scale farms … by hand (konko) … with remarkable success'. Yet, a British official noted in the 1890s that, at Kombo on the Gambian South Bank, 'the farms were especially large and they were in good condition'.[12] However, Thapa

[9] Agboola, 'Agricultural changes', p. 136.

[10] Camilla Toulmin and Bara Guèye, 'Is there a future for family farming in west Africa?', *IDS Bulletin* 36 (2005), p. 26.

[11] Ibid., p. 23.

[12] Assan Sarr, 'Gender, spirituality, and economic change in rural Gambia: agricultural production in the lower Gambia region, *c.*1830s–1940s', *African Economic Hist.* 45 (2017), pp. 7–8.

has pointed out that though 'small farms' or 'family farms' were defined in various ways, 'many sources define small farms as those with less than 2 hectares of cropland'.[13] That said, this paper argues with examples from nineteenth- and early twentieth-century western Nigeria that indigenous extensive farming (plot sizes of ten or more hectares, though not necessarily patterned after European-style plantation agriculture) was practised by the military aristocracy of the nineteenth century and some of the Western-educated African elite of colonial Lagos in different politico-economic settings. It highlights changes – and their implications – in access to land, labour mobilization and exploitation, and the linkage of agriculture with warfare and the political economy in one context and social mobility in the other.

Preferring 'extensive' agriculture to the somewhat problematic concept of 'plantation agriculture', this article analyses indigenous extensive farming (involving single farms of several acres of cultivated land as contrasted with the household smallholder, multiple subsistence plots) by the indigenous Yoruba elite in Ibadan and Ijaye[14] and compares their agricultural practice with a successor generation of the Anglo-African, Christian mission-influenced elite of Lagos[15] in two defining epochs, the 1850s to 1893 and the late 1890s to the 1920s, respectively. This longitudinal comparative analysis of agricultural practice, land use, capital and labour mobilization in western Nigeria in two distinct sociopolitical and economic settings across a century is a major departure from the dominant preoccupation in the literature with microstudies of export crop production and marketing, labour, agricultural policy and entrepreneurship.[16] It also explains the apparent lack of continuity of indigenous extensive agriculture in the region.

The discussion is organized around the interlocking issues of context (pre-colonial warfare and early British colonial rule), access to land (by military conquest and inheritance, and colonial-era alienation), labour (servile/unfree, wage, household), output (foodstuff versus cash crop), marketing outlets (local and indigenous versus imperial/global), household subsistence versus market consumption of produce, and diverse farming practices.

The analysis is based on archival material and contemporary eye-witness accounts and secondary source material. Fragmentary data on population, labour, land values and agricultural output, which indicate changes in the agricultural economy, have been collected from the accounts of missionaries and colonial officials between the 1850s and 1920s. The paper is spiced with life histories and case studies of prominent entrepreneurs in the agricultural sector of western Nigeria, ranging from the Ibadan and Ijaye-based Yoruba warlords of the early and mid-nineteenth century, to the likes of J. P. L. Davies and J. K. Coker of Victorian Lagos.

[13] G. Thapa, *Smallholder farming in transforming economies of Asia and the Pacific: challenges and opportunities* (2009), p. 6. Garner and Compos however note that 'references to size often mean either the size of landholdings or its market position with respect to larger commercial farms'. See Elizabeth Garner and Ana Paula de la O Campos, *Identifying the 'farm': An informal discussion of the concepts and definitions*, ESA Working Paper 14-10 (2014), p. 7.

[14] Awe, 'Militarism'; Falola, *Political economy*; and Falola, 'Construction and destruction'.

[15] Hopkins, 'Innovation in a colonial context'; and Ade Adefuye, 'John, Gershion and Joshua Ricketts: Jamaican contribution to the socio-economic development of the Colony province', in G. O. Olusanya (ed.), *Studies in Yoruba history and culture: Essays in honour of Professor S. O. Biobaku* (1983), pp. 135–52.

[16] Sara Berry, 'The concept of innovation and the history of cocoa farming in western Nigeria', *J. African Hist.* 15 (1974), pp. 83–95; Sara Berry, *Cocoa, custom and socio-economic change in rural western Nigeria* (1975); Forrest, 'Agricultural policies' and Olukoju, '"Faulkner Blueprint"'.

In effect, the article demonstrates that there was more to indigenous agriculture than the idealized, small plot, subsistence farmer. It derives valuable insights from the internal dynamics – factor allocations of land, labour and income, food processing and value addition – and impact of indigenous extensive farming in two successive temporal and politico-economic contexts. Critical to this is indigenous initiative or agency in changing the sociopolitical and economic milieux of the 1850s to the 1920s.[17]

I

The nineteenth century was possibly the most active period of indigenous warfare and state-building in western Nigeria, homeland of the Yoruba. The century began with the collapse of the Old Oyo Empire, a pre-modern state that straddled the modern states of Nigeria and Benin at its height in the early eighteenth century. However, internal crises and pressure from the emergent Sokoto Caliphate led to its dissolution by 1817.[18] Three interwoven processes – warfare, population displacements and state-building – followed, leading to the rise of the successor states of Ibadan and Ijaye (from Old Oyo), on the one hand, and the rump of Old Oyo centred just north of Ibadan and the non-Oyo Yoruba States of Abeokuta, Ijebu and the Ekiti Parapo Confederacy. These processes had serious implications for economic activities, especially crafts, agriculture and commerce, which required varying degrees of settled life and sedentarization. More importantly, these activities, including stable human settlement, peace and security, underpinned the political economy of the Yoruba States. Given the pre-industrial or agrarian setting in which these developments took place, agriculture was key to military and political power. As we shall see, it demanded the control of land, labour mobilization and policing. Case studies of Ibadan and Ijaye, where warlords built their power on an increasing number of military retainers, who needed to be provisioned, illustrate the necessity for and practice of extensive agriculture between the 1850s and the 1890s.

In the meantime, it is important to historicize and contextualize agricultural practice in western Nigeria as it had developed by the 1850s. The following general features can be highlighted. There was an ecological divide between the forest and savanna belts of Yorubaland, each with its peculiar features. It has been asserted, for example, that 'large farms were usual in the savannah'.[19] This contrasted with the smaller average sizes of farms in the forest zone, where the rudimentary farming implements apparently limited the extent of bush clearing for extensive cultivation. Agboola remarked, with reference to Ilesa, Idanre and Ondo in eastern Yorubaland, that 'despite the use of slave labour, farms were generally and understandably of smaller sizes than in the savannah zone'.[20]

Yam was the dominant crop in both ecological zones of western Nigeria well before the 1850s.[21] Ibadan 'chiefs and head-warriors' reportedly had 'large farms for yams in the 1850s'.[22]

[17] An illuminating analysis of African agency as a historical concept is provided in Lynn Thomas, 'Historicizing Agency', *Gender and Hist.* 28 (2016), pp. 324–39.

[18] See I. A. Akinjogbin (ed.), *War and peace in Yorubaland, 1796–1886* (1998).

[19] Agboola, 'Agricultural changes', p. 130.

[20] Ibid., p. 131.

[21] Ibid., p. 128.

[22] Ibid., p. 130.

However, there were co-staples in the respective zones – guinea corn, maize, beans, cotton, tobacco and vegetables – in addition to tree crops – kolanuts, locust bean, coconuts, plantains, bananas and the oil palm – which yielded edible oil, kernels, palm wine and emollients. The combination of the co-staples varied with the ecological divide of the region. According to contemporary observers during the 1850s, while guinea corn was the co-staple of yam in the savanna, its place was taken by maize in the forest zone.[23]

The agricultural economy of western Nigeria was complex and diverse. This, coupled with the antiquity and vibrancy of the arts and craft industry, local markets and long distance trade, meant that by the mid-nineteenth century, it was 'a peasant agricultural economy rather than a purely subsistence one'.[24]

Previous biographical and state-centred studies of Ibadan and Ijaye, and eye-witness accounts by European missionaries provide the data for analyzing agricultural practice in the context of warfare and state-building during this period.[25] The Ijaye and Ibadan warlords, and the notable woman entrepreneur, Efunsetan Aniwura of Ibadan, established large farms which fed their extensive households and military retainers. At Efunsetan's death in 1874, she had three large farms, each of which contained a hundred slaves, who planted yams, corn and vegetables.[26] A striking praise name (*oriki*) of Ibikunle, the Ibadan supreme ruler in the 1850s, was 'owner of farm land at Ogbere … [and another] at Odo-Ona, A wide expanse of farm land, extensive as far as the city wall at Adesegun'.[27] Henry Townsend, a visiting British missionary, asserted that *Aare* Kurunmi, supreme ruler of Ijaye, alone had large farms of some 100 acres in size.[28] A report by S. H. Clarke, another contemporary missionary, stated that Ijaye farms covered ten to twelve miles beyond the city walls. It took Clarke an hour-long horse ride to traverse the farmlands which stretched towards the Upper Ogun River.[29] Long after he left the locality, he referred wistfully to 'the rich and luxuriant farms of Ijaye'.[30] The farms produced yam, corn, palm oil, vegetables and fruits for domestic consumption, and export to Ibadan and Abeokuta.

Making allowance for slight differences, we can identify the following features of the extensive farming of this era. The farms were larger than the usual household plot. A European missionary observed in 1851 the presence of kolanut groves occupying several hectares fortified with mud walls and owned by Ibadan military chiefs.[31] The missionary Townsend reported that Ibadan's supreme chief in 1850 – either Oderinlo (1847–50) or Ope Agbe (1850–51) – had a farm 'as large as 100 acres' near the city in which maize, guinea corn and yams were planted.[32] Another missionary, David Hinderer, observed that Ibadan chiefs and top military leaders owned extensive yam farms during the 1850s.[33] Farms located outside the city walls, known as *oko egan*, were generally extensive. Awe stated that some *oko egan* had 600 (or even more) slaves working on them, a clear indication of their large size.[34] Clarke noted this trend at Ilorin

[23] Ibid.

[24] Ibid., p. 131.

[25] Awe, 'Militarism'; Falola, 'Construction and destruction'.

[26] Details in Bolanle Awe, 'Iyalode Efunsetan Aniwura (Owner of Gold)', in Bolanle Awe (ed.), *Nigerian women: A historical perspective* (2001), pp. 63–82.

[27] Awe, 'Militarism', p. 67, n. 4.

[28] Falola, 'Construction and destruction', p. 24.

[29] Ibid.

[30] William H. Clarke, *Travels and explorations in Yorubaland, 1854–1858*, ed. J. A. Atanda (1972), p. 111.

[31] Falola, *Political economy*, p. 91.

[32] Ibid.

[33] Agboola, 'Agricultural changes', p. 130.

[34] Awe, 'Militarism', p. 69.

(a northern Yoruba metropolis that fell under Fulani rule), where he observed that seven or eight villages engaged in agriculture 'the property, no doubt, of wealthy men residing in the cities'.[35] He also spotted 'another farm village of considerable size situated in a fresh country still in a good state of cultivation, being the farms and plantations of Ilorin planters'.[36] A European eyewitness account of the vast holdings of one Braima near Ilorin in 1889 stated as follows:

> For some miles … our route lay through Braima's plantations. … The farm covers a large tract of country, spreading far and wide over hill and dale. Now we pass through vast fields of lofty millet, and now through acres of yams. We … descend into a deep valley, where we find … a regular forest of bananas. … Plantations of pepper and various spices are next passed through, and by the time we reach the limits of our host's domains, we have seen what can be done with land, in this part of Africa, by a man of enterprise.[37]

The large size of the farms was attributed to the ease of clearance of farmlands in the savanna and the extensive exploitation of slave and captive labour.[38] In all, extensive farming – rather than intensive agriculture – was practised: 'farmlands were (simply) expanded to cope with increasing demands for food'.[39]

From the 1850s, the farm settlements emerged as a pillar of agricultural production in Yorubaland. Mega city-states, such as Ibadan, Ijaye and Abeokuta, were encircled by rings of farm settlements (*abuleko* or *oko aba*), which were an average of fifteen to forty kilometers removed from the centre of the cities and towns, and inhabited by people from the main towns. Such farmsteads were noted by European visitors to the Yoruba heartland as early as the 1850s.[40] In 1891, Alvan Millson, an Assistant Colonial Secretary, informed a meeting of the Royal Geographical Society that Ibadan, which he described as 'The London of Negroland', with a population of some 200,000 persons, was '[s]urrounded by its farming villages, 163 in number'.[41] Agiri noted that after 1878, Egba farm settlements had extended to Ota, 40 miles south of Abeokuta, and south-eastwards between Owode and Mokoloki, 25 and 40 miles, respectively, from Abeokuta. Similar forays were made westwards toward Ilaro.[42] 'The establishment of the numerous farmsteads', Falola noted, 'was one of the most significant developments in the agricultural history of the post-1850 era' in Yorubaland.[43]

These large farms employed slave labour in the main, as confirmed *inter alia* by our earlier reference to a single farm in Ibadan worked by 600 or more slaves. J. P. L. Davies, J. A. O. Payne, and Chief Abasi, notable Yoruba entrepreneurs of the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, testified before a colonial Commission on Trade in Lagos in 1898 that there were 'large plantations' or extensive farms which employed between 80 and 500 slaves in the vicinity of

[35] Clarke, *Travels and Explorations*, p. 86.

[36] Ibid., p. 168.

[37] Captain A. F. Mockler-Ferryman, *Up the Niger* (1892), pp. 211–14, cited in Ann O'Hear, *Power relations in Nigeria: Ilorin slaves and their successors* (1997), p. 31.

[38] Agboola, 'Agricultural changes', p. 130.

[39] Falola, *Political Economy*, p. 88.

[40] Ibid., p. 89.

[41] Cited by Ruth Watson, *'Civil disorder is the disease of Ibadan': Chieftaincy and civic culture in a Yoruba City* (2003), p. 5.

[42] B. A. Agiri, 'Aspects of socio-economic changes among the Awori, Egba and Ijebu Remo communities during the nineteenth century', *J. Historical Soc. Nigeria* 7 (1974), p. 469.

[43] Falola, *Political economy*, p. 90.

Abeokuta, Badagry and Ijebu Ode.[44] Ownership of such farms was typical of the leading lights of nineteenth-century Ibadan military aristocracy – Ibikunle, Ogunmola, Latoosa and Akere.[45] Given the distance from the main towns of Ibadan and Ijaye, the farms also housed the slave labour employed on them. But household labour remained important, and not only for small peasant farmers. For, the civil and war chiefs (in Ibadan and elsewhere) deployed close kin and free-born supporters – in addition to slaves – in both fighting and farming during this period.[46] The chief or military leader was actually respected for the size of his household, comprising both the freeborn and servile members (slaves and pawns), that he could mobilize at will. According to Awe, slaves, mainly war captives, constituted 'the bulk' of a chief's following. While 'the best of them were recruited into his own private army … [m]ost of the remaining slaves worked on his farms, and many Ibadan farms were indeed colonized entirely by these slaves'.[47] Near Ilorin, in the northern Yoruba savannah belt, agricultural slaves worked on the farms under the supervision of overseers (*alakoso*), selected for their loyalty to the owner.[48]

The farms produced a variety of crops, mainly root crops (yam) and grains (corn and guinea corn). Varieties of yam and corn, the dominant foodcrops, were processed into various food items. Kolanut, which was consumed locally but was also in demand from northern Nigeria, was the dominant cash crop till the 1860s, when palm produce attained greater importance as a major item of international trade. In Ibadan, the supreme chief, Balogun Ogunmola, monopolized the production and sale of kolanuts up to his death in 1847. Subsequently, other leading chiefs in Ibadan took to kolanut production and trade in view of its high economic value.[49]

The products of these farms exceeded domestic consumption.[50] They contributed to the local and distant market systems that served the fiscal and commercial aims of the State. Foodcrop production on these farms was accompanied by handicrafts such as cloth weaving (indigo planting), dyeing, basket and mat weaving. By implication, these farms were not simple or monocultural economic units. Men were dominant in number but women too were present in large numbers. Moreoever, the production of commodities was also accompanied by human reproduction, which boosted the labour force.

Extensive farming in the pre-industrial and pre-colonial setting of nineteenth-century Yorubaland was founded on some common practices.[51] It relied upon rudimentary farm implements – hoes and matchetes. In addition, natural manure was hardly ever used as mixed

[44] TNA, CO 147/133, Denton to Chamberlain, 4 Jun. 1898, enc., 'Evidence to the Commission on Trade'.

[45] Awe, 'Militarism', p. 70, n. 12.

[46] E. Adeniyi Oroge, 'The institution of slavery in Yorubaland with particular reference to the nineteenth century' (Unpubl. Ph.D Thesis, University of Birmingham, 1971), p. 158, asserted that a war chief's reputation rested on his ability to 'fight, farm and trade'. Cited in Awe, 'Militarism', p. 68.

[47] Awe, 'Militarism', p. 67.

[48] O'Hear, *Power relations*, p. 31.

[49] Falola, *Political economy*, p. 91.

[50] J. E. Inikori, 'The development of commercial agriculture in pre-colonial west Africa', *African Economic History Working Paper Series* 9 (2013), p. 3, has explained that large-scale production of this type was 'commercial agriculture', as contrasted with large-scale farming undertaken with non-wage labour and designed to provision households and warriors, which was 'subsistence' agriculture, irrespective of the volume of production.

[51] Discussed in Adedipe, Okuneye and Ayinde, 'The relevance of local and indigenous knowledge'.

farming was barely practised. Cow dung could have served the purpose but cattle rearing was not sufficiently widespread. A notable exception was Efunsetan, who owned two cattle farms in the city of Ibadan managed by her Hausa slaves, though it is not clear whether she used the dung as manure on her extensive farms. In any event, the abundance of cultivable land and relative soil fertility in the region did not necessitate intensive farming, which would have required the use of fertilizers or manure.

Furthermore, rotational farming was the norm given the abundance of land. A corollary of extensive farming, it did not significantly improve agricultural practice. Moreover, there was no recourse to irrigation. However, farmers exploited swamp land (*akuro*) located along the banks of rivers and streams. Swamp farming sustained certain crops that could not be grown elsewhere, especially during the dry season.[52] In addition, the range of crops was fairly wide, cutting across the seasons. But there is no record in the literature of experimentation with new or hybrid crops. However, some form of specialization was practised where the local ecology (such as swamps) permitted. For example, Alalubosa (place of onions) and Onireke (place of sugar cane) in Ibadan were named after crops which might have been predominant there.[53]

Finally, insecurity – kidnapping and destruction of enemy farms, and population displacement in the wake of the fall of Ijaye – disrupted farming at different times. Ibadan farms were raided by its western adversaries (Ijebu and Egba) while the bulk of the army was busy on the eastern front. Between 1860 and 1865, Ibadan farmers abandoned their farms in the direction of Ijebuland and shifted their activities to more secure areas near Ijaye. Still, Ijebu and Egba kidnappers disrupted farming during the Kiriji War (1877–93) to such an extent that Ibadan experienced occasional outbreaks of famine.[54]

In summary, the extensive agriculture of this period took place in the context of intermittent pre-colonial warfare; access to land by military conquest and inheritance; mobilization of household and slave labour; production of foodstuffs primarily for domestic consumption but also for local markets and even regional trade; reliance on indigenous credit facilities; and rudimentary farming practices. No major innovations were recorded in terms of land use, cropping or capital formation.

II

The military subjugation of the Ijebu Kingdom in 1892 and the conclusion of the peace treaties of 1893 formally ended the pre-colonial era of indigenous rule in Western Nigeria, and formalized British colonization. This introduced fundamental socio-economic changes which impacted on the political economy of the region.

First of all, colonial rule imposed a new regime of laws and political order, which substantially altered indigenous economic and sociopolitical systems. The impact of the relative

[52] Falola, *Political economy*, p. 89. A similar trend has been observed in the Gambia: 'Prior to the expansion of cash crop farming, the most important rice farming communities were located close to the river and swamplands (locally known as faros). … These faros had fertile soils and a reliable source of good, fresh water'. See, Sarr, 'Gender, spirituality, and economic change in rural Gambia', p. 17.

[53] Awe, 'Militarism', p. 70.

[54] Ibid., pp. 75–6.

socio-political stability on agricultural activities occasioned by the imposition of British rule was attested the Governor of Lagos on a visit to the hinterland of Lagos in 1895:

> I was much struck with the country I passed through … to Ilaro; the land is undoubtedly very fertile and has on it quantities of the Oil Palm tree; in addition it is cultivated very extensively and produces large crops of maize, native beans, yams and other edibles …[55]

Second, labour relations were transformed by the abolition of the slave trade – though slavery persisted in some forms while debt peonage (*iwofa*) also allowed the continuation of non-waged labour. This had grave implications for erstwhile warlords and their slave-run farm settlements. In 1904, Aina, a leading farmer in Abeokuta, attributed the poor yield of cotton in the Egba Country to 'three great disadvantages under which the cotton farmer laboured'. One of these was 'a dearth of labour since the cessation of slavery, and paid labour was now both costly and difficult to obtain'.[56]

Third, the introduction of modern currency, rail and road transport unleashed economic dynamics that expanded the scope of economic activities. Fourth, the introduction of cash cropping, and especially the cocoa export business, added a new dimension to farming in the hinterland of Lagos. Fifth, European missionaries and their African surrogates, and the returnees from the Atlantic Slave Diaspora added new human and material forces to the mix of economic and political dynamics. African missionaries, import and export traders, and professionals carved a niche for themselves in the emergent British colony. One of their initiatives was the establishment of extensive cocoa and citrus farms, especially in the immediate hinterland of Lagos. This was a new phase in extensive farming in western Nigeria.

Cocoa farming rapidly spread across south-central and eastern Yorubaland.[57] But, as Hopkins asserted, the 'true pioneers' of cocoa export industry 'were Creole merchants from Lagos'.[58] Professor Ade Elebute, a notable surgeon and amateur historian, has commented on one of them, J. P. L. Davies, as follows: 'He initiated a successful agricultural enterprise on the outskirts of Lagos, where he took the significantly innovative step of planting cocoa, a produce that bestowed a legacy of prosperity on many parts of south-west Nigeria'.[59] The pioneer cocoa planters differed in a number of respects from the nineteenth-century warlord-farmers discussed above. They did not wield military or political power and so were not focused on building or sustaining political entities. Indeed, their motive was primarily social and economic. Davies, the pioneer cocoa commercial farmer, was interested in making money from agriculture, after failing in commerce, in order to regain his social standing in Lagos.[60] In effect, their motives were not overtly political in the sense of state-building. Indeed, a later generation of cocoa growers outside Lagos who were drawn from the savanna fringes of the Yoruba country were also primarily interested in economic and social self-actualization in the face of the pressures and opportunities of the colonial political economy. They specialized in producing export

[55] NAI, CSO 1/1/15, George Denton to Joseph Chamberlain, 5 Oct. 1895.

[56] NAI, CSO 1/1/45, Report on Governor's Visit to Cotton Districts, enclosed in Harley Mosely to Oliver Lyttelton, 30 Jan. 1904.

[57] Berry, *Cocoa, culture and socio-economic change*.

[58] Hopkins, 'Innovation in a colonial context', p. 88.

[59] Adeyemo Elebute, *The life of James Pinson Labulo Davies: A colossus of Victorian Lagos* (2013), p. 231.

[60] Hopkins, 'Innovation in a colonial context', p. 91.

crops – cocoa, in particular – rather than foodcrops for local consumption and to do so they depended on wage labour, which had cost implications for their operations. This supplemented household and cooperative labour (known as *owe* and *aaro*) in the Ibadan-Ife-Ondo 'cocoa belt' of the Yoruba hinterland. However, it appears that wage labour was not preponderant for as late as 1951–52, a survey revealed that members of cocoa farmers' households supplied 'over half the labour time expended on the farms'.[61] But it is necessary to emphasize, as Berry noted, that 'hired labour' had been employed 'from the earliest years of cocoa cultivation'.[62] Moreover, as farmers, they took advantage of the modern transport and currency systems, and new crops. They also adopted modern farming and accounting methods. Finally, though their farm sizes varied and probably did not surpass those of the previous century, their relative economic net worth was more considerable.[63] This may be attributed to the fact that cocoa farmers did not consume what they produced; that they produced for the external, rather than the internal, market; and that the valuation of their crop (cocoa) was much higher than the food crops of the previous era.

A significant dimension of the extensive farming of the early colonial period was the rapid increase in the number of cocoa planters – on the model of the Agege pioneers – in south central and eastern Yorubaland. This secondary wave of extensive farming (the stage of adoption), which had begun by 1920–21, was undertaken in a somewhat different economic and social ecology in eastern Yorubaland. The new crop of farmers rode on the wave of the philosophy of the 'Bible and Plough' which drove the expansion of Christianity into eastern Yorubaland.[64] The increasing popularity of cocoa farming and export trade drew on two main sources of new-generation farmers – demobilized Yoruba soldiers and migrants from the forest-savanna fringe of Yorubaland. The demobilization that colonial rule imposed on the warring Yoruba states unleashed a flood of former 'war boys', who found new opportunities in cocoa farming in the two decades after 1893. Berry noted that cocoa farming was embraced

> most readily in Ibadan and Ilesha – the two principal belligerents in the Sixteen Years War. … Just as the Agege planters turned to agriculture … when their commercial ventures in Lagos suffered from depressed world market conditions, so many ex-soldiers in the interior fell back on farming to escape the economic consequences of the peace.[65]

In addition, a large number of migrant farmers and labourers from the savanna fringes of northern Yorubaland surged into the Ife-Ondo cocoa belt from the 1920s but especially from

[61] Sara S. Berry, 'The concept of innovation and the history of cocoa farming in western Nigeria', *J. African Hist.* 14 (1974), p. 90, citing R. Galletti, K. D. S. Baldwin and I. O. Dina, *Nigerian cocoa farmers* (1956), p. 668.

[62] Berry, *Cocoa, culture and socio-economic change*, p. 130. See also Agiri, 'The development of wage labour'.

[63] Hopkins, 'Innovation in a colonial context', p. 88, notes that Davies and Coker had 200 and 1,500 acres at Ijan and Agege, respectively. Jane Guyer, 'Small change: Individual farm work and collective life in a western Nigerian savanna town, 1969–88', *Africa* 62 (1992), p. 470 states that the 'mid-size' cocoa farm of the 1960s–80s was in the 40–80 acre range.

[64] J. B. Webster, 'The bible and the plough', *J. Historical Soc. Nigeria* 2 (1963), pp. 418–34; Hopkins, 'Innovation in a colonial context', p. 89; Charles Olutayo Adesina, 'Modern agriculture in Nigeria: A historical exegesis', *Benin J. Historical Stud.* 4 (2002–04), pp. 60–9.

[65] Berry, *Cocoa, custom and socio-economic change*, p. 53.

the 1940s.[66] It is worth noting that most of them began life as farm labourers but gradually raised capital to become farm owners themselves. Issues of tenancy were resolved within the context of indigenous Yoruba customs – such as by the payment of the *isakole*, a token form of land rent. Though initially nominal, *isakole* soon acquired greater significance in defining landlord-tenant relations in Ife and Ondo kingdoms in south central Yorubaland.[67] It is worth stressing, however, that the popularization of cocoa farming in the post-1920 phase was characterized by the fragmentation of farm plots, each farmer holding multiple but dispersed cocoa farms. By the 1950s, it has been noted, the average size of the cocoa farms in western Nigeria ranged between 1.4 and 2.5 hectares.[68]

The challenges of access to land and labour mobilization were compounded by issues of access to capital and agricultural practice. Both are intertwined: cocoa farmers opted for extensive cultivation (rather than intensive exploitation of a limited area of land), which demanded labour and capital. As new areas were opened up to cocoa cultivation, new migrants gradually progressed, under the tutelage of more established ones, from migrant labour to farm owners.

In all, the indigenous large-scale farming of the first half of the twentieth century in the context of colonial rule was characterized by several significant developments. These included radical changes in access to land principally through colonial-era alienation and colonization of swathes of the forest belt of south central and eastern Yorubaland; deployment of household, cooperative and wage labour – 'the use of market and non-market relationships';[69] production of cash crops (cocoa and palm produce) for the overseas market and a variety of minor crops for the domestic market; utilization of indigenous (personal, family, networks) and modern credit institutions, and reliance on rudimentary farming practices. Mechanization and extension services were minimal, at best.[70] However, ploughs were employed in cotton cultivation in Abeokuta between the 1850s and 1870s, an innovation which 'encouraged larger farms than was possible using traditional methods'.[71] But this was not extended to cocoa farming. Indeed, Berry stated that, since all cocoa farmers, both large and small, employed the same tools and techniques, there were 'no technical economics of scale in West African cocoa production'.[72]

In the final analysis, a number of innovations characterized the agricultural practice of this period.[73] In terms of capital formation and land use, Berry has highlighted the economic value of 'interplanting food crops with the young cocoa trees'.[74] She also noted that 'the establishment of a new cocoa farm is an act of capital formation requiring the expenditure of productive resources over a period of several years before the farm begins to yield any output'.[75] The planting of cocoa in itself, the peculiarity of its planting, land and labour usage, and the

[66] Berry (ibid., p. 69) remarked that the 'great majority' of cocoa farmers in the Ife and Ondo villages in the 1960s had come from 'the northern parts of Yorubaland'. They had been arriving since the early 1940s.

[67] Details in Berry, *Cocoa, custom and socio-economic change*, pp. 90–125.

[68] Adesina, 'Modern agriculture', p. 68.

[69] Berry, 'The concept of innovation', p. 90.

[70] The enterprise of two generations of the Ricketts at Agbowa, on the eastern edge of the Lagos Colony provides an interesting exception. See Adefuye, 'John, Gershion and Joshua Ricketts'.

[71] Agboola, 'Agricultural changes', p. 143.

[72] Berry, *Cocoa, culture and socio-economic change*, p. 181.

[73] See Agboola, 'Agricultural changes', for details.

[74] Berry, 'The concept of innovation', p. 90.

[75] Ibid., p. 89.

rapidity of its adoption and spread, were classic instances of innovation. Hopkins notes that the period between 1880 and 1920 was 'important not for the quantity of cocoa exported, but because it was a time of qualitative change and discontinuity, when the foundations of what was an entirely novel agricultural enterprise were laid down'.[76] The innovations introduced by the Lagos trader-turned-planters in and around Agege, some 15 miles north of Lagos, included a labour code, enforcement of quality controls, construction of roads, use of machinery and direct shipments of produce.[77] Capital was raised through personal savings, which for many served as start-up capital. Some farm owners accumulated capital during the slack season by working as farm labourers. Practically everyone tapped into the resources of social networks. Still, the expansion of cocoa farming was not accompanied by any radical changes to traditional farming practices, such as would have produced greater yields from existing cocoa farms. As experience had shown that older cocoa farms declined in productivity, the farmers 'devoted their entrepreneurial abilities and financial resources to the establishment of new farms and to the employment and supervision of labour on often widely scattered cocoa plots'.[78] Altogether, the innovating cocoa farmers took risks in trying out a new crop, bearing the cost of gestation of some five to ten years. That amounted to the 'postponement of present consumption for the sake of future returns'.[79]

III

This discussion has highlighted aspects of large-scale farming in Western Nigeria by two distinct groups in two defining epochs. Some observations can be made about agricultural practice during the century covered in this study.

The first is the relative decrease in the size of the farms. The extensive slave-run subsistence farms of the pre-colonial warlords were often larger than the wage-labour based, export-crop plantations operated by Christian Saro Lagos trader-farmers. Easier access to (unfree) labour and land facilitated the ownership of larger farms in the precolonial period (up to the 1890s). The second is the differentially motivated population movements that accompanied these projects. During the nineteenth century, war chiefs relocated free and slave labour to farm settlements on the outskirts of the metropolis while cocoa farming induced the migration of the northern Yoruba from the savanna to the forest belt. The former was involuntary while the latter was voluntary, though induced by economic and social pressure. Third, in all cases, large-scale farming required colonization – clearing the forest and settling people in the respective ecological, political, economic and social settings. Fourth, innovation was undertaken by these groups of farmers, not only during the cocoa 'revolution', but in terms of a marked departure from earlier farming practices and, in most cases, labour mobilization. Fifth, the actors involved in these enterprises varied widely. The precolonial actors were rulers who had near-absolute control over land, labour and other material resources. The cocoa pioneers and their successors cut across social classes, ranging from the western-educated and sophisticated Lagos Saro urban elite to the provincial yokels of the Yoruba hinterland. The latter had to acquire land

[76] Hopkins, 'Innovation in a colonial context', p. 87.
[77] Ibid., p. 89.
[78] Berry, 'The concept of innovation', p. 89.
[79] Hopkins, 'Innovation in a colonial context', p. 87.

by negotiation (rather than by force as in the previous era), leading to the acquisition of usufructuary rights. Sixth, these agricultural enterprises had a broader significance for their practioners. The nineteenth-century warlords were driven by power consolidation and preservation, while the Lagos Saro pioneer cocoa planters sought social and political relevance in late Victorian Lagos. These efforts were manifestations of endogenous initiative and agency, which drove agricultural production beyond subsistence to profit-making.

This article has also highlighted significant changes in the wider agricultural economy of western Nigeria between the 1850s and 1920s. Major developments, if not turning points, took place in the two phases of agricultural enterprise considered in this essay.

First, the rise of farmsteads into important units of agricultural production from the 1860s, as Yoruba urban centres – epitomized by Ibadan and Abeokuta – conflated preparation for (offensive and defensive) war with state-building in the unstable political situation of the second half of the nineteenth century. Second, changes in labour relations – rise of wage labour and extirpation of servile labour – principally during the first two decades of the twentieth century, affected the profitability of agricultural enterprises and the size of farm holdings. Third, cash crop production, especially of cocoa after 1920, effectively laid the foundation for the modern agricultural economy of western Nigeria with significant implications for the region's economic, social and political development, and its self-assertion in the emergent Nigerian State. Fourth, land tenure changes, which had begun in colonial Lagos, gradually spread across the region. However, evolving indigene-settler relations became fraught and even took violent forms as late as the 1980s. Fifth, while extensive farming was limited to the savanna and the forest fringe of Yorubaland in the nineteenth century, cocoa planting brought cash crop-induced plantation-style farming into the forest zone during the twentieth. Yet, in the second wave of cocoa planting outside the Agege hub, 'it lost something of its plantation flavour as developed in the Agege area'.[80] This was because the indigenous Yoruba of the interior lacked the experience of American South and Caribbean plantation agriculture possessed by the Saro pioneers. Sixth, official policy towards agriculture varied throughout the period. In the nineteenth century, agricultural policy was an adjunct of the military and political agenda of warfare and state consolidation. In the early twentieth century, government policy shifted from the setting up of botanical gardens to non-intervention in production. The government was only involved in quality control through the institution of a produce inspection scheme.[81]

In the final analysis, the vast majority of western Nigerian farmers remain rooted in an agricultural tradition dominated by small-sized landholding. The reduction of farm holdings from the large enterprises of the nineteenth century to the medium-sized cocoa farms of the twentieth century may be attributed to the transition to a new political economy that ended servile labour, commercialized land and labour, and thus raised the cost of production.

[80] Agboola, 'Agricultural changes', p. 136.

[81] O. N. Njoku, 'Evolution of produce inspection in Nigeria up to 1936', *ODU: A journal of west African studies* 19 (1979), pp. 43–57; and Ayodeji Olukoju, 'Government, the business community, and quality control schemes in the agricultural export trade of Nigeria, 1889–1929', *African Economic Hist.* 26 (1998), pp. 99–118.

Taskscapes and community dynamics in rural Yorkshire, *c.*1920–1965

by Jane Rowling and Stefan Ramsden

Abstract

Using the framework of Tim Ingold's concept of 'taskscape', this article seeks to address the role of work in shaping the dynamics of rural community in the mid-twentieth century. We do this by examining oral histories of two communities which have important points of similarity and difference: the community farming on the small, mixed farms of Lower Wharfedale, on the border between North and West Yorkshire, and the workers and farmers cultivating the large-scale arable enterprises of the East Riding of Yorkshire Wolds. We argue that the form of agricultural work which took place in these localities during the mid-twentieth century was crucial in setting up the types of work relationships which characterized the different communities there. Localized differences manifested in several ways through the unique taskscapes of the two case studies: a deeply stratified community structure versus pseudo-familial employment relationships; proletarian village communities versus close farmer-employee relationships; and mobility versus stability.

'Community' is a contested term, difficult to define, freighted with normative baggage and frequently discarded by exasperated scholars as unhelpful. Nonetheless, it is a term that points towards a set of problems that have an enduring fascination and have been central to the social sciences since their origin: how do people form, inhabit and value face-to-face groups? In both the sociological and popular imagination it has often been assumed that if 'community' exists anywhere, it is in stable villages where families who have lived in proximity for generations rub along, helping each other, sometimes feuding, but never indifferent to each other.[1] For sociologists, nineteenth-century social theorist Fernand Tönnies' dichotomy contrasting *Gemeinschaft* ('community') with *Gesellschaft* ('society') has been influential.[2] In the first half of the twentieth century, Chicago School sociologists took Tönnies as inspiration for narratives positing that true 'community' existed in pre-modern, rural societies but had been eroded by the development of modern, urbanized 'mass society'.[3] At the same time, cultural commentators in interwar England lamented the decline of the rural 'organic community', which they saw as under assault from urban modernity.[4]

[1] G. Day, *Community and everyday life* (2006) p. 5; R. Frankenberg, *Communities in Britain* (1966) p. 238.

[2] Day, *Community*, p. 5; F. Tönnies *Community and association* (1955).

[3] A. P. Cohen, *The symbolic construction of community* (1985) pp. 21–8.

[4] P. Brassley, 'The wheelwright, the carpenter, two ladies from Oxford and the construction of socio-economic change in the countryside between the wars', in P. Brassley, J. Burchardt and L. Thompson (eds), *The*

Historians of the British countryside present a more complex story of community change in the modern era. Reay considers that the agricultural revolution helped create a landless rural proletariat. He shows how agricultural labourers in nineteenth-century Kent developed a common identity: shared experiences of work and the Poor Law were strengthened through sociability in village pubs and beer houses away from the eyes of their employers.[5] Newby offers a similar analysis, arguing that English villages in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries were 'occupational communities' analogous to urban neighbourhoods.[6] For Reay and Newby, community was a product of modernity rather than a survival of a pre-modern rural idyll. Nevertheless, historians argue that the twentieth century brought the demise of the village-as-occupational-community. Short writes that in the 1920s and 1930s, villages became less self-contained: shops and trades disappeared from high streets while motorized transport and mass communication brought in new people and ideas.[7] For some authors surveying the interwar period, 'adaption' is a better word than 'decline' for the fortunes of the village community.[8] Nonetheless, most consider that the village as 'occupational community' came under further pressure after the Second World War. Newby found that by the 1970s, the reduction of the agricultural workforce, the influx of outsiders into villages and the paradoxical increase of the tied cottage led to an intensification of the farmer-worker relationship and the end of the village as 'occupational community'.[9] Other authors are wary of the notion of community-in-decline, since the relocation of commuting urbanites to the countryside often brought new kinds of social interaction.[10]

The present article contributes to this historiography through analysis of two case studies of rural community and social change across the mid-twentieth century. These case studies exemplify Howkins' contention that divisions between the various landscapes of Britain 'were not purely spatial but also social, cultural and economic'.[11] We highlight how local agricultural working practices were imbricated into community relations and underpinned social change that was distinctive to these contexts. In this we take a materialist approach, inspired by geographers and social anthropologists who consider work as central to the processes through which locality is given meaning by residents.[12] In particular, we turn to anthropologist Tim Ingold's conceptualization of 'taskscape'. This idea refers to the ways in which a landscape is imprinted, shaped and made meaningful by an interweaving of the tasks people undertake there. Ingold writes:

Note 4 *continued*
English countryside between the wars. Regeneration or decline? (2006), pp. 213–14; A. Howkins, 'Death and rebirth? English rural society 1920–40', in Brassley *et al.* (eds), *English countryside*, pp. 15–16.

[5] B. Reay, *The last rising of the agricultural labourers* (1990), pp. 55, 140–1.

[6] H. Newby, *The deferential worker* (1977), p. 46.

[7] B. Short, *The battle of the fields. Rural community and authority in Britain during the Second World War* (2014), p. 39.

[8] Brassley *et al.* (eds), *English countryside.*

[9] Newby, *Deferential worker;* H. Newby, *Green and pleasant land. Social change in rural England* (1979)*;* T. Marsden, J. Murdoch, P. Lowe, R. Munton and A.Flynn, *Constructing the countryside* (1993); A. Howkins, *The death of rural England. A social history of the countryside since 1900* (2003), pp. 165–86.

[10] Newby, *Green and pleasant land,* p. 184.

[11] Howkins, *Death of rural England*, pp. 7–8.

[12] D. Massey, *Spatial Divisions of Labour: Social Structures and the Geography of Production* (sec. edn, 1995), pp. 189–215; V. Walkerdine, 'Communal beingness and affect: An exploration of trauma in an ex-industrial community,' *Body and Society* 16 (2010), pp. 91–116.

> It is to the entire ensemble of tasks, in their mutual interlocking, that I refer by the concept of taskscape. Just as the landscape is an array of related features, so – by analogy – the taskscape is an array of related activities.[13]

These activities cannot be separated from their social context: 'the taskscape exists not just as activity but as interactivity'. Time is an important dimension of the taskscape, since activities occur in a temporal plane and their impacts accumulate; the taskscape is therefore dynamic, always in the process of becoming.[14]

We use the oral recollections of people who lived close to agriculture between *c.*1920 and *c.*1962 to examine the relationships between rural taskscape and community. Oral history is a source with methodological challenges, but numerous historians have used recorded reminiscences fruitfully not only for 'recovering' details of past activities and attitudes, but also for understanding how individuals and groups make sense of their historical experience.[15] Placing personal testimony within the framework of taskscapes allows us to identify key activities which characterized interaction between the agricultural workforce in our case study areas, and the effect these had on community structure. By analysing how people view their own stories and communities during their working lives, we find the links between everyday task structures, work patterns, and the ways in which agricultural communities conceptualized themselves in the mid-twentieth century.

This article utilizes oral history collections from two contrasting rural settings in Yorkshire: the Wolds of the East Riding, and Lower Wharfedale on the border between North and West Ridings. The case studies focus on the period *c.*1920–1965, taking us from the interwar agricultural slump occasioned by the abandonment of wartime controls in 1921 and the global Depression of the later 1920s and 1930s to the relative stabilization of agricultural incomes in the period following the 1947 Agriculture Act.[16] Change was apparent across rural Britain throughout this period, resulting in the post-war transformation that Howkins terms 'the second agricultural revolution'.[17] Most strikingly, the number of people engaged in agricultural work in Britain fell considerably, from 857,000 in 1930 to just 400,000 in 1970.[18] Data on twentieth-century British agriculture are easy to come by.[19] What is less explored is the way in which this large-scale political, economic and social change impacted different communities in different ways, depending upon the surrounding topography, the type of agriculture employed locally and the types of tasks and working methods required to carry them out. These distinctions are quite clear over even relatively short distances, as shown by the two Yorkshire case study areas investigated here.

[13] T. Ingold, 'The Temporality of the Landscape', *World Arch.* 25 (1993), pp. 152–74, 159.

[14] Ibid., pp. 163–4.

[15] A. Portelli, A. *The death of Luigi Trastulli and other stories. Form and meaning in oral history* (1991), pp. 1–26; A. Thompson, 'Four paradigm transformations in oral history', *Oral Hist. Rev.* 34 (2007), pp. 49–70; V. R. Yow, *Recording oral history* (2nd edn, 2005), pp. 1–2.

[16] Howkins, *Death of rural England*, pp. 142–59.

[17] Ibid., p. 8.

[18] Y. Zayed and PP. Loft, Briefing Paper Number 3339, 'Agriculture: Historical Statistics' 25 Jun. 2019 (House of Commons Library), p. 16.

[19] J. Martin, *The development of modern agriculture: British Farming since 1931* (2000).

The case studies

For the first case study, we use a collection of oral histories focusing on the Yorkshire Wolds in the East Riding. The Wolds is a farming region of low, chalk hills extending in a crescent from the shore of the River Humber to Flamborough Head on the North Sea coast. A distinctive pattern of farming developed here after the period of parliamentary enclosure. Between 1730 and 1850, two out of every three acres on the Wolds were enclosed.[20] With its free-draining chalk and light soils the Wolds are ideal for arable production (80 per cent of agricultural land on the Wolds was in arable production in 1950).[21] During our period, the area was characterized by large post-enclosure farms, commonly 500–1000 acres, usually farmed by tenants.[22] This model of farming required a workforce of young, live-in farm servants (employed yearly, receiving food and board as part of their payment) to look after and work horses on farms situated at some distance from villages. East Riding farm servants ('hired lads' or 'horse lads') tended to move position yearly, often travelling some distance from job to job. Most farms also employed older married men as labourers. Stephen Caunce has described the social and economic working of this system, explaining its persistence into the twentieth century, after farm servantry had disappeared in most other parts of the country.[23] Caunce's work was based on oral history interviews conducted in the 1970s with men who remembered working on farms in the East Riding in the period 1900–1920. The present article utilizes a collection of 60 interviews conducted in 1999–2000 for an oral history project undertaken by the East Riding Museum Service.[24] Interviewees were both male and female; their memories covered agriculture and rural life in the East Riding from the 1920s to the 1960s. The coherence of the system described by Caunce was fragmenting during the interwar years. Whereas 59 per cent of employed males aged 12 and over in rural districts of the East Riding worked in agriculture in 1921 (the majority of whom were paid workers), only 35 per cent of those aged 14 and over did so in 1961.[25] By the end of the 1950s there was no longer a need to employ live-in labour to care for and work heavy horses. So, the period with which we are concerned saw significant changes to the ways in which agricultural work was organized on the Wolds.

The second case-study, Lower Wharfedale, is very different, both topographically and in terms of historic agricultural employment patterns. The valley is characterized by millstone grit, covered by a shallow layer of clay soils. The hillsides are free-draining, although the sandier valley bottom is prone to flooding from the River Wharfe. Movement through the area has historically centred on the market town of Otley, the site of a bridge over the Wharfe, and former home of four livestock auction mart sites.[26] In terms of agriculture type, the dictates

[20] K. J. Allison, *The East Riding of Yorkshire landscape* (1976), pp. 149–50.

[21] Allison, *East Riding,* p. 256.

[22] S. Caunce, *Amongst farm horses: The horse lads of East Yorkshire* (1991) p. 11.

[23] Ibid.

[24] Thanks to East Riding of Yorkshire Council Museum Service for supplying oral history interviews collected for a Heritage Lottery Funded project. These interviews form part of a public collection, available for public consultation in the East Riding Archives office in Beverley, and their catalogue numbers are given in the notes.

[25] Caunce, *Farm horses,* p. 11; Census of England and Wales 1921. *County of Yorkshire* (1923) Table 16, p. 198; Census 1961 'England and Wales Occupation Industry Socio-economic Groups. Yorkshire East Riding' (1966), p. 15.

[26] J. Rowling, 'Trust in a masculine space and a community within a community: Pre-1950 auction mart

of the soil and topography mean that little has changed since Fred Cobley's *On Foot Through Wharfedale* (1882):

> Otley may be regarded as the centre of a wide agricultural district. The weekly market is invariably numerously attended by farmers, cattle dealers, and others from many miles around … Still, Wharfedale is not much of a grain-producing district, and grazing is most prevalent.[27]

The 1943 Farm Survey demonstrates that post-war farming in Lower Wharfedale took place on a relatively small scale. Farm sizes were, on average, 70–100 acres (28–40 hectares), and the agriculture largely of a mixed character, with production of cereal crops taking place in the valley bottom, while cattle and sheep dominated the hillsides.[28] Land use data demonstrates that little has altered in terms of grassland-arable distribution across the valley between the 1930s and the twenty-first century. A process of amalgamation of smaller farms had begun to take place by the 1960s; however, 2019 DEFRA statistics showed that the number of holdings of between 20 and 50 hectares has reduced by only six per cent since 1950, suggesting relative stability in farms of this size. The typical Lower Wharfedale farm remains about 40 hectares.[29]

These small, mixed farms required much less non-familial labour than the East Riding's large arable units. Census data shows that in 1931 in Wharfedale Rural District labourers were outnumbered by farmers (30 per cent and 33 per cent respectively), whereas in the East Riding's Driffield Rural District (an area covering mostly Wolds farmland and villages), labourers far outnumbered farmers (66 per cent of the male agricultural labour force as opposed to 18 per cent).[30] This difference reminds us that the large agricultural workforces which formed Reay's and Newby's occupational communities were more common in the arable counties of southern and eastern England.[31] Indeed, our two case studies fall at each side of the northerly part of the diagonal line with which James Caird divided Britain's lowland, arable zone (to the south and east) from the upland, pastoral zone (north and west).[32] Of 424 farms in the Lower Wharfedale area for which National Farm Survey returns were made, over half, 222, employed no one outside of the family in 1943. Around a quarter, 108, employed a single labourer, 47 farms employed two labourers, 29 employed three labourers, and only 15 farms in the area employed between four and ten labourers. One farm, at Clifton, reported ten labourers, all employed on a casual basis. The largest number of labourers employed by one single enterprise was reported by the manager of Home Farm on Harewood Estate, one of the largest agricultural enterprises in the area. The majority of labourers on Lower Wharfedale farms in 1943 appear to have been employed on a permanent basis, with only 53 of the 424

Note 26 *continued*
culture in Lower Wharfedale, Yorkshire,' *Rural Hist.* 26 (2015), pp. 71–99.

[27] F. Cobley, *On foot through Wharfedale: Descriptive and historical notes of the towns and villages of Upper and Lower Wharfedale* (Otley, 1882), p. 81.

[28] National Farm Survey, 1941–1943, TNA MAF 32.

[29] Environment Roam Land Cover Map 2015, digimap.edina.ac.uk/roam/map/environment [accessed 20 Mar. 2021]; and Dudley Stamp Land Use Map (1930s); S. Dodds, 'What Size is the Average Farm?' (Oct. 2019), www.macintyrehudson.co.uk/insights/article/what-size-is-the-average-farm [accessed 20 Mar. 2021].

[30] Census of England and Wales 1931 'Occupation Tables' (1934), Table 17, pp. 547–8, 565.

[31] Reay, *Last rising*; Newby, *Deferential worker.*

[32] Howkins, *Death of rural England,* p. 8.

analysed returns featuring casual staff.[33] Interviews in Lower Wharfedale were carried out as part of PhD research between 2011 and 2013. Overall, 41 interviews took place, with both men and women born between 1914 and 1951 who were either farmers, labourers, or people otherwise connected with agriculture.[34]

These descriptions demonstrate the key differences in employment patterns and task cycles between the arable Wolds and the mixed/pastoral gateway to the Dales. The life-cycles and networks which formed the basis for community on the farms and in the villages in these two areas have been heavily influenced by these factors, as have the particular forms of social change these areas experienced.

Taskscapes on the Yorkshire Wolds

The system of farming that developed on the Wolds in the nineteenth century and persisted until the mid-twentieth century was characterized by a mobile workforce and physical, economic and social distance between farmers and labourers. George Nellist, a farm worker on the Wolds from 1919 until the 1970s, considered that 'there were farmers and labourers … two classes, that's all'.[35] Most Wolds farmers were tenants, but this did not imply social and economic proximity to their labourers. The wealthier farmers lived in substantial farm houses some distance from villages in the midst of the fields created during parliamentary enclosures (*c.*1770–1850).[36] Though farmers might personally recruit their farm servants, many left both the management of their farms and the feeding and housing of farm servants to their foremen. Some interviewees described these farmers as 'gentlemen'. Jack Henson remembered a farmer at Watton Grange in the 1920s who would not allow hired lads in the stable where he kept his riding horses:

> We wasn't allowed in groom's stables, wasn't lads. I know he caught me in once … I was helping John, the young lad [the farmer's son]. He came in, he said, 'what are you doing in here, Jack? You aren't allowed in here' … He threatened me once for swearing … He says, 'I'll horsewhip you if I hear you swearing anymore!' … No, he was a gentleman farmer.[37]

The societal distance between farmer and worker was reflected in the organization of the farm's domestic space, with farm servants usually sleeping in the farm foreman's house. When farm servants lived with the farmer, this was often in a loft or other separate space, and most did not eat with their employer. Older, married farm labourers might receive a tied house near to the farm or, more usually, rent a cottage in the nearest village.[38] As Gary Moses has shown, this system did not make for a close identification of employer and employee.[39] Neither

[33] National Farm Survey, 1941–1943, The National Archives, MAF 32.

[34] Jane Rowling 'Farming community and identity in Lower Wharfedale, Yorkshire, 1914–1951' (unpubl. PhD thesis, University of Leicester, 2017). The interviews are in Jane Rowling's possession and any consultation should be negotiated by personal correspondence with her.

[35] Interview with George Nellist, East Riding of Yorkshire Museum Service (ERYMS) (Skidby Mill) 2018.8.

[36] Allison, *East Riding*, pp. 148–77.

[37] Interview with Jack Henson, ERYMS (Skidby Mill) 2018.17.

[38] Caunce, *Farm horses*, p. 16.

[39] G. Moses, 'Proletarian labourers? East Riding farm servants, *c.*1850–75', *AgHR* 47 (1999), pp. 78–94.

does the oral history evidence from the Wolds suggest the 'traditional deferential' attitude towards employers that Howkins identifies amongst farm servants in the interwar period.[40] Jack Henson, in the narrative quoted above, uses the term 'gentleman' descriptively, even ironically; Caunce notes that the subculture of East Riding farm servants was autonomous and independent.[41]

It is also possible to distinguish a third socio-economic grouping in the rural East Riding. Living in the villages were smaller farmers, including smallholders and market gardeners, as well as tradespeople, including blacksmiths, joiners and shop keepers. These were emphatically not 'gentlemen'. Marie Grice grew up in Middleton-on-the-Wolds in the 1930s and remembered:

> The village farmers weren't all that rich … They were working farmers sort of, themselves. Maybe one man or two that's all … When I used to go to fetch the milk, you see, it was the farmer's wife who got you the milk … she worked hard.[42]

These small farmers included the market gardeners in Skidby who Ken Grasby remembered 'were only just making a living – they weren't going out for meals or to pubs'.[43] Because of their physical situation within the village and the fact they might only employ family members or one or two labourers, smaller farmers and their labourers often had closer relationships of the kind described below in Lower Wharfedale. For example, Eileen Green's parents had a dairy farm in the interwar years in Cottingham: 'We had one man work for us all his life, from being 12 until he died, when he was about 55. He was a very good worker, very reliable, very honest'.[44]

In the first half of the twentieth century, however, workforce mobility was a significant feature of the Wolds taskscape. There was little alternative to employment in agriculture and domestic service for school leavers, and many young people spent time 'hired out', boys on farms and girls as domestic servants. In 1931, 58 per cent of occupied males living in East Riding Rural Districts worked in agriculture. In the Administrative County as a whole, 63 per cent of females aged between 14 and 20 worked as domestic servants.[45] This somewhat bucks national trends – in England as a whole farmworkers were a minority of the rural population by 1931, and only 12 per cent of employed women in England and Wales worked in domestic service in 1921.[46] Bessie Gibson grew up in the Wolds village of Rudston Parva, and recalled her own and her brothers' entry into the labour force in the 1920s:

> The vicar … went to see Mother and Father to see if they were agreeable for me to go and would I go, you know, to work there … I just went and lived there and I got paid once a month … I had four brothers and one sister and money was very short, I mean, and you had to go straight away, you see, to earn a bit of money so as that you looked after yourself and you didn't cost them anything … the others all did farm work … They were hired out, the same as me. Wherever they went they slept there.[47]

[40] Howkins, *Death of rural England,* p. 91.

[41] Caunce, *Farm horses,* p. 43.

[42] Interview with Marie Grice, ERYMS (Skidby Mill), 2018.27.

[43] Interview with Ken Grasby, ERYMS (Skidby Mill), 2018.19.

[44] Interview with Eileen Green, ERYMS (Skidby Mill), 2018.50

[45] Census 1931, *Occupation tables,* table 17, pp. 546–8.

[46] Howkins, 'Death and rebirth?', p. 24.

[47] Interview with Bessie Gibson, ERYMS (Skidby Mill), 2018.9.

Farm servants had no need to develop loyalty to a particular employer as it was customary and accepted that East Riding hired lads changed position most years. George Nellist, hired out on the Wolds in the 1920s, recalled:

> You had a chance to change farms once a year and you very often did and that's how you got to know the country so intimately; you stopped a year in one place, got to know that district and then you moved to another farm in another district.[48]

Caunce has highlighted that this mobility enabled young farm servants to bargain for more money as their skills and strength improved.[49]

However, mobility was circumscribed. Few of the interviewees moved more than 20 miles. Different methods of farming were dictated by different landscapes within the county, and those who learned their farming on the Wolds preferred to stay there. George Nellist spent all of his working life on Wolds farms, apart from a couple of occasions where he 'slipped off each side' of the hills.[50] In the 1920s, Jack Henson left a job in Sproatley in the low-lying Holderness area of East Riding because he 'didn't like the country' – he returned to a Wolds farm near Driffield that he had previously worked on because he 'always liked Driffield side'.[51] Young women also benefited from mobility. Bessie Gibson's first job was as a domestic servant in the village vicarage, but she moved around to live and work across the next few years:

> They weren't suited when I left, like, but I thought I was bettering myself and maybe getting another shilling or two you see … I went to Haisthorpe into a farmhouse. We had three men in, lived in … there was their bedroom to keep clean and the beds to make … then I went into Bridlington. I had two places in Bridlington. I left there and got back to Lowthorpe to The Elms.[52]

Though mobility was central to the experience of young workers, it could also be important to older farm labourers. When a farm servant married, life as a hired lad ceased and the couple would move wherever work was available. Bessie met her husband, who was from North Yorkshire and was working as a farm servant near her parents' village. After they married, Bessie's husband found work as a shepherd at Fimber Field farm, 13 miles from Rudston Parva, and the couple moved into a tied cottage there. Later Bessie made moves of four, nine and five miles to the villages of Huggate, Sledmere, and Garton-on-the-Wolds, following her husband's work. Bessie suggests that pecuniary incentives trumped any notion of loyalty to a particular employer:

> Wherever he was he was always a year or two … he was with a man called Mr Byers, he was him four years and then he went to Mr Ewbank and he worked on Sledmere estate for so many years … a bit more money, maybe, maybe only a shilling or two, but it was a lot of money.[53]

[48] Interview with George Nellist.
[49] Caunce, *Farm horses,* pp. 66–73.
[50] Interview with George Nellist.
[51] Interview with Jack Henson.
[52] Interview with Bessie Gibson.
[53] Ibid.

This mobility meant that villages typically contained a mix of both 'born-and-bred' residents – young people whose parents had a farm or smallholding could often move into the family business, thus avoiding being 'hired out' – and incomers to the village, workers who moved around following employment. However, as Reay also noted in nineteenth-century Kent, mobility took place within a relatively circumscribed geography; many 'incomers' were nonetheless 'insiders' in terms of their attachment to and knowledge of the immediate landscape and its customs and practices.[54]

On the Wolds in the first half of the twentieth century, villagers lived amongst agricultural processes, leading to some blurring of the boundaries between the tasks of the workplace and those of the village more generally. Bob Leveridge recalled that the day-to-day traffic of agricultural work was a consistent background to village life in the 1930s, as farm workers took horses to the pond to be watered and cleaned, and horses to the blacksmith to be shod:

> When I was a lad we used to play football on the roads … only thing what stopped us in them days more than traffic was cows and sheep running on the roads, you know, taking them to the sheep dip and that.[55]

Agricultural tasks taking place in and around the village often involved cooperation. Whereas the large Wolds farms were self-sufficient in terms of labour – some even employed their own blacksmiths on site– for the smaller village farmers, many jobs required pooling resources.[56] Ken Grasby remembered that during threshing time in the 1930s and 1940s, in addition to a gang of casual labourers who 'went round with the threshing machine':

> A few people in the village used to come. A few of them used to work for farmers in the village you see. We used to help each other … We all got paid as if we were ordinary casuals.[57]

It was not only paid labourers who participated in the agricultural taskscape. There were opportunities for children interested in farm work. Ken Grasby grew up in Skidby in the 1930s and remembered:

> I used to go up there and help the farm up there and there was a chap was working with four 'osses in a drag … I says, 'Can I take two?' I was eleven. So he says, 'Aye, you put the oldest two in roller' and he took the other two in harrows. 'Right' he says, 'follow me, like' and I drove these two 'til dinner time.[58]

Other interviewees recalled how, as children, they had involved themselves in the activity of farms – for example, moving 'stooks' of corn out of the way of the horses during harvest and helping to load carts. As in Lower Wharfedale, and perhaps in farming areas throughout Britain, this could develop into mentorship of young boys who showed a particular enthusiasm for farming. For Ken himself, an early interest in farming led to paid casual work while he was still at school and then to jobs in market gardening and eventually working his own smallholding.

[54] Reay, *Last rising*, p. 58.

[55] Interview with Bob Leveridge, ERYMS (Skidby Mill), 2018.26.

[56] Ibid.

[57] Interview with Ken Grasby.

[58] Ibid.

Though agriculture framed much social interaction in Wolds villages in the first half of the twentieth century, not all residents were involved. The gender separation characteristic of industrial communities was also a feature of the East Riding countryside.[59] The wives of small farmers might undertake some agricultural work looking after chickens and making butter; women might undertake seasonal tasks in market gardens in villages nearer to Hull; in the nearby Vale of York, the 'gang system' employed women to harvest root vegetables.[60] But the large Wolds farms, specializing in cereal cultivation, did not employ women for farm work in this period. The oral histories do not reveal female domestic servants undertaking farm work in the ways that Nicola Verdon and others have described in some other parts of northern England.[61] Therefore, to a significant extent, the place allotted to the Wolds farm labourer's wife was in the home; their daily tasks and social interactions were little different to those recalled by working-class women in towns and cities at the time.[62] Marie Grice remembered her mother's life as the housewife of a farm labourer in Middleton-on-the-Wolds in the 1930s:

> There was a copper with the fire underneath you know, and that copper served four cottages, families. They had to take it in turns … My mother used to get up early to have the first turn with the copper and then they'd fill it up and leave it running low for the next person to use, so the fire didn't go out on them, and two used it on a Monday and two used it on a Tuesday. My mother would have it all done practically by [the time] we were ready to go to school. She worked very, very hard … then she'd go out and do a load of washing for somebody else.[63]

Margaret Barker moved to Middleton from Driffield in 1939, and remembered that as a housewife of a labourer, she didn't really know much about the agricultural life of the area: 'well I don't know who worked on the farms, 'cause I didn't have much to do with them'.[64] Gary Moses has described the working conditions of the East Riding farm servant of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries as 'proletarian'; aspects of the life stories and experiences of the Wolds labouring classes, particularly that of women, speak less of an urban/rural divide than of common working-class experiences.[65]

The agricultural taskscape of the Yorkshire Wolds militated against workers engaging in some of the leisure activities that historians have described young working-class people enjoying in the interwar years – the mass courtship of the urban 'monkey walks', the commercial dance halls and cinemas.[66] Farms were often in remote settings, and hours were long for hired lads who had to feed their horses after a working day that could last from six in the morning until six at night. Jack Henson, a hired lad in the 1920s, recalled:

[59] N. Dennis, F. Henriques, and C. Slaughter, *Coal is our life. An analysis of a Yorkshire mining community* (1956); Walkerdine, 'Communal beingness'.

[60] Interview with Eileen Green; Interview with Beattie Smith and Edna Blackburn, ERYMS (Skidby Mill), 2018.45; Caunce, *Farm horses,* p. 26.

[61] Nicola Verdon 'Agricultural labour and the contested nature of women's work in interwar England and Wales', *Hist. J.* 52.1, (2009), pp. 109–130; Steve Humphries and Beverley Hopwood, *Green and pleasant land. The untold story of country life in twentieth-century Britain* (2000), pp. 123–4.

[62] E. Roberts, *A woman's place: An oral history of working-class women, 1890–1940* (1984).

[63] Interview with Marie Grice.

[64] Interview with Margaret Barker, ERYMS (Skidby Mill), 2018.11.

[65] Moses, 'Proletarian labourers'.

[66] K. Milcoy, *When the girls come out to play. Teenage working-class girls' leisure between the wars* (2017); A. Davies, *Leisure, gender and poverty. Working-class culture in Salford and Manchester, 1900–1939* (1992).

> Well, you didn't bloody finish! By time you'd got your tea, you'd to finish doing horses and after you got them done you maybe had a saddle room, or a 'slum', as they used to call it … as in winter time, you couldn't go out on a Sunday because you knew you had to go back and do all your horses.[67]

Though hired lads could socialize with their peers after a long day's work, girls often worked alone. Bessie Gibson recalled of her first job as a domestic servant in a vicarage:

> I used to finish, maybe eight o'clock or something like that, because you see, they used to have an evening meal and there was all the washing up and that. Why, I just used to read and then go to bed. I mean, you went to bed early in them days. Because there was nothing else to do … You didn't see anybody. You weren't allowed out.[68]

However, this is not to say that all aspects of a wider leisure culture were unavailable to young people living and working on the Wolds. Brian Short considers that in the interwar British countryside there were 'signs of social change and modernity … isolation was breaking down'; he points to village hall 'peripatetic film shows or glee parties' and the increase of motorized transport including public bus services.[69] Jeremy Burchardt picks out the provision of village halls as 'perhaps the single most important component of the revitalization of rural leisure' in this period.[70] On the Wolds, access to an expanding leisure culture depended on proximity to town or village, and perhaps access to a bike, though some interviewees remembered using buses to visit towns to watch a film or attend a dance on a Saturday night. There were also dances organized in village halls, and one interviewee remembered that some lads took every opportunity to attend.[71] Bob Leveridge recalled that he and other hired lads would cycle four miles on an evening from their farm to Skidby to watch a travelling cinema show in the village hall.[72] Of course, for the married farm labourer, village pubs were popular and married couples might attend whist drives together.[73]

Howkins described English agriculture and the countryside in the first half of the twentieth century as 'Janus faced' because many parts of an older, out-dated society persisted alongside features of modernity.[74] The East Riding testimony supports this assessment. Dances, film shows, and whist drives were part of a broader working-class culture making its way into the countryside in the interwar years, but elements of a more distinctively local communal culture, rooted in the county's particular taskscapes, persisted. The distinction between farmer and farm labourer in the East Riding village had since the nineteenth century been marked by attendance at church (or Wesleyan Methodist chapel) for the farmer and the more radical, working-class Primitive Methodist chapel for the labourer.[75] Though the role of Methodism in East Riding rural culture declined after the First World War, some interviewees remembered that the distinction between church and chapel, and between Wesleyan and

[67] Interview with Jack Henson.

[68] Interview with Bessie Gibson.

[69] Short, *Battle of the fields,* p. 39.

[70] J. Burchardt, '"A new rural civilisation": village halls, community and citizenship in the 1920s' in Brassley *et al.* (eds), *English countryside*, p. 26.

[71] Interview with George Nellist.

[72] Interview with Bob Leveridge.

[73] Interview with Eileen Green.

[74] Howkins, *Death of rural England*, p. 8.

[75] P. M. Truss, 'Primitive methodism in the Yorkshire Wolds, *c*.1820–1932' (unpublished PhD thesis, University of Leeds, 2016), p. 78.

Primitive Methodism, was still pertinent.[76] A further distinctive element of the East Riding social scene during the twentieth century was the Martinmas hiring fairs held in the market towns over two weeks every November. Fairs were an opportunity for farm servants to seek new employment, to drink and to see old friends, renewing the bonds of their occupational community. Interviewees testified that hiring fairs were still taking place in some towns through and just after the Second World War.[77] Jack Henson remembered of the 1920s and 1930s:

> I used to go to Beverley [hirings] an' all, and Driffield. When I got older I used to reckon to have two Tuesdays at Hull and two Saturdays at Beverley and two Saturdays at Driffield, if I could afford it.[78]

If the Martinmas hirings were an opportunity for farm servants to express their common identity, another communal occasion with origins in the nineteenth century focused on the village itself. Caunce notes that the hiring system scattered families; Friendly Society 'Feast' days, involving a parade, a communal meal and celebrations for the whole village (often with a fun fair) were a way in which families and communities were brought back together.[79] Friendly societies lost their economic importance after National Insurance was introduced, but annual Feasts were held in at least one Wolds village until 1939, as Audrey Thompson remembered:

> All the young farm lads that were on the farms they used to, I mean they used to come from miles away. I had cousins and uncles and, you know, they all used to come. That was the family gathering was Middleton Feast. It was bigger than Christmas.[80]

On the eve of the Second World War, the demands of capital-intensive arable farming on the Yorkshire Wolds had been met for over a century by a young and mobile workforce of hired servants. Though Caunce and Moses argued that the internal coherence of the East Riding farm servant system was undermined by the First World War, being 'hired out' continued to be a fact of life for many young people in the 1920s–1940s.[81] There were 3954 agricultural workers listed as horsemen in the East Riding Administrative County in the 1911 Census;[82] in the 1921 Census, 4132 were 'distinguished as in charge of horses' and, despite the Depression, in 1931 there were still 2762 employed in charge of horses.[83] British Farming experienced well documented doldrums during the interwar years, with the staple of Wolds farming, grain cultivation, badly hit; however, Martin includes the Wolds as part of the chalkland areas of Britain where it was still possible to undertake 'profitable cereal production' in the 1930s.[84] The Second World War extended the life of the hiring system, since many capable hands had signed up for the army – 'farmers had to rely on young lads

[76] Truss, 'Primitive methodism', pp. 259–90; interview with Eileen Green.

[77] Interview with Bob Leveridge; Interview with Harry Dennis (ERYMS: Skidby Mill): 2018.45

[78] Interview with Jack Henson.

[79] Caunce, *Farm horses,* p. 182; D. Neave, *Mutual aid in the Victorian countryside: Friendly societies in the rural East Riding, 1830–1912* (1990).

[80] Interview with Audrey Thompson (ERYMS: Skidby Mill), 2018.53.

[81] Caunce, *Farm horses.* Moses, 'Proletarian labourers'.

[82] Caunce, *Farm horses,* p. 18.

[83] Census 1931, *Occupation tables*, table 16, p. 378.

[84] Martin, *Development of modern agriculture,* p. 11.

and prisoners of war' recalled Harry Dennis, who was hired out aged 14 in 1939 and worked as a farm servant throughout the war.[85]

The testimony of those who were hired out in the 1940s suggests that tension between old and new worlds was apparent in the workplace. For example, John Harrison worked for one year as hired lad with farm horses, the next year on a farm, driving tractors, and the year after was hired back onto a large farm 'amongst horses' again. In this time of change and transition, different generations brought conflicting expectations about how social relations might work on the farm. John got trouble from the foreman because he lingered in the house rather than returning immediately to the stable after one evening meal: 'you were supposed to spend half an hour in the stable after you'd had your dinner. The gaffer said "your place is in the stable"'.[86] Bob Leveridge recalled that after his first year hired onto a farm where the lads could treat the foreman's house as their own home, he left his next post after two weeks because he didn't like the 'old-fashioned' ways:

> It was what you'd call an old-fashioned place where you lived in a different place, do you see, and just went in for meals. And we were always used to just grabbing hold of paper, anything and just looking as though I was at home … whereas that place, it was just as if you, there was a stranger all together … you lived in the big house but after, they had another building … when you'd had your meal, you used to go … that used to be what you call 'your house'.[87]

The post-war years saw the rapid end of the farm-servant system in the East Riding; according to Caunce the vitality of this system was weakening after the First World War, and the mechanization of farming which accelerated during and after the Second Word War removed the rationale for hiring live-in 'horse lads'.[88] Short records that tractors deployed on British farms increased from 102,000 in 1942 to 295,000 in 1950 and 430,000 in 1958.[89] Skidby farmer Ken Grasby remembered a relatively speedy reduction in the numbers of horses in the fields around the village in the later 1940s:

> A lot of horses disappeared in '48, so I think you would be going up the road and you would see half a dozen in a field and you would see just three and then you would see just one, which they kept for fetching turnips in, going round sheep fold and such as that, and then these Fergie tractors with hydraulics come on the go so folks didn't need to struggle with them.[90]

The East Riding followed the national trajectory whereby prospering post-war agriculturists utilized new methods that meant a sharp decline in labour requirements. The number of non-family workers on English farms dropped from almost a million in 1945 to under 100,000 by 1990.[91]

These changes undoubtedly impacted on the village communities of the Wolds. The post-war severance of village life from agriculture noted by Howard Newby was particularly marked in

[85] Interview with Harry Dennis.

[86] Interview with John Harrison (ERYMS: Skidby Mill), 2018.32.

[87] Interview with Bob Leveridge.

[88] Caunce, *Farm horses*, p. 211.

[89] Short, *Battle of the fields,* p. 106.

[90] Interview with Ken Grasby.

[91] Howkins, *Death of rural England,* p. 159.

an area of large farms where there had previously been a high demand for agricultural labour.[92] The change appeared obvious to those like Bob Leveridge who had lived and worked in and around Skidby since the 1920s:

> I mean most of the people what you talked to was farmers' lads [labourers] and one thing and another because all the farms had to – I mean now they haven't anybody on farms now, but farmers and sons.[93]

John Harrison's career as a farm worker in the 1940s and 1950s epitomizes the changing position of agricultural labourer in these years. He began as a hired lad working with horses in 1939, and recalled many of the traditional aspects of an East Riding farm servant's life (living in, annual pay, a hierarchy with foreman, 'wagoner' and so on). By the time John became foreman on a Wolds farm in the mid-1950s, the lads he and his wife looked after were not farm servants but students gaining a year's work experience while studying farming at Bishop Burton Farm Institute, founded in 1954.[94]

So, on the East Yorkshire Wolds, Howkins' 'second agricultural revolution' took place in a taskscape that had become characterized by a mobile workforce, distant and relatively short-term relations between labourer and employer, gender division and villages that resembled Newby's 'occupational communities', with institutions and sociable practices which preserved class distinctions. The taskscape of Lower Wharfedale, 50 miles away, represents a considerable contrast.

Taskscapes in Lower Wharfedale

Progression through working life in mid-twentieth century rural Lower Wharfedale was characterized by stability, rather than mobility; intergenerational mentorship; regular use of public space to cement community bonds that transcended the employer-employee divide; and the development of locally specific, and task-specific expertise which corresponded to the particular agriculture type and topography of the area. However, as Ingold's work on taskscapes posited, working relationships between community members, their job roles, personal roles, and landscape were perpetually in process.[95] As technology, agricultural policy, and agri-economics changed, so the value of certain tasks and knowledge shifted, becoming more or less important to the functioning of the working community, and the meanings individuals saw within the construction of community itself.

For young people, finding agricultural work often marked a moment of transition from childhood to adulthood. In the absence of annual hirings and large-scale workforce movements, neighbourly relationships often played a major part in finding a first job, especially for the children of non-farmers.

In contrast to Hobsbawm and Rudé's 'dark village' of a century before, to which farmers and landowners emphatically did not belong, this community exhibited a more complex and interwoven social structure.[96] As noted above, small farmers predominated here. These small

[92] H. Newby, *Country Life – a social history of rural England* (1987), pp. 220–5.
[93] Interview with Bob Leveridge.
[94] Interview with John Harrison.
[95] Ingold, 'Temporality'.
[96] E. J. Hobsbawm and G. Rudé, *Captain Swing* (2014).

Yorkshire farmers, according to a study from 1958 cited by Martin, 'saw themselves as manual workers and were content if their unit provided a return commensurate with wage levels received by manual workers in other industries'.[97] The social alignment of small farmers and labourers has been noted in other contexts – for example, Reay writes that in nineteenth-century Kent small farmers were 'more socially aligned with labourers – in terms of literacy levels and life-styles – than with large farmers'.[98] Nonetheless, farmers' sons (and, less often, daughters) had a clear path into agriculture laid out for them, whereas those whose parents did not have land relied upon less prescribed routes into farm employment.

This landscape of small, tenanted farms surrounding small villages lent itself to a system of employment whereby only one or two labourers, alongside the farmer's family, including women, were necessary to keep each farm running. In these circumstances, the recollections of former farm labourers show that young people were identified early as potential workers, and a relationship of mutual trust was established, through favours, advice, and support. One interviewee recalled a typical pathway of selection, mentorship, and increasing responsibility:

> Where I lived in Guiseley, there were a cattle dealer and he used to drive cows. We'd just a few buildings and that, and a field, and he used to rent it off us, and then as the cows calved when he wasn't there, he used to say, 'watch them for us,' and he used to give us a penny or tuppence for going across and telling him a cow had calved, and then I started – I was about ten – and I used to sit at the side of the road, with the cows eating the road sides off … and then when I got to twelve I used to go milk by hand – well, I could allus milk because I was fairly strong in the arm – and I used to milk for him, a few cows, and it got, you know, bigger and bigger, and then when I was twelve he bought us a brand new bike, and I says, 'what's that for?' and he says, 'so you can take the cows [to auction]' … Every year from then on he bought me a new bike, because I used to wreck them – well they used to get kicked – and I left school, I shouldn't have done but I did, at about twelve – officially you could leave at thirteen in them days – and so I left and then I went to work for this Tom Penny, and then I sort of graduated on. I never had a farm of my own, I've allus been a manager, you know.[99]

For those young people who did not have a farm-based childhood, the path into agricultural work in the mid-twentieth century relied heavily on the ability to be mobile, and to move independently through the landscape. This was important both for getting to sites of work, and, as the cattle dealer's protégé explained, in an area where auction marts provided key loci for economic and social exchange, for carrying out tasks within the context of wider agriculture. This provided an entry point into the community, allowing a young person to enter the normally closed space of the auction mart, supported by the name of the more established man – the cattle dealer or farmer who already had a reputation within the community.[100] Unsurprisingly, the bicycle featured heavily in these recollections as the key method of transport for boys who were interested in farm work. 'As soon as I could ride a

[97] Martin, *Development of modern agriculture*, p. 130.
[98] Reay, *Last rising*, p. 37.
[99] Interview with retired farm manager, Yeadon, 17 Dec. 2013.
[100] Rowling, 'Trust in a masculine space'.

bike' was used by male interviewees to pinpoint the age at which they began to spend time on nearby farms.[101]

For farmers' sons, the boundary between home and work was more porous, the same space being used for both. Task-based mobility took the form of travel with an older relative, and this usually began at a very young age. Farmers' sons related how grooming for work was an integral part of their childhood. One farmer, who grew up close to Harrogate, explained:

> The first thing I can remember is delivering milk with my father when I was about eight, and we used to ladle it into jugs on the customers' doorsteps … Then after that, one just works, are you with me? As a farmer's son, you just – work. You don't realize it until one day you say, 'I don't want to go,' and they say, 'Well you won't get your sixpence'. [laugh] And then you realize you're actually working for your living![102]

He continued:

> Onwards to maybe 1964/5 when I decided I wanted to be a sailor. I was told while I was thinking further about it I would help on the farm. I'm still helping! … So I never actually accomplished what I actually wanted to do, you know, you sort of had to do as you were told, as you might say now. 'You're not going to sea.' Well, they didn't say that, no, as I said, you know, 'Whilst you're thinking about it'. Well, I'd already thought about it, but still.[103]

This was a typical experience related by farmers' sons, who frequently recalled helping with small tasks around the farm, a role which began as a privilege and evolved into an obligation.

In mid-twentieth century Lower Wharfedale, unlike on the Wolds, close personal relationships between farmer and labourer were the norm. These relationships had their foundations in this early, subtle recruitment process. In this social structure, we find something of the paternalism which Newby identified in *The deferential worker*.[104] Farmers who worked with a small number of labourers were likely to take on a mentoring role, as one retired labourer, who had worked on three Lower Wharfedale farms over his lifetime, explained:

> When I worked for Mr Wardle, he was just like a father to me, he were a lovely man. He couldn't have been better. Because when Mr Coball said to come down, I said, when Mr Wardle died, I said, 'he was just like a father to me,' which he was, and he said, 'Well Derrick,' he said, 'I can't be as good as that but I'll do my best'. Anyway I got on well with them here. I did my job. I've always tried to do a right job, you see … And Mr Wardle, he was just like a father to me. He'd buy me a watch at Otley, buy me anything what he could do. The thing he did once, he used to come down every Thursday, down to Weardley for his dinner, and my teeth at that time were breaking off. I were looking after them, but they seemed to keep breaking off, you see. And my wife said to him, she said, 'Aren't his teeth a mess?' she said, 'he wants them out!' so he says, 'right, when I go to Otley on Friday I'll go see the dentist, I'll make an appointment for him to go!' … Well, it wasn't a bad thing, it wanted doing. But as I say, he were just like a father to me. He was really, really, really

[101] Interview with retired farm worker, Harewood, 7 Dec. 2012.

[102] Interview with farmer, Harrogate, 22 Nov. 2012.

[103] Ibid.

[104] Newby, *Deferential worker* pp. 49–51.



FIGURE. 1. 'Drinkings' Farmer Henry Rowling (right) and farm labourer sharing food *c.*1940s (J. Rowling private collection)

> good. It broke my heart when he died. Because I'd worked for him 27 year and he'd been a really, really lovely man.[105]

The interviewee had taken his first job on Mr Wardle's farm as a teenager, and the relationship between the two men took a variety of forms. While this was an explicitly paternalistic relationship, it also incorporated elements of mutual respect and equality, demonstrated through the powerful gesture of eating together. Commensality was a feature of agricultural life in Lower Wharfedale which cropped up again and again in oral interviews. The importance of sharing food is a theme which has long been established in the field of anthropology, and it is well recognized that eating together creates a sense of 'we' as opposed to 'them' and 'us'.[106]

Many interviews included references to farmers and labourers eating together in the fields (see Figure 1). This was a crucial part of the day-to-day interactions between the different workers on the small mixed farms. This kind of interaction over the long periods of employment built

[105] Interview with retired farm labourer, Harewood, 13 Aug. 2012.

[106] S. W. Mintz and C. M. Du Bois, 'The anthropology of food and eating,' *Annual Rev. of Anthropology*, 31 (2002), pp. 99–119; F. Armstrong, 'Food and drink in Ireland,' *Proc. Royal Irish Academy: Archaeology, Culture, History, Literature* 115C (2015), pp. 405–30.

close, almost familial relationships, in which employers could expect loyalty and hard work in return for pastoral care and material support. Those who did not commit to this hard work were excluded from the paternal relationship with the farmer, and consequently from the potential of long-term stability in employment.

While slacking off work was something of a taboo in both case study areas, in this environment, where relations between employer and employee were much closer, it held an added element of betrayal of trust. Those who did not pull their weight in Lower Wharfedale became the butt of jokes and teasing, which could last a lifetime, for example the nickname 'Rice Pudding' for the man who chose to help in the kitchen on threshing day, rather than take on the dirty job of raking chaff out from under the threshing machine.

Mr Wardle's former employee continued to describe the sense of obligation he felt to his employer, and the trust he enjoyed as a result of fulfilling this work obligation:

> As long as you did your job you were alright … you had to do your job and if you didn't do it that were it, you'd be off … You don't just work like hell because the boss is there, because he knows, 'Well he's only doing that because I'm there'. But it's what you do when the boss isn't there, because he can tell then that he's been working while he hasn't been there. No, I never were bothered if the boss caught me stood about, I wasn't bothered, because as I say, I cracked on.[107]

Another former farm labourer and manager remembered:

> If you were a worker you were alright, but woe betide you if you were one of these here that were a bit dodgy like. We once had a lad down there, I won't mention any names, and we set him on to do calf rearing … he used to disappear after he'd fed the calves, and I went looking for him one morning and I couldn't find him anywhere. I thought, oh he must be sat in the toilet or something, he's maybe been taken short, so I went and I flung the door open, and he's sat reading a newspaper in the toilet! [laugh] Aye, he was! Sat reading a newspaper in the toilet! I said, 'I think you'd better come out of there!'[108]

In an area of mixed agriculture, dangerous tasks were part of everyday life: handling animals, working with increasingly powerful machinery, pesticides and chemical fertilizers. Farmers and labourers working together in small groups or pairs were forced to rely upon one another for personal safety, as well as for animal welfare and economic success, in a way which would be alien to farmers employing a larger labour force and a farm manager to do the work of the farm. Shirking work not only betrayed the pseudo-familial mentor-mentee relationship between farmer and labourer, but had the potential to put others at risk.

Unlike on the Wolds, the relationship between farmer and worker in Lower Wharfdale frequently transcended the private space of the farm. Particularly important public spaces in the agricultural life of the area in the mid-century were the auction marts and pubs. For previous generations, the churches and streets of the area had provided the same function, but by the mid-twentieth century, particularly towards the end of the study period, the

[107] Interview with retired farm labourer, Harewood, 13 Aug. 2012.

[108] Interview with retired farm worker, Harewood, 7 Dec. 2012.

majority of interviewees did not recall church attendance as a significant part of their lives. The turn of the twentieth century had also seen the selling of cattle on the streets stopped, and these activities moved into dedicated spaces away from the non-farming population. Just as the annual hiring fairs in the East Riding reinforced the occupational community of hired lads, these spaces were the locus of social interaction, the focus of economic activity, the means and motive for mobility, and a forum for creating and affirming insider status. Public space allowed the mixing of the wider community, beyond those working directly in agriculture.

Otley, at the centre of Lower Wharfedale, had two auction marts: the Wharfedale Farmers' Auction Mart, built in 1893 and still in business today, and the Bridge End Auction Mart, built in 1934 and closed in 2000. Other marts were dotted across the valley, at Knaresborough, Pannal, Wetherby, Skipton and Bingley; however, following a national trend which continues today, they gradually disappeared across the period.[109] In the mid-twentieth century, these marts were the backbone of the Lower Wharfedale agricultural economy. However, they were very much closed spaces, at which behavioural expectations and personal reputation played a crucial role in the winning of the trust of the wider community, and the achievement of insider status.[110]

Commensality also characterized these public spaces. Auction marts were judged almost as much by the quality of their food provision as by the trade that happened there:

> I used to go down to Bridge End and there were a lady in there called Mrs Eckersley, and she had a belly pot stove thing in the middle of the room, and she made some fantastic dinners. Christ almighty! They were right dinners![111]

A day at the auction mart would often be followed by a visit to the pub. A resident of Otley remembered: 'in Otley on a Monday, which was auction day, all the pubs would be full with farmers everywhere, the town was full of farmers'.[112] This was not simply a social occasion, or a chance to drink. Another farmer explained:

> If you'd been to market you went to the pub afterwards and had a drink, and that's where you used to do some more dealing. In the olden days you would go to market and you'd take your cattle, and you would sell them, and then you would come in. And you learnt – believe it or not – you learnt more in the pub afterwards than what you could do in a whole week on the farm, simply by talking to different farmers, saying, 'I'm having a problem with so-and-so', and someone would say, 'Oh I had that problem, years ago, and I found that so-and-so' … you could perhaps cure a cow or repair something by just going to market for a couple of hours afterwards and having a pint or whatever, a couple of pints, and then coming back home and carrying on working. That's what markets were for. It was a social occasion to a certain degree, but it was also a learning curve too.[113]

[109] J. Wright, T. Stephens, R. Wilson and J. Smith, 'The effect of local livestock population changes on auction mart viability – a spatial analysis', *J. Rural Studies* 18 (2002), pp. 477–83.

[110] Rowling, 'Trust in a masculine space', pp. 71–99.

[111] Interview with retired farm worker, Harewood, 7 Dec. 2013.

[112] Interview with Otley resident, East Keswick, 3 Oct. 2012.

[113] Interview with farmer, Harrogate, 22 Nov. 2012.

These testimonies demonstrate the extension of the trust-based, commensality-supported, mentor-mentee relationship away from the farm and into the wider community. Women can be seen in these recollections as a constant presence in conceptually male space, providing food, facilitating pseudo-familial and wider community relationships, and carrying out farm work as part of family farming enterprises.[114] Public space provided fora for the sharing of locally specific knowledge and experiences which cemented community bonds. As early as 1906, H. Rider Haggard, on visiting Otley, had written that the method of farming 'seems well suited to the locality, and new comers who attempt other fashions usually fail or fall into line with the local custom'.[115] Expertise in farming the particular topography of one region carried a social capital which would not translate easily to another.

Across the period 1920 to 1965, the technology available to farmers changed almost beyond recognition, with much of this change coming in the Second World War and after. In terms of mobility alone, the number of motor vehicles on Britain's roads increased from 2.3 million in 1931 to over 20 million in 1973.[116] The effect of this increasing mechanization and mobility on agriculture was twofold, increasing the distances which people could travel in a day, and further reducing the number of hands needed on the farm. This caused a change in the taskscape, as the number of jobs for labourers declined, a larger range of tasks fell onto the shoulders of fewer workers. In Lower Wharfedale, the recipients of mentorship were increasingly likely to be farmers' sons, rather than village children, and the closure of key public spaces like pubs and auction marts reduced opportunities for commensality, and rendered the bicycle redundant as a means of effective mobility through the taskscape. One interviewee summarized: 'nowadays if my son goes to market, he takes the cattle, drops it off, hasn't time to stop, and comes home'.[117]

Lower Wharfedale lies only fifty miles from the Wolds of the East Riding. The economies of both areas were based around agricultural production, despite close proximity to the industrial centres of Leeds, Bradford and Hull. In the mid-twentieth century, both localities grappled with changes that were general to the wider British countryside: technological upheaval, societal change, and a declining agricultural workforce. Despite these parallels, interviews within these two communities revealed striking differences that shed new light on the regional variation in rural taskscapes and life experiences in the mid-twentieth century. Though geographical variety in agricultural practices and farming fortunes in this period are well recognized in the historiography, the extent of variation of rural society has not been fully explored; the influential works in this area tend to present either detailed case-studies of single areas, or broad surveys.[118]

[114] J. Rowling, 'Changing roles, new self-perceptions: rural women in Lower Wharfedale 1914–1951', *Oral Hist.*, 42 (Spring 2014), pp. 95–108.

[115] H. Rider Haggard, *Rural England* (2 vols, 1906) II, p. 305.

[116] DVLA, 'History of road safety, The Highway Code and the driving test', www.gov.uk/government/publications/history-of-road-safety-and-the-driving-test [accessed 26 Jun. 2020].

[117] Interview with farmer, Harrogate, 22 Nov. 2012.

[118] Howkins, *Death of rural England*; Newby, *Deferential worker*; Brassley *et al.* (eds), *English countryside*; Short, *Battle of the fields*; Martin, *Development of modern agriculture*.

We have used Ingold's concept of 'taskscape' to foreground the interweaving of spatial and social dimensions of agricultural work. Interviewees set their stories of work and community within a well-drawn local landscape of farms, villages and market towns. Agricultural employees on the Wolds found themselves and their landscape best served by continuing to utilize a mobile approach to work, in which ties of loyalty to individual farmers were usually weak. Hired lads and farm labourers were spatially and socially separate from the class of farmers, and knowledge about the taskscape was gained by moving from farm to farm. The Wolds farm labourer demonstrated an independent attitude and a relatively instrumental attachment to place. By contrast, Lower Wharfedale's young farmworkers might expect to stay with the same farmer, as the only, or one of a few workers, for an extended period. In these cases, familiarity with the landscape was gained through long term association with a particular patch of land, and the relationship between farmer and labourer took on a reciprocal form, with obligations and responsibilities on both sides. This has much in common with Newby's description of the 'deferential' relationship between farmer and worker in Suffolk during the 1970s.[119] However, the societal distance between these two groups in Lower Wharfedale was smaller than on the large cereal farms of East Anglia and the East Riding Wolds. Therefore, Newby's depiction of farmer paternalism as 'hegemonic control' exercised by one class over another does not seem quite appropriate as a means of capturing the lived experience of workers and farmers in mid-century Lower Wharfedale.

The characteristic workplace relationships of each taskscape impacted on the patterning of local communities. Wolds villages, where many residents were agricultural labourers, resembled the kind of 'occupational community' depicted by Reay and Newby, though the extent of mobility on the Wolds meant that these were not the settled 'organic communities' idealized by interwar sociologists and commentators.[120] In Lower Wharfedale, the key distinction even before the Second World War was one that historians have described in the British countryside during the later twentieth century: between those who were connected with farming and those who were not.[121] In both areas, familiarity with the landscape, the environment, and local cultural norms with regard to working the land were key to a sense of belonging. Integration within the 'farming community' of Lower Wharfedale would not grant insider status among the labourers at an East Riding hiring fair, for example. This difference in knowledge and experience of environments, and, consequently, in approaches to the management of localized landscapes is what, fundamentally, separates these two rural Yorkshire communities and makes them different from one another; entities of their own, with unique characteristics within the imaginations of their participants.

[119] Newby, *Deferential worker,* pp. 419–20.

[120] Reay, *Last rising*; Newby, *Deferential worker*; Brassley, 'Wheelwright'; Cohen, *Symbolic construction.*

[121] Howkins, *Death of rural England,* pp. 165–86.

Annual list of publications on Agrarian History, 2019*

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JOURNAL AND BOOK ARTICLES

ALLEN, ROBERT C., 'Class structure and inequality during the industrial revolution: lessons from England's social tables, 1688–1867', *EcHR,* 72, pp. 88–125.

ANDREWS, MAGGIE, 'Worcestershire's women: local studies and the gender politics of the First World War and its legacy', *History,* 104, pp. 851–70.

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Book Reviews

UK and Ireland

ROSAMOND FAITH, *The moral economy of the countryside: Anglo-Saxon to Anglo-Norman England* (Cambridge University Press, 2019). xii + 235 pp. £19.99.

More than two decades after the release of her commanding survey of the English peasantry, Rosamond Faith returns once again to the vexing subject of relationships between lords and peasants in her latest monograph. Having worked on the agriculture, farmers, and peasantry of England and France for the better part of fifty years, Faith now turns her attention not only to the mechanics of how the peasantry were exploited but, rather, why lords in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries were able to appropriate their labour. This is a particularly timely contribution to the field given something of a flurry of publications addressing the topic of early medieval peasant society (see, for examples, recent works by Constance Bouchard, G. G. Astill, Alexander Langlands and Charles West). Despite the focused nature of this question, Faith's monograph also seeks to intervene in another, much older debate: when did 'feudalism' appear in early medieval England? In a distant echo of John Horace Round, Faith argues that the Norman Conquest of England in 1066 marked a distinct moment of transition between a 'profoundly un-feudal society' to a 'profoundly feudal one'. This is not Chris Wickham's steady but sure march of the feudal mode, but, rather, a *mutation féodale*. Faith suggests that pre-Conquest lords and institutions controlled one of the two Marxist means of production: land. However, she argues it was only after the Norman influx that lords 'gained control' over the second: labour.

This ambitious work is divided into six sections: 'Rank'; 'Reciprocity'; 'Reputation and Witness'; 'The Wolf Sniffs the Wind' (a reference to the infamous Archbishop Wulfstan of York); 'The Aftermath of the Conquest'; and 'In the World of the Manor'. These sections are further sub-divided into sixteen chapters – arranged in a broadly chronological order – in which she moves through each topic in a lively style, deftly demonstrating the various issues at hand. Using her hard-earned knowledge of the pre- and post-Conquest peasantry, Faith surveys an impressive breadth of evidence and the reader is guided through an extensive selection of narrative, legal, and archaeological evidence. In the first third of this book, Faith makes a case for a prevalent culture of reciprocity in pre-Conquest England – or, at least, a shared idea of fair reciprocal behaviours – and its potential roots; elements of which she traces to an idea of a shared, 'imagined past'. For those unfamiliar with the complexities of early medieval obligations, her examinations of customs such as *mannrædenn* (man-rent) and *feormian* (to provide hospitality) render a potential maze of relationships easily navigable. This makes way for the following exploration of dispute settlement, an increasingly commercialized rural environment, and the influential narrative literature of late tenth and early eleventh centuries. The last third, broadly speaking, focuses on the introduction of new legal concepts and new vocabulary after the Norman Conquest. The *Domesday Book, Lies Willelme,* and the procedures of manor courts form the backbone of this section and provide a glimpse of incoming Norman cultural ideas.

Given the title of this work, it is no surprise that the central argument of the book is underpinned by the idea of the 'moral economy'; a term made popular in academia in the late twentieth-century works of E. P. Thompson and James Scott. For Faith, the 'moral economy' of 'Anglo-Saxon' England – 'values which were shared across class and rank' – acted as check on lordly exploitation of the peasantry until the Conquest of 1066. Faith points to literary and legal sources which potentially evidence a shared sense of what were 'legitimising notion[s]'. For instance, Faith contends that *weorð* (entitlement) – unlike later chivalric ideas of honour – was a concept that included both peasant and noble. Although the common standards of the 'moral economy' changed across the sixth to eleventh centuries,

Faith argues that the Conquest wiped the slate clean of these shared values, as the installation of a new nobility left previous understandings of peasant entitlements adrift and paved the way for 'feudal' thinking. Given that Thompson noted that 'if values, on their own, make a moral economy' then they could be found anywhere, a fuller clarification of Faith's interpretation of this framework would have helped to robustly locate her findings in relation to more recent considerations of 'moral economies'. Nevertheless, this is a stimulating analytic framework and provides much food for thought.

Like her previous works, this is a dynamic contribution to the study of an often neglected but vital segment of society. Though attempting, as she does, to get into 'the hearts and minds' of the English peasantry is always fated to be an uphill struggle given the nature of the surviving sources, Faith admirably navigates this dense world of 'Anglo-Saxon' obligations in an approachable manner. Indeed, her stimulating and, at times, provocative conclusions regarding the development of 'feudal thinking' and the disjuncture wrought by King William's invasion will surely fuel debate for decades to come. While there are still many questions left to answer, this volume will become a valuable touchstone for future scholars studying medieval social relations.

STUART PRACY
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DAVID STONE and RICHARD SANDOVER (eds), *Moor medieval. Exploring Dartmoor in the middle ages* (Moor Medieval Studies Group, 2019). 210 pp. 44 illus. £15.

One would imagine that a region as celebrated as Dartmoor National Park in Devon would be well served by historical studies, and so it is, but scholarly monographs examining the medieval period specifically are rare, so this new volume is a welcome addition to the literature of this remarkable landscape.

The book has its origins in a five-year landscape partnership scheme, funded by the Heritage Lottery Fund and promoted by the National Park Authority, known as *Moor than meets the eye*, of which Moor Medieval was a small though significant sub-project designed to engage the public through community-led historical and archaeological research. The investigation focused on six moorland parishes on the central and eastern side of Dartmoor, in which various aspects of medieval life and landscape evidence were explored. This book represents the published culmination of this effort.

The work has been led by David Stone, a specialist in agrarian history, and Richard Sandover a landscape archaeologist. They are mainly responsible for the six chapters, each of which focus on a separate aspect of medieval Dartmoor. They cover diverse themes including approaches to medieval study, the medieval landscape, before and after the Black Death, the later middle ages, people, landscape, and communities. Within each of the chapters there are also double-page 'boxes', 35 in total, describing specific themes or examples of research in more detail. These boxes have been compiled by both amateurs and professionals involved in the Moor Medieval project and provide interesting snippets to complement the themes of the chapters.

In chapter 1 we are provided with a context for medieval Dartmoor and its study. This includes the nature of the landscape since prehistoric times, derived mainly from pollen analysis, and the various phases of human intervention that preceded the medieval period, as well as an introduction to the natural resources the medieval inhabitants enjoyed. Other topics covered include fluctuations in Dartmoor's medieval population set within a national context, historical resources available for study, and the usefulness of community archaeology. This is followed by an attempt to reconstruct aspects of the medieval landscape within the study parishes from Saxon times onwards, for each of which a map is used to present some of the conclusions. The evidence includes place name studies, examination of field patterns, records of transhumance, agricultural technology, the Dartmoor longhouses and their setting, as well as the less frequently discussed hall houses.

The very different worlds in England before and after the arrival of the Black Death are contrasted, with the discussion focused on changes to Dartmoor specifically. First, the composition of medieval Dartmoor before the 'pestilence' is set out. This includes the population, settlement, villages and hamlets, and the cohesive influence of the manorial and parish structures, where the formulation and consolidation of both institutions are also examined. Occupations of the residents, not unexpectedly, included those involved in the growing of arable crops or raising livestock. Also, in this upland environment, a living could be made from the system of transhumance (as introduced to us on Dartmoor by the late Harold Fox), whereby lowland stockmen would entrust the summertime grazing of their cattle to upland herders. Others were involved in the tin industry, and still others (the *carbonarii*) in the manufacture of peat charcoal, which was used as the fuel to smelt the tin.

The Black Death arrived in Devon in 1349 and spread to most of the west country over the next three years.

Its immediate affect and aftermath are examined for Dartmoor, where the changes were dramatic, explored by the authors through the increase in parish priest vacancies and the many changes in tenancies among the ancient tenements within the Forest of Dartmoor. In the latter case two-thirds of the tenancies had changed hands in the three years following 1348. Nevertheless, despite the ravages of the Black Death, in terms of prosperity, Dartmoor fared better than most areas of England and economic recovery was 'relatively swift', due to the continuance of summer pasturage, the growth of the tin industry and of wool production.

Aspects of this prosperity, rising population and increased consumption of goods, are outlined for the period covering 1400 to 1525. One intriguing anomaly explored is the apparent 'conundrum' of an increasing population and heightened economic activity at a period in the middle ages during which Dartmoor is known for the desertion of a great many of its smaller settlements. The authors dissect and evaluate the standard narratives of falling population caused by Black Death exacerbated by worsening climate in a marginal landscape and offer some new solutions of their own.

It is often quite difficult to succeed in bringing together all the strands of a diverse project of this type into a meaningful volume, especially where so many contributors are involved. However, the editors are to be congratulated on presenting so much new and fascinating material in a coherent and well-structured publication. The book has a glossy A4 format, an attractive layout with 44 colour illustrations and photographs, all of good standard, as well as an index. The text has scholarly authority, but is written in an accessible style, all of which combine to make this volume very easy to 'dip' into, or digest in larger portions.

One refreshing aspect of this work is the seamless coalescence of historical and archaeological sources and the introduction to Dartmoor's medieval study of several fresh themes. It is particularly encouraging to see, possibly for the first time at this level of scholarship, that the tin industry, which was so crucial to Dartmoor's socio-economic past, is integrated into the overall impression of medieval life, rather than being examined separately as has so often been the case. In a wider context, though seemingly a regional study, the research presented in this book will contribute important new material towards a more informed appreciation of medieval England as a whole.

PHIL NEWMAN
Newton Abbot, Devon

JOAN BRIGGS, JOHN SMITH, JENNIFER TINDALL, ANN TUMMAN and XENIA WEBSTER (eds), *Sunderland wills and inventories, 1651–1675* (Boydell and Brewer for the Surtees Society, 2020). li + 234 pp. £50.

This collection publishes all the surviving wills, inventories and probate accounts dating from 1651–1675 for Bishopwearmouth and Monkwearmouth, the two parishes that made up early modern Sunderland. It follows on from an edition of Sunderland's probate documents dating from 1601 to 1650 which was published in 2010, and continues the story of the development of the town and port which by 1665 had a population of *c.*3370. The present volume contains the probate documents of 119 people, mostly preserved at Durham, but also in the National Archives and at York. These are presented with an introduction, a glossary, name index and subject index. The glossary is necessary given many obscure spellings and local terms found in the documents; and the subject index is particularly welcome, providing a time-saving shortcut for researchers interested in particular topics such as objects, rooms and occupations.

Comparing the society and economy documented in this volume with the edition on the first half of the century provides a striking contrast. Gone is the predominantly agricultural society and instead the documents portray a thriving centre of trade, fully involved in the political, religious and economic changes of the time. Among the individuals represented we find George Lilburne, the uncle of the leveller John Lilburne; Peter Greene, the purser of HMS *Resolution*, a ship lost in the Second Dutch War; and George Humble, a Quaker imprisoned for beliefs who died in gaol. The economic transformation can be crudely measured by changes in occupations: a quick analysis shows that in 1601–1650, 27 per cent of those leaving wills and inventories were yeomen and only 4 per cent had maritime occupations; by the 1651–75 period yeomen had fallen to 14 per cent and those with maritime occupations including shipbuilding had risen to 24 per cent. Crafts and trade had increased in importance too, while levels of wealth had risen noticeably.

The documents reproduced are full of interest and variety. Probate documents provide glimpses into the houses and families of people who otherwise left little or no record of their lives. Thus, for instance, the will of William Kell, a shipwright who died in 1658, survives along with a detailed probate account. He failed to appoint an executor but left his wife £100 and the residue of his wealth to his siblings. The church courts appointed his wife, Alice Kell, as administrator of his

estate, and the probate account she produced goes to great lengths to prove nothing was left after his debts and her £100 legacy were paid. The account itemizes even the most trivial of his goods and assigned them values down to the last half penny in a list that ran to three pages. Only 13 out of over 200 items listed were worth more than £1. As a consequence, things which many inventories summarize as 'old lumber' or 'unseen things' are described in detail. John Pearson, a gentleman who died in 1668 left a nuncupative will and an inventory. He left all his 'goods and chattels whatsoever, as well real as personal' to his wife, Elizabeth, 'who hath proved a loving and kind wife to me. And, seeing I got my means by her, I am unwilling to leave her worse than I found her'. He then refused to leave anything to his father, mother, brother or sisters. The inventory records a new brewhouse, £3 worth of strong beer, and malt and hops worth £10, as the only evidence of an occupation, and one that could well have been conducted by his wife.

Within the collection you will find the inventories of female farmers, merchants of imported goods, impoverished seamen, and investors in ships and coal-mines. Many of the documents are quite quirky, defying normal rules of probate: a number of inventories merge into accounts listing debts paid and funeral costs; others list the value of real property; some list no household goods. As such, this collection demonstrates the value of probate documents to historians: not just local historians and historians of the family but all those interested material culture and social and economic change, and provides an important resource for teachers, students and researchers.

JANE WHITTLE
University of Exeter

EMILY SLOAN, *The landscape studies of Hayman Rooke (1723–1806). Antiquarianism, Archaeology and Natural History in the Eighteenth Century* (The Boydell Press, 2019). xii + 212 pp. 37 illus. £60.

This book brings to light the achievements of an extraordinary antiquary and natural historian. In her introduction, Emily Sloan characterizes Major Hayman Rooke (1723–1806) as 'an unjustly neglected provincial figure' (p. 4). The succeeding chapters of her book prove that this claim is by no means special pleading. Sloan convincingly establishes Rooke's importance as a scholar and draughtsman, and she clearly defines his place within the intellectual and cultural networks of his age.

As this latter statement suggests, Sloan's book is much more than a biographical study. Her approach to Rooke's contributions to antiquarianism and natural history is, as she explains, informed by her interest in 'uncover[ing] something of a broader culture of landscape' in Britain during the Hanoverian era (p. 8). This culture, as Sloan argues, was strongly conditioned by the epistemological tendencies of the Enlightenment; it was a culture in which empirical evidence and visual documentation were increasingly viewed as imperative. Rooke's work as a draughtsman and as a scrupulous researcher, when viewed in this context, distinguishes him as much more than just a notable regional figure. Rather, we come to see him as an exemplar of the sensibilities that helped to establish the standards of modern historical, archaeological and scientific research.

Sloan's book is divided into four chapters, the first of which presents a detailed account of Rooke's life. In addition to documenting his 24-year military career, Sloan delves into his time in Mansfield Woodhouse, Nottinghamshire, where he settled following his retirement from the army in 1761. Sloan situates Rooke at the centre of a noteworthy social circle in the Midlands, which included influential landowners, such as the Dukes of Portland, and cultural authorities, like Humphry Repton, as well as learned individuals, such as Samuel Pegge, and literary figures, like Anna Seward, who composed a poem in Rooke's honour. As Sloan points out, Rooke had earned a reputation as a competent draughtsman and engineer during his military career. He was, moreover, widely travelled, and his skills and social connections were an asset to the antiquarian and natural-historical research he chose to pursue in retirement.

Sloan addresses this research in the subsequent chapters of her book, and her second chapter, which deals with Rooke's studies of meteorology, arboriculture and agriculture, will likely be especially interesting to readers of this journal. In addition to paying due attention to Rooke's contribution to the *General view of agriculture in the County of Nottinghamshire* (1798), Sloan provides an insightful examination of the investigations of oak trees and ancient forests for which Rooke is principally known today. As she emphasizes, Rooke's interest in these subjects reflected 'his patriotic, political and patriarchal ethos', as well as his wonder in the marvels of the natural world (p. 83); it also affirmed the fundamental practicality of his inquiries. As the pamphlets and papers Rooke published make clear, he was interested not only in contributing to the advancement of knowledge, but also in bringing about improvements in planting and landscape planning.

Sloan draws similar conclusions in her third and fourth chapters, which deal with Rooke's antiquarian research. In these chapters Sloan considers Rooke's

studies of prehistoric and Roman Britain in turn, and she places particular emphasis on the significance of his commitment to precise documentation and careful excavation. As Sloan stresses, Rooke showed extraordinary care during his excavations at Arbor Low, in Derbyshire, in 1782, two years before Thomas Jefferson's often-cited excavations in Virginia. Rooke recorded not only the position and condition of the artefacts found, but also the steps taken during the dig. At a time when antiquaries such as Bryan Faussett and James Douglas were ripping through ancient barrows at the rate of a dozen a day, the methods Rooke applied were 'highly unusual' indeed (p. 104). What is more, as Sloan avers, these methods affirm the long-lasting influence of Rooke's military career, which also provided him with connections around the country. 'His army background', she writes, 'gave him not only the training in observation, topographical drawing and tactical manoeuvring which helped to inform his approach […], but also supplied him with a ready network of friends and contacts through whom he gained access to a range of sites and artefacts' (p. 150).

In sum, Sloan's book achieves its stated aim of 'broadening our understanding […] of eighteenth-century antiquarianism' (p. 4). This reviewer would have liked for her to have developed aspects of her argument further. Her discussion of the use of drawing as a mode of recording and communicating knowledge, in particular, could have been elaborated, and more connections could have been drawn with other recent evaluations of eighteenth-century topography. Still, Sloan's study of Rooke makes an important contribution to our knowledge, and it provides a useful contrast to the parodic depiction of provincial antiquaries that can limit our appreciation of their achievements. Rooke, as Sloan shows, was no jealous hoarder, and his wide-ranging research cuts against the grain of the county histories often associated with the learned culture of his age. He may have never produced a magnum opus, but he was a talented and good-natured man who shared his work and took a share in supporting the work of others.

Sloan's book is handsomely designed and illustrated with grayscale figures and colour plates of Rooke's watercolour and pen and ink drawings. The book also includes a set of appendices, which provide a bibliography of Rooke's publications and a chronology of his activities based on Sloan's original archival research. These additional resources further enrich this valuable book, which will be an indispensable aid to anyone wishing to learn more about Rooke and his world.

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AMANDA L. CAPERN, BRIONY MCDONAGH and JENNIFER ASTON (eds), *Women and the land, 1500–1900* (The Boydell Press, 2019). 306 pp. 7 illus. £25.

As Amy Erickson acknowledges in the afterword to this collection, it is 'worthy of note that in 2019 a book on the significance of female landholding … should even be required'. However, 'it is still the case that a book on land may be written without reference to women, and yet it does not require the word "men" in its title. But a book on women's use of land must have "women" in the title'. Over the last 30 years in particular, work on women and property ownership has expanded, with Erickson's own 1993 monograph *Woman and property in early modern England* (rev. *ante AgHR* 43.1) remaining one of the most significant and influential contributions. Despite the patriarchal biases of primogeniture (an inheritance practice which favoured the first-born son) and the doctrine of coverture (in which men assumed legal ownership of their wife's property upon marriage), women nonetheless found ways to own property. Yet they are conspicuous by their absence from many histories of landscape and agricultural change.

The editors of this collection, *Women and the land, 1500–1900*, offer new histories of land and property in which women's lives are situated at the centre. Bringing together the work of historians, literary scholars and historical geographers, a broad conception of 'land' is taken to include landscape, residential buildings, and commercial and personal property. In its feminist agenda, the book has two main aims: to bring together work that quantifies women's land ownership in England between 1500 and 1900, and to develop a better understanding of what owning property meant to women across this 400-year period.

The quest for quantifying the proportion of land owned by women in England is ongoing but there is general consensus that female landowners represented a significant minority. In her study of the nineteenth-century acquisition of land for railway building, Janet Casson finds 12.4 per cent of plots acquired were owned by women, a figure that broadly correlates with estimates of between 10 and 20 per cent identified in studies elsewhere. Casson further notes that female landowners were not exclusively drawn from the wealthiest sections of society.

Several chapters in this collection demonstrate the effectiveness of adopting a life-cycle approach to assess women's property ownership. Jennifer Aston's study of mid-nineteenth-century Birmingham wills highlights married women's important role in continuing and creating their own businesses when their husbands died,

as well as their role in preserving wealth over generations through transfer of their estate, personal property and heirlooms. Joan Heggie's work on eighteenth- and nineteenth-century property transactions recorded in the Yorkshire and the North Riding Registers of Deeds reveals distinctive patterns across life cycle and region in female involvement in the property market. She finds that married women were increasingly able to participate in property transactions alone over the course of the period, suggesting the importance of the 1870 Married Women's Property Act and subsequent legislation. Judith Spicksley's chapter considers how much land passed to *un*married women in early modern England. Spinster landowners were not numerous, and patterns varied regionally; however, probate material reveals that some received land as gifts from relatives and friends, as a form of formal security for credit and in instances where the male line had failed. Interestingly, she notes that bequests of animals and livestock in single women's wills indicate that many more had access to land than probate documents suggest.

Unsurprisingly, the rebuttal of the 'separate spheres' ideology binds this collection together. While historical enquiry has shown time and again its flaws as a scheme for understanding male and female behaviours and roles, it continues to underpin many studies of agrarian development and society. This book situates women as key players in the economics of land and demonstrates their agency in its management. Using the quintessential example of Lady Anne Clifford, Jessica L. Malay details the role she carved out as a landowner in Westmorland and her queen-like approach to creating a 'benevolent feudal state' in the north. Stephen Bending echoes this in his chapter on Elizabeth Montagu's design and management of Sandleford estate. She did not buy a physical design from 'Capability' Brown but a mode of employment for local inhabitants. Her estate redesign was in part benevolent, scheduled around the harvest to provide the poor with employment on the estate at times of the year when labour was scarce; equally, the harvest festivals she hosted sought to both display the pastoral pleasures of the landscape and assert her landowning power. Using depositions of church and secular courts, Amanda Flather considers the spatial dynamics of land in relation to gender. She demonstrates that early modern female relationships with the land were not static or rigid but were shaped by a range of factors (including age, status and seasonality). Her chapter acknowledges the important role landscape plays in identity formation and flags this for further attention.

Chapters in the collection also consider female perceptions of land. Jon Stobart's exploration of Lady Sophia Newdigate's eighteenth-century journal recording her tour of southern England and Derbyshire demonstrates her intellectual consideration of the landscape. Stereotypical female concerns such as domestic arrangements and social activities featured more rarely in her journal than her appraisal of design, architecture and artwork. Focusing on the account ledgers of fifteen elite Georgian women, Briony McDonagh highlights female aptitude in account keeping. Her work indicates the importance of estate management as an 'intellectual exercise' for female landowners and like Stobart, she connects their appraisal of the land with their physical experience of (and familiarity with) it, as they walked or rode across their estates.

In considering how structure and agency operated, the authors of this collection question how women navigated patriarchal society, with a view to integrating them into historical narratives and ideas of progress. Through the case study of the abduction and forced marriage of wealthy seventeenth-century heiress Arabella Alleyn, Amanda Capern carefully considers the dynamics of female agency: in this case, landownership was both empowering and a millstone around Alleyn's neck. This book makes no claim to be the final word and there is scope here for moving beyond the insertion of women into established narratives of land and agrarian development. Women were a significant minority of landowners but, as several chapters indicate, this does not mean that landless women lacked an economic, intellectual or emotional relationship with land. Overall, this is a rich and useful collection that answers existing questions concerning female engagement with the English landscape as well as raising new ones.

CHARMIAN MANSELL
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HONOR LEWINGTON (ed.), *Stoke Mandeville: Wills and inventories, 1552–1853* (Buckinghamshire Record Society Publications, 2019) vol. xxxviii, 281 pp. 9 illus. £30 for non-members.

County record societies, of which there are a declining number, perform a great service to researchers in transcribing and making more widely available varied and often hard to access sources, setting them in their context, and presenting them in annotated, indexed volumes available in print or online. Buckinghamshire Record Society has been regularly producing volumes such as the one under review since 1937, covering many aspects of the county's history, from charters to minute books of Friends and descriptions of Lord Cobham's gardens at Stowe. Many of the earlier volumes are

freely available online via the Society's website. This latest volume is well produced, with an introduction, explanation of methodology, glossary of unusual words, alphabetical list of testators, and indexes of names, places and subjects.

It was decided to include only the wills and inventories of those who lived in Stoke Mandeville, with the exception of one case, Robert Buckmaster of Wing, who only held land in the parish. This decision keeps the volume to a manageable size. In total 134 wills and inventories (although only one inventory survives post-1650) covering a 300-year period, were transcribed by the editor and a team of five members of the Buckinghamshire Archaeological Society's palaeography group. The original material is held in a variety of locations: The National Archives, the Centre for Buckinghamshire Studies, Oxfordshire History Centre, and Lincoln Archives. Only material held at TNA is online, so consequently the bringing together of papers from these diverse sources saves the researcher a lot of time and legwork. It could be argued that the volume's introduction could have been more analytical, but that does not detract from the very real benefits the publication brings, giving easy access to disparately placed primary material.

The volume has a particular poignancy about it since the original church of St Mary's and its graveyard, probably dating back to the Norman period was demolished in 1966, while the graveyard, left to the wiles of nature, is soon to be buried under the HS2 railway development. As Lewington writes in the introduction, 'the building of an essential HS2 works depot will … obliterate the whole site which encompasses the old church, its graveyard, any bumps and lumps of the old village and the traces of the mill leet courses'. Thus, documentary evidence will soon be the only source for 'the old churchyard and the buried remains of possibly at least 2,600 people'. The volume's useful appendix details the remains of the old gravestones from a survey carried out in the 1970s and 80s. These graveyard records, added to the incomplete parish registers and the wills and inventories included in the volume, help to preserve for the future at least some aspects of the lives of some of those interred.

The wills and inventories come from a wide variety of backgrounds, although nearly all included in the volume had something to do with agriculture, as would be expected of such a rural county. Interestingly there are only seven named farmers leaving wills, the earliest being in 1775, with yeoman being the most common term for a farmer before that date. There are 14 named husbandmen, some of whom left possessions totalling over £200, and 13 named labourers. However, as Lewington points out, the occupations stated are sometimes done so loosely. Most notably, perhaps, is the will and inventory of John Ledgingham who died in 1616 and is described as a labourer. Ledgingham's possessions were valued at £27 5*s*. 4*d*. He left cows and a bullock, sheep, pigs, corn in barn, wheat in fields and hens, capons and chickens. He was also owed money to the sum of £5. Ledgingham's wife Sybill, who died in 1619, took over the farm upon her husband's death but is described as widow rather than labourer. Women are represented by 17 per cent of the wills in the volume though none are described by their occupation.

Only around seven per cent of the population left wills, so it could be said that the volume is not typically representative of Stoke Mandeville's small population (in 1801 it totalled 248 persons) Familiar family names appear again and again throughout the centuries: the Browns, a yeoman family, are recorded over 200 years from the mid-sixteenth century, and the Hoare family for 200 from the mid-seventeenth century; the Clark family has 41 entries, while the Brudenell family of landowners, has 34. The Brudenells had held the manors of Oldbury and Newbury with the manor of Stoke Mandeville from the beginning of the fifteenth century, although they had disappeared from the Stoke Mandeville record by 1642. Their impressive late sixteenth-century monument was later removed from the old church and placed in the new Victorian edifice.

A lot of effort went into producing this volume, and the Record Society should be commended for continuing to produce such items, adding greatly to the history of the county, as well, in this case to ensuring an ancient site is not wholly buried in the name of 'progress'. The volume is a pleasure to use.

JOHN E. DAVIES
Carmarthen

ERIC L. JONES, *Landed estates and rural inequality in English history: from the mid-seventeenth century to the present* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2018). xi + 129 pp. £44.99, ebook (as reviewed) £35.99.

This short book, in the series entitled 'Palgrave Studies in Economic History', is also a Palgrave Pivot series book, designed to facilitate the rapid publication of material longer than a journal article but shorter than a monograph. It has a different format to many academic texts, each short chapter starting with an abstract of disjointed sentences, almost mirroring the style of late nineteenth / early twentieth century texts.

Eric Jones addresses a number of issues which he feels have been ignored or given insufficient attention in the past, by challenging current thinking on the

subject of landed estates. These include the erosion of public rights of way by such estates through addressing the economic impact rather than the architectural or landscape view. As for blood sports, he considers that they are an 'abuse of animals' representing status and the opportunity for male bonding. Similarly, he examines the abuse of social oppression, through the treatment of estate staff and tenant farmers. This economic study of landed estates also considers the investment of profits made in industry elsewhere into the land, during the nineteenth century.

In the first chapter, Jones reviews how the landed interest came to exist following the Restoration in 1660: whilst it already existed at this point, the opportunity to buy back lost lands or to invest in available confiscated lands, established the system of landed estates which this book examines. With the end of the Civil War, he notes that disputes were no longer settled by violence between different factions, but rather through legal or political solutions. He proposes that the conversion of merchants and manufacturers into landowners was a process which reduced the impetus of commercial activity, resulting in resistance to change and the re-direction of commercial profits into leisured activities in the rural environment, potentially harmful to the overall economy.

As an example of the investment of industrial profit, chapter 2 examines the purchases made by Lancastrian cotton manufacturers. These were made initially in Lancashire, then elsewhere in the north of England, before progressing to the south of England, where a provisional view based on Gloucestershire and Herefordshire is presented. Associated with these land acquisitions were the purchases of furnishings and paintings for the 'big houses', also providing status symbols: whilst these items are viewed as having potential resale value, estates were expected to provide an annual return from farm rents. The latter however were often consumed by landscaping costs and ornamenting the owner's private space. Further, for those who bought land during periods of agricultural prosperity, there was the opportunity to remodel their estate by rebuilding farmhouses and bringing farm buildings up-to-date.

Chapter 3 moves the focus from the landowners to the lower orders of servants: in particular, the way that landowners treated them, in terms of the social segregation achieved through separation of housing and reorganized household layouts, so that servants could do their work unseen. In a chapter entitled 'Expelling the people', the impact on the local inhabitants of the actions of landed estate owners is examined. The usual descriptions of walled estates, villages demolished and villages relocated to provide privacy and far-reaching views are again rehearsed. It is noted that the agricultural depression of the later nineteenth century had little effect, in that money other than farm rents was funding many of these estates.

Under the heading of 'Road Capture', chapter 5 considers how roads within parks and estates were closed and new ones forced to be developed: this is exemplified by the right-angled bend in the road, with the park gate on the corner. The same issue applied to footpaths but on a larger numerical scale. Once again, such actions were taken to increase the privacy afforded to the landed estate owner.

The next chapter considers the hunting, shooting and fishing aspects of rural estates. With a late focus on the fox and pheasant as targets, the conflict between maintaining both on the same estate is described. Further, the balance between agriculture and sport is examined: in particular, it is noted that when farm rents fall during periods of agricultural depression, the renting out of sporting rights enable some estates to survive economically. As to why such activities are pursued, Jones suggests that male bonding and the affirmation of status through privileged access to land and water are at the root of such sports. The next chapter moves on to present two poaching cases from the Savernake estate in Wiltshire: these are used to exemplify the harsh enforcement of the Game Laws designed to protect landowners' sporting resources.

Examining the inequality existing in the countryside alongside the associated institutions, chapter 8 considers the migration of workers from the south of England to the coalfields and factories of the north, along with the interruption caused by the agricultural depression from 1880 to 1940, in which he suggests that 'market towns … became backwaters with backwood societies to match' (p. 94). By reviewing the history of landed society over the past 370 years, Jones argues that the continuity of the estate system since the Restoration resulted in social stagnation. He concludes that the system is, and has been, a 'social and market failure on a grand and enduring scale' (p. 122).

References in the text are non-existent: there are no footnotes or endnotes to enable the reader to undertake further research, only a list of sources and further reading at the end of each chapter, in which there is not one single primary source, despite reference being made to sources in a local record office (p. 84). At one point when considering employment in stone picking, Eric Jones states that 'There are so many [instances] that it is needless to document them' (p. 41), yet on the same page, he notes that 'abstractions [need to be] given faces to allow the individuals of the past to

re-emerge'. At one point (p. 75), the author draws on works of fiction to make a point.

Overall, this book presents an orthogonal view on landed estates, one which many might challenge, if only the sources used had been explained.

ALAN WADSWORTH
Evesham, Worcestershire

JOHN E. DAVIES, *The changing fortunes of a British aristocratic family, 1689–1976: The Campbells of Cawdor and their Welsh Estates* (The Boydell Press, 2019). 354 pp. 12 illus. £85.

This book is the first full-length study of one of the most significant aristocratic families in south-west Wales. It takes in a broad chronology in charting 'the changing fortunes' of a substantial landowning family. The chapters are arranged thematically, and as one would expect of one of David W. Howell's students, Davies's approach follows Howell's seminal study *Patriarchs and parasites* (1986, rev. *ante AgHR* 35.2).

Chapter 1 provides an introduction to the Campbells of Cawdor, and to individuals we meet later in the volume, as well as providing an overview of the family's estates and landholding. The second chapter considers issues of estate administration and land management, including a section on the land agents, showing the variable relationships that existed between landlord and agent. The chapter provides insights into the structure of land management, followed by chapter 3's overview of agricultural practices. We see landlords as agricultural improvers, patriarchal interactions with tenants, and the nature of tenancies and leases. The Campbells were certainly living up to the ideals of the moral economy of the landed estate, as argued by Matthew Cragoe in his study of the Carmarthenshire landed elite, *An Anglican aristocracy* (1996, rev. *ante AgHR* 45.1).

The Campbells were ready to exploit the resources on their land, and chapter four details the industrial ventures they undertook, from lead mining to selling timber. They supported road building schemes, and the expansion of the railways in south-west Wales. Chapter 5 focuses on the Christian paternalism of the family, in particular within the spheres of religion and education. Charitable bequests were doled out, and financial support offered to church and school building projects, with a preference shown towards Anglican requests for aid. Indeed, the Campbells used their influence to uphold the status of the established Church and its schools within the locality. Within this framework, there was little sympathy or support for the Welsh language, with the Campbells conforming to the traditional image of an anglicized and increasingly distant elite.

Chapter 6 focuses on the Campbells at the local level, and how the family kept their status and position as generations served in local government. There is an interesting account of Baron Cawdor assuming the role of lord lieutenant in leading the force to see off the French during the last mainland invasion of Britain, at Fishguard on 22 February 1797. Others undertook their civic duties in less dashing ways, as magistrates and members of various committees and boards, increasingly against a backdrop of the declining power of the elites in this sphere over the course of the nineteenth century. The Campbells were political leaders in south-west Wales, as chapter 7 shows, and supported the status quo during the late nineteenth century, when critiques of the elite were presented by 'nationalist campaigns'. Significantly, as a Scottish family, they were seen as newcomers to the county. Another handicap was financial, with lack of money also requiring caution within the political sphere, with notoriously expensive electoral campaigns in the pre-reform years.

The eighth chapter begins with an appraisal of the development of the Stackpole mansion and surrounding landscape park. There was also a secondary seat, Golden Grove in Carmarthenshire. The chapter also provides an insight into household management and the role of servants. The country house was a hub for leisure and recreation, and a means of displaying wealth and status. Away from the estate, the 'London season' beckoned, as did continental travels, and in this context, absenteeism is discussed. All this came at a price however, and debt was an ever-present burden for many families to shoulder.

The final chapter, entitled 'The End of the Welsh Estates', charts a tale of decline, with the prominence of agriculture waning, the impact of the Local Government Acts of 1888 and 1894, calls for land reform, and threats to the lifestyle and position of the elite in society. Whilst the Campbells were hit by death duties, they were in a position to sell land to settle debts, unlike many owners of smaller estates. After 1906, the Campbells left Wales for Cawdor Castle in Scotland, leaving their Welsh estates to be managed by agents. With the ravages of the Second World War, and military requisition, Stackpole Court and Golden Grove suffered. Whilst Golden Grove was leased to Carmarthenshire County Council, later becoming an agricultural college, Stackpole Court was sadly demolished in 1962. During the 1960s and 1970s, the family set about selling their Welsh properties and possessions.

This volume is the result of scrupulous archival research, which comes as no surprise considering the author's former career as county archivist for

Carmarthenshire. Indeed, a range of collections in the Carmarthenshire Record Office were consulted, but also from the record office of neighbouring Pembrokeshire, the National Library of Wales, and further afield, including the Cawdor Castle estate papers still in private ownership. In appraising the source material available, Davies highlights the disappointing lack of sources about women in the Cawdor papers. Mere glimpses are provided by a handful of letters, a few diaries, and a travel journal. As Davies himself states: 'The silence of the women, or at least their lack of a direct voice, is a sad loss' (p. 4). Such are the limitations provided by some estate archives.

Whilst a number of Scottish families acquired Welsh estates, most notably the Bute family, who transformed Cardiff during the nineteenth century, significantly, the Campbells chose to establish themselves in Wales. Considering notions of identity, and the influx of newcomers, it would be intriguing to know how the Campbells appear between the pages of the Welsh language press, in particular, building on the reference to the 'nationalist campaigns' of the late nineteenth century alluded to in chapter 7.

Within this case study of a single estate, the multifaceted identity of the landed elite emerges. They were landlords, agricultural improvers, entrepreneurs and industrialists, and social and political leaders. The Campbells of Cawdor certainly conformed to this patriarchal ideal.

LOWRI ANN REES
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RODERICK FLOUD, *An economic history of the English garden* (Allen Lane, 2019). 416 pp. £25.

This volume will be as much of interest to garden historians, as to anyone who has enjoyed a stroll around the grounds of an English stately home. It lifts the lid on the sheer effort required to create these gardens, and exposes the enormous sums required to pay for them. It helps us to question how gardens were built, why they were constructed in certain ways, and how they have been maintained. The book's high quality derives from the author's stature as an economic historian. During his long career Roderick Floud has produced ground-breaking research, initially using quantitative methods to study economic history and later transferring these methods to the history of human health. The application of Floud's skill and experience to the economic history of English gardens has produced a book of great authority, with forensic attention to detail. Its major strength lies in Floud's ability to assess the garden industry in the context of the social and economic history of England.

The first chapter provides an overview of the book's arc, setting out the premise that gardening should be considered as an industry, providing a detailed explanation of the methods used to estimate relative costs, and putting rising garden spending into the context of economic and social change. The second chapter, 'Gardens and the State', makes a striking case that gardens built by the monarchy and paid for through taxation represented a state promotion of the garden industry, which should be seen as a process that continued with the nineteenth century building of public parks and the development of new towns in the twentieth. The structure of the remainder of the book traces the economic impact of all this spending, dealing in turn with the work of designers, nurserymen, gardeners and inventors and manufacturers. Floud concludes with chapters on 'The People's Gardens' and 'The Kitchen Garden', demonstrating how increasing prosperity in the late nineteenth and twentieth centuries enabled the expansion of the suburbs and the widening of access to gardening. Throughout Floud has used trade papers, account books, family papers and probate records to piece together trails of who paid who and for what work.

Floud builds his case for the significance of the garden industry by establishing how much was spent and by comparing this spending with other sectors. In addition, he offers a fresh portrait of the garden designer as businessman. Capability Brown managed the labour and resources required to deliver major projects despite irregular income, geographically distant sites and a banking system that in the eighteenth century offered no protection from debtor's prison if payments could not be made. Consistently within this volume, Floud is able to put garden spending into context, for example comparing the profitability of nurseries with other retail trades, and to provide nuanced answers to questions such as why the nursery trade was clustered around London whilst its products were shipped across the country. The book makes a significant contribution to the history of technology in highlighting the innovation required to achieve the impression of a natural landscape and the amounts garden owners were willing to pay for this. These developments are seen in the context of the growth of industry more broadly, linking invention in gardening to the development of canal and reservoir building, steam engineering and central heating.

Throughout the book, gardening is situated as a manifestation of luxury, of spare time and spare money, separate from growing for sustenance. This separation is justified in the final chapter, in which Floud's understanding of the histories of economics and health come together to produce an excellent

analysis of the place of the kitchen garden in economic history. He makes a strong case for viewing kitchen gardening as an exercise for show or pleasure, both within the context of the Royal gardens at Frogmore, and the local garden contest with its outsize onions and marrows. The purchase of farmed produce was the most efficient option at all levels of society. This chapter is significant in counterbalancing nostalgic fictions surrounding grow-your-own in the present day and makes an important contribution to long running debates about land use and the relationship between farming and gardening. There are many reasons for growing your own fruit and vegetables but economic efficiency, within our current system, is not one of them. My only criticism of the book is that after setting out so convincingly the interrelation of gardening and economics, it neglects in the conclusion to consider the ways in which these practices might be changed by the advance of climate breakdown.

However, this book is thought provoking, even unsettling. It demonstrates the success of the artifice of the natural garden scene, onto which the nymphs and cherubs have wandered as though in a Sellar and Yeatman cartoon. These gardens were built to appear timeless, yet Floud has made their temporality crystal clear. In laying out exactly how vast sums were spent alongside evidence of pervasive malnourishment among the poor, we are confronted by the inequalities on which the English idyll was founded. That such a work draws attention to the sources of this wealth, for example that the house and gardens of Harewood were funded by slave ownership, is particularly pertinent to current questioning of the roots of racism in Britain. An important area for further research is the economics of plant collecting, which Floud acknowledges he did not have space to consider. Along with Floud's evidence on the sources of English wealth, such research would situate the economic history of the English garden in the context of Empire and Britain's place in the world. This work successfully argues that the garden industry was and remains a significant part of the English economy. The mark of this success is the number of questions that it provokes, both about England's past and about the future of the garden industry.

SOPHIE GREENWAY
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SIMON TOWNLEY (ed.), *A history of the County of Oxford*, XIX. *Wychwood Forest and Environs* (Boydell and Brewer, 2019). 429 pp. 116 illus. £95.

The Victoria County History moves forward in spite of the obstacles in its path, and this volume demonstrates the value that the VCH gives both its local readers and the whole historical profession. It deals with twelve 'settlements' in west Oxfordshire centred on Shipton-under-Wychwood and the royal forest of Wychwood. There is no town among the group of parishes chosen for this volume but it has a unity based on the centrality of Shipton. This was the site of a minster church and a royal estate centre in the early middle ages, and in modern times has been a large village with a concentration of facilities. Most of the 12 villages have shared in the experience of living in or near to the royal forest. Cornbury House and Park, and its estate, though lying on the edge of the territory covered by the volume, has exerted much influence. Shipton station, opening in 1853, gave the villages a transport focus, and in the twentieth century the Imperial Wireless Station at Leafield became a centre of technology and employment.

This VCH volume continues the traditions of the VCH in its authority, careful referencing of information, and calm and confident tone. It is arranged according to the conventional template of themes such as landscape, economic history and local government, but that standardized ordering of subjects is essential if parish histories are to be compared. The volume can be repetitive, but this is inevitable in a work of reference in which readers expect each parish history to be complete in itself. Within the traditions of the VCH project, one welcomes the modernization of the terminology and approaches. We begin with landscape and built character, and landownership has replaced the history of the manor. Welfare is now a subheading under social history. The overview provided at the beginning of this volume is an excellent introduction to the overall development of the twelve settlements. It makes use of historical concepts, such as the multiple estate model, which suits Shipton very well, and the minster status of the parish church is important for understanding the evolution of the units of lordship. Archaeology is integrated into the history, and in particular shows the value of field walking for tracing changes in settlement. In analysing the modern villages they are found to fit the 'open' and 'closed' parish model. Long-term population changes are laid out in a table in the overview and explained separately for each parish. The operations of the poor law, old and new, have an important role in the social history of the parishes.

All aspects of agricultural history are covered, with information about the soils and topography under 'landscape', farming methods and land holding under economic history, while farmers and labourers figure prominently in the social history section. The documentation for agricultural history (particularly from the perspective of this reviewer) is not abundant,

but there is enough to establish the main outlines. The nucleated villages and open fields (mostly two fields) were established quite early, though some parishes have large areas of old enclosure, sometimes the result of assarting from the forest up to the fourteenth century. The open fields (practising sheep and corn husbandry) persisted, and one parish was not enclosed until 1854. The yeomen farms that developed in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries were subject to amalgamation in later centuries until some parishes now have one very large farm, or all of the land is cultivated from a distance. For centuries the people of such villages as Shipton, Ascott, Ramsden and Leafield had access to grazing and other forest resources, claiming common rights but often taking wood and game illicitly. As on the fringes of many royal forests they established a distinctive way of life and mentality. Outsiders dismissed their behaviour as criminal. The ending of royal forest elsewhere was usually protracted, but in the case of Wychwood it was sudden and brutal, as disafforestation and the clearance of the woods all happened in 1856–8. Communities which had always been impoverished felt even more deprivation and, in the depression of the 1870s that soon followed, many migrated to Australia and New Zealand. Since those hard times Wychwood's villages have followed a familiar route of gentrification, the growth in commuting, and the death of the village shop.

The VCH is designed to be consulted, and cannot give extended attention to the many subjects covered. Readers are left with a desire to know more, which may mean following up the footnotes, or embarking on their own research. This agrarian historian was intrigued by the VCH's discovery of a wealthy demesne farmer, Thomas Sessions of Milton around 1500, and gives tantalising hints of his activities. Some may notice the strength of political conservatism. For example the village hall at Shipton was built in the 1880s on the initiative of the Conservative Association and named Beaconsfield Hall in honour of Disraeli. Some local people adopted contrary attitudes: a pauper rebellion against a select vestry at Ramsden in 1834–35 showed robust dissent against attempts to reduce poor relief. Ascott in particular became a centre of radicalism, at a popular level in 1873 when the 'Ascott martyrs' (16 women supporting the agricultural workers) were imprisoned, and in the early twentieth century with middle-class promotion of progressive causes, such as the WEA. Nonconformist religion also flourished in the villages. The VCH tells us about a popular culture of Morris dancing and mumming throughout the area, which predates the arrival of middle-class intellectuals, and we would like to know more about its roots. Finally, the editors of the VCH, while discreetly maintaining their objectivity throughout, provide a clue to the area's notoriety in the second decade of this century, with a sentence (on p. 171) revealing that this was the epicentre of the 'Chipping Norton set'.

CHRISTOPHER DYER
University of Leicester

ANDREW CONNELL, *'There'll Always Be Appleby' – Appleby Gypsy Horse Fair: History, mythology, evaluation* (Cumberland and Westmorland Antiquarian and Archaeological Society, 2019). 136 pp. 31 illus. £12.99.

This revised edition of the 2015 publication, *Appleby Gypsy Horse Fair*, develops the material presented in its predecessor with new evidence and analysis that, as the author explains in the Preface represents 'a more direct attempt to disentangle myth and reality' (p. xii). In particular the author interrogates the folklore and speculation surrounding the origins and legal status of the fair, along with a more extensive focus on the often fractious relationship between fairgoers, wider public and the authorities. Today, Appleby Horse Fair, which is held in the Cumbrian town of Appleby-in-Westmorland between the first Thursday and Tuesday in June, is the largest annual gathering of the UK's Gypsies and Travellers attracting around 40–50,000 visitors (p. 2). Connell draws from a range of primary materials from local sources as well as from reports, books and articles related to the historical and contemporary scholarly work on Gypsies and Travellers. Through a meticulous and thorough study of this evidence, Connell addresses two of the most enduring myths surrounding the Appleby Fair, and the Gypsies' role in its evolution and development which, with the 'reluctant involvement of the local authorities … inadvertently contributed to its modern status as a culturally significant media event' (p. 9).

Firstly, the author takes issue with conventional wisdom that the fair stems from a Royal Charter granted by James II in 1685. The author notes that before the mid-twentieth century there is no mention of the fair having been granted a Royal Charter and neither does any evidence exist to suggest that King James II had any interest in, or dealings with, Gypsies. Connell's investigation locates the myth's origins to 1945 when a local Alderman, determined to find a way of ending the fair claimed that it dated from the supposed 1685 charter and that once it was found the Borough Council would have a mechanism to force the fair's abolition. The elusive charter is yet to be found, but the myth took hold and, as 'collections of photographs, tourist guides and websites proliferated,

the 1685 charter story would be routinely repeated as fact' (p. 18). Indeed, the failure to prove the charter's existence has saved the fair from probable closure; its continuance being based on 'prescriptive right' or custom, the fair 'is not an event with a programme and entrance fees to designated areas, organizers or owners [and so] the closure mechanism of the 1871 Fairs Act is of no relevance to it' (p. 100).

Secondly, evidence sheds light on the notion that Appleby is part of a centuries-old pilgrimage for Gypsies and other travellers. The author charts the evolution of Appleby Fair (or New Fair) which like other fairs originated as a market for livestock and which was, for much of its history, essentially a drovers' fair until the arrival of the railway in 1862. This spelled the end of the drovers' association with the fair which, by the late nineteenth century, was exclusively concerned with 'the exhibition and sale of horses of every description for which it is one of the best markets in the kingdom' (p. 32). The fair's association with Gypsies 'can be with some certainty located in the first decade of the twentieth century', when they were joined by itinerant potters, 'who mustered with great force from their encampments on the Moor' (p. 44). Connell gives short shrift to scholars who claim the exclusion of Gypsies from accounts of Appleby in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries was due to their 'othering', noting that the scant attention given to Gypsies was due to their marginal participation at the fair as it was then primarily a drovers' fair. With reduced attendance during World War II, the Gypsies consolidated their monopoly of the fair, cementing its association with the 'caravan fraternity'.

The author details the periodic campaigns to close the fair (stymied through the lack of a mechanism to effect its closure) and those who have fought to keep the fair open. In the 1960s for example, the indomitable Gypsy, Silvester Gordon Bowell, whose skills at negotiating with the *gorgio* (non-Gypsy) authorities while simultaneously gaining the Gypsies' compliance, saved the fair from the threat of closure and returned it to its former Fair Hill location. Boswell had correctly perceived that the authorities were not united in their opposition to the fair, and the author charts the ambivalent social attitudes and images of the fair in newspapers, where coverage varies 'from the roseate to the bloodstained' (p. 83), and among local residents and businesses, whose opinions remain equally divided. The book is supplemented with a range of illustrations and photographs of Appleby Fair from the past and present. The Appendices include intriguing recollections from a life-long resident of Appleby of the fair during her childhood in the 1930s, and an elderly Romany lady, whose late husband was a member of Boswell's Gypsy committee, who laments the decline of the fair following the increasing presence of *gorgio* 'so-called travellers' (p. 106).

This is an impressive book that achieves its aim of separating myth from fact through rigorous empirical investigation, while remaining sensitive to the strong sense of connection and importance that the fair holds for many of Britain's travelling communities who, if only briefly can become 'part of the process of recapturing a lost world, and affirming that the rituals of family reunion, display of possessions, courtship and campfire camaraderie live on' (p. 82).

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SOPHIA DAVIS, *Island thinking: Suffolk stories of landscape, militarisation and identity* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2020). xiii + 302 pp. 32 illus. £59.99.

The publisher's advertorial states that *Island thinking* is 'a cultural historical and geographical study of Englishness in a key period of cultural transformation in mid-Twentieth Century Britain', using 'a highly regional focus to investigate'. The book is not a systematic, complete analysis of the history of landscape militarization in Suffolk; as the word 'stories' and the term 'island thinking' suggests, it is more a selective highlighting of those aspects of landscape militarization which create, contribute to, or reinforce the notion that Suffolk is 'an island within' England or Britain – and how this is proposed, reflected or reinforced by literature about the county.

Literature is used to justify the choice of Suffolk and to make the case for its metaphysical island identity. O. J. R. Howarth's 1937 observation that East Anglia was 'self-contained within the limits of the sea to the north and east, the forest to the south, the Fen country to the west'; Tennyson's, that the Suffolk Coast is a translation of England into miniature form; Allan Jobson's 1948 description, in referring to Constable, that 'Suffolk is an emblem of the nation'; and Claude Messent writing in 1949 that agricultural Suffolk 'can claim in many ways to be the most English part of England'. Given however that it is Norfolk, not Suffolk, that is bounded on two sides by the sea, it would have been helpful if Davis had spent a little time here on saying why Suffolk had attracted this 'island' status rather than its East Anglian counterpart, and perhaps more generally, in order to test the central 'island thinking' premise of the book, whether Suffolk is unique in generating 'island thinking', and to what extent it can be found in other counties on the geographical periphery and without large metropolitan areas.

Of most interest in this first part of the book is where Davis considers countryside writing's 'struggle' with contemporary militarization. Here Davis' knowledge of landscape militarization suffuses her analysis of these writings. However, the rest of the chapter is dense with numerous sources and, whilst a valuable compendium of writing on rural Suffolk, is less compelling. Much of the literature referred to is taken at face value and of equal merit; looking at book reviews and sales may have provided some insight as to the relative significance of the various writings.

Davis offers a good account of how Britain was affected by preparations for war (and defence) through the case study of Suffolk. The writing is enlightening and perceptive: 'the extensive militarization of the Suffolk landscape produced a patchwork of inaccessible areas, transforming the meanings of the land and landscape in England's "farthest east" towards a felt sense of being on the front line, with the idea of invasion close to hand'. The anti-invasion areas of Suffolk's Coast represented a new form of enclosure, demonstrating the argument that new metaphorical, if not actual, islands were created within both the island of Suffolk, England, and Britain.

In a chapter on 'Birds and Belonging' Davis uses RSPB archives to describe the 'material circumstances' of landscape militarization that prompted the return of the avocet to England in 1947 and the development of 'pioneering' nature reserves, which encouraged the reintegration of avocets into Britain's wildlife. This and the subsequent chapter on nature reserves are excellent in highlighting how these reserves 'managed nature' to favour the development of the avocet over and above other bird species. Davis quotes from wartime literature and broadcasting portraying birds as 'the heritage we are fighting for' and 'expressions' of the nation. She argues that the birds became 'a vehicle for formulations of national identity and ideas of England as a home to which to return and belong', creatively weaving in references in literature to migrant birds and national identity, although I found the reference to post-war Commonwealth immigration to Britain under-explained in terms of its relevance.

In the chapter on rewilding and war monuments Davis focuses on the former experimental military site at Orford Ness – now a National Trust-managed nature reserve and monument to the Cold War, where rather authoritarian-sounding Trust volunteers have supplanted Ministry of Defence police. In support of describing Orford Ness, Davis introduces a new phrase to my lexicon at least, that of 'military-academic-industrial complex', but I can make a stab at understanding what it means. Elsewhere there's the occasional lapse into impenetrable neo-academic verbiage, such as 'taskscape-mediated connection between land and sky', which no matter how many times I read it I am no closer to comprehending.

In contrast, in the 'Looking to the Skies: Post-war Radar Stories' chapter, Davis makes a strong argument for the two places in Suffolk at which radar was developed (Bawdsley and a distinct part of the Orford Ness site) being both 'island-like, even though neither were technically islands' – and the radar researchers, 'drove this characterisation process' by referring to themselves as 'islanders'. Further feeding the 'island' concept, as a major feature of our air defences, Davis argues that radar helped to maintain Britain as an 'island fortress'. (For readers of this journal the chapter will probably tell you more than you ever need to know about the development of military radar in Suffolk.) What is of interest is the link with avian life – how bird movements were an obstacle to radar development, but subsequently how civil usage of radar subsequently contributed to the developing awareness of bird migration patterns.

What may be most striking to readers of the *Review* is the almost total absence of reference to how landscape militarization affected agriculture in Suffolk. Davis writes that 'Suffolk's countryside … underwent massive changes during the Second World War, from the movement of people to changes in land use, with anti-invasion defences on the coast, airbases and battle training areas, and more mechanised and extensive farming'. Yet a word search of the book brings up 'agriculture' only four times and 'airfields' and 'airbases' only six times each, even though new-build military airbases had an immense impact on Suffolk's landscape and agriculture, albeit, in many instances, temporarily.

By the end of the Second World War there were 32 military airfields in Suffolk – 23 of them built during the war – and East Anglia as a whole had the highest concentration of new-build military airfields in the country, predominantly for heavy bomber aircraft. Arguably the military airfields were the single largest example of Second World War landscape militarization imposed on Suffolk, but they barely get a mention. Instead, Davis focuses in depth on those aspects of militarization which feed the 'island' theme, and ignores those that seemingly do not – although one could argue that islands of crumbling concrete in and amongst Suffolk's present-day wheat and barley fields could have helped to support Davis' island concept at least as much as the Orford Ness experimental military site.

Readers should find the overview chapter on landscape militarization in Suffolk, and the chapters on bird life,

nature reserves, and the radar development and military experimentation sites extremely informative, even if they might not find themselves buying into the concept of them contributing to and/or reflecting a sense of island identity at county level. More importantly, the price of pursuing the 'island' theme is that more significant instances of landscape militarization are all but ignored because for Davis they don't serve the 'island identity' concept. Part literature review, and part socio-cultural, military and conservation history, the book falls between each of these stools (perhaps inevitably). It is more a documentation of the perception of change, rather than detailed historical interrogation of the actual change, although an optimum amount of factual contextual information is provided.

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ANGELA CASSIDY, *Vermin, victims and disease: British debates over Bovine Tuberculosis and badgers* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2019). 390 pp. 20 illus. £20 / free open access.

This book is a history of the science and policy behind Britain's ongoing badger controversy. At last we have a full-length treatment of an important question at the intersection of society and nature: are badgers villains or victims in the spread of bovine tuberculosis (bTB)? On the one hand there is the discourse of farmers and fellow-travelling politicians with rural constituencies, who speak in effect about 'bad' badgers, and on the other there are ecologists and the general public, for whom badgers are an iconic species. The advantage of Dr Cassidy's book is that she carefully peels back the layers and reveals the full complexity of a situation that seems to have little hope of immediate resolution.

By the time bTB was first discovered in badgers in 1971 there had already been a century of public debate about the disease. The early focus had been on its spread from cattle to humans through infected milk, but by 1960 this hazard had been largely controlled through pasteurization. In the 1970s the confirmation of a wildlife reservoir of bTB gave the disease a new manifestation in both the public and the scientific imaginations. The story has been told before but Dr Cassidy adds significant value. For instance, she discusses the actors rather than the organizations involved, using oral history and a close reading of official documents such as committee minutes to identify the key participants and their decisions, their motivations, and the constraints upon them. There are enlightening character sketches, highlighting, for instance, the irritability of Lord Zuckermann and his condescension towards pro-badger campaigners; and there are also in-depth discussions of enthusiasts such as Ernest Neal, Eileen Soper, and Eunice Overend, providing a background to the radical animal politics emerging from the 1960s onwards and its influence upon policy-makers.

The role of badgers in spreading bTB is just one of the knowledge controversies that have become embedded in Britain's cattle economy in the last 50 years. Others include Foot and Mouth Disease and Bovine Spongiform Encephalopathy. In the case of bTB in badgers, several epistemic communities – professional and popular – are involved. In recent times it has been particularly difficult to find a consensus for action, possibly due to a reduction in deference to authority and the greater in-depth exposure of the issues in the press and social media. Even the credibility of science has been undermined, first by the casual indifference of politicians to any expertise that does not fit their ideological preconceptions, second by the poor record of the tuberculin test for identifying the disease in cattle, and third (a point made in my *A History of Uncertainty: Bovine Tuberculosis in Britain, 1850 to the Present* [2016]) by the naivety of scientists with regard to the experimental frames that are practicable in a hostile rural setting.

There have been nine official reports on bTB, from Zuckerman in 1980 to Godfray in 2018. Dr Cassidy's book is the most detailed summary of these and the many swings in policy, from the banning of snaring and gassing, to the re-introduction of extensive trapping and shooting, and, most recently, the expansion of the vaccination of badgers. She is particularly strong on the origins of the parallel views of badgers as either vermin or charismatic wildlife.

According to Dr Cassidy, the bTB infection of cattle and badgers has been framed in two ways. The first sees the problem as one of agricultural malaise, with farmers as victims of financial loss and emotional stress. Although they have some professional support in the shape of veterinarians, overall there is little sympathy for them amongst city dwellers. In the second framing the focus has been on environmental ethics, with an acknowledgement of animal suffering and an emphasis upon the need for ecologically based policies, such as vaccination rather than culling. Here the badger is seen as the scapegoat for a bTB problem that is principally the result of cattle-to-cattle transmission. The second frame has also deployed notions of care about badgers that are new in the last 50 years, making it difficult for civil servants and politicians to ignore arguments about the inhumane practices of culling.

The author does not shy away from making recommendations. Two that stand out are, first, the

need for investment in better technologies (for instance to identify the disease in cattle and provide suitable vaccination strategies for badgers), and, second, a call for regular personal interactions between the competing interests at national and local level. The first is complex and expensive science that will yield results only in the long run, while the second should be achievable through diplomacy and an attempt at mutual understanding; and yet such consensus-building seems to be as far away as ever.

Dr Cassidy's style is admirably clear, jargon-free and without artifice. While coming from a Science and Technology Studies viewpoint, her theoretical cloak is worn lightly and in a way that enables an impartial analysis of the arguments deployed by all of the combatants in the controversies she unpacks. In addition, there is thorough scholarship evidenced in over 900 endnotes, 45 pages of bibliography and a full index.

Whereas in the past I have complained in book reviews about the high prices placed upon monographs by commercial publishers, now I am pleased to report that researchers, students and general readers can download the text under review for free. This wholly admirable innovation is supported financially by the Wellcome Trust and forms part of the structural shift in academic publishing that is now taking place. If this trend is taken to its logical conclusion there will be less need for expensive hard copy library storage, though we readers will all require more hard disk space on our computers to store electronic books. Overall, it is not difficult to see where balance of cost and convenience lies.

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Europe and Elsewhere

CHRISTOPHER KISSANE, *Food, religion and communities in early modern Europe* (Bloomsbury, 2018). 226 pp. 23 illus. £26.09.

Food, religion and communities in early modern Europe traces some of the many cultural resonances of food though the varied, and often tumultuous, landscape of early modern religion. Christopher Kissane encourages his readers to think 'through' food, rather than 'about' food, arguing that by using food as a 'prism' of study it is possible to illuminate wider historical processes. The book is structured around three such historical processes and the role that food played in their development: Inquisition, Reformation, and witch-hunting. The book takes the reader on a journey from late medieval Castile, where religious tension was rife, to sixteenth-century Reformation Switzerland, where food became part-and-parcel of religious debates, concluding in early modern Shetland, where food was considered key to the practice of witchcraft.

Part 1 of the book focuses on the role of food in late medieval Inquisition trials in Castile. Kissane demonstrates that dietary habits and food choices were used time and again as evidence of religious non-conformity. As Kissane puts it, whilst Inquisitors and accusers were unable to look into their neighbour's souls, they could instead focus on differences that might point towards 'crypto-Judaism' or insincere conversion to Christianity. Dietary habits were one such easily noticed difference. Abstaining from certain foods, most notably pork, cooking with ingredients associated with 'deviant' religious cultures, such as olive oil and aubergines, preparing foods in certain ways, such as baking unleavened bread, and organizing kitchens around non-Christian principles, for example by separating certain ingredients, were all deployed by accusers as evidence of potential heresy. Eating and preparing food could therefore be a perilous business, communicating religious identity and revealing to onlookers what an individual believed and potentially what their true faith and religious convictions were.

Part 2 of the book moves the analysis away from accusatory neighbours and 'heretical' women, to focus on the significance of food in debates over religious reformation in sixteenth-century Switzerland. Homing in on the hotly contested issue of fast-breaking, Kissane argues that the Reformation was not solely a theological movement, but also a process that incorporated lived religious experience. In many ways, it was food that united the everyday experience of the Reformation with the theological debates that underpinned it. As Kissane demonstrates, the system of fasting, alongside contemporary representations of the foods associated with it such as meat and dairy, was a microcosm of how the Catholic Church functioned and a distillation of reformers' arguments against it: fasting had no basis in Scripture, it oppressed the poor and needy by forcing them to change their eating habits, and it emphasized the fact that the Church was run by greedy clerics who did not follow their own rules. The issue of fast-breaking, then, demonstrates clearly the role played by food in debates surrounding religious reformation.

The final section of the book examines the ways in which food was seen to be integral to the operation of witchcraft in early modern Shetland. As Kissane argues, witchcraft was believed to be at work in the production, preparation, and consumption of food. The theft of milk, the destruction of crops, and the

consumption of inappropriate foods were all hallmarks of the witch's craft. Those accused of witchcraft became scapegoats for a range of problems associated with food, whether that be the constant threat of harvest failure, the very real experience of dearth and hunger, or the unpredictable nature of food production techniques such as dairying. As well as elucidating legitimate concerns surrounding food supply, the connection between witchcraft and food also reflected commonly held beliefs about what constituted nourishing and religiously appropriate foods. Whilst Christian feasts were centred on purifying and religiously significant foods such as bread, 'sabbath' meals left the eater unsatiated and encouraged them to consume foods that were foul and often highly unappetising. These beliefs speak to the kinds of fears that propelled witchcraft accusations, demonstrating that they were embedded in the environmental difficulties of the period and in wider cultural assumptions about what constituted an appropriate diet.

Kissane's book is richly researched, forcefully argued, and provides ample 'food for thought'. There are, however, a few issues I would have been curious to read more about. At several points in the book Kissane describes late medieval and early modern religious identities as 'embodied'. I would have been interested in reading more about the embodied aspects of religious identities and how these beliefs may have conditioned how people of various religious persuasions engaged with certain foods. Was there a fear, for example, that eating foods associated with other religions had the potential to irrevocably alter a person's bodily physiology and in turn undermine their piety? May this partly explain why suspected Jews and Muslims may have run the risk of continuing to eat religiously significant foods despite the dangers involved? Connected to this, I was also intrigued by an assortment of examples where health concerns were given as the reason for either abstaining from certain suspect foods, or partaking in them. Was Luis Hurtado successful in convincing the Inquisition that he had only committed the sin of eating meat during Lent because he had been sick with syphilis? Likewise, would Pedro de Villareal's claim that he only abstained from bacon as it exacerbated his gout have fallen on deaf ears? These questions are not meant to detract from the strength of Kissane's analysis, but to offer suggestions of how this rich and complex topic can be explored further, particularly in relation to how medical understandings of food interacted with, and perhaps challenged, religious perceptions of diet.

The book is beautifully written and represents a welcome, and highly accessible, addition to the field of early modern food studies. The central message I am left with from Kissane's book is that food and its various cultural meanings, in times past (and perhaps present?), is both unifying and divisive. Food was used to define 'deviant' and 'normative' behaviour, and employed as a tool to construct theories of the 'self' and of the 'other'. The study of food, then, as Kissane shows, is critical to understanding human behaviour, relationships, and connections to the material world.

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JONATHAN FINCH, KRISTINE DYRMANN and MIKAEL FRAUSING (eds), *Estate landscapes in northern Europe* (Aarhus University Press, 2019). 290 pp. 199.99DKK.

This collection of essays on noble estates in Norway, Demark, Sweden, the Netherlands and Britain is the first publication from the ENCOUNTER network (European Network for Country House and Estate Research), established in 2015. This network facilitates the comparative study of the social, economic and cultural role of country houses within rural society. Its first publication provides a wealth of research on Norway, Sweden and Denmark to Anglophone readers. Hopefully, the comparative approaches applied by ENCOUNTER and its conferences and publications will do as much to revivify the study of this subject as CORN (the Comparative Rural History Network) and its publications have done to re-animate debates in agrarian history more widely.

There is certainly scope for such a development. Studies of landholders and landed society exist in an odd combination of comparative and insular research traditions. Comparative studies of European nobilities have been going on for over forty years, stimulated by the republication (and translation) of Norbert Elias' seminal work, *The Court Society*. However, as Elias' work suggests, debates have centred on the role of the 'absolutist' princely court as a political mechanism to constrain and emasculate the European nobility. At the other end of the spectrum, the Brenner debate, and subsequent contests over the nature, timing and character of the 'second serfdom' in Central Europe have kept alive the comparative analysis of lordship and landlord power. Similarly, studies of the architecture of the post-Renaissance country house have always been comparative and European in scope. However, aside from the proponents of Arno Meyer's interpretations about nineteenth-century aristocratic survival, the histories of estates, inheritance and the economic and social fortunes of nobles have tended to be either national in scope, or more often focused on the history of a particular property or family. This specificity is

usually a function of the profusion of source materials in a particular estate archive, and results in work that reveals (even revels in) the inner workings of processes of administration, social relationships, cultural expression or material consumption. The disadvantage is that this work sometimes loses sight of the 'big-picture' concerns that can be used to thread together these particular examples or experiences.

The question is, how should such comparative analyses be undertaken? One way is to abstract general trends, shared phenomena or common explanations and to write about them at a fairly high level of abstraction (and tedium for the reader). The other way, adopted in this collection of essays, is to place thoroughly researched, lively and interesting case studies side-by-side in order to let the reader draw out relevant comparisons (aided by an effective synoptic introduction and conclusion). This works, up to a point. In truth, on one level there is not much that unites Yme Kuiper's plea to overturn the urban bias in the history of the Netherlands, with Arne Bugge Amundsen's discussion of the Danish Protestant ascendancy in seventeenth-century Norway. However, more broadly, this collection succeeds in raising important questions in the comparative study of estates and estate history.

Firstly, there is the question of categories and nomenclature. These essays have been written in English, but several contributors point out that some of the foundational concepts underlying comparisons within this study do not translate well into the language. The distinction between *Gutsherrschaft* and *Grundherrschaft* is basic to concepts of lordship and landholding in north-central Europe, but translates only moderately well as 'demesne' farming/estates versus tenancy or rental farming/estates. As Mikkel Venborg Pedersen and Carsten Porskrog Rasmussen illustrate, in practice, the heavy hand of the landowner could be apparent in *Grundherrschaft* systems, even without extensive formal labour services. Do we need more pliable, but transparent, terminology, and can ENCOUNTER begin to create it?

This question of language feeds into a deeper issue, that really needs to be addressed in a comparative study – the 'institutional' issue of inheritance practices and their effects on estate formation, transmission and diffusion. Students of agrarian history are familiar with the supposed differences in the effects of systems of primogeniture and 'partible inheritance'. These essays are replete with such instances, whether it is the effects of the introduction of primogeniture on Norwegian estates after 1671 in Amundsen's essay, or the tensions that existed within *Stammgut* inheritance practices in Baden-Württemberg in Menning's study. However, as Menning's study reveals, in fact this system had the paradoxical effect of holding estates *together*, because the increasing proliferation of heirs (and rentiers), meant that they could only be managed effectively as a single unit, and the heirs had a considerable financial interest in leaving the golden goose undivided. These essays explore the relationship between 'institutional' structures of noble status, privilege and rights, with the practices and practicalities of estate management, but they highlight how important comparative analysis could be in assessing their effects and their causal significance.

In addition, there is the question of change over time in the legal position and managerial practices of landed estates, and the causes and dynamics of change. These are detailed in some depth in quantitative analyses by Finch of the 1873 Return of Landowners in Britain and Ulväng through a detailed study of 530 manors in six regions of Sweden through to 1950. These analyses emphasize the importance of regional variation, as does Kuiper's study of the Netherlands. In Britain, noble estates were largest where land was cheapest, or rather, where estates were managed extensively rather than intensively (incomes did not, necessarily, match acreages). In Sweden, noble estates remained surprisingly viable in regions of higher quality agricultural land, or with iron-production, where estate incomes remained more buoyant and family trusts were left intact. In the Netherlands, Kuiper makes observes that we should not generalize about the insignificance of nobles based on their marginality in 'Golden-Age' Holland and Zeeland, but need to look at the revival of noble fortunes and estates in Gelderland, Utrecht and Frisia in the later eighteenth century. Here, they look much more like their prosperous, innovative, intensifying neighbours across the channel in Southern England. As the studies of Denmark, Sweden and Norway each point out, although Meyer and others may well be correct to point out the enduring political, economic and cultural power of nobles in the long nineteenth century, political Liberalism introduced a raft of measures to dismantle their legal, fiscal, inheritance and lordship privileges and customs between 1770 and 1870 (with Britain and Ireland as latecomers). These essays provoke questions about the comparative effects and the relative extent of these changes in neighbouring countries.

So, this volume is extremely worthwhile for the questions it provokes. It is also well worth reading in its own right. It is very handsomely produced, illustrated copious in colour throughout, with very legible illustrations of contemporary maps and drawings. Each of the authors is an expert within each national historiography, but each writes extremely accessibly

and concisely for a non-specialist reader, and each has clearly condensed a series of thorny, complex debates into concise syntheses, in which they plant their own detailed empirical research. This work will be of value to those interested in country houses and country house society in countries that do not, conventionally, feature largely in Anglophone studies. It will be very welcome for undergraduate and postgraduate students seeking a clear introduction into this wide variety of subject areas within these countries. Hopefully, too, it marks the start of a series of agenda-setting publications in this series, which bring together scholars from across Europe (and, hopefully, those studying colonial contexts, too), in order to re-think, re-define, and re-conceptualize this important and fascinating topic.

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DAVID MOON, *The American Steppes. The unexpected Russian roots of Great Plains agriculture, 1870s–1930s* (Cambridge University Press, 2020). 352 pp. 1 illus. 6 maps. £89.99.

Russian influences are etched into the landscape of the Great Plains, as David Moon demonstrates in *The American Steppes*. Today, travellers may glance at a sign for a Mennonite museum, or they might hear the ubiquitous phrase 'Germans from Russia'. These observations are not new. Moon introduces readers to a 1942 sculpture in Newton, Kansas, erected to commemorate the Russian Mennonites who ostensibly brought Turkey Red wheat to the Plains. The sculpture followed a 1941 radio play about a young Mennonite girl whose family brought seeds from the Crimea to the United States. These cultural documents gesture towards the power of an agricultural origin story. Moon's book, however, reveals that this simplified legend is but one strand in a complex history of exchanges between the Plains and the steppes. These exchanges include wheat, but they also include soil science, shelterbelts, and tumbleweeds.

Moon argues that Russian immigrants, research, and science played a crucial role in the development of Great Plains agriculture in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. The author is uniquely poised to marshal evidence for this assertion; his extensive experience with Russian material, including a 2013 book on the environmental history of the steppes, allows him to assemble histories of contact between Russian and American scientists. Moon's own journeys span state archives in Russia, Kazakhstan, Ukraine, and the United States, and include regional holdings from Odessa to Topeka. This archival feat is particularly evident in part II, where Moon details specific 'transfers'. However, the danger in such a topic is that the author will produce a Russian source for plains agriculture at every turn, even with scarce evidence. Thankfully, Moon skilfully avoids that fate by acknowledging barriers to exchange and noting archival absences.

Structurally, Moon assists readers by devoting the first three chapters to 'context'. The first chapter offers a summary of European settlement on the Great Plains, with a specific eye on Russian and Mennonite settlers. Chapter 2 outlines the barriers to Russian-American exchange, among them the steppes' reputation as a site of disaster, American perceptions of Russia as culturally 'backward,' and the political realities of Soviet Russia. As noted above, this chapter is particularly useful for such a project, because Moon does not dismiss the real impact of cultural prejudice or strained diplomatic ties. However, these barriers did not preclude numerous exchanges, facilitated by the bridges described in chapter three, including: travellers between the two regions, immigrants with Russian language skills, and international scientific communities. Helpfully, by the end of part I, key individuals will feel familiar to readers.

Part II is structured around two plants as bookends (wheat and tumbleweeds), with exchanges of science and technique sandwiched between. Moon begins with the most iconic transfer, the vaunted Turkey Red wheat, before working through the longer history of exchange. In chapter 4, Moon tells a more complete story that includes the USDA's search for a hardy wheat and the relationship between American crop scientist Mark Carleton and steppes-born Mennonite immigrant, miller Bernhard Warkentin. Notably, the long and varied introduction of Russian wheat varieties to the plains was not distilled into the Mennonite seed story until the early twentieth century. Chapters 5 and 6 turn to a lesser-known site of Russian influence: soil science. Moon begins by noting that USDA publications in the 1930s describe plains soil as 'chernozems', the Russian term for black soil on the steppes. This designation demonstrates a Russian influence, but there were barriers (as Moon notes throughout). For example, into the twentieth century, American soil science remained rooted in geology, while Russian science considered soil formation in a wider context that included climate and organic matter. However, some scientists were determined to build bridges. Curtis Marbut, a director of the US Soil Survey, read Konstantin Glinka's book in German, used his methods in Plains fieldwork, and even befriended his fellow soil scientist at a conference in Prague. Marbut's unwavering efforts to implement Russian science in the US, and his friendship with Glinka, are highlights

of Moon's research. Chapters 7 and 8 survey both the Russian and American experience with shelterbelts as a technology for ameliorating drought and dust storms. During the New Deal, American foresters turned to Russian science to argue for the Great Plains Shelterbelt Project, largely due to the ambitions and efforts of Russian-born forester Raphael Zon. In fact, the US also looked to the steppes for shelterbelt tree species, including Russian olive and mulberry. Finally, Moon turns to another species transfer, and threat to young shelterbelts, the Russian thistle. Better known as a tumbleweed, the Russian thistle was part of the same transfer that brought steppe species to the Great Plains. Moon's final account of a plant traveller underlines the complex and global sources of plains agricultural history.

Ultimately, Moon's study is eminently convincing. He makes careful, evidence-based connections, though after reading it is tempting to search for Russian influences elsewhere – in the social realism of the Newton sculpture for instance. One admirable feature of Moon's text is his clear delineation of the book's aims. However, though he repeatedly notes the structures of settler colonialism that facilitated many of these transfers, Moon also relegates Native peoples to the past. Given that his period overlaps with the US government's assimilationist policies, of which agriculture was a central tenet, I found myself wondering if Russian wheat varieties were sowed on reservations. Or, if soil scientists, driven by Russian sources, conducted fieldwork on reservations? Certainly, Moon's research task was already expansive, but the book could have benefited from including contemporaneous Native people in the narrative. Still, *The American Steppes* is an important entry into the growing body of literature that positions the American West within global histories. Aside from the obvious audiences of environmental and agricultural historians, *The American Steppes* will be of interest to anyone looking for a transnational study that does not devolve into mere comparisons. Finally, Moon's book will appeal to Plains people who are interested in a more nuanced story of their Russian roots.

MICHAELA RIFE
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SARAH HAMILTON, *Cultivating Nature: The conservation of a Valencian working landscape* (University of Washington Press, 2018). 312 pp. 21 illus. $40.

The Albufera Lake south of the Spanish city of Valencia was recently awarded the title 'Threatened Lake of the Year 2020' by the international foundation, Global Nature Fund. Even though this information was not available at the time of *Cultivating Nature*'s publication, the book provides a historically well-founded explanation of how the degradation of this ecosystem occurred and why social and cultural factors have been of crucial importance in its demise.

Based on the revised version of the author's doctoral dissertation, *Cultivating Nature* presents the history of the Albufera de Valencia chronologically, from the end of the nineteenth century to the beginning of the twenty-first century. The introduction takes the reader quickly through the local setting and international entanglements of the place, a coastal lagoon with surrounding dunes, fields and forests (known in Valencian as *la Devesa*). Hamilton offers a *longue durée* look at the history of Valencia and the Albufera from Roman times, through the period of Muslim rule, to the beginning of the twenty-first century. Besides introducing the main actors – including landowners, rice farmers, fishermen, hunters, city dwellers, politicians and scientists – she also provides information on the ecological importance of the wetland, for example, as a refuge for migratory birds, and highlights the historical link between the landscape and Valencian identity. Furthermore, speaking from an environmental perspective, she shows how many developments in modern Spanish history ran parallel to those in other Western European countries, such as the enthusiasm for nature in the early twentieth century that emerged from Romanticism, the consequences of agricultural intensification and the role of health and the environment in urban communities during the 1970s.

Contrary to the ideas of modernization based on the exploitation of natural resources that have prevailed since the monarchist restoration in 1874, Hamilton explains in the first chapter how a new discourse emerged that emphasized the protection of nature as an integral component of a modern state. She explains convincingly that in this process 'acrimonious relationships across the Western world between those seeking to protect valuable landscapes and those seeking to live within them' (p. 58) arose. This becomes clear in the Albufera, where rice farmers committed to agricultural modernization felt threatened by conservationists and recreation-seeking urbanites when the city of Valencia purchased the Albufera and its Devesa from the Spanish Ministry of Finance in 1911.

During Franco's dictatorship, the central government's modernization agenda continued and parts of the landscape around the Albufera were eventually destroyed for the development of tourist infrastructure, as Hamilton examines in chapter two. Particularly during the first phase of the regime, in which the country's self-sufficiency was emphasized, some scientists were successful in pointing out the importance of ecological

health for economic productivity. Hamilton argues that, unlike socialists and other obvious opponents of the regime, conservationists were not seen as a threat by the dictatorship and they managed to establish 'early precedents for a perception of scientific arguments in favour of conservation and sustainable use as apolitical and nonthreatening, thereby providing an avenue for certain types of low-level dissent' (p. 66). A subchapter also deals with the case of the Doñana National Park, which shows successful international cooperation between conservationists, and the regime's concession in favour of Spain's growing reputation in international relations with Western democracies.

A separate chapter is devoted to the final phase of the dictatorship (1970–74). One of Hamilton's central arguments in this part is that under the guise of nature conservation, a deeper criticism of the Franco regime arose which was supported by neighbourhood associations and environmentalists, among others. They united 'human welfare and social justice with the condition of the spaces in which people lived, worked, and played' (p. 96). Closely related to this was a 'neovalencianism' which gained momentum in the struggle for the public space of the Albufera from the 1960s onwards, contributing to an eco-nationalism and expressing itself, for example, in the fact that the Devesa was regarded 'as a Valencian commons' (p. 106). Under pressure from these groups and due to numerous critical newspaper articles about the condition of the Albufera, the city tried in vain to curb the criticism and protests by revising the expansion plan, which no longer revolved solely around the Albufera but also questioned the entire regime.

The last two chapters of the book cover the period of Spain's democratization and integration into the European Community. In order to halt the ongoing degradation of the Albufera, environmentalists, together with the city and the Generalitat Valenciana, set up the Albufera Natural Park in 1986. As in the early twentieth century, rice farmers were largely left out of the planning process and new regulations were imposed, an approach which, according to Hamilton, demonstrates 'a profoundly political preference for urban, progressive interests over rural, economic ones' (p. 145). Despite the ensuing strong protests by farmers, the ongoing ecological problems of the lake, which also affected agricultural activities, as well as the new marketing ('Protected designation of origin') and agri-environmental programs introduced by the European MacSharry reform in 1992, have led to a convergence between farmers and scientists and to a new awareness of many farmers as ecosystem conservators. Nevertheless, Hamilton stresses that there have been further conflicts in the aftermath, and that 'this quid-pro-quo conservation is not culturally sustainable' (p. 185), as it is often still perceived by farmers as an imposition and restriction.

By the conclusion, it becomes apparent that Hamilton's book is a passionate plea for the consideration and involvement of the local population, especially farmers, in nature conservation issues. *Cultivating Nature* shows in an impressive way how much contemporary history can benefit from oral history. Chapters 3 to 5 especially have drawn a lot of information from the more than twenty interviews conducted by the author. In addition, the book is mainly based on archive sources, articles from newspapers and magazines, legal texts and a solid base of secondary literature.

Needless to say, in covering nearly 140 years of history in 200 pages, the book cannot answer all questions. For example, the reader learns quite a lot about individual scientists and conservationists, while the experiences and fates of individual farmers remain somewhat in the background. One could also ask whether they were really such a uniformly acting group as is suggested over long stretches of the book. And what role have Valencian actors played in organic farming since the 1990s? Overall, *Cultivating Nature* is a work written in a clear, engaging language, which is not only excellently suited for academic introductory courses on the agricultural and conservation history of Spain in the twentieth century, but also provides a good introduction for a readership outside the academic world that is generally interested in nature conservation.

ANDREAS JÜNGER
Rachel Carson Center

FERNANDO COLLANTES, *The Political Economy of the Common Agricultural Policy: Coordinated Capitalism or Bureaucratic Monster?* (Routledge, 2020). 116 pp. 7 illus. £31.99.

First published in Spanish in 2019 with the rather more revealing title of *¿Capitalismo coordinado o monstruo de Frankenstein? La política agraria común y el modelo europeo, 1962–2020 [Coordinated capitalism or Frankenstein's monster? The Common Agricultural Policy and the European Model, 1962–2020]* this is not a straightforward study, or simple history, of the European Union's Common Agricultural Policy (CAP). It has loftier ambitions, asking for example: 'Does [the CAP] illustrate the virtues of the European model of coordinated capitalism, as opposed to US-style liberal capitalism? Or, conversely, is it an incoherent set of instruments that exerts diverse negative impacts and seems to have escaped the control of its designers?' (p. ix). Its author, who is Associate Professor of

Socioeconomic History at the University of Zaragoza, laments the rise of Euroscepticism, which has raised questions requiring answers such as: 'Is the EU really a triumph of democracy or, on the contrary, an institution with a serious problem of lack of legitimacy? Is it a bastion of Europe's tradition of social capitalism within a global neoliberal era or, conversely, an agent working against said tradition?' To help address these issues, the book 'analyses the socio-economic dimension of the problem through a case study of the Common Agricultural Policy' (p. 2). I have my doubts that a case study of the CAP is, by itself, capable of answering such deeply divisive questions.

It is claimed that the use of an historical political-economy approach results in two distinctive features distinguishing this from other analyses of the CAP. First, 'the book tries to consider the socio-economic and the political sides of the analysis in a more integrated fashion than has been common so far' (p. 3); and second 'the book aspires to providing a longer-run perspective than is usual in most available historical and social science studies, not to speak of journalistic coverage of the CAP' (p. 4). This is quite ambitious in the space of 112 pages, and quite understandably the author concedes that the book 'does not give … a complete, once-and-for-all history of the CAP'. It is 'closer to a history-based essay than to a history monograph proper' (pp. 3–4). It relies on printed rather than archival sources.

Anyone new to the CAP, wanting to know the 'whats' and 'whys' of support for European farmers, may well need to search out additional material. Readers with more than a passing knowledge of the CAP and its history will not be too surprised by the book's contents, but may quibble over odd statements that appear. These include: 'Only during the Uruguay round of the GATT (1986–1993) was agriculture incorporated into international trade negotiations' (p. 40), and a confusing reference to 'farm income', when farm revenue (from sales and subsidies, before deduction of costs) was surely in mind (for example, p. 37). The author clearly has little time for 'neoclassical economists' and 'Marxist sociologists and other critics of neoliberal globalization' (for example, pp. 15, 108).

Chapter 1 introduces the concept of 'coordinated capitalism', a phrase that reverberates throughout the book. This is 'a variety of capitalism in which the state actively intervenes in order to pursue social, environmental and territorial objectives' (p. 107). The European Union's embrace of coordinated capitalism underpins the rhetoric surrounding the CAP: 'A common agricultural policy had the potential to illustrate the virtues of European-style coordinated capitalism' (p. 85).

Although the Treaty of Rome outlined a number of objectives for the CAP, the main concern of policy makers in the early years was a belief that farm incomes lagged behind those in other sectors. Thus a system of market price support, involving import taxes, export subsidies, and the purchase of 'surplus' produce was put in place, resulting for example in the infamous 'butter mountains' in intervention stores. Some analysts characterized this as an agricultural welfare state, even though the benefits flowed disproportionately to larger farmers (who had more to sell), and landowners. Others have claimed this was successful rent-seeking by the farm lobby. However, a 'change of paradigm was started by the MacSharry reform of 1992 and consolidated by the Fischler reform of 2003. … The key to paradigm change was the substitution of a system of price support via market intervention with a system of income support via direct payments to farmers' (p. 41).

Chapter 3 challenges the 'monster myth'. It claims that the CAP was never as costly to taxpayers or consumers, or as disruptive to farmers in the 'global South', as its critics suggest. The pre-1992 CAP had a more modest impact on food prices than was commonly supposed, and with rising real incomes throughout Western Europe the proportion of the household budget spent on food declined; CAP's budget was only ever a small fraction of EU GDP (Gross Domestic Product); and the anti-agrarian policy bias of the global South was more problematic than the CAP for their agricultures.

But if the CAP was never as bad as its detractors made out, nor was it ever as good as its advocates alleged. Chapter 4 addresses this 'even greater myth': the claim that the CAP's coordinated agrarian capitalism resulted in an agricultural welfare state, and that it subsequently delivered effective environmental protection together with robust policies for rural development. Despite the progressive incorporation of these other concerns, Collantes concludes that the post-1992 policy mix 'did not trigger a substantial reorientation of those instruments towards social justice, environmental sustainability or rural development' (p. 101).

Consequently, in the closing pages the author declares: 'The CAP is actually a rather sad story. If all the stories that we can contrapose to Eurosceptic arguments are of this kind, no wonder Eurosceptics are ever more in number' (p. 110). Whilst many could concur that the history of the CAP is a rather sad story, some of them might suggest that this is more than counterbalanced by the wider aspirations and achievements embedded in the European project.

ALAN SWINBANK
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THE

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CONTENTS

Notes on contributors		iii
Forthcoming conferences		v
Leasing, fattening and guarding livestock in times of crises: North-Eastern Catalonia, *c.*1330–70	LLUÍS SALES I FAVÀ	169
The creation and administration of post-enclosure poor lands in English parishes, *c.*1630–1840	HIDEAKI INUI	192
From botany to agriculture: The scientific network linking Great Britain, Spain and Italy in the late eighteenth century	MARTINO LORENZO FAGNANI	213
The decline of landed estates in the eastern Netherlands, *c.*1880–*c.*1940	PIET VAN CRUYNINGEN	236
'A Better England': Women's agricultural labour and the National Association of Landswomen, 1919–1923	BONNIE WHITE	255
The significance of public egg-laying trials in Britain in measuring the productivity of chickens, *c.*1890–1964	JAMES P. BOWEN	274

Book Reviews

Douglas Crowley, *Braydon Forest and the forest law*	R. W. HOYLE	296
Todd Andrew Borlik (ed.), *Literature and Nature in the English Renaissance: An ecocritical anthology*	ANDREW MCRAE	297
Eugene Costello, *Transhumance and the making of Ireland's uplands, 1550–1900*	JAMES LYTTLETON	298
Margaret Bird, *Mary Hardy and her world, 1773–1809*, I, *A working family* Margaret Bird, *Mary Hardy and her world, 1773–1809*, II, *Barley, beer and the working year*	SUSANNA WADE-MARTINS	299

Carl J. Griffin, *The politics of hunger: Protest, poverty and policy in England, c.1750–c.1840*	LEONARD BAKER	302
Paul Brassley, Jeremy Burchardt, and Karen Sayer (eds), *Transforming the countryside: The electrification of rural Britain*	VANESSA TAYLOR	304
Natacha Chevalier, *Food in wartime Britain: Testimonies from the Kitchen Front (1939–1945)*	PAUL BRASSLEY	305
Pamela Slocombe, *Whaddon and the Longs: A West Wiltshire history*	JOHN GAISFORD	306
Francis Pryor, *The Fens: Discovering England's ancient depths*	ANEURIN MERRILL-GLOVER	307
Michael Blakstad (ed.), *Farming the Valley: Mapping the history of East Meon*	ALAN WADSWORTH	308
James P. Bowen and Alex Craven with Jonathan Comber, *The Victoria County History of Herefordshire. Colwall*	ALAN WADSWORTH	310
James Rebanks, *English pastoral: An inheritance*	PHILIP CONFORD	311
Sandro Guzzi-Heeb and Pierre Dubuis (eds), *Organisation et mesure du temps dans les campagnes européennes de l'époque moderne au XXe siècle*	STEFAN HANSS	312
Verena Lehmbrock, *Der denkende Landwirt. Agrarwissen und Aufklärung in Deutschland 1750–1820*	KEITH TRIBE	313
Rebecca Earle, *Feeding the people: The politics of the potato*	ELEANOR BARNETT	314
Christiane Cheneaux-Berthelot, *Paris et ses campagnes au XIXe siècle: marchés, productions, producteurs*	P. M. JONES	316
Richard Broome, Charles Fahey, Andrea Gaynor and Katie Holmes, *Mallee Country: Land, people, history*	KOSMAS TSOKHAS	317
Ulrike Kirchberger and Brett M. Bennett (eds), *Environments of empire: Networks and agents of ecological change* Corey Ross, *Ecology and power in the age of empire: Europe and the transformation of the tropical world*	MAURITS W. ERTSEN	318
Ben Nobbs-Thiessen, *Landscape of migration: Mobility and environmental change on Bolivia's tropical frontier, 1952 to the Present*	SETH GARFIELD	320
Marcel Thomas, *Local lives, parallel histories: Villagers and everyday life in divided Germany*	GEORGE GIBSON	321

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Society Business

Forthcoming conferences

British Agricultural History Society Spring Conference, 2022

This conference will (provisionally) be held at Harper Adams University, Shropshire, on Monday 4 to Wednesday 6 April 2022.

Rural History 2021

The fifth biennial conference of the European Rural History Organisation (EURHO), Rural History 2021, will take place in Uppsala, Sweden. This conference has been postponed to Monday 20 to Thursday 23 June 2022.

Further details of these conferences will be available from the Society's website at www.bahs.org.uk

Joan Thirsk Memorial Prize 2022

Submissions are invited for the Joan Thirsk Memorial Prize offered by the British Agricultural History Society in memory of Joan Thirsk (1922–2013). The Thirsk prize is an annual award for the best book in British and Irish rural or agrarian history employing broadly historical methodology (so works of social anthropology, archaeology or of contemporary rural sociology will not be eligible). There is a single prize of £500 (which may be split) and the committee is allowed to commend other submissions.

The winner of the prize will be announced in April 2022.

For further details see the Society's website at www.bahs.org.uk

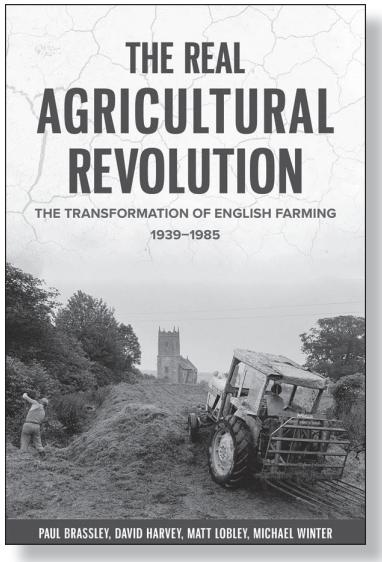
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Leasing, fattening and guarding livestock in times of crises: North-Eastern Catalonia, *c*.1330–70*

by Lluís Sales i Favà

Abstract

Sedentary livestock husbandry became a central activity by which peasants in late medieval Catalonia earned a living and were also able to withstand the economic, environmental, and military crises of the fourteenth century. The case study of the Les Gavarres region and the exploration of its notarial sources demonstrates that animal rearing provided economic autonomy to the servile peasantry. It initially describes the specific leasing contracts that enabled an active market for fattening livestock. Taking into account a sample of 3082 contracts related to this market between 1330 and 1370, it subsequently provides evidence about the wide extent of livestock rearing and about the factors that affected the activity (plague, crop failure, warfare). The case of the ovi-caprine herds ultimately demonstrates the strategies used by peasants in order to cope with short-cycle crisis. By resorting to these resilient animals or enlarging their herds, families could balance cereal or labour shortages. The study challenges the traditional idea of Mediterranean livestock husbandry being ancillary or hostile to settled agriculture.

It is well known that the Mediterranean was a region of transhumant livestock rearing, in which flocks and herds were driven long distances and largely kept separate from cereal agriculture. The implications of this for understanding the rural economies of the Mediterranean are profound, affecting considerations of crop yields, resource management, the role of formal institutions that organized transhumance, and the context within which peasant producers cultivated the land.[1] The administrative complexities required to manage such extensive transhumant herds have attracted the attention of historians, who

* I wish to thank Alexandra Sapoznik (King's College London) and the two anonymous reviewers for their suggestions and comments on the first draft of this article. The research for this paper was undertaken as part of the project funded by the Spanish Ministry of Science, Innovation and Universities "La desigualdad económica en el mundo rural y las pequeñas ciudades de la Cataluña Vieja bajomedieval a través de las fuentes notariales" (PGC-2018-100979-B-C21) and of the research group funded by the Generalitat de Catalunya "Renda feudal i fiscalitat a la Catalunya baixmedieval" (2017 SGR 1068).

[1] J. A Fernández Otal, 'La ganadería y la transhumancia en Aragón: una visión historiográfica', in J. L. Castán and C. Serrano Lacarra (eds), *La transhumancia en la España mediterránea. Historia, Antropología, Medio Natural, Desarrollo natural* (2004), pp. 109–75; M. A Carmona Ruiz, 'La Mesta Real y las mestas andaluzas', in *Historia de Andalucía* (9 vols, 2006), IV, pp. 210–18; M. C. Quintanilla Raso, 'El pastoreo en Cuenca a finales de la Edad Media. Bases y lógicas de un sistema económico en la compleja realidad agraria', in J. Gómez-Pantoja (ed.), *Les rebaños de Gerión. Pastores y trashumancia en Iberia antigua y medieval* (2011), pp. 37–69.

have focused on pastures, their management, and the conflicts arising between livestock companies and towns.[2]

Accordingly, for the central and late middle ages, there has also been interest in seigneurial livestock transhumance, generally that organized by large monastic institutions.[3] For Catalonia and Aragon there is a large array of studies on the relations established between the highland pastures and the plains, focusing on the Pyrenees and other scales of the vertical transhumance cycle.[4]

Yet within a broader European context, Iberian livestock breeding has been deemed an underdeveloped sector. The lack of a permanent shift toward pastoral agriculture after the Black Death, and also the widespread use of the light scratch plough instead of the heavy plough hauled by draught animals, have been interpreted as some of the reasons for the long-term divergence between the economic development of the north and the south of the continent.[5]

This article introduces some nuances to the alleged Iberian paradigm of both extensive transhumance and underdevelopment. It presents a case study of sedentary pastoralism in north-eastern Iberia, a land of lasting droughts and poor soils that hindered the possibility of benefiting from all the manure produced. Still under these conditions, the study underlines the integration between settled agriculture and animal breeding.[6] Animals held by peasants on farmsteads were an important and underexplored aspect of the rural economy in the medieval Mediterranean. The cohabitation between animal breeding and cultivation deserves further historiographical attention as it adds complexity to our understanding of the peasant economy.[7] In overall terms, cases of the temporary or permanent increase of sedentary

[2] Some examples for the late medieval Crown of Aragon are J. Fernández Trabal, 'Aprofitaments comunals, prats i pastures al delta del Llobregat (segles XIV–XV). Conflictes per a la utilització de l'espai a la Baixa Edat Mitjana', *Acta Historica et Archaeologica Mediaevalia*, 10 (1989), pp. 189–220; M. T. Ferrer i Mallol, 'Les pastures i la ramaderia a la governació d'Oriola en el segle XIV', *Miscellània de textos medievals*, 7 (1994), pp. 79–139 and J. Fernández Trabal, 'Béns comunals a l'Edat Mitjana: un estat de la qüestió', in J. J. Busqueta and E. Vicedo (eds), *Béns comunals als Països Catalans i a l'Europa contemporània. Sistemes agraris, organització social i poder local als Països Catalans* (1996), pp. 67–74. For an earlier period, see A. Riera Melis, A., 'El valor dels erms: la gestió de les pastures a Catalunya (segles XI–XIII)', in F. Sabaté (ed.), *Natura i desenvolupament. El medi ambient a l'Edat Mitjana* (2007), pp. 221–50.

[3] See C. Hoffman Berman, 'Medieval Agriculture, the Southern French Countryside, and the Early Cistercians', *Trans. American Philosophical Soc.*, 76 (5) (1986), pp. 94–117 and J. R. Hinojosa Montalvo, 'La ganadería en el Elche medieval', *Anales de la Universidad de Alicante. Historia Medieval*, 14 (2003–06), pp. 145–208.

[4] C. Laliena Corbera, F. Utrilla Utrilla and G. Navarro Espinach, 'La evolución histórica del paisaje rural en los Pirineos durante la Edad Media: explotación agropecuaria y recursos forestales', in A. Sabio and I. Iriarte (eds), *La construcción histórica del paisaje agrario en España y Cuba* (Zaragoza, 2003), pp. 53–64; C. Denjean, 'Gens des villes ou peuples des montagnes? Regards sur les Pyrénées (XIIe–XVe siècle)', *Actes des congrès de la Société des historiens médiévistes de l'enseignement supérieur public*, 34 (2003), pp. 293–314; O. Codina Vialette, 'Del dret d'orri al cortó. Evolució de la ramaderia ovina a Andorra (segles XV–XIX)', *Estudis d'Història Agrària*, 18 (2005), pp. 91–110.

[5] M. Hechter, M. W. Brustein, 'Regional modes of production and patterns of State formation in Western Europe', *American J. Sociology*, 85 (5) (1980), pp. 1061–94; N. Voigtländer H.-J. and Voth, 'How the West "invented" fertility restriction', *American Economic Rev.*, 103 (6) (2013), pp. 2227–64.

[6] B. Kayser, 'Désintégration et intégration des relations agriculture-élevage dans les régions méditerranéennes', *Annales de Géographie*, 557 (1991), pp. 18–30.

[7] As has been assessed for other regions of the Continent by G. Barker, A. Grant, P. Beavitt, N. Christie, J. Giorgi, P. Hoare, T. Leggio and M. Migliavacca, 'Ancient and modern pastoralism in central Italy: an

pastoralism in relation to transhumance should also be taken into account by researchers, as has been the case for later periods in Iberia.[8]

Thorough exploration of notarial registers of the region of Les Gavarres, in Catalonia, demonstrates not only that sedentary pastoralism was a prominent activity, but that, through rearing livestock, the servile peasants were able to achieve a certain level of economic autonomy. Furthermore, study of the legal mechanisms by which they loaned, shared or sold livestock has uncovered the widespread use of *comanda* contracts, which penetrated into all layers of rural society. Sedentary livestock rearing was, ultimately, an important means by which peasants were able to withstand the economic, environmental, and military crises of the fourteenth century.

In this context, agriculture and pastoralism coexisted on farmsteads and shaped one another, likely improving the yields of both activities. Over the period studied (1330–70), the region saw a more intensive exploitation of the fallows, through a selective contribution of manure to the fields, the construction of dovecotes, and the extension of forage land plots (*farraginals*); and, in the largest farmsteads, the stabling of livestock or the closure of certain plots of land to guard the animals (*closos*).[9] Long-range transhumance has not been detected in this zone of small peasant landholdings and scarce communal land. The latter circumstances hampered the mobility of animals. Most of the flatter lands in northern Catalonia shared these same conditions.[10]

The study is also inspired by the question of the nature of ecological adaptation of livestock rearing to conditions in Les Gavarres. Peasant families set in diverse ecological contexts showed marked preferences for specific breeds depending on the prevalence of crops or scrubland, while ecological and environmental factors also imposed limitations on herd sizes. In periods of crisis, the intensification of livestock breeding, and breed selection, allowed peasant families to mitigate the impacts of crop failure, mortality, and warfare.

Drawing on extensive archival material from the region of Les Gavarres from the fourteenth century, section one of the article discusses the *comanda* contracts which underpinned the system of leasing livestock between peasants and the ways in which a market for fattening livestock developed in this region, demonstrating the importance of this legal and financial instrument to the peasant economy. Section two examines the extent of livestock rearing,

Note 7 *continued*
interdisciplinary study in the Cicolano mountains', *Papers of the British School at Rome* , 59 (1991), pp. 15–88 and by P. Slavin, 'Peasant livestock husbandry in late thirteenth-century Suffolk: Economy, environment, and society', in M. Kowaleski, J. Langdon, and P. R. Schofield (eds), *Peasants and lords in the medieval English economy: Essays in honour of Bruce M. S. Campbell* (2015), pp. 3–26.

[8] C. R. Phillips and W. D. Phillips Jr., *Spain's Golden Fleece: wool production and the wool trade from the middle ages to the nineteenth century* (1997).

[9] Contemporary sources show the practice of a 'guaret vell', in opposition to a newer form of fallow husbandry, likely a three-field system. In the latter, fodder legumes such as white lupin would have been incorporated to provide nitrogen to the crops: AHG, Notaria de Caldes-Llagostera, CL 44, f. 124v–125r (1353-V-3). See also A. Riera Melis, *Els cereals i el pa en els països de llengua catalana a la baixa edat mitjana* (2017), pp. 237–8.

[10] But rare exceptions do exist. The hills of the Montgrí, some 20 km. further north, were largely scrubland on calcareous soils, not suitable for agriculture. Large flocks of sheep grazed here in the winter after having descended from the summer pastures of the Oriental Pyrenees. See X. Soldevila i Temporal, 'L'élevage ovin et la transhumance en Catalogne nord-occidentale (XIIIe–XIVe siècles)', in P.-Y. Laffont (dir.), *Transhumance et estivage en Occident* (2006), pp. 109–18.

the volume of transactions which can be extrapolated from the sources, and how external factors such as plague, weather and crop failure affected the prevalence of livestock rearing. In particular, it will be seen how embedded sedentary livestock rearing was in the rural economy of this region, and the role of environmental factors in supporting, maintaining, and limiting the size of flocks and herds. Section three puts these trends in livestock rearing into context to show how livestock rearing allowed peasants greater economic agency and resilience than has previously been thought. Together, this paper throws light on an as yet unexplored aspect of the medieval economy.

I

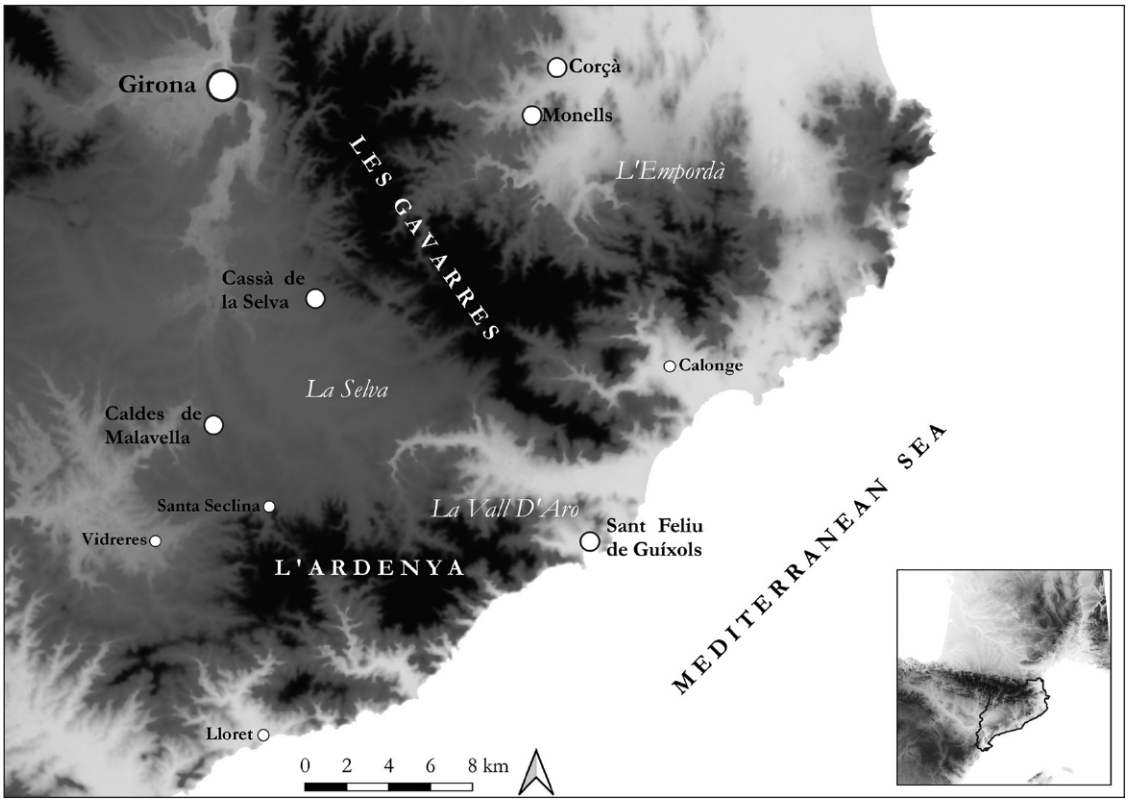
The area under study in this article is the Les Gavarres hills and three of the plains that surround them: La Selva to the west; the lower Ter river basin to the north east; and the valley of Aro to the south (Map 1). Les Gavarres forms an extended terrain of around 39,000 hectares of low Mediterranean mountains in north-eastern Catalonia. The vegetation combines areas of stone pine and cork oak with scrubland filled with arbutus, mastic and spiny broom. The hills stretch from the city of Girona toward the small town of Calonge, which sits on a narrow slope facing the sea.

In the late middle ages, the most densely inhabited spots were the small towns and villages situated in the depressions that surround the higher ground. These undulating plains (Empordà, La Selva, valley of Aro) were home to an intensive fallow agriculture, growing winter-cycle cereals (chiefly wheat, but also oats and barley) and spring crops (millet), along with flax in specific highly irrigated plots. The dwellers of the scattered peasant households in the territory (*mas* sg., *masos* pl.), both in the hills and the plains, were invariably peasants of servile status (*remença*). These men were bound to one single *mas*, owned by a lord, and were obliged to pay a redemption if this wished to leave the tenancy. The lord also enforced a series of personal demands on his peasants, including fines for female adultery, death without a heir or damage to the house from fire.[11] Nonetheless, these peasants were allowed to take autonomous economic decisions in regards of their *mas*: selling, renting or using land as collateral in debt contracts land were allowed upon payment of a fine to the lord, and also investment in rural industries (mills, forges, kilns).

The findings of this article arise from an extensive survey of the notarial registers of five of these small towns: Caldes de Malavella and Cassà de la Selva to the west, Sant Feliu de Guíxols in the Vall d'Aro, and Corçà and Monells on the Empordà in the northeast. Before the Black Death of 1348, none of these towns had more than 1000 inhabitants, and some, such as Corçà and Cassà were considerably smaller. Each of these communities used one single notarial office, granted by their jurisdictional lord. For this reason, it can be assumed that all significant economic transactions which took place in these towns appear in the books analysed, which also capture many more inhabitants from the surrounding areas.

All data related to livestock and stockbreeding has been collated from a total of 142 notarial books, comprising on average 150 folios each, of which 47 are from Caldes, 42 from Sant

[11] P. Freedman, *The origins of peasant servitude in medieval Catalonia* (1991).



MAP 1. North-eastern Catalonia

Source: AHG, Notarial registers of Cassà de la Selva, Caldes de Malavella, Sant Feliu de Guíxols, Monells and Corçà.

Feliu, 22 from Cassà, 18 from Monells, and 13 from Corçà. The chronology covered by these registers is uneven amongst the five notarial offices. Caldes is the best represented case: out of 492 months between January 1330 and December 1370, the acts of 326 months (66 per cent) are available. Corçà is the worst-represented locality, with only the acts from 112 months (22.7 per cent) surviving, and consistent data just available from 1352 onward.[12]

Sources available suggest an increase of stockbreeding over the fourteenth century, particularly in response to the demand from towns, which were voracious consumers of meat.[13] The urban centres also hosted some of the productive processes of a growing Catalan drapery industry, as well as tanneries, which required wool and skins respectively.[14]

[12] In Cassà, data from 273 months is available, accounting for 55.5% of the time. For this notary, registers are absent between 1343 and 1348. Sant Feliu offers consistent data for 1339 onward, with 240 months available in total (49%). The available registers are more patchy for Monells, where 142 months are preserved (28.8%).

[13] R. A. Banegas López, *Sangre, dinero y poder: El negocio de la carne en la Barcelona bajomedieval* (2016).

[14] For the wool see M. Gual Camarena, 'Orígenes y expansión de la industria textil lanera catalana en la Edad Media', in M. Spallanzani (ed.), *Produzione, commercio e consumo dei panni di lana nei secoli XII–XVIII* (1976), pp. 511–523 and L. To Figueras,

TABLE 1. Types of documents related to livestock market in the notarial offices of Les Gavarres (1330–70)

	Purchases		*Leases*
	ex novo debt notes	actual contracts	*comandes de bestiar*
Cassà de la Selva	37 (11%)	6 (2%)	287 (87%)
Caldes de Malavella	414 (24%)	55 (3%)	1252 (73%)
Sant Feliu de Guíxols	36 (13%)	22 (8%)	216 (79%)
Monells	272 (42%)	36 (6%)	344 (53%)
Corçà	14 (13%)	3 (3%)	88 (84%)
Total	773 (25%)	122 (4%)	2187 (71%)

Source: AHG, Notarial registers of Cassà de la Selva, Caldes de Malavella, Sant Feliu de Guíxols, Monells and Corçà.

Livestock breeding in late medieval Catalonia is demonstrated most clearly through contracts made regarding the leasing, sharing and selling of livestock.[15] Purchases of livestock produced debit notes, and were relatively infrequent. Much more common were livestock leases (*comandes de bestiar*). A total of 3082 contracts of sales and leases types have been collected in the aforementioned notarial registers for the region and period under scrutiny, of which livestock leases, henceforth *comandes*, account for almost three-quarters (Table 1). In the smallest of these settlements, Cassà, as much as 87 per cent of the private contracts in relation to herds were articulated as *comandes*, and these accounted for 53 per cent in Monells.

The *comanda* contract was widespread throughout southern Europe during the late medieval period.[16] It consisted of a temporary transfer of a herd or an animal from a lessor to a holder,

Note 14 *continued*
'La comercialització dels draps de llana a Vic: un exemple de la recaptació dels impostos de la bolla de plom i del segell de cera (1363–1364)', in J. Baget, P. Orti Gost and P. Verdés (eds), *Renda feudal i fiscalitat a la Catalunya baixmedieval* (2018), pp. 253–78. For the leather industry, see R. Salicrú, 'Los cueros bovinos en el Mediterráneo del siglo XV: retroceso del mercado magrebí y auge de los mercados ibéricos', in R. Córdoba de la Llave (coord.), *Mil años de trabajo del cuero: actas del IIº Simposium de Historia de las Técnicas* (2003), pp. 169–200.

[15] For a discussion on the types of sources available for studying the peasants' livestock in this period and region, see E. Mallorquí, 'Masos agraris o ramaders? El cas de Cruïlles i Sant Cebrià dels Alls a la primera meitat del segle XIV', in J. Bolòs, E. Jarne and E. Vicedo (eds), *Família pagesa i economia rural: VII Congrés sobre Sistemes agraris, organització social i poder local* (2010), pp. 169–99.

[16] The first documented *comandae* make their appearance in the western Mediterranean around 1230 (M. Le Mené, 'Les redevances a part de fruits dans l'Ouest de la France au Moyen Age', in *Les revenus de la terre, complant, champart, métayage, en Europe occidentale (IXe–XVIIIe siècles), Actes des VIIes Journées Internationales d'Histoire de l'Abbaye de Flaran. Septembre 1985* (1987), pp. 22–3). Depending on the ecological contingencies or on the types of animals grazed, they present slightly different legal forms [C. Rendu, 'Un aperçu de l'économie cerdane à la fin du XIIIème siècle: draps, bétails et céréales sur le marché de Puigcerdà en 1280–1281', *Quaderns d'Estudis Cerdans*, 1 (1991), pp. 91–2; M. Gómez de Valenzuela, *Documentos sobre ganadería altoaragonesa y pirenaica (siglos XV y XVI)* (2007)]. These contracts were used both in sedentary and extensive pastoralism (R. Soto, 'Ovelles, vaques, porcs i eclesiàstics (algunes consideracions sobre la ramaderia balear a l'Edat Mitjana, segles XI–XIV)', *Estudis d'Història Econòmica*, 1 (1992), pp. 13–29), but

in exchange for a quantity of money which may or may not have been proportional to the profit obtained from the exploitation of the stock. This descriptive section focuses primarily on the form of these *comandes* due to their ubiquity in the notarial registers, but also with the purpose of pointing at a significant historiographical void.

During the central decades of the fourteenth century in Les Gavarres *comandes* were either agreed between neighbours – inhabitants of the same parish or vicinity (*veïnat*) – who were either peasants or specialized intermediaries; or secondarily assigned by merchants from towns and cities. The *comandes* of this region dealt with small assemblages of animals that were husbanded by peasant families. These people were a vital joint for an integrated livestock market which reached the urban centres of consumption.

Between 1330 and 1370, two subtypes of *comandes* show up in the notarial manuals. On the one hand was the sharecropping of animals, by which the borrower agreed to the return of the initial capital invested by the lender in the herd, in addition to a proportionate share of the profits that were to be yielded.[17] On the other hand, we encounter simple deposit orders; transfer of livestock with, apparently, no other condition than the restitution of animals at the request of the lender. Both types inevitably relied on informal private arrangements, in which the profits that would be shared, the use to which animals would be put, or the time of their return were agreed. Of the total 2187 *comandes*, 52 per cent utilize the set of clauses specific to sharecropping (1132), while the remaining 48 per cent (1055) were simple deposits.[18] Although the uses to which animals were put are not always evident in the sources, animals that yielded secondary products that could be destined for consumer markets (ovi-caprids, swine, cattle) were preferably borrowed on a sharecropping basis, whilst simple deposits were used to place draught animals on others' hands.

Within any of the subtypes of *comanda*, animals were frequently transferred to third parties. In order to keep track of the herds and to be able to settle the debt when the contract concluded, the animals were identified with some precision, both through descriptions of their physical traits and by ear cuts and brands.[19] The deeds subsequently detailed the obligations

Note 16 *continued*
also as a strategy of feudal lords to favour the installation of peasants in their estates (R. Jean Emigh, 'Loans and livestock: comparing landlords' and tenants' declarations from the Catasto of 1427', *J. European Econ. Hist.*, 25 (2) (1996), pp. 705–23).

[17] As most of these documents read: 'Lucrum quod fecerit animalia supradicta medium per medium dividatur inter me et vos'. This same contract, entitled *gazaille*, has been described for the Languedoc in G. Sicard and M. Sicard, 'Redevances a part de fruits et métayage dans le sud-ouest de la France au Moyen Age', in G. Sicard and M. Sicard, *Les revenus de la terre,* pp. 71–3. The term *gasalla* would precisely name these contracts in north-eastern Catalonia in the sixteenth century. See P. Gifre Ribas, *Els senyors útils i propietaris de mas. La formació històrica d'un grup social pagès (vegueria de Girona, 1486–1730)* (2012), p. 465.

[18] But in two notarial offices in particular that served less dynamic rural markets, Sant Feliu de Guíxols and Corçà, explicit sharecropping became practically hegemonic in the livestock market during the fourteenth century. Distribution of these two subtypes is the following: Monells, 121 simple deposits (35%) and 223 share contracts (65%); Cassà de la Selva, 168 deposits (59%) and 119 share contracts (41%); Sant Feliu de Guíxols, 16 deposits (7%) and 200 share contracts (93%); Caldes de Malavella, 738 deposits (59%) and 514 share contracts (41%); Corçà, 12 deposits (14%) and 76 share contracts (86%).

[19] In 1348 a flock of sheep had circular perforations made in their ears ('cissas in rotundo'), whilst in 1347 a red cow borrowed by a widow had been marked in white ('signis albis'). See, respectively, AHG, Notaria de Monells, Mn 168 (1348-XII-1) and AHG, Notaria de Monells, Mn 281 (1347-II-3).

of the borrower towards the herd. Although a very limited range of verbs is used, the parties seemed to pick the expression according to the activity that best suited the type of livestock or the concrete agreement that had been reached.[20]

The *comandes* also often include cash loans, in addition to leases of animals. The loan would be subject to the same principles under which livestock were borrowed. In 1350 Bonanat Esteve from the vicinity of Puigmoler, in Cassà, acknowledged receiving from Bonanat Alagot a donkey but also 47 *sous* (s.) on a simple deposit.[21] Bonanat Alagot was an active local livestock dealer, who mostly employed this mechanism in his business.[22] Several interpretations arise from these deals: the loan could provide for the animal's care (such as for fodder, horseshoeing, and so on); it could be a mechanism to secure the commercial relationship between lessor and lessee;[23] or could sometimes even be a disguised capitalization of the lessee's own livestock.[24]

When these contracts came to an end, the parties calculated the profits to be shared. In explicit sharecropping contracts, the overall profits were the difference between the initial and the sale prices, while the share was generally at halves. In reality the possibilities afforded by *comandes* was endless. *Comandes* did not only deal with fattening cattle intended for slaughtering and selling to butchers, but also other stock that generated by-products were included in informal side-agreements. Details about products such as wool, dairy products or manure are rarely given. When these are recorded, they provide clear examples of the ways in which these animals were used and the potential benefits of leasing. On January 17, 1367, in Cassà de la Selva, the notary registered a contract in which Pere Saulina, from the hamlet of Santa Pellaia, lent ten white sheep to Arnau Geronès, from the vicinity of Llebrers, in Cassà.[25] The document states that there was an agreement to share the benefits, but the initial estimated cost of the animals was immediately crossed out by the scribe. Apparently, the parties had reached a more complex arrangement, which required an ancillary document registered on the same day due to clarify the terms of contract.[26] Pere Saulina was enabled to recover his

[20] E.g. *pensare, custodire, procurare, cibare* (i.e. to pay for, to guard in custody, to take care of, to feed).

[21] AHG, Notaria de Caldes-Llagostera, CL 36, f. 136r (1350-VI-21). This amount of money was not far from the 36 s. a donkey could cost, on average, between 1348 and 1352 in neighboring Caldes de Malavella.

[22] Most of the examples from Cassà of this type correspond to provisions made by Alagot.

[23] For the late medieval Treviso contracts 'de depositi et salvamenti' have been described, in which livestock was borrowed along with cash, as a ways of allowing the purchase of the animal by the lessee, and thus being a preamble of a sharecropping contract (*soccida*). See G. Cagnin, 'Pro bono et fino amore, de iusto et vero capitali et vera sortex: documentazione notarile e credito a Treviso (secoli XIII–XIV)', in F. Menant and O. Redon (eds), *Notaires et crédit dans l'Occident méditerranéen médiéval* (2004), p. 114.

[24] Sixty-five of the total 2187 (2.9%) *comandes* analyzed include a resale agreement as an ancillary clause, in which it is significantly set forth that the return of, only the loan, would settle the whole contract. The conversion of livestock into capital still shows up in another circumstance. In the livestock sharecropping contracts, the instruments attest the initial investment – which was to be entirely recovered by the lender – through alternative formulae. Here, it is common for the same sharecropper to unfold as the salesman (*que animalia a nobis emistis*), assessing again that a lien had been put on the peasant's livestock in order to raise funds. This is mentioned in 219 of the total 2187 contracts (10%). In conclusion, almost 13% of the *comandes de bestiar* considered here were a form of capitalizing assets by peasant households.

[25] AHG, Notaria de Caldes-Llagostera, CL 78, f. 6v (1367-I-17).

[26] Ibid.

sheep the following March or April and, with them, all the sheared wool. For his part, the borrower could keep the milk and cheese (*caseos et late*) obtained during this time.

By the mid-fourteenth century, *comandes de bestiar* had generated a small market, which even had some impersonal traits. As in the financial market as a whole, the share in the contracts could be split and transferred. The property rights over the animal, or a fraction of it, frequently ended up in the hands of holders who were physically far from the space where the custody and grazing of the flocks took place. These individuals were not involved in livestock farming and would merely expect the punctual return of their profits. For this reason, the basic clauses of the *comandes* achieved a certain level of standardization in Les Gavarres, and possibly throughout the *vegueria* of Girona that made them virtually identical regardless of the authenticating notary. This uniformity made the contract highly attractive and was key to its wide diffusion. These *comandes* were highly portable, and debts could be transferred to third parties or settled by a foreign authority.

Unlike real property purchases and leases in emphyteusis – that required the lord's permission and the payment of a perpetual rent – livestock could be transferred by these peasants to third parties without having to meet tax obligations or any legal impediments. This created an important dynamism in the livestock market. For example, in acquiring, pawning, or even seizing animals in a suit, it was not mandatory to ask for the lord's permission. In this regard, the *comandes de bestiar* were an adaptable product, which allowed, for instance, complex operations of debt compensation (such as meeting other debts with a share of a *comanda*) within the rural communities and beyond.

The presence of livestock in Les Gavarres was notable during the late Middle Ages. By the fourteenth century, single animals and small herds were put in the hands of peasant families, mostly through the system of *comandes*. Almost three-quarters of the contracts relating to livestock were, in fact, leases of this sort. Animals were guarded by the peasantry, who would fatten them to be sent off to the market. After the breeding of livestock, possible subsequent phases of this business (such as sending off the animals toward the city for slaughtering) are documented far less by local sources. As an example, in 1348, the acts of termination of a commercial company between three local intermediaries from Cassà and Caldes assessed that it was owed a certain amount of money from Guillem Gros, a butcher from Perpignan. The company would have been sending cows and calves – their main object of trade – reared by Les Gavarres peasants, to the Roussillon.[27] Other animals would be used to feed the household, to plough their plots or to load their goods. Given that the *comanda* became such a frequent contract in the peasant economy, the scarcity of existing studies is startling. Future comparisons with other cases in Catalonia and beyond will shed more light on this ubiquitous system of leasing animals.

[27] AHG, Notaria de Caldes-Llagostera, CL 33, f. 102v (1348-IX-1). These arrangements were probably more frequent with butchers and tanners from nearby Girona.

II

In this section the livestock market of Les Gavarres is assessed by estimating the volume of business that must have been transacted there and by defining its dynamics in relation to economic and social trends. To do this, all documented livestock contracts are taken into account, including leases and purchases. Pastoralism is interpreted here as a contingent activity that helped peasants overcome troubling periods in an arable-led economy.

In order to address how many animals were involved in the *comanda* contracts on average, it is necessary to remind ourselves that the livestock farming evaluated in this article does not include forms of transhumance. Livestock breeding in Les Gavarres was at the time a complement to sedentary farming, an activity with which it was positively related (for example, through selective soil fertilization which increased crop productivity) but also often conflictingly (such as the frequent invasion of farmland by small domestic animals).[28] In this sense, it cannot be denied that the nature of most of the *masos* in northeastern Catalonia – including those of these coastal hills – imposed certain ecological limits to large herds. Yet however modest, the available sources demonstrate that every *mas* had a contingent of animals, either owned as full property or leased through *comandes*.[29]

As a consequence, fourteenth-century inhabitants of the area of Les Gavarres took part in minor transfers of livestock. More than 80 per cent of the documented contracts, for example, at Monells, mobilized one or two animals (Table 2). The dynamics documented there can be extrapolated to the other localities. However, as the number of transferred heads of livestock increases, the number of documents declines.

Nine out of ten *comandes de bestiar* include fewer than ten animals.[30] One single *comanda* could combine different types of animals or include animals of different ages. Similarly, debt notes arising from purchases reflect transactions in which only a single animal was involved. However, here the animals were less diverse in character. Purchases were used only to transfer the most valuable animals in their optimal state of maturity (i.e. adults), which could render the operation profitable right from its beginning. These transactions appear almost entirely to have been restricted to oxen, cows, donkeys, mares and mules.

Although the number of animals in each transaction was rather modest, the documents show that, between 1330 and 1370, this area was home to constant livestock breeding, fattening, leasing and selling. The intensity of this trade, adjacent to the city of Girona, made Les Gavarres an area coveted by both feudal lords and urban capital. These actors were interested

[28] Ordinances or bylaws related to these trespasses can be found at AHG, Notaria de Caldes-Llagostera, CL 45, f. 23 (1354-III-4); CL 45, f. 26 (1354-III-18); CL 58, f. 62 (1359-VII-29); CL 58, f. f. 67v (1359-VIII-19); CL 70, f. 138v (1365-VIII-9); Notaria de Monells, Mn 215 (1368-VIII-16); Mn 215 (1370-VI-17).

[29] P. Orti Gost and L. To Figueras, 'Serfdom and Standards of Living of the Catalan Peasantry before and after the Black Death of 1348', in S. Cavaciocchi (ed.), *Schiavitù e servaggio nell'economia europea secc. XI–XVIII. Atti della 'Quarantacinquesima Settimana di Studi' 14–18 aprile 2013* (2014), pp. 155–72.

[30] The average observed number of animals per contract ranges from 6.1 to 3.7 depending on the location. In Corçà there were 6.1 animals on average per contract; in Sant Feliu, 5.8; in Cassà and Caldes, 3.7 both; and in Monells, 3.4. *Comandes* including sheep, goats or both imply the mobilization of a larger volume of livestock (they generally grazed in larger herds); the higher presence of sheep in the markets of Corçà and in Sant Feliu explains the differences.

TABLE 2. Head of livestock transferred in Monells (1330–69)

Number of animals	0.5–1 (%)	1.5–2 (%)	2.5–3 (%)	3.5–4 (%)	5–10 (%)	11–20 (%)	21–39 (%)	≥40 (%)	*Total*
Number of *comandes*	161 (47)	92 (27)	17 (5)	13 (4)	28 (8)	19 (6)	13 (4)	1 (0.3)	344
Number of debt notes	201 (86)	25 (11)	2 (1)	0 (0)	2 (1)	0 (0)	3 (1)	1 (0.4)	234
Number of purchase contracts	4 (22)	0 (0)	2 (11)	0 (0)	0 (0)	5 (28)	5 (28)	2 (11)	18
Total	366 (61)	117 (20)	21 (4)	13 (2)	30 (5)	24 (4)	21 (4)	4 (0.6)	596

Source: AHG, Notarial registers of Monells

in direct extraction of rents, along with being able to graze and fatten livestock so close by. The trend possibly dated back several decades.[31]

Interpolating the partial data available for the five markets and the four decades under study, perhaps as many as 6200 contracts, involving some 25,000 heads of livestock, and an investment of 600,000 *sou*s (s) would have been recorded.[32] Although the actual trend is described below, the average is of about 600 head of livestock transferred annually in these towns.

Comparison with the results obtained by Christian Guilleré for the city of Girona between 1341 and 1348 – who collected information from approximately half of the notaries acting in the city at that time, but strikingly documented fewer than 600 animals in only 100 *comandes* for this period – suggests how proportionally much more vigorous these rural trading nodes were compared with a city of around 10,000 inhabitants in terms of livestock transactions.[33] As a consequence, it can be deduced that most of the peasant families in the territory met their needs in the rural markets to which they were relatively close. In turn, Girona was the destination for some of the fattened animals and their by-products, although during this period it does not appear to have been the main supplier for the peasantry. In terms of livestock, the rural markets analysed here had a catchment area of less than ten km, although the most active could attract customers from as far as 25 km away seeking the most valuable animals.[34]

[31] As an early example, in 1151, the officials of the count Ramon Berenguer IV summoned as much as 440 swine as the anual rents paid by the *masos* of Caldes and nearby Llagostera. See T. N. Bisson, *Fiscal accounts of Catalonia under the early count-kings: 1151–1213* (1984), p. 44.

[32] L. Sales i Favà, 'Crèdit i morositat a la Catalunya del segle XIV. El cas de la baronia de Llagostera' (unpublished PhD thesis, University of Girona, 2019), p. 290–3.

[33] C. Guilleré, *Girona al segle XIV* (2 vols, 1993), I, 371–80.

[34] In order to complete an estimation for the whole perimeter of Les Gavarres it should also be taken into account the volume of transactions in the four eastern-most markets (La Bisbal d'Empordà, Peratallada, Palafrugell and Calonge), but this exercise is unachievable due to mostly fragmentary or simply non-existent notarial ledgers.

Two of these markets stand out above the rest: Caldes de Malavella and Monells, for which there may have been over 4500 contracts.[35] They draw our attention to several factors: the number of protocolized contracts, the diversity of business, the volume of heads of livestock which transited through town, the diversity of animals, and the turnover that all this implied.

Thus three-quarters of the business in this ecological space would have taken place in the markets of Caldes and Monells. Between the two localities, they could have absorbed the traffic of about 16,500 animals during this period. Of similar size, the towns are located at opposite ends of the massif. Well connected with the city of Girona, other small towns, and the main trade roads, they had the advantage of acting as a hinge joint between immediate *masos*, those inside the massif, and the Empordà and the Selva plains. In other words, they brought together different habitats and products, which was possibly the key to their success as trade centres.

The animals traded in the markets and towns around Les Gavarres were of all types of domestic livestock, including cattle, horses, mules, goats, sheep, swine, geese, and even beehives (Table 3). Cattle – both oxen and cows – appear frequently and were present in similar proportions in all markets. These were the most common type of livestock in the late medieval *masos* due to their versatility, providing dairy products, meat and skins, reared calves, and draught power. The breeds that show the biggest divergence between zones were swine, and especially the sheep and goats. The latter two constituted an important part of the volume of trade: logically, goats and sheep were integrated into larger herds. However, certain areas witnessed a greater presence of these animals than others. In Sant Feliu and Corçà, sheep and goats represented 60.3 per cent and 67.5 per cent of the total number of documented animals respectively.[36] In Cassà and Caldes they accounted for 36.1 and 43 per cent, showing that they were more central to the commercial and domestic economy in the north-east and in the maritime Gavarres than in the western La Selva. It is likely that the topography of the upper Les Gavarres, with pronounced slopes and ravines, determined this distribution.[37]

Donkeys and mules were much rarer. In addition to agricultural tasks, they were used in carrying heavy loads, and thus their physical deterioration as a result of work could be significant and fast. Therefore, these animals, as well as oxen, were most frequently purchased rather than leased. Horses (draft horses and mares) are grouped under the heading 'other equines' in Table 3 along with male and female foals (the exact nature of which is unknown). Other animals such as geese and beehives appear only infrequently.[38]

[35] Inferred data provides 2537 livestock contracts for Caldes and 2080 for Monells. This balance is surpassed in terms of heads of livestock: 9304 for the former, 7167 for the latter. As mentioned above, the operations in Caldes involved a higher number of animals (3.7) than in Monells (3.4).

[36] In Sant Feliu the number of goats was double that of the sheep, while in Corçà the former appeared to be irrelevant.

[37] Slavin has detected a sharp negative correlation between pig- and sheep-herding. In late medieval England, swine herds were related to intensive legume-based arable regimes or woodland, whilst sheep were more prevalent on poorer soils of labour-extensive systems. See Slavin, 'Peasant livestock husbandry' pp. 16–18 and 23.

[38] Poultry is generally absent in the notarial documents. Although they were bred for the consumption of eggs and ultimately, feathers and meat, they seldom entered the commercial circuits. Their presence in most *masos* is assessed by widespread and customary emphyteutic rents that ought to be rewarded with chicken or eggs. To this regard, see M. Wilmart, 'Du poulailler au marché. Esquisse d'une économie volaillère médiévale (XIII–XVIe siècle)', *Revue d'ethnoécologie*, 12 (2017).

TABLE 3. Total head of livestock documented in notarial deeds (1328–71)

Market	*Contracts*	*Oxen*	*Cows and other bovines*[a]	*Donkeys and jennets*	*Male and female mules*	*Other equines*[e]	*Goats*[b]	*Sheep*[c]	*Swine*[d]	*Beehives*	*Geese*	*n.i.*	*Total*
	n.	n. (%)	n. (%)	n. (%)	n. (%)	n. (%)	n. (%)	n. (%)	n. (%)	n. (%)	n. (%)	n. (%)	n.
Caldes de Malavella	1681	298 (4.8)	914 (14.8)	463 (7.5)	56 (0.9)	35 (0.6)	1079 (17.5)	1601 (26)	1654 (26.8)	0 (0)	34 (0.6)	29 (0.5)	6163
Cassà de la Selva	326	86.5 (6.9)	175 (14)	68 (5.5)	42.5 (3.4)	4 (0.3)	141 (11.3)	309 (24.8)	410 (32.9)	10 (0.8)	0 (0)	1 (0.1)	1247
Monells	596	96.5 (4.5)	414 (19.3)	133 (6.2)	62 (2.9)	50 (2.3)	334 (15.6)	843 (39.4)	205.5 (9.6)	0 (0)	0 (0)	2 (0.1)	2140
Corçà	105	18 (2.9)	95.5 (15.5)	16 (2.6)	9 (1.5)	4 (0.6)	22 (3.6)	393 (63.9)	48 (7.8)	0 (0)	0 (0)	10 (1.6)	615.5
Sant Feliu de Guíxols	269	29 (1.9)	221.5 (14.2)	18 (1.2)	25 (1.6)	4 (0.3)	629.5 (40.3)	318 (20.3)	284.66 (18.2)	30 (1.9)	0 (0)	3 (0.2)	1563

Notes:
[a] Including male and female calves (*vedells, vedelles*), non-castrated male and female after they are weaned (*braus, braves*) and individuals between one and two years (*jònecs*).
[b] Including bucks and young goats (*cabrits*).
[c] Including rams, ewe lambs and lambs (*anyells, anyelles*).
[d] Including gilts (*porques*), sows (*truges*), male and female piglets (*porcells, porcelles*).
[e] Including draft horses (*rossins*), mares (*eugues*), male and female foal (*pollins* or *poltres*, *pollines*).
Source: AHG, Notarial registers of Cassà de la Selva, Caldes de Malavella, Sant Feliu de Guíxols, Monells and Corçà.

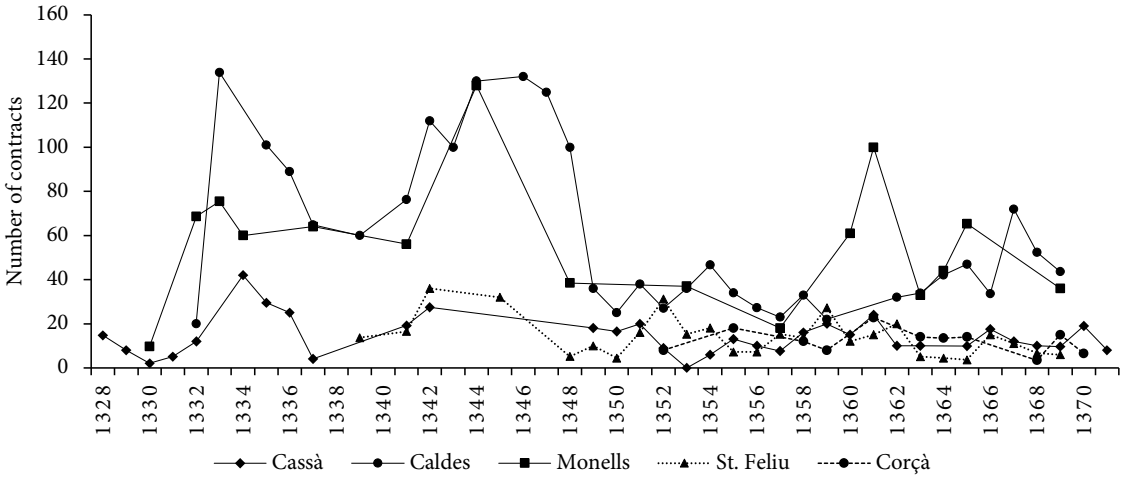


FIGURE 1. Amount of documented livestock contracts in the notarial offices of Les Gavarres (leases and purchases)

This market performed several economic functions: it replenished livestock of each family; but it also assigned animals for fattening within a broader commercial operation. In addition, as assessed for the real estate market, the livestock market allowed the *mas* to adapt to a context of crisis by selling, mortgaging, or on the contrary incorporating more adaptable breeds.[39] These operations are interpreted below in relation to social and economic and trends.

The data analysed for Monells, Cassà and Caldes, from which the oldest serial documentation is available, indicate that the commerce in livestock – both purchases and leases – experienced a sudden rise during the early 1330s (Figure 1). In Caldes, only 20 contracts were recorded in 1332, but there was a sharp increase the following year to 134 contracts. In Cassà, 12 contracts were listed in 1332, and the sources suggest that around 40 would have been made in 1334.[40] In Monells, a similar increase is registered between 1330 (10 contracts), 1332 (69) and the following years.

This activity declined from the middle of the decade until the beginning of the 1340s, although with some variations across the region. In Caldes, 65, 60 and 76 contracts were registered in 1337, 1339 and 1341 respectively. For Cassà, data is only available for the first and the last years (4 contracts in 1337 and 19 in 1341). In Monells, where the sample is also scarce for this period, the trend appears even more stable after the initial rise of the early 1330s. Sixty contracts were recorded in 1334, 67 in 1337, and 56 in 1341. From 1341 on, a general flourishing of the activity is again apparent. This is also seen in Sant Feliu, for which data survives from this period. The figures provided by four notarial offices indicate that the period 1341–48 was of

[39] A. Furió, 'Reproducción familiar y reproducción social: familia, herencia y mercado de la tierra en el País Valenciano en la Baja Edad Media', in F. García González (ed.), *Tierra y familia en la España meridional, siglos XIII–XIX. Formas de organización doméstica y reproducción social* (1998), pp. 25–43.

[40] Data for 1334 in this town is weak: the notarial deeds are only available for to the last two months of the year, during which up to 7 livestock contracts were registered. In 1335, with 11 months documented, the sources provide 27 acts.

intense activity, with peaks by the central years of the decade: Monells registered 128 contracts in 1344, and Caldes 132 in 1346.[41]

The catastrophic mortality of 1348 and the abandoning of many *masos* resulted in severe contraction of the livestock market. In Monells and Caldes, this activity was reduced to approximately one-fifth of the turnover that was being achieved before the Black Death. In the notarial office of the latter town only 25 deeds were registered in 1350 whilst in Monells in 1353, 37 were recorded. This trend stretched throughout the decade after the Plague and is seen, albeit with some local differences, for the whole of the territory under study. The early 1360s saw a recovery in activity. Aggregated data for the set of notaries suggest a rise at the beginning of the decade (1360–61), and another in the latter part of the decade.

It is noticeable that the four cycles for which significant – but relatively short – increases in commercial livestock activity is detected (1332–34, 1341–48, 1361 and 1366–69) coincide with short crises, during which existing literature has demonstrated the rise of grain prices, wheat shortages and famines, spread of disease and mortality, and periods of warfare.

A sharp increase in the number of contracts is seen shortly before and during 1333, known as 'lo mal any primer', a year in which severe drought combined with a crisis of cereal distribution, the consequences of which were prolonged to 1334, with a significant rise in agricultural prices.[42] There are also well-known reports of droughts, bad harvests and scarcity preceding 1348, which would have weakened the population in Europe before it was decimated by the Black Death.[43] In particular, the periods 1340–41 and 1345–47 would have been of years of crisis in the food supply.[44]

Difficulties persisted after the Plague. The 'mortaldat dels infants' of 1362 had been preceded by a grain crisis on a continental scale between 1360 and 1362.[45] Although we have no specific troubles documented in the production or distribution of cereals by the end of that decade, episodes of war between Aragon and Castile, and the increased fiscal pressure by the Crown, could have brought difficulties to the countryside. The incursions by military companies hired

[41] Boost of the livestock market in this same period was also assessed by Guilleré, *Girona*, I, p. 374.

[42] P. Orti Gost, 'El forment a la Barcelona baixmedieval: preus, mesures i fiscalitat (1283–1345)', *Anuario de Estudios medievales*, 22 (1992), pp. 415; T. López Pizcueta, 'El 'mal any primer': alimentación de los pobres asistidos en la Pia Almoina de Barcelona: 1333–1334', in *Actes del Ier Col·loqui d'Història de l'Alimentació a la Corona d'Aragó* (2 vols, 1995), I, pp. 613–23; P. Benito i Monclús and J. Maltas i Montoro, 'Fams immortalitzades. El "mal any primer" (1333–1334) dins l'annalística catalana de la baixa edat mitjana', in G. Castelnuovo and S. Victor (eds), *L'Histoire à la source: acter, compter, enregistrer (Catalogne, Savoie, Italie, XIIe–XVe siècle). Mélanges offerts à Christian Guilleré* (2 vols, 2017), I, pp. 503–20; J. Maltas i Montoro, '"Del cot fet per lo senyor infant en Pere en la ciutat de Leyda". Una iniciativa general para Cataluña contra la hambruna de 1334', in L. Palermo, A. Fara and P. Benito (eds), *Políticas contra el hambre y la carestía en la Europa medieval* (2018), pp. 81–119.

[43] J. Valdeón, 'La crisis del siglo XIV en Castilla: Revisión del problema', *Revista de la Universidad de Madrid,* 79 (1971), pp. 169–72.

[44] The drought in the summer of 1339 implied new scarcity in 1339–40. Still an important increase in the prices of cereal is documented by 1345, that would lead to a crisis of supplies during the two following years. See J. Càceres Nevot, 'La participació del consell municipal en l'aprovisionament cerealer a la ciutat de Barcelona, (1301–1430)' (unpublished PhD thesis, University of Barcelona, 1999), pp. 133 and ff., and Benito i Benito i Monclús, P., 'Crisis de subsistència i polítiques frumentàries a la Barcelona medieval', in M. Renom (ed.), *Proveir Barcelona: el municipi i l'alimentació de la ciutat, 1329–1930* (2016), p. 30.

[45] B. Sharp, *Famine and scarcity in late medieval and early modern England* (2016), pp. 93–4 and J. Drendel,

by Peter III of Aragon into the surrounding territories of Les Gavarres in 1365, and by Castilian partisan troops in 1368–69, are all well documented.[46] Both forays by these *companyies estranyes* fostered episodes of violence with the local population, damage to houses and infrastructure, and most likely, looting of crops.[47] On Saint Stephen's day in 1365, for instance, the notary of Caldes, Dalmau Jaspert, testified through a deed that more than 15,000 men had ridden through the territory led by a certain '"deventera del pillatge", quod dominus rex eis concesserat de omnibus bonis et rebus que et quas invenire possent extra forcias'.[48]

The correlation between increasing periods of activity in the livestock market and short crises, largely related to dearth, offers insight into how livestock rearing and pastoral husbandry fitted within peasant economies. Economists of developing countries today have observed that food shortages often lead peasant families to raise money from their own livestock.[49] Actors are pushed to enter the market to sell or mortgage their domestic animals in order to acquire grain. In agricultural economies, livestock can serve as a buffer to overcome grain shortages, a phenomenon which may explain the tendency to resort to this market in times of insufficient harvests, rising agricultural prices or endogenous economic difficulties on the *masos*. The latter was the particular case of a sale of a donkey between the Reig brothers of Sant Cebrià dels Alls in 1341.[50] The salesman, Pere, who was about to enter the Campins *mas* in Cruïlles as the new husband of its heiress, alleged that he had nothing to eat and that, given the great *inopia* of his living, was obliged to sell the animal to his relative for a price of 50*s*. But beyond any specific case, we must also explain the correlation between crisis and the rise of the livestock market more generally, taking into account the contracts and the types of animals involved.

The peasants who, in the context of pasture shortages and rising fodder prices, acted as lenders in animal leases could have been attempting to unburden their own costs of guarding the animals. But what were the incentives of the borrowers? It has previously been stressed that some *comandes* were in reality a mechanism through which livestock were mortgaged. In other cases, a fictitious purchase of the animals was followed by a *comanda* by which the seller would continue to look after them. But the evidence shows that most of these operations must have involved, effectively, a temporary delivery of new animals to the stock of a *mas*.[51] Although pastoral husbandry was a structural activity that allowed for a regular source of income, it

Note 45 *continued*
'Les disettes en Provence', in M. Bourin, J. Drendel and F. Menant (eds), *Les disettes dans la conjoncture de 1300 en Méditerranée occidentale* (2011), pp. 263–75.

[46] Some references to the former incidents are found in AHG, Notaria de Caldes-Llagostera, CL 71, f. 100v–101r (1365-XII-24); CL 71, f. 102r (1365-XII-25); CL 70, f. 396v–397v (1366-I-5); CL 72, f. 126v–127r (1366-VIII-5), and to the latter, in AHG, Notaria de Caldes-Llagostera, CL 583, f. 20r (1368-VIII-14) i CL 583, f. 45v (1368-XII-11). Under the same circumstances, in Monells, on August 1368 an ordination was decreed for which anyone having a window on the town defensive wall itself was to repurpose it as an arrowslit, along with forbidding the circulation of swine through the streets of the town. See AHG, Notaria de Monells, Mn 215 (1368-VIII-30).

[47] AHG, Notaria de Caldes-Llagostera, CL 76, f. 39v–40r (1367-I-25)

[48] AHG, Notaria de Caldes-Llagostera, CL 71, f. 102r (1365-XII-26). For the consequences of the entry of these military companies see M. Sánchez Martínez, '"Les villes" de Catalogne et les Grandes Compagnies (1365–1366)', in Ch. Raynaud (ed.), *Villes en guerre XIVe – Xve siècles* (2008), pp. 43–62.

[49] H. Binswanger and J. McIntire, 'Behavioral and material determinants of production relations in land-abundant tropical agriculture', *Economic Development and Cultural Change,* 36, 1 (1987), pp. 73–99.

[50] AHG, Notaria de Monells, Mn 165 (1341-I-31).

[51] See note 24.

could also become a contingent activity in difficult times. Livestock required less investment in time and resources than crops; herding and maintaining animals could be assigned to the less productive members of the *mas* such as children and the elderly; it was less affected by dearth, as most animals could adapt to several types of vegetation available; and it was a more practical activity in times of attack and uncertainties.[52]

III

The trends in livestock leasing indicate the development of a strong and active market for livestock. These animals could be sold or, more often, leased by peasants who then tended and fattened them, and took the ancillary products that they produced. The trends in activity in this market for leasing livestock, the times at which it appears most intense, and fluctuations in the type of animals leased, strongly indicate that sedentary pastoral husbandry was a dynamic response by peasants to short-term crisis.

In fourteenth-century Les Gavarres peasants made decisions to diversify their investments in order to guarantee the continuity of their *mas* or even their own survival.[53] This is assessed through the types of animals chosen. The next paragraphs deal with the sheep and goats that appear to have been closely connected with the strategies for mitigating cyclical hardships. These animals were predominantly traded through *comandes* and fattened for market.

Domestic ovi-caprids (goats and sheep) are well adapted to long dry seasons and to shrublands, which are the main features of this coastal Mediterranean habitat. They provided regular milk and, eventually, hides and meat. The latter, from ram and buck, was consumed by the urban lower classes. Wool was mostly supplied by ewes, which were the great majority in flocks. This was the result of a deliberate process of selection to create flocks of a size appropriate to the land-ownership structure and the ecosystem.[54]

Sheep and goats appear in Les Gavarres as a business operated locally, often by intermediary inhabitants of the towns, and by well-off peasants. This specific market did not involve significant concentration of capital. Unlike the market for other animals, in which capital concentration was more intense, in Caldes one man, Simó Prat, managed to monopolize 8 per cent of sheep and goats *comandes* (12 of 150) during the 1340s. The rest of the contracts took place among local petty operators.[55]

The origin of the livestock borrowers indicates that there was a high propensity to place goats in steep areas, while sheep were grazed in all habitats, although preferably in flat zones

[52] A. Riera Melis, 'La ramaderia pagesa als comtats catalans (segles IX–XI)', *Estudis d'Història Agrària*, 17 (2004), pp. 751–64.

[53] In extremely adverse circumstances, it is known that peasants could even decide to reduce the cultivated area, allocating all the grain available for their own food and for the supply of livestock. In 1358, an entry relating to a private account of Bonanat Vila, of Cassà, and drawn up on the occasion of an outstanding debt he had with his neighbor Pere Sala, revealed that in 1349, for instance, no one ploughed the fields in the region including, apparently, those who had oxen to do so. See AHG, Notaria de Caldes-Llagostera, CL 55, f. 72r–72v (1358-I-22).

[54] J. Medrano Adán and M. L. Cercós Vallés, 'La crisis bajomedieval en las sierras turolenses, un modelo de análisis local (Puertomingalvo, 1400–1500)', *Anuario de estudios medievales,* 34, 1 (2004), pp. 237–8.

[55] Sales i Favà, 'Crèdit i morositat', pp. 379–87.

such as fallow land with nearby cereal crops. Perhaps to prevent conflicts arising from trespass, the number of sheep delivered to each *mas* of the flat lands was generally small. In Caldes, of 75 contracts that included goats during the period under study, the animals were delivered to *masos* in Caulès 11 times, 8 in Lloret, 7 in Santa Seclina and 6 in Vidreres (a total of 32 cases, 42.6 per cent). These scarcely populated parishes stretched through the steep hills of the Ardenyes, adjacent to Les Gavarres. This pattern is also reproduced in the other four localities under study.

Goats are voracious animals which could easily come into conflict with agriculture; they were a specialization of the mountain *masos*, where they had access to shrubland.[56] They are also the most resilient of all documented breeds.[57] As shown in Table 4 for Caldes de Malavella, transactions involving these animals, best adapted to adverse conditions, and in particular to droughts, increased in critical periods: the dearth of the 1340s and the onset of the Plague (goats account for 49 per cent of the animals leased in 1345, 43 per cent in 1348, and 46 per cent in 1350) and the troubled period of the late 1360s (with 40 per cent in 1367).[58] Data from Caldes and Monells, where the samples are most robust, indicate that the number of goats in each remittance was between 7 and 16 per cent higher than that of sheep.[59] No significant alterations in these proportions were observed throughout the period studied.

Although goats were particularly traded during periods of crisis, these periods also saw an increase in transactions of ovi-caprid herds as a whole, as sheep and goats were often involved in the same transaction (Table 5, from index n. 86.3 to 130).[60] It is clear that peasants responded to a series of poor consecutive harvests (1340s) or to the desolate scenario of the years after the Black Death, in which labour was in short supply, by resorting to ovi-caprids. Thus, some families chose a type of production that required less investment in labour and time, and which also did not depend as much on forage as other animals did, for they could be fed with the vegetation of the garrigue and at the margins of cropland. In the case of Monells, for example, the herds traded contained an average of 16 head of livestock between 1330 and 1337, whilst between 1340 and 1348 the average climbed to 22.5. Table 5 illustrates the upward trend in the volume of these remittances, followed by declines once the crises had subsided.

Assuming the enlargement of the herds after the Plague, with the available documentation and for this same period – when in principle less productive lands were employed as pastures – it cannot be proven that these were occupied by more ovi-caprids overall (Table 4). The increase in ovi-caprids after the Black Death was, strictly, of the size of the herds. Sheep and goats accounted for 41.9 per cent of all animals traded in Caldes between 1331 and 1349,

[56] By 1513, the Castilian humanist and agronomist Alonso de Herrera, indicated that 'quien quisiere tener éste ganado guarde d·ella qualsequier arboledas y lugares sembrados, que la cabra es muy comedera y golosa', and advised that they ought to be grazed in mountain pastures. See A. de Herrera, *Libro de agricultura que es de labrança y criança* (1539), f. 154v.

[57] Herrera underlined that 'por comer de todas las yervas en los años fortunosos se sostenien muy bien y mejor que los otros ganados' and further commenting 'que ninguna cabra se vida muerta de hambre, que de todo comen'. Ibid.

[58] In Caldes de Malavella, data for only 2 months of 1345 is available, for 10 months of 1348, whilst the whole year is available in 1350. The deeds corresponding to 11 months are usable for 1367.

[59] The documented flocks of sheep, goat or of both breeds range from 11 to 20 heads depending on the town, and rarely exceeded 40 individuals.

[60] Only the herds transferred through a *comanda* (the great majority) have been taken into account.

TABLE 4. Proportion of marketed domestic animals in Caldes de Malavella (1332–69)

	Oxen	*Cows and bovines*	*Equines*	*Sheep*	*Goats*	*Swine*	*Others*	*Total*
	n. (%)	n. (%)	n. (%)	n. (%)	n. (%)	n. (%)	n. (%)	n. (%)
1331–34	8 (2.9)	38.5 (14)	29 (10.5)	78 (28.3)	30 (10.9)	90 (32.7)	2 (0.7)	275.5
1335–39	38 (6.2)	78 (12.7)	80.5 (13.1)	175 (28.5)	70 (11.4)	163.5 (26.6)	10 (1.6)	615
1340–44	61 (4)	179.5 (11.9)	152.5 (10.1)	438 (29.0)	185 (12.3)	475 (31.5)	17 (1.1)	1508
1345–49	48 (3)	166.5 (10.2)	121 (7.4)	345 (21.2)	420 (25.8)	516 (31.7)	10 (0.6)	1626.5
1350–54	40 (6.8)	136.5 (23.2)	33 (5.6)	83 (14.1)	110 (18.7)	176 (29.9)	11 (1.9)	589.5
1355–59	29 (7.8)	88 (23.7)	41 (11)	116 (31.2)	60 (16.1)	38 (10.2)	0 (0)	372
1360–64	26 (7.8)	56.5 (16.9)	35 (10.5)	129 (38.6)	16 (4.8)	72 (21.5)	0 (0)	334.5
1365–69	48 (5.7)	173 (20.5)	61 (7.2)	237 (28.1)	188 (22.3)	123.5 (14.6)	13 (1.5)	843.5

Source: AHG, Notarial registers of Caldes-Llagostera.

TABLE 5. Evolution of the size of ovi-caprine deliverances (1330–69) (index n. 16=100)

	Caldes de Malavella	*Cassà de la Selva*	*Monells*	*Corçà*	*Sant Feliu de Guíxols*	*Total*
1330–1339	97.5	61.3	100	No data	No data	86.3
1340–1349	98.1	No data	140.6	No data	116.3	118.3
1350–1359	135.6	118.8	No data	125	140.6	130.0
1360–1370	120.6	75.6	94.4	118.1	138.8	109.5

Source: AHG, Notarial registers of Cassà de la Selva, Caldes de Malavella, Sant Feliu de Guíxols, Monells and Corçà.

and they experienced an insignificant rise between 1350 and 1369, when they accounted for 43.4 per cent of the total number of animals. In Monells, the number of ovi-caprids declined as a proportion of the total animals grazed after the Black Death, from 65.6 per cent in 1330–49 to 43.6 per cent in 1350–69.

Moreover, the intensification of ovi-caprids breeding by some peasants, perhaps in preference to arable agriculture, was not a general pattern. Rather it applied specifically in certain circumstances in which cultivation of the *mas* was especially difficult, as for lone widows, adolescents and orphans, and the elderly. For example, in Caldes, of the 79 women who appear alone as borrowers of livestock during the period under scrutiny, 59 (75 per cent) did so during one of

the four mentioned periods of subsistence crisis or conflict.[61] Most of these women acted by themselves because they had been widowed or because their husbands were unfit to work on the farmstead.[62]

Thus, alterations to the types of production pursued during short crises were not consolidated in the long term. This was due in large part to ecological and institutional conditions which discouraged the growth of livestock beyond certain limits: fragile coexistence with agriculture in a land of poor soils, the dispersed nature of plots belonging to a single household, fees imposed on access to woods and waste controlled by territorial lords (*emprius*) in Les Gavarres, along with the overall scarcity of communal land (*deveses*) for pasture. This makes a sharp contrast with northern Europe, where during the second half of the fourteenth century the decrease in available labour and the fall in cereal prices caused by the demographic catastrophe of the Black Death led to a contraction in the land under arable cultivation, and an increase in pastoral husbandry.[63] The result was the shift by both peasants and lords from labour-intensive arable land to pastures and pastoral agriculture.

Such a radical change in patterns of production might be convincing for the northern-Atlantic Europe.[64] However, in Mediterranean Iberia, especially away from the Pyrenees, changes were likely gradual and in dialogue with cultivation. Still, from the data analysed, it is clear that crisis had also an impact on the types of specific contracts chosen, either as purchases or comandes. This is particularly apparent with the plague of 1348, and in the markets to the west of Les Gavarres.

As noted above, in all five localities, most peasants involved in the livestock market chose to tend the animals *in comanda* instead of purchasing them outright. This was a general trend in north-eastern Catalonia in the late middle ages. Instead, purchases were restricted to the most valuable animals (oxen, cows, equines). The cost of the latter generally had to be met in a short period of time. An unequal balance between purchases and *comandes* is thus to be found in the sources prior to 1348.

The Plague marked a change of strategy on the western slopes of Les Gavarres. From that period on the purchasing of animals became rare in the markets of Cassà and Caldes. In Caldes, between 1349 and 1369 – the last year with data available – it can be estimated that only four purchases on average were recorded annually, with never more than 10 estimated purchases in one single year, whereas before the Black Death there had been on average 35 sales of livestock annually, accounting for 11.7 per cent of the deeds referred to livestock during this period, after the Black Death these purchases accounted for 33.7 per cent of all transactions.

[61] In Caldes, women alone borrowed livestock in the following occasions: 1333 (2 contracts), 1335 (4), 1336 (5), 1341 (5), 1342 (6), 1343 (3), 1344 (12), 1346 (8), 1347 (11), 1348 (4), 1349 (1), 1350 (1), 1351 (5), 1354 (2), 1358 (1), 1365 (1), 1367 (3), 1368 (1) and 1369 (4).

[62] Discussion about single women and specialization on livestock can also be found in Slavin, 'Peasant livestock husbandry', pp. 19–20.

[63] See N. Morard, 'L'élevage dans les Préalpes fribourgesoises: des ovins aux bovins (1350–1550)', in G. Fournier (ed.), *L'élevage et la vie pastorale dans les montagnes de l'Europe* (1984), pp. 15–26 and B. Campbell, *English seigniorial agriculture, 1250–1450* (2000).

[64] G. Sivéry, 'Le passage de l'élevage extensif à l'élevage intensif et l'évolution des paysages forestiers dans le Sud-Est du Hainaut à la fin du Moyen Age', *Hommes et Terres du Nord*, 2–3 (1986), pp. 172–6 and G. Bois, *La gran depresión medieval: siglos XIV–XV. El precedente de una crisis sistémica* (2001), pp. 79–80.

Although the data is more fragmentary for Cassà, it is worth mentioning that, during the period 1328–42, purchases constituted 22 per cent of all transactions of domestic animals. After a documentary gap between 1343 and 1348, from 1349 onward purchases virtually disappeared from the local market.

Comandes may have been an arrangement better suited to *masos* that, post-1348, were in the process of resizing.[65] These were generally also short of labour due to depopulation caused by the catastrophe.[66] The *comanda* was a cheaper and more flexible option than selling, allowing the lessee the use of the livestock to obtain derived products and, after remunerating its owner, to return it without a significant investment. In addition, Caldes and Cassà experienced a greater influx of capital from Girona from an early stage and the livestock business was also concentrated in fewer hands.[67] These actors would also have preferred *comandes* to selling, since the former was a contract by which the peasantry tended the animals with no expense on the part of the dealer, and were ultimately reintroduced into the commercial circuit supplying meat and other products to the city.

On the northern slopes of the Gavarres, and to a lesser extent also in the Vall d'Aro, the solution adopted after the Plague was one of continuity. Here a certain equilibrium was reached between purchases and leases, with some years even registering a higher number of the former contracts than the latter.[68] The appearance of a significant number of sales reflects that there indeed existed buyers, generally peasants of servile status, inclined to deal with the relatively high cost of animals such as oxen or mules in a single installment. It has to be taken into account that most debt notes in Monells and elsewhere settled a single payment term (193 of 234 contracts), which did not usually exceed half a year.

Different amount of purchases between zones could be an indication that the *masos* on the Empordà were positioned to act more vigorously in the new post-plague era than those of La Selva (although the latter appear less integrated with urban demands). Further studies on the consequences of the Black Death in the towns and *masos* of the region of Girona, could shed further light on the extent to which this was true cross the region.[69]

This section has highlighted the important role of livestock in peasant economies during the fourteenth century. Although many of the animal products were destined for urban

[65] Ferrer i Mallol, M. T., 'Establiments de masos després de la Pesta Negra', in M. T. Ferrer i Mallol, J. Mutgé i Vives and M. Riu i Riu (eds), *El mas català durant l'Edat Mitjana i la Moderna (segles IX– XVIII). Aspectes arqueològics, històrics, geogràfics, arquitectònics i antropològics. Actes de Col·loqui celebrat a Barcelona del 3 al 5 de novembre de 1999* (2001), pp. 189–241.

[66] Evidence is provided by A. Serra Clota, 'Reaccions senyorials a la crisi agrària a Catalunya, a la baixa edat mitjana: els remences', *Anuario de Estudios Medievales*, 29 (1999), pp. 1018.

[67] See L. Sales i Favà, 'Crédito y redes urbanas: el caso de Girona y las pequeñas ciudades de su entorno en el siglo XIV', in D. Carvajal de la Vega, J. Añíbarro Rodríguez and I. Vitores Casado (eds), *Redes sociales y económicas en el mundo bajomedieval* (2011), pp. 129–50 and Sales i Favà, 'Crèdit i morositat', pp. 286–449.

[68] For example, in 1357 and 1361, in Monells, more purchases than *comandes* are detected. Eleven purchases and 7 *comandes* are registered throughout 1357, whilst in 1361 (with data from 9 months), the sources provide 48 purchases and only 27 *comandes*.

[69] See J. Trenchs Òdena, 'Documentos pontificios sobre la peste negra en la diócesis de Gerona', *Cuadernos de trabajos de la Escuela Española de Arqueología e Historia en Roma*, 14 (1980), pp. 183–230 and C. Guilleré, 'La peste noire a Gérone (1348)', *Annals de l'Institut d'Estudis Gironins*, 27 (1984), pp. 87–161.

consumption, this asset was originally traded in small towns, where it shaped a very active market. For peasants, crisis fostered different transformations of this economic activity. This included dedicating more resources overall to livestock, increasing emphasis on certain breeds in different regions, and a tendency to use flexible contracts. It is likely that these strategies were adopted to help farmsteads overcome periods of scarcity of other resources such as crops and labour, although without consolidating its pre-eminence in the long term.

IV

In 1332 Gilabert de Cruïlles, the local lord of the eponymous town, invited over to his castle the count of Empúries to enjoy a meat feast. This same count, Pere d'Aragó, had taken part in a reception (*comviviolo*) five years earlier that had been organized by Ot de Montcada in the fortress of the latter in Caldes de Malavella. In this gathering the source tells us that a whole calf was served.[70] During the first years of the 1340s, Guillem Ramon de Montcada – possibly the brother of the above-mentioned Ot – visited the town of Caldes several times in order to bathe (*balneabat se*) in the house of one Bonanat Boïga. A local tradesman, Boïga had a thermal pool inside his own residence. The hot spring water, still used today in local spa resorts, emanated from underground. During his stays, the convalescent lord also made sure that the local butcher supplied him with enough meat.[71] These and numerous other available examples provide information about the consumption patterns of the nobility along with the role of lavish meat consumption as a social marker among higher social strata.[72] But as for the interest of this article, these particular cases reveal that Les Gavarres and the surrounding territories were a well-stocked area of domestic animals. Livestock served not only to fill the table of the feudal lords in their sporadic stays in their domains, but principally to supply the urban markets and also to feed the peasant population.

This article has demonstrated a system through which leased livestock were kept on *masos* for commercial purposes, i.e. to be sent to urban markets. Overcoming the dissociation between arable agriculture and livestock breeding so often attributed to Mediterranean farming, peasants managed to consolidate a scheme of custody, fattening and marketing of animals that in Les Gavarres acquired significant dimensions. It must be acknowledged that this activity was not free of conflict, either of ecology, spatial coexistence with cultivation, or of overlapping labour cycles, in addition to droughts, crises and pandemics during the challenging fourteenth century.

In this respect, livestock rearing could have taken on a convertible nature. That is, the peasantry was more or less actively engaged in it depending on broader climatic and social circumstances, in addition to the specific circumstances of each *mas*. The peasantry could also modify the type of livestock raised depending on the life cycle of the *mas* or perhaps

[70] See, respectively, AHG, Notaria de Monells, Mn 162 (1332-III-30) and Notaria de Caldes-Llagostera, CL 3, f. 92r (1329-V-8).

[71] AHG, Notaria de Caldes-Llagostera, CL 21, f. 122v (1341-XI-26); CL 25, f. 110v (1343-XI-18).

[72] A. Riera Melis, 'Jerarquía social y desigualdad alimentaria en el Mediterraneo Noroccidental en la Baja Edad Media. La cocina y la mesa de los estamentos privilegiados', *Acta Historica et Archaeologica Mediaevalia*, 16–17 (1995–1996), pp. 181–205.

on changing market demand. The mechanics of the *comanda de bestiar*, which allowed both lending one's own livestock and tending those of others, was the legal solution that facilitated the entire development of this system.

The needs of the peasantry to diversify their investments converged with the favorable conditions of the region for livestock rearing, including proximity to market and the integration of marketing into the peasant economy. In addition to acting as livestock borrowers, peasant families were also the regular clientele of commodities and money markets. In practice, these markets are not indistinguishable from one another, as shown for example by the cash loans which accompanied the assignment of animals in *comandes*. These were complex operations that most likely resulted in the strengthening of the customer-supplier relationships.

This study of livestock rearing has also uncovered the means by which the unfree Catalan peasantry may have been able to find some measure of economic autonomy. To some degree, livestock grazing escaped the limitations imposed by lords over other economic activities, most notably the land market and pawning. In this respect, access to the market and the quota of livestock grazed on each *mas* can also be used as a marker for assessing social inequalities within peasant communities, along with other indices usually chosen by the scholarship, such as the size of dowries and land holding. The possession of a significant amount of stock improved the well-being of families. In fact, evidence from this territory shows that the amount of livestock accumulated by a few *masos* allowed them to lease surplus animals to the neediest neighbours.[73]

[73] As we have assessed in L. Sales i Favà 'Mercado ganadero y estratificación social en el medio rural catalán (s.XIV)', *Historia Agraria* (forthcoming, August 2022).

The creation and administration of post-enclosure poor lands in English parishes, c.1630–1840*

by Hideaki Inui

Abstract

This paper explores the creation and management of post-enclosure poor lands and variations in the distribution of the benefits derived from these lands between the 1630s and 1840s, with particular attention to the data gathered from across the nation for the Brougham commission reports. It shows that these lands were managed in three broad ways: by trustees allowing the poor to harvest resources directly, by trustees letting (allowing occupancy) to the poor, or by trustees leasing to tenants and utilizing the income, where the trustees were expected to provide annual accounts audited by the inhabitants. It will also illustrate the two main categories of relief that were distributed to the poor, in coal or cash, and the legal procedures used to prevent the trustees acting in breach or requiring them to perform their obligations to secure poor lands as charitable funds.

Poor lands were awarded as part of the process of enclosure with the intention that the rents should be used not to supplement parish revenues to alleviate the burden of tax assessments for ratepayers, but to relieve the poor who did *not* receive parochial relief. Their creation was to compensate for the extinguishing of common rights connected to pre-existing charitable estates that had been created in trust.[1] As was the case with older charitable trusts, the trustees of poor lands were frequently chosen from among the parish elites. During the process of enclosure, poor parishioners could become excluded from direct access to the commons, putting greater weight upon support obtained as parish pensioners[2]. In this respect, understanding the role of post-enclosure poor lands might be of particular significance for an appreciation of the changing institutional culture of the parish[3], reflecting the connection

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[1] E. C. K, Gonner, *Common land and inclosure* (1912), p. 367; J. Humphries, 'Enclosure, common rights, and women: the proletarianization of families in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries', *JEcH* 50 (1) (1990), pp. 17–42.

[2] B. Sharp, 'Common rights, charities and the disorderly poor', in G. Eley and W. Hunt (eds), *Reviving the English Revolution: Reflections and elaborations on the work of Christopher Hill* (1988), pp. 107–37; R. W. Hoyle, 'The forest under the Dynhams', in J. Broad and R. W. Hoyle (eds), *Bernwood: The life and afterlife of a forest* (1997), pp. 35–72. J. Broad, 'The smallholder and cottager after disafforestation – a legacy of poverty?', in Broad and Hoyle, *Bernwood*, pp. 90–107.

[3] S. Hindle, '"Good, Godly and Charitable Uses": Endowed charity and the relief of poverty in rural England, c. 1550–1750', in A. Goldgar and R. I. Frost (eds), *Institutional culture in early modern society* (2004), pp. 164–88.

between the loss of common land through enclosure and stresses upon the Elizabethan poor relief system, which was designed to 'cope with poverty in a predominantly unenclosed rural economy'.[4] As will be discussed, it is likely that the supposedly strict line against using poor lands to relieve the burden on the parish relief system was an ideal not always lived up to.[5] Although post-enclosure poor lands were created from the seventeenth century onwards, historians' studies of the poorer sort in rural society have paid little attention to the capacity of post-enclosure poor lands due to their apparently small contribution nationally.[6] Nevertheless, as with charities, in particular localities they could take on greater importance.

The main objective of this paper is not to contend that post-enclosure poor lands played a decisive role by comparison to the rate-based parish relief developed rapidly after the statute of 1598 onwards, but rather to illustrate the ways in which they were created and managed and how their benefits were distributed among the poor during the years between the 1630s and the 1840s – before the provisions of the Enclosure Act of 1845, which required the award of recreation land and garden allotments for the labouring poor at every enclosure[7]. This study represents an introductory investigation of post-enclosure poor lands, but it would provide a useful resource for scholars of poor relief to fit into a broader national picture.

This article utilizes the evidence of the Charity Commission, or the Brougham Commission, which lasted for 19 years (1819–37) and published 32 reports. The reports are highly revealing of the technical details of the administration of poor lands, in part by consulting them in tandem with the results of an earlier census conducted on charities in 1786, the Gilbert Return (Abstract of the Returns of Charitable Donations 1786, P.P. 1816 XVIa), about which the historical record is almost invariably silent. But it should be noted that about one third of the land descriptions in the Charity Commission reports do not allow us to judge how much of the land was actually enclosed or allocated as poor lands, not least because the land is described in very succinct ways. It is therefore impossible to derive a full overview of post-enclosure poor lands, and the researcher must also be reliant on richer observations of selected specific places available for analysis.[8]

Though the poor could be defined in various ways, in the reports those who enjoyed access to poor lands were defined as the industrious poor who should have 'exclusively'

[4] S. Birtles, 'Common land, poor relief and enclosure: the use of manorial resources in fulfilling parish obligations 1601–1834', *Past and Present* 165 (1999), pp. 105–6.

[5] S. Pinches, 'From common rights to cold charity: enclosure and poor allotments in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries', in A. Borsay and P. Shapely (eds), *Medicine, charity and mutual aid: the consumption of health and welfare in Britain, c.1550–1950* (2007), pp. 50–2.

[6] J. L. Hammond and B. Hammond, *The village labourer 1760–1832, a study in the government of England before the Reform Bill* (1911); Gonner, *Common land*; J. D. Chambers, 'Enclosure and labour supply in the industrial revolution', *EcHR* sec. ser., 5 (1953), pp. 319–43; K. D. M. Snell, *Annals of the labouring poor: social change and agrarian England, 1660–1900* (1985); J. Neeson, *Commoners: common right, enclosure and social change in England, 1700–1820* (1993); J. D. Chambers and G. E. Mingay, *The Agricultural Revolution, 1750–1880* (1966); L. Shaw-Taylor, 'Parliamentary enclosure and the emergence of an English agricultural proletariat', *JEcH* 61 (2001), pp. 640–62; J. Burchardt, *The Allotment Movement in England, 1793–1873* (2002).

[7] Birtles, 'Common land', p. 105.

[8] G. Clark, 'The Charity Commission as a source in English economy history', *Research in Economic Hist.*, 18 (1998), pp. 1–2, 27; P. Cockton, *Subject Catalogue of the House of Commons Parliamentary Papers 1801–1900*, III, *Law and Order, Local Government and Local Finance, Poverty and Social Administration, Education, Information and Recreation* (1988), pp. 696–7.

received charitable allowances and who were 'not maintained by parochial relief' (Weeden Beck, Northants.) These recipients were called simply 'the poor inhabitants', 'poorest sort of labourers' (Little Hale, Lincs.), or 'second poor' (Ashton Keynes, Wilts.). But, in some parishes in Norfolk, the poor were defined as those who had occupied land not above the value of £5 or £6 a year, or who had occupied land with more than a yearly value of £10 but had received parochial relief within six months preceding, meaning that the limits to entitlement seems to have been more rigorous.[9] Exceptionally, at Welford (Northants.), the definition of the eligible poor was extended to 'the poor generally', because only a very small number of poor received no relief at all.[10] As Hoyle suggests, it should be noted that they were 'poor on a broad definition, they were economically sufficient to avoid dependence on the poor law', and were also 'capable of behaving politically'.[11]

In what follows, a more detailed consideration of poor lands rests on three core areas: the regional distribution and scale of poor lands; the creation of poor lands; and their management and distribution of benefits derived from poor lands among the poor.

I

This section will provide details on the distribution and scale of the post-enclosure poor lands recorded in the Reports, which cover the lands that existed in England during the years between 1820 and 1839. Although the data in the returns pertain to 36 counties only, they can be taken as indicative of their spatial distribution and scale, covering 350 post-enclosure poor lands, including 323 cases of parliamentary enclosure (*c.*1750–1840) and 27 cases of pre-parliamentary enclosure (pre-1750) poor lands, established chiefly in the seventeenth century; and 113 cases of poor lands created by private donations identified in the Reports (Table 1). However, this number should be considered a minimum, because some cannot clearly be identified as poor lands due to the brevity of their description, partly because coverage was incomplete as mentioned above, and in some cases because such lands may have disappeared before the Reports were made.[12]

Table 1 shows that post-enclosure poor lands were widespread across England, but most parishes did not have them.[13] The table also shows the median acreage of pre-and post-parliamentary enclosure poor lands in each county identified in the Reports. Judged by whether the acreage was higher than the national median of 13.9 acres, areas with relatively larger poor lands can be identified in the parts of the Fens, the Midlands and the South West. However,

[9] BPP, 1823, VIII, Report of Commissions of Inquiry into Charities in England and Wales, 8th Report, Appendix [thereafter CCR *report number*], p. 544; BPP, 1825, XI, CCR, 13th Report, p. 27; BPP, 1833, XIX, CCR, 26th Report, pp. 106, 278–9; BPP, 1835, XXI, CCR, 29th Report, pp. 612, 1262–3; BPP, 1839, XIV, CCR, 32nd Report, Part IV, p. 193.

[10] BPP, 1825, XI, CCR, 13th Report, pp. 39–40.

[11] R. W. Hoyle and C. J. Spencer, 'The Slaidburn poor pasture: changing configurations of popular politics in the eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century village', *Social Hist.* 31 (2006), p. 200.

[12] Pinches, 'From common rights to cold charity', pp. 42–3.

[13] There were at least about 15,500 parishes, townships, local incorporations and other bodies responsible for administrating poor relief. Cf. S. King, *Poverty and welfare in England, 1700–1850: a regional perspective* (2000), p. 7.

TABLE 1. The number of poor lands in each county

County	*Post-enclosure (No.)*	*Pre-parliamentary enclosure (No. and year)*	*Created by private donations (No.)*	*Median acreage*
Bedfordshire	10	0	2	7.9
Berkshire	12	0	0	8.5
Buckinghamshire	19	2 (1632, 1777)	0	79.7
Cambridgeshire	8	0	2	6.9
Derbyshire	3	0	0	1.5
Devonshire	1	1	4	8
Dorset	4	3 (1628)	4	38.5
Essex	4	0	9	2.7
Gloucestershire	8	1 (1672)	1	8.5
Herefordshire	5	0	2	1.7
Hertfordshire	8	0	1	9.6
Kent	0	0	1	3.3
Huntingdonshire	8	0	0	3.3
Leicestershire	13	3 (1655, 1668, 1710)	2	14.0
Lincolnshire	19	3 (1700)	1	17.0
Middlesex	17	0	0	10.0
Norfolk	25	1	5	23.2
Northamptonshire	51	3 (1681, 1685)	3	9.0
Nottinghamshire	12	0	1	1.9
Oxfordshire	13	0	4	9.0
Cheshire	1	0	1	0.8
Durham	2	0	4	11.9
Lancashire	2	0	5	0.4
Rutland	2	1	3	25.0
Shropshire	1	0	4	0.8
Somerset	3	2 (1637)	3	39.5
Staffordshire	2	1 (1636)	6	2.5
Suffolk	42	1 (1663)	22	13.5
Surrey	0	0	2	19.0
Warwickshire	6	1 (1660)	1	2.3
Westmorland	1	0	5	42.4
Wiltshire	8	2 (1651, 1663)	0	51.6
Worcestershire	1	0	0	17.6
Yorkshire, E. Riding	7	1	6	3.4
Yorkshire, N. Riding	5	0	0	1.5
Yorkshire, W. Riding	27	1 (1641)	9	3.4
Total	350	27	113	13.9

Source: BPP, 1820–39, Reports of the Commissioners of Inquiry into Charities.

these spatial patterns of median acreage are not always correlated with the size of compensation for the poor derived from them in cash, coals and other fuels. To gain better insight into the meaning of this spatial variation in median size, it is useful to examine how size was related to the methods of exploitation.

At Cavenham (Suff.), about 80 acres was set out for the poor 'in lieu of their right of cutting fuel on Cavenham Heath'. However, at Branbee, about 13 acres of land, which approximated the national median of 13.9 acres, was allotted in exchange for the right to cut furze on the common. In the case of Lakenheath (Suff.), about 154 acres of fen was allotted to the trustees for the poor 'for the purpose of digging turf for fuel' and was used by the poor, 'under the order and regulations of the parish officers', leading to relatively high acreage. This is true of the cases of Norfolk. At Hevingham (Norf.), about 159 acres of land was set out to the trustees, but it was 'very bad land', so the land was used for the poor to cut fuel. Also, at Bow Brickhill (Bucks.), about 198 acres of land called 'Black Ground' was allotted to the trustees for the use of the poor 'for firing'. Thus, it seems likely that the relatively large median size of poor lands in some parishes lowland eastern England and the Midlands, was related to the type of management by trustees, whether they allowed the poor to harvest resources, or let them (allowing occupancy) to the poor, as described below. Birtles argued that fuel allotments were, in essence, allotted where the use of the commons for fuel had been especially important before enclosure.[14] However, it seems likely that other relatively large median acreages in parts of the Midlands and South West that were once forest were not directly related to the method of exploitation. For instance, at Brill (Bucks.) about 181 acres of land was allotted for compensation of the rights of which the poor were deprived after disafforestation of Bernwood Forest, the rent of which was distributed among the poor in cash. The same is true of the cases in Wiltshire, Dorset, and Somerset, where about 61 acres of land was allotted for the poor in Gillingham at the disafforestation of Gillingham royal forest, and about 80 acres of land was set out to the trustees for the poor of Mere in Wiltshire in 1651 as compensation for disafforestation of Gillingham royal forest; while at Combe St Nicholas (Som.) about 162 acres of land was allotted for the poor after the disafforestation of Neroche Forest; and at Edwinstowe (Notts.), under an Act for disafforesting Sherwood Forest (1818), 91 acres of land was set out to the trustees for the poor.[15] Thus, the relatively large median size of poor lands in these parishes was related to the management by the trustees leasing them to the tenants, distributing benefits derived from the land among the poor in cash. There were, however, exceptions to these relatively generous grants on the disafforestation of large royal forests encompassing several neighbouring parishes or generous benefactions in the past. In several cases, under an act of parliament for enclosing a part of the forests, the acreage for disafforestation awarded in a single parish was much smaller than county's median acreage.[16]

[14] S. Birtles, 'Common land', p. 93.

[15] BPP, 1834, XXI, CCR, 27th Report, p. 9; BPP, 1837, XXIII, CCR, 30th Report, p. 152; BPP, 1834, XXI, CCR, 27th Report, p. 766.

[16] See, for instance, Whitfield (Northants.) in 1796 as the part of enclosure of Whittle Forest (BPP, 1826, XII, CCR, 14th Report, p. 301), Hanbury (Staffs.) in 1803 as the part of enclosure of Needwood forest (BPP, 1824, XIV, CCR, 11th Report, pp. 561–2), Hanslope (Bucks.) and Piddington (Northants.) in 1827 as the part of enclosure of Salcey Forest (BPP, 1834, XXI, CCR, 27th Report, p. 140; BPP, 1830, XII, CCR, 23rd Report, p. 382).

In short, although the highest concentrations of relatively large-scale poor lands observed in the Reports were most pervasive in parts of lowland eastern England, the Midlands, and the South West, the spatial variation in size frequently ties in with the share of lands suitable not for agriculture but for cutting furze etc., or the relatively larger amounts of land granted after disafforestation of royal forests or drainage of fen lands, which had supplied the poor of the neighbouring villages with their livelihoods[17]; and the presence of one or two exceptionally generous benefactors in the past.

As the poor lost access to the common waste through enclosure and disafforestation, it seems that the expansion of rural poor relief was spurred by the need for additional support, which produced various new distributions for poor-relief, which could take quite varied forms in the mixed economy of welfare in each parish as described below.

II

This section examines the varied and changing forms by which poor lands were created. Before the reign of Charles II (1660–85), the method of enclosure by agreement was frequently confirmed by the Court of Chancery, whereby poor lands were created by a decree of the Court, not by an act of parliament. These poor lands were created by a decree of the Court of Chancery and were enclosed by agreement among the proprietors, as in 27 cases (about eight per cent of 350 observations) in the Reports. It was apparently during the reign of Charles II that the decree of the Court of Chancery was supplemented, to be eventually superseded, by a private act of parliament appointing Commissioners to make the enclosure and exchange of lands, and confirming the agreement of the proprietors to enclose.[18]

At Souldern (Oxon.), as there were no directions as to the usage of the poor land, and no specified trustees set out by a decree of Chancery (1634), the poor land remained unenclosed and the poor turned out their horses and cattle on it freely, which led to 'constant contention among the poor'. Two parishioners issued a petition in the Court of Chancery in 1814, resulting in the poor land being subjected to trustees appointed by the court.[19] Also, at Mickleton (Glos.), by a decree of the Court of Chancery in 1637 under an 'act for inclosing the common fields of Mickleton', about 38 acres of land was enclosed and set out by agreements between the lord of manor and freeholders for the poor, although later this agreement that the land should be for the poor was abandoned. The court of Chancery declared that the poor land was employed 'for the best benefit of the poor, in setting them to work, and affording them such relief as should not tend to abate the usual rates of the parish'.[20] Likewise, at Little Hale (Lincs.) in 1700, 'by a decree of the Court of Chancery for inclosing this lordship', 20 acres of land was allotted to the churchwardens, overseers of the poor and the minister for 'the poorest sort of labourers'.[21]

In the case of disafforestation of royal forests – territories that were subject to forest law, which took precedence over common law – lands were specifically assigned for the maintenance

[17] R. W. Hoyle, 'Disafforestation or drainage: the crown as entrepreneur?', in R. W. Hoyle (ed.), *The estates of the English crown, 1558–1640* (1992), pp. 353–88.

[18] T. E. Scrutton, *Commons and common fields or The history and policy of the laws relating to commons and enclosures* (1887), pp. 132–3.

[19] BPP, 1825, X, CCR, 12th Report, p. 311.

[20] BPP, 1829, VIII, CCR, 21st Report, pp. 152–3.

[21] BPP, 1839, XIV, CCR, 32nd Report, Part IV, p. 193.

or support of the poor, and were created by decrees of the Court of Exchequer or Duchy court– an equitable jurisdiction of the Exchequer.[22]

During the years of personal rule (1629–40), Charles I resorted to forest sales or disafforestation to realize these lucrative assets, and supplement cash-strapped royal revenue because of the unwillingness of parliament to grant the right to raise taxes, igniting riots and protests at the loss of commons rights belonging to the poor inhabitants of forest villages who relied on woods and open wastes for their survival.[23] From the middle of the seventeenth century, especially during the three Anglo-Dutch wars and then fighting against French, timber and wood resources became more important as a strategic supply for the navy free from interference by blockade of the traditional Baltic timber routes.[24] Through disafforestation and leasing of forests dwellers with commons rights lost access to valuable waste and woods.[25] Additionally, the harvest crisis in the years of very high price such as 1661–62, 1678–79, and 1693–94 worsened the predicament of poorer forest dwellers.[26] Crown policy was to establish charity lands after disafforestation as compensation for the loss of rights of common.[27]

To name only a few, at Motcombe and Bourton (Dors.), by 'the deed of disafforestation of the royal forest of Gillingham', the commissioners enclosed and set out about 16 acres of waste lands and about ten acres of part of the demesne lands within the forest for the parochial poor of Motcombe and Bourton.[28] In the case of Brill (Bucks.), 231 acres of land was allotted for poor-relief after disafforesting Barnwood Forest in 1632.[29] Also, at Belton (Rut.), at the disafforestation of Leighfield Forest in 1630, about 34 acres of land within the forest was enclosed and set out to the freeholders of Belton in trust for the relief of the poor.[30] Interestingly, in the case of Mere (Wilts.) in 1651, the creation of poor land was initiated by the poor inhabitants themselves who appealed the parish elites to ask for compensation after the disafforestation of Gillingham royal forest in the late 1620s.[31] Consequently, the township of Mere established an incorporated association called the 'Company' that consisted of 13 trustees chosen from the parish elites for managing the enclosed eighty acres of land allotted for relieving of the poor.[32]

Later, towards the end of eighteenth century and in early nineteenth century, post-disafforestation poor lands were created by an act of parliamentary enclosure: at Fewstone (Yorks., W. Riding) in 1770, the poor lands were set out to the trustees for the poor 'under

[22] J. C. Cox, *The royal forests of England* (1903), pp. 1–75; Hoyle, 'Disafforestation or drainage', pp. 369–71; W. H. Bryson, *The equity side of the Exchequer: its jurisdiction, administration, procedures and records* (1973), pp. 8–13.

[23] B. Sharp, *In contempt of all authority: rural artisans and riot in the west of England, 1586–1660* (1980); Hoyle, 'Disafforestation or drainage'; J. Thirsk, 'The crown as projector on its own estates, from Elizabeth I to Charles I,' in Hoyle (ed.), *Estates of the English crown*, pp. 297–352; P. Large, 'From swanimote to disafforestation: Feckenham Forest in the early seventeenth century', in Hoyle (ed.), *Estates of the English crown*, pp. 389–417.

[24] R. G. Albion, *Forests and sea power: the timber problem of the Royal Navy 1652–1862* (1965), pp. 93–106.

[25] S. Morrison, 'Good stewardship and the challenges of managing the Stuart royal forests in England, 1603–1714', *J. Markets and Morality* 17 (2014), pp. 408, 413–4.

[26] S. Hindle, 'Dearth and the English revolution: the harvest crisis of 1647–50', *EcHR*, 61 (2008), p. 98.

[27] Sharp, 'Common rights', p. 128.

[28] BPP, 1837, XXIII, CCR, 30th Report, pp. 152–3.

[29] BPP, 1834, XXI, CCR, 27th Report, pp. 9–11; Hoyle, 'Forest under the Dynhams', p. 70.

[30] BPP, 1821, XII, CCR, 5th Report, p. 346.

[31] TNA, E134/3Anne/Trin19, fo. 6.

[32] TNA, E134/3Anne/East28.

the act for the enclosure of Knaresborough Forest'.[33] Similarly, in the case of post-Restoration drainage of marsh and fen in such counties as Suffolk, Yorkshire, Bedfordshire, Norfolk, Cambridgeshire and Lincolnshire, poor lands were created by acts of parliament throughout this period. As opposed to the case of drainage in early seventeenth-century, local acceptance of post-Restoration drainage schemes, as measured by the absence of violent disruption, was assisted by parliamentary sanction.[34] The drainers pleaded to parliament for legislation to back their activities after 1660, which could also provide immediate and practical benefit, such as clauses specifying means of punishing opponents and conferring local influence and legitimacy. This is most apparent in the 1662 Act for the Bedford Level: at Lakenheath (Suff.) in 1663, under the Bedford Level Act, 154 acres of 'Poors Turf-Land', fen-grounds were allotted for the use of the poor to the trustees. The land was divided into several plots among the poor for the purpose of digging turf for fuel 'under the regulations of the parish officers'.[35] Also, at neighbouring Mildenhall (Suff.), about 18 acres of poor land was created under 'an act passed of King Charles II (1660–85) for inclosing the fens' to set out to the parish 'for the use and benefit of the poor persons residing within the parish'.[36] After 1700 the interest in fen drainage, of which the major but often unrealized aim was to enlarge the arable area, languished noticeably, not least because the price of corn fell too low to yield much return to the farmer. The period from the 1760s, when grain growing became decisively profitable again, led to 'a fresh round of bolder improving enterprises'.[37] For example, at Bourne (Lincs.) in 1777, by an award on the enclosure of the North Fen, about one and a half acres of land were allotted to the trustees for the poor.[38] At the townships of Skelton and Saltmarsh in Howden parish (Yorks., E. Riding), on the enclosure of Walling fen in 1785, about four acres of land was respectively awarded to 'one of the principal parishioners' or the parish in lieu of 'common belonging to the Poor's croft' for the poor.[39] Even in the early nineteenth-century, at Snailwell (Cambs.) in 1805, by the award under an act of parliament, about 33 acres of fen land was set out to the manor lord, rector, churchwardens and overseers to be used, under their direction, by the poor.[40] At Chatteris (Cambs.), 'under an act of parliament for enclosing lands', about 34 acres of fen or marsh land was allotted to the trustees by the commissioners in lieu of the Guildhall, together with rights of common. The rents were distributed among about 300 persons who abstained from 'parish-relief', in sums ranging from 2*s*. 6*d*. to 12*s*. These 'donations' were continued 'unless in cases of misconduct or of death'.[41]

The creation of poor lands by Acts of Private Enclosure increased from the reign of George II.[42] Around 5000 private acts were passed, mostly in two 20-years bursts from 1760 to 1780 and

[33] BPP, 1822, IX, CCR, 6th Report, p. 638; B. Jennings, *A history of Harrogate and Knaresborough* (Huddersfield, 1970), p. 254.

[34] J. Thirsk, *English peasant farming: The agrarian history of Lincolnshire from Tudor and recent times* (1957), p. 47; K. Lindley, *Fenland riots and the English Revolution* (1982), pp. 72–5.

[35] C. Holme, 'Drainers and fenmen: the problem of popular political consciousness in the seventeenth century', in A. Fletcher and J. Stevenson (eds), *Order and disorder in early modern England* (1985), p. 176; BPP, 1830, XII, CCR, 22nd Report, p. 167.

[36] BPP, 1830, XII, CCR, 22nd Report, pp. 169–71.

[37] J. Thirsk, 'Agricultural policy and practice, public debate and legislation', in J. Thirsk, *The Agrarian History of England and Wales*, V (ii) (1990), pp. 200–1.

[38] BPP, 1839, XIV, CCR, 32nd Report, Part IV, p. 325.

[39] BPP, 1824, XIV, CCR, 11th Report, pp. 768, 770.

[40] BPP, 1837–8, XXIV, CCR, 31st Report, p. 165.

[41] BPP, 1837–8, XXIV, CCR, 31st Report, pp. 299–301.

[42] Gonner, *Common land*, pp. 58–60.

from 1793 to 1815 in milieu of rising prices, harvest crisis and the Napoleonic war. About 3,000 of these enclosed 4.5 million acres of open fields and about 2000 enclosed 2.3 million acres of common land and waste.[43] By this time enclosers enjoyed much easier access to Parliament than Chancery procedures, the former coming to seem quicker, more certain, and more effectual (but more expensive).[44] In addition, the sentiments of parochial ratepayers were increasingly shaped by the perceived burdens of poor rates that weighed heavily on them: most parishioners of Chipping Barnet (Herts.) who paid towards the poor rates were 'extremely sensible of the great and heavy charge and burthen [of] the poor' and if part of the waste or common was enclosed and improved, and a certain annual rent created on such enclosed ground for 'the benefit of the poor' of the parish, it would be 'greatly for the ease and benefit of the parishioners' who paid towards the poor rates and the necessary improvement 'by good husbandry, sowing corn' would accrue the benefit and advantage to the public. Therefore, the parishioners of Chipping Barnet agreed that James Duke of Chandos could enclose the waste called Barnet Common, amounting to 135 acres, and 'An Act for inclosing part of a common called Barnet Common' was obtained, resulting in 135 acres of improvable land that was enclosed and set out to the trustees 'for the benefit of the parish'.[45]

In general, the process of parliamentary enclosure began with a petition from landlords and the occupiers of larger holdings, naming the petitioners and describing the land. By Commons Standing Orders in 1774 no petition could be presented before a notice of it had been posted in the parish church for three Sundays in August or September, but even before 1774 public notice was often given.[46] Commissioners were appointed to oversee the process, often consisting of clergy, surveyors, land agents and stewards.[47] In the case of Middle Rasen (Lincs.), the commissioners of enclosures awarded poor lands under an act of Parliament to the trustees in the following words:

> We do hereby allot and award unto Marmaduke Dixon, Thomas Brown, John Turner, and John Bennet, all that said piece or parcel of ground containing 18a. 3r. 16p. statute measure, to hold the same to them and their heirs, upon trust nevertheless that they shall at all times let the same upon the best terms that can be had, and pay the yearly rents and profits therefrom arising, to the overseers of the poor of Middle Rasen for the time being, to be by them applied in aid of assessment for the relief of the poor of the said parish, and for no other purpose whatever.[48]

Likewise, at Finchley (Middx) in 1810, 'by an act of parliament' it was enacted as per the following: the commissioners should have allotted such part of the waste lands as they thought proper, not exceeding 20 acres, to the overseers of the poor. After the execution of the award of the commissioners, the poor land was vested in the manorial lord, the rector,

[43] M. Turner, *English parliamentary enclosure: its historical geography and economic history* (1980), Ch. 3; G. E. Mingay, P*arliamentary enclosure in England: An introduction to its causes, incidence and impact 1750–1850* (1997), pp. 63, 112.

[44] W. Cornish, S. Banks, C. Mitchell, P. Mitchell and R. Probert (eds), *Law and society in England 1750–1950* (2nd edn, 2019), pp. 139–40.

[45] BPP, 1833, XVIII, CCR, 25th Report, pp. 245–6.

[46] Cornish *et al.*, *Law and society*, p. 140.

[47] M. W. Beresford, 'Commissioners of enclosure', *EcHR*, 16 (2) (1946), pp. 132, 130.

[48] BPP, 1839, XIV, CCR, 32nd Report, Part IV, p. 497.

churchwardens and overseers of the poor as the trustees, who were thereby empowered and required to demise the poor land for any term not exceeding 21 years, at the best yearly rents to be payable half yearly.[49]

It seems that calculations made for poor land acreage – which correlated with the real rents derived from poor lands – could be influenced by the scale of provision devoted to the poor. At Fincham (Norf.), by the Fincham Enclosure Act (1772), the commissioners were directed to set out to the lords of several manors in Fincham, and the rector, churchwardens and overseers of the parish, 'such quantity of the waste lands as would let for £36 per annum'. In 1773, the commissioners set out about 51 acres of land by this award.[50]

III

Having established indicators of the prevalence of poor lands, and the means by which they were created, this section examines in more detail examples of their subsequent management. At Slaidburn (Yorks., W. Riding), by a decree of the chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster (1641), the commissioners overseeing the enclosure were directed to allot about 60 acres of land to the trustees for the relief of the poor. The poor land was let to several tenants at the rent of £50 a year. The trustees were expected to be accountable for the annual rents to the overseers of the poor. Before 1784, the land was let at a public meeting to a tenant on 'a condition to permit some poor inhabitants to depasture their cows'. However, as the poor who depastured their cows claimed 'a greater interest therein than the trustees considered them titled', the trustees 'brought an action for the purpose of recovering possession', resulting in establishing their 'absolute right' to the land, which led to the abolition of customary depasturing cattle on the land.[51] In the case of Frithelstock (Devon), £20 out of the charitable fund derived from the poor land had been applied to the construction of the parochial poorhouse. A promissory note was given for it by the overseers of the poor, and the interest was regularly paid from then on.[52] Although the management of poor lands was governed by the trustees who largely consisted of parish officers, and in practice selected from the ratepayers who contributed towards the poor rate, it might be noted that poor lands were governed by an organization specially created and solely responsible for those lands. As mentioned above, they should not use the lands to defray the burden of the rates.[53]

At Mere (Wilts.) in 1651, by a decree of Chancery after disafforestation of Gillingham Forest, about 80 acres of land for the poor was set out to 13 trustees in a body called the 'Company'.[54] The trustees were empowered to hold a meeting annually in several inns before Christmas to instruct an 'accomptant' to make a list of the poor who had 'need of relief'.[55] They 'did give Notice to and order the poor Inhabitants' to visit this accomptant to 'set down their names in a sheet of paper'. On the basis of the information gathered, the trustees conferred on 'who had the greatest need or who stood as the greatest want' and they ordered the accomptant to

[49] BPP, 1824, XIII, CCR, 10th Report, pp. 326–7.
[50] BPP, 1835, XXV, CCR, 29th Report, p. 514.
[51] BPP, 1826, XIII, CCR, 15th Report, p. 714.
[52] BPP, 1824, XIV, CCR, 11th Report, p. 164.
[53] Hoyle and Spencer, 'Slaidburn', p. 189.
[54] TNA, E134/3Anne/Trin19; E34/Anne/East28.
[55] TNA, E134/3Anne/East28, deposition of William Baron, one of defendants in this cause.

distribute the benefits to 'those that they found to be in the greatest distress'.[56] After 'the list of the names of the said Poor people was read' to the trustees, one of them assigned a number on the list 'by consent of the other trustees'. Then the trustees determined 'how much such poor person should have of the said year's profits'. In the event of doubt about whether recipients qualified or the size of pension, they put the matters to a vote between them. Edmund Best the elder (died in 1700) and his son, who were 'intrusted with the parish business of Meer', kept the account book after 1656.[57]

The same procedure for managing poor lands is found in the poor land created by acts of parliamentary enclosure. For example, at Great Greenford (Middx), by the act of parliament passed for the enclosure of the common lands, the commissioners were directed to set out a poor land to be vested in the lords of the manor of Greenford, and the rector, churchwardens and overseers as trustees for the poor. The trustees were, by the act, empowered to demise the poor land, for any term not exceedingly 21 years, and apply the rents in purchasing fuel, to be distributed among the poor who were legally settled and resident in the parish, according to such rules as the trustees prescribed.[58] However, as the case of Clophill (Beds.) suggests, the trustees were expected to be accountable for their actions: the accounts of the charity were 'kept by the treasurer', and 'audited by the feoffees'.[59] At Brandon (Suff.), as the profits of the flint-quarry were very considerable during the Napoleonic War, the yearly rent and dividend from an accumulated fund of £10 10*s*. from three per cent Consols were audited at the end of the year.[60] Also, at Potterne (Wilts.), under an act of parliamentary enclosure (1824), regular accounts were kept of the receipts and payments by trustees for the poor and audited at a vestry meeting.[61] In the case of Scalford (Leics.), by an award of enclosure of the parish (1766), the trustees who consisted of churchwardens and overseers, were directed to account annually on Wednesday in Easter week to the inhabitants of Scalford touching the receipts and application of the rents. The accounts of the charity were audited at a public vestry.[62]

As Birtles suggests, when trustees administered charity bequests, they had a decisive role in keeping them separate from the distribution of parish relief.[63] However, as the commissioners sometimes complained, this was not always done. To name only a few examples, in the case of Edwinstowe (Notts.) in 1818, the accounts of disbursements were not annually balanced or audited. The charity commissioners requested that the accounts should be 'entered in a book, and annually audited by the inhabitants of the townships entitled to the charity'.[64] Likewise, as the case of Chiswick (Middx), if the rents received by the overseers to carried into their general accounts, the charity commissioners recommended that 'a specific distribution of this rent ought to be made to the poor'.[65] The same is true of the poor lands created by decrees of equity jurisdiction. At Brill (Bucks.), the trustees had to

[56] TNA, E134/3Anne/Trin19, deposition of Edmund Best of Mere, yeoman.

[57] TNA, E134/3Anne/East28, deposition of Henry Clarke.

[58] BPP, 1823, IX, CCR, 9th Report, p. 223.

[59] BPP, 1823, VIII, CCR, 8th Report, pp. 9–10.

[60] BPP, 1830, XII, CCR, 22nd Report, p. 161.

[61] BPP, 1830, XII, CCR, 23rd Report, p. 374.

[62] BPP, 1839, XIV, CCR, 32nd Report, Part V, pp. 448–9.

[63] Birtles, 'Common land', pp. 81–2.

[64] BPP, 1828, XI, CCR, 19th Report, pp. 330–1.

[65] BPP, 1826, XII, CCR, 14th Report, p. 180.

bring the account book yearly for rents and profits of the poor land to the Justices at the Quarter Sessions.[66]

In short, poor lands were set out to the trustees who were empowered to let them for the poor and to distribute the rents or profits among the poor, but they were also expected to subject to an annual audit among the inhabitants. Thus, the trustees of post-enclosure poor lands were responsible, accountable, and potentially liable, for the management of the charitable funds derived from poor lands. The following section presents three broad ways in which the lands were managed by trustees.

IV

The first type of management by the trustees was to allow the poor to have herbage or the cutting of furze, turf, wood, etc., which were secured to the poor by setting aside of some lands.[67] This type of direct use was permitted in only 12 out of 350 observations in the Reports – no more than three percent of all – and was most frequently permitted for obtaining fuel (Table 2). Allowing the poor to have herbage was identified only in individual cases in Norfolk, Gloucestershire and in Theddingworth (Leics.) in 1710, where 16 poor cottagers nominated by the freeholders as trustees were allowed herbage – 'privilege of depasturing one cow each, from May day till St. Andrew's day, and from thence till Lady day, two sheep' – on eight acres of poor land, with payment to 10 shillings to the overseers of the poor on 1 August annually, towards the repairs of fences. This system continued for a long period 'in strict accordance with the rules laid down'. However, as the number of poor having increased, the poor land was divided and let to 'as many poor cottagers, in quantities of about one rood to each person, at a rent of 5s per annum for each rood'.[68] Also, at Scottow (Norf.), by an 'act of parliament for the inclosure' (1828), the poor cottagers were allowed to depasture 21 acres of poor land, and also to cut the furze. But it was represented that the poor might have deprived far greater benefit from the poor land if it had been let and the rents applied to their benefit.[69]

Where the land was common waste on which the poor were permitted to collect fuel, it was often overused, and for this reason the Allotments Act in 1832 authorized parishes to let fuel allotments as garden allotments[70]. The best example of this is West Newton (Norf.) in 1805, where the trustees were awarded twelve acres of land, but the poor cut fuel there 'without any control', so there was very little fuel, and 'no herbage upon it'.[71] Similarly, in Barton Bendish (Norf.) in 1775, the trustees allowed the poor to cut turves on about 40 acres of land set out 'without restriction', but then it was 'so nearly exhausted'. Later the herbage on the land was let annually to the highest bidder, but the rent was improperly carried to the account of the poor-rates.[72] In the case of Old Buckenham (Norf.) in 1791, the poor were allowed to cut turf 'under certain rules laid down by the trustees' on 80 acres of land allotted for compensation of

[66] TNA, E112/620/109/1.

[67] Mingay, *Parliamentary enclosure*, p. 136; Gonner, *Common Land*, p. 366.

[68] BPP, 1839, XIV, CCR, 32nd Report, Part V, p. 290.

[69] BPP, 1833, XIX, CCR, 26th Report, p. 253.

[70] D. C. Barnett, 'Allotments and the problem of rural poverty, 1780–1840', in E. L. Jones and G. E. Mingay (eds), *Land, labour and population in the Industrial Revolution* (1967), pp. 162–83; Birtles, 'Common land', pp. 93–7, 104.

[71] BPP, 1834, XXII, CCR, 28th Report, p. 81.

[72] BPP, 1835, XXI, CCR, 29th Report, p. 506.

TABLE 2. Types of poor land management by trustees, and provision for fuels

	A			*B*			*C*	*A+B*	*A+C*	*Total*
	Leased to tenants			*Let to the poor*			*Permission to cut fuels/herbage only*			
		(i)	(ii)		(i)	(ii)				
Bedfordshire	9	2	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	10
Berkshire	7	3	1	4	3	2	1	0	0	12
Buckinghamshire	12	6	2	3	1	1	0	3	1	19
Cambridgeshire	5	1	1	2	0	0	0	0	1	8
Derbyshire	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3
Devon	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Dorset	4	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	4
Essex	3	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	4
Gloucestershire	4	3	0	0	0	0	3	0	1	8
Herefordshire	5	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	5
Hertfordshire	8	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	8
Huntingdonshire	8	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	8
Kent	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Leicestershire	8	3	0	4	0	0	1	0	0	13
Lincolnshire	8	2	0	8	6	0	0	3	0	19
Middlesex	16	8	4	0	0	0	0	0	0	16
Norfolk	13	9	1	6	1	1	3	1	2	25
Northamptonshire	45	12	4	4	2	0	1	0	1	51
Nottinghamshire	11	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	11
Oxfordshire	10	5	2	1	0	0	1	0	1	13
Palatine of Chester	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Palatine of Durham	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2
Palatine of Lancaster	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2
Rutland	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2
Salop	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Somerset	2	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	3
Staffordshire	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2
Suffolk	38	29	9	2	1	1	1	0	1	42
Warwickshire	5	4	2	0	0	0	0	1	0	6
Westmorland	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Wiltshire	6	0	0	2	0	0	0	1	0	9
Worcestershire	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Yorks., E. Riding	7	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	7
Yorks., N. Riding	5	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	5
Yorks., W. Riding	27	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	27
Total	283	95	27	37	14	5	12	9	9	350

Note: (i) For fuels; (ii) In lieu of right to use fuel.
Source: BPP, 1820–39, Reports of the Commissioners of Inquiry into Charities.

enclosing the commons, in quantities varying from 2000 to 6000 turves according to family size.[73] Also, it might be noted that the right of the poor to cut the furze or other fuels on the allotment was permitted for 'their own use', but 'not for sale'.[74] At Aston Subedge (Glos.), the commissioners allotted five plots of an acre each, where the commissioners ordered the poor to plant and cultivate with furze once in five years on one portion by rotation. In the case of Bow Brickhill (Bucks.), about 198 acres of land was allotted to allow the poor for cutting turf, but the commissioners recommended the parish to divide 50 acres into plots of one or two roods each to be distributed among the poor as gardens in future.[75] Thus, although this type of management allowing the poor to harvest was, in effect, exploited as common land had been, it changed over time into poor lands with regulations, and was replaced with the types of leasing the tenants or letting the poor over time, resulting in that this type became less widespread.

The second type of management consisted of providing fuel or money by letting some land to the poor themselves for little or low rent. At the time of charity commissioners' inquiry, the share of poor lands that were let to the poor directly was small and total only 11 per cent (37 cases) in the Reports (Table 2). As Birtles mentions, the provision of an Act of 2 Will. IV c. 42 (1831) enabled parishes to let out the poor lands 'to any poor and industrious poor for 'regulated cultivation' by themselves.[76] Thus, the poor had 'no right to the occupation' of the poor land, but under the provisions, industrious cottagers might be accommodated with small allotments by the authority of vestry.[77] In the case of Potterne (Wilts.), it was stipulated that the poor were 'to be yearly tenants under the committee of management' and were 'not to be dispossessed except by a notice signed by a majority of the committee'.[78]

It seems likely that this type of management reflects their association with measures to support the independence of the poor by 'self-provisioning' to lessen the labouring poor's dependence on formal and informal relief provisions: at the case of Newton Harcourt (Leics.) in 1772, ten acres of land was allotted at the enclosure, and in 1831, the land was divided into 24 plots (about one rood each), which were let to the poor at the rate of 6*s*. 8*d*. for each rood, because it was considered that this system was 'more beneficially applied for the sake of the independent labourers'.[79] The following cases reflect the extent to which the parish assisted their independence with financial aid. At Cumnor (Berks.) in 1820, about five acres of land was divided into 40 equal portions, and the rents derived from the poor were 'guaranteed to the charity by the vicar and three or four of substantial inhabitants of the parish'.[80] Likewise, at Great Hale (Lincs.) in 1700, 21 acres of land were let to the poor at eight shillings per rood respectively, which rent was guaranteed by the parish officers and applied to the 'education of the poor' until 1834.[81]

It is likely that letting such small gardens to the poor was intended to complement family incomes that – because of low wages and low levels of employment – could be insufficient.[82]

[73] BPP, 1835, XXI, CCR, 29th Report, p. 835.
[74] BPP, 1831, XI, CCR, 24th Report, p. 168.
[75] BPP, 1834, XXI, CCR, 27th Report, p. 121.
[76] Birtles, 'Common land', p. 104.
[77] BPP, 1835, XXI, CCR, 29th Report, pp. 1181–2.
[78] BPP, 1830, XII, CCR, 23rd Report, p. 374.
[79] BPP, 1839, XIV, CCR, 32nd Report, Part V, p. 286.
[80] BPP, 1837–8, XXV, CCR, 32nd Report, Part I, pp. 274–5.
[81] BPP, 1839, XIV, CCR, 32nd Report, Part IV, p. 193.
[82] E. Griffin, 'Diets, hunger and living standards during the British industrial revolution', *Past and Present*, 239 (2018), pp. 99–100.

These garden allotments were allowed before 1831, when the garden allotment movement haltingly began.[83] For instance, in the case of Grandborough (Bucks.), about five acres of land was allotted in 1797 'in lieu of a right of cutting furze', and was let to a tenant. Although the rent was distributed among the poor 'in shares of about 2*s*. 6*d*. each', the poor land was, by 1830s, divided into 63 plots and let rent-free to the poor, who made about £1 per year each by cultivating them as gardens.[84]

Thus, this type of management could be intended to incorporate contributions from relatively more affluent poor households into the parish poor relief system: at Hassingham (Norf.), the trustees were awarded about 14 acres of fen land, which was let to six poor households, who had not received parish relief within the year, selected by the trustees at the rent of seven shillings for their herbage. The rents were distributed among the most needy.[85] At Langford (Berks.), the rents from 40 poor persons were used for the purchase of coals, which would be given away among all the poor at Christmas.[86] Also, at Husbands Bosworth (Leics.), the rents from 41 poor labourers were used to distribute cash allowances (2*s*. 6*d*. each) among the 'such poor as had no portion of the land allotted to them'.[87]

However, as the charity commissioners claimed in the case of the hamlet of Thurlaston in Dunchurch (Warks.), it is important to note, when analysing the role of letting to the poor, that 'a portion of poor land should be divided into small allotments at low rents for the use of the deserving poor, keeping them within such bounds as should not hold out the temptation to become [a] small farmer, or to deprive their employer of the due benefit of their time and strength, and at the same time especially discouraging the idea (very prevalent in this district)', because '"Poor's Land" of itself implied a right in the poor parishioners to demand the occupation, instead of a participation in the benefits of the produce of the land'.[88]

The final form of management was leasing to tenants. This has by far the highest share of observations, at 81 per cent of 350 cases in the Reports (Table 2). This leasehold contract method was adopted in accordance with the provisions laid down pursuant to acts of parliamentary enclosure, which largely required that poor lands were let by auction. For instance, at Feltham (Middx), by an act of parliament it was enacted that the commissioners should set out the lands, which should be let 'by public auction' at the best rents that might be reasonably obtained for the poor, with proper and necessary covenants.[89]Likewise, at Blofield (Norf.), the commissioners required the trustees to let about 40 acres of land 'at the best yearly rent'.[90]

The reason for the adoption of this method was simple. Linking management to income and the profits of farming allowed them to secure larger charitable funds to cater for demand. At Bishop Wilton (Yorks., E. Riding), the community terminated land lease with the yearly tenant, who 'fell into bad circumstances' and could not 'pay the full rent'. The parish re-contracted with a new annual tenant who offered to 'take it at the present rent, and bring it into good cultivation', and not least because the parish recognized him as responsible tenant,

[83] Birtles, 'Common land', p. 104.
[84] BPP, 1834, XXI, CCR, 27th Report, p. 24.
[85] BPP, 1834, XXII, CCR, 28th Report, p. 104.
[86] BPP, 1837, XXV, CCR, 32nd Report, Part I, p. 379.
[87] BPP, 1839, XV, CCR, 32nd Report, Part V, pp. 239–40.
[88] BPP, 1835, XXI, CCR, 29th Report, p. 1775; Quote from Pinches, 'From common rights to cold charity', p. 44.
[89] BPP, 1823, IX, CCR, 9th Report, p. 281.
[90] BPP, 1834, XXII, CCR, 28th Report, p. 103.

'thought it advisable to accept his offer'.[91] Also, at Ashton Keynes (Wilts.), 25 acres of land was let by the churchwardens by auction, and the highest bidder was required 'to find a security for the payment'.[92] Parishes could select tenants who would most likely deliver the rents along with payment of a security, although the extent to which these strategies were used varied across parishes, including those who invested capital to improve the lands. At Kirby Lonsdale (Westm.), for instance, about two acres of land called Poor Carrs was let to a tenant at the yearly rent of £10 5*s*., which was considered rather high, and the tenant had laid out 'a good deal of money' on the land.[93] In Inkberrow (Worcs.), the yearly tenant 'made a considerable outlay on the land'.[94] Likewise, in the case of Ingham (Norf.), the lands were let by auction to six tenants for terms of seven years, but at the end of term, as they complained that they had not received a 'sufficient compensation' for invested capital on the land, the parish allowed them to continue to be tenants at the same rent.[95]

V

We will now consider how these incomes were spent or disbursed. There were, broadly speaking, two main categories of relief distributed from these poor lands, coals, which were distributed in around a quarter of cases, and cash benefites, which were found in around two-fifths of the cases where the form of relief can be observed.

By 1650, coal was Britain's principal source of fuel, not only for domestic heating, but also for the smithies, forges, lime kilns and so forth.[96] Later, the availability of coal further increased and cost fell after the advent of canals (1760s to 1830s).[97] Fuel wood was gradually replaced by coal. By the early nineteenth century coal could cost about 40 per cent less than in the early eighteenth century, also as taxes were reduced.[98] However, it should be noted that it was not always the most suitable form of fuel. Although coal burnt more evenly, gave out more energy and was less bulky to store than firewood, it would not burn well on the simple hearths under a wide chimney that were still common in cottages in the late and early nineteenth centuries – iron grates and tall narrow chimneys were necessary, but expensive to acquire.[99] Nevertheless, it is remarkable that a considerable number of coal charities were established in the mid-eighteenth to mid-nineteenth centuries. For example, at Bishop Wilton (Yorks., E. Riding), before 1786 it was customary to give a cash allowance to the poor at Christmas and Easter. Later, the vicar conceived 'such a mode of distribution to be liable to abuse', so he proposed the parishioners to adopt the distribution of coals to the poor, which had been since then found 'a beneficial alteration'. Coals were granted, 'generally in chaldrons and half chaldrons' (one chaldron was equivalent to 36 bushels).[100] At Harmondsworth (Middx), before 1821 the coals were sold to the poor at a reduced price of 1*s*. 9*d*. or 6*d*. a bushel. In 1821, the coals were given away,

[91] BPP, 1824, XIV, CCR, 11th Report, p. 749.
[92] BPP, 1835, XXI, CCR, 29th Report, p. 1262.
[93] BPP, 1822, X, CCR, 7th Report, pp. 552–3.
[94] BPP, 1833, XIX, CCR, 26th Report, p. 651.
[95] BPP, 1833, XIX, CCR, 26th Report, pp. 278–9.
[96] K. Wrightson, *Earthy necessities: economic lives in early modern Britain* (2000), pp. 170, 243–4.
[97] Pinches, 'From common rights to cold charity', p. 38.
[98] S. Pennell, *The birth of the English kitchen, 1600–1850* (2016), Ch. 4.
[99] Pinches, 'From common rights to cold charity', pp. 38–9; Pennell, *English kitchen*, Ch. 4.
[100] BPP, 1824, XIV, CCR, 11th Report, pp. 749–50.

because 'the season being mild and wage low', it was thought that it might be more beneficial to 'make the distribution gratis'.[101] Also, at Feltham (Middx), it was reported in 1823 that a coal merchant who contracted with the parish at a vestry, supplied coals at the lowest price – 'at half price' – to the poor according to a list given to the coal merchant, according to 'the size of their families, two, three or four sacks, a piece'. By these means all the poor inhabitants were supplied with fuel 'for the greatest part of winter'. The charity commissioners assured that 'this mode of distribution' was found 'much more beneficial to the poor than the former system', which was to distribute coals among the poor in sacks, and that the poor themselves agreed.[102] In parishes in such counties as the East Riding of Yorkshire, Middlesex, Norfolk, Lincolnshire, Berkshire, Buckinghamshire, Warwickshire, Nottinghamshire, and Bedfordshire, we find the rents of poor land laid out in the purchase of coals for the poor.[103]

It should be noted that coal varied enormously in cost around the country, according to the time of year, and depending on the proximity of the coalfield.[104] The generosity of trustees, or the income at their disposal, also varied. In Brandon (Suff.), the trustees distributed a quantity of coals (from 1.2 cwt to 2.4 cwt) among the poor;[105] at Blofield (Norf.), in quantities varying from six bushels to three-quarters of a chaldron (from about 4.2 cwt to 19 cwt), being equal to the sums from 3.7 shillings to about 21 shillings;[106] at Helpringham (Lincs.), in quantities of from 12 bushels to a chaldron each (from about 8.4 cwt to 25.33 cwt);[107] at Langford (Berks.), in quantities varying from 3 cwt to 9 cwt, according to 'the necessities and number in family';[108] at Bradwell (Bucks.), coals were distributed among the poor families, varying from 3 cwt to 8 cwt, according to necessity and the numbers in each family;[109] at Tysoe (Warks.), coals were distributed among 'all the poor parishioners' who had rights to cut gorse in the winter season for three or four successive weeks, giving to each family a cwt (1*s*.).[110]

The share of cash allowances was about 40 per cent of 339 observations on the expenditure of income from leasing to tenants and or letting to the poor in the Reports. At Faringdon (Berks.), the charity commissioners recommended that it was 'more expedient as a general rule not to give a sum larger than 5*s*', so the rents were distributed among 143 recipients, the sum given to each varying from 1*s*. to 5*s*., with the exception of 10*s*. being given to two persons on account of illness.[111] At Maidford (Northants.), yearly at Christmas the rents were distributed among the poor, in sums of 1*s*. per head 'according to the size of their families'.[112] Likewise at Middleton Cheney (Northants.), the rents were distributed among the poor families on a list, in sums varying from 1*s*. to 15*s*. according to numbers of family.[113] In the case of Little Plumstead in Norfolk (1801), about 34 acres of land was allotted: one-half of the rent was distributed among all the poor who had not occupied land worth £10 or received parochial relief within six

[101] BPP, 1823, IX, CCR, 9th Report, p. 228.
[102] BPP, 1823, IX, CCR, 9th Report, p. 281.
[103] Birtles, 'Common land', p. 93. See, for example, Byfield (Notts.) (BPP, 1825, XI, CCR, 13th Report, p. 6), Sunbury (Middx) (BPP, 1823, IX, CCR, 9th Report, p. 319), Flitton with Silsoe (Beds.) (BPP, 1823, VIII, CCR, 8th Report, p. 12) and so on.
[104] Humphries, 'Enclosure, common rights, and women', p. 35.
[105] BPP, 1830, XII, CCR, 22nd Report, p. 161.
[106] BPP, 1834, XXII, CCR, 28th Report, p. 103.
[107] BPP, 1839, XIV, CCR, 32nd Report, Part IV, p. 195.
[108] BPP, 1837, XXV, CCR, 32nd Report, Part I, p. 379.
[109] BPP, 1834, XXI, CCR, 27th Report, p. 118.
[110] BPP, 1828, X, CCR, 18th Report, p. 506.
[111] BPP, 1837, XXV, CCR, 32nd Report, Part I, p. 369.
[112] BPP, 1826, XII, CCR, 14th Report, p. 249.
[113] BPP, 1826, XII, CCR, 14th Report, pp. 293–4.

months, in sums of about three shillings a head.[114] Also, at Chevington (Suff.), even with other charity assets, the cash allowance was only distributed among the poor yearly at Christmas, in sums varying from 8*s.* to 10*s.* according to the size of family.[115]

Given almost all men earned something close to 10s per week in the 1830s and 1840s, the average annual cash allowance was either lower than or slightly exceeded a weekly household income.[116] Therefore, as French suggests in terms of welfare practices based on poor rates, it is likely that cash allowances received from charitable assets would have supplied immediate 'bridging income' rather than any kind of sustained wage 'subsidies'.[117] In some rural parts of the more industrial north-west, where Steve King has noted a rich vein of charitable provision, poor lands had been awarded in lieu of the gifts and endowments received in the past.[118] For example, at the township of Borwick, parish of Warton (Lancs.), where on the enclosure of Borwick Moor (1800), only about one rood of land was allotted for the poor and the rent was £3 19*s*., this money was distributed in sums varying from 4*s.* to £2.[119] At Staindrop (Palatine of Durham), about three acres of lands were awarded to parish officers at the enclosure Stain Moor in 1764, and then the rents were distributed among such poor in East Quarter and Langdale as did not receive parochial relief, who were selected by the inhabitants at the town meeting in sums varying from 5*s.* to 25*s.* for the former and from 10*s.* to £2 for the latter. Here as the charity commissioners suggested, all poor lands were 'high rents' because of letting 'by tender'.[120] Likewise, at Hamsterley (Palatine of Durham), ten acres of land, 'late parcel of the Moors', was awarded in exchange for poor's lands existing in the townships of Lynesack and Softley. The rents at the rate of £16 a year were distributed among the poor, varying from 3*s.* to 10*s.*[121] On the other hand, at Spaxton (Som.), about 28 acres of land awarded to the trustees in 1691, and in 1826 the rents were distributed with other charities' funds in various sums from 5s. to £2 each according to the 'exigency of each case'. Here income from the produce of this land was used to further extend the land. This high cash allowance seems to have been influenced by the amount of fixed income that was derived from capital assets – the gifts and endowments received in the past. The rents of these poor lands could be distributed among the poor with high average cash allowance.[122] Contrastingly, at Hanbury (Som.), on the enclosure of Needwood Forest, only about two acres of land was let to yearly tenants, and with lack of generous benefactors in the past it yielded only a sum of 4 shillings customarily, among the poor.[123]

[114] BPP, 1833, XIX, CCR, 26th Report, p. 106.
[115] BPP, 1830, XII, CCR, 22nd Report, p. 220.
[116] Griffin, 'Diets, hunger and living standards', pp. 84–7.
[117] H. French, 'Living in poverty in eighteenth-century Terling', in S. Hindle, A. Shepard and J. Walter (eds), *Remaking English society: social relations and social change in early modern England* (2013), p. 313; Sharp, 'Common rights', p. 129.
[118] S. King, 'Making the most of opportunity: the economy of makeshifts in the early modern north', in S. King and A. Tomkins (eds), *The poor in England 1700–1850: an economy of makeshifts* (2003), p. 237.
[119] BPP, 1826, XIII, CCR, 15th Report, p. 315.
[120] BPP, 1829, VIII, CCR, 21st Report, pp. 99–100.
[121] BPP, 1829, VIII, CCR, 21st Report, p. 50.
[122] BPP, 1826, XIII, CCR, 15th Report, p. 364.
[123] BPP, 1824, XIV, CCR, 11th Report, pp. 561–2.

VI

Poor lands could be maladministered by the trustees. Take the example of hamlet of Catcot (Som.) in 1798, where about 20 acres of land was allotted for the poor to dig and cut turf with 'the leaves and consent of the minister, churchwardens and overseers'. The charity was abused by cutting improperly, and 'by persons not authorized' without control of the trustees, which led to free-riding.[124] Also, in the case of Souldern (Oxon.) mentioned above, over-grazing led to the end of permission of direct pasturing and a switch to cash allowances.[125] At Brill and Oakeley (Bucks.), after the disafforestation of Bernwood Forest (1622), 231 acres of land was set out for the poor, but the land was intercommoned with 'greater numbers of cattle', which led not to reducing poverty, but to increasing poverty. By 'the request of the poore inhabitants' as relators the Attorney General brought a suit in the Court of Exchequer, where the trust was regarded as being 'fallen to the ground' without 'effectual remedy'. The court determined that 'some speedy course for the recovery of the said trust' and the appointment of new trustees were required.[126] Consequently, the agreement between the commissioners of the Court of Exchequer, the new trustees and the poor inhabitants of Brill and Oakeley was achieved: that 'the poore inhabitants of Brill had two third part and the poore inhabitants of Oakeley one third part of the trust lands. And the poor land which had ever been allotted to the poor severally were to let to a tenant or tenants by lease as one block and the rents were to distributed among the poor according to the intent of the former decrees'. The trustees were to bring in a perfect account of 'all theire doings' to the Quarter Sessions next after the feast of Easter.[127]

The trustees of poor lands had the potential to breach their duty and act in their own interests or those of others. However, incidents in which charity funds were used to off-set the poor rates comprised only about 16 per cent of cases (57) observed in the Reports. At Slaidburn (Yorks., W. Riding), the charity commissioners found that of the 23 recipients of benefits had received the parochial relief based on poor-rates for 10 to 20 years. Considering the mode in which the charity had been administered, the charity commissioners came to the conclusion that it would be placed on 'a satisfactory footing without the interference of a court of equity'.[128] Later, the attorney general brought a suit to the Duchy Court at 'relation of six poor inhabitants,' as the trustees who had 'so absolute power' to control or not to give any account of their proceedings let the poor lands to their friends at lower rent than its real value.[129]

In Great Rollright (Oxon.) in 1776, two allotments (about 56 acres of land and about 17 acres of land) were awarded to the trustees. At the first time, about 56 acres of land was let to the tenant at the 'best improved yearly rent'. But the rent of £70 was generally carried to the overseers account after the deduction of land tax (£2 6*s.* 8*d.*) and chief rent (14*s.*) to assist the poor parishioners, to sell the coals to them at reduced price, to distribute clothes them gratis, and to give out 'flax to be spun and woven'. While about 17 acres of land was applied to the poor for cutting furze. The herbage of the land was let to the 'highest bidder',

[124] BPP, 1824, XIV, CCR, 11th Report, p. 503.
[125] BPP, 1825, X, CCR, 12th Report, p. 311.
[126] TNA, E112/366/119.
[127] TNA, E178/5169, fo. 7.
[128] BPP, 1835, XXI, CCR, 29th Report, p. 1435.
[129] Hoyle and Spencer, 'Slaidburn', pp. 187–9.

of which the rents was laid out in the purchase of coals, which were distributed gratis among the poor, in quantities proportioned to the size of respective families. Later, the charity commissioners recommended correction by the trustees:

> 1st. That the accounts of the charity farm belonging to the parish, should be kept distinct from those of the poor-rates.
> 2nd. That the produce of the land should be applied to the following purposes, viz.: to the repairs of the cottages belonging to the farm, to the payment of rents, to the selling of coals at a reduced price, and to the purchasing of clothes for young persons on their going out to service.
> 3rd. That in the distribution of the said charity, due attention be had to the merits of the persons to be benefited thereby.
> 4th. That a book be provided for the entry of all recipients and payments for the charity and that it be yearly produced at the Easter meeting, for the inspection of the parish.

Consequently, it was decided at the vestry that the accounts would be kept distinct from those of the poor-rates, and the rents should be adopted to the most needy and deserving poor and the charity account would 'be yearly produced at the Easter meeting, for the inspection of the parish'.[130]

At Mickleton (Glos.), by a decree of the Court of Chancery (1637), under 'an Act for inclosing the common fields of Mickleton', about 38 acres of land was set out for the poor by agreement between 'John Fowler and others on the part of the poor' and Sir Edward Fisher, knight, but the agreement was later departed from by the trustees, so it was ordered by the court that the poor land should have been used forever for the use and benefit of the poor people. The court nominated and appointed the new trustees to consider how the poor's land might have been employed for the best benefit of the poor, 'in setting the poor to work, affording them such relief as should not tend to abate the usual rates of the parish', and the court further ordered that the poor's land was conveyed to the trustees 'not in such a way as that it should tend only to the benefit of the rich, in easing them of those ordinary taxations which by law they must undergo'. By 1808, the poor's land was let to a tenant by auction or tender, of which the rents were distributed among the poor.[131]

Thus, it is worth noting that, where a breach had already occurred, the poor could be awarded an appropriate remedy, because there was a legal difference between rate-based parochial relief and the allotments administered by charitable trusts. The same is true of the following cases. In the case of Shobdon (Heref.) in 1829, as the whole rents were 'given in direct aid of the poor-rates', the charity commissioners considered that as 'the misapplication of the rents' and submitted a petition to 'the consideration of Her Majesty's Attorney general'.[132] Similarly, at Bilton (Warks.), the commissioners recommended not to bring the rents 'in the overseer's book', but suggested separating accounts.[133] In the case of Oadby (Leics.), where by an award (1760), under an Act for enclosing the open fields in Oadby, 15 acres of land was

[130] BPP, 1825, X, CCR, 12th Report, pp. 274.
[131] BPP, 1829, VIII, CCR, 21st Report, pp. 152–3.
[132] BPP, 1837–8, XXVI, CCR, 32nd Report, Part II, pp. 204–6.
[133] BPP, 1835, XXI, CCR, 29th Report, p. 1162.

set out to the trustees and let annually at Easter in the vestry to 'the highest bidder'. But the rents were received by the overseers and 'carried to the poor's-rates'. So, doubts having arisen as to this application, and 'the class of poor entitled', a petition was presented to the Court of Chancery by the vicar and others for reference to the master for a scheme, and also to report what class of persons were entitled, whether all poor people or only such as did not receive parochial relief.[134]

Thus, poor lands could be defended by legal procedures to prevent the trustees acting in breach, simply using them to reduce other expenditure on the poor, or by requiring them to perform their obligation to secure poor lands as charitable funds. They may not have been very prevalent nationally, but this survey of post-enclosure poor lands allows us to illustrate how they could be administered carefully, locally significant, and monitored by their recipients over long periods of the time. This is a corrective to the argument of Neeson that such institutions were not very important, and not trusted by the poor.[135]

VII

This article has traced the creation and management of poor lands and variations in the distribution of the benefits derived from them until the 1840s. Some poor lands were created in exchange for existing charity lands, some by enclosure and loss of common rights, and some by disafforestation and associated loss of rights. Poor lands could be supported by legal procedures to prevent the trustees acting in breach or requiring them to perform their obligation to secure poor lands as charitable funds. Although there existed many poor lands that were well managed by the trustees, some were used to complement, and reduce the cost of, the poor-relief system, arguably reducing the intended benefits to the poor. In most cases where poor lands were leased out, it seems the tenants were well controlled by the trustees, by auctioning off tenancies to the highest bidder or making efficient use of surplus funds in order to gain sufficient charitable assets. This might reflect a positive correlation between the adoption of leasing-to-tenants method and the securing of charitable funds. It should be noted that this study does not allow for any comparative evaluation of the importance of the national level in the poor-relief system. However, the examination of poor lands exposes much detail in the broader thinking about management of, and entitlement to relief, and the varied ways this came to be expressed in each locality. As such poor lands are a further element for scholars of poor relief to fit into a broader national picture.

[134] BPP, 1839, XV, CCR, 32nd Report, Part V, p. 320. For other examples, Kinnersley (Heref.), Norton (Derbs.), Great Claybrook, Great Glenn, Stretton Parva (Leics.), Middle Rasen, Nettleton, Bourne, Little Hale, Covenham St. Bartholomew, and Dorrington (Lincs.), Hanworth (Middx), Keyworth and Woodborough (Notts.), Burford (Oxon.), Newbold-on-Avon and Bilton (Warks.), Pocklington and Walkington (Yorks., E. Riding).

[135] Neeson, *Commoners*, pp. 208–215.

From botany to agriculture: The scientific network linking Great Britain, Spain and Italy in the late eighteenth century*

by Martino Lorenzo Fagnani

Abstract

This article analyses the contacts between Great Britain, Spain and the Italian States through which naturalists and agriculturists oriented their botanical knowledge towards the enhancement of crops and related products in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. The British agricultural revolution and the studies conducted in botanical gardens and scientific societies meant England and Scotland were perceived as good models for Spain and Italy, despite the obstacles of language and geographical distance. Study journeys, the exchange of seeds and the circulation of specialized texts offered the Mediterranean experts useful means of refining their knowledge. This article examines the flow of information through a series of case studies, of how knowledge was absorbed and adapted, and the degree of articulation and reciprocity in the networks involved, aiming to pave the way towards future debate.

Agricultural science began to emerge as a well-defined discipline in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. Peter Jones has rightly talked about 'the evolution of the "encyclopaedic" spirit of the Enlightenment across the watershed of the French Revolution and the Napoleonic imperium in Europe' while 'visions of total social transformation receded and were replaced with more pragmatic concerns'.[1] Having taken this path of 'emancipation', agricultural science nonetheless was strongly and enduringly shaped by other, more autonomous disciplines, such as aspects of the natural sciences, and various traditions of technical knowledge and economic thought, contributing to the composite nature which still, in part, characterizes it today.

Much has been said about the British contribution to agricultural science in the second half of the eighteenth century, when Great Britain was taken as an agricultural model for all of Europe.[2] However, as highlighted by Mauro Ambrosoli, the British model was part of

* I would like to thank Esther García Guillén, Irene Fernández de Tejada de Garay, Abel Blanco Asenjo and Gloria Pérez de Rada Cavanilles of the archive of the Madrid *Real Jardín Botánico* for their competence and their kindness in assisting me. I also thank Professor Paul Warde, Professor Henry French and the anonymous referees for their helpful comments.

[1] P. M. Jones, *Agricultural Enlightenment: Knowledge, technology, and nature, 1750–1840* (2016), p. 225.

[2] The British agricultural revolution has a central role in the classic E. J. Russell, *A History of Agricultural*

an articulated system of circulating expertise, technical knowledge and seeds. It was by no means fully indigenous to British soil. For example, the English model owed much to the knowledge brought by Huguenot farmers, gardeners, horticulturists and nurserymen from south-eastern France after the revocation of the Edict of Nantes in 1685, and before that, from Flanders and Holland. Seeds for novel fodder crops were extensively imported into England from the Continent, as evidenced by their common names, which often contained adjectives of origin such as 'French' or 'Dutch'. A sufficient local supply of seed was only established thereafter. Later, the roles partially reversed and England became the example for the Continent.[3]

Spain and Italy, for their part, saw the development of a widespread interest in disciplines such as botany, geology and chemistry, as well as some economic writers interested in improving agriculture, such as Campomanes, Jovellanos and Genovesi. However, in Spain and Italy significant barriers existed to the widespread application of new knowledge and principles. Foreign examples were an important stimulus to change, as happened after 1750 with the spread of methods (crushing and pulverizing the soil as efficiently as possible, sowing in rows, etc.) and agricultural machinery (seed drill and horse-drawn hoe, designed by the Englishman Jethro Tull, 1674–1741).[4] Furthermore, in the first 15 years of the nineteenth century, Italy benefited from the massive influence of Napoleonic policies on agricultural science,[5] while Spain – animated by the politician Manuel Godoy and later by the regime of Joseph Bonaparte – pursued certain plans, such as a network of 24 'acclimatization gardens' and training for their directors which they would in turn provide to local landowners, although these schemes were not fully implemented.[6] Nonetheless, while the influence of the French naturalists and *agronomes* on Spain and Italy has been the subject of a good number of studies,[7] the same

Note 2 *continued*
Science in Great Britain, 1620–1954 (1966), which also analyses the long-term consequences. Other cornerstones of historiography on these topics are: E. Kerridge, *The Agricultural Revolution* (1967); A. J. Bourde, *The influence of England on the French agronomes, 1750–1789* (1953). Equally interesting are the contributions in B. A. Holderness and M. Turner (eds), *Land, labour and agriculture, 1700–1920: essays for Gordon Mingay* (1991).

[3] M. Ambrosoli, *Scienziati, contadini e proprietari: Botanica e agricoltura nell'Europa occidentale, 1350–1850* (1992), pp. 354–5, 374–5.

[4] N. Hidden, 'Jethro Tull I, II and III', *AgHR* 37 (1989), pp. 26–35; Ambrosoli, *Scienziati, contadini, proprietari*, p. 372.

[5] M. L. Fagnani, 'L'agraria "italiana" prima e dopo Napoleone: Percorsi formativi di una scienza', *Società e storia* 169 (2020), pp. 457–91; M. L. Fagnani, 'Agricultural science in Napoleonic universities: Didactic and research in Pavia, Bologna and Padua', *Nuncius: J. Material and Visual Hist. of Science* 34 (2019), pp. 575–601; L. Brassart, 'Improving useful species: A public policy of the Directoire Regime and the Napoleonic Empire (1795–1815) in Europe', *Historia agraria: Revista de agricultura e historia rural* 75 (2018), pp. 93–113.

[6] A. González Bueno and R. Rodríguez Nozal, *Plantas americanas para la España ilustrada: Génesis, desarrollo y ocaso del proyecto español de expediciones botánicas* (2000), pp. 14–16; A. González Bueno, Gómez Ortega, Cavanilles, Zea, *Tres botánicos de la Ilustración: la ciencia al servicio del poder* (2002). See also: E. Llopis, 'La agricultura, 1790–1840: De la crisis a la gran oleada roturadora', in A. Morales Moya (ed.), *1802: España entre dos siglos: ciencia y economía* (3 vols, 2003), I, pp. 177–214.

[7] For example, J. Horan, 'Napoleonic cotton cultivation: A case study in scientific expertise and agricultural innovation in France and Italy, 1806–1814', in D. Phillips and S. Kingsland (eds), *New perspectives on the history of life sciences and agriculture* (2015), pp. 73–91; J. Horan, 'King Cotton on the Middle Sea: Acclimatization projects and the French links to the early modern Mediterranean', *French Hist.* 29 (2015), pp. 93–108; J. Horan, 'Fibers of empire: Cotton cultivation in France and Italy during the age of Napoleon'

cannot be said of the British influence. The circulation of knowledge, scientific and technical texts, seeds and machine models from the North Sea to the Mediterranean basin has received relatively little attention.

An important exception is the aforementioned contribution of Ambrosoli on contacts between England and Italy. Tull himself was influenced by agricultural techniques and machinery used in Italy and southern France, albeit in a more rudimentary form: he was able to see them during his Grand Tour in the early 1710s.[8] However, the reception in Spain and Italy of British agricultural improvements was much more extensive, and could relate to somewhat hidden connections that were not always obviously agricultural, while other agricultural improvements were not destined to become an enduring component of agricultural science. From the end of the Napoleonic wars to the end of the nineteenth century, new expert knowledge also opened up a gap between hopes for a professionalised agricultural science and the ordinary practice of farmers.[9] Indeed, it is no simple matter to extract these currents and exchanges from a host of works in the entangled histories of natural sciences and agriculture.

Nevertheless, more in-depth analysis has been conducted on the network of provincial academies that sought to support many individual farmers and agriculturists in different areas of Europe. Good examples are the French provincial academies studied by Daniel Roche,[10] and the well-functioning network of agricultural academies and societies that developed in the Republic of Venice from the 1760s, studied by Michele Simonetto.[11] In the case of Spain, the extensive network of *sociedades económicas de amigos del país* (developed from the 1770s) did not prove to be of great benefit to local experimentation.[12] However the influence of British knowledge on Spanish and northern Italian networks has not been a focus of attention. Some recent studies have also partially addressed the connections between British and Italian economic thought, which also related to agricultural issues.[13]

Note 7 *continued*
(PhD thesis, Florida State University, 2013); A. García Belmar and J. R. Bertomeu Sánchez, 'Constructing thecentre from the periphery: Spanish travellers to France at the time of the chemical revolution', in A. Simões, A. Carneiro and M. P. Diogo (eds), *Travels of learning: A geography of science in Europe* (2003), pp. 143–88.

[8] Ambrosoli, *Scienziati, contadini, proprietari*, pp. 360–1.

[9] P. Warde, *The invention of sustainability: nature and destiny, c.1500–1870* (2018), pp. 228–64.

[10] D. Roche, *Le Siècle des Lumières en province: Académies et académiciens provinciaux, 1680–1789* (2 vols., 1978); D. Roche, 'Natural history in the academies', in N. Jardine, J. A. Secord and E. C. Spary (eds), *Cultures of natural history* (1996), pp. 127–44.

[11] M. Simonetto, *I lumi nelle campagne: accademie e agricoltura nella Repubblica di Venezia, 1768–1797* (Treviso, 2001).

[12] L. M. Enciso Recio, 'Los cauces de penetración y difusión en la Península: Los viajeros y las sociedades económicas de amigos del país', in *Historia de España*, XXXI (i) (Madrid, 1988), pp. 3–56; P. Ruiz Torres *Reformismo e Ilustración* (2008), pp. 475–98.

[13] For example, see: S. A. Reinert, 'The Academy of Fisticuffs: political economy and commercial society in Enlightenment Italy' (Cambridge MA, 2018); R. Faucci, *A history of Italian economic thought* (2014). For a more comparative point of view, see also: L. Maddaluno, '*De facto policies* and intellectual agendas of an eighteenth-century Milanese agricultural academy: Physiocratic resonances in the Società Patriotica', in S. L. Kaplan and S. A. Reinert (eds), *The economic turn: recasting political economy in Enlightenment Europe* (2019), pp. 395–438. More generally, on the history of Italian agriculture, E. Rossini and C. Vanzetti, *Storia dell'agricoltura italiana* (1987); E. Sereni, *Storia del paesaggio agrario italiano* (1961). Readings particularly attentive to the international context are those of Antonio Saltini, *Storia delle scienze agrarie* (4 vols, 1984–89), II and III, recently republished with a different subdivision.

Exchanges between Great Britain and Italy in the second half of the eighteenth century have also drawn attention from the history of botany, but with the exception of Ambrosoli, given little space to the influence of that discipline on the development of agricultural science.[14]

This article will use a series of case studies to elaborate further the role of Great Britain in the development of agricultural science in Italy and Spain. We can concentrate on three specific 'conceptual sets' where developments in Britain had the most to offer: training, seeds and texts. The case studies provide insight into how the circulation of expertise, seeds and texts was shaped by an international network of training. In particular, they show the importance of British influence in the processes by which agricultural science developed, although not yet fully recognized as such, within other branches of science and technology.

It will be seen that these processes were far from simple and straightforward. It is first of all necessary to distinguish between direct contributions to agricultural science and indirect ones. The latter comprise training, seeds and texts that were originally intended for promoting progress in other technical sectors or for the training of professionals in fields unrelated to agriculture. A good example may be that of Angelo Gualandris, who will be discussed in greater detail below. He was a naturalist sent by the Republic of Venice across Europe to England to deepen his knowledge of geology and mineralogy with the aim of applying it to mining consultancy once back in Italy. However, later on, this knowledge, combined with a strong interest in agriculture demonstrated by Gualandris in his youth and during the trip 'sponsored' by the Republic, ended up contributing more to his growth as an agriculturist than as a mining expert (working as an agricultural inspector not for the Republic, but for the nearby 'Austrian' Lombardy).

As already discussed, some knowledge gleaned from Britain may also be better understood as coming through a 'British filter' than originating on the island. A case in point is the potential of the great ocean explorations for the improvement of European agricultural science. Of course, Renaissance botanists from many parts of western Europe had already acquired a good understanding of non-European plants and left a corpus of knowledge that was well in use at the beginning of the eighteenth century, providing the foundation for all subsequent improvements of botany as an increasingly well-defined science. Furthermore, Spanish colonies in the Americas and clergy in Spain provided a major channel for the introduction and spread of New World plant species in Europe. However, relying on this solid base of knowledge, during the eighteenth century there was a new 'exploratory wave' in the Americas as well as in the Pacific area often associated with colonies and their surrounding areas. British explorers and naturalists played a significant role, as will discussed in greater detail.[15]

[14] For example, see L. Ciancio, '*Tuis impulsus consiliis*: Antonio Turra, the Vicenza Academy of Agriculture and the reception of Linnaeus' thought in the Venetian Terraferma', in M. Beretta and A. Tosi (eds), *Linnaeus in Italy: The spread of a revolution in science* (2007), pp. 169–98.

[15] For some examples of the vast historiography on this topic see Marie-Noëlle Bourguet: 'L'esploratore', in M. Vovelle (ed.), *L'uomo dell'Illuminismo* (1992), pp. 283–351; 'La collecte du monde: Voyages et histoire naturelle (fin XVIIIe – debut XIXe siècle)', in C. Blanckaert, C. Cohen, P. Corsi and J.-L. Fischer (eds), *Le Muséum au premier siècle de son histoire* (1997), pp. 163–96. See also: M.-N. Bourguet and P.-Y. Lacour, 'Les mondes naturalistes: Europe (1530–1802)', in D. Pestre and S. van Damme (eds), *Histoire des sciences et des savoirs* (3 vols, 2015), I, pp. 255–81; I. Del Campo, *Introducción de plantas americanas en España* (Madrid, 1993). About the British case, see the classic L. H. Brockway, *Science and colonial expansion: the role of the British Royal Botanic Gardens* (1979).

However, it is important to remember that before practical uses or techniques for the acclimatization and dissemination of 'exotic' plant species were developed in Europe, the major question for late seventeenth- and early eighteenth-century botanists was taxonomy, a problem seemingly resolved by Linnaeus and quickly adopted by the British, who were disinclined to follow Tournefort's classification system.[16] It seems likely that the adoption of the Linnaean system facilitated botanical exchanges both within the international 'scientific community' and between botanists and agriculturists and their suppliers: nurserymen and gardeners whom I will discuss in the following pages. Although there was no lack of 'interpretations', criticisms and contaminations with vernacular names in the use of Linnaeus' classification, most of the sources I have analysed show a high level of acceptance of the 'new rules'.[17]

What emerges from the case studies below, based on largely unpublished handwritten and printed documentation, is the complex catalogue of knowledge, expertise and plants that provided the basis for the more mature nineteenth-century agricultural science. As a result, particularly of the wartime events and political instability that characterized the last decade of the eighteenth century, the innovations of the British centres could often not be immediately implemented on the Continent. Exceptions were not lacking, but what accumulated in Spain and especially in Italy in the late eighteenth century was above all 'cognitive' and material assets, which – taking up Jones's lesson on the continuity of the agricultural Enlightenment – provided the background for broader experimentation and enhanced progress during the nineteenth century.

I

One route by which England influenced Spain and Italy was by the provision of training centres for experts who went on to play an important role in agricultural science. In the case of Madrid, a significant example is given by the brothers Claudio (1774–1842) and Esteban (1776–1813) Boutelou. Descended from a family of esteemed French gardeners who arrived in Spain during the reign of Philip V, under Charles IV the Royal House, as part of a wider policy of funding training abroad, financed their botanical, agricultural and horticultural studies in France (1789–92) and England (1793–96). They worked at the Trianon and Kew Gardens and met important botanists, such as Jean-Baptiste de Lamarck, Charles-Louis L'Héritier de Brutelle and James Edward Smith. Returning to their homeland in 1797, they applied their

[16] S. Müller-Wille, 'Systems and how Linnaeus looked at them in retrospect', *Annals of Science* 70 (2013), pp. 305–17; S. McMahon, 'Boundary work: "National quarrels and party factions" in eighteenth-century British botany', in D. M. Knight and M. D. Eddy (eds), *Science and beliefs: from natural philosophy to natural science, 1700–1900* (2005), pp. 43–61. See also the classic work E. Mayr, *The growth of biological thought: Diversity, evolution, and inheritance* (1982), pp. 162–95. On the diffusion of the Linnaean system in Spain, J. Sarrailh, *L'Espagne éclairée de la deuxième moitié du XVIIIe siècle* (Paris, 1954), pp. 441–7.

[17] In Italian and Spanish sources, the binomial nomenclature was often accompanied by vernacular names when it comes to studies on native plants. A good example of this type of 'fluidity' can be found in C. Bellardi, *Catalogo primo de' vegetali economici che si coltivano nel R. Orto Agrario dell'Università di Pavia* (Pavia, 1809).

technical experience and knowledge of the species cultivated abroad to the development of Spanish gardening, arboriculture and agricultural science.[18]

Claudio joined the staff of the Madrid Royal Botanic Garden (*Real Jardín Botánico*) and held positions of increasing responsibility: senior gardener, deputy director and professor of agriculture. He was also a gardener and arborist of Buen Retiro Park. During the 'foreign' regime of Joseph Bonaparte (1808–13), he was responsible for the Madrid Garden, but later the Bourbons removed him from the capital due to his collaboration with the previous occupation regime.[19] Esteban was instead a senior gardener in the Aranjuez Garden, where he studied the acclimatization of exotic trees. He was also a professor of agriculture and rural economy at the Madrid Garden. When the acclimatization garden of Sanlúcar de Barrameda on the coast of Cadiz was opened in 1806, he became its director. This appointment allowed Esteban to study the local agriculture and especially viticulture, for which he introduced modern oenological terminology in Spain.[20]

References to their English years and a certain propensity to take British studies as a model frequently surfaced in the brothers' studies and writings in the following years. For example, describing the food and forage crop *Brassica napobrassica* (L.) Mill. – the swede, or rutabaga – their *Tratado de la huerta* referred both to Claudio's accounts on wild specimens that he had analysed near Dover and to the Scotch-English botanist Philip Miller's opinion in considering the plant a species in its own right and not a variety of *Brassica oleracea* L.[21] In describing then the broad bean (*Vicia faba* L.) – among which the Windsor variety was indicated as the one with the largest, softest, roundest and flattest bean – the *Tratado* pointed out its use in England and other parts of Europe as a food for horses.[22]

In an 1808 issue of the *Semanario de agricultura y artes*, Esteban published an article on the production of liquors, a 'branch really important for our trades and agriculture', but rather neglected by the Spanish. Esteban took the opportunity to praise a nobleman from Jerez de la Frontera, Don Jacobo Gordon (possibly of Scottish descent), who not only undertook to

[18] F. J. Girón, 'Nueva savia para el Viejo Continente: El Jardín del Príncipe en Aranzuez, Rambouillet y la quimera de Norteamérica', in L. Sazatornil Ruiz and F. Jiméno (eds), *El arte español entre Roma y París (siglos XVIII y XIX): Intercambios artísticos y circulación de modelos* (2014), pp. 375–401; M. Luengo Añon, 'Claudio Boutelou Agraz', in *Diccionario biográfico español*, website of the *Real Academia de la Historia* [hereafter *DBE*]: http://dbe.rah.es/biografias/19091/claudio-boutelou-agraz [accessed 29 July 2020]; M. Luengo Añon, 'Esteban Boutelou Agraz', in *DBE*: http://dbe.rah.es/biografias/19094/esteban-boutelou-agraz [accessed 29 July 2020]; F. Luque Janodet, 'Un acercamiento al interés por la viticultura en el siglo XIX: a propósito de la traducción a francés del Ensayo sobre las variedades de la vid común que vegetan en Andalucía de Simón Clemente y Rubio', *Anales de filología francesa* 27 (2019), pp. 515–31.

[19] During the reign of Ferdinand VII (1813–33), Claudio continued to play a central role in the development of Spanish agricultural science, its application, and its teaching, especially in Alicante, Malaga and Seville.

[20] Cf. E. Boutelou, *Memoria sobre el cultivo de la vid en Sanlúcar de Barrameda y Xerez de la Frontera* (1807). An 'Idea de la práctica enológica de Sanlúcar de Barrameda' was added to the 1808 edition. See also: J. L. Pan-Montojo, *La vitivinicultura en España (1750–1988)* (Madrid, 1989); F. Bajo Santiago, 'El nacimiento del léxico científico-técnico del vino en España: Esteban de Boutelou', in M. T. Echenique Elizondo and J. P. Sánchez Méndez (eds), *Actas del V Congreso Internacional de Historia de la Lengua española. Valencia, 2000*, II (Madrid, 2002), pp. 1899-1914.

[21] C. Boutelou and E. Boutelou, *Tratado de la huerta o método de cultivar toda clase de hortalizas* (2nd edn, 1813), pp. 80–1.

[22] Ibid., pp. 245–52.

perfect distillation practices, but referred to English agricultural improvements to enhance Andalusian crops. Indeed, he had brought a wide selection of agricultural machinery and tools from England, 'the most appreciated ones in that country', including a particularly strong mould-board plough.[23]

On a subsequent occasion, Esteban analysed large Andalusian *cortijo* estates, their crops and the way they organized production.[24] Among other 'political economy' writers, he referred to Arthur Young and his *Annals of Agriculture*, quoting a passage from the article 'On the Necessity of Avoiding All Public Regulations Relative to the Size of Farms' (1786).[25] In particular, Esteban cited the support expressed by Young for modern agricultural machinery, which many instead criticized as an alleged cause of unemployment. Young specified that a plough was more functional than a spade and employed less manpower, but it also left more people free to work in activities other than agriculture, such as manufacturing and commerce. Young concluded:

> The fewer men required to cultivate the earth, the more numerous may be those classes unconnected with agriculture, because the greater is the neat produce which goes to market. Every mode, according to this reasoning, of simplifying the operations of agriculture by means of large occupations is perfectly harmless in respect to population; for while the soil is well cultivated, the produce will find the way to market, and will certainly be consumed; and you can do no more than consume it, if you had a farmer's family in every field.[26]

Esteban supported this reasoning and provided a partially adapted translation into Castilian. Esteban was therefore quite familiar with Young's writings and his important journal, yet another demonstration that the British models were esteemed by the two Boutelou brothers, who cherished their training in England. In 1817, Young's name resurfaced in Claudio's *Elementos de agricultura*, which praised the tireless work of the Englishman in studying European agriculture on his travels and promoting it in his motherland, and Young's suggestion of chairs in agriculture in every university.[27]

Two Italians who had part of their scientific and technical training in England were Paolo Balsamo (1764–1816) and Angelo Gualandris (1750–88). Balsamo left Sicily in 1787 for a long scientific voyage that embraced peninsular Italy, France, Flanders and England, where he lived from the beginning of 1789 to the middle of 1790. His international education was funded by the Bourbon authorities and was to specialize in agricultural science, having just been appointed professor of agriculture at the Academy of Studies in Palermo at a time when formal education in agriculture in both Italy and more widely in Europe remained very limited.[28]

[23] E. Boutelou, 'Observaciones sobre la distilación de los aguardientes en Xerez y Sanlúcar de Barrameda', *Semanario de agricultura y artes dirigo a los parrocos* [hereafter *SAA*], 4 Feb. 1808, pp. 65–73, in particular p. 66, note 1; Sociedad Económica Matritense (ed.), *Agricultura general de Gabriel Alonso de Herrera, corregida según el testo original* (4 vols, 1818–19), I, p. 349.

[24] E. Boutelou, 'Observaciones sobre las grandes labores de Andalucía, e ideas sobre las utilidades y perjuicios que resultan al Estado y a la Agricultura de la excesiva extensión de los grandes cortijos' (part 1), *SAA*, 21 Apr. 1808, pp. 241–52.

[25] The article 'by the editor' is in *Annals of Agriculture and Other Useful Arts* [hereafter *AA*] VII (1786), pp. 510–24.

[26] Ibid., pp. 520–1.

[27] C. Boutelou, *Elementos de agricultura* (1817), I, pp. vii–viii.

[28] F. Brancato, 'Balsamo, Paolo', in *Dizionario biografico degli italiani* [hereafter *DBI*] V (Rome, 1963).

In England, in addition to purchasing and sending agricultural machinery to Sicily on the orders of the Board of Studies (*Deputazione degli Studi*), Balsamo befriended Young and wrote some articles for the *Annals of Agriculture*. For example, he wrote an article-letter from Sutton, Suffolk, titled 'Thoughts on Great Cities' in which he expressed his support for Young's opinion that great cities helped agriculture: 'They, as you rightly observe, consume a good deal of the earth's products, and as such cannot fail to encourage the farmer, and consequently to promote the welfare of agriculture'. In particular, the population gathered in the cities – as opposed to the same number scattered in country villages – encourages luxury, which 'increases in proportion to the number of individuals united together' and, 'in spite of all the loud complaints of the moralists against it, must be acknowledged very useful to society'. In fact, it guarantees a large consumption of agricultural and other products, thus favouring rural society, manufacturing, crafts and commerce.[29]

A more practically orientated article-letter that Balsamo wrote for the *Annals* was 'On the Advantages of Introducing Grasses in a Course of Arable Crops'. It supported the benefit of leaving fields fallow in the crop cycle, underlining how the meadows enrich the soil and make the subsequent cultivation of cereals more profitable, as well as providing good nourishment for the livestock. In particular, this was linked to his careful studies of a Dunstall Hall farm near Wolverhampton in the West Midlands, where he collected extensive data on the management of the estate – acres dedicated to each crop, head of cattle raised by species, products sold annually, etc. –and commented on them, proposing a long list of observations in support of his thesis.[30] This allows us to note how Balsamo's training, which began on the Continent and continued in England, gave him the capacity to assess agriculture from different viewpoints: political-economic and technical-scientific.

Balsamo started to teach in 1791 after returning to Palermo. In his lessons and writings, he took as a model both the modern and enterprising management of the English countryside and that nation's liberalism. He supported the unification of small properties into large cultivation units. Disregarding large absentee owners and small tenant farmers, he focused everything on large tenants who – as direct farmers or by leasing part of the land to small farmers – would champion greater productivity of land and employment, better living conditions for workers, and a consequent increase in food prices and a new impulse for trade.[31]

England was also a model of efficiency in the management of estates and for the resourcefulness of its landowners, as Balsamo underlined after some discouraging inspections in the Sicilian countryside in the 1790s and 1800s. In 1809 he still made reference to his time spent in England twenty years earlier, his study of agriculture in the English countryside, and his contacts with Young, landowners and farmers.[32] While this demonstrated the importance of

[29] P. Balsamo, 'Thoughts on Great Cities', *AA* XIII (1790), pp. 465–82. Balsamo lived for most of his stay in William Green's house, a neighbour and friend of the Young family: G. Giarrizzo, 'Paolo Balsamo economista', *Rivista Storica Italiana* 78 (1966), pp. 5–60, in particular pp. 14–15.

[30] P. Balsamo, 'On the Advantages of Introducing Grasses in a Course of Arable Crops' with 'An Account of the Expences and Profit of Mr. Miller's Farm, of Dunstall-Hall, near Wolverhampton', *AA* XIV (1790), pp. 1–19.

[31] P. Matarazzo, 'L'Accademia di agricoltura di Palermo. Stato e feudalità a confronto nel tardo Settecento', *Studi storici* 43 (2002), pp. 1003–27; Giarrizzo, 'Paolo Balsamo economista', pp. 36–40.

[32] P. Balsamo, *Giornale di viaggio fatto in Sicilia e particolarmente nella contea di Modica* (1809), pp. 173–85,

the English influence in his training as an agriculturist and economist, it also showed that Sicilian agriculture was continuing to experience serious difficulties.

Let us now turn to Angelo Gualandris. He had a medical education at the University of Padua, where he joined Pietro Arduino, professor of agricultural science, and Arduino's brother Giovanni, superintendent of agriculture. They were two of the most important men in the agrarian reforms implemented by the Republic of Venice since the 1760s. Thanks to them, Gualandris became an important member of the Agricultural Academy of Padua. After graduating, he undertook a long geological, botanical and agronomic journey through Europe from 1775 to 1777, sponsored by the Deputies to the Mines of the Republic. Starting in the Belluno area, the journey took him to Switzerland, Germany, France and England. He then returned to Italy via Turin.[33]

The English interlude lasted from October 1776 to March 1777, a much shorter period than the years of training of the Boutelou brothers and Balsamo, however Gualandris made his months in Britain very fruitful. In London he met the naturalist Johann Reinhold Forster, who, together with his son George, had accompanied James Cook on his second voyage around the globe (1772–75).[34] Forster put Gualandris in contact with numerous scientists in different fields, including Joseph Banks, not yet president of the Royal Society, but already a renowned botanist who had participated in Cook's first voyage (1768–1771).[35]

Gualandris was able to attend some meetings of the Royal Society and study Banks's scientific collections. From the Forsters' description of the 1772–75 voyage, he gained interesting information on the practical uses of some plants. For example, when they showed him a fabric used by Tahitians made of 'New Zealand' flax fibre (*Phormium tenax*, J. R. Forst. and G. Forst), Gualandris considered it 'completely new' but resembling hemp. Most of all, he evaluated it as 'an important article of economy' if imported into Europe, since its cultivation apparently required less attention than that of *Cannabis sativa* L. Moreover, the Forsters spoke to him of mulberry cultivation and silkworm breeding, also describing a variety of Chinese worm that can feed on the leaves of any tree and produce a strong and shiny silk. It can be hypothesized that it was a species of the genus *Antheraea* (Hübner, 1819), producing tussah silk. Furthermore, Gualandris visited the Royal Society for the Encouragement of Arts, Manufactures and Commerce, being impressed by its collection of agricultural machinery – of which the Academy of Padua had the penultimate edition of the catalogue – and in particular by a simple straw cutter designed by a farmer. He appreciated the incentive that the institution gave to farmers' creativity, with prizes for the best projects.[36]

In this regard it should be noted that in the late eighteenth century the Venetian experts – although they were no longer at the crest of European technology – had very little to learn from

Note 32 *continued*
pp. 265–6. See also Giarrizzo, 'Paolo Balsamo economista', pp. 54–60.

[33] F. Baraldi, 'Gli studi geologici di Angelo Gualandris nelle opere pubblicate e nei documenti inediti conservati nell'Archivio storico dell'Accademia Nazionale Virgiliana di Mantova', in N. Azzi, F. Baraldi and E. Camerlenghi, *Angelo Gualandris (1750–1788): Uno scienziato illuminista nella società mantovana di fine Settecento* (2018), pp. 9–77.

[34] Letter from London, 16 Jan. 1777, in A. Gualandris, *Lettere odeporiche* (1780), pp. 243–66.

[35] For a biography of Banks (1743–1820) see the entry by John Gascoigne in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* [hereafter *ODNB*] VI (2004).

[36] Letter from London, 16 Jan. 1777, in Gualandris, *Lettere odeporiche*, pp. 247–9, 255–6.

the foreign silk trade.[37] So what then was the reason for the conversation between Gualandris and the Forsters about hypothetical alternatives to the normal silk production chain? Gualandris might have been in search of alternative products, thinking of the frequent waves of mulberry disease that hit the Italian States. Some areas of the Republic of Venice had experienced such waves first-hand, for example in the late 1750s and the early 1770s. The damage they caused to the cultivation of mulberry trees and consequently to the entire silk production chain was felt throughout the Republic and agricultural academies were mobilized to analyse the phytopathological aspects and to propose both remedies and methods to stem the spread.[38] Sometimes it was unfavourable climatic conditions that damaged the production chain: this was the case of the weather in the Verona area in 1763 and 1777.[39] Moreover, beyond the mulberry disease, and with regard to the more general management of silk production, many less important agricultural writers and farmers, who knew the best local practices, attended the meetings of the Venetian agrarian academies and could comment wisely about the novelties printed in the Venetian newspapers.[40] Therefore, the fact that Gualandris turned his attention to textile fibres during his stay in England could be interpreted all the more as motivated by specific objectives, such as the one hypothesized above – as well, of course, as personal curiosity.

Unfortunately, the best Venetian farmers were hampered by general economic conditions that changed only during the Napoleonic occupation of Italy as the result of complex socio-political circumstances.[41] Nonetheless, what the conversation with the Forsters demonstrates to us is that Gualandris's interest was already oriented towards the issues of agriculture and derivative products, despite the fact that his mission was primarily focused on mining. Problems specific to the Venetian territories led him to look for possible alternatives in sources that were 'external' to the traditional silk production system of the Republic.

Gualandris later moved to Derbyshire, where he was mainly interested in mines and geological questions. However, he did not fail to study the countryside and gather information

[37] On the importance of the silk trade in Italy, see: C. Poni, *La seta in Italia: Una grande industria prima della rivoluzione industrial*, eds, V. R. Gruder, E. Leites and R. Scazzieri (Bologna, 2009); G. Federico, *An economic history of the silk industry, 1830–1930* (1997).

[38] For instance, see: C. Bettoni, *Progetto per preservare i gelsi dall'epidemica mortalità, aumentandone l'entrata* (Brescia, 1776); M. Locatelli, *Su la corrente malattia de' gelsi* (1773).

[39] A. M. Girelli, *Il setificio veronese nel '700* (1969), pp. 98–9 with note 26; P. G. Zanetti, 'L'orto agrario di Padova e l'agricoltura nuova', *Rivista di storia dell'agricoltura* 36 (1996), pp. 5–67, in particular p. 11; Simonetto, *I lumi nelle campagne*, pp. 170–1.

[40] This peculiarity of the Venetian network is analysed in depth and with numerous case studies in Simonetto, *I lumi nelle campagne*. A particularly interesting case of concentration of knowledge through the attentive reading of technical texts from all over Europe is given by the agriculturists who animated the *Società d'Agricoltura Pratica* (Society of Practical Agriculture) in the city of Udine in Friuli, eastern region of the Republic of Venice. See also A. Tonutto, *L'Accademia di Udine dalla caduta della Repubblica di Venezia all'unione del Friuli al Regno d'Italia (1797–1866)* (1997); L. Cargnelutti, 'Nota biografica', in A. Zanon, *Lettere a Fabio Asquini (1762–1769)*, ed., L. Cargnelutti (1982), pp. 423–6; L. Morassi, 'La Società d'Agricoltura Pratica di Udine (1762–1797)', in A. Tagliaferri (ed.), *Atti del convegno Venezia e la Terraferma attraverso le relazioni dei Rettori* (1981), pp. 361–70.

[41] In this period the Venetian silk sector suffered from the Napoleonic wars, the alternation of French and Austrian control after 1797, the Continental Blockade, but also indiscriminate cutting of mulberry trees in some areas. For example, see: A. Zannini, 'Sempre più agricola, sempre più regionale: L'economia della Repubblica di Venezia da Agnadello al Lombardo-Veneto (1509–1817)', *Ateneo Veneto* 9 (2010), pp. 137–71, in particular p. 167; M. L. Ferrari, *'Quies inquieta': Agricoltura e industria in una piazzaforte dell'Impero asburgico* (Milan, 2012), p. 67.

on agricultural practices.[42] He recorded that the land was favourable for cereal growing, especially wheat. After one or two years of cultivation, it was left fallow and sheep were allowed to graze during the summer. He gathered information on ploughing and fertilizing techniques, but also on the typical organization of stockbreeding on farms: for 100 acres, the farmers usually kept six horses, between 40 and 100 sheep, and some cattle. He collected information on the habits of rural society: bread and cheese were the main foods. In times of scarcity the bread was made from a mixture of wheat and barley flour. Two other widespread crops were potatoes and turnips, the former for human consumption and the latter for sheep and cattle. He noted that, unlike other areas in England, *Brassica rapa* L. subsp. *oleifera* (DC.) Metzg. was not grown in this region for the production of oil.[43]

Later, from 1783 to 1788, Gualandris was in Mantua as a professor of botany and natural history at the local Gymnasium and director of its garden, but also agricultural inspector and a main member of the Agriculture Class of the Academy of Sciences and Fine Letters.[44] He died of a fever at the end of 1788, but in those few years he promoted numerous projects to enhance agriculture, inspired by his travel and particularly by the progress made in England. For example, in the mid-1780s the Agriculture Class launched a study of the Mantuan territory, gathering information on crops and manufacturing, types of property and the conditions of rural society. In the summer of 1786, Gualandris personally carried out a survey of the countryside, pinning down the details obtained from direct observation and interviews with farmers and landowners. He used his results to develop an extensive series of projects, including reforestation, improvement of pastures and livestock, recovery of olive growing on the hills, and enhancement of mulberry cultivation and silk manufacturing. The slow pace of bureaucracy in Austrian Lombardy and the end of Gualandris's life left most of the projects uncompleted.[45]

What I am interested in emphasizing as regards Gualandris's investigations is his recording of the existence in the Mantua area of precisely methods and crops already applied in England and on the Continent not ten years earlier.[46] Considering his direct study of the lands, analysis of peasant habits and consultation with specialists, we can immediately note a connection between the experience in London and Derbyshire and his methods of work in Mantua. Gualandris's survey in 1786 was more engaged than his fact-finding journey to England, where he had been very interested in cultivation practices, agricultural machines, types of farming, and textile manufacturing. His work in Mantua had the goal of proposing plans to strengthen the agricultural and manufacturing sector in the area and was therefore more systematic and methodical.

With regard to mulberry cultivation and silk manufacturing, the Forsters' accounts not only foreshadowed the interest shown by Gualandris in 1786, but also the advice that he provided to

[42] Letter from Old Bath of Matlock, 21 Feb. 1777, in Gualandris, *Lettere odeporiche*, pp. 266–300.

[43] Ibid., pp. 269–70.

[44] Baraldi, 'Gli studi geologici di Angelo Gualandris', pp. 12–17; Archivio di Stato di Mantova, Liceo ginnasio Virgilio – parte I, 79, list of the *Liceo* teaching staff for the years 1774–1895.

[45] Accademia Nazionale Virgiliana – Archivio Storico [hereafter ANV – AS] /30, fascicoli 1784, 1785. E. Camerlenghi, 'Le perlustrazioni fatte nel Mantovano e i progetti politici agrari', in Azzi, Baraldi and Camerlenghi, *Angelo Gualandris*, pp. 159–74.

[46] For example, even in Switzerland: Letter from Bern, 29 Oct. 1775, in Gualandris, *Lettere odeporiche*, pp. 77–91.

a landowner and entrepreneur near Mantua: the Dowager Marchioness Castiglioni of Casatico (1735–1803). In addition to investing in cereal-growing and viticulture, the Marchioness distinguished herself for research and inventions in the field of textile materials and techniques. For example, her studies on the use of vinegar instead of oil in the processing of flax fibre and wool were highly regarded at the Academy of Mantua, as was the design of some textile instruments that earned her membership in the Agriculture Class in 1775. In addition, in the late spring of 1788 she agreed to carry out some experiments that the Class commissioned her on feeding silkworms on dried mulberry leaves so that production could continue during bad years for the trees.[47] We can guess the weight of Gualandris' advice also in experiments on the 'alternative' or 'flexible' feeding of silkworms. He had developed an interest in the tussah silkworm, having learned from the Forsters that it feeds on more than one plant, suggesting greater adaptability than the common silkworm, which only eats mulberry leaves. While his interest certainly regarded the different food needs of the two species, there were many other variables at play, such as environmental conditions and difficulties in importation. It is thus not surprising that he made no recorded attempts to introduce any species of the genus *Antheraea* into the Mantua area.[48]

Furthermore, knowing the Marchioness's interest in textile machines, it can also be suggested that Gualandris shared with her what he had seen in the collection of the Royal Society for the Encouragement of Arts, Manufactures and Commerce. As early as 1769 it included many textile machines, such as brocade looms, stocking frames and spinning-wheels. Among them were a 'reel for winding silk from the cocoons', for which a certain Mr Verrier had won 40 pounds on 14 June 1762, and a 'silk reel' presented to the Society by John Pownall Esq. There was also a 'complete frame and reel with a bason [*sic*] and furnace of the proper size to make silk, agreeable to the present best method of working in Italy', which placed Italian expertise in silk processing among the best in Europe.[49] When Gualandris visited the collection between 1776 and 1777, it had surely grown: his study of the machines allowed him to broaden his knowledge on the matter, which was of value in his work for the Academy and for the Marchioness.

II

Great Britain played an important role in providing Spain and Italy with the wide range of plants that would constitute the material substrate on which to conduct agricultural studies in the nineteenth century.

[47] ANV – AS/8, fascicolo Borsa Matteo, the secretary of the Academy to the Marchioness, May 1787; ANV – AS/32, fascicolo 1788, the Marchioness to the secretary, 20 May 1788. On the friendship and the correspondence between Gualandris and the Marchioness, as for a short biography of the latter, see N. Azzi, '*Datemi vostre nuove eletrizzanti*: Lettere dal carteggio di Angelo Gualandris e Maria Teresa Cristiani Castiglioni (1768–1788)', in Azzi, Baraldi and Camerlenghi, *Angelo Gualandris*, pp. 79–157.

[48] However, interest in Spanish varieties of silkworms was expressed by Count Alfonso Castiglioni, landowner and botanist in Brianza, to one of the main professors of the Madrid Garden, Casimiro Gómez Ortega: Archivo del Real Jardín Botánico de Madrid [hereafter ARJB] /I, 20, 2, 8, Castiglioni to Gómez Ortega, 26 May 1787.

[49] *A Catalogue of the Machines and Models in the Repositories of the Society for the Encouragement of Arts, Manufactures and Commerce* (1769), pp. 3–4.

For Spain, in addition to the seeds sent to the Madrid Garden by Joseph Banks and the physician and botanist John Hope of the University of Edinburgh,[50] an excellent example is provided in the second half of the 1790s by Charlotte Jane Stuart (1746–1800), wife of John Stuart Marquis of Bute, future member of the Royal Society and last British ambassador to Spain before the interruption of diplomatic ties in 1796–1802. The Marquis's family had already shown interest in sponsoring both scientific explorations and agricultural experiments. His father cultivated a great interest in natural sciences and agricultural studies. In 1770, he had financed Alberto Fortis from Padua and Domenico Cirillo from Naples in their scientific expedition to a number of Dalmatian islands. He also published the *Botanical Tables Containing the Families of British Plants* in 1785 and contributed to the scientific research of Scottish universities.[51]

For her part, the Marchioness supplied the Madrid Garden with seeds from England and other areas, such as North America and British India. There was a great variety of trees that could be useful in forestry: several species in the genera *Pinus* L., *Betula* L. and *Quercus* L., important in timber production or for reforestation.[52] Other plant species supplied by the Marchioness had food potential for their fruits and berries. There were, for example, a variety of 'pequeñísimo' [very small] melon (*Cucumis melo* L.), the bitter berry (*Prunus virginiana* L.), the American persimmon (*Diospyros virginiana* L.) and the deerberry (*Vaccinium stamineum* L.), although the sour taste of its berries does not make it the most palatable of the genus *Vaccinum*. There was also a plant with utility in the dye house: the *Indigofera caerulea* Roxb from the Indian subcontinent.[53] The botanists of the Madrid Garden were aware of

[50] For example, see the list ARJB/I, L.S. 4 1785: there are seeds sent both by Hope (6 front and back) and by Banks (from 2 front to 5 back, from 52 back to 53 front). About Hope (1725–1786), see the concise but accurate biography on the website of the Royal College of Physicians of Edinburgh, available: https://www.rcpe.ac.uk/heritage/college-history/john-hope [accessed 23 July 2020].

[51] On the role of the Butes both in European diplomacy and in the patronage of science, see: K. W. Schweizer, 'John Stuart, third Earl of Bute (1713–1792)', in *ODNB* LIII (2004); R. Thorne, 'John Stuart, first Marquis of Bute (1744–1814)', in *ODNB* LIII (2004); M. H. Lazarus and H. S. Pardoe, 'Bute's *Botanical tables*: dictated by Nature', *Archives of Natural History* 36 (2009), pp. 277–98. Italian historiography too has analysed the influence of the family: L. Braida, *L'autore assente. L'anonimato nell'editoria italiana del Settecento* (2019), pp. 51–2; P. Bianchi, 'Nella specola dell'ambasciatore. Torino agli occhi di John Stuart, Lord Mountstuart e Marchese di Bute (1779–1783)', in E. Piccoli and F. De Pieri (eds), *Architettura e città negli Stati sabaudi* (Macerata, 2012), pp. 135–60; L. Ciancio, 'Fortis, Alberto', in *DBI* XLIX (Rome, 1997); G. Pizzamiglio, 'Introduzione', in A. Fortis, *Viaggio in Dalmazia*, ed., E. Viani (1987), pp. i–xxxii, in particular pp. ii and xiii; G. Torcellan, 'Alberto Fortis (nota introduttiva)', G. Giarrizzo, G. Torcellan and F. Venturi (eds), *Illuministi italiani* (7 vols, 1965–71), VII, pp. 281–307, in particular pp. 288–9. On the contribution of three British noblewomen to botany, see: Nicole LaBouff, 'Public science in the private garden: Noblewomen horticulturalists and the making of British botany, c. 1785–1810', *Hist. Science* (2020), currently only available online: https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/full/10.1177/0073275320961908.

[52] On the growing sensitivity about the damage caused by deforestation in southern Europe in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, Warde, *Invention of sustainability*, pp. 325–7.

[53] The seeds sent by the Marchioness were planted a few years later, in 1799 and 1800: ARJB/I, L.S. 17 1799, *Indigofera caerulea* (no. 1023), 29 back, *Cucumis melo* (no. 1061), 30 back; ARJB/I, L.S. 22 1800, *Prunus virginiana* (no. 1830), 55 back, *Diospyros virginiana* (no. 1890), 57 front. There are no details on the melon: it was probably a variety that had interested the staff of the Madrid Garden, otherwise a widespread species in the Mediterranean area. On the food uses of varieties of *P. virginiana*, see D. E. Moerman, *Native American food plants: An ethnobotanical dictionary* (2010), pp. 200–2. On the dyeing uses of *I. caerulea* to obtain a delicate shade of indigo, see *The Monthly Rev.* LXXI (1813), p. 400. On its area of origin see: P. S. Nagar,

the importance of a contact such as the Marchioness, which allowed plant species from the Spanish colonies to be supplemented with others from Kew Gardens and areas that had been or were still under British influence. For the dispatch of seeds, but also of seedlings and dried samples, carried out with zeal and cleverness, in 1796 the Marchioness was appointed official correspondent of the Garden.[54] Obviously, contact with the Marchioness of Bute did not yet represent a conscious choice to specialize in plant husbandry, as would begin to happen in the Madrid Garden in the first decade of the nineteenth century. However, the British contributed to the material component on which the staff of the following years would work. In this, we can see a parallelism with what happened at the Paris *Jardin des plantes*: the botanical heritage accumulated during the Old Regime – when it was still the *Jardin du roi* – provided materials for the experiments in agriculture, forestry and the processing of derived products during the Revolution and Napoleonic imperium.[55]

For Italy one may cite cases of English contributions to the 'scientific centre' of Brera in Milan, where the garden for the teaching at the Gymnasium was sometimes also used for experiments on 'economically valuable plants' by the Patriotic Society.[56] The botany lessons of Fulgenzio Vitman (1728–1806) were planned based on the relevance of plants in the arts and agriculture alongside their medical and pharmaceutical uses. We see them in the documentation representing the economic garden of the *Theresianum* in Vienna as a model: highlighted alongside cereals, flax, hemp, asparagus, lettuce, and various species of the genus *Brassica*, were dye plants, fodder plants and others useful in crop rotation. There was also no lack of interest in vegetables suitable for cosmetics and perfumery.[57] While not classifiable as true agricultural science, Vitman's botany was based on practical applications. This was clear in his imports of seeds and plants from the rest of Europe,[58] with England also contributing. For example, in December 1786 a long list of 'hardy plants suitable for the climate of Lombardy' was sent from London on behalf of the otherwise unidentified nurseryman William Malcolm of Kennington, Surrey. The list included the almond tree (*Prunus dulcis* [Mill.] D. A. Webb), the filbert (*Corylus*

Note 53 *continued*
Floristic biodiversity of Barda hills and its surroundings (2005), p. 211; S. Sharma and B. Tiagi, *Flora of north-east Rajasthan* (1979), pp. 128–9. About the deerberry and its uses, see the entry by James R. Ballington in R. E. Gough and R. F. Korcak (eds), *Blueberries: A Century of Research* (1995).

[54] ARJB/I, 8, 6 – 6, first draft of the letter of appointment to the Marchioness, 1796; 9, 3 – 7, second draft, 24…; ARJB/I, 11, 3, drafts of the staff meeting, 10 Sept. 1796; ARJB/I, 11, 3, drafts of the staff meeting, 3 Sept. 1796.

[55] Emma C. Spary, *Utopia's Garden: French natural history from Old Regime to Revolution* (2000); *ead., Eating the Enlightenment: Food and the Sciences in Paris, 1670–1760* (2012); *ead., Feeding France: New sciences of food, 1760–1815* (2014).

[56] A. Visconti, 'Il giardino botanico della Società Patriotica di Milano (1776–1796)', *Museologia scientifica* 14 (1998), pp. 263–9.

[57] Archivio di Stato di Milano [hereafter ASMi] – Studi p.a./2, fascicolo Botanica, three dateless documents entitled respectively: *XV Cattedra (annale) di botanica*, *Hortus oeconomicus Collegii Imperialis Theresiani in suas classes divisus*, *Systema botanica tradenda in Universitate Viennensi*. See also M. T. Monti, 'Promozione del sapere e riforma delle istituzioni scientifiche nella Lombardia austriaca', G. Barsanti, V. Becagli and R. Pasta (eds), *La politica della scienza: Toscana e stati italiani nel tardo Settecento* (1996), pp. 367–92, in particular p. 379.

[58] A. Visconti, 'La fondazione dell'Orto Botanico di Brera e gli anni della direzione dell'abate vallombrosano Fulgenzio Vitman (1728–1806)', *Atti della Società italiana di scienze naturali e del Museo civico di storia naturale in Milano* 153 (2012), pp. 27–48, in particular pp. 34–7.

maxima Mill.), the date-plum (*Diospyros lotus* L.), and the river birch (*Betula nigra* L.).[59] The first two are known above all for the dietary use of their nuts, while the date-plum – 'cousin' of the American species procured by the Marchioness of Bute for the Madrid Garden – has fine-grained wood and sugary fruits. Its fruits would be studied in north-eastern Italy by the botanist and agriculturist Giovanni Mazzucato to produce sweeteners after Napoleon's 1806 Continental Blockade against British shipping, which limited the arrival of sugar cane from the colonies and created an urgent need for surrogates.[60] As for the river birch, originally from North America, it could supply both good timber and a sweet syrup from its processed sap.[61] The filbert was also of North American origin, while the almond and the date-plum were already acclimatized in some areas of Italy.

It is difficult to know which plants on the long list were bought from Malcolm, but it is interesting to note that his fame reached as far as Milan.[62] He stood out among nurserymen. First of all, as Kathleen Clark recently hypothesized, his 1771 nursery catalogue was probably the first of its kind to use Linnaean system of nomenclature. Additionally, Michael Symes, as Clark reports, suggested identifying the mysterious Malcolm as the Duke of Norfolk at Worksop Manor.[63]

The scientific modernity of his communication strategy and his likely prominent social status would have been two important factors in establishing his reliability also on the Continent. If contacts with Malcolm had been initiated only a few years earlier, we might have assumed the intermediation of Ludovico Barbiano of Belgiojoso, imperial plenipotentiary in London. For example, in 1779 the Milan Chamber Magistrate and the Patriotic Society – of which Belgiojoso was a strategic partner – asked him for some seeds of the so-called 'Siberian barley' (probably *Hordeum distichon* L.) for use in experimental crops in the Alpine valleys.[64] However, Belgiojoso's diplomatic term in London began in 1769 and ended in 1783, before the 1786 list was compiled. The list was probably the work of Antonio Songa, imperial consul in London and

[59] ASMi – Studi p.a./2, List of hardy plants suitable for the climate of Lombardy sold by William Malcolm & Son of Kennington Surry near London, 26 December 1786. The almond tree is registered as *Amygdalus dulcis*.

[60] About Mazzuccato's experiments on date-plum, see M. L. Fagnani, 'Studying "useful plants" from Maria Theresa to Napoleon: Continuity and invisibility in agricultural science, northern Italy, the late eighteenth to early nineteenth century', *Hist. Science* 59 (2021), pp. 373–460.

[61] See the entries in J. S. Fralish and S. B. Franklin, *Taxonomy and ecology of woody plants in North American forests (excluding Mexico and subtropical Florida)* (2002), and in D. H. Les, *Aquatic dicotyledons of North America: Ecology, life history, and systematics* (2017).

[62] The first catalogue of the plants cultivated in the Brera Garden was published many years later, in 1812. It reported – among several other species – the presence of the date-plum and the river birch, but not the almond tree nor the filbert. About the lack of a complete report before the 1812 catalogue, see E. Banfi and A. Visconti, 'L'Orto di Brera alla fine della dominazione asburgica e durante l'età napoleonica', *Atti della Società italiana di scienze naturali e del Museo civico di storia naturale in Milano* 154 (2013), pp. 173–264. Banfi and Visconti have reported and commented the full list proposed in the 1812 catalogue (pp. 194–264)

[63] K. Clark, 'What the nurserymen did for us: The roles and influence of the nursery trade on the landscapes and gardens of the eighteenth century', *Garden Hist.* [hereafter *GH*] 40 (2012), pp. 17–33. See also Malcolm, William *Catalogue of hot-house and greenhouse plants, fruit and forest trees, flowering shrubs, herbaceous plants, tree and kitchen garden seeds, perennial and annual flower seeds, garden mats and tools* (1771).

[64] A. Visconti, 'Il trasferimento delle piante nella Lombardia austriaca negli ultimi decenni della dominazione asburgica', *Altre modernità* 10–11 (2013), pp. 39–51, in particular p. 42.

close correspondent with the Patriotic Society, with whom he shared news, seeds and scientific texts.[65] 'Austrian' Milan – fully dedicated to the enhancement of sciences, arts and agriculture – could maintain contacts with Great Britain thanks to Songa, taking advantage of the European network of diplomacy in Vienna and the international scientific community.

III

In addition to training experts in agriculture and providing highly useful seeds, Great Britain also influenced the development of Spanish and Italian agricultural science through treatises and technical texts, which were both read in their original version and translated and adapted to the needs of the target audience. It is no coincidence that, at the end of 1782, Jacobo María de Spinoza, member of the *Real Audiencia* of Catalonia, underlined in some of his reflections how England was one of the most active players in Europe in strengthening the agricultural sector, promoting the application of science and technology to it. For example, he recalled the books of the economist Joseph Massie, who was also interested in British agricultural productivity and whose fame had reached Catalonia.[66]

As far as the technical texts were concerned, the adapted translations into Castilian of French versions of the English originals played a significant role. Two examples will be provided here: the works of British agriculturists Thomas Hale and Jethro Tull.

Between 1765 and 1795 the Castilian version of *A Compleat Body of Husbandry* by Hale (1756–58) was published in many volumes in Valencia. The translator was the politician and agrarian scholar José Antonio Valcárcel,[67] who in turn had worked on Dupuy-Demportes' *Le gentilhomme cultivateur*, a French adaptation of the original version. However, such 'chains' skewed the original message: in the specific case of Hale, although the horse as a working animal was one of the cornerstones of the English 'new husbandry', the Spanish experts continued to prefer the traditional ox, therefore Valcárcel criticized the use of the horse in agricultural works in its translation-adaptation.[68]

Henri Louis Duhamel du Monceau, engineer and agriculturist, translated Tull's *The New Horse-Houghing Husbandry* (1731) into French in 1750. Duhamel's translation, while correcting

[65] N. Raponi, 'Barbiano di Belgiojoso, Ludovico', in *DBI* VI (Rome, 1964). The signature on the list of hardy plants appears to be 'Antonio Songa', a name frequently found among Patriotic Society correspondents. See Biblioteca Nazionale Braidense, AF XI, 37–38, for copies of all letters written by the secretary from 1781 to 1790.

[66] Archivo Histórico Nacional de Madrid – Estado/3238, 339, Papel que para mejorar la agricultura, industria y fabricas catalanas escribía el fiscal de lo civil de la Real Audiencia de Barcelona Don Jacobo María de Spinoza, 21 Dec. 1782. On Massie's life (d. 1784) there is very little information. See also P. Mathias, 'The social structure in the eighteenth century: a calculation by Joseph Massie', *EcHR* 10 (1957), pp. 30–45.

[67] Valcárcel (1720–1801) was born in Burgos, but at some time he moved to Valencia and remained there until his death. He had been a member of the local economic society since 1778 and wrote numerous texts on agriculture, manufacturing and trade. There is not much more information about him than that he proposed himself to the Valencian administration for several bureaucratic and financial assignments: A. González Bueno, 'José Antonio Valcárcel', in *DBE*: http://dbe.rah.es/biografias/20105/jose-antonio-valcarcel [accessed 29 July 2020].

[68] T. Hale, *A compleat body of husbandry* (4 vols, 1756–9); J.-B. Dupuy-Demportes (ed.), *Le gentilhomme cultivateur ou corps complet d'agriculture* (8 vols, 1761–4); T. Hale, *Agricultura general y gobierno de la casa de campo*, trans., J. A. Valcárcel (10 vols, 1765–95), in particular, see IX (1770), p. 438.

some passages in Tull's work and introducing improvements in the use of some of the machines described, recognized the practical advantages of its systems, in particular the introduction of forage crops. It was a very different work from the original. In turn, the politician and interpreter Miguel Joseph de Aoiz translated – adapting it to the needs of the new public, of course – the French version of Duhamel into Spanish, to which were also added two chapters of *Kitab al-Filaha*, an agriculture treaty by the Andalusian Abu Zakariya Ibn al-Awwam, who lived in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries.[69] The two chapters were translated from Arabic by the Lebanese royal librarian Miguel Casiri[70] and Count Pedro Rodríguez de Campomanes, future minister and member of the Council of Castile.[71]

Even more than in the case of Hale, Tull's original message came to the Spanish readers in modified form. However, the basic agrarian principles remained, even partly updated and corrected through Duhamel's intervention, 'brought closer' to the Spanish reality through the adaptation of Miguel Joseph de Aoiz, and even enriched with a historical and anthropological perspective through the translation of Ibn al-Awwam's work. Therefore, the British treaties had the merit of introducing agrarian novelties into the Iberian Peninsula, albeit domesticated and partly deprived of the possibility of challenging traditional practices.

To find original British scientific and technical texts, we need to search in specialized libraries. It is significant that at the death in 1804 of the great botanist Antonio José Cavanilles, director of the Madrid Garden, some interesting British publications were included in his personal library, among many others from all over Europe.[72] For example, there were the *Botanick Essays* of the Scottish surgeon and botanist Patrick Blair (d. 1728), a member of the Royal Society of London.[73] Printed in the English capital in 1720, the first part of the *Essays* described the structure of flowers and the plants' fruiting, while the second discussed their generation and nourishment. Blair was not directly interested in the enhancement of agriculture, but in his scientific thought, plants were considered in their practical use, and not necessarily medical. Writing about the classification of plants in the *Pharmaco-Botanologia* – which Cavanilles did not have – Blair had focused on the genera *Abies* and *Pinus* (firs and pines) to describe their practical uses even outside of medicine and pharmacy, to which he devoted most of the space. For example, he noted that the pine's 'kernels are much esteemed in Italy, being look'd upon as more delicious than almonds', while its rosin, like that of the fir and larch, had numerous uses in manufacturing and mechanics. He mentioned the importance of fir wood in the construction of buildings, ships and various instruments.

[69] K. Matteson, *Forests in revolutionary France: Conservation, community, and conflict, 1669–1848* (2015), pp. 65–72; L. Argemí i d'Abadal, 'Agronomía y revolución agraria en España (1750–1820)', in L. Argemí i d'Abadal and E. Lluch (eds), *Agronomía y fisiocracia en España (1750–1820)* (1985), pp. 1–43, in particular pp. 9–13. On the translator (1699–1753), see C. González Caizán, 'Miguel José de Aoiz de la Torre', in *DBE*: https://dbe.rah.es/biografias/31308/miguel-jose-de-aoiz-de-la-torre [accessed 29 July 2020].

[70] On Casiri (1710–1791), important arabist and lexicographer linked to the Royal Library of El Escorial, see F. Martín Escudero, 'Miguel Casiri de Gartia', in *DBE*, http://dbe.rah.es/biografias/18260/miguel-casiri-de-gartia [accessed 29th July 2020].

[71] On Campomanes's economic thought and his patronage of Spanish agriculture, see Ruiz Torres, *Reformismo e Ilustración*, pp. 484–6.

[72] ARJB/XIII, 1, 33, 1, *Índice de los libros de historia natural existentes en la biblioteca de Don Antonio Josef Cavanilles*.

[73] See the entry by Anita Guerrini in *ODNB* VI (2004).

Forestry information was more accurate for all evergreen conifers, for example regarding the care of seeds, transplanting seedlings, management of soils, etc.[74]

Cavanilles possessed two treatises by another important botanist, Philip Miller (1691–1771), director of the Chelsea Garden and correspondent of the Florentine Botanical Society, which in 1783 would merge with the agriculture Academy of Georgofili. The titles in the Spanish library were *Figures of the Most Beautiful, Useful, and Uncommon Plants Described in the Gardeners Dictionary*, in the 1777 London edition. Furthermore, Cavanilles had the 1785 French translation of the *Gardeners Dictionary Containing the Methods of Cultivating and Improving the Kitchen, Flower, Fruit and Pleasure Garden*, first published in London in 1731. Miller always applied his botanical knowledge to 'plants of economic value'. For example, he selected the cotton seeds planted in British Georgia and studied the cultivation and colouring properties of the rose madder (*Rubia tinctorum* L.)[75]

In Cavanilles's library there were also the six volumes of *Voyage dans l'hémisphere austral et autour du monde*, the 1778 French translation of the report of the second journey of James Cook.[76] It contained naturalistic, geographical and environmental information on the lands explored by Cook, but also details on customs and economic activities, including the crops and food habits of the indigenous people. Again it was a translation-adaptation. But at least there was only the transition from English to French without a further one into Castilian.

In any case, oceanic explorations during the eighteenth century focused more and more on the possibility of exporting and importing crops – through suitable selection and acclimatization experiments – between the motherland and the colonies. As a rich historiography has shown, on the threshold of the French revolution the Paris *Jardin du roi* had many plant species from the Americas and Asia, gathered and studied following scientific expeditions such as those of Bougainville (1766–69) and La Pérouse (1772–76 and 1785–88). Many species also came from international missions in which France participated. This was the case of the expedition to the Viceroyalty of Peru (1777–88) coordinated by the Madrid Garden, in which the French botanist Joseph Dombey also took part by order of Minister Turgot. As for the British Empire, Joseph Banks is a good example of this 'globalized' interest in economically valuable plants. For example, in 1793 he organized the transport of the breadfruit (*Artocarpus altilis* [Parkinson ex F. A. Zorn] Fosberg) from Tahiti to the British West Indies where it became a staple food which made up for the lack of other plantations of food plants. The concept of scientific travel supported by geographical explorations had been represented by Banks also during the first voyage of Cook, not by coincidence sponsored by the Royal Navy and the Royal Society. And again, the Scottish botanist and surgeon Archibald Menzies, following George Vancouver on

[74] P. Blair, *Pharmaco-Botanologia or an Alphabetical and classical dissertation on all the British indigenous and garden plants of the New London Dispensatory* (7 'decads', 1723–27), I, pp. 6–8. See also McMahon, 'Boundary work', pp. 52–61.

[75] A. Paterson, 'Philip Miller: A portrait', *GH* 14 (1986), pp. 40–1; H. Le Rougetel, 'Gardener extraordinary: Philip Miller of Chelsea (1691–1771)', *J. Royal Horticultural Soc.* 96 (1971), pp. 556–63. See also P. Miller, *The method of cultivating madder as it is now practised by the Dutch in Zealand… with their manner of drying, stamping and manufacturing it for use… to which is added The method of cultivating madder in England from many experiments made in the course in thirty years on the culture of that useful plant* (1758).

[76] J. Cook, T. Furneaux, J. R. Forster and G. Forster, *Voyage dans l'hémisphere austral et autour du monde, fait sur les vaisseaux de roi, l'Aventure et la Résolution, en 1772, 1773, 1774 et 1775* (6 vols, 1778).

the 1791–95 voyage around the world, noted the uses that indiginous people of different areas made of local plants.[77] We can therefore understand the interest that travel reports could have for Cavanilles and for the Madrid Garden, which organized important scientific expeditions in Latin America and which received botanical species from all around the world.[78]

The British texts fitted in Cavanilles's rich international library, establishing his background in plant physiology and shaping his increasingly well-defined concept of 'applied botany'. In 1795–97, he published his *Observaciones sobre la historia natural, geografía, agricultura, población y frutos del Reyno de Valencia* (*Observations on Natural History, Geography, Agriculture, Population and Goods of the Kingdom of Valencia*), an account of his explorations of the Valencia area. The focus of the work was on agriculture and manufacturing, with a study on the organization and customs of rural society.

From 1797 to 1801, Cavanilles published articles on agriculture and applied science in various journals. He wrote about the downsides of rice growing, about citrus and chufa (*Cyperus esculentus* L.) cultivation. He also wrote about the cultivation and processing of plants for textile fibres, such as *Agave americana* L., *Stipa tenacissima* L. and *Abutilon theophrasti* Medicus, on which Cavanilles was conducting experiments at the time. For the *Anales de historia natural* (*Annals of Natural History*), of which he was co-editor, he wrote about elastic resin and the plant species that produce it.[79] We can hypothesize that Cavanilles's transition from systematic botany to an increasingly applied botany[80] owed a great deal to the influence of English texts on agriculture, horticulture, and the processing of derived products. These themes emerged – albeit with a more ethnographic and anthropological point of view – also in the *Voyage* of Cook. In this perspective, the value of English literature contributed to shaping the role of Cavanilles as a 'link' between traditional botany and the agrarian orientation that the Madrid Garden would assume under the direction of Francisco Antonio Zea (1804–08).[81]

[77] Bourguet, 'L'esploratore', pp. 283–351; C. Deschamps-Lang, 'Joseph Dombey au Pérou et au Chili, 1778–1784', in Y. Laissus, *Les naturalistes français en Amérique du Sud, XVIe–XIXe siècles* (1995), pp. 157–66; D. Powell, 'The voyage of the plant nursery, H.M.S. Providence, 1791–1793', in *Economic Botany* 31 (1977), pp. 387–431; I. Laboulais-Lesage, 'L'usage des récits de voyage dans les dictionnaires de géographie du XVIIIe siècle: le cas des notices américaines', in G. Bertrand (ed.), *La culture du voyage N: pratiques et discours de la Renaissance à l'aube du XXe siècle* (2004), pp. 147–79.

[78] L. López-Ocón Cabrera, *Breve historia de la ciencia española* (2003), pp. 200–17; Del Campo, *Introducción de plantas*.

[79] A. J. Cavanilles, 'Observaciones sobre el cultivo del arroz en el Reyno de Valencia y su influencia en la salud pública', in *Memorias de la Real Academia Médica de Madrid* I (1797), pp. 99–128; A. J. Cavanilles, 'De los naranjos', *SAA*, 24 Jan. 1799, pp. 49–56; A. J. Cavanilles, 'Del cultivo de las chufas', *SAA*, 1 May 1800, pp. 273–5; A. J. Cavanilles, 'Sobre el cultivo de algunas especies de malvas y uso económico que se puede hacer de sus fibras', *SAA*, 16 May 1800, pp. 305–9; A. J. Cavanilles, 'Observaciones sobre algunos vegetales que producen resina elástica', in *Anales de Historia Natural*, 2 (1800), pp. 124–8; A. J. Cavanilles, 'Del cultivo de las chufas', in *Anales de Ciencias Naturales*, 3 (1801), pp. 234–6.

[80] M. L. Fagnani, 'From "pure botany" to "economic botany" – changing ideas by exchanging plants: Spain and Italy in the late eighteenth and the early nineteenth century', *Hist. European Ideas* (2021), currently only available online: https://doi.org/10.1080/01916599.2021.1921007 [accessed 4 May 2021], pp. 3–4.

[81] On Zea's scientific and pedagogical thought, alongside his direction of the Madrid botanical garden, see: D. E. Soto Arango and M. A. Puig Samper Mulero, 'Francisco Antonio Zea (1766–1822). Las facetas de un científico criollo', in E. Cervantes (ed.), *Naturalistas proscritos* (2011), pp. 61–72; D. E. Soto Arango, 'Francisco Antonio Zea y la enseñanza de la agricultura en el Real Jardín Botánico de Madrid', *Historia crítica* 16 (1998), pp. 43–60.

In Italy, the reception of British texts was sparser, both in natural sciences and agricultural techniques, but fruitful cases were not lacking. The Venetian intellectual Francesco Griselini, founder in 1764 of the long-lived agrarian magazine *Giornale d'Italia*, made his debut in the literature in 1763 with the *Nuova maniera di seminare e coltivare il formento* (*A New Way of Sowing and Cultivating Wheat*), which described the sowing machine designed by Jethro Tull. The success was very great, so much so that the text was republished, even adding notes by the Florentine Academy of Georgofili. Griselini thus began his copious production of agricultural texts: monographs, adapted translations, dictionaries and articles.[82] Griselini also supplied Italy with the adapted translation of Hale's *A Compleat Body of Husbandry*, but as in the case of Valcárcel, the reference model was again the French translation-adaptation by Dupuy-Demportes and not the original in English.[83] Once again, however, its innovations – 'filtered' through French and Italian interventions – became widely used in Mediterranean lands.

Turning our attention to Milan, the shop of the Swiss bookseller and printer Jacques Bayle Barelle offered a limited selection of texts in English. Among Samuel Richardson's novels *Clarissa* and *Pamela* and one of the most popular travel books at the time, the *Voyage Round the World* by Admiral George Anson, the 1785 catalogue contained a very useful publication for science and technology applied to agriculture: the three volumes of the 1771 *Essays and Observations Physical and Literary* read by the Philosophical Society of Edinburgh, which in the meantime had become the local Royal Society.[84] In a 'forum' that embraced also botany, anatomy, medicine, meteorology, and chemistry, in Volume III of the *Essays* there were the description of some experiments on the use of marl in agriculture, written by physician James Ainslie,[85] an article by a certain George Clark on the advantages of the shallow ploughing, 'kept within three inches of the surface', and criticism thereof by Lord Kames.[86] In particular, Kames – besides being an important jurist and philosopher among the founders of the Society – was interested in agricultural improvements, dealing with them in his social treatise *Historical Law-Tracts* (1758) and in the *Gentleman Farmer* (1776).[87]

[82] On the multifaceted Griselini (1717–1787) and his journalistic activity, see: G. Torcellan, 'Francesco Griselini (nota introduttiva)', in Giarrizzo, Torcellan and Venturi (eds), *Illuministi italiani,* VII, pp. 93–120; G. Fumi, 'Francesco Griselini (nota introduttiva)', in S. Zaninelli and G. Fumi (eds), *Scritti teorici e tecnici di agricoltura* (3 vols, Milan, 1989), II, pp. 187–99; P. Preto, 'Griselini, Francesco', in *DBI* LIX (2002); M. Lastri (ed.), *Biblioteca georgica ossia Catalogo ragionato degli scrittori di agricoltura, veterinaria, agrimensura* (1787), p. 68.

[83] It was *Il gentiluomo coltivatore o Corpo compiuto d'agricoltura ad uso della nazione italiana* (23 vols, 1769–83), originally planned as a 26-volume series, at least according to Lastri (ed.), *Biblioteca georgica*, p. 68.

[84] *Catalogue des livres françois, italiens, latins et anglois qui se trouvent chez Jacques Barelle libraire à Milan* ([Milan], 1785), p. 267. About Jacques and his connections with Karl Joseph von Firmian, Hapsburg plenipotentiary minister in the Duchy of Milan see R. Pasta, 'Mediazioni e trasformazioni: operatori del libro in Italia nel Settecento', in *Archivio Storico Italiano* 640 (2014), pp. 311–54, in particular pp. 342–3. About the Society of Edinburgh, its history and its publications: R. L. Emerson, 'The Philosophical Society of Edinburgh 1748–1768', in *British J. Hist. of Science* 14 (1981), pp. 133–76.

[85] J. Ainslie, 'An Essay on Marle', in *Essays and Observations Physical and Literary read before the Philosophical Society of Edinburgh* (3 vols, 1771), III, pp. 1–55.

[86] George Clark, 'The advantages of shallow ploughing', and Lord Kames (Henry Home), 'Observations upon the foregoing paper concerning shallow ploughing', in *Essays and Observations… Edinburgh*, III, pp. 56–67 and 68–79.

[87] On Lord Kames's life (1696–1782) and thought, there are many important historical studies. Among them, see: J. McCosh, *The Scottish philosophy:*

The presence of the *Essays* in Bayle Barelle's shop acquires a particular interest if we consider that Jacques's son, Giuseppe, would be the first professor of agricultural science at the University of Pavia (1804–11), during Napoleonic rule. His education was heavily influenced by the books on natural sciences and the technical manuals of agriculture sold by his father,[88] Giuseppe Bayle Barelle may have somehow also benefited from the *Essays* of the Royal Society of Edinburgh. He read Italian, French and Latin, but it is hard to say if he knew English too. However, it cannot be ruled out that he understood it sufficiently or that someone at his father's shop could translate it for him.

IV

The British interest in the western Mediterranean environment, natural resources, and agriculture was also expressed in visits to those lands. The context was generally that of the Grand Tour done for reasons of leisure and healthcare, but travels to the Continent were also undertaken for study and research. Examples include the journeys of Arthur Young in France, Catalonia,[89] northern and central Italy in the late 1780s, or the travel of James Edward Smith in 1786 taking him to the major cities on the Italian peninsula.[90] Tull himself, as commented before, visited southern France and Italy on his journey through Europe in the early 1710s: he was looking for relief for his poor health in the warm Mediterranean climate, but he drew inspiration from those lands also for deepening his agricultural knowledge.

Although an extensive and excellent historiography exists on these writers, there is more work to be done on the precise motivations that led Young, Smith, Tull, and other British naturalists or agriculturists to visit the Mediterranean countries. Writers like Young were clearly interested in comparative studies and one would like to know more about the potential for scientific and technical progress that these educated and highly skilled travellers imagined might exist in lands and villages rich in natural resources, but socially backward and poor (the exemplary case is Young's observations in north-eastern Spain). However, these journeys also express a sort of 'reciprocity' between Great Britain and the Mediterranean basin, in the sense that it was not only the former giving something to the latter through their leadership in terms of natural and agricultural sciences, but also the potential of the latter to constitute an excellent field laboratory for British experts. In this article, I have tried to demonstrate this by highlighting the richness of eighteenth-century Spanish botanical gardens, featuring the enduring legacy of the Arab

Note 87 *continued*
Biographical, expository, critical from Hutcheson to Hamilton (1875), pp. 173–83; W. C. Lehmann, *Henry Home, Lord Kames, and the Scottish Enlightenment: A study in national character and in the history of ideas* (1971).

[88] Fagnani, 'L'agraria "italiana" prima e dopo Napoleone', pp. 463–7.

[89] A. Young, *Travels during the Years 1787, 1788, and 1789 undertaken more particularly with a view of ascertaining the cultivation, wealth, resources, and national prosperity of the Kingdom of France* (2 vols, 2nd edn, 1794), II, pp. 317–18.

[90] R. M. Capel Martínez, 'Il "tour" iberico: costumi, avventure, ricordi e opinioni dei viaggiatori inglesi nella Spagna del Settecento', *Dimensioni e problemi della ricerca storica* (1995), no. 2, pp. 139–67; J. Edmondson and C. Smith, 'The Linnean Society's Smith Herbarium: A resource for eighteenth-century garden history research', *GH* 27 (1999), pp. 244–52; G. Douglas, 'Italy in the Linnean collections: A review of the biological specimens, books and manuscripts linking Italy with Linnaeus and the Linnean Society of London', in Beretta and Tosi (eds), *Linnaeus in Italy*, pp. 31–46.

agricultural revolution and equally long-lasting connections with the Italian States. Moreover, regarding the latter, there is scope for more research on connections within these regions, not least the mutual influence between Spain and Bourbon southern Italy in terms of botany and agriculture, in addition to the role of these exchanges in the definition of an 'agricultural botany' that was the base of the more mature agricultural science of the nineteenth century.

As Balsamo commented on English agriculture in the *Annals*, British travellers such as Young and Smith expressed both positive and negative opinions on what they had seen in Italy, then publishing their notes in English and French. It was therefore a large European network in which scientific knowledge, expertise, seeds, texts, even machines circulated with the aim of contributing – consciously or not – to a modern, up-to-date agricultural science. However, as the cases presented here show, some countries were more advanced from this point of view and represented a role model for others, which faced more difficulties as a result of their political, social and economic conditions. The contribution offered by Great Britain to the agricultural science of the western Mediterranean basin was therefore of great importance, despite being hidden amongst studies generally seen as belonging to the natural sciences or natural history, as with the cases of Madrid and Milan, where the organization of botanical gardens and scientific book collections by means of British seeds and texts contained great potential for agriculture and forestry. Even travels like those of Gualandris, linked to mining issues and to gaining a deeper knowledge of geology and mineralogy, included an in-depth study of European agriculture and rural society, with particular regard for the English countryside.

This 'hybrid' nature was, on the other hand, peculiar to a time of epistemological definition for agricultural science. However, if full awareness of this branch of learning was missing in Italy and Spain, the circulation of knowledge and materials in those countries laid the groundwork for later more 'conscious' agriculturists. We have seen this in Cavanilles, the 'link' between classic Spanish systematic botany and Zea's agricultural botany. The books accessible to the young Giuseppe Bayle Barelle, who would become a fully fledged professor of agricultural science, state the idea even better. In this still fluid branch of knowledge, however, Great Britain was perceived to have the clearest ideas, with a wide appeal throughout Europe. This was demonstrated by the widespread circulation of the texts of Tull and Hale in France and from there to Spain and Italy. As I have pointed out, Griselini was consecrated as a specialized journalist thanks to his commentary on English agronomic writings, albeit through the filter of the French translation. The Academy of Georgofili approved Griselini's work on Tull's seeding machine and produced its own annotated edition, which reiterated with numerous references – notes, comments and inserts – the British contribution to the enhancement of agriculture.[91]

This article has also sought to highlight the potential of travel literature in providing experts with new models for strengthening agriculture and manufacturing.[92] This is seen in the

[91] F. Griselini, *Nuova maniera di seminare e coltivare il formento…* (3rd edition, 1765). See, for example, pp. 2–3, note a, in which the editors praise the network of agricultural societies and academies spread in England, Scotland and Ireland.

[92] See also G. Bil, 'Tangled compositions: Botany, agency, and authorship aboard HMS *Endeavour*', *Hist. Science* (2020), currently only available online: https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/full/10.1177/0073275320971109 [accessed 16 January 2021].

information reported by the Forsters to Gualandris on the tussah silkworms and on the 'New Zealand' flax, which could have provided textile fibres by economizing on the breeding of the former and on the cultivation of the latter, probably against the background of the aforementioned liabilities of mulberry cultivation and the silk chain. We have seen how Gualandris was quite convinced of this potential, but their application in the Republic of Venice was not implemented due to a range of variables: environmental factors; the possibility of coexistence with local productions, on which the agriculturists of the various areas of the Republic could have given the most competent judgment, supported by the network of agricultural academies; the government's willingness or lack thereof to undertake new experiments.

The development of more ambitious projects in Italy had to await the establishment of the Napoleonic empire, which favoured better circulation of knowledge and species along with major institutional, social and economic changes. Despite this fact, the Napoleonic period and the subsequent conservative reaction – both in Italy and in Spain – were also characterized by complex political and military events that delayed for several decades effective improvement of the agricultural system via appropriate reforms.[93]

[93] About the Spanish situation, see also: López-Ocón Cabrera, *Breve historia de la ciencia española*, pp. 226–48; and J. L. Pan-Montojo, *Apostolado, profesión y tecnología: Una historia de los ingenieros agrónomos en España* (Madrid, 2005).

The decline of landed estates in the eastern Netherlands, *c.*1880–*c.*1940*

by Piet van Cruyningen

Abstract

Until now the sales of landed estates that occurred in western Europe from the late nineteenth century until 1940 have only been studied in the context of national historiographies. A comparative approach could provide more insight into the causes of those sales. This paper is intended as a first contribution to such an approach. It compares the results of research in the eastern Netherlands with well-documented cases such as England, East Elbian Germany and northern Italy. Variations in chronology and geographical distribution of sales can be explained by variables such as estate size, diversity of assets, government policy, taxation, and the inheritance system. Dutch landlords were often forced to sell because their estates were small, government did not support them, taxation was high, and partible inheritance was strictly adhered to. It also appears that north-western countries (UK, the Netherlands) were less inclined to support estate owners than central/southern countries (Germany, Italy).

From the late nineteenth century onwards many landed estates in western Europe were sold, often to former tenant farmers. This has sometimes been interpreted as being the result of a crisis of the traditional landowning classes caused by the late nineteenth-century agricultural depression. Such an interpretation appears to be logical, as large-scale imports of cereals from North America caused cereal prices in Europe to drop precipitately and led to a drop in land rents.[1] A recent article concluded that falling rent incomes confronted landed elites all over Europe with 'insurmountable financial difficulties', leading them 'to withdraw from agriculture and look to move their assets into other businesses'.[2] Due to reduced incomes from rents it is assumed that rational landlords preferred to sell their land and purchase more profitable assets, such as shares and bonds. Considering that in northern Italy, for example,

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[1] F. M. L. Thompson, *English landed society in the nineteenth century* (1963), pp. 303, 310; J. V. Beckett, *The aristocracy in England* (1986), p. 198; A. L. Cardoza, *Aristocrats in bourgeois Italy: The Piedmontese nobility, 1861–1930* (1997), pp. 197–8.

[2] E. Tello, G. Jover, I. Murray, O. Fullana and R. Soto, 'From feudal colonization to agrarian capitalism in Mallorca: Peasant endurance under the rise and fall of large estates, 1229–1900', *J. Agrarian Change* 18 (2018), p. 504.

in the early 1890s estates yielded less than two per cent of their capital value, it was indeed rational to move out of agriculture.[3]

Such a move out of agriculture did indeed take place, but if we look at it from a European perspective it becomes clear that there were geographical variations in the amount of land that was sold and in the chronology of the sales. In England, for example, many estates were sold, but recent research has demonstrated that even nowadays the gentry and aristocracy still own a staggering 30 per cent of all English land.[4] In East Elbian Germany, sales only began in the late 1920s and most *Junkers* held on to their land until the wave of destruction that swept over the eastern provinces of Germany in 1945 and the subsequent communist land reforms.[5] In some provinces of Emilia Romagna sales took place during the late nineteenth century depression but elsewhere in northern Italy they occurred considerably later, in the 1910s and 1920s. In England as well, most of the sales occurred after *c.*1910.[6] Therefore the bulk of these sales took place more than a decade after the late nineteenth-century depression, which ended around 1895. The chronological variation between and within countries shows that estate sales were not simply the result of the late nineteenth-century agricultural depression. Whether landed estates were sold or not was determined by a range of variables, such as government policy, taxation, death duties, and inheritance systems. Moreover, variations in farming systems – arable agriculture being more vulnerable to falling prices than animal husbandry – also played a part.[7] Which factors were decisive can only be established through comparative research, by demonstrating the differences and similarities between several cases.[8] Comparative research on this topic is lacking, however, apart from broad surveys of the history of the European aristocracy such as those of Lieven and Wasson that can only touch upon it. Studies on estate sales are part of national historiographies and almost never pay attention to other countries.[9]

[3] Cardoza, *Aristocrats*, p. 202.

[4] G. Shrubsole, *Who owns England? How we lost our green and pleasant land and how to take it back* (2019), p. 267.

[5] S. Malinowski, *Vom König zum Führer: Deutscher Adel und Nazionalsozialismus* (2nd edn., Frankfurt am Main, 2004), pp. 283–4; I. Buchsteiner, 'Pommerscher Adel im Wandel des 19. Jahrhunderts', *Geschichte und Gesellschaft* 25 (1999), p. 352; I. Buchsteiner, 'Besitzkontinuität, Besitzwechsel und Besitzverlust in den Gutswirtschaften Pommerns, 1879–1910' in H. Reif (ed.), *Ostelbische Agrargesellschaft im Kaiserreich und in der Weimarer Republik. Agrarkrise – junkerliche Interessenpolitik – Modernisierungsstrategien* (Berlin, 1994), p. 128; R. Schiller, *Vom Rittergut zum Grossgrundbesitz: Ökonomische und soziale Transformationsprozesse der ländlichen Eliten in Brandenburg im 19. Jahrhundert* (2003), p. 207; G. Mahlerwein, *Grundzüge der Agrargeschichte. Die Moderne (1880–2010)* (2016), p. 31.

[6] Cardoza, *Aristocrats*, pp. 200–3, idem, 'Commercial agriculture and the crisis of landed power: Bologna, 1880–1930' in R. Gibson and M. Blinkhorn (eds), *Landownership and power in modern Europe* (1991), pp. 195–6; Beckett, *Aristocracy*, p. 85; F. M. L. Thompson, 'The land market: a reappraisal reappraised', *AgHR* 55 (2007), p. 300; J. V. Beckett and M. Turner, 'End of the old order? F. M. L. Thompson, the land question and the burden of ownership in England, *c.*1880–*c.*1925', *AgHR* 55 (2007), p. 288.

[7] J. Habakkuk, *Marriage, debt and the estates system. English landownership 1650–1950* (1994), p. 685; Beckett, *Aristocracy*, p. 198; N. Koning, 'The failure of agrarian capitalism: Agrarian politics in the United Kingdom, Germany, the Netherlands and the United States, 1846–1919' (PhD Diss. Wageningen University, 1994), pp. 99–100, 116–19.

[8] Y. Kuiper, 'Landed elites, landed estates and lifestyles in Europe (1880–2000): A historiographical balance and a research agenda', *Virtus: J. Nobility Stud.* 23 (2016), p. 97.

[9] D. Lieven, *Aristocracy in Europe 1815–1914* (1992), pp. 21–133; E. Wasson, *Aristocracy and the modern world* (2006), pp. 52–5, 159–75; D. Cannadine, *The decline and fall of the British aristocracy* (1992), pp. 698–704, places the British case in a European perspective.

As a result, although this is a European phenomenon, there is no European debate about it. This article is an attempt to start a debate on European estate sales in the period from the 1880s to the Second World War by reviewing the results of several national and regional studies and adding the results of a study of another area, the eastern Netherlands. This Dutch case contributes to the debate through the quality of the sources – particularly the declarations for the inheritance tax and the detailed records of estate sales – and by paying attention to some issues that are under-represented in the historiography, such as the part played by government policy to support agriculture and the inheritance system. The Dutch inheritance system was different from that of, for instance, Britain or Germany, because inheritance was partible, and there were no exceptions to this rule for the nobility.

The next section presents a survey of the most important motives for estate sales according to historiography, relying mostly on research on three well-documented cases of regions where no land reforms were implemented (at least not before 1945): England, East Elbian Germany and northern Italy. Countries where land reform took place, defined as government-initiated property redistribution of agricultural land from landowning elites to the peasantry or the state, are excluded here, because this article aims to study 'voluntary' transfers of land, forced by market developments or increasing taxation. In section II the Dutch case will be introduced, section III will investigate the composition of the investment portfolios and the degree of indebtedness of Dutch landlords, based on valuations of inheritances. In section IV I estate records are used to gauge the profitability of land and in section V the records of estate sales are analysed to go deeper into the motives for selling and to determine who purchased the land. Was most land sold to the tenants as in England or were there maybe new men who wanted to invest in estates, or were estates sold to conservation organizations? Finally, section VI presents the conclusion.

I

The simple explanation of estate sales is that during the late nineteenth-century depression tenants, hit by lower cereal prices, were granted rent reductions and remissions. This reduced estate revenues and stimulated landlords to move out of agriculture and invest in more profitable assets. Rents were indeed reduced, in the south-east of England by 41 per cent between 1874–78 and 1894–98 and in northern Italy by 35 per cent between 1881 and 1890.[10] If this were the explanation for the sales, one would expect them to take place during and shortly after the depression, say during the 1880s and 1890s. However, as demonstrated above, the bulk of the sales occurred considerably later. When we consider why this was so, we should keep in mind that these were traditionally *landed* elites. Land was not just an economic asset to them, it was the basis of their power and prestige. They only sold when they saw no other option.[11] Whether, and when, landlords perceived the need to sell, depended on several factors. Owners of smaller estates sold earlier and more often because the maintenance costs of a large house and park were relatively heavier for them as they had fewer hectares to provide revenue. Also, these smaller

[10] Thompson, *English landed society*, pp. 303, 310; Cardoza, *Aristocrats*, p. 198.

[11] Habakkuk, *Marriage, debt*, pp. 362, 626, 669.

owners often had less income from non-agricultural sources. Magnates, however, could survive more easily because they not only had more land but also more non-agricultural assets such as stocks and bonds. Often, they only sold outlying estates and kept the core estate intact. This may be the reason why in England such a large share of the land is still owned by the aristocracy today. Still, much land was sold to the tenants and as a result the percentage of land cultivated by owner-occupiers in England and Wales increased from 12 per cent in 1909 to 36 per cent in 1927.[12]

Another factor that affected the decision to sell or not was indebtedness. When an estate was indebted, reduced rent income led to a disproportionally lower disposable income because a part of the revenue had to be reserved for interest payments. In 1880, it was calculated that on an averagely burdened English estate a fall in gross income of 30 per cent might lead to a decrease in net revenue of 50 per cent. Many estates in England were burdened with debts at the beginning of the agricultural depression in the 1870s and, in several cases, indebtedness was indeed the motive for selling.[13] In older German historiography a lot of weight was attached to indebtedness as a cause for the assumed decline of the East Elbian *Junkers*. Recent research has shown, however, that the effects of debts were not that strong; the most indebted estates were usually also the ones with the highest net revenues. Some foreclosures did occur, but their number remained limited.[14] A cause of the relatively good performance of East Elbian estates may have been that many of them were exploited directly by their owners, therefore landlords could profit from upswings of the agricultural economy. They were not dependent on notoriously sticky rents like the landowners in England or northern Italy who had leased out their land. In Bologna province, for instance, it was the capitalist tenant farmers who profited most from high prices, not their aristocratic landlords. As a result, these landlords were selling out in the 1920s.[15]

A very important actor was the state. It could decide to support the landowning class or to burden it with heavy taxation. The latter appears to have happened in the United Kingdom. Particularly the inheritance tax that was introduced in 1894 elicited loud howls of woe from the landowning class. The tariff for the largest inheritances was eight per cent initially, but it was raised to 40 per cent in 1919 and 60 per cent by 1939. Moreover, from 1910, land was valued at the current selling prices – not as formerly based on existing rents – and farms were valuated individually, not estates as a whole, which led to higher valuations.[16] In Italy, however, property taxes were reduced to support large landowners.[17] In Germany taxation of landowners was mild and when landlords managed to present extremely low incomes in their declarations for the income tax through creative book-keeping, officials turned a blind eye.[18]

[12] Cardoza, *Aristocrats*, pp. 195, 200; Habakkuk, *Marriage, debt*, pp. 280, 363, 395; S. G. Sturmey, 'Owner-farming in England and Wales, 1900–1950' in W. E. Minchinton (ed.), *Essays in agrarian history* (1968), p. 287.

[13] Cannadine, *Decline and fall*, p. 93; idem, 'Aristocratic indebtedness in the nineteenth century: the case reopened', *EcHR* 30 (1977), pp. 633, 645.

[14] H. Rosenberg, *Große Depression und Bismarckzeit: Wirtschaftsablauf, Gesellschaft und Politik in Mitteleuropa* (2nd edn., 1976), p. 164; K. Heß, 'Zur wirtschaftlichen Lage der Großagrarier im ostelbischen Preußen 1867/71–1914' in Reif, *Ostelbische Agrargesellschaft*, pp. 164, 167.

[15] Cardoza, 'Commercial agriculture', pp. 192, 195–6.

[16] Habakkuk, *Marriage, debt*, p. 661; Cannadine, *Decline and fall*, pp. 96–7.

[17] Cardoza, ' Commercial agriculture', pp. 185–6.

[18] W. Pyta, 'Besteuerung und steuerpolitische Forderungen des ostelbischen Großgrundbesitzes 1890–1933' in Reif, *Ostelbische Agrargesellschaft*, pp. 361–4.

In countries such as Germany, France and Italy, the state tried to support agriculture through the introduction of protective tariffs on cereals.[19] The United Kingdom decided not to do so and as a result wheat prices in Germany dropped by only 10 per cent between 1865/74 and 1905/13 compared with 40 per cent in Britain.[20] East Elbian *Junkers* who directly exploited their estates could profit most from these better prices. Smaller countries such as Denmark and Belgium followed a different course. They stuck to free trade or introduced only very moderate tariffs, but they also facilitated and stimulated the agricultural sector by funding agricultural research and education.[21] This policy was not aimed at supporting landlords or the landed interest as a whole, but at supporting farmers to adapt to the changing circumstances. Farmers profited most from this. Landlords might profit indirectly if they were able to extract some surplus from better performing tenants through increased rents.

II

The Netherlands is usually perceived as a bourgeois country where land was not the primary basis of prestige and of economic and political power as it was in other European countries. This perception is based on society in the western part of the country, particularly Holland, where the leading families were the *regenten* (rulers) of the cities who had invested most of their wealth in government bonds. They often possessed a country house, but apart from a garden there was seldom much land attached to it and it was not the basis of their power and prestige.[22] Sometimes they also owned a seigneury, but after the introduction of the new constitution in 1848 almost all rights attached to seigneuries were abolished. Ownership of a mansion on one of the prestigious canals in Amsterdam was more relevant for one's status. In the eastern and northern provinces the situation was different. Here a prominent nobility existed which based its power for the most part on the ownership of land. In the eastern provinces, Gelderland and Overijssel, noble status plus the ownership of a landed estate provided access to the provincial Estates (assemblies) and thus to lucrative offices. For many noblemen office-holding may have been their primary source of income.[23] This was lost in the revolution of 1795 and in Overijssel this led to the sale of estates by impoverished nobility to their tenants or to urbanites. The nobility of Gelderland appears to have weathered the storm

[19] M. Tracy, *Agriculture in western Europe: Challenge and response 1880–1980* (2nd edn, 1982), pp. 69, 93; Koning, *Failure*, pp. 142–4; Cardoza, 'Commercial farming', p. 185.

[20] Tracy, *Agriculture*, p. 48; Koning, *Failure*, pp. 136–40; J. L. van Zanden, 'The first Green Revolution: the growth of production and productivity in European agriculture, 1870–1914', *EcHR* 44 (1991), p. 227.

[21] Tracy, *Agriculture*, pp. 115–20; H. Van Molle, 'A state for the peasants or the peasants for the state? The two faces of Belgian agricultural policy' in N. Vivier (ed.), *The state and rural societies: policy and education in Europe 1750–2000* (2008), pp. 164–8.

[22] P. Brusse and W. W. Mijnhardt, *Towards a new template for Dutch history: de-urbanization and the balance between city and countryside* (2011), p. 77; J. de Vries and A. van der Woude, *The first modern economy: success, failure, and perseverance of the Dutch economy, 1500–1815* (1997), pp. 119, 591.

[23] L. van der Hoeven, 'Naar een overheersende stand: Een beschouwing omtrent de vermogensontwikkeling, de huwelijkspolitiek en de sociaaleconomische positie van de Gelderse adel in de zeventiende en achttiende eeuw' in C. O. A. Schimmelpenninck van der Oije, F. Keverling Buisman, M. V. T. Tenten and F. J. W. van Kan (eds), *Adel en ridderschap in Gelderland: Tien eeuwen geschiedenis* (2013), pp. 103–6.

better.[24] Few estates were sold in the Napoleonic period and those that did change hands were often purchased by other noblemen.

This article focuses on the two eastern provinces that together covered an area of *c.*8500 km² or 25 per cent of the land area of the Netherlands. Even after the losses of the early nineteenth century they contained most of the large contiguous landed estates in the country.[25]

In the late 1840s about one sixth of all land in Gelderland was part of individual estates of 100 hectares or more.[26] That is a modest share, but it is of the same magnitude as elsewhere in continental western Europe. In France in 1884, for example, 25 per cent of the land was part of estates over 100 hectares, and in the western provinces of Prussia, Westphalia and the Rhineland, estates over 150 hectares accounted for 15 and 21 per cent of all land respectively. It was much lower than in England, however, where 56 per cent of land was owned by landlords with more than 1000 acres (*c.*400 hectares) in the 1870s.[27] In Gelderland, there were 40 estates of 400 hectares or more around 1850, three-quarters of which were owned by noblemen, and all but one of the 17 estates larger than 1000 hectares were in noble hands. Together the owners of estates over 400 hectares possessed *c.*12 per cent of all land in the province.[28] This was a small, but very wealthy and powerful group in a rural province characterized by mostly small farms and small towns. This small group also had political power; until the introduction of the general franchise in 1917 about one-fifth of the members of the Provincial Estates were wealthy landlords.[29]

In Overijssel the elite of large landowners was even smaller than in Gelderland. Information on the number and size of Overijssel estates around the middle of the nineteenth century is somewhat scarce, especially on the smaller estates of less than 400 hectares. Eleven estates can be identified, however, that had an area of 600 to 1500 hectares. Together they covered no more than four per cent of the land area of Overijssel, considerably less than in Gelderland. These 11 estates were owned by seven different families, five of which were titled nobles, and five of which also owned estates in Gelderland.

By English standards most of these landlords were 'lesser gentry', but it would be wrong to also classify them as 'provincial gentry', because in the Dutch context they were magnates and played a significant part in national politics. This was partly due to the requirements for election into the Upper House (*Eerste Kamer*). Only men who paid most tax in a proportion of one in 3000 inhabitants per province, could be elected. After 1887 this was raised to one in 1500

[24] A. J. Gevers and A. J. Mensema, *De havezaten in Twente en hun bewoners* (1995), p. 25; S. W. Verstegen, *Gegoede ingezetenen: Jonkers en geërfden of de Veluwe 1650–1830* (1990), pp. 54–9.

[25] There were large landowners in Friesland too, but most of them owned scattered farms and plots of land, cf. Y. Kuiper, *Adel in Friesland 1780–1880* (1993).

[26] Calculation based on A. J. van der Aa, *Aardrijkskundig woordenboek der Nederlanden* (14 vols., 1839–1852).

[27] G. Dupeux, *La société Française, 1789–1960* (1964), p. 157; H. Schissler, *Preußische Agrargesellschaft im Wandel: Wirtschaftliche, gesellschaftliche und politische Transformationsprozesse von 1763 bis 1847* (1978), p. 162; Beckett, *Aristocracy*, p. 50; Cannadine, *Decline and fall*, p. 9.

[28] A list of all estates in the two provinces with more than 400 hectares was compiled, based on primary and secondary sources. A spreadsheet with the data and sources is available.

[29] P. van Cruyningen, *Bedrijf en bestaan. Twee eeuwen economische geschiedenis van Gelderland* (2014), pp. 96–7, 118; id., *Boeren aan de macht? Boerenemancipatie en machtsverhoudingen op het Gelderse platteland* (2010), pp. 77–80.

inhabitants and in 1917 the requirement was abolished. This requirement was based on three national taxes of which the land tax was by far the most important. Those who were eligible for the Upper House paid on average 62 per cent of their total tax sum for the land tax.[30] As a result, large landowners were overrepresented in the Upper House. Of the 42 estate owners whose declarations for the inheritance tax have been analysed for this article no less than ten were members of the Upper House. The loss of the last vestiges of privilege attached to the land in 1917 probably did not cause estate sales, but it may have made the decision to sell easier.

Most smaller estates were composed of a country house, a modest park, a number of farms that were rented to tenant farmers, and some woods. Particularly the largest estates of more than 1000 hectares possessed extended woods. These woods were exploited directly by the owner.[31] Therefore, the income of most landlords was composed of rents and for the larger ones also of wood sales. Considering the relatively small size of eastern Dutch estates, rent reductions such as those occurring in England in the 1880s would have been catastrophic for these estate owners. Rent reductions in Gelderland remained limited, however; at their lowest level, in the late 1880s, rents were eight per cent lower than at the beginning of the depression and after that they gradually increased again. In 1901/05 they were already nine per cent higher than around 1880. In Overijssel, the depression appears to have had a stronger impact; the rents were reduced there with 23 per cent in the late 1880s, after which they recovered more slowly than in Gelderland. In both provinces rents increased strongly after 1905, in 1912 reaching a level 79 per cent higher than around 1880 in Gelderland and 52 per cent higher in Overijssel. One cause of this increase of rents was that Dutch agriculture was performing well and adapting successfully to the changed circumstances in the 1870–1914 period. This was especially true for the eastern provinces, where a successful transformation took place from cereal cultivation to dairy production, that had already begun before the depression. Productivity was also raised here thanks to the strongly increased application of fertilizers.[32]

The good performance of Dutch agriculture was also the result of government policy. Like Denmark and Belgium the Netherlands did not resort to the introduction of tariffs on agricultural imports, but the government began to support the agricultural sector by financing agricultural research, education and extension.[33] As already stated, this kind of support focused on farmers, not on landlords. Landlords could profit indirectly through increasing rents if they were willing and able to do so. Less positive for estate owners was the introduction of income tax in 1893/4 and of an inheritance tax on all estates worth more than 1000 guilders net in 1878. Death duties initially were very low, but after the introduction of progressive tariffs in 1911 they were gradually raised until they reached a peak in the early 1920s.[34] Table 1 shows the tariffs

[30] N. Bos and R. de Peuter, 'De lijsten van de verkiesbaren en elite-onderzoek', *Tijdschrift voor Sociale Geschiedenis* 12 (1986), pp. 414–15; J. K. S. Moes, *Onder aristocraten. Over hegemonie, welstand en aanzien van adel, patriciaat en andere notabelen in Nederland, 1848–1914* (2012), p. 147.

[31] P. van Cruyningen, 'De rol van de 'gentry' in de economische ontwikkeling van Gelderland in de negentiende eeuw', *Bijdragen en Mededelingen Gelre* 105 (2014), pp. 170–2.

[32] J. L. van Zanden, *De economische ontwikkeling van de Nederlandse landbouw in de negentiende eeuw 1800–1914* (Wageningen, 1985), p. 121, 283–4; *id.*, 'First Green Revolution', pp. 227–8.

[33] J. Bieleman, *Five centuries of farming. A short history of Dutch agriculture, 1500–2000* (2010), pp. 163–5.

[34] C. Smit, *Omwille der billijkheid. De strijd over de invoering van de inkomstenbelasting in Nederland*

TABLE 1. Death duties on inheritances of 200,000 to 500,000 guilders, 1911–26 (percentage of the net value)

	1911	*1917*	*1921*	*1926*
Children/husband/wife	2.25	5.5	7.5	6.5
Grandchildren	5.25	8.25	11.25	9.75
(Grand)parents	8.5	8.5	18.5	13.5
Brothers/sisters	12	16	26	21
Nephews/nieces	15	20	35	27.5
Others	20	26	46	36

Source: J. P. Sprenger van Eyk and B. J. de Leeuw, *Wetgeving op het recht van successie van overgang en van schenking* (1930), pp. 951–2, 1019.

for the part of an inheritance assessed at 200,000 to 500,000 guilders, which was the kind of sum most heirs of estate owners inherited. Particularly when an estate was inherited in the collateral line the inheritance tax could be extremely high. In 1923, for instance, the Dowager Countess van Rechteren Limpurg had to pay 1.2 million guilders for the inheritance the estate of her uncle Baron van Heeckeren van Enghuizen, which had been estimated at 3.4 million guilders.[35] During the interwar years complaints were raised that taxation, and particularly death duties, were threatening the survival of landed estates. One particularly hot-headed commentator even wrote that in the case of landed estates 'taxation equalled expropriation without compensation'.[36]

III

How did owners of large estates in Gelderland and Overijssel fare under these circumstances? Evidence from an area in the north west of the Achterhoek region shows that between 1850 and 1900 the percentage of land belonging to estates over 100 hectares increased from 32 to 35 per cent. From 1900 onwards, however, several estates were sold and by 1920 estate owners held only 27 per cent of the land. Evidence from other parts of the two provinces is more patchy, but the general impression is that there too 1900 was a turning point. Until that year, landlords held on to their estates, after 1900 several of them began to sell. A survey from the 1940s provides an opportunity for comparison with the mid-nineteenth century. Around 1850 privately owned estates with more than 400 hectares covered *c.*74,000 hectares in the two

Note 34 *continued*
(2002), pp. 259–64; N. Bos, 'Vermogensbezitters en bevoorrechte belastingbetalers in de negentiende eeuw', *Bijdragen en Mededelingen tot de Geschiedenis der Nederlanden* 105 (1990), p. 557; W. Verstegen, *Vrije wandeling: Het parlement, de fiscus en de bescherming van het particuliere Nederlandse natuurschoon. De Natuurschoonwet tussen 1924 en 1995* (2017), pp. 32, 66.

[35] Source: see appendix.

[36] J. P. van Lonkhuyzen, 'Het verdwijnen van groote landgoederen', *Tijdschrift der Nederlandsche Heidemaatschappij* 37 (1925), pp. 73–4, 76; quotation from J. B. Heppener, 'Het verdwijnen onzer landgoederen', *Tijdschrift der Nederlandsche Heidemaatschappij* 49 (1937), p. 387.

provinces. The overview for the 1940s shows that this had been reduced to *c.*33,000 hectares.[37] If we correct for under registration and for estates that had survived, but were reduced to less than 400 hectares, the landed elite may still have owned some 35,000 hectares around 1940. This means that somewhere between 1850 and 1940 almost 40,000 hectares of land had found new owners.

To investigate why landlords sold up, declarations of estates of deceased landlords for the inheritance tax have been analysed. It was possible to trace 42 of those, mostly of landlords deceased between 1880 and 1926. These were all landowners who belonged to the small group of 50 landlords that owned at least 400 hectares around 1850, or their descendants. Of the deceased, 30 were noblemen or -women, 12 were bourgeois. Four of those bourgeois belonged to families that had owned estates at least since the eighteenth century, the others had acquired their estates in the nineteenth century.[38] All of them had estates assessed at more than 100,000 guilders, and 35 out of 42 owned more than 500,000 guilders. This means that by Dutch standards they were extremely rich. In 1900/02 only 0.1 per cent of Dutch inheritances were valued at 500,000 guilders or more. Estate owners also had very few debts. In 34 out of 42 cases debts were valuated at less than 10 per cent of the value of the assets. Most of these deceased only left some outstanding debts to tradesmen and owed some wages to servants. The debts of five landowners were valuated at 10–25 per cent of the assets, one at 35 per cent, one at 51 per cent and another one at 62 per cent. Compared with their English and eastern German counterparts Gelderland and Overijssel landlords were hardly indebted. Like the Westphalian nobility, which was lauded for its 'wise thrift' in 1861, the Dutch nobility clearly was averse to lavish spending.[39]

It is useful to compare Dutch estate owners, with their relatively small landed estates, with the lesser gentry in England. This group was hit more severely by the late nineteenth-century depression than the wealthier strata of the English aristocracy.[40] That they often had to sell out may have been caused by the fact that they were more dependent on income from agricultural assets. However, Rothery showed that sales by the gentry may also have been caused by the wish to diversify investments.[41] Since most of the Gelderland estate owners were comparable with the minor gentry, it seems fruitful to have a look at the composition of their inheritances to see whether they also owned non-agricultural assets to some degree. The declarations for the inheritance tax show, unsurprisingly, that real estate – almost all of it rural – was the most important asset of these landlords. The median percentage for real estate was 63. The second most important asset was stocks and bonds, the median percentage for which was 26. Table 2 shows that there were clear differences in the composition of the investment portfolios. The percentage of the inheritances invested in stocks and bonds varied from 0.3 to 76.1. One might expect that bourgeois individuals would invest more in paper assets than noblemen, but that

[37] Van Cruyningen, 'Rol van de "gentry"', p. 170 (NW Achterhoek); overview 1940s based on *Landgoederen en wandelterreinen in Nederland* (1946) and estimates. The estates of the royal family and the city of Kampen are excluded from these calculations.

[38] See appendix.

[39] Bos, 'Vermogensbezitters', p. 563; quotation from H. Reif, *Westfälischer Adel 1770–1860: Vom Herrschaftsstand zur regionalen Elite* (Göttingen, 1979), p. 238.

[40] Beckett, *Aristocracy*, p. 476; Habakkuk, *Marriage, debt*, p. 667.

[41] M. Rothery, 'The wealth of the English landed gentry, 1870–1935', *AgHR* 55 (2007), pp. 251–68.

TABLE 2. Composition of inheritances of estate owners

Percentage	*Real estate*	*Stock and bonds*
< 20%	1	14
20–40%	4	17
40–60%	13	7
60–80%	16	4
> 80%	8	.
Total	42	42

Sources: See appendix.

was not the case. Of the ten deceased who had invested less than ten per cent of their estate in shares and bonds, five were bourgeois. Of the 11 landowners who had invested more than 40 per cent of their estate in paper assets, seven were noblemen or -women. Maria Cornelia baroness van Heeckeren van Wassenaer, for example, who died in 1912, had invested 47 per cent of her estate of 5.7 million guilders in paper assets. Her securities were worth more than her real estate. As elsewhere in Europe, the wealthiest families appear to have had the most diversified investment portfolios.[42]

Of course, there were more differences in investment behaviour. This became clear after the Russian revolution, when some landlords were hit heavily and others much less. Hendrik baron van Heeckeren van Enghuizen, for instance, who died in 1923, had invested only a modest part of his estate in foreign bonds. After the turmoil of 1917/18, his Russian and Austro-Hungarian bonds had become worthless and his French bonds had lost most of their value. This caused him a loss of some 14,000 guilders. This loss was bearable, but several families had invested much more in such bonds. In Dutch historiography the losses incurred on such investments have been identified as one of the catalysts of estate sales during the interwar years.[43] Some families indeed incurred heavy losses on their foreign bonds. Frederik baron van Pallandt van Rosendael lost 430,000 guilders on his and when he died in 1932 the value of all his paper assets was reduced to 104,000 guilders. His heirs were forced to sell large parts of the estate. The Rosendael estate was huge by Dutch standards – *c.*10,000 hectares in the nineteenth century – but in the 1930s much of it was sold.[44] Not all landowning families incurred such high losses on foreign investments. Assueer baron van Nagell van Ampsen, for instance, had spread his investments prudently over Dutch, foreign and colonial assets and when he died in 1928, the profits on his colonial investments more than compensated for the losses on his foreign bonds.[45] Count Van Rechteren Limpurg, who died in 1918, had invested mostly in Dutch and colonial

[42] Wasson, *Aristocracy*, p. 48.

[43] F. Keverling Buisman, 'De adel uit huis: Herbestemming van landgoederen, kastelen en landhuizen' in J. Bosmans, B. Boersema, F. Keverling Buisman, A. Schuurman, B. van Straalen and M. Wingens (eds), *Gelderland 1900–2000* (2006), p. 365; Verstegen, *Vrije wandeling*, pp. 83–4.

[44] Verstegen, *Vrije wandeling*, p. 85; J. C. Bierens de Haan, *Rosendael, groen hemeltjen op aerd: Kasteel, bewoners en tuinen sedert 1579* (1994), p. 201; GAA, Huis Rosendael no. 1008; M. Koman, 'De versnippering van landgoed Rosendael (1902–2017)' (Unpubl. MA thesis, University of Groningen, 2017), pp. 95–6.

[45] Verstegen, *Vrije wandeling*, p. 84.

shares and bonds and made a handsome profit on his shares in Royal Dutch Petroleum. Therefore, it cannot be said that loss on foreign investments was a common experience for all landowning families.

In some cases, after 1917/18, losses on foreign investments caused landowners to sell their estates or parts of them. In other cases, in the same period, high death duties caused sales. The heir of Baron van Heeckeren van Enghuizen, for instance, had no choice but to sell part of the inherited estates in order to pay the death duties. Most sales after the first World War can be explained in this way. However, there were many sales already occurring before the war which cannot be so easily explained. In a small area in the north-east of Gelderland, for instance, four estates on a total of 21 were publicly auctioned between 1900 and 1914.[46] And these public sales were only the tip of the iceberg; many estates or parts of estates were sold privately. At first glance, it is difficult to discern a cause for these sales. Rents were increasing again after 1900, death duties were still low, foreign investments were not imperiled by war or revolution. According to contemporaries, however, estate incomes were decreasing.

Most sales took place after an owner had died. Since concepts such as male primogeniture, entail, or *Fideikommiß* were unknown in the Netherlands and the estate was divided equally among all children, the death of a large landowner was always a crucial moment.[47] Families usually tried to allot the core estate with a considerable amount of land to one of the sons. In the nineteenth century this did not pose serious problems, because there was always a son willing to take over the estate. After 1900, however, it became difficult to find heirs who wanted to continue agricultural estates. That is hardly surprising considering the low profits and large amount of work required to run such an estate. Investing in stock and bonds provided much more income – at least four per cent compared with less than two per cent for land – and all one had to do for it was clip coupons. Therefore, many families decided to sell. Even when one of the sons inherited the estate, it was sometimes sold after some years. When Paul baron van der Borch van Vorden died in 1901, Vorden castle and 587 hectares of land were allotted to his eldest son. In the following years he now and then sold plots or farms until in 1920 he decided to have most of the remainder publicly auctioned. As shown in Table 4 he received a high price for this land, much to the distress of his 12 brothers and sisters who had agreed to let him have the land at a modest price to preserve the paternal estate.[48]

IV

Although agriculture was performing well and rents were not decreasing by much during the late nineteenth-century depression, observers were not generally optimistic about the profitability of landed estates in the Netherlands. In 1890, the State Commission on Agriculture remarked about the Achterhoek region that the costs of running an estate were increasing

[46] Verstegen, *Vrije wandeling*, p. 31; Van Cruyningen, 'De rol van de 'gentry'', p. 170.

[47] Kuiper, *Adel in Friesland*, p. 160.

[48] RAZ, Notarial Archives Gorssel no. 27, 27 June 1902; G. Emsbroek, *De Konijnenbult: Over kasteel Vorden en dat hotel, over de eigenaren en bewoners* (2006), p. 82.

TABLE 3. Valuation and revenue from the Ruurlo estate, 1860s and 1910s

	1860s	*1910s*
Valuation		
Hectares	1770	1980
Valuation (guilders)	680,000	1,136,000
Guilders/hectare	384	573
Revenue/expenditure		
Gross revenue	29,147	43,857
Expenditure	10,008	24,918
Net revenue	19,139	18,939

Sources: GAA, Huis Ruurlo, nos. 155, 435, 1024–8, 1070. Valuations took place in 1867 and 1914. Revenue and expenditure are averages over the years 1865–69 and 1912–16.

and revenues diminishing. Particularly the income from forestry was declining due to the reduced demand for both firewood and oak bark for the production of tannin.[49] Nine years later, a newspaper comment on the sale of an estate near Arnhem remarked that a landed estate normally yielded a profit of less than two per cent of its capital value. The best thing a private owner could do, according to the paper, was break up the estate and sell it. Especially in the environs of Arnhem, with its attractive wooded, hilly and malaria-free landscape, where there was a strong demand for land to build villas, this was a good proposition. Also, during the interwar years, experts were complaining that landed estates were hardly profitable any longer due to low revenues and high taxation. They attributed the estate sales to these factors.[50]

These, often loud, complaints were at least partly meant to convince the government to implement legislation to support estate owners for which lobbying had been taking place intermittently since the 1890s.[51] Therefore the authors of these publications might have been grossly exaggerating and it might be wise to confront them with data from estate records. The administrations of two estates have been analysed. These were both large estates by Dutch standards and belonged to very wealthy noble families. If there were problems on these estates, we may assume that on smaller estates the problems were probably worse.

Willem baron van Heeckeren van Kell's well-managed and well-maintained Ruurlo estate in the Achterhoek region was valuated in 1867 and 1914, which provides an opportunity to calculate profitability in the 1860s and 1910s. Table 3 shows that although the size of the estate increased, net revenue stayed at the same level. The problem was that although gross revenues from rents and wood sales increased, expenditure on wages and land tax increased somewhat more. Since the value of the land had increased by 40 per cent between the two valuations,

[49] C. J. Sickesz and P. W. A. Cort van der Linden, 'Gemeente Laren (provincie Gelderland)', *Uitkomsten van het onderzoek naar de toestand van den landbouw in Nederland* (4 vols, 1890), I, p. 6.

[50] *Arnhemsche Courant* 10 April 1899, retrieved from www.delpher.nl on 25 October 2019; E. Storms-Smeets, 'From elite to public landscapes: The case of the Klarenbeek estate in Arnhem, 1880–1950', *Virtus: J. Nobility Studies* 23 (2016), pp. 158–62; Van Lonkhuyzen, 'Het verdwijnen'; Heppener, 'Het verdwijnen'.

[51] Verstegen, *Vrije wandeling*, pp. 18–19.

this meant that the net profit was reduced from a modest but acceptable 2.8 per cent in the 1860s to a meagre 1.7 per cent in the 1910s. This does not reflect well, and the situation was even worse because the maintenance costs of castle and park were not included in the estate accounts. Information on this maintenance is only available from 1918 onwards and then at least some 10,000 guilders were spent yearly thereon.[52] The remainder was not enough to pay personal taxes and provide a sufficient income for the family. That they could live in noble style was thanks to the 1.1 million guilders that were profitably invested in paper assets. This demonstrates that purchasing an estate on the eve of the Great War was not an economically sound proposition, and the heirs of estate owners must have realized that it was wise to sell. The wealthy van Heeckeren family was able to keep the estate intact until the 1930s, but for smaller landowners selling must have appeared to be a better option.

Although the Rosendael estate near Arnhem was vast (almost 10,000 hectares), much of the land belonging to it was of limited value; it consisted mostly of heath, sand drifts and woods and little agricultural land. As a result, income from rents was limited. The woods provided revenue through timber sales, but the heath and sand drifts provided no income, and the costs of the exploitation of the woods increased. Here too, wages increased strongly, and Rosendael had a large staff: at the turn of the century 22 people were employed in the castle and 13 in the gardens. Those gardens were opened to the public and the sale of entrance tickets provided extra income, but the costs of gardeners and guides for the visitors kept increasing. As a response to these developments, in 1916 Baron van Pallandt sold 3700 hectares of the lowest-yielding land and some outlying possessions. Owing to these sales and by inheriting the 1000-hectare Keppel estate with good agricultural land, the financial situation of the baron was improved by the late 1920s.[53]

However, when Baron van Pallandt van Rosendael died in 1932, the combination of partible inheritance, high death duties and the reduced value of foreign securities gave the death blow to this estate. The estate had to be divided between five children; the valuable Keppel estate was split off again and the youngest son, who inherited Rosendael, had to make do with woods and heath. Although in the 1930s landed estates could profit from a milder tax regime, the family still had to pay more than 400,000 guilders over the inheritance. In the past it might have been possible to pay these death duties by selling paper assets, but as noted in the previous section the stock and bonds of the van Pallandt family had lost much of their value after the revolutions of 1917/8. As a result, in 1934 and again in 1938, 3500 hectares were sold. Such sales offered temporary relief, but in the longer run they of course reduced the revenues of the estate and made it more difficult to maintain castle and park. This then often resulted in more sales and in the case of Rosendael by the 1950s only some 700 of the original 10,000 hectares were left.[54]

[52] GAA, Huis Ruurlo no. 1070.

[53] Bierens de Haan, *Rosendael*, p. 201; Komans, 'De versnippering', pp. 72–82.

[54] Verstegen, *Vrije wandeling*, pp. 84–6; Koman, 'De versnippering', pp. 86–94.

V

The previous sections have shown that Gelderland landowners were selling land from 1900 onwards, at first mostly because land no was longer very profitable, later often because high death duties and losses incurred on foreign bonds forced them to do so. What we do not know yet is who bought this land. Was there a shift to owner occupancy as in England, or were there *nouveaux riches* prepared to found new estates? By closely studying records of estate sales from the period 1900–20 an answer to this question can be found, and more insight gained into the reasons for selling.

In Twente, wealthy textile manufacturers founded new estates, but these were usually considerably smaller than the old estates and often consisted for a large part of heath and forested land for hunting and shooting. They seldom bought existing estates, instead often purchasing former communal land and converting that into estates.[55] Now and then, however, existing estates were sold to new men. In 1912, for example, the Twente textile manufacturer J. H. van Heek bought the 1250-hectare Bergh estate in the Achterhoek area from the prince of Hohenzollern-Sigmaringen. The core of this prince's possessions was situated in south-west Germany, so this was the sale of an outlying estate. Most agricultural land belonging to this originally much larger estate had already been sold in the nineteenth century. Van Heek bought the castle with park and woods with the intention to preserve the historic ensemble, not to exploit a working agricultural estate.[56] Three years earlier the 1200-hectare Hoenderloo estate to the north of Arnhem was sold for 130,000 guilders to the estate agent of the Rotterdam port tycoon A. G. Kröller. This sale marked the beginning of the creation of a huge estate that covered an area of 6800 hectares by 1916.[57] The Hoenderloo estate was mostly composed of heath, sand drifts and woods and hardly any agricultural land, and this was also the case for the other estates bought by Kröller. Kröller's new estate was meant for recreation, hunting and shooting, and conspicuous consumption; agriculture was all but irrelevant. *Nouveaux riches* appear to have been hardly interested in owning traditional agricultural estates. The only known exception is the sale of the Singraven estate in Twente in 1915 to the North-Holland industrialist J. A. Laan.[58] This was sold by the heirs of J. A. Roessingh Udink, who had left a heavily indebted estate. The Singraven estate was almost his only possession. There were almost no paper assets and Roessingh Udink had even spent part of his wife's private capital. Singraven is the only estate for which debts appear to have been the main reason to sell.

The estates mentioned above were all sold as a whole. The most profitable way of selling an estate, however, was to break it up and sell it in small parcels in order to most advantageously profit from the land hunger of farmers and real estate developers. This was what happened to three estates in the Achterhoek region for which the protocols of the public auctions have been

[55] E. A. C. Smeets, 'Landscape and society in Twente and Utrecht: A geography of Dutch country estates, circa 1800–1950' (Unpubl. PhD thesis, University of Leeds, 2005), pp. 125, 188–97, 236.

[56] Algemeen Handelsblad 12 July 1912, retrieved from www.delpher.nl on 9 December 2019; A. P. van Schilfgaarde, *Het Huis Bergh* (1950), pp. 53, 57–8.

[57] B. Haak and P. Hofman, De Hoge Veluwe in de 19e eeuw (1995), pp. 44–5; W. H. Nijhof, Anton Kröller (1862–1941) en Helen Kröller-Müller (1869–1939): Miljoenen, macht en meesterwerken (2006), pp. 275–6, 278, 284, 286.

[58] Gevers and Mensema, *Havezaten in Twente*, p. 482.

TABLE 4. Estate sales in the north-west Achterhoek, 1900, 1914 and 1920

Estate	*Year*	*Hectares sold*	*Guilders per hectare*	*Land purchased by (in %)*			
				Farmers	*Landlords*	*Other country dwellers*	*Urbanites*
Oolde	1900	455	294	54	1	36	9
Ross	1914	239	866	59	14	13	14
Vorden	1920	152	1529	56	6	23	15

Sources: Regionaal Archief Zutphen, Notarial Archives Gorssel, no. 26; Notarial Archives Zutphen, no. 607; Erfgoedcentrum Achterhoek en Liemers, Notarial Archives Bronckhorst, no. 269.

analysed. Table 4 shows that most land was purchased by farmers and comparatively little by landlords. The purchasers in the category 'other country dwellers' were mostly carpenters and wood merchants, who bought the wooded parts of the estates for the purpose of felling the trees.

The table also shows a steep increase in the purchase price per hectare. This increase may have been smaller than the table suggests due to disappointing proceeds from the sale in 1900, as valuations for nearby estates around 1900 show prices between 500 and 600 guilders per hectare.[59] That still means that prices increased about threefold, and this was not because of differences in the quality of land that was sold. All three estates were situated close to each other in two municipalities and had the same type of sandy soils with a mix of arable, pasture, coppice, pine forest and heath. The cause of increase in the purchase price was the land hunger of farmers, real estate developers and wood merchants.

The steep increase in land prices stimulated estate sales in three ways. Firstly, it became increasingly attractive to sell low-yielding land and re-invest the proceeds in more lucrative stocks and bonds. Secondly, from 1911 such steep price increases coincided with also steeply rising death duties, thus contributing to the strong increase in the amount that had to be paid for the inheritance tax. This was exacerbated the way in which estates were valued. The law prescribed that real estate had to be valued at the market price on the date of the death of the owner. By this was meant the proceeds that could be expected from the public auction of the real estate.[60] Therefore, the heirs had to pay death duties over a sum they could only realize if they broke up the estate and publicly auctioned it. Thirdly, rents lagged behind any increases in the purchase price of land, as has already been shown above in the discussion of the profits of the Ruurlo estate. Rents tend to be sticky, particularly when the landowners are paternalistic aristocrats who perceive tenants as 'their' people who should not be overburdened with high rents.[61] The high profits that were made in agriculture in the 1914–21 period were appropriated by the tenants, not by the landlords. Expressed as a percentage of the purchase price, rents became lower and lower. Dutch government policy contributed to this by supporting the farmers, not the landlords.

[59] For instance Regionaal Archief Zutphen (hereafter RAZ), Notarial Archives Gorssel, no. 27, 27 June 1902.

[60] Sprenger van Eyk and De Leeuw, *Wetgeving op het recht van successie*, p. 527.

[61] J. L. van Zanden, 'De opkomst van een eigenerfde boerenklasse in Overijssel, 1750–1830', *A. A. G. Bijdragen* 24 (1984), pp. 119–26; Van Lonkhuyzen, 'Het verdwijnen', p. 76.

TABLE 5. Motives for sales of estates

	England	*Eastern Netherlands*	*East Elbian Germany*	*Northern Italy*
Reduced revenue	Yes	Yes	Somewhat	Yes
Indirect exploitation	Yes	Yes	No	Yes
Move to more profitable assets	Yes	Yes	?	Yes
Small size of estate	Yes (gentry)	Yes	?	Yes
Indebtedness	Yes	No	Sometimes	?
Taxation	Yes	Yes	No	No
Government policy	Yes	Yes	No	No
Partible inheritance	No	Yes	No	No
Lack of other sources of income	Yes (gentry)	Yes	?	Yes

VI

This paper does not pretend to give the definitive answer to the question of why landlords in many parts of Europe decided to sell their estates. However, by comparing the Dutch case with the three other cases that have been studied most intensively until now – England, East Elbian Germany and northern Italy – it can provide insight into the main causes for estate sales and into geographical patterns. The Dutch case particularly highlights the importance of legal and political factors, such as the inheritance system, taxation, and government support for farmers instead of landlords. Using the available data we can compare key aspects of rural property regimes for these four regions. Table 5 shows differences that may offer an explanation for observed patterns of estate sales.

In general smaller estate owners with few non-agricultural assets seem to be most inclined to sell. The magnates in England have in most cases managed to maintain themselves as major landowners. Dutch estates were most vulnerable. Not just were they mostly relatively small and had to deal with a government they perceived as rapacious and rents that did not keep pace with the capital value of land, but they were also the only ones who were confronted with strict partible inheritance. It is not surprising that many Dutch landowning families decided to sell. That did not mean that they were impoverished. If the proceeds from the sales were invested prudently, they could yield considerably more income than land. The self-image of large landowners as the ruling rural elite may have suffered, their wallets did not.

Whilst all over Europe owners of landed estates wrestled with reduced rent incomes, it was only in Germany that the government managed to dampen the effects of the late nineteenth-century agricultural depression by introducing high tariffs. There, most similarities between the four cases end. A geographical divide can be discerned between England and the Netherlands on the one hand and East Elbian Germany and northern Italy on the other, determined by the role of the state. In the two central and southern European countries the state intervened actively to support large landowners with tariffs and a mild tax regime, whereas the two north-west European countries stuck to free trade and increased the burden of taxation for landowners. The Dutch government combined this with support for farmers, but

not for landlords. This raises the question of whether there was a north-west European versus a central and southern European model. It would be interesting to examine if the Scandinavian countries and Belgium can be added to the north-western group. Denmark and Belgium do indeed show similarities with the Netherlands in their support of farmers, and protectionist France might be added to the central and southern group.

This paper deals mostly with numbers, less with people. The people concerned, Dutch aristocratic landlords, must have felt they belonged to an imperilled minority as they saw how their counterparts elsewhere were dispossessed slowly but inevitably, as in Ireland, or quickly and brutally, as in Russia. Under these circumstances, they may have perceived the steep increase of death duties as a deliberate attack on landed property, although it probably was mostly a simple remedy for a government desperately trying to fund expenditure on a large standing army to maintain neutrality during the First World War. This may also have influenced their decisions to (dis)invest in land, and their political orientation. The sale of the Vorden estate in 1920 by baron van der Borch, discussed above, for instance, may not have just been economically motivated. His wife was a German Baltic noblewoman whose family had been completely dispossessed. Van der Borch may have considered his new paper assets as not only more lucrative, but also easier to hide from a hostile government. This once more shows that estate sales in this period should studied from a European perspective.

Appendix. List of declarations for the inheritance tax

Name	*Title*	*Year*	*Source*	*Real estate (x 1000 gld)*	*Stocks/bonds (x 1000 gld)*	*Total assets (x 1000 gld)*	*Debts (x 1000 gld)*
Boetzelaer, W. A. J. van	Baroness	1898	GAA, Doesburg no. 130, 4/6334	317	450	820	51
Borch van Verwolde, A. P. R. C. van der	Baron	1919	GAA, Lochem no. 94, 3/6290	707	54	915	571
Borch van Vorden, P. A. van der	Baron	1901	GAA, Lochem no. 69, 3/306	846	127	998	31
Brants, J. I.		1901	GAA, Lochem no. 69, 3/304	431	459	1056	6
Brantsen van de Zyp, W. G.	Baron	1899	GAA, Arnhem no. 154, 7/1877	637	243	899	182
Brantsen van Wielbergen, C. M.	Baron	1909	GAA, Arnhem no. 189, 8/4833	467	209	707	17
Bylandt van Marienwaerdt, O. W. A. van	Count	1883	GAA, Culemborg no. 2, 1/2074	1510	1023	2628	3
Cremers, W. C. J. J.		1906	GAA, Arnhem no. 178, 8/1031	243	657	1076	9
Dam van Brakel, J. P. H. M. L. van		1900	GAA, Wageningen no. 108, 3/7752	449	82	565	31

Name	*Title*	*Year*	*Source*	*Real estate (x 1000 gld)*	*Stocks/bonds (x 1000 gld)*	*Total assets (x 1000 gld)*	*Debts (x 1000 gld)*
Goltstein, A. F. E. van	Baroness	1917	GAA, Harderwijk no. 103, 3/7109	934	335	1356	15
Goltstein, W. Van	Baron	1901	GAA, Harderwijk no. 82, 2/9975	420	271	738	81
Harlingen, M. A. C. van		1907	GAA, Lochem no. 76, 3/2155	519	192	777	15
Heeckeren van Enghuizen, H. J. K. J. W. van	Baron	1923	GAA, Doesburg no. 190, 4/4040	3293	95	3507	135
Heeckeren van Enghuizen, L. E. van	Baron	1883	GAA, Wageningen no. 87, 2/7863	2843	1045	4117	7
Heeckeren van Kell, W. van	Baron	1914	GAA, Doesburg no. 166, 7/2424	2054	1090	3292	58
Heeckeren van Wassenaer, C. G. U. W. van	Baron	1883	HCO, Almelo no. 135, 4/7635	2320	1892	4705	0
Heeckeren van Wassenaer, M. C. van	Baroness	1912	HCO, Goor no. 788, 2/9037	2379	2720	5757	40
Helmich, G. A.		1892	GAA, Doesburg no. 118, 4/2257	717	48	863	18
Helmich, J. B.		1925	GAA, Doesburg no. 196, 6/5197	328	18	360	11
Kleijn, L.		1887	GAA, Lochem no. 51, 2/4611	252	1780	2366	1
Lüps, J. H.		1926	GAA, Arnhem no. 255, 19/7882	2525	996	4454	88
Lüps, J. H. W.		1880	GAA, Arnhem no. 105, 4/3615	2046	219	2490	73
Nagell van Ampsen, C. J. A. van	Baron	1883	GAA, Lochem no. 47, 2/3364	649	520	1203	3
Nagell van Ampsen, J. E. H. van	Baron	1901	GAA, Lochem no. 68, 3/56	818	432	1291	238
Nispen tot Sevenaer, L. C. C. O. M. van	*Jonkheer*	1901	GAA, Arnhem no. 160, 7/4820	520	403	1126	28
Nispen, F. X. J. van	*Jonkheer*	1899	GAA, Zutphen no. 141, 3/9980	770	544	1730	26
Pallandt van Eerde, R. Th. van	Baron	1913	HCO, Ommen no. 1029, 4/5420	982	984	2148	182
Pallandt van Oud-Beijerland, J. W. van	Baron	1907	GAA, Arnhem no. 180, 8/2106	271	189	495	5

Name	*Title*	*Year*	*Source*	*Real estate (x 1000 gld)*	*Stocks/bonds (x 1000 gld)*	*Total assets (x 1000 gld)*	*Debts (x 1000 gld)*
Pallandt van Oud-Beijerland, S. F. A. van	Baron	1880	GAA, Arnhem no. 105, 4/3779	597	267	1148	3
Pallandt van Rosendael, F. J. W. van	Baron	1932	GAA, Huis Rosendael no. 1008	3623	104	4143	707
Pallandt van Waardenburg en Neerijnen, H. W. v. A. van	Baron	1881	GAA, Tiel no. 1, 4/143	1313	197	1827	17
Pallandt, W. C. van	Baron	1905	GAA, Culemborg no. 22, 3/3424	417	6	460	62
Rappard, J. G. van	Knight	1913	GAA, Lochem no. 86, 3/4362	423	314	775	56
Rechteren Limpurg, A. F. van	Count	1902	HCO, Almelo no. 174, 7/2700	1334	122	1519	149
Rechteren Limpurg, A. Z. van	Count	1918	HCO, Zwolle no. 1510, 9/6466	970	349	1468	14
Roessingh Udink, J. A.		1914	HCO, Almelo no. 203, 8/6100	500	2	517	265
Schimmelpenninck van der Oije, N. A. S.	Baroness	1921	GAA, Apeldoorn no. 212, 8/8632	2116	454	2678	2
Schimmelpenninck van der Oije, W. A. A. J.	Baron	1889	GAA, Apeldoorn no. 116, 4/4633	525	264	863	4
Sickesz, J. B. C.		1880	GAA, Apeldoorn no. 97, 3/5655	70	194	295	54
Torck, A. C.	Baroness	1902	GAA, Arnhem no. 161, 7/5207	1047	1734	457	22
Vitringa, E. J.		1893	GAA, Harderwijk no. 74, 2/6792	300	21	377	132

Sources: All declarations dating from 1818 to 1926 have been preserved by the 'Inspectors of the Registration and Succession' in the several districts of the two provinces. These records have been transferred to the Gelders Archief at Arnhem (GAA) and the Historisch Centrum Overijssel (HCO) at Zwolle. They are now all available on the websites of the archives, www.geldersarchief.nl and www.historischcentrumoverijssel.nl. The 'Source' column indicates the archive where the document is preserved (GAA or HCO), the district where the declaration was handed in, the number of the ledger in which it was preserved, and the record number under which it can be found. The only exception is the declaration of baron van Pallandt van Rosendael, which is present in the archive of Rosendael castle, also in GAA, but not available in digital form.

‘A Better England’: Women’s agricultural labour and the National Association of Landswomen, 1919–1923

by Bonnie White

Abstract

Marketed as a continuation of the recently demobilized Women’s Land Army (WLA), the National Association of Landswomen (NAL) sought to capitalize on its relation to the better-known wartime organization to bolster recruitment, but in doing so it failed to establish its own identity. As a peacetime organization, its mandate overlapped with both the Women’s Farm and Garden Union and the National Federation of Women’s Institutes, forcing it to compete for members with two established organizations that had the infrastructure in place to attend to the needs of rural women. In spite of these difficulties, however, the NAL did achieve a number of key objectives: it helped to establish a health insurance scheme for women agricultural workers, fought for standardized wages for women in the industry, and provided monetary support for women’s agricultural and horticultural education and for the purchase of smallholdings in an effort to keep women on the land.

The First World War resulted in important changes in women’s working lives. Not only was women’s labour valued for its contribution to the British war effort, but many women felt empowered by their wartime experiences and wanted to take advantage of new employment trends once the war ended. The agricultural industry was not immune to these changes, but the pace of change for women was slow, and in spite of the gains made by organizations like the Women’s Land Army (WLA), there persisted significant obstacles to women’s employment in the industry. The National Association of Landswomen (NAL) was created as a ‘sister’ organization to the WLA in 1919 to support the advancement of women in agriculture. Its objective was to increase the number of women employed in agriculture and to improve working conditions for women in the industry. Its organizers understood the patriarchal nature of agriculture and of rural communities and sought to further women’s work in the industry by working within preexisting structures and carefully considering how women’s labour would affect farming regions. In an effort to make women a key part of the revitalization of domestic agriculture, the NAL adopted a cooperative model that was attentive to the concerns of farmers, local government, and trade unions, but also women’s organizations like the Women’s Farm and Garden Union (WFGU) and the National Federation of Women’s Institutes (NFWI) that had similar directives to improve women’s working lives. Unfortunately, the NAL’s close association

with the WLA prevented it from developing its own identity and complicated relations with the WFGU and the NFWI. Throughout its brief years of operation, the NAL continually worked to amalgamate with both groups, but this led to a lack of operational independence, and amalgamation became its primary objective. While its goals were not always consistent, the NAL did help women find employment in agriculture at a time when the agricultural labour force was declining in many areas of the country. It also secured much-needed health insurance for a vulnerable workforce that was left unprotected by changes to government health schemes, and it advocated for a minimum fixed wage for women in agriculture at a time when most in the industry were focused on securing better wages and housing for male labourers. The NAL's work did not cease with the loss of its operational independence; rather, it had an enduring impact on women's organizations, and its former members continued to work on behalf of women in rural industries and communities through the NFWI and the Society for the Oversea Settlement of British Women (SOSBW).

I

The WLA was officially demobilized on 30 November 1919. Formed in January 1917 as part of a broader effort to increase home food production, this 'army' of female farm workers was given limited training in the early days of the scheme and quickly mobilized for work on farms across Britain to replace young men who had been called for military service. The WLA operated under the tutelage of the Board of Agriculture as part of the Women's Branch and under the direction of Meriel Talbot who served as both director of the Branch and as 'chief' of the WLA.[1] Although the Land Army was formed to relieve labour shortages in the agricultural industry and to help increase domestic food production, its organizers envisioned it as a way to create new jobs for women in the industry and to convince farmers, male farmhands, unions, and government – local and national – that women could be a vital part of the revitalization of the agricultural industry that had suffered in the decades following the agricultural depression of the 1870s. At its height, the WLA's membership stood at 27,000 members, a small part of the more than 250,000 women who worked in agriculture during the war, but on the eve of its demobilization, membership stood at 22,000 with only 13,000 trained and just 8000 employed on farms.[2]

Although Talbot knew in August 1919 of the Board of Agriculture's decision to demobilize the Land Army, she delayed informing the Organising Secretaries until mid-October.[3] At that time, Talbot used the occasion to express her belief that, while the WLA would cease to exist after November, its work and success gave women in Britain new opportunities for employment in agriculture that had to be continued after the war.[4] Talbot issued a letter to all active

[1] 'The New Land Lady: Miss Talbot, Revivalist', *Daily Chronicle*, 15 Dec. 1917.

[2] N. Mansfield, *English farmworkers and local patriotism, 1900–1930* (2001), p. 127; TNA, MAF 42/7, Meriel Talbot to Organising Secretaries, 12 Aug. 1919; TNA, MAF 42/7, Report on Enrolments from Organising Secretaries to Women's Branch, 20 Aug. 1919.

[3] TNA, LAB 2/172/LE/823/819, Report on the need for a new organization to replace the Women's Land Army, 30 Aug. 191.

[4] TNA, MAF 2/7, Meriel Talbot to Organising Secretaries, 14 Oct. 1919.

members explaining the government's decision to cease Land Army operations and informing them of a new opportunity with the NAL. In the intervening two months between Talbot learning of the plan for demobilization and when she informed the Organising Secretaries, she had been engaged in talks with Lord Lee who replaced Rowland Prothero as President of the Board of Agriculture in August 1919. Like Prothero in 1917, Lee understood the need to carefully and strategically introduce a new women's organization dedicated to the placement of women workers in the male-dominated agricultural industry, and while he agreed with Talbot that attitudes towards women's work in agriculture had changed, he was also wary of how the continuation of the WLA under another name would be received by farmers and unions.[5] Lord Lee expressed publicly that the position of agricultural labourers had to be improved, particularly wages, and he knew it was 'important at this time that nothing should be done to antagonize labour' and it 'would be a very bad day for agriculture if the Board should, in any way, become a sort of annex to any agricultural organization'.[6] Lord Lee encouraged farmers to 'show a little more sympathy to the smallholder and allotment holder' and 'to newcomers on the land'.[7] Lee was speaking specifically about ex-servicemen, but expressed his support for the position of women in farming and encouraged them to join the Association that was 'being formed to carry on its [WLA] traditions among all women land workers'.[8] His words of encouragement, however, were accompanied by the reality that many Land Girls would not take to full-time permanent positions, even if jobs were available to them. Maggie Andrews has shown that interest in agricultural work declined among women in the 1920s and, while Lynne Thompson has demonstrated that women remained interested in agricultural work in some counties, there was a considerable degree of variation across the country.[9] The work was hard, pay remained low, and the expansion of women's employment in the industry would depend on suitable training and education. The number of horticultural and agricultural schools was in decline after 1918, and women looking to move into agricultural work often turned to voluntary organizations like the NAL for details on the type and duration of training courses and programmes.[10] Lee notified Talbot that the NAL could have no affiliation with the Board of Agriculture and that government-run training schemes would cease with the Land Army at the end of November.[11] In the immediate post-war period, the issue of women's work in agriculture remained contentious, and for Talbot there was no guarantee that former Land Girls would join the new organization or that farmers would be in a cooperative mood.

For the time being, however, the WLA was still operational, and the organization of the NAL was the responsibility of the Women's Branch in conjunction with the Women's County

[5] TNA, MAF 42/7, Lord Lee to Meriel Talbot, 10 Aug. 1919. See Angus Calder, *The myth of the Blitz* (2002), pp. 18–4; M. T. Wild, *Village England: A social history of the countryside* (2004), pp. 135–8.

[6] 'Lord Lee on the Future of Agriculture', *Yorkshire Post and Leeds Intelligencer*, 10 Dec. 1919, p. 8.

[7] 'Farewell Rally of the Women's Land Army', *The Scotsman*, 28 Nov. 1919, p. 7.

[8] TNA, MAF 42/7, Lord Lee to Meriel Talbot, 10 Aug. 1919.

[9] M. Andrews, *The acceptable face of feminism: the Women's Institute as a social movement* (2015), p. 58; L. Thompson, 'The Promotion of Agricultural Education for Adults: The Lancashire Federation of Women's Institutes, 1919–45', *Rural Hist.* 10 (1999), p. 217.

[10] A. Meredith, 'Horticultural education in England, 1900–1940: Middle-class women and private gardening schools', *Garden Hist.* 31 (2003), pp. 67–8.

[11] TNA, MAF 42/7, Lord Lee to Meriel Talbot, 10 Aug. 1919.

Sub-Committees. These initial developments were vital to the success of the new organization. Once Talbot lost institutional support, the self-governing nature of the NAL meant it would be managed by volunteers – unless it could afford paid positions – and supported by its members.[12] With Lord Lee's backing, a provisional committee was formed to garner support for the new organization and to devise a scheme for its operations.[13] Since the NAL would only be provisionally associated with the Board of Agriculture, it would have to be decentralized, with the bulk of the work conducted by county organizers but under the central structure of a national office in London. From the outset, the NAL adopted a similar organizational structure to the NFWI. County or regional committees (depending on membership numbers) would collect membership dues and provide support to its members, but the challenge was in determining what kind of support to offer and to what extent the NAL could establish a central mandate with so much of the daily operations left to individual organizers. Talbot envisioned a central body that would set and manage the terms of union for the NAL and its branches and a small office staff in London to coordinate operations, including collecting data on employment trends and raising funds to support women in the industry, specifically to assist with training and education. The Organising Secretaries supported the creation of a central office but were vigilant to ensure the counties would operate autonomously from the national body.[14] In spite of disagreements, a tentative plan was presented to Lord Lee, who allowed the NAL to form a provisional body to prepare an operational plan and to begin marketing strategies in late November 1919. From the start, however, the NAL lacked clarity on who was making decisions and what the nature of the relationship was between the county branches and the central office in London.[15]

The creation of the NAL was as spontaneous as it was disorderly. The timing was undoubtedly a problem, and Talbot was acutely aware of how much work had to be done before the 30 November deadline. In fact, there was so little time between when the NAL was conceptualized and the launch of its marketing team that Land Girls had not yet been canvassed to determine the level of support for the new organization. Talbot hoped that the plan to tie the NAL to the WLA, promoting one as a natural extension of the other, would encourage Land Girls to look to the NAL for support and comradeship as they transitioned from wartime to peacetime employment.[16] It was also important that the leadership team remain in place, as much as possible, as part of the NAL's effort to link the two organizations by more than simply the personal or sentimental connections between its members.

Meriel Talbot was the driving force behind the formation of the NAL and served as Vice-President along with Lady Denman and Lady Sandwich.[17] It was not until June 1921 that

[12] Meriel Talbot to Women's Sub-Committees, 'National Association of Landswomen', 22 Nov. 1919.

[13] *The Women's Farm and Garden Union Journal*, Oct. 1919, p. 5.

[14] TNA, MAF 42/7, Meeting of the National Association of Landswomen Elected Members and Country Organisers, 5 Jan. 1920.

[15] TNA, MAF 42/7, The National Association of Landswomen, Elected Members to Lord Lee, 20 Nov. 1919.

[16] TNA, MAF 42/7, Meriel Talbot to the Organising Secretaries, 'The Good Work of the Land Army', 22 Nov. 1919.

[17] See B. White, *The Women's Land Army in First World War Britain* (2014), pp. 150–2. Rowland Prothero served as President and H.R.H. Princess Mary served as patroness.

she and Gladys Potts, an inspector for the WLA and Secretary and Chairman of the Society for the Oversea Settlement of British Women (SOSBW), joined the Executive Committee. The role of the Vice President was largely advisory, but Talbot had a direct and deliberate impact on the overall direction of the NAL. As Woman Adviser to the Board of Agriculture, her opinion was sought on a number of matters pertaining to women's employment, including wages, education, and health insurance. The Executive Committee was chaired by Lucy Anne Streatfeild, who served on the Executive Committee of the WLA and would later be an active member of the Women's Institutes drama groups in the 1920s and 1930s. Louise Wilkins also served on the NAL's Executive Committee. She was a highly influential figure in women's agricultural work, having worked with the WFGU to support the advancement of women on the land and with the Trade Board that helped workers who did not have the organizational structure for collective action to secure better wages. Another crossover with the WLA was Miss Baker, who worked for both the WLA as an inspector and the SOSBW facilitating overseas migration for agricultural workers. The Executive Committee changed significantly over the few years of the NAL's operations, but this small group of influential women had connections throughout the various women's organizations that should have made cooperation easier.

Rather than encouraging a spirit of cooperation, the linkages and overlaps between people and organizations complicated cooperative practices as the various groups configured their responses to the problems facing women's labour in the interwar period and how employment issues intersected with the labour and women's movements. For the WFGU, it was not enough to simply find jobs for women in the agricultural industry; the fight for better wages and working conditions was essential to improving women's working lives, and the WFGU refused to bow to the paternalism of rural institutions, specifically regarding the gender divide of labour that determined who could work and in what jobs, but also the value assigned to that work.[18] The NFWI was no less dedicated to improving the lives of rural women, but its connections to the women's movement was complicated by its unwillingness to pursue an agenda that contested the male-female divide that dominated food production in the early 1920s.[19] The problem for the NAL was that the lingering influence of the WLA prevented it from developing its own identity, and from its inception the NAL had to negotiate with various other organizations to facilitate its own operations.[20] It adopted a middle ground, but this lack of operational independence significantly limited the NAL's ability to develop a clear mandate.

The official end of the WLA was as haphazard as the NAL's beginning. While a national ceremony was held in London in December 1919, the counties held individual ceremonies to formally mark the end of the Land Army and to recruit the now former Land Girls into the newly formed and officially inaugurated NAL.[21] The effort to closely tie the two organizations together created immediate problems. Organising Secretaries were slow to demobilize due to their new task of setting up the NAL, and in mid-December they were cautioned that work

[18] 'Women for the Farm', *The Times*, 24 May 1916; MERL, SR WFGA/A/2/1, Meeting of the Women's Farm and Garden Union, 9 Jan. 1920.

[19] Andrews, *Acceptable face of feminism*, p. 55; C. Beaumont, 'Citizens not feminists: the boundary negotiated between citizenship and feminism by mainstream women's organisations in England, 1928–39', *Women's Hist. Rev.* 9 (2000), pp. 411–29.

[20] *The Landswoman*, Dec. 1919, p. 272.

[21] TNA, MAF 42/7, Meriel Talbot to the Organising Secretaries, 18 Dec. 1919.

on behalf of the NAL was voluntary and no longer supported by the Board of Agriculture.[22] All work for the WLA was to cease immediately. By December 1919, the problem of closely linking the two organizations became apparent.[23] The NAL and WLA had to be seen as 'sister' organizations and not one as an extension of the other, but a clear distinction between the two was never fully achieved. Creating separation would not be easy: the NAL *was* an extension of the WLA in mandate and structure, and it was difficult to implement changes once the new organization was officially launched.

The NAL was inaugurated at the end of 1919 and its first, and perhaps most important, decision was to target former Land Girls, which inevitably limited its pool of potential members. While it actively recruited women working in agriculture or those seeking agricultural or horticultural employment, the desire to recruit from an existing organization that was already trained and connected to its leadership team was the primary focus in the early days.[24] The importance of former Land Girls to the future success of the NAL was not unknown, and county branches reported that while former Land Girls were enthusiastic about the new organization, they were not shy about their expectations for the NAL. In February 1920 the East Kent and Wiltshire branches of the NAL, for example, reported 'strong pressure from ex Land Girls to secure milking and poultry work', expecting the NAL to pick up immediately where the WLA had left off.[25] This was promising news for the NAL, but its organizers were also anxious about the immediate pressure to quickly find positions for former Land Girls.

II

The NAL aimed for a membership of 8000, but to accomplish this it would need to recruit members who were not already connected to the WLA, and it would have to compete with other organizations dedicated to advancing the role of women in rural Britain.[26] Even before its formal inauguration, the NAL articulated that it would work closely with the WFGU and the NFWI and was hoping that members of both groups would be willing to join the NAL and pay membership dues to multiple organizations. The need for close cooperation was not simply that the three organizations shared a similar purpose, but because the NAL needed to utilize the operational apparatus of the other two groups to carry out its work, at least until its membership grew and it collected enough money through dues to pay for an office and staff.[27] While cooperation was an obvious benefit to the NAL, the WFGU and the NFWI were sceptical and their members expressed concerns about establishing a close relationship

[22] TNA, MAF 42/7, Meriel Talbot to the Organising Secretaries, 23 Dec. 1919.

[23] TNA, MAF 42/7, Meriel Talbot to the Organising Secretaries, 'Termination of Work in the Counties', 30 Dec. 1919.

[24] 'Women's Land Army', *Essex County Chronicle*, 5 Dec. 1919. At the end of the war WLA essay competitions were won by those who expressed a desire to remain on the land, and *The Landswoman* was the primary organ for recruitment to both the WLA and NAL. See S. Ouditt, *Fighting forces, writing women: identity and ideology in the First World War* (1993), p. 55.

[25] MERL, SR WFGA/E/2/2, Meeting of Organisers NAL, Oct. 1919.

[26] 'An Army of 8,000', *Morpeth Herald and Reporter*, 12 Dec. 1919.

[27] The Women's Library, 5FWI/1/3, 'Women's Committee on Agricultural Work, 22 Oct. 1919.

with the NAL, specifically regarding the impact collaboration would have on their own operations.[28]

The WFGU was created in 1899 with the aim of creating an organization that would connect professional women in agriculture, to gather information about government legislation that affected land workers, and to influence public opinion toward accepting women in farming. The WFGU focused on education and training as well as the establishment of working relations with farmers and trade unions in an effort to combat some of the disadvantages women faced while looking for work. In 1917 and 1918, the WFGU had worked in tandem with the WLA in a joint effort to increase the number of women employed in agriculture, but their attentions had been different with the Land Army focused on recruiting and training women willing to commit to employment contracts, while the WFGU worked toward professionalization and worker independence. In the interwar period, the WFGU placed more than 3,000 women in jobs related to the agricultural industry and was the pre-eminent organization with the knowledge and resources to place women who wished to pursue such careers. In the 1920s and 1930s it operated with the understanding that the war had provided important lessons about the value of women on the land and that farmers' prejudices had largely subsided.[29] Neither did it submit to the gender dichotomy of agricultural labour, and the NAL accused the WFGU of placing women in men's jobs without regard for the potential displacement of male farm labourers, something the WLA had worked hard to avoid.[30] The Committee of Eight, formed in November 1919 to establish the NAL, indicated in its meeting with the WFGU Sub-Committee on Women's Labour its hope that 'women seeking work on the land do so not at the expense of male labourers or the trust won between the WLA and farmers' unions'.[31] Land Girls were supplementing the male labour force, not supplanting it, and the NAL, while rejecting Lord Ernle's statement that women were best suited to 'particular branches of agriculture', felt the need to tread carefully in the still-patriarchal industry.[32]

While the WFGU attended primarily to urban women who were interested in market gardening or smallholdings, the NFWI was dedicated to the role of rural women in agricultural regions either as paid workers or as members of farming families. Like the WFGU, the NFWI stayed informed about pay rates and boarding and lodging expenses and conditions, and it worked to improve rural life for women and children. Both organizations were concerned that an influx of urban women into the rural labour force would compete with country men and women for wages and housing. Conditions in rural areas, comparatively low wages in relation to other industries, and a limited number of cottages that were

[28] The Women's Library, 5FWI/F/2/01/05, *The Women's Farm and Garden Union Journal*, Oct. 1919, p. 5; General Meeting of the NFWI, 23 Oct. 1919.

[29] MERL, SR WFGA/E/2/2, 'Women on the Land', *WFGU Journal*, Apr. 1919.

[30] 'Meeting of the Staffordshire WI', *Staffordshire Advertiser*, 25 Feb. 1922; N. Verdon, 'Agricultural labour and the contested nature of women's work in interwar England and Wales', *Historical J.* 52 (2009), p. 124; *ead*., 'Business or pleasure: middle-class women's work and the professionalization of farming in England, 1890–1939', *J. British Stud.* 51 (2012), p. 398. This was part of a broader response to the modernization of the countryside. See D. N. Jeans, 'Planning and the myth of the English countryside, in the interwar period', *Rural Hist.*, 1 (1990), pp. 249–64.

[31] TNA, MAF 42/7, Meeting of the Committee of Eight and the WFGU Sub-Committee of Women's Agricultural Labour, 16 Dec. 1919.

[32] 'Lord Ernle and the Land Army', *The Landswoman*, July 1920, p. 146.

generally of poor quality and lacked modern amenities were factors leading to demographic changes that began before the war and resumed in the early 1920s.[33] For the NFWI the solution was not an influx of urban workers, but rather the rehabilitation of rural institutions and industries. The NFWI and WFGU also faced backlash from farmers and unions for their perceived interference in labour and were accused of inflating the value of and need for women in the industry.[34] Farmers continued to raise concerns about the value of women labourers and were convinced that women, including former Land Girls, were not worth the expense in terms of wages.[35]

The NAL's mandate was situated between the WFGU and the NFWI, putting it in a difficult position for recruiting new members. Since it was open to all women interested in agricultural work, it competed directly with the other two groups but without clearly distinguishing itself from either. Marketing for the NAL indicated that its goal was to promote national comradeship among women land workers, to further agricultural efficiency among women, and to maintain goodwill between employers and employees that had been one of the key successes of the WLA.[36] Peter Dewey has argued that the agricultural trade unions were weak during the war, but Nick Mansfield argues that the trade unions grew steadily after 1916, and Nicola Verdon has shown that their growth continued in the interwar period when the National Union of Agricultural Workers became a force for organizations focused on advancing the position of women in the industry.[37] The NAL saw a continuing need to placate farmers and the trade unions by advocating for women as supplementary rather than competing labour. It also focused on the importance of education and training for women and the need to promote agriculture's value to the national recovery and women's key role in that process.[38] The NAL's 'A Better England Campaign', launched in December 1919, proved similar to the NFWI's mandate, proclaiming that there was 'honour in agricultural work' and that the revitalization of the agricultural industry was an act of patriotism that could only be accomplished by cooperation between men and women and the promotion and advancement of education and skilled work for women in the industry. While the NAL was less optimistic about the erasure of farmers' prejudices, it did encourage women to take up the mantle of the WLA by demonstrating their value through their labour.[39]

[33] J. Saville, *Rural Depopulation in Rural England and Wales, 1851–1951* (1957), pp. 131–2. Saville's conclusion about the extent of rural depopulation in the period has been challenged by A. Howkins, 'Death and Rebirth? English Rural Society, 1920–1940', in P. Brassley, J. Burchardt, and L. Thompson (eds), *The English countryside between the wars: regeneration or decline?* (2006), pp. 10–25.

[34] *The Women's Farm and Garden Journal*, May 1919, p. 1.

[35] Verdon, 'Agricultural labour', pp. 123–5.

[36] *The Landswoman*, Mar. 1920, p. 63.

[37] P. Dewey, 'Government provision of farm labour in England and Wales, 1914–1918', *AgHR* 27 (1979), pp. 110–20; N. Mansfield, 'Farmworkers, local identity and conservatism, 1914–1930', in Brassley, Burchardt and Thompson (eds), *English countryside*, p. 179; Verdon, 'Agricultural labour', p. 125.

[38] 'Why we need an Association of Landswomen', *The Landswoman*, Jan. 1920, p. 6.

[39] 'Staffordshire Landswomen', *Staffordshire Advertiser*, 20 Dec. 1919, p. 2. Susan Grayzel has argued that the WLA's most significant contribution was changing attitudes about women's roles in rural life, and Birgit Van Puymbroeck has shown the value of *The Landswoman* in fostering a collective identity, but also a new dialogue about the value of women's labour. S. Grayzel, 'Nostalgia, gender, and the countryside: placing the 'Land Girl' in First World War Britain', *Rural Hist.* 10 (1999), p. 157; B. Van Puymbroeck, 'Becoming a Land Girl: reprinting Alice Meynell's 'The Shepherdess' in *The Landswoman*', *Victorian Periodicals Rev.* 50 (2017), p. 404.

The NAL was promoted as an organization that would continue the Land Army's efforts to provide training and agricultural education, but also support the cause of 'women in collective action'.[40] Its platform was broad enough to attract a variety of women from different backgrounds and with diverse skillsets, and while it promised its members a unique experience, its work overlapped with both the WFGU and NFWI but without access to the same resources or infrastructures thus limiting its ability to truly support 'women in collective action'. When the NAL was launched it used the offices of the Organising Secretaries of the WLA in the counties.[41] After 1919 it relied on an arrangement with the WFGU to share office space in London and to employ a part-time secretary. The counties also entered into arrangements with local offices of the WFGU to share resources, which was a point of contention because the WFGU offices were already established and the nature of the arrangement between the two organizations was unclear.[42] In 1921, the NAL shared resources with the NFWI and finally the SOSBW in 1923, and it was only in its final months that it was able to be truly independent.

The NAL's potential for success depended on attracting former Land Girls, but here its approach conflicted with the WFGU. While the WFGU believed that Land Girls would stay on the land, their numbers were declining, and a more sustainable option for women was smallholdings where they could exercise greater control over their working lives.[43] There was, however, an overall decrease in the number of women employed in agriculture after 1919. Between the end of the war and the launch of the NAL, more than 16,000 of the 34,000 women who worked in full-time, paid positions had left agricultural work. More specifically, the number of Land Girls employed on farms dropped by more than a thousand between April and July 1919 and the numbers continued to decline through the end of the year. Although women workers were in demand, most of the work was seasonal.[44] WFGU members expressed concerns that the NAL would recruit women in the larger towns and cities for work in rural Britain and wanted a commitment from the NAL that if the two bodies were to cooperate in the future, the NAL would not adopt a similar recruitment strategy used by the WLA by recruiting urban women seeking to leave domestic service work. In a joint meeting between Mrs Grosvenor, Mrs Balfour, Mrs Wilkins, Miss Pott, and Miss Baker, there had been considerable discussion about the types of women the NAL aimed to recruit. The WFGU expressed its preference that the

> NAL should affiliate to arrangements that have the benefits of keeping women in towns and cities where there is much work to do in gardening. The benefits to be obtained are sufficient to justify this policy … and is one adopted by the Board of Agriculture Women's Branch during the war.[45]

[40] MERL, SR WFGA/E/2/2, Minutes of NAL Executive, 27 Feb. 1920.

[41] 'National Association of Landswomen', *Essex Newsman*, 7 Aug. 1920.

[42] MERL, SR WFGA/E/2/2, 'Landswomen Association', Nov. 1919.

[43] MERL, SR WFGA/E/2/2, Minutes of the WFGU, May 1919; A. Meredith, 'From ideals to reality: the women's smallholding colony at Lingfield', *AgHR* 54 (2006), p. 105.

[44] MERL, SR WFGA/E/2/2, 'Fewer Women on the Land', Oct. 1919.

[45] MERL, SR WFGA E/2/2, Circular Letter on negotiations for Amalgamation between WFGU and NAL, 17 July 1920.

The WFGU representatives were probably referring to the approach used by the French Unit of the WLA whereby women were trained in market gardening and horticulture for work in urban areas,[46] a tactic that supported women's work but did not relocate them to rural areas.[47] In 1919 the WFGU stressed the need for former Land Girls to remain on the land, but for those outside rural areas and with no experience in farming, there was the need for 'further training in agricultural and horticultural work'.[48] Information sessions were held to inform women about the profitability of homemade jams, bottled fruits, and growing vegetables, and representatives encouraged women in towns and cities to raise poultry.

In addition to worries about its recruitment strategies, the WFGU was also concerned about the longevity of the NAL. The NAL had few members, approximately 1,300 at the end of 1919, and limited resources. Its main source of income was the sale of women's workwear that had been left over from the WLA. This included smocks, jumpers, breeches, and boots (but not the official Land Army coats) that the NAL had been given exclusive rights to sell by the Board of Agriculture in a profit-sharing scheme. The NAL kept ten percent of all sales to cover the costs of storage and shipping, with the Board receiving the remainder of the profits.[49] The WFGU had to consider the extent to which the NAL would be a liability in terms of its aim to professionalize agricultural and horticultural work for women and the potential syphoning of members that would have financial repercussions for both organizations.

In November 1919 the NAL had approached the WFGU about cooperation and the possibility of amalgamating in the future. At the time, the WFGU was only willing to talk about cooperation, but not amalgamation until it became clearer where the NAL stood on key issues. NAL recruiting strategies was only one of the several points of disagreement. Connected to the NAL's reliance on former Land Girls was its refusal to allow members of the WFGU to purchase former Land Army uniforms if they were not members of the NAL. Mrs Bridgemen argued that since 'all the work and responsibility of securing the outfits had fallen on the NAL, [and] that the branches were having a hard fight to pay their way, [for the WFGU] to have the benefit of the clothes without paying for it' was unacceptable.[50] The WFGU argued that its members had been engaged in the same work as Land Girls and 'were entitled to the same benefits as the NAL'.[51] The lack of Land Army status was not the issue; rather, the NAL was trying to secure a commitment of cooperation from the WFGU before altering its sales strategies. The NAL required that the WFGU's members also pay membership dues to the NAL if they wanted to take advantage of its services, but its real objective was the future amalgamation of the two societies.[52] From the outset the NAL Executive knew that raising enough

[46] MERL, SR WFGA/E/2/2, Report on Cooperation between WFGU and NAL, 17 July 1920.

[47] 'Women's Land Army: A French Unit', *Birmingham Post*, 30 May 1918; 'Girl Gardeners: French Land Army', *Daily News and Leader*, 29 June 1918.

[48] 'Women Land Workers', *Leeds Mercury*, 23 Jan. 1919, p. 6.

[49] MERL, SR WFGA/E/2/2, Minutes of meeting of Executive Officers of the NAL and WFGU, 19 Jan. 1919.

[50] MERL, SR WFGA/E/2/2, Minutes of NAL Executive, 27 Feb. 1920.

[51] MERL, SR WFGA/E/2/2, Minutes of NAL Executive, 27 Feb. 1920. For more on the divisions between women agricultural workers see N. Verdon, 'Let out in the cold: village women and agricultural labour in England and Wales during the First World War', *Twentieth Century British Hist.* 27 (2016), pp. 1–25.

[52] MERL, SR WFGA/E/2/2, Minutes of NAL Executive, 27 Feb. 1920.

money to maintain operations would be challenging and it would not be long before the NAL would have to pursue amalgamation with either the WFGU or the NFWI. The NAL's revenues came from membership dues, the sale of uniforms, and donations. Its budget was small, and without the goodwill of the WFGU it would not have been able to cover its operational costs, but the executive argued that the sale of uniforms generated the largest profits and because it had sole authority over the sale of WLA apparel, it had the right to set terms and prices. The dire nature of its finances is most clearly indicated by its decision to end its association with *The Landswoman*, the official publication of the WLA and the official publication and primary promotional tool of the NAL. In May 1920, *The Landswoman*, which was edited by Talbot, was operating at a loss, and Talbot made the decision to end the NAL's arrangement with the magazine. This was a surprising decision for the counties because the magazine was a central part of the NAL's marketing campaign and was used to promote work apparel for women, running full-page advertisements on the need for sturdy boots and proper smocks, sold exclusively by the NAL.[53] In its place the NAL tried to send representatives on a national tour, but insufficient funds meant the tour had to be cancelled.[54] Instead, the NAL had to request cooperation from the NFWI to run half-columns in *Home and Country* on a need basis, leaving it with no formal mechanism for recruitment or promotion.

III

Beyond the practicalities of whom to recruit and how, the WFGU was troubled about the NAL's position on women's farm wages, smallholdings, and farming colonies. The government had fixed wages for women in agriculture by county, but in many counties the wage minimums were not being enforced. The WFGU asked for a joint effort from the NAL to keep track of wages in the counties and to report discrepancies to the District Wages Board and the Board of Agriculture. The individual county organizations were free to engage with local authorities regarding wages, but the central office in London gave no direct assistance.[55] The NAL preferred to remain silent on the issue, arguing that it was 'impossible to demand a minimum weekly wage for women, and that the committee adhered to its previous decision that it would be unwise at the present time for the NAL to interfere in this matter'.[56] The immediate concern for the NAL Executive was that an official statement of policy would be viewed as too political. The NAL wished to avoid any potential relationship with Labour and was worried that if cooperation or amalgamation with the WFGU did not come to fruition, its only other option was a similar relationship with the NFWI where overt political statements would be damaging to a future partnership. In April 1920 the NFWI Executive warned the NAL that any future amalgamation of the two organizations required that the NAL avoid involvement with any political body.[57] The NFWI supported 'good salaries' for women farm workers, but there were tensions between the

[53] MERL, SR WFGA/E/2/2, Minutes of NAL Executive, 5 May 1920; *The Landswoman*, June 1920, p. 128.

[54] MERL, SR WFGA/E/2/2, Minutes of NAL Executive, 2 June 1920.

[55] MERL, SR WFGA/E/2/2, 'Potential for Cooperation between NAL and WFGU', 5 Feb. 1920.

[56] MERL, SR WFGA/E/2/2, Minutes of NAL Executive, 7 Apr. 1920.

[57] This warning came after the Middle Classes Union approached the NAL for support on the issue of excessive taxes and rates on the middle classes. MERL, SR WFGA/E/2/2, Minutes of NAL Executive, 7 Apr. 1920.

NFWI and the labour movement in the 1920s, and it was not until the early 1930s that the NFWI Executive actively advocated for better wages and working conditions for women.[58]

The issue of wages was not easily ignored, however. In June 1920 women agricultural workers in Wiltshire threatened to go on strike if wage minimums were not met. During the war, similar action had been taken by one hundred women in South Shields when workers, distressed that wages guaranteed by farmers had not be paid, refused to return to work.[59] The issue was resolved when the Agricultural Wages Board issued a resolution that minimum rates be set on an hourly basis and minimums be determined by employment history.[60] During the South Shields strike, however, the Women's Branch had avoided comment and again in 1920 Meriel Talbot issued a rare recommendation to the county organizations that no action be taken, a reversal of her earlier recommendation that the counties should determine their own course of action. Talbot stated that 'in the event of a strike of agricultural workers the committee considers that the National Association of Landswomen should not identify itself with either side, but should maintain an absolutely neutral position, and further, that the committee strongly urges the branches to do the same'.[61] Although the Executive could not dictate directives to the counties, Talbot recommended that women raise the issue of wages with their County Councils. Despite pressure from the counties (labour disputes emerged in Worcester in March 1920 over the issue of women's wages) and the WFGU, the NAL Executive did not want to antagonize farmers or the unions and recommended the matter be handled by the District Wages Board.[62]

With regard to smallholdings and farming colonies the NAL was equally firm in its unwillingness to wade into the issue, although the decision had nothing to do with the future potential for amalgamation with the WFGU or the NFWI. The Executive Committee generally supported smallholdings, but because both required capital resources that most women did not have and the NAL was in no position financially to subsidize such ventures, it declined involvement. Farming colonies were a different matter because they interfered with the natural balance between male and female labour in farming.[63] All-female farming colonies were a worthy enterprise, but the NAL believed that it was ill-suited to its 'supplement not supplant' approach to women's farm labour.[64] The NAL was committed to this position and offered no recommendations for assistance. More significantly, it did not encourage women to look for support through the WFGU or County Councils, both of which were involved in a number of schemes for smallholdings and farming colonies. For the WFGU the issue of smallholdings was central to its future plans, even if opportunities for women were very limited in the years immediately following the war.[65] Even the NFWI was willing to provide women with

[58] *Home and Country*, July 1927, p. 277.

[59] 'Land Workers Dissatisfied', *North Mail*, 3 June 1918.

[60] 'Women Land Workers' Wages', *Daily Express*, 17 June 1918.

[61] MERL, SR WFGA/E/2/2, Minutes of NAL Executive Committee, 2 June 1920.

[62] MERL, SR WFGA/E/2/2, Minutes of NAL Executive Committee, 7 Apr. 1920; MERL, SR WFGA/E/2/2, Minutes of NAL Executive Committee, 2 June 1920.

[63] 'Women in Agriculture', *Ripon Observer*, 19 May 1921.

[64] MERL, SR WFGA/E/2/2, Minutes of NAL Executive Committee, 27 Sept. 1921.

[65] Meredith, 'From ideals to reality', p. 108. The colony at Lingfield was reminiscent of the nineteenth-century 'back to the land' campaign. See D. L. Opitz, 'Back to the land: Lady Warwick and the movement for women's collegiate agricultural education', *AgHR* 62 (2014), pp. 119–45.

information on cooperative buying and selling and data pertaining to the markets, but the NAL stated that 'it was impossible for the NAL to undertake this, especially as this was the work undertaken by the Women's Institutes'.[66] The NAL's failure to act on the issue of women's wages or employment trends that directly impacted women in agriculture severely undermined its commitment to support 'women in collective action' and was a growing source of tension between it and the WFGU.

The NAL's approach to women in agriculture was certainly influenced by its predecessor, but its refusal to act on matters directly affecting women in agriculture was also due to inadequate staffing. For example, former Land Girls working in remote villages requested that the NAL arrange for books to be sent to members, but the Executive determined that it did not have the human resources to support such initiatives and the matter should be brought before the County Councils or the Education Authorities.[67] The NAL had to decide where to focus its limited energies and despite the broad message of its 'A Better England Campaign', its agenda was dominated by its clearing sheets and health insurance schemes. The clearing sheet scheme was operated by the counties but monthly clearing sheets, a record of who was employed where and where there were labour shortages, were compiled by the central office in London. Members looking for agricultural work could register with the county office where organizers would match women with employers. While census figures show an overall decline in employment in agriculture in the interwar years, Alun Howkins showed that there was significant variation in employment trends across counties, and the clearing sheets were designed to help direct women to counties/districts were work was more plentiful.[68] Employers paid a small fee for the service, whereas in most counties the women were covered by their membership fees, although this was not always the case and some counties charged both the women and the employer a fee. Employment information was sent to the central office where the NAL tracked employment trends. Positions for women were more plentiful in Kent than in Devon, for example, and the NAL was able to coordinate with the counties to maximize work placements. This was particularly important in areas of the country without an NAL branch.

In early 1920 the NAL had branches in 46 counties. Of those, 25 had more than 100 members, while 21 had fewer than 100 members. Ten counties – four in England and six in Wales – had no branches at all. In mid-1920 the NAL had just over 4000 members.[69] The success of the work registration scheme was limited. Untrained women had little chance of finding employment, and the NAL did not have its own training facilities or specific relationships with agricultural colleges. In some counties, like Kent, the NAL branches had arrangements with farmers for short practical training courses and facilitated the process for training and work terms, but there was no certificate of completion or skills test administered, and employers often wanted evidence of training beyond just recommendations from former employers. In 1919, Talbot had worked on a plan to secure agricultural training at a centre

[66] MERL, SR WFGA/E/2/2, Minutes of NAL Executive, 7 Apr. 1920.

[67] MERL, SR WFGA/E/2/2, Minutes of NAL Executive, 27 Feb. 1920.

[68] Howkins, 'Death and Rebirth?', p. 16.

[69] Minutes of NAL Executive, 11 Aug. 1920, MERL, SR WFGA/E/2/2.

in Worcestershire through the Education Authorities' Grant for Ex-Service Women, but the number of spots was limited, and the scheme for practical training in agricultural subjects at Cuming Farm in Hindlip had yet to be approved by county officials.[70] This left many women stuck in the loop of seasonal employment or looking to smallholdings or farming colonies, work that was not facilitated by the NAL. Such services were provided, however, by the WFGU, but only to its own members. The WFGU also had its own networks and was far more successful than the NAL in coordinating work terms. In the spring of 1920, for example, the NAL had just 41 applications for work but nearly 100 vacancies. The WFGU offered to assist with filling the vacancies, but only if NAL members paid membership dues to the WFGU.[71] The problem for the NAL was not that there were not enough women to fill the vacancies, but that women had not sought the services of the NAL, indicating a clear preference for the better-organized and more influential WFGU. The need to amalgamate was more pressing than ever, forcing the NAL to adopt a new strategy.

IV

By June 1920 amalgamation with the WFGU appeared unlikely and the Executive Committee conveyed to its membership its belief that the NAL's interests were more closely aligned with the NFWI. The objectives and priorities of the NAL and WFGU overlapped leading to competition for members and resources and yet their goals remained too far apart to be easily reconciled. Cooperation and possible amalgamation with the NFWI, however, proved no less difficult. The NAL had always embraced the need for cooperation with the NFWI, and in the years after the war there was much talk about the possible amalgamation of all three groups. The NFWI was specifically concerned about wage competition between men and women, as was the NAL, and both were concerned that the WFGU was providing inaccurate information about the state of agricultural employment for women.[72] In her work on women's agricultural labour, Nicola Verdon has shown that although attitudes had changed and continued to change in the interwar period, the 'presence of women workers produced a number of conflicting responses from a range of rural groups and organizations'.[73] Competition between groups was not unexpected, but the NAL Executive was doubtful that it could maintain operations without the support of either the WFGU or NFWI.

In August 1920 representatives of the Executive Committees of the NAL and NFWI met to discuss the matter of amalgamation. One point of contention was the NAL's health insurance scheme. In early 1920 the NAL Executive had reached out to the National Deposit, The Hearts of Oak, The Ancient Order of Foresters, the Agricultural Labourers' Union, and the National Federation of Women Workers (NFWW) to inquire about health insurance for women agricultural workers. The National Deposit and the Ancient Order of Foresters were

[70] Londonderry to Talbot, Agricultural training in Worcestershire, 24 Mar. 1919, MERL, SR WFGA/9/5.

[71] The NAL operated from 1919 to 1923, coinciding with the largest decline in agricultural labour in the interwar period. See B. White, 'What to do with the girls? The legacy of women farm workers in Britain, 1919–1939', *Historical Reflections* 42 (2016), pp. 103–4.

[72] MERL, SR WFGA/E/2/3, Report on Joint meeting of the Executives of NAL, WFGU, and NFWI, 8 June 1920, Minutes of NAL Executive, 10 July 1920.

[73] Verdon, 'Agricultural labour', p. 130.

both able to offer advice on savings and money care for working-class women, while the Hearts of Oak and the Agricultural Labourers' Union could provide practical advice about health insurance, but it was the NFWW that offered to create a Health Section for women agricultural labourers so long as the NAL had a minimum of 5000 members registered for benefits. While the NFWW offered the most robust policy options, the NFWI rejected any affiliation with trade unions.[74] The NAL had to decide whether or not to commit to the NFWW knowing that the matter would be trivial if its Executive was unable to gain the support of the NFWI's membership. The NAL was facing pressure from its own members who wanted to abandon any arrangement with the NFWW in order to placate the NFWI, opting instead to find support through the Friendly Societies that could assist members with savings, insurance, and cooperative banking.[75] If the issue was not resolvable through the Friendly Societies, an organization that 'stimulated a sense of class solidarity of encouraging a spirit of friendship and sociability among equals', several branches expressed support for a savings plan through the Slate Clubs, rather than a specific health insurance plan.[76]

Changes to unemployment and health insurance took place in the interwar period, but the Unemployment Insurance Act of 1920 did not cover agricultural workers and modifications to the old Poor Laws were underway after 1919, but the most significant changes came with the introduction of the Local Government Act of 1929.[77] Cathy Hunt has shown that the National Insurance Act (1911) did not protect those employed casually or those who received irregular wages. Collective bargaining and insurance protections were available through the NFWW, which had the ability to put pressure on dishonest employers who evaded the Act, failed to provide insurance, or who violated wage rates, but only for registered members.[78] The extension of national health insurance in 1911 expanded benefits for working-class men, but few women received coverage. In most cases, women had to find alternative sources of insurance, either through the Friendly Societies or some other organization.[79] The NAL Executive was not willing to alter what it believed would be its signature contribution to women's agricultural labour, a health insurance scheme specifically for its members. In a series of negotiations with the NFWI the NAL made clear 'that the NAL would have no connection with its [NFWW's] political work' and that the health insurance plan was simply for the benefit of women workers who had no other source of income if they were injured while working.[80] The specific issue was that the NAL had been fielding a number of requests for financial assistance from former Land Girls who had sustained injuries while working and had to be absent from work for a number of weeks. The NAL was unable to offer financial support and Streatfeild was adamant

[74] MERL, SR WFGA/E/2/2, Minutes of NAL Executive, 7 Apr. 1920.

[75] MERL, SR WFGA/E/2/2, Letter of Concern from NAL branches on Health Insurance Scheme, 12 Apr. 1920. See F. Bédarida, *A social history of England, 1851–1975* (1979), pp. 67–8.

[76] Ibid, p. 71; MERL, SR WFGA/E/2/2, Minutes of NAL Executive, 7 Apr. 1920.

[77] D. K. Benjamin and L. A. Kochin, 'Searching for an explanation of unemployment in interwar Britain', *J. Political Economy* 87 (1979), pp. 441–78.

[78] C. Hunt, *The National Federation of Women Workers, 1906–1921* (2014), p. 54. See also, M. Glucksmann, Women assemble: women workers in the new industries in interwar Britain (1990), pp. 40–1.

[79] I. Zweiniger-Bargielowska, *Women in twentieth century Britain* (2001), p. 92.

[80] MERL, SR WFGA/E/2/2, Minutes of NAL Executive, 5 May 1920.

that a health insurance plan was the only way to offer meaningful assistance.[81] Insurance became the predominant matter on the NAL's agenda, but the health scheme faced criticism from within the NAL's ranks. Opposition took two forms: those who believed that any type of financial assistance would be beneficial and would ultimately fulfil the NAL's desire to increase supports for farming women, and those who felt the matter should not be to the detriment of the NAL, fearing that continued discussions with the NFWW would cause the NFWI to cease amalgamation negotiations.[82]

The Executive delayed deciding on how to proceed with regard to health insurance and turned its attention to the two proposed options for amalgamation set by the NFWI. In September 1920 two schemes had been drawn up by a Joint Committee for consideration by their respective memberships. Under Option A, the NAL would be incorporated into the NFWI with a Guild of Agricultural Workers (the former NAL) formed and open to all women interested in agricultural work. Each county branch of the WI would have a representative from the NAL and the WI Agricultural Sub-Committees would comprise an equal number of representatives from the NFWI and the NAL. Work specific to the NAL would be carried on by its existing members, and the NAL would be responsible for the management of the Guild of Agricultural Workers. Under Option B, the NAL would be taken over by the NFWI, and all members invited to join the WI. The Agricultural and Horticultural Sub-Committees of the NFWI would have representatives from the NAL to carry out work specific to the NAL's mandate, including clothing sales and clearing sheets.[83]

NAL members immediately objected to what they saw as a piecemeal takeover by the NFWI, whereby Landswomen activities would be gradually subsumed by the WIs, and believed that the NFWI was not committed to advocating for women's work in agriculture (the NFWI was focused on horticulture). Maggie Andrews has argued that it was not until the 1930s that the WIs embraced farming for women as an act of independence and empowerment.[84] The challenge, however, was that the number of NAL branches was in decline, with several positions unfilled and branches requesting financial support due to a lack of membership.[85] Donations also declined and the only alternative to raise funds was through the sale of uniforms which the NAL opened to members of the WFGU at the same price paid by NAL members in the fall of 1920. In Lancashire and Cheshire members protested that 'it was not practical for members of the NAL to become members of the Women's Institutes when they live 12, or more, miles away from a Women's Institute, or it they lived in or near big towns'.[86] Miss Ellis from the Lancashire branch wrote that 'it was felt among all members that it would be most unwise to take up a plan for amalgamation on the stated terms as it would diminish current members' participation at meetings that would be under the chairship of the National

[81] For more on health and welfare schemes in interwar Britain, see M. Gorsky, 'Public health in interwar England and Wales: did it fail?', *Dynamis* 28 (2008), pp. 175–98; H. Jones, 'Employers' welfare schemes and industrial relations in interwar Britain', *Business Hist.* 25 (1983), pp. 61–75.

[82] MERL, SR WFGA/E/2/2, Minutes of NAL Executive, 2 June 1920.

[83] MERL, SR WFGA/E/2/2, Minutes of NAL Executive, 8 Sept. 1920.

[84] Andrews, *Acceptable face of feminism*, pp. 55–6.

[85] MERL, SR WFGA/E/2/2, Minutes of NAL Executive, 6 Oct. 1920.

[86] MERL, SR WFGA/E/2/2, Minutes of NAL Executive, 14 Dec. 1920.

Federation of Women's Institutes', essentially turning the NAL's operations over to the WIs or to new members of the NAL who would have limited knowledge of the organization and its goals.[87] There was also no mention of the NAL's proposed health insurance scheme. As part of the negotiation process, the NAL promoted the insurance plan as part of its 'A Better England' campaign that was not fundamentally different from or in opposition to the nineteenth century 'back to the land' campaign that had been influential to both the creation of the NFWI and the WLA during the war.[88]

While the NAL vacillated between asking for amendments and outright rejection of both options, the NFWI membership voted against the amalgamation plan presented by its Executive Committee.[89] Unfortunately for the NAL, it had already received notice in early January from the WFGU that association between the two organizations would end on 20 January 1921.[90] Also in 1921, the NFWW amalgamated into the National Union of General Workers; rather than a separate health insurance plan, NAL members could enroll as general members or secure insurance through the Rural Approved Societies. Talbot considered having individual branches advocate on the NAL's behalf with their NFWI branch counterparts but feared it 'might be misconstrued and considered propaganda to influence the vote of the Annual Meeting of the National Federation of Women's Institutes'.[91] Instead, Talbot recommended limiting contact between the two organizations for the time being with the hope that a suitable arrangement could be made in the future.

A change in circumstances came with the Corn Production Repeal Act (1921) where both the NAL and NFWI agreed that a woman should be appointed to the Conciliation Committee. The NAL sent a letter to the Minister of Agriculture in August 1921 stating that 'In view of the necessity of safeguarding the interests of women under the new Conciliation Committees, this Association speaking for the Agricultural Women wage earners, asks that a Clause shall be inserted in the Corn Production Acts (Repeal) Bill providing for the inclusion of women on the Conciliation Committees'.[92] In September 1921 the NFWI 'decided to support the action of the NAL with regard to the appointment of women on the Conciliation Committees and had agreed to circulate the same letter to the branches'.[93] The Conciliation Committee was established in July 1921 when government abandoned the Agriculture Act (1920). Its purpose was to mediate between employers and employees with regard to wages and price guarantees for agricultural products, but they had no real power to implement change.[94] Women's agricultural wages declined from 46*s.* per week in 1921 to 36*s.* per week by December 1922, and while the NAL had been unwilling to advocate for women a year earlier, with the completion of its health insurance scheme, it now had some resources available and

[87] MERL, SR WFGA/E/2/2, Minutes of NAL Executive, 14 Dec. 1920.

[88] MERL, SR WFGA/E/2/2, Minutes of NAL Executive, 3 Nov. 1920. See A. Howkins, *Reshaping rural England: a social history, 1850–1925* (1991), pp. 277–8.

[89] MERL, SR WFGA/E/2/2, Minutes of NAL Executive, 8 Feb. 1921.

[90] MERL, SR WFGA/E/2/2, Minutes of NAL Executive, 18 Jan. 1921.

[91] MERL, SR WFGA/E/2/2, Minutes of NAL Executive, 8 Feb. 1921.

[92] MERL, SR WFGA/E/2/2, Minutes of NAL Executive, 26 July 1921.

[93] MERL, SR WFGA/E/2/2, Minutes of NAL Executive, 27 Sept. 1921.

[94] MERL, SR WFGA/E/2/2, Minutes of NAL Executive, 26 July 1921.

felt encouraged by the support it received from the NFWI.[95] The work of the Conciliation Committee was relatively futile and real change did not come until Labour passed the Agriculture Wages (Regulation) Act in 1924, but the issue of wage reductions and agricultural protections created an opening for renewed negotiations between the NAL and NFWI. By the autumn of 1921 major branches of the NAL had closed, including Cambridge and East Kent, while Worcester and Oxford had already amalgamated with the NFWI branches in those counties. The NAL Executive now relied on the negotiating skills of Meriel Talbot and Gladys Potts to draft a statement of aims, objectives, and advantages to amalgamation. This included interaction with the Lingfield colony to encourage NAL members to broaden their approach to women's agricultural work and a presentation by Miss Fawcett on the benefits of health insurance for single women working in agriculture. The health insurance scheme continued to be a point of contention, but not one that would not be overcome. The NAL was asked to 'state their position with regard to the Health Section', including any liabilities stemming from its association with the NFWW. The NAL issued a final statement that 'it recommended the scheme for insurance because they thought it a sound scheme, and because it gave the kinds of benefits the members require. The NAL is under no financial obligation to the NFWW'.[96] A Guild of Landswomen would be created within the NFWI for those who wanted to identify specifically with the agricultural side of farm labour as opposed to the general horticultural option that was popular among NFWI members. The Guild of Landswomen would continue its work on the Conciliation Committee to advocate for fixed wages for women and would also have representation on the Consultative Committee on Women's Organisations that was dedicated to improving women's legal status and independence.[97] The only matter left unresolved was the clearing sheets, which the NAL asked the NFWI to adopt. It declined with the hope that the work would be carried on by the Women's Farm and Garden Association, but no formal arrangement was ever established.[98]

As a final act of compromise, the NFWI agreed that the NAL's funds would remain separate from the NFWI and 'That the money derived from the sale of clothing at Headquarters shall be entrusted to certain Trustees to invest and the income be used as required from time to time for the benefit of individual agricultural and horticultural women workers and that prior claim be given to ex members of the Land Army'.[99] The Committee insisted that NAL funds should only be used to support women in agriculture, with priority given to former Land Girls. Men would not be eligible for assistance. The NAL Executive was dissolved in February 1923. In its place a trust was established to deal with the remaining funds collected during its tenure. The trustees were Lucy Streatfeild, Meriel Talbot, and Alice Franklin, who used what money remained to assist women interested in agricultural work, but without interference from the general membership or competing organizations. Most significantly, it provided interest-free loans to women who were otherwise unable to secure the down payment for a

[95] MERL, SR WFGA/E/2/2, Minutes of NAL Executive, 27 Sept. 1921.

[96] MERL, SR WFGA/E/2/2, Minutes of NAL Executive, 22 Nov. 1921.

[97] MERL, SR WFGA/E/2/2, Minutes of NAL Executive, 11 Jan. 1922.

[98] MERL, SR WFGA/E/2/2, Minutes of NAL Executive, 3 Jan. 1923.

[99] MERL, SR WFGA/E/2/2, Minutes of NAL Executive, 29 Aug. 1921.

smallholding and loans for agricultural training and education. The trustees found a home at the headquarters of the SOSBW in May 1923, where they remained until they completed their work in July of that year.[100]

V

The NAL was envisioned as a continuation of the Women's Land Army and its mandate was to support women working in the agricultural industry. From the outset, the NAL knew cooperation with the WFGU and the NFWI would be important to its operations, not least because it did not have the organizational infrastructure necessary to support its work by the time the WLA was demobilized and the NAL was officially launched in 1919. It was also practical to assume that the three organizations interested in promoting the role of women in rural communities and farming industries would have shared goals that would afford opportunities for collaboration and even amalgamation. The NAL's close ties with the WLA and its commitment to viewing women as supplemental labourers jeopardized relations with the WFGU, while its recruiting tactics and commitment to making health insurance its signature contribution put it at odds with the politically ambiguous NFWI. Despite its limited years in operation, however, the NAL did secure options for women's health insurance, providing vital protections for a workforce that had been largely overlooked by government programmes. It also provided an important service through its clearing sheets that connected women with various employment opportunities across the country, allowing women farm workers to take advantage of posts beyond their own communities or counties. In its later years, the NAL advocated fixed wages for women through the Conciliation Committee, an important contribution to women's longevity on the land given that rural depopulation often resulted from uncompetitive wages and unfavourable working conditions for agricultural workers. It should not be overlooked that the NAL helped to make agriculture a more central part of the NFWI's mandate, and in its final days, contributed resources toward the development of women's smallholdings and agricultural education and training. These accomplishments were distinctively rural and should be seen as part of a larger movement that worked to advance women's agricultural education and improve conditions for women in rural industries. Its Executive Committee may have been disbanded in 1923, but its members went on to play important and influential roles in the Women's Farm and Garden Association, the NFWI, and the SOSBW, three organizations that continued to campaign on behalf of rural women and to broadcast their vital role in national revival.

[100] MERL, SR WFGA/E/2/2, Records of the Trustees of the NAL, Mar. to July 1923. For more on Meriel Talbot's work with the SOSBW, see B. White, 'Meriel Talbot and the Society for the Oversea Settlement of British Women, 1919–1929, *Britain and the World* 10 (2017), pp. 32–52.

The significance of public egg-laying trials in Britain in measuring the productivity of chickens, *c*.1890–1964*

by James P. Bowen

Abstract

Public egg-laying trials, in which the production of a group of birds was formally measured and assessed under standardized conditions, were held to test levels of improvement resulting from breeding. In Britain they provided a quantitative way of assessing the productivity of different breeds and strains within breeds, enabling egg yields (the number of eggs per laying bird) and the laying life of birds to be compared. This article examines early egg-laying trials, which were organized by the Utility Poultry Club and Harper Adams Agricultural College, as well as the high-profile National Egg Laying Test, promoted initially by the Great Eastern Railway (GER) and also the *Daily Mail* newspaper in conjunction with the National Utility Poultry Society (NUPS). The latter became the National Poultry Test, which was modernized in the 1960s to reflect developments in commercial egg-laying and the newly emerging broiler industry. These trials established a system for comprehensive national, regional and county egg-laying trials. It is argued that egg-laying trials played an important role in increasing the egg-laying capacity of chickens and promoting modern intensive methods of production, benefiting small breeders and producers who, during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, dominated the egg market.

> There is nothing in the history of British agriculture in any way comparable with the rise of modern poultry-keeping. Fowls there have always been on our farms, but no one who saw the farmer's wife with her basket of eggs on a market day fifty years ago could have foreseen the emergence of poultry-keeping as an independent industry, with a literature and language of its own, a national institute, and an annual parliament.[1]

At the end of the nineteenth century, Britain was heavily reliant on imported eggs, partly due to inefficient methods of production and low-quality breeding stock. Poultry keeping and the

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[1] W. B. Mercer, *British farming: An illustrated account of all branches of agriculture in England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland. A story of progress in providing food from Britain's fields* (1951), p. 76.

marketing of eggs was traditionally small scale and considered women's work, often being a sideline activity for the farmer's wife.[2] Eggs and poultry were profitable enterprises for small farms serving London and other urban conurbations and an important source of income on small agricultural holdings, gardens, and allotments on the fringes of towns and industrial areas in northern England.[3] A wide variety of farmers kept poultry, providing a valuable supply of eggs and meat, although there were only a few who regarded it as one of their main activities. Little attention was given to the selective breeding of more productive strains of chickens, particularly with regard to egg production.

By the early twentieth century, however, specialist poultry producers who regarded egg production as their main activity were emerging, and co-operative marketing societies were being established.[4] Unlike other branches of farming, poultry was relatively easy to enter as it required little capital, attracting people from a wide range of backgrounds. Those who specialized in this activity tended to farm only a few acres of poor-quality land, often concentrating on egg production more by necessity than choice. Up until the 1930s most birds kept were dual purpose, being suitable for both egg and meat production. Table poultry were viewed as a by-product: once the sex of the young chicks could be determined the cockerels were often separated from pullets and fattened for meat. There was a dramatic expansion in egg production due to low grain prices in Britain and the United States of America (USA) during the interwar period.

Poultry became an increasingly important sector of British agriculture during the twentieth century, undergoing significant technical change including improvements in feeding and housing, more effective disease control and breeding more productive chickens.[5] The business historian Andrew Godley has shown that, prior to the Second World War and even into the late 1950s, poultry production in Britain was predominantly concerned with egg production. Farms produced eggs to be sold locally at markets or collected by packing stations overseen, from 1957, by the British Egg Marketing Board (BEMB). The post-war period saw the increasing application of science and the use of technology in poultry management and production and the expansion of specialist broiler units both in Britain and the USA, rearing birds for meat production.[6] By comparison we know relatively little about the history of the egg-laying industry and especially the crucial role that egg-laying trials played in measuring the productivity of chickens. The history of eggs more generally still remains to be studied.[7]

[2] K. Sayer, 'His footmarks on her shoulders': The place of women within poultry keeping in the British countryside, *c.*1880 to c.1980', *AgHR* 61 (2013), pp. 301–29.

[3] M. Winstanley, 'Industrialization and the small farm: family and household economy in nineteenth century Lancashire', *Past and Present* 152 (1996), pp. 173, 175, 180, 182.

[4] E. H. Whetham (ed.), *The agrarian history of England and Wales* [hereafter *AHEW*], VIII, *1914–39* (1978), pp. 21–2, 179, 151.

[5] J. Martin, *The development of modern agriculture: British farming since 1931* (2000), p. 125.

[6] A. Godley, 'The emergence of agribusiness in Europe and the development of the Western European broiler chicken industry, 1945 to 1973', *AgHR* 62 (2014), pp. 315–36; A. Godley and B. Williams, 'Democratizing luxury and the contentious "invention of the technological chicken" in Britain', *Business Hist.* 83 (2009), pp. 267–91; A. Godley and B. Williams, 'The chicken, the factory farm, and the supermarket: the emergence of the modern poultry industry in Britain', in W. J. Belasco and R. Horowitz (eds), *Food chains: from farmyard to shopping cart* (2009), pp. 47–61; W. Boyd, 'Making meat: science, technology, and American poultry production', *Technology and Culture* 42 (2001), pp. 631–64.

[7] K. Sayer, 'Eggs – an under-researched topic', *Rural Hist. Today* 23 (2012), pp. 1, 8.

Building on the existing literature, this article does not deal with chicken breeding as such, but rather is concerned with egg-laying trials as a method of assessing improvement in productivity per bird.[8] It uses evidence from poultry periodicals and publications, newspapers and two archive collections: those of Arthur Denby Wilkinson and the National Poultry Test – which provides invaluable insight into the growth, management and operation of egg-laying trials – and Harry Douglas Barley (1921–71), a farmer, stockbreeder, and well-known agricultural writer.[9] The former includes detailed correspondence and administrative records, press cuttings, photographs, test results, and technical material. The article covers the period up to the 1960s prior to the emergence of large multi-national breeding companies.

Case studies will be explored of the egg-laying trials organized by the Utility Poultry Club and Harper Adams Agricultural College and the National Egg Laying Test which was founded by the National Utility Poultry Society (NUPS) and Great Eastern Railway (GER) and sponsored by the *Daily Mail*, later becoming the National Poultry Test. It will be argued that these early egg-laying trials played an important role during the period from before the First World War, the interwar years and the decades immediately following the Second World War when small-scale breeders who supplied poultry producers with replacement chickens prevailed. This was the period before large-scale chicken breeders began to dominate the market in the late 1950s and 1960s. Egg laying trials were held to test levels of improvement resulting from breeding and also saw the practical application of science and technology, heralding the widespread adoption of modern industrial production methods.

II

At the end of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries there was a divergence in Britain between poultry fanciers – who sought to win prizes at shows, focusing on aesthetic non-commercial exhibition breeds – and commercial breeders, who aimed to produce utility breeds noted for their egg-laying ability but not aesthetically attractive.[10] Publications like *Poultry World* featured illustrations of different breeds of layers and their eggs and also their respective purposes, for example, egg farming, table poultry, backyard fancier, smallholding and allotment and fancy poultry.[11] It reflected the increasing emphasis on utility, and dual purpose breeds which had commercial attributes of which egg production per bird was the most obvious. Such breeds included the Light Sussex and Rhode Island Reds which were suitable for both egg and meat production.[12]

Some egg producers probably kept records of the number of eggs laid by their flocks of birds and even the productivity of pens of birds, but these would have been a rather crude

[8] For studies of livestock breeding including poultry, see M. E. Derry, *Art and science in breeding: creating better chickens* (2012) and B. Theunissen, *Beauty or statistics: practice and science in Dutch livestock breeding, 1900–2000* (2020).

[9] The Museum of English Rural Life, University of Reading (hereafter MERL) FR DW and D84/7.

[10] P. Brassley, 'Livestock Breeds' in E. J. T. Collins (ed.), *AHEW*, VII (2 vols, 2000), I, p. 561.

[11] *Poultry World,* 15 Nov. 1912, 17 Mar. 1922.

[12] For a modern study of poultry breeds, such as the Sussex and its variant the Light Sussex which when crossed with the Rhode Island Red produced offspring which were sex linked, see D. Scrivener, *Popular poultry breeds* (2009), pp. 249–51.

and imprecise indicator of performance as little attention was devoted to systematically recording egg laying. Replacements would be reared by allowing hens to go broody and hatch their own chicks. Towards the end of the nineteenth century, however, formal egg-laying trials were organized, in which different breeds and strains of chicken were kept under standardized conditions and their egg-laying performance recorded. These trials provided a means of ensuring that performance was externally assessed and objectively scrutinized. In their aims, egg-laying trials were similar to other forms of testing productivity, such as milk recording, which involved recording the daily milk yield of individual cows. Measuring the daily milk output of an individual cow is similar to egg-laying trials in that it was assessing animal and herd productivity, which in the case of dairy cattle was an important prerequisite of progeny testing. Although egg-laying trials, like milk recording, were adopted only slowly, they were nevertheless in the vanguard of animal productivity measurement. The Strutt family of Rayleigh in Essex had been employing such techniques on their Friesian herd since the mid-1890s.[13] Subsequently, in the late 1920s, milk recording enabled George Odlum, a pioneering breeder of high-yielding Friesians, to undertake progeny testing. This led Odlum to develop selective breeding from within the herd, identifying male and female lines based on milk recording and other characteristics going back four or five generations.[14] Odlum also distinguished between breeding for showing and for milk production.[15]

The Utility Poultry Club was formed in 1896 to promote egg-laying tests, initially privately funded and held on farms with breeders entering groups of birds.[16] The organization emphasized the need to encourage productivity improvement over breeding for exhibition with utility breeds or strains increasingly focused on egg production. The first test held on a farm at Northallerton (Yorks., N. Riding) owned by Mr Simon Hunter, was not only the first test in Britain, but probably the first formally organized trial in the world. It was a 16-week test that lasted from 3 November 1897 to 22 February 1898 with seven entries of four pullets each. The egg yield of each pen was recorded and birds that died were replaced. The first trial took place in the winter when egg production was at its seasonal low, in effect testing the birds' ability to produce eggs when prices were at their highest. First prize was awarded to H. Hobson, whose pen of four Black Minocas laid a total of 161 eggs. Between 1898 and 1902 the 16-week tests continued, moving each year to a different farm. The tests grew in popularity.

In 1902–03 the test was held on a farm near Newbury, Berkshire. It saw the first entries of American pedigree bred stock. First prize was awarded to a pen of White Wyandottes. American methods of housing, such as open-fronted scratching sheds and trap nests, were also introduced. The latter was a significant development in that it provided a means of ascertaining the productivity of individual birds as opposed to the productivity of a pen. A trap nest was a means of retaining the bird in the nest after it had laid an egg so that it could be recorded. They were widely used by poultry breeders and in trials in Britain and the USA, making it

[13] G. E. Mingay, *British Friesians. An epic of progress* (1982), p. 59; W. Gavin, *Ninety years of family farming: the story of Lord Rayleigh's and Strutt and Parker Farms* (1967), pp. 161–4.

[14] J. Martin, 'George Odlum, the Ministry of Agriculture and "Farmer Hudson"', *AgHR* 55 (2007), pp. 229–50, esp. p. 237.

[15] Ibid., p. 238.

[16] The following paragraphs, unless otherwise stated, are based on MERL, FR DW AD2/4 'Lessons from Laying Trials'.



FIGURE 1 a. Photograph of a trap nest used in egg-laying trials. After laying an egg, the hen remained in the nest after trapping until it was released by the poultry keeper who then recorded the egg laid. This example, made by Mr Charles Parsons of Sawhills at Thatcham in Berkshire (1858–1938), was exhibited at a Utility Poultry Club show at Plymouth, Devon where it won a silver medal and Crystal Palace where it won a diploma.
Source: MERL, 70/165. (Reproduced by permission of the Museum of English Rural Life, University of Reading.)

possible to ascertain the production of individual birds.[17] This allowed the poultry breeder to identify the more productive laying hens from which to breed, and conversely those with negative characteristics such as lower productivity or whose eggs were small, misshapen or had poor-quality shells of the wrong colour or thickness.[18] However using trap nests was labour intensive and thus expensive. An official history of British farming stated that: 'Trap-nesting was invented as an aid to breeding; egg-laying competitions were started and interest therein stimulated by the daily press.'[19] An example of a prize-winning trap nest is in the object collection at the Museum of English Rural Life (Figures 1a and b).[20]

The use of trap nests was controversial. While individual birds may have exceptional levels of production, other members of the same flock might be considerably inferior. The person who was buying chicks from the breeder would not necessarily acquire those from the most productive birds. In effect, advertisements declaring that one of the breeders' birds had produced an impressive number of eggs could be slightly misleading. A leading critic of trap nests, A. L. Hagedoorn, a Dutch geneticist, argued that a breeder could use an individual hen's

[17] Trap nests were used by Raymond Pearl, a geneticist at the Maine Agricultural Experimental Station in Orono, see K. J. Cooke, 'From science to practice, or practice to science? Chickens and eggs in Raymond Pearl's agricultural breeding research, 1907–1916', *Isis* 88 (1997), pp. 71–2.

[18] A report on farming in Denmark referred to a government experimental farm at Favrholm, which was used to test poultry there, being 128 flocks of 10 hens each. After each test the number of eggs and their size, shape, weight and texture were recorded along with the amount of food consumed. R. G. P. White, *Report on a visit to farms in Denmark and Great Britain* (1949), p. 26.

[19] Mercer, *British farming*, p. 77.

[20] MERL, 70/164–165.

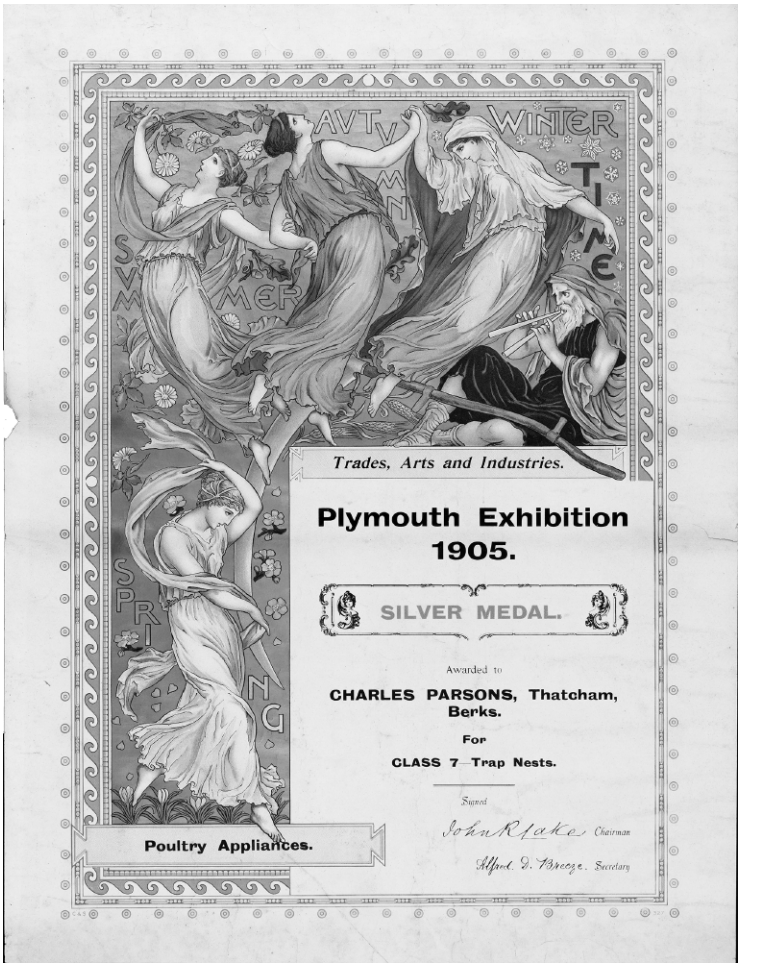


FIGURE 1 b. Certificate awarded to Charles Parsons for his trap nest at the 1905 Plymouth Exhibition.
Source: MERL, 70/166.
(Reproduced by permission of the Museum of English Rural Life, University of Reading.)

results for advertisement purposes even if the results of the rest of the flock were considerably less.[21] Trap nesting was not always accurate as birds could lay on the floor, thereby making it difficult if not impossible to ascertain which bird had laid the egg.

The Utility Poultry Club put forward proposals to hold 12-month egg-laying trials at Harper Adams at Edgmond (Salop.) in 1905, but financial difficulties meant these did not take place.[22] The first 12-month test was held in 1907–08 by the Utility Poultry Club at a farm at Rayne in Essex. Nevertheless, with funding secured from the Board of Agriculture, egg-laying trials began at Harper Adams on the 5 October 1912, initially promoted and supported by the Utility Poultry Club (Figure 2). These were the first large-scale tests and were held on the same site for 30 years. There were 100 pens with each pen having a house for six birds and trap nests.

[21] A. L. Hagedoorn, 'An improved method of testing the quality of a breeder's entire flock', in *Report of proceedings of the World's poultry congress Ottawa, Canada. July 27 to August 4, nineteen hundred and twenty seven* (1928), p. 97.

[22] *History of the National Institute of Poultry Husbandry [NIPH] incorporated by Harper Adams Agricultural College, Newport, Shropshire* (1986), p. 3.



FIGURE 2. Photograph of early egg-laying trials at Harper Adams Agricultural College.
Source: Figure 4.10 from H. Williams, *The lure of the land: A century of education at Harper Adams* (2000), p. 66. (Reproduced by permission of Harper Adams University.)

P. Hedworth Foulkes, College Principal between 1901 and 1922, had a particular interest in poultry and established a specialist poultry department in 1909 providing training in poultry husbandry.[23] This paralleled developments in the USA, where poultry science flourished in the 1910s and '20s, emerging from the discipline of poultry keeping at agricultural experiment stations and colleges.[24]

Unfortunately, the early tests at Harper Adams were affected by disease outbreaks (diphtheric roup) – George Henderson observed that in the mid-1930s laying trials were recording an average mortality of 20 per cent among laying pullets, in some instances as high as 40 per cent.[25] During the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries poultry were susceptible to disease, resulting in high levels of mortality and low egg yields.[26] Poultry keepers paid a fee and entered a pen of six birds. A pen of White Wyandottes, a variety of the American Wyandotte, laid 1389 eggs (worth £7 0*s*. 3½*d*.), winning first prize.[27] In total 17 breeds were represented but this breed was the most productive, taking five out of the first seven places. In 1914 different breed sections were introduced to allow for comparison of White Leghorns, White Wyandottes, Buff Orpingtons, Rhode Island Reds, Barred Rocks, Sussex, and Faverolles; and the following year a

[23] C. Crowther, 'In the beginning: a series of articles dealing with the development of educational and research institutes, no. 19, The Harper Adams Agricultural College', *Agric. Prog.* 27 (1952), pp. 5–12. For the egg-laying trials at Harper Adams and the National Institute for Poultry Husbandry (NIPH), see *History of the NIPH*; H. Williams, *The lure of the land: a century of education at Harper Adams* (2000), pp. 65–6, 84, 134, 160.

[24] Boyd, 'Making meat', p. 636.

[25] G. Henderson, *The farming ladder* (1950), p. 57.

[26] Whetham (ed.), *AHEW*, VIII, pp. 38, 151.

[27] *History of the NIPH*, p. 3.

section was added for commercial egg producers and smallholders. Presumably the trials were initially for poultry breeders who produced chickens for sale and the new sections enabled commercial egg producers and smallholders to enter the birds they had bred themselves. From 1916 Harper Adams took over the sole management of the trials as the Utility Poultry Club, which became the NUPS, focused its attention on setting up the National Egg Laying Test.[28] According to the College's 1918 women's prospectus these trials were 'the largest of their kind in the world.'[29]

Innovations trialled at Harper Adams included the use of artificial light in houses (1921–22). By this time, it was recognized that increasing the number of hours of light to which birds were subjected resulted in a corresponding rise in egg production during the winter months when egg production declined significantly and egg prices were at their highest. Karen Sayer has highlighted that by 1928 'practical winter lighting programmes for layers' had been developed at Harper Adams.[30] The adoption of artificial lighting in poultry sheds stimulated birds to lay year-round, enabling poultry producers to overcome the issue of the seasonality of egg production.[31] Results were published monthly with over 4000 reports being distributed to subscribers and Utility Poultry Club members in 1915.[32] The following year the *Poultry Competition Monthly* was published, to be superseded in 1918 by the *Harper Adams Utility Poultry Journal*, with an annual circulation of 5000.[33] The journal provided monthly updates on the results of trials, predominantly for competitors, along with articles on poultry subjects of wider interest, which were often based on experimental work carried out by the National Institute of Poultry Husbandry (NIPH), established in 1926.[34]

Breeders were presented with certificates for the highest number of eggs laid and in some cases medals, of which numerous examples survive in the MERL's archive and object collections.[35] There were hundreds of visitors to the laying trials. When the fourth World Poultry Congress was held at Crystal Palace in London in 1930, buses transported 350 delegates to view the egg-laying trials at Harper Adams and a commemorative special gold medal was awarded in each section except in the case of a single bird trial. Special prizes such as sterling silver spoons were offered, to encourage former students to enter. An annual conference attended by breeders and specialist egg and poultry producers and farmers, was reported on in supplements to the *Harper Adams Utility Poultry Journal*.[36]

During the First World War increasing emphasis had been placed upon poultry production as the curtailment of egg imports meant that fresh eggs achieved considerably higher prices.[37] After the war, there were increasing calls for agricultural education to be provided for ex-servicemen, many of whom had difficulty finding suitable work. Edward Brown, later

[28] Williams, *Lure of the land*, p. 65.

[29] Ibid., pp. 65–6.

[30] K. Sayer, 'Battery birds, "stimulighting" and "twilighting": The ecology of standardized poultry technology', *Hist. of Technology* 28 (2008), p. 156.

[31] Q. Seddon, *The silent revolution: farming and the countryside in the 21st century* (1989), p. 109.

[32] Williams, *Lure of the land*, p. 66.

[33] Ibid.; MERL, periodicals HAR/ADA.

[34] *History of the NIPH*, p. 37.

[35] For certificates, see MERL, D84/7/169–186; for a medal from the Berkshire Egg Laying Trials held in 1928–29, 1929–30 and 1930–31, see MERL, 59/467.

[36] Williams, *Lure of the land*, p. 66; MERL, periodicals HAR/ADA.

[37] For egg imports, see Holderness, 'Intensive livestock keeping', in Collins (ed.), *AHEW*, VII, I, pp. 490–1.

knighted for his services to the poultry industry, called for instruction to be given in poultry husbandry. He became the President and later Secretary of the National Poultry Council which sought to promote poultry education by awarding certificates and diplomas and encouraging research. In 1926 with financial support from the government and the National Poultry Council, the NIPH at Harper Adams was established.[38] At the opening ceremony on the 3 November 1926, attended by 1000 guests, His Royal Highness the Duke of York (later King George VI) observed in his address that, 'with the growth of the poultry industry, the importance of collecting and recording the results of experience has become more and more apparent'.[39] He toured buildings and rearing pens. It was clearly recognized that research into more efficient and productive methods of poultry keeping was needed. Central to the decision to locate the NIPH at Harper Adams were its egg-laying trials and its reputation for research and teaching in poultry husbandry, which it continued to pioneer even after the trials had ceased.[40] Later in 1938 Dr Charles Crowther, College Principal between 1922 and 1944, said:

> The one branch of the agricultural industry in which the College provides the fullest possible specialized training is Poultry Husbandry. This part of its work is organized separately in the National Institute of Poultry Husbandry, which is a national centre established and maintained at the College by the Ministry of Agriculture. The Institute is very completely equipped for the purposes of instructional and experimental work in the production of eggs and table poultry, and is supplemented by the Harper Adams Laying Trials to which noted poultry breeders in all parts of the country send birds for test every year.[41]

The trials continued at Harper Adams until 1942 when they ceased due to wartime feed shortages.[42] Restrictions during the Second World War such as the rationing of feeding stuffs meant that the poultry industry – like pig production – contracted as, whilst eggs were high in protein, they were low in nutritional value in terms of carbohydrates and in relation to the amount of food the bird consumed.[43] Commercial production declined but efforts were made to use alternative feeds including household leftovers. Hence the expansion of small-scale back-yard poultry production. As Paul Brassley has shown, the shortfall was partly met by households which were often in or on the periphery of urban areas who played an important role in egg production, with 40 per cent of all eggs produced in the last year of the war coming from holdings of less than an acre.[44]

Nevertheless, as a result of the egg-laying trials, Harper Adams developed a national and international reputation for poultry husbandry. Crowther later credited Foulkes with

[38] For the NIPH, see *History of the NIPH*; R. Perren, '1875–1985: Agricultural Education', in G. C. Baugh (ed.), VCH Salop, IV, *Agriculture* (1989), pp. 266–8; Williams, *Lure of the land*.

[39] *Harper Adams Utility Poultry J.* 12 (1926), p. 1; Crowther, 'Harper Adams', p. 11.

[40] A Pathe newsreel produced in 1949, featuring Prof. Herbert Howes, who published *Modern poultry management* (1939), *Management of farm poultry with a view to profit* (1930), and *Turkeys and geese* (1949), records the hatching of wingless chicks imported from the USA.

[41] C. Crowther, 'The Work and Aims of the Harper Adams Agricultural College', *Shropshire Agricultural News* 4 (April 1938), p. 13. For copies, see MERL, periodicals SHR/AGR and Shropshire Archives, Shrewsbury C 22.

[42] Williams, *Lure of the land*, p. 160.

[43] Martin, *Development of modern agriculture,* p. 51.

[44] P. Brassley, 'Pig clubs and backyard chickens: the significance of household producers in Britain in the Second World War', *AgHR* 66 (2018), p. 93.

developing the 'sidelines of agriculture', notably poultry, and the wider influence the egg-laying trials at Harper Adams had on the infant poultry industry. As he wrote:

> To him also is due the world-wide reputation in the poultry industry attained by the College through the institution and development of the Harper Adams Egg-Laying Trials, started (in association for a few years with the Utility Poultry Club) in October, 1911, and continued in unbroken annual series and on a very large scale for thirty years.[45]

Furthermore, Crowther placed particular emphasis on the importance of the egg-laying trials in leading to the promotion of annual poultry conferences, pioneering research and teaching with regards to poultry husbandry by the institution. As he went on to say:

> It is also hardly an exaggeration to claim that the triple movements for a National Poultry Council, a National Poultry Institute, and a National Diploma in Poultry Husbandry had, if not their inception, at least their active incubation period in the Harper Adams Poultry Conferences.[46]

Having discussed the early egg-laying trials organized by the Utility Poultry Club and Harper Adams, attention will now turn to examine the involvement of the Great Eastern Railway (GER) in promoting poultry husbandry in East Anglia. Poultry was one of the most rapidly expanding sectors in this region. The company assisted with the distribution and marketing of eggs, ran poultry demonstration trains, and, with the NUPS, backed the National Egg Laying Test, which attracted sponsorship from the *Daily Mail*.

III

Food shortages during the First World War prompted the GER to organize an egg and poultry demonstration train, which ran throughout East Anglia in the autumn of 1916, promoting the expansion of egg production during wartime. This was not the first initiative of this kind as a poultry demonstration train had operated in South Wales in 1910, and another had travelled through North Wales in 1913.[47] In England similar trains had operated before the war. These were widely reported in regional and national newspapers. Such agricultural extension initiatives had their origins in the USA: in 1906 a train travelled through 21 states; and in 1911 995,200 people toured 71 trains which called at 28 states.[48] As Cooke has pointed out: 'By 1914 a train educating farmers about all facets of egg production – including poultry raising, breed improvement, better care for chickens, and appropriate handling of eggs – had travelled over seven thousand miles in two years.'[49]

The GER was the most influential company playing an important role in promoting more efficient methods of poultry keeping in East Anglia as it had a vested interest in the region's

[45] Crowther, 'Harper Adams', pp. 8–9.

[46] Ibid., p. 9.

[47] 'The Price of Foodstuffs', *The Times*, 4 Apr. 1910, p. 3; 'The Egg Train', *Daily Mail*, 15 Apr. 1910; 'Agriculture', *The Times*, 24 Feb. 1919, p. 11; 'Agriculture', *The Times*, 21 Apr. 1913, p. 4; 'News in Brief', *The Times*, 24 Apr. 1913, p. 10.

[48] Cooke, 'From science to practice', p. 86.

[49] Ibid., p. 86.

poultry industry.[50] The region had good access to London markets, a rapidly expanding poultry sector and cheap cereals were available. Shortly before the outbreak of the First World War, co-operatives such as the Framlingham and Eastern Counties Co-operative Egg and Poultry Society Limited were well established, collecting more than 17 million eggs a year valued at £250,000. The GER transported eggs and poultry south to London, to the manufacturing towns of the north and west, and the seasonal resorts on the east coast, so had a vested interest in actively encouraging the region's poultry industry. The railway company purchased Dodnash Priory Farm at Bentley near Ipswich in Suffolk with the aim of supplying their hotels and providing practical demonstration of approved methods of poultry keeping. The company's 'Poultry and Small Stock Demonstration Train' – a former wartime ambulance train – was exhibited at London Liverpool Street station on 17 May 1920 before conducting a six-week tour of towns in Hertfordshire, Cambridgeshire, Norfolk, Suffolk, Essex, and Huntingdonshire.[51] The train was advertised in the national, regional and local press.[52] Sailors and soldiers who were maimed and wounded in the First World War were encouraged to enter the poultry industry and a newspaper reported that they were to contact the railway company to arrange to view the train.[53] Many who had been traumatized by their wartime experiences had difficulty in adjusting to their civilian life.

The train was aimed at those in urban areas with gardens and smallholders in country districts who could keep poultry and small livestock. One of the three carriages was used to teach horticultural subjects, and was under the direction of the Ministry of Agriculture. Admission was free and visitors passed through the train watching demonstration, discussing issues and asking questions. Films were to be shown using a cinematograph. It was reported that: 'There will be no "dry-as-dust" lectures with an array of statistics, but there will be practical "talks" by men actively engaged in the several branches of production, who will invite questions and be prepared to give helpful answers'.[54] The tour was to be directed by Mr D. Anderson and J. N. Leigh of the GER's Experiment and Demonstration Farm at Bentley, Suffolk where the National Egg Laying Test was held. In an obituary, Leigh was described 'as the doyen of the laying trials movement'.[55] The demonstration train was one way by which information about methods of production and technological improvements were disseminated, promoting poultry keeping among smallholders and showing those thinking of entering the industry how egg production was being transformed.

[50] The following paragraph is based on MERL, FR DW AD2/1, 'The Great Eastern Railway company's farm, Dodnash Priory, Bentley, Suffolk' (n.d.); 'News in Brief', *The Times*, 27 Oct. 1916, p. 5.

[51] The following paragraphs, unless otherwise stated, are based on 'Travelling Lessons in Poultry Keeping', *The Times*, 12 Apr. 1920, p. 4; 'Travelling Poultry Exhibition', *The Times*, 18 May 1920, p. 11; 'The Poultry Train. Public Interest in the Demonstrations', *The Times*, 14 June 1920, p. 7.

[52] For example, the train was also advertised in the *Bury Free Press*, 30 Apr. 1920, p. 8; *Cambridge Daily News*, 20 Mar. 1920, p. 4; *Cambridge Independent Press*, 21 May 1920, p. 10; *Chelmsford Chronicle*, 23 Apr. 1920, p. 5; *Diss Express*, 30 Apr. 1920, p. 8; *Essex Newsman*, 8 May 1920, p. 3; *Framlingham Weekly News*, 15 May 1920, p. 2; *The Globe*, 20 Apr. 1920, p. 5; *Lynn Advertiser*, 11 June 1920, p. 7; *Suffolk and Essex Free Press*, 21 Apr. 1920, p. 8; *Westminster Gazette*, 21 Apr. 1920, p. 4.

[53] *Diss Express*, 21 May 1920, p. 5.

[54] 'Travelling Lessons in Poultry Keeping', *The Times*, 12 Apr. 1920, p. 4.

[55] For obituaries, see MERL, FR DW ET3/8.

Most significantly, the NUPS, which was formed when the northern and southern sections of the Utility Poultry Club merged, founded the National Egg Laying Test in 1917 in conjunction with the GER.[56] Tests were held at Dodnash Priory Farm, the site covering over 20 acres. The first tests began on 7 November 1918 and were managed by Leigh who was managing director of the National Egg Laying Test and later editor of *The National Laying Test Journal*.[57] The test, which was 12 months long, included 277 pens of pure-bred pullets which were organized into six competitive breeds, the most important of which were White Leghorn, White Wyandotte, and Rhode Island Red. In total there were 1445 birds with no fewer than 16 different breeds. Other breeds included Buff and White Orpingtons, Buff Rocks, Light and Speckled Sussex, Langshans, Anconas, Black Minocas, White and Black La Bresse, Buttercups, and Russion Orloffs. The poultry houses were built by the railway company's works, taking into consideration light and ventilation. They were fitted with ten trap nests so the number of eggs laid could be recorded, and there was a grass run. A standard system of feeding was adopted morning and afternoon, including a morning grain of wheat and oats, and in cold weather cracked maize was scattered in the litter or broadcast into runs and in the afternoon a wet mash that was fed in troughs comprising bran, middlings, Sussex ground oats, and clover, maize and fish meal. The chickens were housed, fed and managed according to the rules and the eggs were recorded. They were all managed in the same way in order to enable more objective assessments to take place.

The following year the *Daily Mail* newspaper sponsored the Championship Gold Cup Section and provided all the prize money. In response to egg shortages and to draw attention to the keeping of more productive strains of chickens, the *Daily Mail* ran a four-month winter test which was initially aimed at small poultry keepers rather than commercial poultry breeders. It was intended to encourage households to keep a few chickens of a good laying strain as an economical way of producing eggs. The test was held during the winter beginning on 1 October 1919 and ending on 31 January 1920. Prizes amounting to £250 were offered to encourage small poultry-keepers to acquire more productive strains of birds.[58] The test comprised 250 pens each with four birds, but it was extremely popular, attracting 695 entries.[59] Consequently a committee was tasked to select which entries should be included in the trials. Again, the GER provided all the poultry houses, which were specially designed for small poultry keepers but without trap nests, feed, and staff to manage the tests. Winter trials were intended to identify strains of chickens which produced eggs during the winter months when national production was at its lowest and prices highest. Some strains of chickens may have laid more eggs over the year, but most of these might have been produced during the spring and summer when plenty of eggs were available and prices were low.

At the time it was thought that the most economic method of egg production was to encourage every householder to keep a few laying hens. Hence only those with less than 50 birds could enter. The tests were conducted along the same lines as the National Egg Laying

[56] The following paragraphs, unless otherwise stated, are based on MERL, FR DW AD2/1, 'Dodnash Priory', and FR DW AD2/4, 'Lessons from Laying Trials'.

[57] *The National Laying Test Journal: The Official Organ of the National Egg Laying Test*, 1, 1 (1929) (copy in MERL, AD2/1); MERL, P4/B 1.

[58] '£250 in Prizes for Poultry Keepers', *Daily Mail*, 13 Aug. 1919, p. 3; '£250 Egg-Laying Test', *Daily Mail*, 28 Aug. 1919, p. 3.

Test, although trap nests, the significance of which has been discussed earlier, were not used and the feeding regime differed in that half the daily grain ration was given in the morning and the remainder in the afternoon. A wet mash was fed at midday.

A 12-month test was held beginning on 1 December 1920. It was reported that: 'The *Daily Mail*'s main object in promoting this test is to demonstrate in the most convincing manner possible that the keeping of small flocks of hens of proved-laying strain on back-garden lines is the sole way of satisfying the nation's egg needs economically'.[60] News and results from the egg-laying trials were regularly published in the *Daily Mail,* and prize winning birds were exhibited at the *Daily Mail*'s Ideal Home Exhibition held at Olympia, London. Visitors came to view the tests including journalists and those involved in the poultry industry. Staff provided information about feeding methods and husbandry practices. The intention was that the test would highlight the benefits of keeping good productive laying strains. In 1920 it was reported that 2445 birds were involved in the National Laying Test and the *Daily Mail* trials, constituting a world record.[61]

The National Egg Laying Test remained at Dodnash Priory Farm for 11 years. Highlights of the early tests included the first duck tests in 1920 and the introduction of a section for crosses in 1926–27. In total more than 40 breeds and varieties were entered in the tests. The growing popularity of the Rhode Island Red and Light Sussex contributed to the lack of interest in and thus falling support for a number of traditional breeds. In a paper on poultry education in England and Wales given at the World Poultry Congress at Ottawa, Canada held between 27 July and 4 August 1927, P. Hedworth Foulkes, who had been Principal of Harper Adams between 1901 and 1922, remarked that:

> The National Utility Poultry Society has for many years done most valuable work, by the organization of and giving of lectures to its members all over the country and by its Egg Laying Trials at Bentley, which have become world famous, and which have been the means of stimulating research into realms hitherto undreamt of in connection with the laying hen.[62]

In 1928 the National Egg Laying Test moved from Dodnash Priory Farm to a new test ground at Milford near Godalming, Surrey (Figure 3).[63] It was the oldest and largest egg-laying trial in the world. The site was bought and equipped by a private company interested in developing the poultry industry. It occupied a 27-acre site near to Milford Station, housing 3400 birds, although later in 1938 the trials moved to a 50-acre site close by.[64] A major development in the management of the National Egg Laying Test was the appointment of Arthur Denby Wilkinson as test manager in 1952, a post he held until 1965.[65] He had previously managed numerous commercial poultry farms: Robert Brown's breeding and commercial egg farm at Aldbourne,

[59] 'Record Egg-Laying Contest', *Daily Mail*, 1 Sept. 1919, p. 3.

[60] 'New "Daily Mail" Laying Test', *Daily Mail*, 28 Apr. 1920, p. 8.

[61] 'Poultry Possibilities', *The Times*, 24 Jan. 1920, p. 9.

[62] P. H. Foulkes, 'The development of poultry education in England and Wales', in *Report of proceedings of the World's poultry congress…* (1928), p. 468.

[63] 'New Egg-Laying Test', *Daily Mail*, 5 Dec. 1928, p. 18.

[64] 'New Egg Test Site', *Daily Mail*, 17 Mar. 1938, p. 6.

[65] *Poultry Industry*, 4 Sept. 1952, p. 361. Wilkinson kept notebooks recording information about the National Test including laying figures and work undertaken, nature observations and general diary entries and also produced an autobiographical manuscript, see MERL, FR DW ET1/6-59 and SP4/1.







FIGURE 3 a, b and c Photographs of the National Egg Laying Test promoted by the *Daily Mail* and the National Utility Poultry Society (1930s–1950s).

Source: MERL, FR DW, PH3/30/3, PH3/30/19 and PH3/30/27. (Reproduced by permission of the Museum of English Rural Life, University of Reading.)

Hassocks, O. A. Batten's farm in Sussex, and White Lady Poultry Farm at Bray in Berkshire, where he had been assistant manager. Before the war he had been involved with the Sussex chicken cramming business.[66] Through this role he was clearly a leading figure in the poultry industry and as recognition in 1964 was awarded an MBE for his work as Manager of the National Poultry Tests.[67]

The *Daily Mail* continued to be actively involved with the National Egg Laying Test reporting results and sponsoring the trials into the 1950s, awarding prize money. Whilst initially the National Egg Laying Test, its remit eventually expanded to include commercial random sample tests, broiler tests, BEMB tests and breeding research tests of new composite breeds and hybrids.[68] From the early 1960s attention shifted from conducting egg-laying tests in small unit houses to modern intensive houses.[69] Several trends are apparent from the records of the national test. The average number of eggs laid per bird increased dramatically from 144 eggs in the first year of the test (1917–18) to more than 220 by 1959–60 and the Rhode Island Red and the Light Sussex came to prominence as the most popular breeds, as they saw the greatest improvements in productivity. They did not necessarily lay the most eggs, but they had the advantage that the offspring of the two crosses had physical characteristics that could help determine whether they were cockerels or pullets at a day old (male chicks are silver whilst female chicks are gold).[70]

Like the trials at Harper Adams, the results were published in a house journal, *The National Laying Test Journal: The Official Organ of the National Egg Laying Test Promoted by the Daily Mail and the N.U.P.S.* which was circulated to competitors and poultry presses monthly.[71] It was subsequently incorporated into the *National Poultry Journal* and later *Poultry Industry: the Official Organ of the National Laying Test, supported by the Daily Mail*.[72]

In 1964 the National Poultry Test (a new private limited company National Poultry Tests Limited was established) was completely modernized with new labour saving housing and

[66] For chicken cramming, see B. Short, 'The art and craft of chicken cramming: poultry in the Weald of Sussex, 1850– 1950', *AgHR* 30 (1982), pp. 17–30.

[67] *London Gazette*, 5 June 1964; 'The farmer's chief gets a knighthood', *Daily Mail*, 13 June 1964, p. 7.

[68] MERL, AD2/4, AD2/5, AD2/6, AD2/7, AD2/8, AD2/9, AD2/10, AD2/11. The format of random sample tests whereby a person picked entries at random from several hundred unhatched eggs was first proposed by Hagedoorn at the World Poultry Congress in 1927. Until this format was adopted poultry breeders would select a small number of hens for the tests, the performance of which was recorded. Critics argued that it was statistically insignificant and that breeders relied on the strong performance of individual hens and ancestral breeding. Random sample tests were introduced in the USA in the 1950s, producing more statistically significant results. Hagedoorn, 'An improved method', pp. 95–8; Derry, *Art and science in breeding*, p. 117.

[69] For the debates in Britain during the 1960s about intensive and traditional production, see K. Sayer, 'Animal machines: The public response to intensification in Great Britain, c. 1960–c. 1973', *Agric. Hist.* 87 (2013), pp. 473–501.

[70] Whilst serving in the Food Production Department of the Board of Agriculture during the First World War, the Cambridge geneticist Reginald Crundall Punnett (1875–1967) developed sex-linked breeding whereby pure breeds of birds are crossed, their chicks being sexed at a day-old based on the colour of their plumage. This allowed the cockerels to be disposed of. See R. C. Punnett, *Heredity in poultry* (1923) and *Sex-linkage for egg production and table poultry* (1925).

[71] For a copy of the first issue which was published on the 29 Nov. 1929, see MERL AD2/1.

[72] For copies of *The National Laying Test Journal*, *The National Poultry Journal* (incorporating *The National Laying Test Journal*) and *Poultry Industry: the Official Organ of the National Laying Test, supported by the Daily Mail*, see MERL, periodicals Nat/Lay, Nat/Pou and Pou/Ind.

equipment being introduced.[73] The poultry houses that had been used for 36 years and accommodated 25 birds, were replaced with two large poultry houses, each accommodating more than 8000 birds. A new brooder house was built which allowed for 200 day-old chicks to be reared for three to four months, of which a random sample would go forward to the test houses. Eggs would be graded and there was a further control flock of birds to ascertain how environmental conditions affected commercial egg-laying hens. There would also be testing facilities for broiler chickens bred specifically for meat production which by this time were replacing utility breeds, reflecting the growing demand for table poultry. An article titled: 'Good Chicken Cheaper', published in *Farmers Weekly*, outlined how through testing at the National Test it was possible to rear broiler chickens with a live weight of eight pounds in 15 weeks and a comparable taste and flavour to high-quality table birds.[74]

Objectives of the reorganization of the National Laying Trials included ensuring that the results obtained were statistically significant and that commercial egg and broiler producers had independent means of assessing strains that had a high profit potential. The trials were to be used by the BEMB for strain screening and they were to provide a shop window for pure breeds and commercial strains with particular reference to overseas markets. Lastly it was intended to place the trial on a secure financial basis. Open days were held attracting hundreds of visitors and were widely reported in the poultry press.[75] Articles about the National Test appeared in poultry industry journals such as *Modern Poultry Keeping*, *Poultry Farmer and Packer* and *Poultry World* as well as the farming press more generally such as the *Farmers Weekly* and *Farmer and Stockbreeder*.[76]

A film titled 'Backing a Winner' sponsored by suppliers and produced between 1960 and 1969, was intended to show poultry farmers how the National Test could enable them to select the strain of bird most profitable for their particular system.[77] The purchase of stock could then be informed by results. It outlined how the test was organized. Entries were taken as hatching eggs, collected at random from the farm by a National Agricultural Advisory Service (NAAS) officer and taken to his local headquarters. There were 34 entrants with each breeder supplying 900 eggs. The eggs taken were picked at random from the previous day's production and taken to the NAAS local headquarters from where they were collected within two days by the National Test and taken to Milford. After hatching and sexing, each entry was reduced by random sampling to 300 first-quality pullet chicks. They were reared in two groups of 150 each to avoid any effect of environmental variation. Brooding was done by propane gas with heat kept on for five weeks. The film focused on the technical features and management practices which it described as typical of most modern farms. The stocking rate was one square foot per bird and water was readily available through tube feeders. Coarse ground chick meal was fed at the start, birds were vaccinated and conditions were standard for all birds. Eggs were collected and graded. Records of food consumption and mortality were included in the final published figures and it was stated that: 'The form shown by

[73] 'Big plans for national poultry tests', *Daily Mail*, 9 Mar. 1964.

[74] *Farmers Weekly*, 20 Mar. 1959.

[75] *Poultry Industry*, 10 July 1958.

[76] *Poultry Farmer and Packer*, 12 Mar. 1960. For press cuttings from the 1930s to the 1960s, see MERL, ET3/8-11.

[77] MERL, TR MAFF PH6/104.

entrants in the national poultry tests helps the farmer to be sure of backing a winner every time.' The film – the audience for which was clearly commercial producers – presented a positive impression of the modernized national poultry test going forward, although National Poultry Tests Ltd appears to have later (1967–71) sought financial assistance from government.[78] In many respects this marked a new phase in the development of poultry trials which is distinct from the earlier egg-laying trials.

IV

Having examined the history of early egg-laying trials in Britain, in particular those held at Harper Adams and the National Egg Laying Test (later the National Poultry Test), it is necessary to consider why they were so important. Specialist breeders of chickens specifically selected for egg production increasingly sold chicks and pullets to egg producers. Egg production shifted from a sideline activity in which producers tended to rear their own birds to producers – whose principal activity was egg production – purchasing selected strains of egg producing birds. The egg-laying trials played an important role in this transformation providing specialist breeders with the opportunity to advertise their superior strains of chickens and secure premium prices based on economic factors such as egg production, quality, size, feed efficiency, and mortality. They also enabled commercial egg producers to purchase more productive strains of chickens thereby increasing their profitability. A booklet produced by the GER to highlight the direct and indirect benefits of egg-laying tests stated that:

> The direct value of these tests to the Utility Poultry Breeder lies in the fact that they afford the only possible means of publicly demonstrating and so advertising the laying capabilities of his strain, and they stand to him (the Utility Breeder) in exactly the same relation as the Show Bench does to the Poultry Breeder whose aim it is to breed and sell fowls bred to fancy types.[79]

It went on to outline the wider contribution of the tests in not only emphasizing the need for owners to increase the productivity of their chickens, but also to adopt up-to-date methods of feeding, housing, and general management.

The emphasis on the importance of egg-laying trials for breeders was a recurring theme. At the World Poultry Congress in 1927, Alex McCallum of the Board of Agriculture for Scotland said in his paper about egg-laying tests that:

> The breeder who wants to maintain the quality of his stock can never fold his hands and think his task is done. Year after year, the same care must be exercised in the selection of his breeding stock, and thus the laying test will continue to provide a helpful guide, a useful stimulus, and an informative standard of comparison.[80]

In his description of a commercial poultry farm, Adrian T. Monck-Mason highlighted how egg-laying trials could aid the selection of stock with cross-bred birds used for egg production:

[78] TNA, MAF 293/228.

[79] MERL, FR DW AD2/1, *Dodnash Priory*, pp. 4–5.

[80] A. McCallum, 'Egg-laying tests', in *Report of proceedings of the World's poultry congress…* (1928), p. 81.

in 1939 it was 3000 Black Leghorn-Rhode Island birds.[81] He wrote that no preference was shown to a particular breed, but rather: 'The practice is to analyse the results obtained in egg-laying trials, and to keep a careful watch upon the stamina of the popular breeds. Each year the birds required for the breeding pens are selected from the breeds which available data indicates have the highest stamina.'[82] Clearly the results of egg-laying trials were used to inform commercial poultry producers' decisions as to which strains of poultry to keep and who to buy them from. Egg laying trials were held in other countries, for example, Canada, Demark, Israel, Spain, and the USA, the results and reports of which were circulated widely.[83]

In addition to these high-profile trials which attracted national and international entries, other national, regional and county based egg-laying trials were arranged by council agricultural organizers, agricultural education institutions and utility poultry societies, being listed in a National Poultry Council register of records in laying trials.[84] For instance trials first started in Wiltshire in 1920–21, but their increasing in popularity meant that by 1926–27 there were no fewer than 16 county tests. National trials were also started in Ireland and Scotland in 1913 and 1924 respectively with government-controlled tests being held in Northern Ireland and Scotland.[85] McCallum remarked that the emphasis, especially in county trials, had changed since originally conceived, with more focus on the management of flocks rather than simply the high-performing strains of birds. The objective of the county trials held in England were said to be 'to indicate the value of selected birds as potential breeding stock for egg production', whereas in Canada it was 'to stimulate interest in the breeding of birds for egg production.'[86] In effect, egg production became increasingly focused on economic performance: the most important attribute which was indicative of profitability was the number of eggs produced per bird.

Trials attracted entries from leading poultry breeders such as Harry Douglas Barley (1921–71) of Bay Tree Farm, near Kings Norton, Birmingham, a farmer, stockbreeder, and well-known agricultural writer.[87] Between the 1920s and 1950s he entered his birds into egg-laying trials. His collection includes certificates from international and national egg-laying trials such as the *Daily Mail* International Egg Laying Test and the National Egg Laying Test, those held at Harper Adams, and the National Poultry Show organized by Poultry World held at the Royal Horticultural Hall in London (Figure 4). He also entered birds into regional, county, and more local egg-laying trials such as the Bolsover Castle Laying Test, the Lancashire Utility Poultry Society International Egg Laying Test, the Yorkshire Federation Laying Test, the Worcestershire Laying Trials organized by Worcestershire County Council and the Serial Laying Test at the Breedryte poultry farm at Winthorpe near Skegness.[88]

Barley mainly entered White Wyandottes, Leghorns, and Light Sussex breeds from 1921, and later from the 1930s Rhode Island Reds with which he won the British Oil and Cake Mills Limited (BOCM) Five Year Consistency Cup in 1952. His poultry performed very well and

[81] A. T. Monck-Mason, 'A Commercial poultry farm', in S. G. Brade-Birks (ed.), *Modern farming: a practical illustrated guide* (3 vols, 1950), I, p. 71.

[82] Ibid.

[83] MERL, FR DW AD2/12; White, *Report on a visit to farms in Denmark*, p. 26.

[84] MERL, D84/7/257–265.

[85] McCallum, 'Egg-laying tests', p. 79; MERL, D84/7/265.

[86] McCallum, 'Egg-laying tests', p. 79.

[87] MERL, D84/7.

[88] MERL, D84/7/169–252.

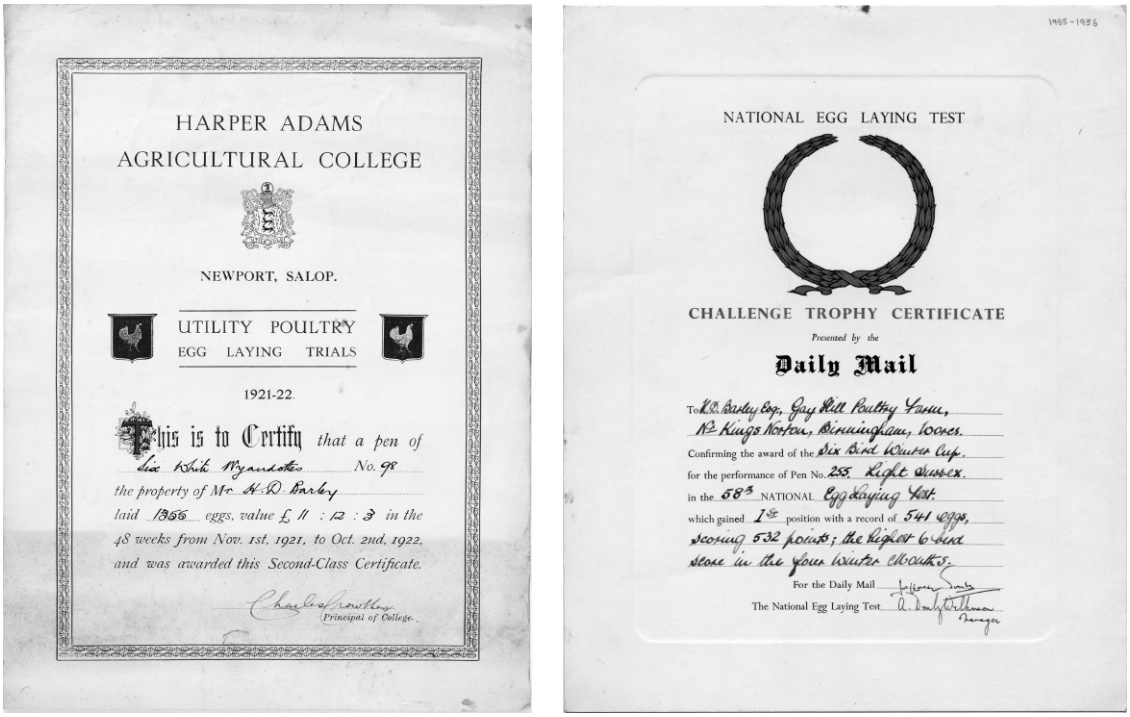


FIGURE 4 a and b Certificates awarded to H. D. Barley by Harper Adams Agricultural College for his entry in the laying trials for 1921–22 and the National Egg Laying Test sponsored by the Daily Mail. The former was for 11 months whereas the latter was for four winter months when egg production was at its lowest. *Source:* MERL, D84/7/169 and D84/7/246. (Reproduced by permission of the Museum of English Rural Life, University of Reading.)

consequently his reputation as a poultry breeder grew to the extent that he was selling globally. He also wrote articles mainly for *Poultry World*, spoke on poultry breeding and equipment and judged. As the example of Barley illustrates, egg-laying trials provided breeders with the opportunity to advertise their breeds and strains of chickens.

In the early 1950s publications stressed the need to acquire more productive egg-laying strains by taking local advice, consulting breeders and studying the results of egg-laying trials. Under optimum management it was suggested that each bird in an entire flock of birds could produce an average of 170 eggs per annum.[89] The importance of egg-laying trials that were promoted by public organizations with the intention of ascertaining the productivity of particular egg-laying chickens was clearly recognized. In a guide to modern farming the parallels between egg-laying tests and milk recording were highlighted and it was stated that:

> Official trials have now been conducted all over the country, and in addition many breeders use trap nests and record the performance of their best strains. By the systematic use of egg-laying tests the laying capacity of our best breeds have been materially improved during

[89] D. Morris and H. R. C. Kennedy, *Poultry keeping for profit* (1952), pp. 66–74.

TABLE 1. Egg yields per annum (the number of eggs per laying bird)

Pre-war	149	1960–61	188	1975	229
1946–47	116	1961–62	191	1976	238
1947–48	120	1962–63	193	1977	240
1948–49	126	1963–64	197	1978	242
1949–50	133	1964–65	204	1979	247
1950–51	136	1965–66	204	1980	248
1951–52	139	1966–67	207	1981	250
1952–53	150	1967–68	211	1982	251
1953–54	161	1968–69	214	1983	258
1954–55	165	1969–70	218	1984	256
1955–56	168	1970–71	220	1985	258
1956–57	171	1971–72	226	1986	258
1957–58	174	1972	230	1987	261
1958–59	179	1973	228		
1959–60	184	1974	229		

Source: Data from Table 22.4 in H. F. Marks and D. K. Britton (eds), *A hundred years of British food and farming: a statistical survey* (1988), p. 237.

> the last decade, and to-day there are a large number of strains of birds in commercial flocks with a proved egg-laying capacity, and the ability to transmit it to their offspring.[90]

Agricultural statistics collected by the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food (MAFF) indicate that there was a significant difference between the average for the poultry sector as a whole and the performance of birds in the egg-laying trials. Prior to the Second World War the figure was 149 per annum (per laying bird) and this actually fell during wartime as commercial egg production was forced to contract and it remained relatively low until increasing steadily from the 1950s to 261 in 1987 (Tables 1 and 2).[91] The figures achieved in the early egg-laying trials do not appear to have been replicated in the national statistics, but this does not necessarily mean that they had limited impact. Arguably they revealed the egg-laying potential of specific breeds and strains of chickens under not necessarily ideal but certainly good conditions. However, during the period under study many flocks of dual-purpose chickens were retained, not focused exclusively on egg laying, but also to produce table poultry and there was a wide variety of performance between producers. Commercial producers, who kept flocks of poultry mainly for egg production, were in a minority during this period, and it is evident that these achieved much higher egg yields than those who regarded poultry keeping as a sideline activity. New innovations and technology like deep litter, straw yards, artificial lighting, and battery cages were not widely adopted by poultry producers in the 1950s.[92] As

[90] V. C. Fishwick, 'Good Farming', in Brade-Birks (ed.), *Modern farming*, I, pp. 73–4.

[91] H. F. Marks and D. K. Britton (eds), *A hundred years of British food and farming: a statistical survey* (1988), p. 237.

[92] Seddon, *Silent revolution*, p. 109.

TABLE 2. Poultry population for egg production (millions)

Great Britain	*Total fowls*
1885	12.4
1908	32.4
1913	33.1
1921	29.0
1925	39.0
United Kingdom	
1929	55.5
1930	61.9
1935	75.1
1938	69.1
1942	53.5
1945	62.1
1950	96.1
1955	86.9
1960	103.0

United Kingdom *continued*	
	Laying fowls
1966	50.8
1970	55.2
1975	49.4
1980	46.0
1981	44.5
1982	44.8
1983	41.1
1984	40.6
1985	39.6
1986	38.1
1987	38.5
1988	36.9 (provisional)

Source: Data from Table 22.2 in H. F. Marks and D. K. Britton (eds), *A hundred years of British food and farming: a statistical survey* (1988), p. 237. Since 1980 the agricultural statistics have included the average number of layers comprising pullets and hens on holdings of 40 or more standard man-days per year.

with other new practices like milk recording, there seems to have been a considerable lag.[93] Moreover, national averages for egg production might not necessarily be accurate as there was clearly under-recording and little attempt to assess the accuracy of the figures. Thus the impact of the egg-laying trials is not fully represented in the national agricultural statistics.

V

This article has outlined the importance of public egg-laying trials in measuring and assessing the egg-laying ability of chickens and promoting modern methods of production. In an age of rapid expansion in chicken numbers the evidence available suggests that trials might have played an important role in contributing to increases in egg production per bird, as some contemporaries certainly argued, and certainly set a publicly-available standard for what particular breeds could achieve. In the early twentieth century there was clearly a greater recognition of the need to increase egg production to reduce the reliance on imported eggs and meet increasing consumer demand in Britain. This was successfully achieved by developing breeds and strains of chickens with higher laying capacity, reducing the incidence of disease, improving housing, adopting technological innovations like artificial lighting and introducing new feeding regimes. Pioneering egg-laying trials such as those conducted at Harper Adams

[93] Martin, 'George Odlum', p. 239.

and the National Egg Laying Test, later the National Poultry Test, reflected the need to improve the egg-laying capacity of chickens to increase egg production. Egg-laying trials also served a wider function in educating specialist commercial poultry breeders and producers and farmers about the importance of adopting more productive and efficient methods of egg production.

Finally, it is important to note that these egg-laying trials were funded and promoted as initiatives open to a wider public, whereas in the second-half of the twentieth century a small number of large multi-national companies developed hybrid hens through selectively cross-breeding the most productive strains of pure-breed layers, which have further revolutionized egg production. Further research is required to examine the role of these companies in increasing the number of eggs laid per bird. Nevertheless, in seeking to understand the unprecedented transformation of commercial egg production in Britain, it is important to appreciate the vital contribution of this early phase of public egg-laying trials.

Book Reviews

UK and Ireland

DOUGLAS CROWLEY, *Braydon Forest and the forest law* (Wiltshire Record Society 72, 2019). x + 418 pp. £20.

Forests in the legal sense have a particular fascination for historians, for they are places apart, different in their landscapes, ecology and economy, certainly different in their legal systems. Moreover, they have largely disappeared, any woodland cover felled, the land apportioned and turned into arable or most likely pasture. As John Broad showed some years ago in work on the Forest of Bernwood in Buckinghamshire, a disafforested forest can cast a long shadow over the parishes in which the forest lay. Its impression does not go away.

Forests were a crown perquisite in the High Middle Ages. Attempts to widen their boundaries produced complaints which were largely resolved in the early thirteenth century. Much of the early history of the forests is therefore that of their swelling and contraction and of contests over their boundaries. This is true of Braydon as elsewhere. In the early seventeenth century, James I and Charles I certainly had more forests than they needed. There were too many which had rarely – if ever – seen a king but where a structure of offices was maintained, lodges were occasionally repaired in case the king might come and the system of forest courts continued to operate (after a fashion) to protect the royal interest. They also tended to be poached and the timber illicitly felled. Disafforestation released some value from these assets. Forests were cleared of woods and deer, the land in part allocated to those who could demonstrate common rights, the remainder sold or granted to suitors. This, of course, brought to an end the institutional history of a forest: it is perhaps surprising that so much record material has survived.

This book starts with what almost amounts to an apology. It is not a single text with an introduction of a sort which forms the staple of record series publications, but an attempt to gather together all the extant material on the Forest of Braydon in Wiltshire. If it is a departure for the Wiltshire Record Series, then it is also a welcome innovation in the historiography of Forests. On its own terms it must be considered a success and a very welcome addition to the literature. In form it consists of a very long introduction (188 pages) covering the history of the forest from the earliest references to disafforestation in the late 1620s and early 1630s and then documents (a mere 175 pages). Latin documents are printed in English translation: English documents are not printed verbatim but in a form of reduced transcript. The scholarship involved is not to be questioned. The labour involved in locating and transcribing materials cannot but be admired.

And yet one wonders whether the book is quite the success that it might have been. The documents printed in the second section are discussed in the first half of the book: there is an element of repetition. But most curiously, there are no cross-references between the two, so archival references are given in the introduction but one has to hunt through the texts to see if the document being cited is printed there. (Not all of them are.) The introduction sticks very closely to the documents. At some points the detail is overwhelming, and the reader's comprehension is not helped by the lack of maps. There is no suggestion that parallels might be sought with other forests in Wiltshire or nationally, and one suspects that Crowley knows neither Buchanan Sharpe's work nor an essay on the improvement of the crown lands I published in 1992 (and the latter [*rev. ante* 42.1] would have given him some references that he might have usefully followed up). Neither appears to be cited. As regards Sharp's work, there is no interest on Crowley's part in the riots in the forest with which the former was chiefly concerned. These are small but important omissions but add to a sense that the book is inward-looking: one would never guess from it that the history of Braydon mirrors that of many other forests. It is a work which will be most useful to Wiltshire historians but also those interested in the history, and especially the final years, of a royal forest.

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TODD ANDREW BORLIK (ed.), *Literature and Nature in the English Renaissance: An ecocritical anthology* (Cambridge University Press, 2019). 622 pp. 11 illus. £84.99.

The field of ecocriticism in literary studies, which emerged into full flight around the turn of the present century, famously left the early modern period behind. Romanticism instead provided a bedrock, a moment of awakening to new perceptions of the relations between humans and the natural world. And it came with its own canon: John Clare, Dorothy Wordsworth, William Wordsworth, and so forth. This was convenient, since we already knew that these were people who wrote about nature; however, ecocriticism nonetheless provided a fresh and moderately useful theoretical frame, in accord with ethical concerns of the moment.

But the narrative of origin would have come as a surprise to Raymond Williams, whose seminal work of materialist criticism, *The country and the city*, stretched back into the Middle Ages. For that matter, it felt a little odd to me, as someone who lost my first supervisor (amicably, by the way, for this was England) by declaring to him that *The country and the city* was the best book on pastoral literature ever written. And then as someone who proceeded to read Michael Drayton's *Poly-Olbion*, and other literature engaged with urgent early modern debates about rural and environmental change. And then as someone told by a colleague, in 2000, that I was an ecocritic, when I had never even heard the word before. In short, early modern ecocriticism has always been a green area fuzzed at the edges with grey, and I am here to testify to it.

But a thread of important studies has worked to break down preconceptions and add clarity to Renaissance ecocriticism. Indeed, one of the most energetic and rigorous participants in this process has been Todd Andrew Borlik, the editor now of *Literature and Nature in the English Renaissance: An ecocritical anthology*. His previous critical work has demonstrated at once the benefits of reading canonical literature in fresh ways, with ecocritical questions in mind, and the value of looking beyond the canon to uncover a wealth of different kinds of writing about the natural world. This sort of thing used to be seen by literary scholars as interdisciplinarity; now it is just what we do. This book could easily have been a collection of things Borlik had found in his previous research and tossed together, but it is far more than that. At 600 pages and including over 200 texts (or extracts of texts), it is a hugely impressive, ambitious, and capacious piece of research.

The book gathers material from across the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. The vast majority of selections are original writing in English, but he sensibly includes a handful of pieces that were translated and were influential in England at this time. The material is organized into six sections. The first, 'cosmologies', considers theories of creation that informed early modern thought, and writing concerned with the shaping hand of a Christian god in the natural world. The second, 'the tangled chain', responds to the idea of a great chain of being (so influential in Renaissance scholarship in the twentieth century), and includes selections of writing on humans, beasts, birds, fish, insects, plants, and metals and elements. The third, 'time and place', gathers material on seasons and key places of the early modern imagination: from the managed environments of gardens and estates, to forests, moors, mountains, rivers, and so forth. The fourth, 'interactions', covers human engagements with the animal world, from hunting and fishing, through pet keeping, to cooking and feasting. The fifth, 'environmental problems in early modern England', stretches from manifestations of agricultural and economic change (what its proponents might have called 'improvement', and what historians might still see as the beginning of an 'agricultural revolution') such as enclosure and the draining of the fens, as well as deforestation and pollution. And the sixth, 'disaster and resilience in the Little Ice Age', considers responses to extreme weather events.

This is a capacious collection of material, which offers much to historians as well as scholars of literature. It contains a strong thread of a literary canon: Edmund Spenser, William Shakespeare, John Donne, Ben Jonson, John Milton, Lucy Hutchinson, and so on. But it also contains, to take a few examples: selections from the Jacobean chorographer and surveyor John Norden, extracts capturing debates over enclosure, and a nice representation of religious thought. There are some rare gems, such as 'The Pout's Complaint', a critique of fen-drainage in the voice of a fish, written by someone known only as Penny of Wisbech. And I count seven extracts from the work of Drayton, most notably his epic *Poly-Olbion*, which is manifestly a fine thing in an anthology.

Of course, there are gaps, and various readers will find fault. Some may be disappointed to see relatively little material concerned with agriculture, or the day-to-day business of living in the natural world for most people in early modern England. Others may have hoped for greater concern with the ways in which colonial plantations in Ireland and engagements with the New World altered perceptions of the relation between the English and nature. Others still may grumble that Borlik's model of the 'nation' tends rather too consistently to be reduced to England. And literary

historians may feel that the sub-sections on pastoral and georgic – the literary modes that helped lend shape to writing about the land, and have proved valuable (albeit perhaps overly so) in the study of such writing ever since – are somewhat perfunctory. But no anthology ever satisfied every reader; this is an impressive effort, and by far the best we now have. As Borlik writes in the valuable introduction: 'By pitting Montaigne against Bacon, Descartes against Cavendish, Digby against Tryon,' the book provides a 'glimpse of the complex, messy and sometimes contradictory attitudes prevalent in the Long Renaissance: from curiosity to disgust, dominance to reverence' (p. 16).

Like no publication before it, *Literature and Nature in the English Renaissance* makes sense of writing about the natural world in the pre-Romantic centuries, when so much was changing in the countryside and so many established truths were being exposed to scrutiny. It is a remarkable achievement, that will prove valuable for teaching and as a first route into research in this field.

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EUGENE COSTELLO, *Transhumance and the making of Ireland's uplands, 1550–1900* (Boydell Press, 2020). 240 pp. 58 illus. £75.

Transhumance has been dismissed in the past as a marginal activity which has left little trace in the landscape, a view that has somewhat constrained this area of settlement studies. Previous work has generally been undertaken from a folklife or geographical perspective, and while Costello's fine book builds on this earlier work, he clearly articulates an archaeological approach, which adroitly combines field survey with the use of historical documents, cartographic sources and oral tradition.

Chapter 1 briefly looks at the issues and opportunities in the study of historical transhumance in north-west Europe before moving on to Britain. The author reviews the evidence as it survives in England and Wales, though reserves most of his attention on the shieling systems in different parts of Scotland, particularly in the highlands and islands, which is reflective of the surviving evidence and extent of current scholarship there. While drawing upon British evidence, the book in turn provides a useful parallel for the evolution and decline of transhumant practices in medieval and post-medieval Britain.

Chapter 2 delves into the perceptions versus actual practices of transhumance in medieval and early modern Ireland. English commentators in the sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries played up the practice of transhumance among the Gaelic Irish, making unfavourable comparisons with the roving nomadic habits of Scythian horsemen on the Eurasian steppes. Such biased and uninformed viewpoints ignored tillage farming among Irish farmers, and that the need to spare the best land for crops and preserve winter grass ironically necessitated farmers to move livestock away in the summer in the first place. Costello makes the important point that transhumant communities in post-medieval Ireland were agro-pastoralists, with the balance between crops and livestock varying greatly, depending on the environmental, economic and political contexts. His research illustrates that transhumance was a stable, well-organized form of cattle farming, which took place over distances that rarely exceeded 12km and was carried out with reference to fixed units of land.

The central chapters in the book focus on three study areas in Ireland: the Carna Peninsula in Connemara, County Galway, the parish of Gleann Cholm Cille in south-west County Donegal, and the Galtee Mountains in Counties Limerick and Tipperary. Focus on these case studies from different parts of the country has allowed for a fine-grained study of differences in topography, soil quality and socio-economic trends in each of the regions. The author has marshalled an impressive array of archaeological and ethnographic evidence that throws light upon the practice of transhumance in Ireland between the sixteenth and nineteenth centuries. The three regional perspectives together make for a substantive study of the book's central issues – the physical and cultural manifestation of transhumance in the landscape, the adaptability of non-elite tenant communities over time, and the decline of seasonal movement and settlement. By exploring the archaeological evidence through the various chapters, Costello has helped to create a template which can assist in the exploration of transhumant landscapes elsewhere in Ireland.

The style of booley dwellings ranges from sod- and rubble-walled huts of various shapes to larger rectangular 'houses' with coursed walls. Differences in shape (with rectangular, circular and irregular examples evident) suggest that chronological factors may explain the different forms of booley dwellings. Bearing that in mind, Costello calls for more archaeological excavations of booley sites, accompanied by palaeoenvironmental analysis in the surrounding areas. He advocates that further field survey could be undertaken to gain a fuller picture of the distribution of possible booley sites at a regional and national scale. Given that much of the discussion of seasonal settlement has relied on comparisons with permanent

settlement, the author believes that it would be beneficial to initiate a programme of excavation also at the permanent dwellings of transhumant families and communities. A better understanding of nucleated or dispersed settlements in general during the later medieval and early post-medieval periods would clearly allow for a more grounded discussion of the layout and distribution patterns of booley dwellings. With excavation and palynology, meaningful examination of transhumant landscapes could indeed be pushed back into the medieval period.

In chapter 6, Costello explores the evolving nature of transhumance in the context of political, social and economic changes that were afoot from the seventeenth century onwards. He sheds light on the impact of capitalism on transhumant practices, posing a new challenge for scholars in historical archaeology to better understand the dynamic relationship between pastoralism and capitalism as it evolved between the sixteenth and late nineteenth centuries – a global economic trend that came to influence the daily lives and seasonal rhythm of these farmers. Farmers increasingly interacted with the growth of capitalism, which influenced the number and kinds of livestock that they kept and rendered the continued removal of people to booley sites either impractical or unnecessary. The exercise of landlord control in the hills and mountains also served to disrupt the dairy- and cattle-based booleying system – Blackface sheep were introduced in large numbers to Irish uplands and their dominance ultimately rendered seasonal relocation unnecessary. The activities of landlords and the Congested Districts Board also restructured tenants' permanent settlements, which in turn undermined the traditional basis of transhumance. The dispersal of home dwellings and the division of infields weakened the co-operative basis that had characterized rundale strip farming. Permanent emigration to America or seasonal migration to Scotland, which reduced the availability of local labour was another factor in the decline of transhumant practices.

Costello's wide-ranging research and incisive analysis on transhumance makes a valuable contribution to historical archaeology not just in Ireland, but in a wider European context. The book is well illustrated throughout with maps, plans and photographs that detail the various booley dwellings in their surrounding landscape. The great achievement of this book is that it brings to the fore a people and a way of life that has not been fully appreciated in Irish settlement studies hitherto, surely a commendable achievement.

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MARGARET BIRD, *Mary Hardy and her world, 1773–1809*, I, *A working family* (Burnham Press, 2020). 818 pp. £38.

MARGARET BIRD, *Mary Hardy and her world, 1773–1809*, II, *Barley, beer and the working year* (Burnham Press, 2020). 896 pp. £38.

Following the publication in 2013 of four volumes of Mary Hardy's diary, along with that kept by her nephew Henry Raven while an apprentice at the Hardy family's brewery, Margaret Bird has now produced four volumes exploring 39 distinct topics covered in the diaries and portraying Mary Hardy's world. The first two volumes include family and working life, and quickly dispel any notions that Georgian country life was remote, static and changeless.

Although historians had been made aware of the diaries and the wealth of information in them by the extracts published by Mary's descendant, Basil Cozens Hardy in 1957 and 1968, it is only now with their publication that their full value can be appreciated. Their significance has been ably demonstrated in Margaret Bird's exhaustive and detailed work. There are many reasons why the diaries are so valuable. They are a detailed daily record covering 36 years. They are written, not by one of the gentry or aristocracy, but are a factual account written by a busy woman and active member of a working family, covering the domestic, agricultural, manufacturing, shipping, political and religious concerns with which she was fully involved. There is no introspection, opinions are rarely expressed and no conversations recorded.

The daughter of a village grocer, Mary married William Hardy, an excise officer who was moved from posting to posting. His ambitions were elsewhere, and starting as a manager of a rural brewery in the Norfolk village of Coltishall, he raised money through mortgages and property owned by his wife to buy his own brewery in 1781, developing his business to the point where the family fortunes enabled the purchase in 1803 of the neighbouring Letheringsett Hall and the extension of his landholding in the parish. The diary is a disciplined record of events and reveals a husband-and-wife partnership in both domestic and business matters. Mary died aged 75 in 1809, just as her son was enlarging the hall, developing the grounds and extending the estate, thus ensuring entry to the gentry class.

In Volume I we are introduced to Mary's family, early married life in Coltishall and the move to the north Norfolk village of Letheringsett. Appendices cover a dictionary of Norfolk dialect, a recipe book compiled by Mary's daughter and a complete list of the servants working for the family from 1772. A helpful family chronology starting in 1732 is included as an

appendix in both volumes. Volume II covers the family's business interests; the running of the farm, milling, malting, brewing and the managing public houses tied to the brewery, with appendices detailing other Norfolk and Suffolk breweries and the tied public houses. The evidence from the diary is painstakingly put in the context of both the place and the time in meticulous detail making extensive use of the most up-to-date secondary literature, occasionally challenging long-held views based on evidence in the diary.

Beginning with an overview of Norfolk and specifically the villages of Coltishall and Letheringsett, the author questions the view that villages in the densely populated north and east of the county were 'remote'. While recognizing that both settlements were on major routeways (Coltishall was on a navigable river and Letheringsett on a main road) the author points out that, while living in Coltishall, Mary Hardy was within three miles, an easy walking distance, of 17 other parishes, some admittedly very depopulated by the eighteenth century and, similarly, from Letheringsett, 25 could be visited. Using both census and map evidence Bird builds up a picture of the landscape, society and economies surrounding these two villages.

The origins of the two diarists are then explored in detail. Mary Hardy, born Mary Raven, came from a large extended family of Ravens in the small Norfolk village of Whissonsett. The many branches of the family, which included farmers and craftsmen as well as her parents, who ran the village grocer's shop, are all described in detail, as is William Hardy's Yorkshire background. Born in 1732, he joined the excise in 1757 and remained an officer with postings all over the country for 12 years. During postings in Norfolk he met Mary and they were married in Whissonsett in 1765. Shortly after he left the excise service, a poorly paid and itinerant occupation not suited to married life, and took on the brewery in Coltishall in 1772.

A second section entitled 'nurturing the young', deals with an under-researched topic. The subject of childbirth, the role of the 'gossip' or a supportive friend during labour, and the choice and hiring of wet nurses are all covered in the diary and comparative material discussed. This is followed by the subject of schooling. All her children attended local schools. The type of education available for the 'middling sort' has been little researched, but Margaret Bird includes a detailed study of the local endowed grammar schools attended by her two sons, and the ladies' academies thought suitable for her daughter. In this she was helped by the survival of an extensive archive held by Gresham's School, which began as an endowed grammar school in Holt, the nearest market town to Letheringsett.

The third section describes the two houses, one at Coltishall and one at Letheringsett, inhabited by the family. While the Coltishall house was on a scale suitable for a brewery manger, Letheringsett Hall was a much grander affair, especially after it was extended by Mary's son (another William). As a result of extensive research, Margaret Bird has managed to establish that the rather heavy Doric portico was the work of the Holt architect, William Mindham. Although his obituary in 1843 described him as 'an eminent architect of Holt', this is the first time any work has been ascribed to him. Mary Hardy died in 1809, just as the major works began on the house and much of this section dealing with the laying out of the grounds describes changes made after the diary ends. One detail however is of particular interest and was typical of the 'enlightenment' thinking of the time. Beauty could be made to serve utility and profit and this is clearly shown in the complicated water works which provided the pure water needed by the brewery across the road as well as the power to work the malt mill with the creation of ponds and water features near the house.

Of particular interest is the section on servants. Throughout the period of the diary two maidservants were kept, one responsible for cleaning of the house and the other for cooking and the dairy. This seems a very small number, especially as the size of the establishment increased with the move to Letheringsett Hall and the amount of entertainment of visitors on business that had to be provided often at short notice. This heavy workload, coupled with Mary Hardy's exacting standards and her husband's short temper may help explain the high turnover of servants, with over a third leaving before their yearly contract ended. It is clear from the diary that Mary often worked alongside her maids. Their living and working conditions are all discussed and compared with the situation elsewhere, but, as Margaret Bird admits, the voice of the servants themselves is rarely heard.

The impression we get of Mary Hardy is of a down-to-earth, hard-working businesswoman, fully engaged in the family business, turning her hand to running a pub when the need arose. It comes as something of a surprise to see her portrait painted in 1785, when she was 51, in which she is beautifully dressed in ribbons and lace with ornately coifed and decorated hair. A painting of 1794 when she was 64 shows her in much plainer clothes, possibly influenced by the more rigorous dress code of Methodism, which she had by this time embraced.

In Volume II we move on from family affairs to the world of work, both on the farm and in the brewing and malting business, beginning with the farm workforce

and the role of the 'farm servant'. It is clear that the accepted meaning of this phrase, particularly in pastoral districts, to describe a young, yearly paid living-in servant does not apply in arable Norfolk. Although these men were hired for a year, they were frequently married and living in local cottages. Their hours were long and there was little time off during the year. When farm work was slack, they would be diverted to help in the maltings and brewery, often delivering beer to the tied pubs across the county.

While at Coltishall, William Hardy hired 41 acres in Horstead and Coltishall for four years from 1774. The lease was transcribed into the diary and a five-course rotation, including an extra crop of barley was practised. On moving to Letheringsett in 1781, he bought alongside the brewery and maltings, 46 acres of scattered holdings. This rose to nearly 400 acres when in 1800 his son bought the 350-acre Letheringsett Hall Farm, thus beginning the formation of the Letheringsett estate, which by 1842 amounted to 2000 acres. In spite of these purchases the family always saw themselves as brewers and maltsters rather than farmers running a vertically integrated enterprise producing much of the hay needed for their dray horses as well as barley for malting, brewing the beer, and then selling it to their tied public houses. It is this record of a mixed business rather than the more usual farming diaries, accounts and *General Surveys*, that make the account so interesting. The diary gives the dates of the ploughing harvest, and the sowing of barley, which fluctuate wildly and are an indication of varying climatic conditions. The establishing of cropping patterns is difficult to identify as are yield figures or sowing densities, but it is clear that barley was the dominant cereal in this prime barley-growing part of the county. In common with evidence from elsewhere muck carting and manuring was a time-consuming activity and it seems that some was bought in. Store cattle, whose manure was regarded a vital part of any good farming system, were bought at the various autumn cattle fairs, but we learn little about their management and the day-to-day running of the farm, which was left to the Hardys' highly competent farm manager. Once he had taken over the running of the family business in 1797 William Hardy junior spent time and money on improving his riverside pastures and creating water meadows there. He had frequent meetings with those promoting the technique, but little about his project itself. He bought a flock of the deeply unfashionable Norfolk horn sheep which no doubt grazed on them. A few house cows were managed by Mary herself, and pigs were kept and fed on the waste products of the maltings.

Two-thirds of this second volume is taken up with the family's main occupation: malting, brewing, and the management of up to 100 public houses. The diaries provide an unusually precise description of a working life in which the Mary and her husband were actively involved. Both at Coltishall and Letheringsett the Hardy's were small-to-middling brewers with an output of 3500 barrels a year at most while the large Norwich brewers produced 13,000 barrels. The whole business was run by the family plus a clerk and four to five workers, who would be responsible not just for the malting and brewing, but delivering to their outlets in a 50-mile radius, as well as occasionally being diverted to farm work. The diary shows a rapid turnover of clerks and it seems that Mary's husband William, was an exacting and unsympathetic employer. In 1787, their son, William, left school at 13 to become a brewery apprentice and later, in 1793, Mary's nephew Henry Raven became an apprentice too, leaving for London in 1797. He too kept a detailed diary that complements his aunt's, explaining both the malting and brewing process. The diaries to shed light on the role of rural breweries from the late eighteenth century and contrasts with other brewery histories which concentrate on large urban concerns whose records often only begin a century later.

It is fortunate that some of the buildings at Letheringsett survive, and detailed drawings were made of them before their conversion to housing in 2013–15. The long two-storey maltings are architecturally impressive and dominated the view of those travelling north from Holt. They were damaged by fire in 1827 and it is not clear how much rebuilding there had to be, but some of the fabric may well date back to the mid-eighteenth century. William Hardy junior gradually took more control of the brewing business, finally succeeding his father in 1797, and was responsible for initiating remarkable improvements. A supply of clean, soft water was essential for the brewing process and the diary describes the digging of a soft water basin across the road in 1787–88. The following year a leet from the river was diverted under the road through a tunnel to provide power to a malt mill at the end of one of the malthouses and in 1792 a house for the clerk was added.

A final section of Volume II deals with the tied system of pubs which was well-advanced in Norfolk by 1800. There were 25 pubs tied to the Hardy brewery by 1797 with 22 more by 1838, challenging the accepted view that the system of 'tying' did not develop until after the change to brewing porter, which required a dark-coloured malt and took longer to mature. A study covering the relationship between breweries and

publicans in rural areas is rarely possible and this is one of the many aspects of these journals that makes their study so valuable. Here the relationship was close with publicans frequently calling and being entertained at Letheringsett. However, pub finances were often precarious and publicans, made up of a shifting population of mobile people, frequently fell into debt. Debt was often allowed to build up; after all, an indebted innkeeper was tied by bond and could be difficult to replace if he left or was forced into bankruptcy.

The volume ends with an explanation of the taxation and excise system of the time and an analysis of the financial success of the Hardy businesses as revealed in the journals. The material on which to base a consideration of the financial success of the business is scanty and difficult to interpret, partly because there were so many different elements (the farm, malting, brewing and servicing the pubs), and partly because of the lack of detailed accounts. The period covered by the diary is one when brewers, maltsters and farmers were making increasingly good livings and the family were making a healthy profit of up to £2000 a year, allowing for investment in the business and the purchase of land and Letheringsett Hall in 1803. Although direct comparisons are difficult, capital valuations provided when William junior took over in 1797, and in preparation for his retirement in 1838, appear to show a rise from £16,000 to £65,000. Appendices cover the system for the collection of excise duties and the many officers employed, a directory of breweries in east Norfolk and Suffolk between 1750 and 1809 and finally details of the 101 public houses supplied by the Letheringsett brewery between 1773 and 1896.

These two volumes, amounting to nearly 2000 pages, are the first half of a mighty four-volume work and demonstrate how the diaries reveal an entirely different picture of the female role in business and society to that portrayed in the more usual journals of leisured ladies studied by Amanda Vickery and others. The Hardy family came from humble origins and, within two generations beginning with the purchase of Letheringsett Hall, joined the gentry class. Finally, in the 1890s, the maltings and brewery were sold to a Norwich concern and the family finally disassociated themselves from an industry that had been the source of their wealth.

One of the many values of the diaries which Margaret Bird brings to our attention is the contrast between the working wife and genteel society. Mary and her husband worked as a team and she was not averse to hard and sometimes menial work, supporting the family enterprise, even when it meant taking over the running in an emergency of one of the family's tied public houses, if necessary, taking her small children with her. On top of domestic duties, she would entertain visiting tradesmen, excise officers and tenants and note in detail matters relating to the brewery, the maltings and the tied public houses. This is in great contrast to the journals of the gentry where the worlds of men and women were separate and clearly defined. In contrast, Mary was an equal business partner with her husband, yet when the occasion demanded, she could sit, beautifully dressed, for her portrait. That such a busy woman could find time to keep a journal is remarkable.

Be in no doubt that Margaret Bird has produced a formidable, detailed, well-researched *tour de force* showing clearly what can be learnt about a little-studied branch of rural society, the upwardly mobile operators of successful rural businesses, through the pages of a unique journal. Any problems with the density of the text in these beautifully produced volumes are greatly alleviated by the wealth of page-by-page illustrations and the marginal notes and references, which are easy to follow.

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CARL J. GRIFFIN, *The politics of hunger: Protest, poverty and policy in England, c.1750–c.1840* (Manchester University Press, 2020). 263 pp. £80.

The politics of hunger is a timely and welcome contribution to ongoing debates surrounding food security, protest, and governmental policy in Britain. With use of food banks becoming endemic, the languages of 'hunger', 'poverty' and 'starvation' stubbornly remain central to modern politics. As Carl Griffin acknowledges, studying the 'politics of hunger' matters because 'it is the history of now' (p. 235). Unfortunately, there has been a tendency amongst historians of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries to focus on the emotive extremes of famine or narrow causal relationships. In this monograph, Griffin seeks to move beyond questions regarding living standards or logistics and explore how articulations of hunger were used as a tool of protest, a spur for public policy change, and a foundation for elite perceptions of the poor (p. 4). Concomitantly, this book demonstrates how the 'bodily state of hunger', and associated fear of starvation, were ever present in the lives of rural people. The 'politics of hunger' were not 'rediscovered' during the 1790s or the 'Hungry Forties' but were consistently voiced throughout the period.

An opening pair of chapters explore how the 'politics of hunger' empowered, legitimized, and encouraged

popular protest. Chapter 1 studies how the idea of 'hunger' was mobilized during eighteenth-century subsistence crises. In this period, Griffin argues, the 'twin discourses' of hunger and starvation became a 'critical plank of the moral economy's invocation by poor consumers.' Critically, whilst the 'discourse of hunger' spoke deferentially of need, the 'discourse of starvation' invoked 'chaos and misrule' (p. 31). Although claims to starvation were rarely meant literally, deploying the 'discourse of starvation' signalled a popular belief that dearth was imminent unless immediate action was taken. Subsequently, whilst crowds and middle-class sympathizers used 'hunger' to implore paternalistic masters for aid, 'starvation' was used to justify all forms of direct action and covert destruction. For Griffin, it was the 'discourse of starvation' that ultimately became integral to popular provisions politics and radical participatory politics. Conversely, the 'discourse of hunger' was 'co-opted by authorities to stoke loyalist feeling' (p. 48). As such, chapter 2 studies how the 'discourse of starvation' was repeatedly invoked in early nineteenth-century protest. Griffin rejects the claim that the supposed 'death' of food rioting in 1801 represented the end of hunger as a political force. Instead, the notion of 'hunger amidst plenty' would 'become central to radical political discourse' (p. 59). From William Cobbett to Swing, the anti-Poor Law movement, and Chartism, hunger 'acted as a bridge between the city and the country, between the labourer and the operative' (p. 73). By 1840, the discourse of starvation had thus become a universal and effective tool for urban and rural protestors.

The second brace of chapters reveals how local and national political authorities responded to the 'discourse of starvation', first through Speenhamland-style 'bread scales' and then the New Poor Law. For the former, Griffin contends that the introduction of 'income-support schemes' was a 'humanitarian response' to the 'hypercrisis' of 1795 whilst simultaneously being a 'pragmatic yet paranoid attempt at maintaining order' (p. 86). Importantly, Griffin traces how a variety of 'Speenhamland-style scales' dispersed throughout the nation, often exploitative and rarely advancing from semi-formalized systems of temporary relief. Furthermore, the widespread adoption of these scales signalled a change in how authorities perceived hunger. Rather than thinking of 'individual need', magistrates and parish officers now judged claimants through 'universal measures of need'. With hunger being 'measured and quantified', poor workers were dehumanized as 'objects of calculation and control' (p. 103). These new imperatives to define and measure, Griffin argues, informed the New Poor Law. Chapter 4 thus explores the making and implementation of workhouse dietaries during the early years of the Poor Law Commission. Crucially, Griffin uncovers how dietary calculations struck an uneasy balance between 'basic biological adequacy' and a desire to punish 'idleness and immorality' (p. 140). Furthermore, when the PLC found itself unable to provide a diet that was both 'humane and economic' it deferred responsibility to local unions, enabling dietary regimes that were rarely adequate. Demonstrating his theoretical skill, Griffin details how workhouses were predicated on Foucauldian 'biopolitics', their systems designed to discipline and shape the pauper body (p. 155).

The politics of hunger concludes with two chapters that assess how hunger, and the hungry, were perceived and theorized between 1740 and 1850. In perhaps his most compelling contribution, Griffin utilizes theories from colonial and post-colonial histories to analyse how agricultural workers in Southern England were rendered as an 'internal colonial subject' (p. 183). By conceiving of the poor as a separate 'animalistic' race, authorities granted themselves moral consent to control and experiment upon the bodies of relief claimants, negating individual agency and transforming the hungry poor into 'biopolitical subjects' (p. 199). Although Griffin is careful not to simplistically equate impoverished labourers with enslaved peoples, his work skilfully demonstrates how racial theories were used to make sense of subaltern groups both abroad and at home. Consequently, Griffin's final chapter examines how hunger could also be understood and mediated through the plight of 'distant others'. By studying popular responses to the Irish Famine, it reveals how hunger was increasingly expressed as relational, becoming mediated not just by individual experience but also 'through the experiences of real and imagined communities' (p. 208). Despite lingering xenophobia in England's working-class population, a shared understanding of hunger led to a number of charitable subscriptions motivated 'by a sense of colonial responsibility and human solidarity' (p. 225). In this crucial moment, Griffin argues, the modern humanitarian response to hunger and starvation began to emerge.

This is a pertinent, well-researched, and compassionate book that should become required reading for students of hunger, protest, politics, and public policy in modern Britain. In every chapter, Griffin combines studious archival research with acute theoretical insights to reveal how the discourses of hunger and starvation became engrained into the fabric of everyday life, governance and resistance. Although further work is needed to explore the 'micropolitics' of hunger in

individual communities and regions, *The politics of hunger* will stand as a foundational text for a promising vein of future research.

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PAUL BRASSLEY, JEREMY BURCHARDT, and KAREN SAYER (eds), *Transforming the countryside: The electrification of rural Britain* (Routledge, 2016). 252 pp. 16 illus. £96.

This volume is an important historical contribution to the under-examined question of how the British countryside became electrified. Earlier scholarship has considered rural issues alongside a dominant urban focus and through debates over electricity's landscape and environmental impacts. Here, rural life is centre stage. With roots in a project led by the late Alun Howkins and a 2013 conference, the book forms part of Routledge's Rural Worlds series and is edited by leading rural historians Paul Brassley, Jeremy Burchardt, and Karen Sayer. Twelve individual contributors include some leading scholars in rural, energy and environmental history. While varied in approach and regional focus, collectively they demonstrate the complexity of this energy transition in Britain and beyond, examining themes of rural modernity and agency, regional and national difference, the intersection of technological change and everyday lives, and the role of institutions in expanding networks.

Difficulties shared across case studies include mutually reinforcing high costs and low demand in sparsely populated areas, and (for users) the inconvenience of electricity compared with trusted sources of heat and power. Enthusiasm for electric lighting was a widespread exception. Breakthroughs are shown to have been as much political as technical. Alongside the National Grid, developed from 1926, emerging national and regional governance bodies – especially post-war nationalization of electricity supply – provided policy direction and economies to aid rural distribution and consumer take-up by the 1950s and '60s. The international studies also suggest the significance of state support.

The first of three sections (the 'progress of electrification') explores technical and political challenges. Karl Ditt's chapter, translated from German, surveys rural electrification in England from the 1880s to the eve of the Second World War. Early tensions between local authority and private undertakings ensured fragmented supply areas and inhibited coordinated action. John Sheail brings his lucid analysis of policy debates to conflicts over the impacts of electricity infrastructure on salmon rivers and rural landscapes in Britain. Protests from the 1920s onwards, he argues, spawned protections that helped form the basis of current environmental legislation. Scotland and Wales are distinct here despite their similar mix of coal in the south and hydro resources to the north. In Richard Moore-Colyer's study of the lesser-known case of Wales (revised from an earlier article), communities' distinct cultural identities, and attachments to established farming and domestic energy-use practices, proved resistant to electricity industry visions of 'efficiency'. The awkward persistence of rural practices is a theme taken up in several later chapters. By contrast, rural electrification appears a relatively straightforward process in David Fleetwood's account of the Scottish Highlands. 1940s social policy underpinned the state-sponsored harnessing of rivers to bring the benefits of electricity to remote homes and industry. Paul Brassley's in-depth examination of halting electrification in England's farms, with a case study of remote south-west England, shows that farmers' use of oil and gas equipment persisted until the post-war regional electricity boards brought economies of scale.

The second section ('effects of electrification') delves deeper into everyday priorities in contrasting visions of 'lived experience' in post-war rural Britain. Karen Sayer's rich study of post-war rural homes, drawing on farming publications and personal memoirs, shows how pre-existing energy sources retained a currency that frustrated electricity industry attempts to shape modernity in its own image. Despite electricity promotions targeting the rural 'housewife', the latest Calor Gas stove or solid fuel Rayburn represented alternative modernities. Rural agency takes a different form in Rosemary Shirley's visual analysis of Women's Institute village scrapbooks from the 1960s. For Shirley, these sources reveal an embrace of electrical life, whether signalled by 'early adopters' of the deep freeze, by fields given over to frozen pea production, or by the acceptance of new infrastructure. A scrapbook representation of pylons – part of the Grid's contested modernity in Sheail's chapter – suggests that the interweaving of modernity and tradition was now integral to rural life.

In the third section ('comparisons across space and time'), rural electrification proved challenging even for two turn-of-the-century pioneers of hydro-electricity. Carin Martiin highlights Sweden's distinctively rural setting for early electrification, developed by groups such as mill owners and farmers, rather than radiating out from urban areas. But here too supplies were fragmented and take-up partial; the wood stove remained 'the heart of the house'. Sweden's welfare state, Martiin hints, was ultimately crucial

to rural electrification in the 1950s and '60s. Ruth Sandwell's engaging discussion of Canada is also a story of gradual, uneven development across its provinces, despite strong and still dominant hydro-electric resources (with a slow incorporation of coal, oil and nuclear sources of generation only from the 1960s). In contrast to its current soaring levels of per capita electricity consumption, up to the 1950s Canada's mostly rural population resisted electric equipment, with cultures of domestic life shaped by seasonal labour patterns and cheap or freely available wood fuel. Martyn Warren's interesting comparative case of rural broadband shows a changed world of communications giants, EU regulations, and a vocal rural middle class. But similarities to electrification include broadband's difficulties as a network more suited to lucrative urban areas, echoes of debates over the role of the state and public finance, and uneven service levels that fall short of democratic entitlements to universal provision: a 'mutating digital divide' forged by rapidly changing technologies.

This volume is a thought-provoking exploration of interactions of technology, politics and everyday life that have transformed the countryside over the past 140 years. It would be good to see more scrutiny of the frequent early twentieth-century claim that electricity would stem Britain's rural depopulation. And there is, inevitably, some repetition of key technical and political developments across the chapters, but these are framed by nuanced interpretative approaches drawing on diverse sources, from industry records to farm surveys and oral histories. With its strong thematic discussions in the editors' introduction and conclusion (and a helpful index), this is highly recommended for scholars and students of rural societies, of energy transitions and of inter-relationships between technology and culture.

VANESSA TAYLOR
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NATACHA CHEVALIER, *Food in wartime Britain: Testimonies from the Kitchen Front (1939–1945)* (Routledge, 2020). xvi + 155 pp. 5 b&w figs. £33.29 (ebook).

Innumerable books, articles, and television programmes, together with the (possibly fallible) memories of those involved, have familiarized a British audience with the history of food in the Second World War. It is conventionally a story of rationing, plain but healthy eating, agricultural expansion and digging for victory, pig clubs, Lord Woolton, the Minister of Food from 1940 to 1943, and how well the Americans ate. The official accounts of food and agriculture written in the immediate post-war years told stories of struggles, ultimately successful, to solve the problems posed by the war. Subsequent historians have either reinforced and amplified, or questioned and cast doubt upon the initial accounts, or made revealing comparisons between the British experience and that of people living in continental Europe.

Natacha Chevalier's testimonies from the Kitchen Front in Britain join those that argue for a more complex and nuanced history of food in the war years. They are essentially based on eight diaries in the Mass Observation archive held at the University of Sussex. These she selected by first applying a list of keywords (which she does not specify) relating to food 'through the search engine' of the digitized Mass Observation material, and making a first selection of diaries based on 'the number of keyword matches and a random reading of samples', then after 'a more extensive reading, eight diaries were eventually chosen according to the degree of information they provided about food purchase, preparation and consumption' (p. 4). These were then analysed using a mixture of quantitative and qualitative methods. For example, the number of complaints about food expressed each month was compared to the number of mentions of food 'in order to measure the degree of inconvenience related to food felt by the diarists' (p. 5) and the way in which it changed over the course of the war. Mass Observation also issued a questionnaire on food matters to all of its volunteers in April 1943, and the replies to this questionnaire were also analysed using the same methodology. This revealed that although, as expected, many respondents mentioned eating less fruit, meat, butter, eggs, and sugar than before the war, it was fruit, especially oranges and bananas, and sweets that they missed more than the other commodities (p. 41). At least part of the explanation for this, she argues, is that the people who responded to Mass Observation questionnaires were skewed towards the middle class, and that before the war fruit was purchased more by the middle and upper classes than the working class.

Given this bias in her sources, she makes a virtue of necessity by arguing that 'more attention has been paid to the working classes and their diet than to the food practices of the middle classes' in historical studies of the Home Front. This is a pity, she maintains, because not only did this neglect the experiences of nearly a quarter of the population, but it was the quarter whose food buying and consumption habits, with their greater emphasis on proteins, fruit and vegetables, were most likely to be affected by wartime shortages. Her eight diarists were therefore all members of the

middle class, although they illustrate the wide range of incomes, employments, and backgrounds that were found in that category, from Robert (the only man among the eight), an electricity sub-station worker living in a rented house in Hampshire, and Clara, married to a Bradford fireman and the mother of two young children, to Irene, a young widow with a bevy of servants and a house in Maida Vale, and Naomi, running a farm on her own estate in Scotland. She was the writer Naomi Mitchison, married to Dick Mitchison, MP and barrister, and the only one of the diarists identified by her real name. An edition of her diary (*Among you taking notes*) was published in 1985.

After the introduction explaining this methodology, Chevalier's first chapter is a brief account of changes in British eating habits since the sixteenth century, followed by a second summarizing class differences in food consumption based on pre-war surveys. The third chapter is mostly a summary of the literature, as it existed up to about 2012, on food production, administration, propaganda and nutrition education, but ending with a survey of the evidence on consumer responses to wartime changes revealed in the various Mass Observation sources. The final two chapters account for two-thirds of the book. The first part of chapter 4 contains brief biographies of the diarists and a flavour of their writing about food, and the second an account of the overall contents of their diaries and their views on wartime conscription, work, and health. The final part of the chapter provides some quantitative analyses which demonstrate that concerns over food issues varied in frequency, reaching a peak in 1941 when the overall progress of the war was at its worst from an Allied viewpoint. Chapter 5 covers the same material thematically, exploring a range of topics such as shortages, shopping, changes in values and attitudes, hospitality, feelings about unfair distribution, the black market (which is not distinguished from the grey market of arguable legality), eating out, the problems of feeding children, and so on. Given all this detail it is perhaps disappointing that the short concluding chapter contains few surprises, but it is nevertheless worth being reminded that wartime food, while sufficient, was often dull and monotonous, that there were big inter-personal differences in wartime food experiences, that social class affected attitudes to food, and that wartime solidarity applied especially to close family and friends.

PAUL BRASSLEY
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PAMELA SLOCOMBE, *Whaddon and the Longs: A west Wiltshire history* (Hobnob Press, 2020). 610 pp. 108 illus., maps and tables. £25.

The isolated hamlet of Whaddon is reached from the outskirts of Trowbridge in west Wiltshire by a narrow lane which at first inclines gently upwards through lush grazing pasture. After a mile or so, it descends to cross the Kennet and Avon Canal, then rises to a low ridge that gives an unexpectedly wide view of the River Avon, flowing south west toward Bristol, and of its tributary Semington Brook. Where the waters join, two farms and a scattering of houses comprise the hamlet. Passing a small church and graveyard, the lane descends to the Avon, turns briefly right, then dissolves into a web of footpaths and bridle tracks. A farm stands on the site of a long-vanished manor house. Beyond the brook, a now-dismantled railway once linked Devizes to Westbury and Chippenham.

From this quiet and unassuming location, Pam Slocombe, long-time organizer of the Wiltshire Buildings Record and member of the Medieval Settlement Research Group, has conjured a remarkable 600-page history of an ancient parish and its manorial owners, the Long family, whose association with Whaddon endured from about 1500 to 1996. They were first drawn to Whaddon from the neighbouring village of Semington to exploit its fulling mill, during the expansionary period of the white broadcloth trade that made Tudor west Wiltshire a driver of the national economy and enriched three generations of Longs. In the seventeenth century, now evolved into gentry, the family produced a notable wife, mother, and correspondent, Rebecca Long/Sherfield, and her son, the politician Walter Long. His story – leading from reckless resistance to Charles I and imprisonment in the Tower to a cavalry charge at Edgehill and promotion to parliamentary colonel, then disillusionment with the army, exile in France and knighthood ('for loyalty') by Charles II – forms the narrative heart of this volume, but is by no means its most signal achievement.

Slocombe's work is unstintingly grounded in archival research, and the clarity of this focus has determined the division of the book into three parts of unequal length. The shorter first part takes the settlement of Whaddon from prehistory to the arrival of the Longs. A succinct opening chapter notes a few archaeological finds and Whaddon's location on the boundary of Mercia and Wessex; then we are quickly into Domesday and the shape and distribution of the medieval village, identified with the help of laser imagery and aerial photography. Whaddon is set in its wider context between the great Selwood forest (which extended west to the Somerset border and as far south

as the Dorset downs) and the forests of Melksham and Chippenham. In the fourteenth century, Whaddon had just 13 households, a manor house, fulling mill, and parish church, and has never expanded much beyond that scale.

The second and largest part, the history of the Longs, provides lucid summaries of most of the many surviving documents relating to the family up to the late seventeenth century, from which Slocombe extracts their sometimes uncertain pedigree. A troublesome issue for west Wiltshire genealogists has been to connect the Whaddon Longs to the senior branches of this extensive family, seated at South Wraxall and at Draycot, and this problem is thoroughly addressed. Some unavoidably dry material is enlivened by the will of the wealthy clothier, Thomas Long of Trowbridge (d.1563), who acquired as many as nine manors during the mid-Tudor upheavals. The inventory of his elder brother and heir, Henry Long of Whaddon (d.1558), reveals the scale of the latter's activity both as a clothier and as a breeder and grazier, with over a hundred cattle and some thousand sheep dispersed among his various properties, including as many as 16 plough oxen in and near Whaddon itself.

In 1616, Henry Long's daughter-in-law Rebecca, newly widowed, married Henry Sherfield, also widowed, a lawyer from Salisbury who was then working at the Court of Wards in London, with chambers at Lincoln's Inn. Often apart, they wrote to each other frequently, and their surviving correspondence takes Slocombe's narrative way beyond the confines of Whaddon and west Wiltshire. Slocombe transcribes numerous letters revealing Rebecca's close attention to the management of her family as they grew into adulthood, especially those relating to marriage negotiations. The protocol of courtship amongst the gentry is clearly evidenced in these letters, along with the mundane issues of running estates at a distance. From this correspondence, Slocombe moves seamlessly into the career of Rebecca's politician son Walter, sourced partly from his own letters to Sherfield but also from state papers and other major collections.

The male line of the Longs died out early in the eighteenth century and the last two centuries of absentee lordship are quickly dispatched before Slocombe turns to the third part of her history. Perhaps the most interesting part for village historians, this deals comprehensively with the buildings of Whaddon and their evolution over time, starting with the church, the long-lost manor house and the surviving stone mill-house. Slocombe's expertise as an architectural historian is impressively deployed in her detailed account of the manor house as it was enlarged and elaborated from *c.*1580 to 1700, with its contents, outbuildings and gardens, before its decline under tenancy and destruction by fire in 1836. The final 180 pages, almost a third of the book, are devoted to the open and enclosed fields, and to the manorial demesne, copyholds and leaseholds, not just of Whaddon itself, but of its outlying settlements of Paxcroft and Hilperton Marsh, and to tracing the families identified with them since the sixteenth century.

This is a work of astonishing dedication, which has taken Slocombe the best part of a lifetime to compile. There can be very few if any other village histories of such depth and detail. Since the book has been illustrated with a large number of well-chosen maps and illustrations, and laid out elegantly in comfortably readable type by the specialist Wiltshire publisher, Hobnob Press, it seems almost churlish to point out its few shortcomings. Academic readers may regret the limited reference to the regional historiography, and the minimalist endnotes, which consist mainly of document numbers. Many of the maps and the pedigrees of the Long family would have benefited from enlargement. Most of all one might wish for a more substantial index, to help the reader navigate the wealth of rural themes which run through this extraordinary history. But *Whaddon and the Longs* will be an essential work of reference for all future studies of west Wiltshire.

JOHN GAISFORD
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FRANCIS PRYOR, *The Fens: Discovering England's ancient depths* (Head of Zeus, 2020). 416 pp. illus. £9.99.

Francis Pryor's *The Fens* is a charming and thoroughly enjoyable autobiographical landscape history of the Fens. This crossing of genre boundaries is accomplished using two parallel chronologies, wherein Pryor's life is used to mirror events in the ever-changing Fens. The two narratives are used to communicate a personal-historical ambience of the Fens. Pryor's various lives as an archaeologist, sheep farmer, and 'churchaholic' of the Fens singularly equip him for this approach.

The book can be split into two parts, the first deals with Pryor's distinguished career as an archaeologist, and this is broadly used to reflect his portrait of the Fens before the Roman conquest. The book's second 'part' moves from the post-Roman period to the present day, and this historical narrative is interwoven with the author's meditations on his life in the Fens after leaving professional archaeology. This distinctive approach finds best expression in the chapters on the prehistoric Fenland. Pryor's archaeological career

lends these chapters a powerful depth of knowledge, this detail providing the best entry-point for Pryor's autobiographical segues. The author seamlessly dips into his own experience preventing inbreeding in sheep as a sheep farmer when discussing the need for widely separated prehistoric agricultural communities to maintain contact. Pryor's agricultural experience grounds his relationship with the Fens and supports the book's overarching aim of dispelling the notion that the Fens were unproductive wastes, arguing instead that the Fens were prosperous landscapes throughout history.

The accounts of archaeological dig sites are set at a wonderful pace, and are the most engaging chapters of the book. This pacing is mainly a consequence of their immanent purpose: situating Pryor's major digs in the context of his life, and the broader prehistory of the Fens. These earlier chapters also convey the sense of urgency in Fen archaeology in the 1970s and '80s by teasing interesting sites which are then forced onto the backburner by outside factors. Chief among these are the urban expansion and demand for gravel in the period, which meant that many Fenland sites were in urgent need of excavation. Contextualizing Fenland archaeology in this period subtly builds suspense for the major discoveries of Pryor's archaeological career, which he is careful not to spoil too soon. Revelations in the study of maps and aerial photographs are delivered with the same understated theatre, giving the impression of reading a dramatized methodology textbook. Cropmarks, it is revealed, emerge when agricultural crops over historic ditches and earthworks grow differently to their neighbours, revealing a shadow of a former landscape when viewed from above. The hot and dry summer of 1976 was a particularly good year for cropmarks, and the reader is slowly drawn into Pryor and his team's anticipation of the aerial photographs of that season. These chapters are very successful in communicating the precise significance of archaeological finds, which means that they can be enjoyed as a basic and digestible introduction to archaeology. This is exemplified in Pryor's recollection of the Cat's Water excavation, where evidence of hearths in around half of 56 buildings is used to demonstrate that these were human dwellings. Phosphate analysis showing levels consistent with high concentrations of manure was then employed to show that the remaining buildings were used to house livestock. Moreover, some of the human dwellings were larger, a trend which increased over time, and this is used to infer increasing social stratification towards the end of the Iron Age.

The least convincing demonstrations of Pryor's personalized approach to Fen history are those chapters on the Roman occupation. These lose the archaeological depth of earlier chapters, and the intimacy with the landscape which carries later passages here feels unfortunately synthetic. The book's later chapters show a notable change of pace, trundling gently through interesting episodes in the histories of several fen towns, from the pre-Norman period through to the modern day. Pryor is not a historian of this period, and the acknowledged oversimplifications on enclosure and the spread of Enlightenment thought are at times distracting. These later chapters are far less unified in purpose than earlier ones, very broadly linked in demonstrating that the fenland towns had and retained a distinct identity over these thousand years. This is done through analysis of medieval church architecture, eighteenth-century intellectual societies, and the rise and fall of the rail network on the Fens. As Pryor's life moves away from archaeology, these vignettes are more clearly motivated by his own experiences, and if the earlier chapters failed to capture the reader's interest, these more introspective chapters will certainly struggle to do so. With that said, Pryor's rich relationship with the Fens provides adequate cohesion for his various sallies into different historical periods and themes, and the amiable written style does not provoke the reader to ask too many questions. Pryor's rural background may contribute to the gleeful and infectious irreverence which makes for very easy reading.

In a sense, this is two rather different books held together by Pryor's fascinating life. The first part is a thrilling introduction to archaeology on the Fens, sustained with a clear purpose and genuine excitement for the source material. This is the strongest part of the book, and will be at least interesting to anyone invested in wetlands or archaeology. The second is a series of vignettes which are drawn together only by Pryor's life and his palpable love for the Fens and those who live on them. This will be of more local interest, providing a single collection of Fen narratives for the interested non-historian. My copy in paperback is wonderfully produced, with large text on thick paper, and a beautiful, abstract representation of the Black Fens by Fred Ingrams fits the front cover.

ANEURIN MERRILL-GLOVER
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MICHAEL BLAKSTAD (ed.), *Farming the Valley: Mapping the history of East Meon* (East Meon History Group, 2019). 159 pp. illus. £25.00.

This lavishly illustrated full-colour book traces the history of agriculture in the Hampshire village of East Meon, starting in the Mesolithic period and ending with the present day. It would appear that this book

has been written for the coffee table, rather than the academic bookshelf, in that there are no footnotes, endnotes, or bibliography: the only references are a series of research studies written by members of the East Meon History Group which are available as PDF documents on their website (https://www.eastmeon-history.net/ftv/), the majority having been prepared by the editor of the book. However, within these studies, there are numerous references to relevant primary and secondary sources.

Starting from before the Roman invasion, the chapter on Early Farming revisits widely understood descriptions of agriculture in England: indeed, the same is true of the chapters on the Roman and Anglo-Saxon periods, although it does note that the best evidence for historic crops does not survive in the chalk-based soils of East Meon. Rather than providing evidence from the village to support these generalizations, it offers limited examples from within East Meon and its landscape.

Moving forward to the medieval period, the chapter starts with the Domesday survey and the two entries for Menes Hundred and Manor, and for Menes Ecclesia: both belonged primarily to the Bishop of Winchester, until some land was made over to Magdalen College, Oxford, in 1480. Here the Winchester Pipe Rolls have been used as evidence and the farming economy is presented in relation to markets, fairs, mills, and blacksmiths: the possible location and extent of fishponds and the deer park are described, before considering the effect of the Black Death on the village.

Farming in the early modern period uses evidence from a 1567 rental and the 1586 Lay Subsidy list, concluding that the layout of the village had changed little from the Domesday survey. Regarding enclosure by agreement, the only surviving record relates to the tithing of Oxenbourne in 1661. In this chapter, the surviving physical evidence of historic farm buildings is presented, in terms of barns, granaries, stables, cowhouses and cart sheds: here the input from Edward Roberts, expert on Hampshire buildings, is acknowledged.

The chapter on the nineteenth century focuses on the enclosures enacted in 1845, along with the 1851/2 Tithe Award: geo-referenced mapping is used to determine the parish land associated with each village farm in 1851/2, some 26 in number. Data is also taken from the 1851 Census to enrich the description of the farming landscape of East Meon. Village life is described through the development of non-conformism in the village, as well as the move away from self-sufficiency to a dependence on goods available in shops which came to the High Street in East Meon. One particular incident from this period is described at length: in 1826, a new vicar came to the parish and attempted to increase the lesser tithes due to him, by tithing turnips used as animal feed. The squire made a stand on behalf of all farmers in the valley and the vicar took the squire to court, concluding at Lincoln's Inn Fields, where it was determined that turnips were indeed subject to tithe. However, the squire's cousin was elected to Parliament in 1835 and raised the matter in the House: whether influential or not, the Tithe Commutation Act received Royal Assent in the following year.

The migration of farmers from Cumberland to East Meon is then described in the following chapter: the book states that it was possible in the 1890s to rent a Hampshire farm of 400 to 500 acres for the same price as 40 to 80 acres in the Lake District. Between 1892 and 1925, nine farming families moved from Cumberland to East Hampshire. These farmers changed the farms from corn growing to livestock husbandry, both sheep and beef cattle: they introduced machinery to make vast quantities of hay and abandoned the practice of folding sheep on turnips using hurdles. Descendants of these Cumbrian farmers are still farming in East Meon today. The breaking up of large estates following the first World War affected East Meon as elsewhere and some of the changes in landownership are traced in the book. As for the impact of the War Agricultural Executive Committee on the village during the second World War, oral evidence is presented of a farmer being shot at Botley in Hampshire whilst resisting confiscation of his land: whether this is a mis-located reporting of the well-known case of Ray Waldon of Itchen Abbas, also in Hampshire, or to a previously undocumented event is not clear.

The final chapter looks at farming in the valley since the 1950s and reviews the continuing agricultural activity in East Meon: the farms are larger, there is more specialization in both livestock kept and crops grown, yet there is some continuity in the farming families of the village. In the conclusion, the editor notes that, on the whole, East Meon has avoided public attention, apart from the Parliamentary army camping there in 1644 and the incident over the tithing of turnips and, therefore, its history is little different to that of many other English rural villages.

The book includes over 50 specially commissioned maps and plans, with the support of the Heritage Lottery Fund: these along with a large number of captioned, colour photographs provide ample illustration for the accompanying text. However, the book would have benefited from a thorough proof-reading: the text is littered with minor errors and typographical mistakes, for example, 'Buster' rather than 'Butser' (of ancient farm reconstruction fame) in the caption on page 24

and in the table on page 83, where it states that the 1851 Census records that William Weeks junior of Oxenbourne Farm employed 489 boys, this figure actually being the arable acreage. Further, there are two occasions where the conclusion to a chapter actually presents a summary of the next chapter. Despite these shortcomings, this is a well-illustrated micro-history of agricultural practices in a single village.

ALAN WADSWORTH
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JAMES P. BOWEN and ALEX CRAVEN with JONATHAN COMBER, *The Victoria County History of Herefordshire. Colwall* (University of London, 2020). xii + 138 pp. 31 figs. 2 maps. £14.

This is the third parish history published by the Trust for the Victoria County History of Herefordshire, the others being Eastnor in 2013 and Bosbury in 2016: as part of the VCH Shorts series, they provide in-depth parish histories. The plan for the future is that they will eventually form part of a VCH red volume on Ledbury and the surrounding parishes of the Malvern Hills: thus, the structure of this book is unsurprising, as it follows a well-rehearsed format. The book opens by examining the parish boundaries, landscape, settlement patterns over time and the built environment. This is followed by an examination of the landownership of the parish in terms of manors and other estates before the main thrust of the volume which presents the economic, social and religious history of Colwall before finally examining the changing structure of local government which managed the parish affairs over time. There is also a chapter on the British Camp, a large earthwork enclosure, which surrounds the Herefordshire Beacon, the highest point on the Malvern Hills within the county of Hereford: the existence of the Norman ring-work bank at this site places it in a rare class of archaeological features at a national level, thereby justifying the separate chapter.

Written in the usual VCH descriptive style, the reader is presented with a chronological stream of facts within each chapter. Colwall was a largely agricultural community until the mid-nineteenth century, and thus this subject appears at the beginning of the chapter on economic history. The section on agriculture in the medieval and early modern period is split into arable, park and chase, meadow and pasture, and woodland. A three-course rotation was being followed in the parish at this time: wheat, Lent grain (grain sown during Lent), and fallow. The description of crops and livestock has been enhanced by the availability of a large number of wills and inventories in this period: dairying was an important activity producing both cheese and butter, and hop growing was already being practised from at least the sixteenth century. Evidence of orchards along with the production of cider and perry is also presented, as well as the growing of flax and hemp.

From 1800 onwards, a series of new farm buildings were erected and existing ones improved, resulting in three 'model farms' in the parish: these were Barton Farm, Winnings Farm, and Park Farm. Whilst the growing of hops declined after this date, they continued to be grown in the parish of Colwall: as for the orchards, the Assistant Tithe Commissioner was unable to calculate the total acreage of orchards in 1839, simply recording 'numerous small orchards'.

A wide range of crafts were practised including weaving, tanning, gloving, and tailoring. With the coming of the railway in 1860, employment patterns changed as people were employed directly on the railway, but also the numbers in the building trades increased, reflecting the growth of the village at this time. Being adjacent to the Malvern Hills, there was access to the water that came from the springs, with a brewery and a mineral water factory (Schweppes) established in 1879 and 1892 respectively. Quarrying was in operation from at least the beginning of the seventeenth century, although this reduced significantly following the Malvern Hills Act of 1884 and the efforts of the conservators appointed under this act. In 1883, a vinegar brewery was moved from nearby Ledbury to the village and at its peak, it was producing 2000 gallons of prize-winning vinegar each day.

The editors have suggested that there were substantial numbers of sheep in the parish in the early nineteenth century, thereby providing large quantities of manure to enable high arable yields (p. 57). However, the only evidence presented is the number of sheep at individual farms at specific dates, and these were not significant numbers given that the parish extended to around 3800 acres at the time (the average of the four numbers quoted being just over 200 sheep), and further there is no indication of actual yields, provided for comparison purposes. The book describes the planting of new orchards by 1885 and reference is made to 'the avenues of lime trees which are characteristic of the village were also planted to attract bees to the orchards' (p. 60): they would indeed attract the bees but lime trees flower in late June/early July, and therefore would have been of no use to the orchard growers whose top-fruit trees blossom in the early spring.

A comprehensive range of manuscript sources has been used in the preparation of this volume, accessed at a number of archive offices, along with printed primary and secondary sources. A full list of abbrevi-

ations is provided, along with a useful index and a select glossary, although it would have been helpful if definitions of 'forlet land' (p. 49 and elsewhere) and 'fee-buck' and 'fee-doe' (p. 51) had been included.

The book is a high-quality production, marred only by two errors this reader found: firstly, in Table 1 (p. 12) the population figures for Colwall in 1981 and 1991 are given as 2088 and 2323 respectively, whereas on the opposite page the population for the same two years is quoted as 2074 and 2143. Secondly, the section on agriculture commences with the sizes of medieval holdings, being based around the concept of the yardland defined as 60 acres (p. 45): however, the glossary defines a yardland as between 15 and 40 acres, depending on local custom (p. 125) and there is no explanation as to why yardlands were larger in Colwall than elsewhere. Notwithstanding, this is a very readable account of an agricultural parish in the south-west Midlands.

ALAN WADSWORTH
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JAMES REBANKS, *English pastoral: An inheritance* (Allen Lane, 2020). 286 pp. £20.

I must start by declaring an interest – or, more accurately, a non-interest. *English pastoral* was commissioned by my daughter Helen when she worked for Allen Lane; she also commissioned and saw to publication James Rebanks's best-seller, *The shepherd's life* (2015). I have had, until now, nothing at all to do with the commissioning, editing, or promoting of either book. Had I been involved in the preparation of *English pastoral*, however, I would have queried the use of endorsements from Philip Pullman and Caitlin Moran: media celebs not noted as authorities on the hardships or history of farming. *English pastoral* looks set to repeat the success of *The shepherd's life*, having featured in January 2021 as a BBC Radio 4 Book of the Week. But what can it offer to the student of agricultural and rural history?

Although much of the book does concern sheep and fields, its title is mischievously misleading. This is no tale of 'England's green and pleasant land', or escape from the stresses of urban life to bucolic tranquillity. The book is divided into three roughly equal sections, the first of which brings to life the author's memories of childhood on his family's Cumbrian farm and makes clear just how much of an endurance test such an existence could often be. Rebanks quotes Virgil's *Georgics*, in which the poet describes farming as a war against nature, where defeat means starvation. It would seem that Rebanks is remembering the early to mid-1980s (the book provides very few dates), describing a farm where money was short and there was a constant struggle to keep on top of things. 'And such a hard way of living made for hard people', Rebanks tells us (p. 31).

The young Rebanks was much influenced by his grandfather, a farmer of the old school, who used the fields as classrooms in which he could pass on traditional knowledge to his grandson. He was slow, patient, and observant, and cared for his animals; he would not have been out of place in a book by H. J. Massingham. But Rebanks's farming relatives were dismissive of such an outmoded approach, and his father found himself increasingly under pressure to modernize. Rebanks is grateful to his grandfather for having shown him a traditional way of farming before it died out. Far from the supposed timelessness of rural England, *English Pastoral* conveys a sense of constant change: during the late twentieth century in particular, but stretching back through generations of the Rebanks family.

The coming of agri-business to Cumbria affected not just farming methods and farm numbers, but the wider culture and social life of the inhabitants. The world in which the young Rebanks was brought up was not entirely bleak, though: he recalls that there was a sense of community, an awareness of natural cycles, a wide range of skilled crafts still being practised, and an independence of spirit that resisted the blandishments of consumerism. But, in the end, Rebanks's father could not hold out against the changed approach that other farmers had adopted.

In the second section, ironically titled 'Progress', Rebanks describes how, through seeing the problems his father faced, he came in effect to discover those ideas about farming, economics and the environment which the organic movement has been promulgating since the 1930s. During the mid-1990s he spent time working on an Australian farm, an experience which showed him the reality of agri-business techniques. There was no sense of history 'to slow everything down', there were no people, no farmsteads: 'Just flat fields, perfect for huge machines' (p. 95). Tens of thousands of sheep were ranched in fields bigger than the Rebanks family's entire farm, a scale of production with which smaller farms could not possibly compete. Rebanks returned to Cumbria appreciating the full beauty of its landscape but bewildered by the seemingly impossible task lying ahead for him if he wanted to continue his family's farming history.

The account of how he and his father tried to keep afloat as economic pressure squeezed them ever harder, is powerful and informative – a valuable contribution to the agricultural history of the late twentieth century. Rebanks shows the reality behind the economists' abstractions: the harm done to animals and the soil,

and the poverty, isolation and social fracturing that adoption of agri-business techniques brought in its train. But his grandfather had offered him a different perspective, and it seemed to him, given the problems which overwhelmed his father, that there was wisdom to be gleaned from this supposedly outdated approach.

So, James Rebanks has come to appreciate the importance of a sense of limits; of replenishing the 'living soil' (though he does not mention Eve Balfour); of working with biological cycles; of encouraging earthworms; of mixed farming; of the philosophy of stewardship; of seeking quality rather than quantity; of local food production; of planting trees, and, in short, of agriculture as *husbandry*. This term takes us back to the 1945 collection of essays edited by Massingham: *The Natural Order: Essays in the return to husbandry.* Sadly, Rebanks refers to none of the chief pioneers of the organic movement, in whose writings all the above ideas and practices can be found, as well as a hostility to capitalist economics that Rebanks evidently shares.

Just as the early organicists contrasted economics with ecology, so Rebanks does, and not merely in theory but in practice. The book's third section is an account of how during the past few years he has sought to demonstrate to environmental activists that farming can be ecologically beneficial. He is fighting on two fronts: against those who see farming as inherently anti-environmental, and against those who ignore environmental and social issues in favour of large-scale food-production, where pursuit of 'efficiency' overrides other considerations. If Rebanks's project proves successful, his future books should, like *English pastoral,* make interesting reading.

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Europe and Elsewhere

SANDRO GUZZI-HEEB and PIERRE DUBUIS (eds), *Organisation et mesure du temps dans les campagnes européennes de l'époque moderne au XXe siècle* (Cahiers de Vallesia/Beihefte zu Vallesia, Archives de l'Etat du Valais, 2019). 234 pp. illus. CHF 55.

This far-reaching volume engages with a recent trend in historiography – the history of time and temporality – which is brought into a conversation with the study of rural landscapes and societies in post-medieval Europe. The volume's focus is on a discussion of three particular aspects: first, the measurement and organization of time in rural Europe or, as one editor calls it, the 'architecture of time in the countryside' (p. 247); second, the relationship between life and time in mountainous regions; third, the distribution of clocks and watches. The overall focus lies on central and western Europe, covering the thirteenth to twenty-first centuries.

The introduction presents a wide historiographical survey. At times, however, the introduction tends to become a bit descriptive. A stronger argumentative framing of the introduction would have been desirable to bring together the wide range of topics discussed in the French and German contributions of this volume: the impact of the calendar reform on rural sites; cultural attitudes towards the closing of contracts; the relationship between notions of time and labour in proto-industrial hubs of watch manufacturing; the temporal regimes of religious services; the links between migratory labour, animal husbandry, agriculture, and timing. This is an ambitious volume with an all-encompassing approach to the history of the *longue durée* attitudes of rural European societies towards time.

The volume convincingly challenges long-held assumptions about the rhythmicity of times and the dichotomy of urban and rural temporalities. Urban contexts have widely been associated with notions of progress, precision, and change, the editors emphasize, which led to a largely assumed dichotomy between 'urban modernity' and 'the cliché of the immobility of the countryside' with its 'resistance against change' (p. 13). In accordance with other recent publications on the history of early modern notions and practices of time, this volume questions such a dichotomy and argues for a larger plurality and parallelism of different understandings of time. It enriches historiographic debates by stressing the potential for innovation in rural societies. When challenging 'the dichotomy of circular time and linear times' (p. 14), however, it is worth noting that Jacques Le Goff himself never understood the *temps de l'Église* and *temps du marchand* in such dichotomous terms; this dichotomy is rather a misunderstanding resulting from later readings of his seminal *Annales* article from 1960. This could have been highlighted more prominently, also in order to reflect a bit more on this volume's wide use of quantitative methods. Doesn't a quantitative analysis lend itself to a rhythmic or linear narration about the past?

E. P. Thompson's 'Time, work-discipline, and industrial capitalism,' is a second classical study from the 1960s that features prominently into the discussions of this volume. In his contribution on 'individual' and 'collective time' in eighteenth-century rural Burgundy, Jeremy Hayhoe argues 'that "ordinary" villagers adopted modern chronometry because they saw advantages in it, not because they would have been forced into it by the arrival of the factory and a discipline of time that

followed' (p. 66). Similarly, Anne Purschwitz focuses on *Zeitverwendungsstrategien* in her contribution about rural Saxony – a term that recalls Alf Lüdtke's concept of *Eigensinn* (p. 84). When examining time in regard to rural labour, one of this volume's strengths is clearly the rich discussion of proto-industrial settings. In her study of watch manufacturing in the German Black Forest, Michaela Hohkamp interweaves natural rhythmicity, agricultural production, inheritance practices, family structures, and labour division, in an inspiring discussion of how innovation could emerge, and the transformation of crafts into commerce. She stresses that the division of labour remained embedded within domestic economies of proto-industrial Black Forest communities. 'The division of labour … was thus less orientated towards work performance, which could be measured in terms of temporal units, than in regard to the final product that could be sold. One is almost tempted to say that the production of timekeepers, in this case, prevented the measurement of working time' (p. 135). The strength of such research is its emphasis on the social, economic, and cultural grounding of the historical experience of time.

Practices of timing were enmeshed in a variety of cultural practices, and temporal practices deserve to be discussed in such anthropological terms. The introduction lists some anthropologists' and sociologists' works on time in rural settings, for example, Pierre Bourdieu's research on temporality among the Kabyle, published in 1963 (p. 9). However, this study is referenced without a discussion of what such work actually means for a historical-anthropological study of time in rural Europe. Bourdieu, for instance, argues that the 'awareness of time is not simply one of the dimensions of his life experience, but rather the form in terms of which that experience is organised' (Pierre Bourdieu, 'The Attitude of the Algerian Peasant Towards Time', *Mediterranean Countryman* 6, 1963, 55–72, reprinted in John Hassard (ed.), *Sociology of time* (1990), pp. 219–37, here p. 219). The question is thus how rural 'lifeworlds' could shape the making and unmaking of temporality in historically and culturally specific situations. Michaela Hohkamp and Claudine Remacle (p. 184) present some fascinating materials for thinking rural times in such a manner.

The volume ends with Pierre Dubuis's thought-provoking call for 'an economic, social and cultural history of the living' that includes an entangled study of time in regard to human, animal, and plant protagonists (p. 247). Unfortunately, this has not been spelled out in more depth. In light of recent work by anthropologist Anna Lowenhaupt Tsing and historians Timothy J. LeCain and Edmund Russell on neo-materialism and coevolutionary histories, however, this seems to be a particularly promising trajectory of future research that puts the matter of rural environments itself centre stage for an interpretation of times. The editors' general comments, thus, hold true: *Bref, les historiens du temps ont encore bien du travail à faire* (p. 21: 'In short, historians of time still have a lot to do').

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VERENA LEHMBROCK, *Der denkende Landwirt. Agrarwissen und Aufklärung in Deutschland 1750–1820* (Böhlau Verlag, 2020). 309 pp. 5 illus. €37.99.

In the standard histories of German agronomy Thaer's *Grundsätze der rationellen Landwirthschaft* (4 vols. 1809–1812) is treated as a founding moment, the initiation of an agricultural science capable of systematic development. As with all such founding moments, there is a prehistory, but this has long been treated as a prior history of error and misunderstanding. For Verena Lehmbrock, however, Thaer is a point of arrival, not of departure; she is interested in what came before, how Thaer was able to present himself as an innovator, and what it was about his work that led others to accept this stance. Writing about agriculture was not a novel idea in early nineteenth-century Germany: since the early 1800s a veritable agromania had developed, with an increasing number of specialized journals, pamphlets, and books seeking to promote agricultural improvement. Lehmbrock is not so much interested in the various recommendations these texts made in themselves, but the status these recommendations had; why such an enormous literature was generated, for whom, by whom. Commanding an enviable knowledge of hundreds of texts in this Enlightenment literature, she seeks to combine the techniques of the history of science with those of the history of agriculture without resort to modernizing generalizations about 'experience', 'theory', 'practice', 'scholarship' or 'empiricism'. All of these terms had a particular contemporary connotation that is not necessarily the one we have today. In part the book draws upon arguments about agricultural practice; but it also examines the terms in which this practice is argued about. For English readers, she includes a lucid overview (pp. 253–69) entitled 'The farming thinker: agricultural knowledge and enlightenment in Germany 1750–1820'.

This title reverses the German of the book's title – 'the thinking farmer' – and this reversal points to one of the book's central ambiguities: the relation of the writer

to the material about which that writer writes. Those who wrote about farming had to have some knowledge of agricultural practice, but, on the other hand, also the time and opportunity to write, sometimes at great length. In the process complementary stereotypes emerged – of the writer remote from the real work of farming, of the farmer rigidly adhering to established practices and resistant to change. As she writes,

The discourse of improvement in the oeconomic Enlightenment was an epistemic and a social arena in which claims to knowledge about agriculture were negotiated. The prize of holding one's own in this arena was won through the power to define the form and content of a so-called scientific oeconomy. We know the outcome, but little about the route to it (p. 25).

'Oeconomy' was at the time synonymous with the agricultural economy – and so reference to an 'oeconomic Enlightenment' brings together the daily life of agricultural labour with the intellectual prospects of the European Enlightenment. At first glance Thaer's book is continuous with this, linking 'rationalism' to agricultural practice. But *rationell* here denotes efficiency and profit-orientation; *rational* would by contrast denote the conduct of agriculture according to general rational principles, seeking greater yields for the own sake, or prescribing best practice in animal husbandry.

Following an introduction sketching out the purposes of the book – not a history of ideal agricultural practice, nor of the provenance of recommendations for such practice, but instead how arguments about good practice were formed, contested, legitimated, and diffused – the first major section deals with agricultural improvement (*Verbesserung*) around 1800. There follows the core of the book, a series of five 'perspectives', beginning with an outline of the work of Michael Irlbeck, a Bavarian farmer who, asked to draft a report for the Bavarian Agricultural Association, produced in 1834 a three-volume treatise for administrators and farmers. Irlbeck farmed about 10 hectares of poor land on high ground, and had dedicated himself to its systematic improvement. He was critical of 'the learned', by which he meant those with a university education; and especially critical of the universal prescriptions fostered by the oeconomic Enlightenment, such as the use of clover. Foreshadowing some aspects of the Green Revolution of the twentieth century, he asked why clover was supposed to be suited to his farming since it required, for his land, such intensive fertilization. Importantly, he did not question the aim of improvement, but questioned how it might be realized. His solution, however, dated from the very writings he criticized: that each recommendation should be vetted by a government official. Furthermore, as Lehmbrock demonstrates, he used the new vocabulary of a profit-oriented agriculture to defend established practices. He turned the rhetorical devices used by agricultural writers and officials on these writers and officials themselves.

Lehmbrock reviews the contention (p. 84) that up until the later nineteenth century all the various measures of agricultural improvement originated in farming practice, not in the literature of agricultural improvement. And here she points to a problem in the historiography: that eighteenth-century writings have generally been interpreted by modern Enlightenment historians, while agricultural historians have generally focused on other sources. If, then, the work of agricultural historians is taken into account, she suggests that the evidence tends to support Irlbeck's thesis that he was not the only *Bauer* open to reform although the improvement literature saw established practice, and its practitioners, as the problem. Enlightenment history is intellectual history, but farmers are not intellectuals.

Having arrived at this insight she selects three mid-eighteenth-century periodicals and examines the manner in which they construct the figure of the 'simple *Bauer*', impervious to 'science'. To this she contrasts the '*denkende Landwirt*' of the book's title, an enlightened, reform-oriented agricultural producer who first appears in *Der Fleißige und fröhliche Wirthschaftsmann*, published in 1811 and 1812, thus coinciding with Thaer's volumes. Lehmbrock here makes the point that 'before' and 'after' share a focus not on agricultural relations, but on the character of agricultural producers. Furthermore, she also makes the point that an apparent continuity in arguments over 'practice' is moderated by the intervention of Immanuel Kant. His *Critique of Pure Reason* (1781) shifted the meaning of 'empirical' from unlearned, unlettered, to our present-day neutral sense. The meanings of 'science' and 'practice' were likewise transformed by Kant. And just as surely as an enthusiasm for Critical Philosophy swept through German universities at the turn of the century, it reached the 'agricultural sciences' too. Thaer had read his Kant (p. 183), and was part of this transformation.

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REBECCA EARLE, *Feeding the people: The politics of the potato* (Cambridge University Press, 2020). 308 pp. 33 illus. £17.99

Feeding the people is at once a compelling account of the potato's journey to become a global staple, and a seminal history of how eating came to feature in modern politics. It is a thoroughly researched, ambitious, and

engaging study that builds on Rebecca Earle's work on the potato, including her hugely enjoyable short book, *Potato*, published in Bloomsbury's Object Lessons series (2019). The potato warrants such scholarly attention as it is now the fourth most important food crop in the world, an incredible feat considering that it was known only to those occupying the Andean mountains until the sixteenth-century Spanish conquest of the Incan Empire set in motion its global dispersal. Through the lens of the potato – this 'exemplary modern food' (p. 3) – *Feeding the people* argues that our contemporary neoliberal conviction that 'what we eat is at once an individual concern and a matter of public interest' (p. 21) has its roots in the eighteenth-century Enlightenment.

The argument proceeds logically and with a broadly chronological structure. Chapter 1 considers Europeans' first encounter with the potato in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries and its assimilation into European diets; chapters 2 and 3 focus on the Enlightenment campaign to encourage potato consumption; chapter 4 traces the global spread of the potato beyond Europe; chapter 5 explores the role of the potato in nineteenth-century discourses on capitalism; and chapter 6 brings the story into the twentieth and twenty-first centuries, especially with regard to wartime expansion of state-led public health initiatives.

Through meticulous research, Earle carefully debunks a major enduring myth that has established itself in the historiography of the potato: that European peasants were slow to accept – and even feared – this new world food. Anxieties are commonly attributed to the knobbly shape of the tuber (which supposedly resembled the limbs of those afflicted with leprosy) and the familial relation between the potato and the poisonous henbane and deadly nightshade (all of the Solanaceae family). The only evidence Earle finds for the association between leprosy and potatoes, for example, is a second-hand comment in a Swiss herbal published in 1620. Instead, Earle argues that peasants and labourers in many parts of Europe had adopted the potato over the course of the seventeenth century, long before eighteenth-century elites encouraged them to do so. Only in the Enlightenment did philosophers, scientists, and statesmen become convinced of the benefits of potato consumption, as part of an emergent notion of statecraft in which the success of a nation relied on maintaining a healthy population.

This finding has significant consequences, not only for how we understand the history of the potato, but also for how we understand historical change. Reversing the traditional top-down historical narrative, it shows how ordinary people contributed 'to agricultural and dietary innovation' (p. 205). Foreseeably, some may object to the lack of quantitative evidence used to support this claim, but I find the accumulative use of a variety of qualitative examples convincing, including examinations of tithe disputes, dietaries, and customs records. This can, however, only apply to those regions from which this data is drawn; Earle notes that elsewhere, including Russia and Finland, there is little evidence for the potato's early dispersion. It would have been interesting to consider why certain areas did not adopt the potato so readily.

Issues of food security, food sovereignty, and statecraft continue to feature in the fourth chapter, which follows the global pathways of potato production. Just as elite Europeans from the mid-eighteenth century took credit for the uptake of potatoes among the labouring classes, by the end of the century Europeans claimed to have introduced the potato in Iran, India, and other areas of colonial interest with the benevolent intent of improving the well-being of local peoples. This chapter begins by suggesting that in certain localities the potato had already been introduced before these top-down schemes, but this becomes less clear in later examples. Across Africa, for instance, Earle maintains that dissemination 'owes much to the activities of colonists, colonial bureaucrats and missionaries' (p. 123), whilst in Kenya, British attempts to enforce potato cultivation were so unfit that they led to the failure of native ecologies. Addressing this local diversity, however, is precisely what is so impressive about this chapter in particular. Moving gracefully between geographical nuances and broad trends makes this an exemplary piece of global history. As Earle indeed writes, 'global processes of imperialism and trade, and the emergence of new political languages, are always articulated locally' (p. 130). The acknowledgements page of the book demonstrates just how much work and scholarly collaboration has been necessary to research sources in several languages across the world.

This is a book of great academic merit and one that will undoubtedly also appeal to a wider audience. Moving across centuries and countries, Earle packs in a great deal of information but maintains an enthusiastic and clear writing style that prevents it from feeling too dense. I particularly enjoyed the eight potato recipes, which add further colour to the book's thesis. It is also refreshing to see repeated efforts to make clear the relevance of historical findings to the present and future. For instance, if it was small-scale growers who cultivated the potato, rather than states and industrial processes, should modern governments empower ordinary people to determine their own agricultural practices? In telling

a story about the humble spud, *Feeding the people* does what all good food history should do: it shows us that food is never just sustenance, but is intricately connected to broader cultural, economic, and political processes that continue to shape the present day.

ELEANOR BARNETT
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CHRISTIANE CHENEAUX-BERTHELOT, *Paris et ses campagnes au XIXe siècle: marchés, productions, producteurs* (Editions SPM, 2020). ix + 273 pp. 27 euros.

The agricultural history of the Ile-de-France region has been well documented by researchers, but this study is unusual in that it focuses on developments within a 7-to-15 kilometre radius of the gates of Paris. Covering a mere 47,000 hectares, the Seine *département* was France's smallest and in 1840 it contained a capital city, numbering one million inhabitants. Yet 74 per cent of the land surface of this tiny administrative unit remained firmly wedded to agricultural production. The story that unfolds can be summed up in the word 'interface': the peri-urban interface and the interface between intensive owner-exploiter cultivation and extensive cereal farming on the surrounding plateaux.

We know most about grain production (wheat, oats, and barley) in this context. Many historians have drawn attention to the high yields achieved in the region; yields that, by the end of the *ancien régime*, matched those being achieved on the best land in England. By continuing the investigation into the nineteenth century this author contributes three more bits of information. She points out that cereal producers planted wheat as much for straw as for grain in the first half of the century. The failure of observed grain yields to progress significantly can be linked to this practice because the seed-yield ratio used to ensure an abundant straw crop was more than twice the national average for cereals. Planting oats and to a lesser extent barley proved an increasingly attractive and reliable land-use strategy to farmers as well. As for the wheat grain, it was no longer conveyed directly to urban consumers by the nineteenth century. Instead, it was transformed into flour in technologically advanced mills (*minoteries*) situated on the outskirts of Paris. In Saint Denis, for example, three out of ten of the processing mills were steam powered by the 1820s.

The spur to these three developments was Paris, of course. The city's livery stables housed a total of 23,000 horses in 1812; 34,000 in 1826 and, if donkeys and mules are added to the total, around 80,000 in 1880. Farmers transported straw litter and also hay and fodder into the capital and then filled their empty carts with stable manure, street sweepings and night soil for the return journey. This relationship is already known to agrarian historians, but not the price-sensitive context in which it operated, nor in its implications for land use and rotations.

The other main focus of this study is horticulture. The author demonstrates that intensive fruit and vegetable production on diminutive plots could be found cheek by jowl with tenanted cereal farms on landscapes almost within sight of the city. Whilst demand for bedding straw was constant and the price obtained for oats fairly stable, seasonal fruit such as peaches, strawberries, cherries, or indeed cut flowers, could be marketed at a considerable premium. The same applied to vegetables with beetroot and lentils achieving the best net profit. On the periphery of the capital the latter crop conveniently matured when neither Egyptian lentils, nor the produce of the south of France were available in the marketplace. Whole villages specialized using pioneering production techniques. Peach trees were nurtured in Montreuil within a grid of walled enclosures, apricots were grown in Arcueil, lettuce in Aubervilliers, cherries in Sceaux and rose bushes in L'Hay. In some villages vegetables were grown in open fields adjacent to wheat and other grain crops, whereas in others horticulture might be practised on separate holdings of no more than 400 or 500 square meters. Large-scale cereal production juxtaposed with what often amounted to kitchen gardening gave rise to differing arrangements in matters of tenure and agricultural machine use, not to mention contrasting patterns of employment, seasonal mobility and wage remuneration. But there were synergies to be had as well – particularly in the area of soil preparation and the protection of tender crops.

It has to be said that these valuable nuggets of information do not emerge very clearly. The book started off life as a doctoral thesis, which the author then adapted to make more accessible to a non-academic readership. This reformatting has produced very uneven results. The barely digestible and sometimes barely legible graphs and tables remain, but the author has added a lot of explanatory footnotes and narrative asides which do not sit comfortably with the text. A strong conclusion sorting the research grain from the incidental chaff would have been welcome. However, the conclusion consists mainly of musings (including comments on Scottish agriculture) that scarcely touch upon the specifics of the author's claims about the hybrid yet hugely enterprising and innovative agriculture of the Seine *département*.

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RICHARD BROOME, CHARLES FAHEY, ANDREA GAYNOR and KATIE HOLMES, *Mallee Country: Land, people, history* (Monash University Publishing, 2020). xiv + 415 pp. $39.95.

Australia's mallee country in the States of Victoria, South Australia, and Western Australia had a distinctive ecological history of woodlands and bushlands, of flora and fauna, that had evolved and flourished in semi-arid climatic conditions characterized by low and variable rainfall. After noting that these regions were named after an indigenous Aboriginal word for the mallee eucalyptus plant, Richard Broom, Charles Fahey, Andrea Gaynor and Katie Holmes elaborate on how, over some 50,000 years, the Aborigines had integrated themselves economically and culturally with the land.

Explorers and surveyors opened the way for a pastoral economy based on hundreds of thousands of sheep that catered for the British wool market. This resulted in armed resistance by and massacres of Aborigines, who were denied access to what was redefined as Crown land, on which, the authors demonstrate, pastoralists had an incentive to maximize short-term returns within the limitations of their annual licences. Hence, they over-grazed their sheep on native vegetation and eroded the soil under the impact of droughts that devastated sheep numbers and drove many pastoralists to the wall.

By the end of the nineteenth century, pastoralism had been replaced by wheat farming on land leased to settlers by colonial and State governments. As is the case throughout what is a model regional history, Broom, Fahey, Gaynor and Holmes draw parallels and make connections between government policies, ecological constraints, scientific discoveries and technological innovations. They point out that new wheat varieties resisted rust disease and thrived in hot Australian conditions, whilst the invention of the mallee roller and the stump-jump plough enabled the expeditious and low-cost clearing away of tough mallee vegetation before planting and harvesting could go ahead.

On the one hand, doing away with scrub that held soil together increased the intensity and frequency of dust storms and soil drift, which were worsened by drought. On the other hand, the advantage was the speed with which a crop could be obtained and delivered to market on government constructed railways, when compared with the years settlers required to chop and slash their way through dense forests in other regions before farms could be established. But the vulnerability of mallee land to drought was still underestimated and misunderstood until it caused a retreat of the wheat settlement frontier that made governments realise that a reliable water supply from dams and irrigation channels was essential.

During the First World War, mallee farmers were able to turn their backs on past disappointments and losses as a result of some good seasons and the British government's acquisition of the entire wheat crop at a guaranteed price. Broom, Fahey, Gaynor and Holmes cast fresh light on how, after the improved conditions of the war years, economic rationality was distorted by political ideology when State governments believed that farming required the attributes of pioneering resilience and masculine independence, whilst rural family homes, where women provided housework and childcare, were the basis of a loyal citizenry and a prosperous nation. Consequently, when State government agencies selected settlers, including returned servicemen under soldier settlement schemes, too much weight was given to character traits and not enough to farming know-how and savings.

Even though the authors do not provide a coherent statistical analysis of class structure based on farm sizes and debt levels, they do show that, once global prices for wheat collapsed in the 1930s, the average debt owed to agricultural banks by inexperienced mallee settlers was 17 times the annual urban wage. Confronted with the prospect of discontented poor farmers getting poorer, governments and agricultural banks wrote off or rescheduled the debts of efficient farmers, while marginal smallholders beyond rescue were paid their equity when they packed up their lives and left the land.

All this resulted in bigger farms that were suitable for mechanization and diversification, so that in the 1950s and 1960s, when the price of wheat was high and farms were profitable, the area cleared and cropping increased. The authors describe how farmers could afford to improve their water supply with the installation of dams and bores, whilst they acquired new tractors which could work with disc ploughs and harvesters. They drew on research when they planted rotation crops to arrest soil drift, introduced trace elements to curb diseases and used fertilizers such as superphosphate.

However, by the early 1970s, the prices for farm inputs rose while prices for farm products fell. In response, the authors report, farmers looked to improve the productivity of their land. They formed Mallee Sustainable Farming and adopted the Landcare Movement, not only to curb erosion, but also to limit salinity caused by the cutting and pulling out of deep-rooted scrub, which had prevented the elevation of the water table and the salt that rose with it. Following on from this shift in farmer attitudes to the landscape, the next step for the authors could have been to apply modelling,

such as that outlined by the Australian Bureau of Meteorology, to a quantitative historical measurement of the interconnections between human economic systems and non-human ecosystems; between financial accounts and environmental accounts; between monetary and non-monetary indicators of the value of productive natural resources, such as land and water, when they were degraded or depleted.

Nevertheless, Broom, Fahey, Gaynor and Holmes provide a commendable survey of how changes in public appraisals, motives and interests caused governments to end major land releases and to create and enlarge national parks. Despite the emergence of a conservationist consensus, the authors add that conflicts and compromises persisted over the relative merits of recreational tourism, wilderness experiences and agricultural projects. Importantly, Aboriginal communities, who had worked on or remained attached to their traditional land and had affirmed their identity with it, were able to run indigenous ranger and heritage programmes.

If proof was required that all was not well, the severity of recurrent droughts since the 1980s accelerated the use of no-till farming, which, the authors explain, mitigated the effects of drought, dust storms and soil drift because it replaced the use of fallowing or repeated cultivation of the soil as the way to remove nutrient-consuming and water-absorbing weeds. Instead, no-till farming depended on machinery to sow into undisturbed soil, mechanical seed crushers and herbicides to control weeds, as family-owned farms with inter-generational knowledge continued with mixed success to adapt technology to ecology under the pressure of climate change and unstable export markets.

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ULRIKE KIRCHBERGER and BRETT M. BENNETT (eds), *Environments of empire: Networks and agents of ecological change* (University of North Carolina Press, 2020). 278 pp. $29.95.

COREY ROSS, *Ecology and power in the age of empire: Europe and the transformation of the tropical world* (Oxford University Press, 2019). 496 pp. 21 illus. £19.99.

The close relation between colonial empires and (so-called) natural resources has been a well-known subject of historical study. Often, these resources appear in the story once they would have been available – the cotton picked, the trees felled, the oil pumped from the earth – with the environment that offers the resources out of focus. The attention for the environmental side of colonial resource extraction policies – either with or without taking into account how the colonized were using these resources and were affected – is more recent. Two books of this more recent type feature in this review. Corey Ross's *Ecology and power in the age of empire* was first published in 2017, with the paperback edition following in 2019. Eleven chapters cover over 400 pages, an impressive *tour de force* of colonial environmental history. But I propose to turn our attention first to the volume of essays edited by Ulrike Kirchberger and Brett Bennett, published in 2020. Their attention within the wider context of colonial environmental history focuses on the movement of plant and animal species between different geographical areas. The nine chapters (plus introduction and epilogue) are presented by a team that is well balanced in terms of focus areas, gender (as far as I can tell), and regional coverage. Together, the team brings specific species like tobacco and oysters, and arrangements like zoological and botanical exchange networks, to our attention. The overarching concept the book seeks to discuss is the question of non-human agency, with a connected question about how historians can mobilize insights from non-historical disciplines to capture that agency – two issues very close to my own interest!

There is enough to enjoy in the book; each chapter convincingly presents the social construction of ecological sciences and the associated movement of species. As with many edited volumes, the promised discussion of the main themes is not equally visible in all chapters. We do indeed find recognition of the non-humans that co-shape the story throughout the volume, but a few chapters do not move very far beyond the descriptive aspect. In the introduction and most chapters, the concept of networks is prominent. It is a logical choice, as exchanges between territories lend themselves well to being described as movements between nodes. So far so good. I would object, however, to the way networks as a concept are made equal to the concept of networks in actor-network theory (ANT) approaches. The word may be the same, but behind words appear different worlds. In network analysis, the network is fixed and the actors move between nodes. In ANT, it is the network that is continuously redrafted by the movements themselves. One is never certain the network will be there. I realize that writing about something that is continuously ambivalent is terribly difficult, but my criticism of the network concept in the book reaches further than some semantic debate. In a network approach, it is easy to connect the 'local' to the 'global', as the book indeed aims to do, with species moving over the globe (indeed, the global) from locales (indeed, the local) – leaving aside that the term

'global' is disturbingly often associated with 'Western', and non-western places are the 'local' ones. In ANT, the distinction between local and global does not make sense, as every connection needs to be (re)constructed locally. The global is as local as the local. I would have liked to read more about how the networks of exchange had to be continuously performed and created, but I like the way the chapters manage to present their colonial sub-projects in terms of the ecologies they tried to understand and did create – often without actually desiring specific creations!

The epilogue stands somehow apart from the approach in introduction and chapters. It aims to bring together the different chapters, and to make overarching sense of the processes of species movement discussed in the book. This feature is not what strikes me most in terms of the epilogue being different, however. I am simply fascinated that in a book aiming to use concepts like agency, networks, and what we could label as the social construction of (scientific and colonial) practices, the chapter that brings everything together mobilizes a narrative of 'underlying geographic and evolutionary factors shaping invasion that are then influenced by historical contingency' (p. 235) – accompanied by a rather traditional idea of science as a practice. Apparently, we can employ agency as much as we want, but we are only playing in the space that has already been shaped by external factors. I would like to know where these factors come from themselves – and see no other explanation than that these factors are the results of the agencies that shaped them, a route that the epilogue clearly does not pursue. Interestingly, one reason why the epilogue does fit with the other parts of the edited volume rather well, is the way networks are conceptualized as existing features, within which actors move – as I already suggested above. As soon as we use actor-network theory as a theory of actors-in-a-network, the network becomes a fixed pattern – and we have returned to concepts like agent and structure that ANT wanted to challenge in the first place.

I may not prefer the way it is done, but the question taken up in the epilogue of *Environments and empire* of how to bring the diverse experiences of different colonial regions together is worthwhile. Perhaps the monograph *Ecology and power in the age of empire* by Ross could offer much more in terms of relating different locales over time, with its single author discussing an impressive set of case studies on different ecologies and colonies. The ingredients are certainly there: we read about cotton, cocoa, rubber, tin, copper, oil, nature conservation and forests, and irrigation, and we move from continent to continent in a really impressive book on how ecological resources were claimed, used and spoiled by colonial agents, from individuals to states. The chapters cover a lot of ground but maintain a comprehensive narrative of improvised planning – if I may borrow one of my own concepts. In some of the topics I think I know something about (like Geertz's agricultural involution concept), I found some of the references not up-to-date with recent scholarship. However, it is much to ask from an author who writes about so many aspects in admirable detail to have everything at the same level of scholarly debate. Overall, the book convincingly illustrates its three main propositions. It may not be the first imperial movement that changed environments rather drastically (the Assyrian empire comes to mind), but modern imperialism did mark a seminal period for the ecosystems of the colonial world. This thorough transformation of the colonial era indeed built on longer histories, and resulted in considerable harm to these diverse environments. After reading the book, one wonders how there is a single landscape left in the tropics, so much has been developed, moved, spoiled, turned into capital, etc.

What I miss in the richness of the book, is a closer connection between the case studies. There were opportunities to make links between regions, commodities and periods. To take another example that I can easily recognize, the large-scale irrigation systems in colonial India (that Ross mentions on pp. 316–18) are more or less directly related to the current pumping of groundwater in the Punjab referred to on p. 387 – if only because the British systems would have brought the groundwater that is now pumped out. I would also think that the forestry themes and chapters could have been connected more clearly. Obviously, Ross has made efforts to bring his themes, times, and ecologies together. In the introduction, he presents the three propositions I already mentioned, which serve as a guide for the chapters. In the final chapter, he brings his narratives together through programs like the Green Revolution and the Environmental Conservation policies of the decolonized world. I agree that such programs must be connected to the ecological actions and programs of the colonial world, but I do not think these connections help us to understand how the different extraction and development agendas of colonial powers in different regions and over time were (not) connected in colonial times. Colonial powers, commercial companies and colonized groups were engaged with all kinds of ecological activities simultaneously – forest exploitation was done next to mining or farming. I know that reviewers need to stay away from criticizing authors for not having written the book the reviewer wanted to

read, but I hope that Ross manages to use his vast and impressive overview of ecological interventions in the colonial world to bring out these continuously created connections between resource policies and actions of different kinds in different colonial localities over time in his forthcoming work. Indeed, I would think that an actor-network inspired approach would help do exactly that!

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BEN NOBBS-THIESSEN, *Landscape of migration: Mobility and environmental change on Bolivia's tropical frontier, 1952 to the Present* (UNC Press, 2020). 342 pp. 18 illus. $37.50.

The development of tropical and semitropical frontiers comprises a dramatic chapter in late twentieth-century agricultural and environmental history. Particularly noteworthy is the transformation of Bolivia's eastern lowlands over the last half century. The region's largest department, Santa Cruz, witnessed an agro-export boom as hundreds of thousands of migrants converted native landscapes into soy farms and cattle ranches. Its capital, Santa Cruz de la Sierra, grew from a town of 40,000 to become the nation's largest city with a population of over 2 million. All along, economic growth defied political upheaval, as Bolivia careened from revolutionary to authoritarian to neoliberal regime. Ben Nobbs-Thiessen's illuminating study situates eastern Bolivia's take-off in the migration of peoples, plants, technologies, and ideologies. In the historian's able hands, such flows are reconstructed through multinational narratives that trace territorial displacements, sociopolitical tensions, and agroecological transformation. Boldly conceptualized, richly documented, and elegantly written, the book is much more than another case study of regional development in Latin America. How this one-time backwater became its nation's economic powerhouse is a parable of twentieth-century global capitalism and geopolitics.

Bolivia's 'March to the East' was a state-backed project of frontier expansion unveiled by the Nationalist Revolutionary Movement after assuming power in 1952. Over-reliance on tin exports and food imports, demographic strains on highland Andean landholdings, a history of humiliating wartime territorial losses, and U.S.-subsidized Cold War developmental priorities roused a new-found urgency among Bolivia's leadership to colonize the fertile and more sparsely populated lowland regions. Mass media played its part. In a delightful chapter analysing the oeuvre of the peripatetic Bolivian filmmaker Jorge Ruiz, backed by the state's Instituto Cinematográfico Boliviano and the U.S. government, Nobbs-Thiessen analyzes the documentaries that showcased highland-lowland migration as a bridge for the nation's socioeconomic, regional, and racial divides. Like the gendered 'foundational fictions' of nineteenth-century Latin America nationalist literature dissected by Doris Sommer, Ruiz's plots centered too on the romantic unions between Indigenous highlanders (*kollas*) and largely mestizo lowlanders (*cambas*), with the latter often feminized in these odes to progress.

Change was, in fact, coming to eastern Bolivia in the mid-1950s, with the arrival of railways linking Santa Cruz to the Brazilian and Argentine borders and an interregional highway to Cochabamba. And from the get-go, *cruceños* avid for investment ranted at federal infringements on regional autonomy and at the influx of outsiders in scarcely camouflaged racist language. The core of the study, however, focuses on the origins of disparate human flows to eastern Bolivia – Okinawans and Japanese, Mennonites, and Andeans – and their impact on frontier development. While previous works compartmentalized the groups' trajectories, Nobbs-Thiessen's layered approach parts ways from traditional monoethnic studies of migration, allowing for broader insights into their commonalities and divergences. Agrarian populations with collective histories of displacement and transregional ties, the three groups, notwithstanding racial and religious differences, formed part of the flotsam and jetsam of twentieth-century globalization. Victims of Japanese imperialism and postwar U.S. military occupation, Okinawans were lured to South America by colonization projects promoted by the U.S. and Bolivian governments. Japanese colonists arrived as well. In their peregrinations, the Okinawans' paths converged with another Diasporic people, the Mennonites, who streamed in from Paraguay, Canada, and, predominantly, Mexico. The latter, distressed by overcrowding, drought, and the evangelizing/ cultural influences of U.S. and Canadian coreligionists, turned to Bolivia in the late 1960s, where the promise of agricultural cooperatives, exemptions from military service and public education, and the importation of duty-free machinery beckoned. Andeans, whose hardscrabble conditions had dispatched hundreds of thousands of household members for seasonal labor in Argentina, marched to the East in search of a plot of land, as 'spontaneous' migration far outstripped official colonization. In other words, a region at the margins was soon to be remade by settlers squeezed from other global peripheries.

Nobbs-Thiessen underscores the hardships endured by migrants lacking secure title and credit, local

environmental knowledge, agricultural extension, and access to markets. Those hailing from Asia and the Andes confronted *cruceños*' racism as well. Yet in the absence of backing from the Bolivian state, those more fortunate, and the Mennonites, in particular, counted on infrastructural and social service support from Protestant religious organizations, whose relations with U.S. development agencies and Bolivian government bureaus proved rather fluid. All three migrant groups clamored for the rights of 'agrarian citizenship' as frontier pioneers, resorting at times to acts of civil disobedience to protest their abandonment by state officials.

In a particularly evocative *mise en scène*, Nobbs-Thiessen juxtaposes the historical trajectories of two interlopers in the eastern lowlands in 1967: the insurrectionary foray of Che Guevara among the Bolivian peasantry, and a party of Mexican Mennonites scouting out lands for future settlement. While the former's doom is one of Cold War Latin America's watermarks, the fate of the latter encapsulates Santa Cruz's actual 'revolutionary' transformation over the next half century. Over the course of the 1970s, links to Mennonite communities in North and South America facilitated the acquisition of tractors, agricultural machinery, and livestock to establish a dairy industry in the region. (Japanese and Okinawan settlers focused on commercial rice cultivation, while Andean colonies planted sugarcane, rice, and corn. Cotton would also enjoy a boom into the mid-1970s.) Yet it was another migrant to the lowlands – soy – whose proliferation relied on the plant's adaptation to tropical and subtropical latitudes (advanced by U.S.-trained Brazilian agricultural engineers), rising global demand for livestock feed, and Bolivia's turn to neoliberalism in the mid-1980s, that propelled the region's skyrocketing agribusiness, with Mennonites prominently at the helm. Not that such sagas, *pace* Jorge Ruiz, would have their full Hollywood endings: following the presidential election of Evo Morales in 2005, Santa Cruz, as the center of economic power, would rally for regional autonomy from Andean highland control.

While Nobbs-Thiessen weaves multiple threads, the Mennonites' saga, meticulously reconstructed through archival sources and oral histories, overshadows that of other migrants. Collectively, the migration narratives crowd out a more comprehensive history of the receiving regions and their local populations, which emerges only sporadically amid extensive reconstruction of extra-regional processes. Nevertheless, Nobbs-Thiessen has provided a compelling account of Bolivia's 'March to the East' that will not only be of significant interest to historians of Latin America but scholars of twentieth-century migration and comparative frontiers in general.

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MARCEL THOMAS, *Local lives, parallel histories: Villagers and everyday life in divided Germany* (Oxford University Press, 2020). 320 pp. 31 illus. £65.

Marcel Thomas' fascinating comparison of two villages illustrates the similarities and differences in rural life in West Germany (FRG) and East Germany (GDR). In so doing, Thomas successfully challenges the traditional approach of treating the rural as backward and villagers as passive in the context of wider social change.

The book takes the West German village of Ebersbach in Baden-Württemberg, and the East German village of Neukirch in Saxony, to explore how local residents experienced and navigated social change in their localities in the post-war era. Thomas chooses these two villages because they shared similar characteristics in 1939, such as population size, types of employment and relative cultural heritage. What makes the book so interesting is its examination of two similar villages from a similar starting point. This allows for an effective exploration of the commonalities and divergences of how villagers were affected by, and negotiated their lives within, the two opposing systems of capitalism and socialism. In this way, it provides a useful contribution to debates around the relationship between state and society in the two post-war Germanies.

Previous work in this area has used Berlin or border towns as case studies; in contrast Thomas uses a comparative approach firmly focused on the local in two unrelated towns not close to the physical divide. A wide range of documents are used, such as local histories, transcripts of local political debates, newspaper articles, Stasi files, combined with interviews with 20 people who lived in each village. The use of oral history is a particular strength of the book, offering a window into how citizens perceived the world around them. Citizens' petition letters (*Eingaben*) are used to bring to life the views of citizens in Neukirch regarding the state, particularly in discussions of local activism in chapter 5. A combination of these sources allow Thomas to use Geertz-style 'thick description' and *Alltagsgeschichte* to develop a bottom-up approach to successfully uncover how individuals responded to and negotiated the larger changes going on around them.

The book comprises six well-structured chapters, first setting out the argument, then treating both villages separately before bringing them together to highlight similarities and differences. The first two chapters show how the residents of both villages

followed a similar theme of departing from, and then seeking to return to, the rural and village community, initially not wishing to protect this form of community but then missing it when it was gone. Chapter 3 explores the influence of foreigners on each society and concludes that locals in both villages marginalised foreign workers or ethnic German refugees coming into the community in order to claim ownership over their own local identity.

The main argument of the book is that 'villagers on both sides of the Iron Curtain gave local meaning to the Cold War and strove for the same goals' (p. 276) in using pragmatism to improve their lot within their respective political systems. This is seen most clearly in chapters 4 and 5. The fifth chapter provides examples of local activism within the political system such as the restoration of a tower and restaurant in Neukirch and the opening of a youth centre in Ebersbach. Chapter 4 is the strongest and most interesting chapter of the book; it considers how citizens located themselves within the context of the Cold War and in relation to the other German state. Here, it would be beneficial for the author to call upon works such as Benedict Anderson's *Imagined communities* to provide a framework for how citizens in each state imagined people in the other. Nonetheless, Thomas' conclusions that Ebersbachers gradually lost interest in the GDR and claimed German identity for themselves whilst Neukirchers placed importance on the FRG as a barometer for life in the GDR, are strong and convincing.

Moreover, Thomas demonstrates how villagers considered themselves at the mercy of external changes. An example of this is in Chapter 6 where Thomas notes that in local histories, Nazism was briefly referenced as an event that happened to citizens of each village, constructing a zero-hour narrative of the post-war era. This final chapter almost provides short literature reviews of local histories written of the two villages, an area of history the author laments as often being dismissed by academics as biased or inaccurate. It is here that Thomas makes one of the most interesting conclusions of the book, arguing that from the 1970s onwards, people in both villages used local histories to understand and control the past in order to shape the present and their future locally during times of uncertainty of the end of the economic miracle in the FRG, the shortage economy in the GDR, and the impact of reunification on people in Neukirch.

One aspect that remains underdeveloped at various points in the book is the concept of identity and in particular how local identity in this context relates to national identity. It would also have been pleasing to see more of an exploration of transnational influences from both Germanies on each society to complement the comparative approach. This is however only a minor point to enhance the study rather than pointing to a hole in the approach.

Altogether, the book is fantastically well signposted and structured, making several clear arguments in each individual chapter that serve as building blocks for the central argument that individuals negotiated their lives in a specifically local way within the wider Cold War context. As a result, Thomas fully immerses the reader in all things Ebersbach and Neukirch in a highly engaging way that allows him to succeed in his stated aim of bringing the local more into the academic.

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