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Introduction

Carriers had their origins as medieval pedlars; however, with the improvement of roads in the second half of the sixteenth century, and the general growth in trade, the operation of a complex network of scheduled public carrying services using waggons and packhorses emerged. As trade continued to grow and the economy to expand in the seventeenth century, they began to operate over greater distances. While large carriers transported goods between the developing industrial centres and stage coaches conveyed passengers over long-distance routes, there were also those prosaic carriers who regularly served the needs of local villages and towns, carrying manufactured or imported goods, parcels and packages, agricultural produce, mail and people. These country carriers were fundamental to the development of places such as Lancaster and, according to Everitt, served four functions. Firstly, they acted as shopping agents, giving customers credit and purchasing goods which were then sold locally for profit. Secondly, they transported bulky goods and parcels to nearby towns or (from the 1840s) railheads from which they would be distributed to their respective destinations. Thirdly, carriers’ carts were often the only form of public passenger conveyance, taking villagers to the nearest market town, for although by the 1850s omnibus services were developing in urban areas this trend was not mirrored in rural areas until the arrival of the motorbus in the 1920s. Lastly, they carried produce such as milk, eggs and poultry, fruit and vegetables to town for sale to merchants and shopkeepers, thus contributing greatly to the rural-urban economy which articulated the geography of market horizons for towns such as Lancaster. The carriers not only served the town’s provincial function, extending the market’s geographical range, but also contributed to its rapidly developing manufacturing sector. Therefore the role of carriers should not be overlooked. Despite the arrival of the canal and the railway, they continued to serve the surrounding area, often surviving until replaced after the First World War. They were thus significant in the evolution of contemporary society, although the extent to which there was continuity in the switch of carriers to motorbus services or motor lorries is beyond the scope of this paper.

Previous historical analysis of carriers was inspired by an exploration of the historical fictional works of Thomas Hardy, George Eliot and W.H. Hudson and by the discovery of rare documentary evidence including carrier diaries such as that of Frederick William Palmer of Walton-by-Kimcote. Subsequently research has focused on towns, notably Leicester which had a large agricultural hinterland and villages which required communications with the nearest market. Though Everitt at Leicester pioneered research into country carriers during the 1970s, more recently there has been limited interest in this traditional form of English local history with the exception of Hey’s work on trade and communication in North Derbyshire and South Yorkshire, and Gerhold’s Carriers & Coachmasters: Trade and Travel before the Turnpikes, examining the early history of carriers. This paper seeks to revive historical interest in
the subject while also providing a valuable insight into the economic and social aspect of local and regional communities.

It analyses a variety of important themes, which not only highlight the routes and frequency of the carrier services serving Lancaster in the nineteenth century but also the characteristics of the carriers themselves. Such an analysis of carriers, using Lancaster during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries as a case-study, will extend previous research, which has tended to focus on the role of road transport and carrying operations between 1550 and 1800, when Britain experienced considerable upheaval in industrial and economic terms. Similarly, previous work on Lancaster as a transport centre has been largely concerned with coastal shipping, canals and the railway. This paper seeks to redress the imbalance, shedding light on a different aspect of the region’s history and demonstrating the considerable changes which occurred during the period 1824-1912—and, moreover, the longevity and survival of local road transport in the railway age. This last aspect is a crucial and generally overlooked theme, for the usual view—that the grass grew on the roads between the 1830s and the Edwardian period—is manifestly incorrect.

The use of Lancaster as a case study reveals some similarities with previous studies of carriers while also reflecting the specific changes in the town itself during the nineteenth century. Lancaster’s favourable geographical location in north-west England is significant, for it not only served as an important market centre for the largely rural areas of Westmorland and the Lune Valley, but was also a major centre for textile manufacturing and had important links with the rising industrial manufacturing centres of south-east Lancashire.

Lancaster: the context and the sources

Lancaster, a route centre since the Romano-British period, developed as a classic county town of Hanoverian England, even though the actual administrative centre of Lancashire was Preston. Although much historical investigation has considered the town’s maritime, canal and rail functions, little emphasis has been placed on the complex network of overland carriers which in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries operated out of Lancaster and allowed the distribution of goods throughout its extensive largely rural hinterland. Since the granting of the first borough charter of 1193 Lancaster was an important regional and provincial market centre, developing during its ‘Golden Age’ in the eighteenth century into a thriving international port, trading with North America, the West Indies and the Baltic. As Dalziel has commented, ‘Lancaster was at the centre of a strong regional web of agricultural development, commerce and industry during the eighteenth century’. The carriers were a distinctive but integral part of the community, operating an extensive communications network whose vital role underpinned the economic and social life of the area and was not yet extinct at the beginning of the First World War.

For this investigation, four trade directories were used, providing snapshots of the extent and organisation of carrier networks and their changes over time. The first directory was Edward Baines’s History, Directory, and Gazetteer of the County Palatine of Lancaster (1824). It forms the basis of this paper and is invaluable as it is the first to provide detailed evidence on the commerce of the town. This is supplemented by three later directories: the History, Topography and Directory of Westmorland; and the hundreds of Lonsdale and Amounderness in Lancashire (1851) published by P. Mannex & Co. (fig.1); Topography and Directory of Lancaster and 16 miles Round (1881) also published by Mannex; and (fig.2) the History and Directory of Lancaster and District
The use of a directory from 1851 allows an assessment of the impact of the growth of the railway; that from 1912, in contrast, highlights the extent of the change that occurred in Lancaster and the surrounding area during the later nineteenth century. Specific archives relating to carriers are very limited but trade directories, which in the nineteenth century had a much broader scope than those of the previous century, provide a foundation for the exploration of carriers despite the degree of unreliability and flaws which they present. Tabulated and analysed, even a brief written record in a contemporary directory supplemented with census data can provide an insight into the workaday lives of ordinary country people.

Geographical distribution of carrier services

Throughout the period the carriers of Lancaster generally operated within a clearly defined local area but, significantly, some provided services to distant towns. For example, Baines’s directory of 1824, in addition to relatively local services, listed a twice-weekly service operated by Thomas Chorley to both Halifax and Leed, a journey of approximately fifty miles. Nathan Metcalf operated a service along the ancient turnpike road up the Lune valley to Richmond, arriving on a Thursday at three in the afternoon and returning the following day at twelve noon. Nevertheless, the majority of carriers operated in the hinterland, which extended east up the Lune Valley as far as Kirkby Stephen, north as far as Kendal, west across the sands of Morecambe Bay to Ulverston, and south as far as Winmarleigh, Garstang and Nateby in the Fylde. Although the number of services operating declined between 1824 and 1912, generally speaking a large number of the settlements continued to be served by carriers because individual routes were amalgamated and extended to include settlements which previously had their own separate operator. This was especially the case with many of the Lune Valley carriers. Thus, while there had been multiple carrier services to individual settlements such as Tunstall, Wray and Hornby, the contraction and decline in the number of services saw routes being extended, to the extent that by 1912 William Moorby stopped at eleven stations and there were carriers in competition on a route that served Caton, Cloughton, Wray, Wennington and Bentham. Similarly, to the south of Lancaster a single carrier was then operating to Galgate, Forton, Scorton, Garstang and Winmarleigh. It is important to note that
directories often listed carrier services not as individual routes but rather on the basis of settlements which they connected. This is evident in Baines’s directory, where the carrier John Rigg, operating from the Old Sir Simons inn, is listed separately as serving Cartmel, Hawkshead and Ulverston, but this service was in reality one cross-sands service stopping at the various intermediate settlements en route.

Investigation into carrier destinations indicates that while Lancaster had a distinct sphere of influence, many of the settlements served by Lancaster carriers had their own sub-networks of carrier operators (such as those of Hawkshead and Ulverston) which served much smaller areas. This can be confirmed by cross-checking directory evidence. It is reasonable to assume, therefore, that Lancaster was a significant regional hub for a hierarchy of carriers which included a much wider network of local carriers serving the largely rural hinterland of the surrounding area. Directory evidence shows that, excluding the few long-distance carriers, the majority operated within a twenty-mile radius, the rural hinterland of Lancaster. However, the increasing significance of alternative methods of transport, specifically the railway, led to the reduction of this radius. The long-distance services operating in 1824 and the cross-sands routes to Furness were equally made redundant by the coming of the railway.15

The distribution of carrier services within the week

Analysis of Lancaster directories clearly indicates that the day with the greatest number of carrier services was Saturday, followed by Wednesday, these being Lancaster’s market days. But many services also operated on Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday to surrounding market centres, including Kirkby Lonsdale, Kendal, Garstang and Ulverston. The evidence suggests that while market day in Lancaster influenced carrier operations, surrounding markets were also served by Lancaster-based carriers, to which they distributed goods, and the importance of the market focus cannot be overstated. As Everitt noted, the frequency of carrier services during the nineteenth century reflected ‘the increasing dependence of rural areas upon their local

2. Extract from T. Bulmer & Co., History and Directory of Lancaster and District (1912), giving comprehensive information about carrier services on the eve of the First World War.
capitals, a deepening connexion between each ‘country’, in the old sense of the word, and its county town’. This is evident in the case of the carriers of Lancaster. The majority of carrier services originating from Lancaster did not travel more than twenty miles and, given an average speed of three to five miles per hour for a heavily-laden cart on poor roads, a journey time of perhaps five hours each way would have allowed travel during daylight hours in the summer months at least.

In Lancaster’s case there was a uniquely challenging route, that which crossed the potentially treacherous sands of Morecambe Bay [see painting by J.M.W. Turner, reproduced on the front cover]. Baines’s 1824 directory indicates that the over-sands services operated only on Tuesdays and Fridays, their timings being determined by the tidal changes of the bay. As a result of their dependence on tides the operators were often unable to unload and return the same day, instead staying overnight at one of the inns in Lancaster which not only provided accommodation but also business premises for carriers. This is evident in the timetabling of the cross-sands carriers in 1824: for example, John Rigg operated a service from Hawkshead, Cartmel and Ulverston to Lancaster on Tuesdays and Fridays and similarly both John and Thomas Butler operated to Ulverston. The length of this route (20 miles, compared with the 34-mile road route via Milnthorpe) and its dependence on the tide meant that on a Tuesday and a Friday the cart would arrive in Lancaster in time to unload for market the following day. Similarly, the need to break a journey overnight is apparent in the case of Leonard Chapman, who operated a long route to Kirkby Stephen from the Nag’s Head, Church Street, arriving on Friday, and departing at eleven the following morning.

The cross-sands carriers, in particular, faced considerable danger and risk. For example, on 2 January 1824 ‘A boy belonging to one of the Backbarrow carriers was drowned on Lancaster Sands’. This tragedy highlights the danger of the over-sands services—there are comparable references to passenger carriages being blown over by strong winds, trapping the occupants in sinking sand. However, Mannex’s 1881 directory records the cessation of the over-sands route as a result of the growth of the railway network, which also had the effect of reducing a significant proportion of Lancaster’s carrier trade. But there were also wider implications for, as Winstanley has highlighted, by ‘destroying the lucrative coaching trade and enabling long distance travellers to avoid an overnight stay in the town’, the change in the mode of transport diminished Lancaster’s economic significance and its traditional role as a route centre and attractive resort. Although the coming of the railway to Lancaster and its gradual penetration into the surrounding area had a significant impact, carriers were nevertheless required to serve the railheads and, given the relatively local operation of many of them, they suffered considerably less than long distance carriers or coastal shipping.

Also apparent in the pattern of carrier services, both in terms of their number and their seasonal variation, is the rise of Morecambe (formerly Poulton-le-Sands) as a Victorian seaside resort. It is not included in the 1824 directory even under its former name, but is prominent in those of 1881 and 1912. Two carriers, W.B. Clark and J. Masheder, operated to Morecambe in 1881 but in 1912 there was only one, T. Ayrton. There was, however, a distinction between summer and winter services, indicating the impact of Morecambe’s summertime tourist season, when there were daily services by both operators in 1881, augmenting horse-drawn tram services. Despite the resort’s relatively early railway connection (1848), in 1881 both carriers operated four services each week even in winter.
Carriers' inns and stations

English carriers traditionally used inns as termini, because they provided space for their horses and carts as well as being a convenient rendezvous for passengers. The inns derived income from the eating and drinking that went on among the carriers and all who did business with them. In addition to providing fodder and shelter, innkeepers also acted as local agents, interacting with carriers by exchanging money, storing and delivering goods. During the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries Lancaster carriers mainly operated from the inns in the town centre, on Church Street, Penny Street and Market Street. Although in 1824 sixteen inns were used by carriers, by 1881 this had decreased to eleven, suggesting not only a decline in services but also a concentration on certain inns. However, by 1912 only five inns were used by carriers, and instead services had begun to use other locations within the town, including the market square and the arcade. The dominance of a relatively small number of very important inns is clear—between 1824 and 1912 the key locations were the Nag's Head and the Sun Inn, both on Church Street, and the Cross Keys on Market Street. The Nag's Head, for example, had four services in 1824 and this increased to six in 1881 and eleven by 1912.

This trend correlates with Everitt's findings concerning Leicester. He observed that 'During the nineteenth century it is clear that in many towns a small group of inns, usually those nearest the markets, were able to attract a growing part of the country trade and so become noted centres' for what he describes as 'village men' (those local carriers who rarely stayed overnight) and thus were essentially 'the meeting places of a local fraternity'. Census material supports this impression of local short-distance services. According to the 1851 census Robert Redmayne (aged 45) from Bentham operated a service linking Lancaster and Kirkby Lonsdale on Wednesdays and
Saturdays, Bryan Edmundson (55) of Lancaster providing a service on Mondays, Wednesdays and Saturdays to Hornby (where he had been born), and James Brunton of Over Kellet, whose occupation is given as ‘blacksmith’, operated to and from Yealand on Tuesdays and Saturdays.

The demolition of public houses at the end of the nineteenth century, when Lancaster underwent much rebuilding and urban improvement, affected the carrier inns. For example, the Black Bull (six carrier services in 1824 and one in 1881), the Boars Head (one in 1824 and three in 1881) and also the Corporation Arms and Commercial Inn were all demolished during the 1880s. A similar pattern can be identified in Leicester with the emergence of a small number of dominant inns. As Everitt highlighted, between 1815 and 1884 there was a small decrease in the number of inns patronised by carriers, but there emerged ‘a close little caucus of ten dominant establishments which between them accounted for half the carrying trade of the town’.

In Lancaster the three dominant carrier inns were predictably very close to the market place, which by 1912 developed in its own right as a carrier station with seven services. Also significant is the location of the main inns in terms of their convenience for entering and leaving the town. Thus, the majority of routes served from inns in Market Street were for destinations north of the town, while Church Street inns served the Lune Valley to the north-east. Routes were steadily concentrated in these two streets: in 1824 carriers used inns in Penny Street, St. Leonard Gate and St. Nicholas Street, but by 1912 none of these was involved. A comparable shift has been identified in the market town of Clitheroe, in East Lancashire, where Crosby has noted that the railway station yard became the focus of activity. This increasing centralisation of carrier services to correspond with the focus of Lancaster’s commercial activity would also have assisted the interchanging of goods.

The occupations of the carriers

The size of Lancaster and its role as a major commercial centre meant that a large number of full-time professional carriers served its hinterland. These people generally fitted into one of two categories. Firstly, there were those who lived in villages and operated a few services per week

4. Part of the hinterland of Lancaster: detail of the map (by Edward Mogg) of the Lake District published in Daniel Paterson’s Paterson’s Roads, being an entirely original and accurate description of all the direct and principal cross-roads in England and Wales (1826), showing the area around Morecambe Bay.
to Lancaster and other local market towns. For example, in 1824 Thomas Butler of Floookburgh, one of three villages in the township of Lower Holker near Cartmel, not only operated a cross-sands service from Ulverston to Lancaster (according to the tide) on Tuesdays and Fridays, but also another cross-sands service (over the Leven estuary, and again dependent on the tides) from Holker to the Braddy’s Arms, Ulverston on Mondays and Thursdays. Similarly, John Butler of Cark near Grange-over-Sands operated a cross-sands service in direct competition with Butler, serving the Sun Inn, Ulverston from Cark on Mondays and Thursdays according to the tide.

Secondly, there were full time carriers who can be identified operating a single route several times each week. In 1824, for example, Thomas Saul operated a service to Wray three times a week, while in 1881 E. Marsden operated a service south to Nateby and Galgate on Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday. In the same year, W.B. Clark and R. Nelson each worked to Morecambe four days a week during the winter and daily during the summer. There is evidence that the carrying trade was dominated by small family businesses such as the Butlers but further research is required to determine the extent of this familial pattern.

There is also clear evidence that some carriers had multiple occupations, especially when their services were operated directly from warehouses to allow the swift distribution of goods. For example, W. Clark operated from Slyne and Hest Bank to Hodgson’s Flour Warehouse, Lancaster on Wednesdays and Saturdays, coinciding with Lancaster market days. In 1824 John Swindlehurst operated a twice-weekly carrier service to Lancaster from Dolphinholme, a remote rural location in Wyresdale with one of the valley’s sixteen water-powered textile mills. Many of the carriers combined their carting role with, for example, shopkeeping, spinning, innkeeping, coal-dealing or farming. That must have been particularly so for those living in the villages rather than the town. This distinction, between full-time carriers and those with multiple occupations, corresponds with Gerhold’s differentiation for the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries between common (or professional) and casual carriers—the latter, predominantly operating over short distances, probably conveyed a greater tonnage overall.

The 1901 census of Ulverston demonstrates how carting might be linked to other occupations. Edward Dixon, a carrier aged 18, born in the small Cumberland mining town of Milom, was the youngest member of a family occupying a private house and shop, his occupation being listed as ‘carter’ and ‘Cooperative Stores’. It is reasonable to suppose that Dixon would have carried goods to and from his family’s shop. Hey has identified the difficulties inherent in identifying the multi-occupations of carriers, observing that ‘if carrying was normally a by-employment in which men took goods no further than the market towns or the inland ports, then the carrier would probably have been known instead by the name of his principal occupation’. He suggests that to establish accurately the actual number of carriers is problematic. This was certainly so with Arthur Holmes: according to the 1881 census he was a ‘Farmer of 22 Acres’ from Silverdale, but his twice-weekly carrier journey to and from Lancaster is not mentioned. An example of a carrier having multi-occupations is Job Kenyon who in 1912 operated a service on Wednesdays and Saturdays from the Nag’s Head to Caton, Claughton and Wray. According to the 1901 census Job Kenyon, aged 42, was residing in the civil parish of Wray with Botton and was engaged in the occupations of coal merchant, farmer and carrier. The Inland Revenue District Valuation of 1910-1915 provides further evidence of his farming activities. He rented at a rate of £35 per annum, 122 Roeburnside Farm House which encompassed 23 acres 3 roods 20 perches and had a total market value of £866, of which £200 were buildings and the rest only fair land. There are, however, examples in census schedules of individuals
whose occupation was recorded as ‘carrier’; one instance is John Close, aged 31, who in 1881 was lodging in Wray with Botton and operating a service to and from Caton on Mondays, Wednesdays and Saturdays, and had been recorded in 1871 as a servant. However such cases of individuals being recorded as a ‘carrier’ are rare.

The unreliability of directories has been emphasised by Crosby, referring to Clitheroe in the Old Coaching Days by Stephen Clarke (1897), which describes the carrier and shopkeeper Billy Hobbs and his route to Lancaster through the Trough of Bowland carrying mussels, garden and farm produce—he used a packhorse, not a cart. Not only was this carrier service not recorded in trade directories, but it also raises questions about contemporary perceptions of carriers—the supposition that all of them used a cart is seemingly untenable. Overall, these examples suggest that while there were full time carriers, the majority operated services in support of their other occupations, such as coal or flour merchant, farmer or shopkeeper.

The carriers as a community

The carrying trade of Lancaster was male dominated and there was only a small minority of women carriers. Nevertheless, those women that did operate were prominent, such as Ann Butler who in 1881 operated a twice-weekly service to Ashton, Thurnham and Cockerham. Other women operated carrier services only once a week, such as Mary Clark who in 1824 carried from the Sun Inn to Beetham on Saturdays, arriving at eight in the morning and departing at three in the afternoon; Mary Willian (1824) from the Commercial Inn to Tunstall arriving at nine in the morning and departing at two in the afternoon; and Mrs Bullfield (1881) working from the Cross Key to Overton. These women were not making a living primarily through the carrying trade, especially as they were travelling to small rural hamlets in the Lune Valley where they lived. Moreover, such women, probably widows of carriers, may have had other jobs in addition to carrying and they may perhaps have hired someone to operate the service on their behalf, continuing the family carrying business until their sons grew up or an opportunity arose to sell.

There is clear evidence from Lancaster that families remained in the carrying trade for long periods. For example, in 1824 John Butler and Thomas Butler operated carrier services to Ulverston, while in the 1881 census an Ann Butler was operating two services and there was also an S. Butler, suggesting a possible family connection. Similarly the name R. Hodgson appears in 1824 and later in 1881, and there is also a W. Hodgson. The surname Dugdale spans the entire period, although there is a change in initials (and the name is missing in 1881) and the same applies to the surname Saul, present in both 1824 and 1912. It appears that the carriers of Lancaster were a close-knit community with sons frequently taking over from their fathers, though this is contradictory to Crosby’s findings in the Clitheroe area, where a pattern of long and durable family connections is not evident.

Directory evidence implies that during the period 1824-1912 the carriers played an important role in the social and economic life of Lancaster and the surrounding area. The names of carriers show strong and distinctive local roots (for example, Hodgson, Rigg, Parrington, Dugdale and Butler) and a tightly-knit community must have developed—and had probably done so by 1824, as dynasties of carrier families emerged. In 1881, for example, H. Helme operated a carrier service to Garstang from the Bear and Staff on Wednesdays and Saturdays, while in 1912 John Helme operated from the King’s Arms to Galgate and Garstang. This not only implies that carrier families existed, but also suggests a significant decline in services between 1881 and
1912. In 1881 two carriers operated to Galgate and Garstang respectively, but in 1912 only a single service was operated by John Helme.

Contributing to the sense of community within the carrying trade and the wider community were the busy communal gatherings at inns, stations and market places. These hubs also emerged as foci for the local population, combining business and pleasure in a distinctly informal environment. As Everitt suggested for the old county towns and regional centres, such meetings must have engendered a strong sense of community among carriers, people from the surrounding rural hinterland, and the people of the country market towns.31

The survival of the carrying trade

The long-distance carrier must be distinguished from the country or village carrier, for the role of the former was, as Everitt emphasises, ‘to link one town with another, one area with another, and above all the provinces generally with London’.32 This contrasts with the village or country carrier, whose function was ‘to unite a market town with the villages of its hinterland, with the local area dependent upon it, and not town with town’.33 According to the 1824 directory Lancaster had long distance carrier services to Leeds, Halifax, Colne and Clitheroe and Richmond (to which there was an ancient and important trading road, turnpiked in 1751).34 While these accounted for only a small proportion of carrier services originating from Lancaster, they were particularly significant. The long-distance carrier services linking Lancaster with much larger industrial towns especially benefited the intermediate towns and villages through which routes passed and where goods were traded. After 1850 the railway network not only linked Lancaster with places such as Preston, Carlisle and the conurbations of south Lancashire, but also with the textile centres of Yorkshire. By 1881, therefore, no long-distance carrier services existed—although, strangely, in 1912 a single daily long-distance route, operated by Sutton & Co from the Arcade, linked Lancaster with London.35

However, the survival and resilience of the carriers in more local terms is evident from directory evidence. As late as 1912, thirty were operating to and from the town. Their survival reflects the changes which the Lancaster area experienced, with significant industrialisation and commercial expansion, and the ability of carriers to respond to such change.36 The increasing significance of alternative modes of transport—especially, of course, the canals and railway—combined with improved road transport as a result of early nineteenth-century turnpike schemes, required the carrying trade to reorientate its operations. Despite the construction of the Preston and Lancaster canal in the mid-1790s, and its extension to Kendal in 1819, some of the carriers of Lancaster continued to flourish by focusing their routes on canal wharfs.37 Others sustained themselves by providing a door-to-door service for clients. For example, as noted above, in 1881 W. Clark operated from Slyne and Hest Bank specifically to Hodgson’s Flour Warehouse, so that it remained competitive in terms of cost and because it could provide a quicker and more reliable service.

By the mid-nineteenth century the canal was itself under pressure from the expansion of the railway network in North Lancashire and South Cumbria. This soon led to the abandonment of some of the local carrier services and, especially, the longer-distance routes. For example, the railway line from Carnforth to Ulverston was completed in 1857 and immediately destroyed the competitiveness of the cross-sands route which had been a major component of Lancaster’s carrying business.38 Even after the railway had opened north of Lancaster to Carlisle (in 1846) there continued, according to
Mannex in 1851, ‘A Coach daily, over the sands to Ulverston, alternately from Bear and Staff, Penny st and King’s Arms, Market st’, and carriers arrived weekly from Cartmel and Ulverston until superseded by the railway. Initially the railways, because they were often independent, small-scale operations, might have had little direct impact on carrier services, and indeed generated new business for some—locally, the Furness Railway Company stimulated additional cartage traffic for Thomas Ellwood, Walter Berry and others. However, as the railways were increasingly interconnected and became integrated freight handling networks, they tended to supersede parallel carrier services.

Nevertheless, the railways themselves relied very heavily on local, ancillary distribution networks. Because in country districts few villages had rail communications, they needed better links with railheads. As F.M.L. Thompson has argued, ‘far from displacing horses, the railways created new and expanding demands for horse-labour’, and the evidence suggests that this was the case with Lancaster. The railways boosted trade and the increased amount of freight carried had to be distributed by road locally. As Everitt suggested, carriers linked ‘town and country, farm and market, and village and railhead together’, the patterns of their routes reshaped so that it complemented, rather than competed with, the new railway system. Lancaster’s small seaport, Glasson Dock further down the Lune estuary, was not linked to the London & North Western Railway until 1883. Mannex’s 1881 directory shows three carriers operating to the port including, unusually, one for passengers only.

The development of railheads and docks therefore created some new carrier services, or supported existing ones, because they provided short haul feeder services serving local industries. This was evidently a wider national trend. Vickers, in his study of the carriers of Victorian Lakeland, has suggested that ‘it is probable that rail freight and the railways themselves would not have expanded so rapidly without the responsive support of the horse-drawn cartage sector’, which was extremely versatile and much more adaptable than the train. This confirms the view, expressed by Thompson, that the railways actually created carrier traffic and that society and economy in Victorian Britain was at least as dependent upon the horse as any previous period. The greatest market for horses was in the late-nineteenth century.

**Conclusion: Lancaster as a carrier centre**

Directories indicate that Lancaster was a very important centre for carriers between 1824 and 1912, the majority of them being engaged in short distance work. However, further research is required to reconstruct the wider webs of carrier networks on a county or sub-regional basis. One town’s directory listing is likely to present only a partial or incomplete picture. It is clearly important not to underestimate the significance of road transport, while at the same time not overstating its ability to serve all the needs of the local economy. We also need to look at the differences within particular areas—for example, while many of the market towns were eventually connected to the railway network, so undermining long-distance carrier services, the country carriers continued to be a lifeline for many rural settlements, entering into a complementary relationship with the railway. The enduring impression of local carrier services is that they were highly individualistic and personal in character, being largely unregulated until the eve of the Victorian period. Moreover, that local carriers survived in the Lancaster area until the First World War suggests that communities valued having their own carrier, with whom there was direct personal contact and who could be relied upon. It is therefore likely, as Vickers has highlighted,
that a high degree of mutual trust existed between the carrier, his clients and local traders.\(^7\)

Just as Everitt identified for Leicestershire and Kent, the country carriers serving the Lune Valley survived until after the First World War because of the lack of an adequate alternative and the fundamental role which they performed in traditional everyday life. Their rapid replacement by petrol lorries and omnibuses in the 1920s reflected the dramatic increase in registered motor goods vehicles, from 41,000 in 1918 to 100,000 in 1920.\(^8\) Yet Everitt noted the paradox that provincial society in the nineteenth century was 'too varied and subtle in its development, too full of survivals and peculiarities, to fit neatly into any preconceived theories of urban evolution'.\(^9\) This case-study of Lancaster and surrounding areas has demonstrated that the survival of carriers and the flourishing of associated crafts, traditions and occupations, not only throughout Victoria’s reign but also into that of her grandson exemplifies one aspect of that pattern which should not be ignored.

NOTES AND REFERENCES
The turnpike acts from 1750 significantly improved the highways from Lancaster north to Kendal, south to Garstang, and to Richmond in the east: D. Gerhold, 'Productivity change in road transport before and after turnpiking, 1690-1840', *ECHR* new ser. vol.49 no.3 (1996) pp.491-515.


John Fell, 'The Guides over the Kent and Leven Sands, Morecambe Bay', *TCWAAS* vol.7 (1883) pp.1-26 esp. pp.10-14.


Crosby, 'The carriers of Clitheroe', p.106; Vickers has highlighted how Furness Railway station and goods yard at Cark similarly created much traffic for the carrier Thomas Ellwood 'Country carriers in Victorian Lakeland', p.283).


I am grateful to Dr. M.J. Winstanley of the Department of History, Lancaster University for this information.

Crosby, 'The carriers of Clitheroe', pp.101-102

*ibid*, p.101

Everitt, 'Country carriers', pp.196-197, 200

*ibid*, p.179

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BALH 2010 Publications Awards: winning article

‘And the Laxey river runs down to the sea’: the farming landscape of Lonan and the Laxey valley

PATRICIA NEWTON

And the Laxey wheel keeps turning, turning, turning,
   In Lady Isabella’s memory,
   And while the water flows,
   The Laxey wheel still goes,
   And the Laxey river runs down to the sea.¹

Editor’s note: This is an edited version of an article first published in the *Proceedings of the Isle of Man Natural History and Antiquarian Society*, vol.12 no.1 (2005-2007). It concerns the parish of Lonan, one of the three parishes which form the sheading of Garff on the east side of the Island, between the towns of Ramsey and Douglas. Lonan parish includes the village of Laxey, which in the early-nineteenth century grew rapidly with the expansion of lead-mining. From 1854 draining of the mines was facilitated by the opening of the awe-inspiring Laxey Wheel, by far the largest waterwheel ever constructed in the British Isles. It is now a major tourist attraction, as is the adjacent Snaefell Mountain Railway, ascending the Laxey Valley to the upper slopes (which reach to just over 2000 feet in Lezayre parish).

I am very grateful to Patricia Newton for her help in revising the article for *The Local Historian*, and especially for her detailed and highly-informative additional footnotes explaining, for a non-Manx readership, the fascinating terminology and distinctive historical patterns of Ellen Vannin.

In 2004, on behalf of the Isle of Man Natural History and Antiquarian Society and Laxey and Lonan Heritage Trust, Susan Chambers and I undertook to photograph farms in the parish of Lonan. Our aim was to counterbalance the 150th anniversary celebrations of *Lady Isabella*, the Laxey Wheel, with a record of the farming landscape which had formed the backdrop to the lives of miners 150 years previously. The results were exhibited during the 2004 celebrations to the evident enjoyment of today’s farmers. But from a geographer’s viewpoint, what combination of landownership, legal nicety and changing agricultural practices, superimposed on the physical topography of Lonan parish, led to our present agricultural landscape? Socially, from west to east, the picture includes the mountains, intack and quarterlands, with the abbey lands in the north-east and the church lands in the south-east.² Physically, the scene is dominated by the Laxey River and its tributaries, feeding in from Glen Roy in the west and including the separate river systems of Ballagawne/Garwick Stream to the south, and the Groudle River which forms the southern boundary (see colour...
picture, inside back cover). From predominantly steep and very wet in the north-west, the land grades down to flatter and drier in the south-east.

A survey undertaken in 1608 found for Lonan that ‘there was noe tenant within that parish because of the Barren Soyle therein’.7 Both James Chaloner in 1656 and William Sacheverell in 1702 refer to the lack of trees for the previous 150 years,4 though there had obviously been plenty in the past. Apparently it was not only the site of Lonan Church that was skeed [‘tired’; possibly referring to stony or uncultivable ground]. In 1827 William Pettman, who came from Kent to value the land on behalf of the 4th Duke of Atholl, based his observations on agriculture by valuing the tithes, firstly according to the amount of wheat grown in the parish, and then on other crops. He concluded that ‘to the undersigned it seemed surprising so little wheat is grown in this parish. There are some quarterlands amounting to several hundred acres that are worth from 20 to 25 shillings per acre a portion of them being set at that rent. On no part of England that has fallen under his notice has he yet discovered on soil and in such a climate similar to Lonan parish lands letting at such rents capable of growing wheat in so small a proportion’. He advised that ‘the Rents inserted in the foregoing schedule were taken for the most part from the landowners themselves and it is also believed they are very moderate and it is also believed that when the quantities of lands can be accurately ascertained they will greatly exceed those contained in the foregoing Schedules’. And he adds that he would ‘not be responsible for the accuracy of the Rents obtained in the manner those in this parish were, from the information of men decidedly averse to give in either the actual quantity or fair average value. All he will be responsible for is that the quantity of corn and grain now fairly set down from the best information that could be obtained without actually going into and viewing each field and that its average produce is rather under, than over stated’.5

So were the early writers correct? Is Lonan’s land so barren? Was there simply no land let on lease? Or was Pettman right? Was there more wheat grown than was claimed? Has the type of agriculture in Lonan changed since then? What evidence is there still on the ground and in our photographs for the agricultural practices of the past? Did Pettman simply get the wrong impression as to the climate of the parish, and therefore have an unrealistic expectation of its ability to grow corn crops? William Blundell, who was in the Isle of Man between 1648 and 1656, reported that

‘This island, besides corn of all sorts yieldeth good store of flax and hemp. There is not much pasture ground, the most and best is in the Earl of Darby’s possession, lying in the south part of the island. Their neat [cattle], therefore, in general are by consequence little, low, small, and poor (but not in any extremity) … and no marvel, or they feed for the most part in healthy ground, lying continually in the open fields both winter and summer, never housed; neither is any hay or fodder given them, but are enforced to feed on what they find, those yt graze by ye sea shore or near thereto are observed every day of themselves to go down in companies … and there they will expect the ebbing of the water to have ye benefit to eat of ye sea tangle [Alga] yt is those weeds which the sea, at the coming in of the tides, casteth upon the land, and ebbing, leaving them in great heaps. The cattle do more willingly yea, I may truly say more greedily, feed on those weeds than upon grass or hay … those cows yt feed on them are far fairer, bigger-bodied, fatter and yield more milk than those of the inland’.6

By 1827 Pettman would have been seeing it after a massive failure of both fishing and crops. In the words of James McCrone this was ‘reducing the Islanders to poverty’, and many of them were emigrating to America leaving nothing to pay their debts.
McCrone reported that ‘the winter has been uncommonly severe. If it were not for
gorse cattle would die of want’, and that ‘Dunlop’s estate is for sale’, probably
referring to A. Dunlop of Ellerslie, Marown, one of the leaders in agricultural
improvement on the Island and whose loss would have been
significant.7

What farm land did Lonan have, and
what does it have now? In 1812
Thomas Quayle, writing a report on
the state of agriculture for the 4th
Duke of Atholl, cites Lonan as
having fourteen treens, 56
quarterlands, 148 intacks and 36
cottages.8 In 1827 an inventory of
lands paying tithes to three parties,
(the Duke of Atholl, the Bishop, and
the Vicar), found 1248 acres in crop,
154 acres in meadow, 2033 acres in
pasture and ley, and 982 acres in
geary, totalling 4418 acres.9 The
Duke’s third was calculated as
1472 1/2 acres. A further 2505 acres
were mountain land, and about 600
were tithe-free, bringing the total
acreage to 7619.10 Island-wide, while
Braddan and Lezayre have larger
acreages of mountain land, only
Michael equates with Lonan as
having as much as one-third of its
total assigned to the mountains.

Of 75 holdings, ten were cottage or
intack and thirty had ten acres or
less. Ten were of 100 acres or more,
these being Baldromma Christian (200 acres), Ballamoor (125), Ballameanagh,
Ballavarane and Skinscoe (120), Ballagraw (101), and Balladoon (Balladoo or
Balladoorie), Ballaquine, Lower Grawe, and Balladrine (Balladrink), all of 100 acres.
Baldromma Christian and Lower Grawe were both said to have fifty acres in crop, but
while Balladune had forty acres of its total of sixty and Ballaragh 39 of its eighty in
crop, most farms, including the other larger ones, had less than thirty. ‘Crop’,
however, could mean green as well as corn or fodder crops. Not surprisingly, the larger
acrees in most farms were recorded as being pasture and ley, although some nineteen
farms were dominated by geary.11 It is perhaps not surprising that Pettman was
disappointed at the low returns. He could have read the earlier descriptions by James
Chaloner, one of the commissioners under Lord Fairfax, whose 1656 report described
the Island as yielding ‘Rye, Wheat, and Barley, but chiefly Oats, the ordinary Bread-
corn of the Inhabitants. It is stored with Beasts, Sheep bearing a coarse fleece, some of
which are called Lawton-sheep; also with Goats and Horses’.12 But by 1827 Lonan still
only had 34 acres devoted to producing 97 bolls in wheat,13 which was supposed to
bring in a good proportion of the Duke’s income. The next lowest parish was Patrick,
with 255 bolls, but barley and oats were cultivated to a much greater extent there, with
396 and 773 acres respectively. Was wheat grown in substantially more quantities than
was declared by the Lonan farmers? Or was Lonan’s land more often devoted to raising stock, with fodder crops such as barley and oats grown only as required for individual farmers and their families?

What physical features allow us to assess how the land was used? Mills were located close to water and the source material they process. In the thirteenth-century *Chronicles of the Kings of Man and the Isles*, the sole reference to a mill on the Island is in a description of the boundaries of the monastic lands in Lonan in 1280: ‘this is the dividing line between the king’s land and that of the monks at Skynnescor [Skinscoe]; from the entrance of the harbour which is called Laxa it ascends by the same river and ascends in a line under the mill … as far as the little valley situated between St. Nicholas chapel and the estate which is called Gretastaz [Gretch Veg] and ascends from there by the old wall well known to the locals along the sloping sides of the mountains’.¹⁴ The type of mill is not stated, but it was clearly an important landmark to the monks and presumably of practical use to them. Perhaps it was simply a Norse, or little, mill with a horizontal wheel, used to grind corn or possibly just to bruise gorse for cattle if the landscape was so barren. J.R. Oliver described this mill as Lewthwaite’s (now more commonly known as the power station site, or opposite it).¹⁵ Reference to Woods’ *Atlas*,¹⁶ however, shows that the eastern boundary of Gretch Veg with land surrounding St Nicholas’s chapel (a *keeilb*)¹⁷ was either in a largely dry valley, or in the adjoining valley with a small stream running at the side of Laxey School. This tallies with Oliver’s interpretation of its being inside Minorca Hill and linking to the hill wall. If this is the case, then it is probably the same site as a nineteenth-century water-using industry, the brewery, parts of whose walls and tailrace are still clearly visible today.

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2. The Laxey area: from OS 1st edition 1-inch to 1-mile sheet 10
Isle of Man (1873)
The Manorial Rolls of 1511-1515 refer to four mills in Lonan: Mullen Vaatage, Moore’s Walk Mill, Parr’s Water Corn Mill, and Parr’s Walk Mill. The latter two may have been operated by the same wheel. ‘Walk’ refers to fulling mills where wool was cleaned by being pounded with hammers.

John Feltham, in *A Tour Through the Isle of Man in 1797 and 1798*, wrote that ‘Laxey is a group of about 30 cottages in a deep glen opening into a fine bay on one side and surrounded by steep and lonely mountains. It has a herring house also a flax mill, a tucking mill, and three corn mills’. Though Laxey itself was small, the demands of the wider parish and its ability to produce some form of grain were evident. The ‘flax mill’ was almost certainly a scutching mill where, following retting [softening] in a dub, or pond, for a week the flax would be stripped of its fibre. Because this reduces the weight so much it is a process undertaken close to the source of the fibre, so at least one crop was in good supply, probably grown on the numerous intacks of the Laxey valley.

A late-eighteenth century painting by John ‘Warwick’ Smith shows flax left to dry following retting in ponds near Old Laxey Bridge and upstream of it by the former turbine house (itself on the site of an earlier flax mill). As late as 1851 encouragement was being given to flax cultivation in Ireland and reports on this appeared in the Manx press. The cultivation of flax was also encouraged here, particularly at times when supplies of cloth were needed for the Island’s garrisons. However in times of drought, as in 1800, the steeping of flax was forbidden because of fears that it would poison the springs. There is known to have been a flax mill upstream of the former Laxey Garage site, where a tributary enters the Laxey River. Typically of Lonan, this mill was jointly owned by a number of proprietors, each holding a quarter or half share of the premises. This could be seen as an early version of the industrial co-operative, where landholdings may have been numerous and individual owners would not have grown sufficient raw material to justify such ventures on their own. Until the early-twentieth century there were at least three corn mills operating in Lonan at any one time, certainly supporting a theory of extensive corn, though not necessarily wheat, production in the parish. The existence of woollen, paper and flax mills supports the notion of a more widely-based agricultural industry.

Woods’ *Atlas* of 1867 gives an easily-comprehensible plan showing the location and size of landholdings. This demonstrates the impact of topography and traditional Crown ownership of much of the higher ground. By then there were many smallholdings owned by leadminers who, having no implements, allowed a neighbouring farmer to work the land, simply giving help with tasks such as weeding or stacking corn. The steep-sided slopes of the Laxey valley were not really suitable for growing wheat and, although nearer to water sources and potential mills, they were also sub-divided into small units, so were inadequate for growing crops commercially (rather than for subsistence purposes).

However, other improvements were being undertaken. In 1844, ten years before the inauguration of the Big Wheel, a lade [leat] was constructed across, inter alia, the farmlands of Ballayolgane and neighbouring Ballacowle to augment the Glen Mooar river’s inadequate supplies of water for the mine machinery and washing floors (*see colour picture, inside front cover*). The initiator of this enterprise was John Kewley. At the time the Laxey mines were enduring a slack period and many men were out of work. The Kewley family, dominant in the Laxey Valley and neighbouring Glen Roy, paid the miners to undertake this work, and thereby used up their own family fortune. The Ballayolgane tithe plan of 1843 tells us that John Kewley had only 125 acres, and that his property was leased out to five tenants, four of whom can be found in the 1851...
census living in the Agneash area. The new lade not only subdivided the farmlands of Ballayolgane and Ballacowle but required the removal of stones and the construction of supporting walls. There is surely a link between this family philanthropy and the existence of smallholdings divided up by huge walls, eight feet high and eight feet wide. The walls are of different styles and vary in thickness, some are clearly being reconstructions of existing field boundaries (see colour picture, inside back cover). The existence of a limekiln nearby supports the evidence of field improvement. Land drainage was an important aspect of improvement even on smaller holdings. The 27-acre Cronk Mooar holding was advertised for sale by public auction in 1852: ‘The land has been fenced and drained and the old sod fences remain to be spread about’. In 1848 Shonest was offered as ‘containing about 332 acres of arable and pasture land with an excellent new dwellinghouse and out offices with horsepower threshing machine of easy draught; parts of the estate are in a high state of cultivation and the remainder capable of great improvement and the roads have lately been greatly improved’.

The reasons why the monks acquired land on the north-eastern seaboard of Lonan parish, covering the farms of Ballaragh, Ballachrink, Ballamoar and Skinscoe, may be questioned. Old Laxey Bridge, described by Waldron as ‘the most beautiful of any in the Island’, is otherwise known as Monks’ Bridge and is believed to be medieval in origin. The old packhorse route, wide enough for two cows and their calves, runs across it and through the middle of the abbey lands. The bridge may have been built to get their goods to the harbour or to carry grain to a mill on the other side of the river. While the more rolling open land of the southern part of the parish would have been relatively easily accessible from Douglas and a wider market, it was not easy to travel from the south of the parish to the north, or to access the main sources of water in the clefts of Laxey Glen. Grain-growing was clearly more feasible in the former localities, as indicated by tithe plans for individual landholdings in the 1830s and 1840s and in

3. The Moaney: hedges in the foreground are low and built of field-rubble or sod. They may have served to provide shelter for the dwelling, but would not permanently have kept any form of stock in or out. In the background are later intacks with straighter, more substantial, field boundaries
Blackwell’s 1848 map of the Island. However, the dominant alignment of routes otherwise is to the common land of the mountain itself and its turbaries, particularly that on Mullagh Ouyr, and not to potential markets or mills. The importance of these routes is evident in their greater width than standard packhorse routes and by the fact that Manx hedges to adjacent fields are much higher, designed to keep stock out of the fields rather than in.

Early examples of sod hedges at The Moaney are perhaps survivals of those which were originally built between Lady Day and Michaelmas to ensure that stock did not get into crops, or to prevent one man’s stock from injuring another’s. They could be thrown down again for the rest of the year. Later intacks, such as The Laggan and The County, are dominated by their straight, regular hedges. During the summer, as evidenced by the tithe assessments, the fields were utilised for crops, oats, potatoes, and later turnips being widely grown. By 1867, when the preliminary Ordnance Survey plans and accompanying notes were published, many farms had arable land round their buildings and only a little pasture, implying reliance on the commons for grazing. During fieldwork the ridge-and-furrows or lazy beds of the smaller holdings, possibly made by ploughing with oxen or simply by using the Manx spade, were found near the Creg-ny-Baa road and on the Cairn above Laxey harbour. For those grinding their own corn a quernstone would still have been used. One was found near Cronk Mooar in Glen Roy.

Farmsteads themselves give the final indication of the nature of agriculture. From Blundell’s description of Island farming practices, substantial farm buildings would not be expected, because stock were not kept inside. The main exceptions were rooms for milking the cow, or for keeping the pig, which was another important source of income and needed shade. Agricultural dwellings of the seventeenth century were fairly basic, and few survive intact. Most have either been replaced by a later dwelling, or turned into a farm building, as at South Baldrine. Ballakilley, now a holiday cottage,

4. The dwelling at Mullaghouyr is on the left, with a massive chiollagh [large fireplace] at its left end. The waterspout is between the two buildings. Rope stones suggest that the barn was originally attached to an earlier building, possibly a house.
originally had a pitched roof with a ‘cat-slide’ over a back kitchen, but had subsequently been altered to a mono-pitch roof. Adjacent to this was the original range of single-storey farm buildings. Ballaquine and Ballavarane also have the long range of buildings down one side of the farm ‘street’, incorporating a turf house and what may be the later addition of a boiler house. An earlier dwelling at Baldromma Mooar, with old plaster on the walls, internally appears as an L-shape with chiollaghs [large fireplaces sometimes similar to the inglenook hearth] at either end of the L, and a smaller back-kitchen-style fireplace at the junction of the L. It is possibly an extended cottage, or was split into two. As with Ballakilley, a later farmhouse is uphill from it and the farm buildings are also of three distinct periods going up the hill. On the north side of the Laxey Valley, Gretch Veg provides a good example of a Manx farm-street, serving one of the few farms that has not extended beyond its original quarterland boundary. One of its earliest dwellings was incorporated in the long range of buildings opposite the current farmhouse. Behind the range was the threshing mill leading into the adjoining barn. The current farmhouse itself represents a very large front extension to an older dwelling.

A substantial number of intacks had been created before Thomas Quayle’s records of 1812 and the Disafforesting Act of 1851. Some are named in tithe records of the 1840s, and it seems a reasonable assumption that many are now represented by tholtans [derelict farmsteads] such as Mullaghouyr. Although described in Woods’ Atlas as intack, by the time of the 1851 census this farm covered 100 acres—as much as some quarterland farms. But what controlled its siting? Lying in a hollow with its eaves level with the top of the bank, Mullaghouyr had all the prime necessities of a home, water supply, shelter and defence (in terms of privacy), and warmth. The main chiollagh is in the wall facing the prevailing south-westerly wind, with a massive fireplace and oven at the side. The waterspout is seemingly a later modification as a result of infill behind two buildings and the collapse of part of a dwelling. The barn-cum-byre has opposing doors for using the flail; the total length of such an implement plus arm being about two metres, the four-metre depth of the building provided the right space for its operation as it was swung from side to side. Such opposing doors may sometimes be found in the farmhouses themselves. A later ‘mod con’ for the farmer is the sheep dip in the front garden. However, this could be indicative of the changes imposed by the gradual loss of the common mountain land after 1865, which meant that such work could no longer be undertaken when the flock was higher up on this land. The greater permanence of sheep at the lower level is also apparent in the construction in later walls of the durragh [a passage designed for sheep only (not cattle) through a field wall] for their passage from one field to another.

Of the intacks The Moaney (‘the turbary’) and Raby (‘roe farm’) are probably the best known, albeit in part due to folklore. Kneen suggests of the latter that the king’s deer were preserved on estates bearing this name. After the Restoration the Colcheragh family were reputedly deprived of the land for their part in the Civil War, and one of the family made a new farm for himself on intack land outside the treen, marrying the heiress of another intack and combining the two farms into the mountain estate of Raby.

But Colcheraghs stayed with the land of their fathers
Building anew where the mountains rose free,
Tilling wild acres and stocking hill pastures,
Pasturing greatly, as all men could see

The three buildings are roughly set in a rectangle in a hollow sheltered from the prevailing westerlies.
The buildings are of random rubble and were thatched, but with what is not known. A supply of fresh water was close at hand. While it seems the most primitive of farms, it reputedly became the largest sheep farm in Lonan. Although itself of unsubstantiated date, the folksong *Ny Kirree fo Niaghtey* ['The Sheep under the Snow'], relating the loss of 2000 Raby sheep under the snow on unenclosed lands at Laggan Agneash and Coawry Chistey ['hollow of the kist'], supports weather records referred to in Sacheverell’s 1702 report: ‘the Island’s air by reason of its northerly situation is sharp and cold much exposed to violent winds; having no shelter from woods or mountains, for the mountains fill the middle part of the country so that the habitable part is exposed to the sea’s air’.27 George Waldron, following nearly twenty years’ residence on the Island, described in 1744 how ‘as to the seasons three parts of the year is winter and the vast quantity of snow and rain that are almost continually falling swell the rivers to that degree that they frequently overflow the lands and do much damage, great numbers of small cattle, such as sheep, goats and hogs being lost in them’.28 That the Raby sheep were so numerous can be taken in the context of James McCrone’s evidence to the 1827 Commission on Tithes, that ‘from 15,000 to 20,000 sheep on the Island are grazed on the mountains but in the winter months about one half are brought down’.29

Despite these poor conditions, Waldron points out ‘but in the midst of utmost irregularity they have two conveniences, which sometimes the best ordered houses cannot boast of, the finest brooks in the world running continuously near them and turf which makes a very sweet firing at their very doors’.30 A note added later by William Harrison, editor of *The Manx Society*, remarks prophetically, ‘What effect the Disafforesting Act of 1860 will have upon the poor commoners remains to be seen’.31 Although Fraser Forbes had advised the 3rd Duke of Atholl in 1765 that he ought to set up a farm to demonstrate agricultural improvements,32 it was only at the beginning of the nineteenth century that some wider influence was brought to bear on the improvement of Manx agriculture generally. A branch of John Christian Curwen’s Workington Agricultural Society was set up on the Island in 1806; the Island’s own Society was not established until 1858. Newspapers of the 1820s advertised threshing mills, and the horse-gin or horsewalk remains as one of the most identifiable features on the farms today, though many of those in Lonan have been grubbed out or become overgrown. No surviving examples of horsewalks complete with their attached threshing mills have been found in the parish, though the power mechanism for one at Croit ny Cloughbane is being restored. The machines themselves were being produced in the Isle of Man at least until the 1880s; surviving receipts from Gellings (a firm of iron-founders) and the Ballagawne smithy shows the total price of such a mill to have been £32 9s 6d.33 At Ardwoillagh the single storey barn, 30 feet by 15 feet, had a mud floor, timbered at one end with a wooden platform erected for threshing, while at Ballaglass a Scotch mill from Banff was recorded.34 Apart from threshing, this mill may have been used for gorse, which previously had been pounded by hand but was now processed by a number of stamps. Cleigh Clagh (‘stone fence’) lies just below the mountain boundary, almost 900 feet above sea level and in the bleakest part of the parish. It had a substantial horsewalk, but attempting to grow a corn crop at that altitude seems over-optimistic.

> All is safely gathered in,  
> All except poor Tom Kaneen’s  
> He has left his till the last  
> ‘cause it’s still as green as grass35

These upland horsewalks, being built at ground level and serving single-storey buildings, contrast greatly with those of Pooilhylley and Ballacollister, which were
artificially built up from ground level, and others at Glen Roy, South Baldrine, Gretch Vane and Grawe whose gearing led into the upper level of two-storey bank barns. It is only with the latter two categories, where threshing barns were associated with substantial ranges of buildings including additional grain storage, that there may be some justification for associating the existence of mills with the growing of wheat. Perhaps one of the later intacks, Cleigh Clagh seems to represent more than one phase of building. The initial dwelling, barn and byre are built at one level, and pigsties, a possible calf house, stable, and fold for shearing in, at another. It may have been built or extended in response to the 1866 Forest (Commoners’ Allotment) Act, which enabled the construction of cottages for shepherds or servants as considered necessary. Cleigh Clagh is unique in Lonan for its central, freestanding surviving chiollagh, the lack of any other solid partitioning between rooms suggesting either use of furniture as additional walling, or free movement of people and perhaps animals between rooms.

At the time of the tithe survey four individuals owned property listed as Ballaglass, two owners having substantial amounts of land with at least two houses each on them, and two with just a cottage and garden. In total six, possibly seven, houses existed in the vicinity, including Ballakey (or Amogary) and Ballaglass. When sold on in 1905 that portion of Ballaglass now known as Ballaglass Beg was described as a small croft of nineteen acres, unoccupied and ‘likely to remain so as the quantity of land is insufficient to maintain a family’.

A massive gable wall at Ballakey seems to indicate the equivalent of a modern-day granny flat extension, albeit a house separate from the older farmhouse to which it is attached. An early statute states that ‘if there be a waste unrented adjoining the gable of a man’s house without a door or a window, any man having permission may build on the same if the said party to whose rent the same adjoineth has not a mind to inclose the same who in all reason ought to have the same before any other and adjoin his house to said gable and lay flags or set rafters upon the same paying half the charges of said gable unto’. Thus by the insertion of a single, small window in the gable one could ensure that that nobody else could claim a right to build on adjacent land—another classic feature of Manx dwellings may therefore be revealed. The Ballaglass tithe map appears to indicate the original farm building without the addition. The 1868 Ordnance Survey map includes it.

Moving downriver to the quarterlands, some original or second generation dwellings have survived at Ballavarane and The Grawe. These dwellings, rather than being replaced, have traditional catslide extensions to the rear subsequently raised into full-height extensions. On the other hand, as at Ballalheaney, datestones throw into question whether or not the whole building was rebuilt at a later date (in that case 1851), a little after the barns and stable dated 1843 and 1844, or simply extended. In the south of the parish Ballameanagh Beg, although at sixty acres not one of the bigger quarterlands, was the home of Godfrey Tate, Captain of the Parish. In Pettman’s 1827 report Tate, with his tenant farmer, was described, possibly as a means of currying favour, as one of the pioneers of agricultural improvement in the parish. The steadings which is recorded in the tithe comprised a dwelling, presumably for the tenant farmer, at right angles to the stable with hay barn above, and cow house, in a very fine stone-built range with steep gable roofs characteristic of the earlier buildings. Tate’s own farmhouse is also one of the finest in the parish, and may have been unsurpassed at that time. Tate was also described as having messuages, houses, offices, a soapery, chandlery and premises purchased from Colquitt Heywood and tenanted by William Greeves, probably on the quay at Douglas. Cumbrian influences, through trading, may have prevailed in the construction of one of the earliest buildings in which several different activities could
take place, rather than individual buildings for each activity. Tate bought the farm in 1818 from George and William Miller, tanners of Whitehaven. In the 1820s Baljean, a former intack farmed in winter and fished in summer, was bought freehold (with many adjacent intacks) by John James Moore, one of the family of limeburners of Abbey Farm, Malew, but himself also a tanner. Although by the time of the 1851 census Moore was listed simply as a landed proprietor, and had borrowed money from the Guinness family of Dublin to build himself a new farmhouse, he clearly had intentions of being at the forefront of farm improvement. In August 1844 an article appeared in the Manx Sun stating the intention of several gentleman to establish a model farm ‘where our insular farmers may avail themselves of the most approved methods of agriculture put into practical operation in the Isle of Man’. Many of Baljean’s current buildings in a former three-storey range seem certainly to have been built in this spirit around 1843-1844. By 1847 it was described as ‘well adapted for stock being excellent dry sound pasture each field being so arranged as to have a supply of running water for the stock and for irrigation and many of the enclosures are fenced with stone. There is on the farm a good new dwelling house suitable for a respectable tenant excellent offices with mill driven by water for thrashing and manufacturing the produce and cottages for the labourers employed in its cultivation’. There were 492 acres enclosed, and 125 unenclosed. Later it was said that in total forty families lived on Baljean. The estate’s water-driven mill served a particular purpose: the barn was then the longest in the vicinity and, used as a sawmill, was the only places where the 72-foot spokes of the Great Wheel, the Lady Isabella, could be fashioned. The use of lime had been encouraged since the seventeenth-century, but the construction of limekilns, either on the shore or inland depending on the available transport from the limestone quarries of the south of the Island, and on the location of the fields to be limed, seems to have been undertaken sporadically. As with farm ranges, the practice was followed on increasingly sophisticated lines by private landowners well into the nineteenth century. At Baljean, John James Moore made use of the stone from his fields to build the largest private limekiln on the Island. Large lumps of lime were loaded into the top of the kiln mixed with coal or peat. A fire was lit at the bottom and the whole left for some days, the burning process driving off the

5. The remains of the large limekiln built by John James Moore at Baljean
carbonic acid in the limestone to leave lime or quicklime. Taken to the fields, it could be harrowed in with manure or mixed with water to make slaked lime:

    The use of lime without manure,
    Will make the farm and farmer poor.\textsuperscript{43}

By 1868 Moore’s limekiln is specifically identified on the OS maps as ‘Old limekiln’, so it may have been soon abandoned. It faces away from the prevailing wind and there are no signs of drawing vents to compensate. Alternatives to lime were readily available. Pettman refers to the custom of taking wrack from Laxey beach to improve the lands of Laxey Glen,\textsuperscript{44} and regular advertisements also appear in the press: ‘For sale the remainder of a cargo of guano the above having been analysed tried and tested last year; parties wishing are requested to make earlier application Timber Yard Douglas John Moore’.\textsuperscript{45}

Not all farms benefited directly from being purchased by wealthy landlords. In the 1860s, attracted to Lonan because its rolling hills reminded him of the Cumberland countryside where he was brought up, the benefactor Henry Bloom Noble bought Ballathoan (now Ballachoan), Brundal, three separate parcels of mountain land, part of Ballaglass and part of Ballalheaney (subsequently renamed Riversdale), and two adjoining fields, all in Glen Roy. Insecurity caused by the tithe system, or having taken part in the running trade or later in mining,\textsuperscript{46} had resulted in many farmers losing interest in the land and accumulating debt. While the owners were able to remain on the properties as tenants, the amount they received from the sale after outstanding mortgages and debts had been paid off was often considerably less. Noble’s newly-acquired mountain lands surrounding the route from Gob-n-y-Geay to Windy Corner (later known as Noble’s Road) were joined together to become a sheepwalk of 1000 acres. Noble was a moneylender prepared to help those who helped themselves, but he appears to have made no direct attempt otherwise to enable his tenants to improve their farms.

Following his death in 1903, Noble’s trustees had each property meticulously surveyed prior to their sale by auction. The descriptions make interesting reading. Riversdale, the summer residence from which Noble had been driven into Douglas each day by the coachman who received an individual bequest of £1000, comprised 24 acres, ‘a pleasant residence, good house, cottage, coach house, stable and gardens with fruit trees’. The dwelling was ‘sufficiently large, but should have the addition of a proper dairy’, and there was perceived to be ‘insufficient stabling and no cow house; if lands to be cultivated by a resident tenant then it would be advisable to convert the cottage to the rear into accommodation as such’. The land was divided into seven fields of convenient size, but not cultivated: ‘the whole area is now lea’.\textsuperscript{47} In making his assessment William Kerruish walked every field and made notes on the condition of every boundary and the work needed to repair it. In the case of Brundal this amounted to 10 ½ pages of notes. For the main farmhouse the schedule of repairs was:\textsuperscript{48}

\begin{itemize}
  \item Gates – provide and fix 14 new gates and pillars
  \item Barn – clear out eaves and down spout
  \item Calf House – provide 6 feeding troughs, 6 stall partitions
  \item Stable – new stall partitions, repair
  \item Cowhouse – 5 new partitions, 8 new troughs
  \item Potato house – 2 doors on sties
\end{itemize}

At the time the tenant of Brundal was said not to have ‘the capital, help, energy or industry necessary to make a living’ from the property.\textsuperscript{49} Most of Noble’s properties did not sell immediately, as they were run down in farming terms—fairly disastrously so in the case of Brundal—and also perceived as being isolated and distant from any
transport, some three miles from the nearest station of the Manx Electric Railway at Ballabeg: ‘The distance from towns, heavy difficult approach, the loneliness of the situation are factors which all detract from the value of this estate’. At least one potential buyer was lost because his wife refused to move there from Douglas. There was clearly no incentive seriously to cultivate this part of the parish, let alone to grow wheat.

Sandwiched between Noble’s properties lies Glen Roy farm. At the beginning of the nineteenth-century its owner, the Reverend William Fitzsimmons, was in frequent correspondence with the agricultural pioneer John Christian Curwen in Cumberland about the assessment of tithes. Curwen may have directly influenced the building by Fitzsimmons of one of the first conjoined ranges of cowhouse, stable and cart shed. At a later date this was extended by the addition of a second range at right angles, with the sophistications of a horsewalk linked to a threshing barn at the upper level, and a chute to the turnip store below from which cattle and horses could be easily supplied. Separate ranges provided additional stabling, with a haybarn above and pigsties coupled with henhouses.

The construction of substantial ranges grew apace during the nineteenth-century. Agricultural influences on this included the loss of mountain land and commons, and the consequent need to accommodate stock, particularly, cattle, nearer the home farm; the perceived convenience of accommodating agricultural activities close together under one roof; the loss of land available for pasturing and hence the need for additional food stock, of necessity under cover, to feed the animals; and possibly the desire to protect investment in the more sophisticated agricultural machinery, implements and carts that were becoming available.

Such influences could only be acted on where there was sufficient finance. In Lonan the most sophisticated results were achieved down river, where the impact of the profits made by a few in the new mining industry, and the proximity to Douglas, which grew rapidly after it became the Island’s capital in the 1860s and this generated demand. Examples include North Baldrine, owned by the banker George Dumbell, who was also chairman of the Great Laxey Mining Company. This is a complete courtyard steading with limited access at two of its corners to adjacent fields. Stock could easily be impounded in the centre of the yard. Its high stone pillars show its status, and arched entrances on either side of the threshing barn indicate that it was planned for easy access by cart to either courtyard or field. Hay or straw could be on-and off-loaded to and from the granary above. The horsewalk was to the rear, and on the other side of the courtyard were the cowsheds and implement sheds. Long ranges, frequently in an L-shape, are found at Ballavarane, Ballameanaugh Mooar, Ballakilley,
Baldromma Mooar and South Baldrine, all on the Douglas side of the parish. Together with Ballabeg, the latter two, which had been recorded earlier as the largest in Lonan, are today the three remaining dairy farms. The size of farm troughs, used to keep milk cans cool, remains an indicator of the past importance of the industry.

The other main influences on farm buildings, and what was produced in them, were brought about by the focus on public health issues, particularly following the formation of local authorities which included, in 1894, Lonan Parish Commissioners. ‘Nuisances’ had first been defined in the 1851 Nuisances Act, whereby an authority was empowered to ‘order cleansing, whitewashing and purifying’ of any premises deemed to be in ‘a filthy and unwholesome condition’. ‘Dung, manure, offal and filth’ could be destroyed or sold in the parishes, the proceeds going to the Captain of the Parish for enforcing the Act.51 The Commissioners’ clerk had to walk the parish, notebook in hand, to identify privies which were likely to cause ill-health, discover cowhouses and dairies which were not in an ‘appropriate state’, and license the slaughterhouses, of which there were several in Lonan. It seems as if hardly a farm, certainly among those on the north side, escaped being the subject of an order at some time or another.

Ballaragh was ordered to light and ventilate the dairy, Ballaquark to replace the existing water closet and ashpit, and Ballachrink to ‘cleanse the slop drain upon the premises which is in a very foul and dirty condition, discontinue to use it because of immediate proximity to door and kitchen window, & in consequence of its being so badly constructed as to render it impossible to keep in a clean and wholesome condition’.52 But compliance was another matter, since premises were invariably rented—tenants claimed that improvements were the landlord’s responsibility, and vice versa. Improvements, however, were primarily achieved internally and the response (at least until the 1930s) did not generally require or (if it did) achieve construction of new purpose-built buildings.

For all that he did not openly help his tenant farmers, part of Noble’s legacy had helped to found the Agricultural Board in 1917, and the setting up in the 1920s of the Government experimental farm at Knockaloe Mooar near Peel. From 1934 the race was on to eradicate tuberculosis in cattle. More stringent regulations were enforced throughout the Island. While primarily intended to remove sources of infection in the interior of cowsheds, these also included for the first time grants towards the improvement, reconstruction or rebuilding of agricultural buildings. This had an important impact upon the landscape, particularly of farm buildings. One such visibly
altered and improved building remains at Skinscoe. Its early-nineteenth century range reflects some of the prosperity of this former abbeyland farms on what was presumably more fertile ground overlooking the mouth of the Laxey River. However from the mid-nineteenth century it was continually being advertised for letting or sale. Presumably run down it was later subject to Commissioners orders to improve its buildings. Also in Pettman’s time it grew an abundance of oats, and did so again in 2004, but did it ever grow wheat, even for the monks? In 1947 compulsory cropping was introduced. Farmers had to have not less than half their arable land under crop, not less than one-eighth of their arable land under green crop, and one quarter of their green crop under potatoes. There was no compulsion to grow wheat. 55

It was really only on those farms with very substantial buildings, where the available acreage and storage space exceeded the demands of the stock and the family, that commercial crops could be grown in any quantity. All those buildings postdate Pettman (1827) by several years, and perhaps he was correct in thinking that the parish could grow wheat but wrong in his view that conditions at his time justified doing so. Many of the ranges had been built by the time of the first the Ordnance Survey plans published in 1868. The field-by-field records accompanying these plans do show the majority of fields close to farmsteads as arable, but regrettably they are no more specific.

Today, all the Lonan farms carry stock, and until comparatively recently each had a mixture of beef and dairy cattle and sheep. Although today’s agricultural sheds are massive, their basic raison d’etre is no different from that which brought about the nineteenth-century ranges—economy and efficiency of working, not grain storage over and above that needed for stock. Pettman would surely, if he could, appreciate the irony of his remarks in today’s Lonan landscape. Built in 1860 in response to the quantity of water freely running down Glen Roy, and the growing demand for flour from an increasing mining population, lies Laxey Glen Mills, the Island’s last operational flour mill. But not a single grain of its ingredients is grown in Lonan parish.

NOTES AND REFERENCES

1 Stuart Slack (words and music), ‘The Laxey Wheel’, The Manx National Songbook (The Manx Experience, 2001) p.280
2 Due to Norse control during the 10th-12th centuries the Island’s law of property and its transfer differed from those in England and Scotland (though many of the differences were removed in 1867). Under the feudal system most land was ‘owned’ by the Lord—those who farmed the land were merely tenants who paid a tribute to the Lord. However, as these tenants came to believe that they could pass on their tenancy as a personal property they could be considered as landowners. The land held by the Lord (who never personally cultivated his Island estates) was either waste, which when later enclosed became ‘intacks’ (see note 8) or was held by the Barons (of whom the most important was the Abbot of Rushen Abbey—hence the name Abbeylands).
3 A.W. Moore, A History of the Isle of Man (T. Fisher Unwin 1909, reprinted Manx Museum and National Trust, 1977) p.914
5 Manx National Heritage Library [MNHL] Atholl Papers [AP] MS9707 AP 22 and AP 22 (2nd) -3
6 William Blundell, History of the Isle of Man (1648-1656) (reprinted in TMS vol.25, 1876) pp.40-41
7 MNHL. Letters from J. McCrone to the Duke: AP 49 (4th) –30, 7 Mar 1827; AP 50 (2nd) (Tag 7) –2; and to C. Carrington, 10 Dec 1827
8 On the Island the Viking legal and administrative systems were generally superimposed on Celtic landholding systems. The Island’s seventeen parishes are arranged in six sheadings, equivalent to skeitarhing [ship-assemblies or one-sixth part] which were administrative areas providing for longships and their crews. The sheading boundaries derive mainly from the crest of the central mountain range and run outward to the sea, giving access to good and poor land, peat and the shore. Each sheading had 26 treens (10-12
per parish), used for fiscal purposes paying a fixed annual tax alterable only by Act of Tynwald. Items such as parish fencing and churchyard walls had to be repaired by the tenants. Quarterlands paid one-quarter of the rateable value of a tenen, and varied in area from 40-150 acres. They constitute the ancient customary estates or farm units, corresponding to the English manor. In many cases they have a portion of turfary, hill pasture, arable and meadow. Naturally, changing family circumstances, landownership and farming practice mean that present-day boundaries do not usually fit traditional boundaries. Many occupants now hold lands in several quarterlands. Of some 770 quarterlands, some 130 were originally Church Lands (belonging to the Abbey or the Bishop). Intack, originally common or waste not included in quarterlands, was from time to time licensed to be enclosed (‘taken in’), especially in the late 18th and 19th centuries. Other lands included cottages (small parcels in towns and villages) and mills, always registered separately. These differences are now gone, although separate registers were kept for Lord’s Land and Ecclesiastical Land after 1538.

9 Geary may be described as rough boggy grazing land—literally, ‘sour’ or ‘acid’ land.
10 MNHL MS 09707 AP 22 (3rd) – 8, 9, 10
11 ibid.
12 Chaloner, A Short Treatise, p.6
13 A bolt is six bushels, or 555 kilograms
14 George Broderick (ed and trans), Chronicles of the Kings of Man and the Isles: Cronica Regum Mannie et Insularum (Manx National Heritage, 1996)
15 J.R. Oliver (ed), Monum enta de Insula Manniae (TMS vol.4, 1860)
16 James Wood was a surveyor and for a time Town Clerk of Ramsey. Between 1837 and 1839 tithes on the Island were abolished and commuted to a one-off payment calculated on a principal sum of 25 years’ purchase. For this purpose a Register of Landowners was made. In 1860 a Lunatic Asylum Act was passed, and in 1864 another assessment of landowners was compiled to determine the levy on each landowner to fund the asylum. Woods then used both sets of documents, amalgamating the information to produce A New Atlas and Gazetteer of the Isle of Man, a parish-by-parish plan which shows all boundaries of parishes, baronies, freeholds, quarterlands and individual farms, accompanied by a comprehensive reference table showing the name of every proprietor and a description and extent of his or her land.

17 A keell was a simple chapel of the early medieval period: at least 174 have been recorded on the Island, out of perhaps over 200, though only 35 can be easily identified. They are usually near a spring or well, and often have a burial ground and sometimes a priest’s house or hermitage. The majority are ruinous or have vanished. Records are made up of extant sites, potential remains, place-names and folk memory.
18 MNHL Manorial Roll 1511-1515: the Manorial Roll lists the revenues due to the Earl of Derby, as King of Man, for one year (the southern division for 1511, the northern division for 1515) from individual landowners. It was translated from the Latin and published by Theophilus Talbot Douglas (Oxford UP, 1924).
19 John Feltham, A Tour Through the Isle of Man in 1797 and 1798 (ed. Robert Airey and reprinted in TMS vol.6, 1861) p.214
20 MNHL Microfiche: tithe map for Lonan no.118 John Kewley of Ballavolgan
21 Manx Sun 8 Aug 1852 advertisement for Cronk Mooar
22 Manx Sun 24 May 1848 advertisement for Shonest
23 George Waldron, A Description of the Isle of Man (1731) (ed. William Harrison and reprinted in vol.6, 1861) p.159
24 A petition to the Home Secretary in 1857 stated that ‘The inhabitants of the Isle of Man in general have enjoyed Common of Turfary, of Estovers, and of pasture; also of quarrying stones, and digging and carrying away sand and gravel. Common of Estover is exercised in respect of heath and Common of Pasture exercised in respect of horses, cattle, sheep, geese and swine’. Such unstinted use gave a variety of benefits particularly to crofters and small farmers. Licenses to ‘take in’ land were periodically granted by the Lord (later, the Governor) but had additionally to be sanctioned by the ‘Great Enquest’, a form of jury to ensure they did not affect rights of way, public turbaries or watercourses. The petition followed sanction for the enclosure of huge areas of common, which had led to rioting. This resulted in the Disafforesting Act of 1860: like all legislation applying to the Island, this was debated through the House of Keys, the lower chamber of the Manx Parliament, and the upper Legislative Council, before being promulgated at Tynwald, a joint open-air sitting of both houses. It swept away all property rights of every description (except for mineral rights and certain Crown interests) and vested the King’s Forest in three commissioners who in 1865 awarded one-third to the Crown, one-third to the people to be invested in Trustees of the Commons, and one-third to be sold as allotments to defray the costs of the process and the new walls, roads and fences. This made difficulties for crofters, who were deprived of hill grazing grounds.
25 J.J. Kneen, Place Names of the Isle of Man (Yn Cheshaghht Ghaillckagh: The Manx Society, 1928)
27 Sacheverell, Account of the Isle of Man, p.11
28 Waldron, Description, 2
29 MNHL MS 09707 AP Bk 55, 60, 61 (29 Sep
1826). Pettman himself ‘suffered’ as a result of the bad weather, leading McCrone to comment to R.C. Carrington that ‘Mr Pettman is still here – storm bound, he should have left the Island months ago’ [fol.50 (2nd) – 2, 10 Dec 1827]

30 Waldron, Description, p.2
31 ibid, p.85
32 MNHL MS 09707 33 (2) – 19 (15 Jul 1765)
33 MNHL MD 572 donated by A. Mylroi; permission to use granted by late A. Mylroi junior.
34 MNHL Folklife Survey: notes by I.M. Killip K/M/R/A May 1962
35 Author unknown: recounted by John Corlett, Ballacowin, Glen Roy
36 MNHL MS 09196/136 accounts of Henry Bloom Noble Trustees, re Ballaglass Beg
37 MNHL MS 09707 AP 28 – 12
38 MNHL MS 09707 AP 22 – 8
39 MNHL Deed no.45 May 1819
40 Manx Sun 24 Aug 1844
41 Manx Sun 20 Mar 1847
42 MNHL Folklife Survey: Thomas Quayle, King Orry KM-M1 Feb 1957
43 Henry Tanner, Principles of Agriculture Elementary and Advanced (9th edition, 1897)
44 MNHL MS 09707 AP 22 – 8
45 Manx Sun 26 Feb 1848, Jan 1849
46 By the end of the 17th century there were heavy duties on imports entering British ports, but the Island, as an independent kingdom, could frame its own tariffs. It was therefore legal to import, duty-free, commodities such as brandy and silks from France, rum from Jamaica, and tea from the East. These could then be resold in Britain, but the British Navigation Acts stated that only British ships could trade in British ports—Manx vessels did not qualify. The ‘running trade’ therefore involved using fast clippers to run cargoes to quieter parts of the British coast. This became a highly-profitable business, paying good money to many ordinary Manx people—so that farming and the upkeep of farms came well behind in their priorities. The Dukes of Atholl, as Lords of Man, also profited substantially from the dues they levied on the trade. In 1765 the British Parliament passed the ‘Mischief Act’, allowing UK revenue officers to stop and search vessels entering or leaving Manx ports. By the end of the century the trade had more or less ended.
47 MNHL MS 09196/136 accounts of Henry Bloom Noble Trustees, re Riversdale
48 ibid., re Brundal
49 ibid.
50 ibid.
51 Nuisances Act 1851, clause 1
52 MNHL 0948/1/1 Minutes of the Lonan Commissioners 1894
53 MNHL L6/A2 Manx Journal of Agriculture (Isle of Man Board of Agriculture, Jan 1947): Defence Regulations (Agricultural Tillage Order) 1946

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Themes in local history

Zion’s people: who were the English Nonconformists?

Part 2: Occupations (Quakers, Baptists, Congregationalists)

CLIVE D. FIELD

Introduction

Of the five demographic aspects of Nonconformity considered in this three-part article, occupation has unquestionably attracted the most historiographical interest. Ever since the nineteenth century there has been a developing impression that, as Lovell Cocks expressed it in 1943, ‘Nonconformity was the Established Church of the middle classes’. ¹ Regrettably, however, occupation is the most difficult facet of the Free Churches to report. This is not simply because of an absence of data, but also because of the ambiguous and often inconsistent meanings of occupational descriptions over time and place, including the potential for mismatch with social status and economic wealth (the latter mainly studied within the context of the post-Restoration hearth tax). ² It can, for instance, be quite hard to differentiate between yeomen and husbandmen, production and distribution, wholesale and retail trade, or masters and men in the same branch of manufacture.

These difficulties are compounded by the fact that, until well into the nineteenth century, it was common for people to have more than one employment, partly as a function of seasonality. Moreover, there has been no uniform method for the classification of occupations over the centuries, and even when a single system appears to find more favour than others, as with the Registrar General’s fivefold schema, the coding of individual occupations can alter as the numbers employed and skills demanded change (an obvious example is the progressive lowering of the status of clerical work). So, although there is a reasonable amount of information to synthesise, presenting the work of many scholars in a directly comparable fashion, and thereby drawing conclusions, is far from simple. Caution must therefore be exercised in interpreting the following Nonconformist occupational data.

As discussed in Part 1, baptism (or birth) and marriage registers provide the most important occupational evidence for Nonconformity, spanning members, attenders and—in the twentieth century—even some affiliates. While a few sources are specific to each of these categories, the fact that the vital registers cut across them, and that some historians of early Nonconformity have constructed nominal databases populated from the registers and a range of other documents, means that in this section it is more appropriate to assemble material by denomination rather than the three levels of Free Church identity. Unless otherwise stated, all the discussions relate to the occupation of male Nonconformists.

Quakers

Some of the richest evidence exists for the Quakers. This has generated a significant secondary literature and scholarly debate on their social origins in England,³ though it
has often been obscured by differences over nomenclature and classification and, for their first half-century, attempts by some historians to position the data within a rather sterile ‘bourgeois versus plebeian’ dichotomy. The principal research studies in tables 21-33 begin with some national data compiled by Vann and Eversley for the mid-seventeenth to mid-nineteenth centuries, based upon the occupations of Quaker bridegrooms and the fathers of the bride (Table 21). Unfortunately, the usefulness of their analysis is limited by their acknowledged assignment of the same occupation to multiple categories, leading to unhelpful double-counting for our purposes.

Despite inconsistent categorisation of occupations and the inevitable geographical variations, usually mirroring the local and regional economies, the broad trends in Quaker social structure of the late seventeenth century are clear enough. The Friends were drawn mainly from the ‘middling sort’. At the top of the scale, the movement attracted relatively few gentry, except perhaps during the early decades (Table 27), and few professionals. At the bottom, it had limited appeal to labourers and other unskilled workers. Its core support was drawn from three groups: yeomen, farmers and husbandmen forming 16 per cent nationally in Table 21a, but three-fifths in the most rural counties such as Cheshire and Somerset (Table 25) and nearing that in Lancashire; wholesale and retail traders, who often constituted two-fifths to one-half; and artisans, who accounted for two in five nationally (Table 21a) and far more in London (Tables 22, 23), and Gloucestershire/Wiltshire, Bristol and Yorkshire (Table 24). Food- and clothing-related trades were the principal activity areas for the early Friends. Insofar as it is possible to distinguish members from non-members among the Quakers, there are hints that the latter had a slightly lower status than the former—for example, more husbandmen and fewer yeomen or farmers, and more artisans and fewer traders.

Among the Friends, the relative absence of gentry and labourers persisted into the eighteenth century, while the number of yeomen, farmers and husbandmen remained static (Tables 21, 27a and Banbury Monthly Meeting) or registered a slight decline (Tables 26, 27b, 30). Otherwise, there were indications of the beginnings of upward mobility, with increases in professionals (Tables 21, 22, 23, 26, 27, 30) and traders (Tables 21a, 23, 26 and Wiltshire); and a decrease in artisans (Tables 21, 22, 23, 27b), although they naturally remained prevalent in manufacturing districts such as the West Riding (Table 30). The expansion in the Quaker trading community was particularly obvious at the wholesale end (Tables 21a, 27b) and among the younger generation (Table 21a). By the 1780s a strong merchant cadre (with a few bankers) was evident, representing 11.4 per cent of Quakers in London (Table 23) and 9.7 per cent in Manchester, Leeds, Birmingham and Bristol. More than four-fifths of Friends in these provincial cities around this time have been categorised by Pratt as ‘upper’ or ‘middle’ class, i.e. predominantly in non-manual employment, with skilled manual workers (curiously described as ‘lower middle’ class) comprising 14.5 per cent and the unskilled a mere 1.7 per cent (Table 31). York Monthly Meeting was only marginally more inclusive, with just 15.0 per cent semi-skilled and unskilled, 38.6 per cent routine non-manual or skilled manual, 36.4 per cent in intermediate non-manual employment and 10.0 per cent professionals or higher managers.

The nineteenth century witnessed further Quaker embourgeoisement. The non-parochial (baptismal/birth) registers are the principal source for Nonconformist social structure during the first third of the century. They have long been used in a highly localised, and thus inevitably piecemeal, fashion by scholars. Gilbert was the first to prepare something approximating to a national sample from them, but his pioneering work in this field has now been completely superseded by the
comprehensive analysis by Watts of all the extant non-parochial registers at The National Archives and the tabulation of the occupational information in them for each English and Welsh county, disaggregated by decade within denomination, and with comparative statistics from the 1841 census. A necessarily simplistic recalculation and aggregation of Watts’s dauntingly impressive research is presented in Table 3.2.

Although the Quakers could boast very few gentry and men of independent means, and fewer than the Baptists and Congregationalists, what Watts describes as the middle class (his groups II-VI inclusive) dominated the Friends in the 27 English counties examined, with 62.6 per cent, way ahead of the next denomination in the table, the Congregationalists with 25.9 per cent. The manual component was correspondingly quite small, with 19.5 per cent of Quakers in the upper working class and 17.7 per cent categorised as poor. Watts’s own commentary highlighted the fact that, in every single county in which they were represented, the Friends were by far the most prosperous of all Nonconformists, attracting a disproportionate number of businessmen and retailers and, in most counties, also an unduly large contingent of farmers. In only four counties (Cheshire, Derbyshire, Dorset and Lancashire) were fewer than half their fathers in groups II-VI. Moreover, Quaker prosperity appeared to grow from decade to decade. The quantitatively more limited marriage register data (Table 2.1) tell a similar story for the first half of the nineteenth century.

There is much less evidence for the ensuing hundred years, but Isichei has undertaken a small-scale analysis from the national digest of Quaker deaths (Table 3.3). This reveals a concentration, at just over the three-quarters mark for each snapshot up to 1900-1901, in the upper and middle classes (her groups I-II), which was ‘precisely opposite to that of the general population’. Her separate study of the membership of Banbury and Bristol Monthly Meetings, in the light of the population census returns for 1851 and 1861 respectively and other information from secular sources, confirmed this picture. For instance, 61.3 per cent of Bristol Friends in 1864 were from her class I. It was a similar story in York, where members were distinctly more socially elevated in 1821-1860 than in 1780-1820, with the numbers in professional and intermediate non-manual occupations up by one-third, to reach 62.8 per cent, and 96.0 per cent keeping servants (compared with 63.0 per cent in the earlier period). By 1901 70.5 per cent of Friends in the city were non-manuals, 13.7 per cent skilled manual and 15.8 per cent semi- or unskilled manual. Even in industrial Bradford more than three-fifths of Quakers in 1881 were in non-manual roles (four times the proportion among the town’s residents), with the rest mostly skilled manual workers; three-quarters of all members kept servants. At Darlington almost one-third came from the upper, professional and manufacturing classes, two-fifths were shopkeepers or tradesmen and one-seventh clerks. In inner London in 1885-1895 and 1905-1913 78.5 per cent of Quaker bridegroom s followed non-manual pursuits, mostly as employers or managers, professionals, clerks or retailers.

Nationally, 63 per cent of male Friends marrying for the first time in 1937-1938 belonged to the Registrar General’s classes I and II (professional and intermediate occupations, corresponding to upper and middle class), but by 1957-1958 this had jumped to 85 per cent. The number in class III (skilled workers, non-manual and manual) fell from one-third to one-tenth, with 4 per cent at both dates in class IV (semi-skilled) and none in class V (unskilled). In class I there was a significant shift from industrial or financial positions to professional ones, particularly doctors and lawyers, while a reduction in clerks and sales representatives was behind the decline in class III. For a sample of the adult membership as a whole in 1964-1965 the distribution of Friends by Registrar General class was: 27.1 per cent in I, 50.6 per cent
in II, 12.4 per cent in III, 2.8 per cent in IV and 0.3 per cent in V. In York in 1999 two-thirds of Quakers were professionals, especially as teachers, with the remainder apparently entirely non-manual.

**Table 21:** Occupational structure of Quakers in England 1650-1849 (%)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1650-1699</th>
<th>1700-1749</th>
<th>1750-1799</th>
<th>1800-1849</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a) bridegrooms</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total number</td>
<td>618</td>
<td>655</td>
<td>689</td>
<td>276</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gentry</td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td>0.6</td>
<td>0.4</td>
<td>2.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional/clerical</td>
<td>5.2</td>
<td>9.6</td>
<td>14.8</td>
<td>29.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agriculture</td>
<td>16.3</td>
<td>15.7</td>
<td>15.7</td>
<td>8.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Textiles</td>
<td>29.8</td>
<td>22.7</td>
<td>14.2</td>
<td>9.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Food</td>
<td>13.9</td>
<td>23.5</td>
<td>25.3</td>
<td>18.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leather</td>
<td>9.2</td>
<td>8.4</td>
<td>7.3</td>
<td>2.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wholesale trades</td>
<td>22.8</td>
<td>32.2</td>
<td>35.1</td>
<td>30.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Retail trades</td>
<td>17.6</td>
<td>20.0</td>
<td>19.7</td>
<td>13.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Artisans</td>
<td>40.1</td>
<td>26.4</td>
<td>18.1</td>
<td>13.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b) brides’ fathers</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total number</td>
<td>179</td>
<td>269</td>
<td>322</td>
<td>161</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gentry/professional/clerical</td>
<td>8.9</td>
<td>13.8</td>
<td>14.0</td>
<td>25.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agriculture</td>
<td>17.9</td>
<td>18.2</td>
<td>16.5</td>
<td>16.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Textiles</td>
<td>21.2</td>
<td>18.6</td>
<td>13.0</td>
<td>9.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Food</td>
<td>21.8</td>
<td>21.2</td>
<td>31.1</td>
<td>26.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leather</td>
<td>8.4</td>
<td>6.7</td>
<td>5.6</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wholesale trades</td>
<td>35.8</td>
<td>34.9</td>
<td>37.0</td>
<td>31.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Retail trades</td>
<td>13.4</td>
<td>16.7</td>
<td>15.2</td>
<td>13.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Artisans</td>
<td>22.3</td>
<td>25.3</td>
<td>19.3</td>
<td>18.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Table 22:** Occupational structure of Quakers in London and Middlesex 1657-1719 (%)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1657-1669</th>
<th>1685-1689</th>
<th>1715-1719</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total number</td>
<td>151</td>
<td>248</td>
<td>198</td>
<td>597</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gentry</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td>0.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional</td>
<td>4.6</td>
<td>0.4</td>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>2.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yeomen/farmers/husbandmen</td>
<td>2.6</td>
<td>3.9</td>
<td>5.6</td>
<td>4.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Food and consumption trades</td>
<td>19.2</td>
<td>20.2</td>
<td>21.7</td>
<td>20.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clothing trades</td>
<td>1.3</td>
<td>2.3</td>
<td>7.1</td>
<td>3.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Artisans in clothing</td>
<td>33.8</td>
<td>38.0</td>
<td>27.7</td>
<td>33.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other artisans</td>
<td>29.1</td>
<td>27.1</td>
<td>26.8</td>
<td>27.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maritime occupations</td>
<td>7.3</td>
<td>5.0</td>
<td>5.1</td>
<td>5.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Labourers/servants</td>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>3.1</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>2.7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 23: Occupational structure of Quakers in London c.1680 and c.1780 (%)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>c. 1680</th>
<th>c. 1780</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total number</strong></td>
<td>242</td>
<td>236</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bankers and merchants</td>
<td>5.8</td>
<td>11.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wholesale and retail trades</td>
<td>21.5</td>
<td>48.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manufacturers and artisans</td>
<td>61.2</td>
<td>33.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Schoolmasters and doctors</td>
<td>2.1</td>
<td>3.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agriculture</td>
<td>2.1</td>
<td>3.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mariners</td>
<td>4.1</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Labourers</td>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 24: Occupational structure of Quakers in Gloucestershire/Wiltshire, Bristol, Buckinghamshire, Lancashire and Yorkshire 1656-1725 (%)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gloucs/Wilt</th>
<th>Bristol</th>
<th>Bucks</th>
<th>Lancs</th>
<th>Yorks</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1656-1688</td>
<td>94</td>
<td>168</td>
<td>149</td>
<td>178</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gentry</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>3.4</td>
<td>0.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Merchants</td>
<td>1.1</td>
<td>10.1</td>
<td>1.3</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>2.4</td>
<td>0.7</td>
<td>1.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yeomen/freeholders</td>
<td>20.2</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>12.7</td>
<td>14.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Farmers/husbandmen</td>
<td>5.3</td>
<td>0.6</td>
<td>21.5</td>
<td>18.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Food and consumption trades</td>
<td>7.4</td>
<td>17.3</td>
<td>23.5</td>
<td>5.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clothing trades</td>
<td>3.2</td>
<td>4.2</td>
<td>1.3</td>
<td>4.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Artisans in textiles</td>
<td>29.9</td>
<td>16.1</td>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>19.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other artisans in clothing</td>
<td>6.4</td>
<td>23.2</td>
<td>12.1</td>
<td>16.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Artisans in mechanic trades</td>
<td>23.4</td>
<td>22.0</td>
<td>18.1</td>
<td>16.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seamen/soldiers</td>
<td>1.1</td>
<td>3.6</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Labourers/servants</td>
<td>2.1</td>
<td>0.6</td>
<td>3.4</td>
<td>1.2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 25: Occupational structure of Quakers in Cheshire, Essex and Somerset 1654-1664 (%)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Cheshire</th>
<th>Essex</th>
<th>Somerset</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total number</strong></td>
<td>154</td>
<td>151</td>
<td>177</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gentry</td>
<td>3.2</td>
<td>4.6</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional</td>
<td>1.3</td>
<td>0.7</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yeomen</td>
<td>21.4</td>
<td>23.2</td>
<td>24.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Farmers</td>
<td>22.1</td>
<td>13.9</td>
<td>16.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Husbandmen</td>
<td>16.2</td>
<td>7.3</td>
<td>20.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wholesale traders/ large producers</td>
<td>3.2</td>
<td>21.2</td>
<td>13.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Retail traders</td>
<td>14.9</td>
<td>13.2</td>
<td>9.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Artisans</td>
<td>13.0</td>
<td>13.2</td>
<td>12.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Labourers/servants</td>
<td>4.5</td>
<td>2.6</td>
<td>2.8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Table 26: Occupational structure of Quakers in Colchester and Essex 1655-1724 (%)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>1655-1664</th>
<th>1665-1674</th>
<th>1675-1684</th>
<th>1685-1694</th>
<th>1695-1704</th>
<th>1705-1714</th>
<th>1715-1724</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gentry</td>
<td>3.7</td>
<td>3.1</td>
<td>2.2</td>
<td>1.6</td>
<td>1.4</td>
<td>0.8</td>
<td>0.7</td>
<td>1.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agriculture</td>
<td>31.1</td>
<td>30.2</td>
<td>26.6</td>
<td>23.1</td>
<td>26.1</td>
<td>22.8</td>
<td>20.0</td>
<td>25.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional</td>
<td>0.4</td>
<td>0.6</td>
<td>0.9</td>
<td>0.4</td>
<td>2.8</td>
<td>4.1</td>
<td>3.7</td>
<td>1.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wholesale/</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>large producers</td>
<td>21.0</td>
<td>21.8</td>
<td>22.2</td>
<td>24.7</td>
<td>23.7</td>
<td>25.7</td>
<td>26.4</td>
<td>23.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Retail trades</td>
<td>13.9</td>
<td>15.4</td>
<td>13.7</td>
<td>15.5</td>
<td>15.3</td>
<td>15.7</td>
<td>19.1</td>
<td>15.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Artisans</td>
<td>25.5</td>
<td>24.6</td>
<td>29.2</td>
<td>30.3</td>
<td>27.9</td>
<td>29.5</td>
<td>29.8</td>
<td>28.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sea trades</td>
<td>3.4</td>
<td>3.4</td>
<td>3.7</td>
<td>3.1</td>
<td>2.1</td>
<td>1.1</td>
<td>0.3</td>
<td>2.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Labourers/servants</td>
<td>1.1</td>
<td>0.9</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>1.3</td>
<td>0.7</td>
<td>0.3</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Table 27: Occupational structure of Quakers in Buckinghamshire and Norfolk 1662-1740 (%)

#### a) Buckinghamshire

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>1662</th>
<th>1669/1672</th>
<th>1686/1689</th>
<th>1700</th>
<th>1720</th>
<th>1740</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gentry</td>
<td>6.8</td>
<td>5.0</td>
<td>4.2</td>
<td>3.2</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>1.1</td>
<td>3.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional</td>
<td>3.4</td>
<td>1.7</td>
<td>0.6</td>
<td>0.6</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>2.2</td>
<td>1.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yeomen/farmers</td>
<td>33.9</td>
<td>29.2</td>
<td>19.9</td>
<td>19.7</td>
<td>20.0</td>
<td>23.3</td>
<td>23.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Husbandmen/labourers</td>
<td>8.5</td>
<td>15.0</td>
<td>22.3</td>
<td>19.1</td>
<td>19.3</td>
<td>14.4</td>
<td>17.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wholesale trades</td>
<td>23.7</td>
<td>21.7</td>
<td>21.7</td>
<td>23.6</td>
<td>20.7</td>
<td>23.3</td>
<td>22.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Retail trades</td>
<td>15.3</td>
<td>18.3</td>
<td>18.7</td>
<td>17.2</td>
<td>20.0</td>
<td>15.6</td>
<td>17.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Artisans and labourers</td>
<td>8.5</td>
<td>9.2</td>
<td>12.7</td>
<td>16.6</td>
<td>17.0</td>
<td>20.0</td>
<td>14.3</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

#### b) Norwich and Norfolk

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>1662</th>
<th>1669/1672</th>
<th>1686/1689</th>
<th>1700</th>
<th>1720</th>
<th>1740</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gentry</td>
<td>6.8</td>
<td>4.1</td>
<td>1.7</td>
<td>2.2</td>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>5.1</td>
<td>3.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional</td>
<td>1.4</td>
<td>0.8</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.8</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>0.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yeomen/farmers</td>
<td>17.6</td>
<td>19.0</td>
<td>13.2</td>
<td>14.3</td>
<td>13.8</td>
<td>14.2</td>
<td>14.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Husbandmen/labourers</td>
<td>8.1</td>
<td>8.3</td>
<td>8.9</td>
<td>8.5</td>
<td>3.8</td>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>6.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wholesale trades</td>
<td>16.2</td>
<td>9.1</td>
<td>8.5</td>
<td>8.8</td>
<td>11.3</td>
<td>13.7</td>
<td>10.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Retail trades</td>
<td>12.2</td>
<td>15.7</td>
<td>14.9</td>
<td>9.2</td>
<td>10.0</td>
<td>7.6</td>
<td>11.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Worsted weavers</td>
<td>13.5</td>
<td>10.7</td>
<td>14.5</td>
<td>11.4</td>
<td>9.6</td>
<td>6.6</td>
<td>10.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Woolcombers</td>
<td>8.1</td>
<td>9.1</td>
<td>17.4</td>
<td>15.4</td>
<td>23.3</td>
<td>24.9</td>
<td>18.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Artisans and labourers</td>
<td>16.2</td>
<td>23.1</td>
<td>20.9</td>
<td>30.1</td>
<td>24.2</td>
<td>23.9</td>
<td>24.2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 28: Occupational structure of Quakers in Buckinghamshire, Huntingdonshire and Cambridgeshire 1655-1724 (%)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Buckinghamshire 1655-1700</th>
<th>Huntingdonshire 1655-1724</th>
<th>Cambridgeshire 1655-1724</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total number</strong></td>
<td>198</td>
<td>216</td>
<td>214</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Gentry</strong></td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td>2.3</td>
<td>0.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Professional</strong></td>
<td>3.5</td>
<td>1.9</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Yeomen</strong></td>
<td>13.1</td>
<td>14.8</td>
<td>26.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Husbandmen</strong></td>
<td>20.7</td>
<td>12.5</td>
<td>13.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Farmers</strong></td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>5.1</td>
<td>0.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Wholesale traders/ large producers</strong></td>
<td>11.6</td>
<td>8.8</td>
<td>5.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Retail traders</strong></td>
<td>21.2</td>
<td>23.6</td>
<td>21.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Craftsmen</strong></td>
<td>16.7</td>
<td>20.4</td>
<td>23.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Labourers/servants</strong></td>
<td>11.1</td>
<td>10.6</td>
<td>7.9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 29: Occupational structure of Nonconformity in Warwickshire 1660-1720 (%)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Presbyterian/Baptists 1660-1720</th>
<th>Quakers 1660-1720</th>
<th>all Dissent 1660-1669</th>
<th>all Dissent 1683-1686</th>
<th>all Dissent 1703-1706</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total number</strong></td>
<td>209</td>
<td>110</td>
<td>298</td>
<td>998</td>
<td>432</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Gentry</strong></td>
<td>12</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Yeomen</strong></td>
<td>2</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Husbandmen</strong></td>
<td>2</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Professional/merchants</strong></td>
<td>25</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Tradesmen</strong></td>
<td>27</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Artisans</strong></td>
<td>30</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Labourers/servants</strong></td>
<td>2</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 30: Occupational structure of Quakers in West Riding of Yorkshire 1715-1801 (%)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1715-1740</th>
<th>1741-1770</th>
<th>1771-1800</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total number</strong></td>
<td>160</td>
<td>191</td>
<td>261</td>
<td>612</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Gentry</strong></td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Professional</strong></td>
<td>0.6</td>
<td>2.1</td>
<td>3.4</td>
<td>2.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Agriculture</strong></td>
<td>19.4</td>
<td>14.1</td>
<td>12.6</td>
<td>14.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Commerce</strong></td>
<td>6.9</td>
<td>12.6</td>
<td>14.9</td>
<td>12.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Manufacturers</strong></td>
<td>73.1</td>
<td>71.2</td>
<td>67.8</td>
<td>70.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Labourers</strong></td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>1.1</td>
<td>0.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 31: Occupational structure of Quakers in Manchester, Leeds, Birmingham and Bristol 1750-1824 (%)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>upper class</th>
<th>upper middle class</th>
<th>lower middle class</th>
<th>lower class</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>339</td>
<td>356</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Date</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1750-1764</td>
<td>37.1</td>
<td>45.5</td>
<td>16.1</td>
<td>1.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1780-1794</td>
<td>35.3</td>
<td>43.5</td>
<td>18.5</td>
<td>2.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1810-1824</td>
<td>46.8</td>
<td>41.5</td>
<td>10.6</td>
<td>1.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>City</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manchester</td>
<td>51.6</td>
<td>38.1</td>
<td>9.0</td>
<td>1.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leeds</td>
<td>39.7</td>
<td>38.2</td>
<td>20.1</td>
<td>2.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Birmingham</td>
<td>52.5</td>
<td>40.7</td>
<td>5.9</td>
<td>0.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bristol</td>
<td>33.0</td>
<td>48.6</td>
<td>16.5</td>
<td>2.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>40.9</td>
<td>42.9</td>
<td>14.5</td>
<td>1.7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 32: Occupational structure of Nonconformity in England c. 1800-1837 (%)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Quakers</th>
<th>Baptists</th>
<th>Congregationalist</th>
<th>Wesleyan Methodist</th>
<th>Primitive Methodist</th>
<th>Meth New Connexion</th>
<th>Bible Christians</th>
<th>Methodist Unitarians</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number of counties</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adults/fathers [number]</td>
<td>8,924</td>
<td>6,152</td>
<td>37,251</td>
<td>76,594</td>
<td>7,965</td>
<td>6,103</td>
<td>3,150</td>
<td>408</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I Gentlemen/indep.</td>
<td>0.1</td>
<td>0.2</td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td>0.1</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MIDDLE CLASS</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II Business</td>
<td>11.0</td>
<td>2.2</td>
<td>2.6</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>0.3</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td>1.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>III Professions</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>0.2</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td>0.1</td>
<td>0.2</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IV Farmers/yeomen</td>
<td>13.6</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>4.1</td>
<td>4.2</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>1.2</td>
<td>10.3</td>
<td>0.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V Food and retail</td>
<td>30.2</td>
<td>10.7</td>
<td>12.6</td>
<td>8.3</td>
<td>2.8</td>
<td>7.5</td>
<td>3.5</td>
<td>2.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VI White collar</td>
<td>5.3</td>
<td>2.3</td>
<td>5.6</td>
<td>3.1</td>
<td>1.8</td>
<td>2.6</td>
<td>0.8</td>
<td>0.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UPPER WORKING CLASS</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VII Labour aristocracy</td>
<td>5.5</td>
<td>5.9</td>
<td>5.4</td>
<td>5.3</td>
<td>3.5</td>
<td>8.7</td>
<td>2.2</td>
<td>7.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VIII Higher skilled</td>
<td>14.0</td>
<td>14.8</td>
<td>21.3</td>
<td>19.7</td>
<td>17.4</td>
<td>36.1</td>
<td>12.4</td>
<td>10.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>POOR</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IX Lower skilled</td>
<td>10.7</td>
<td>15.0</td>
<td>17.8</td>
<td>22.7</td>
<td>29.3</td>
<td>20.8</td>
<td>23.3</td>
<td>17.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>X Depressed</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>32.5</td>
<td>9.8</td>
<td>12.1</td>
<td>17.6</td>
<td>12.8</td>
<td>0.3</td>
<td>55.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>XI Unskilled</td>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>12.4</td>
<td>19.3</td>
<td>23.2</td>
<td>24.8</td>
<td>9.1</td>
<td>47.0</td>
<td>4.7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 33: Occupational structure of Quakers in Great Britain 1840-1901 (%)  

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1840-1841</th>
<th>1870-1871</th>
<th>1900-1901</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total number</strong></td>
<td>222</td>
<td>194</td>
<td>191</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>I UPPER AND MIDDLE CLASS</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gentlemen</td>
<td>12.2</td>
<td>25.3</td>
<td>10.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Landowners</td>
<td>12.6</td>
<td>13.4</td>
<td>7.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional</td>
<td>7.2</td>
<td>7.2</td>
<td>5.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Merchants and bankers</td>
<td>9.9</td>
<td>7.7</td>
<td>8.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others</td>
<td>8.6</td>
<td>7.2</td>
<td>13.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sub-total</td>
<td>50.5</td>
<td>60.8</td>
<td>46.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>II LOWER MIDDLE CLASS</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Retailers/smaller entrepreneurs</td>
<td>17.6</td>
<td>6.2</td>
<td>11.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Independent craftsmen</td>
<td>5.9</td>
<td>4.1</td>
<td>6.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others</td>
<td>3.2</td>
<td>6.2</td>
<td>14.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sub-total</td>
<td>26.7</td>
<td>16.5</td>
<td>32.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>III SKILLED OR SEMI-SKILLED WORKING CLASS</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sub-total</td>
<td>15.8</td>
<td>15.5</td>
<td>14.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>IV UNSKILLED WORKING CLASS</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sub-total</td>
<td>7.2</td>
<td>7.2</td>
<td>7.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 34: Occupational structure of Baptist members in Bedfordshire, Cambridgeshire and Northamptonshire 1710-1849 (%)  

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>pre-1730</th>
<th>1730-1769</th>
<th>1770-1809</th>
<th>1810-1849</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total number</strong></td>
<td>454</td>
<td>518</td>
<td>667</td>
<td>1,072</td>
<td>2,711</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gentlemen</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>1.2</td>
<td>0.6</td>
<td>1.2</td>
<td>1.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.4</td>
<td>0.6</td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td>0.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Farmers</td>
<td>26.9</td>
<td>25.9</td>
<td>19.0</td>
<td>16.4</td>
<td>20.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tradesmen</td>
<td>35.5</td>
<td>34.2</td>
<td>39.0</td>
<td>29.0</td>
<td>33.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Labourers</td>
<td>36.1</td>
<td>38.4</td>
<td>40.8</td>
<td>52.9</td>
<td>44.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Baptists**  
In a small sample of Warwickshire Baptists for 1660-1720, 47 per cent were artisans, 21 per cent yeomen or husbandmen and 18 per cent tradesmen (Table 29), but tradesmen appear to have been far more dominant in the limited number of Baptist congregations for which there is occupational data in the Evans List of 1715-1729.\(^38\) The best eighteenth-century figures currently come from nine village chapels in the predominantly agricultural counties of Bedfordshire, Cambridgeshire and Northamptonshire and relate to the admission of new members (Table 34). Notwithstanding the unhelpfully broad nature of the occupational categories, the limited appeal to gentlemen and professionals is very clear, as also is the strong presence of tradesmen (about one-third), the reducing proportion of farmers over time, and the growing number of labourers, who represented a majority of rural Baptists during the first half of the nineteenth century.

Although this would not have been typical of some late eighteenth-century urban Baptist chapels, where (to judge from Bristol) labourers would have been nearer one-tenth, with shopkeepers and artisans predominating,\(^39\) it did tend to reflect the
national situation, as captured in the early nineteenth-century non-parochial registers (Table 32). Here, on average, three-fifths of Baptists were categorised as ‘poor’ (the lower skilled, depressed and unskilled), far more than among the Quakers and Congregationalists, though fewer than among the Primitive Methodists and Bible Christians. In particular, the Baptists had attracted large numbers of weavers in Lancashire and the West Riding, framework knitters in Leicestershire, and miners in Staffordshire. The remainder of their congregations were almost evenly divided between the middle class and upper working class. Other north-west data from the 1840s bear this out, with textile workers, especially weavers and spinners, the largest single group (44.8 per cent), followed by labourers (11.2 per cent); the remainder were disproportionately retailers or craftsmen. In Leeds in 1851 most Baptist heads of households were artisans or unskilled.

The later nineteenth-century Baptist evidence is more urban, including an important analysis of Liverpool (Table 35). This suggests growing Baptist affluence, with nearly two-thirds of adherents in non-manual employment and the denomination’s backbone to be found among the lower middle and skilled working classes, in common with the rest of the city’s Nonconformity. One large central Birmingham chapel followed suit, with 7.5 per cent of its members in 1878 professional, 17.5 per cent manufacturers, 16.4 per cent commercial, 20.3 per cent shopkeepers, 2.5 per cent shop assistants, 21.9 per cent skilled artisans, with just 5.6 per cent servants and 8.3 per cent labourers. In Oldham in 1858 and in Bradford in 1882, however, the Baptists, although still over-represented among non-manual occupations relative to the population, had a more democratic profile, certainly compared with the Congregationalists. Few in Bradford kept servants, there was a strong following among skilled workers, and around one in seven was semi-skilled or unskilled. One of the three chapels studied here was in an artisan suburb, another in a working class area, underlining the importance of location in shaping social structure. Much the same was true of a fourth Baptist congregation in Bradford, sited in a poor district which later became an Irish enclave, where textile workers comprised the biggest single group for a slightly earlier period.

A variant on the same theme is the mapping of Nottingham Baptist members by the social class of the streets in which they resided; in the 1880s around one-quarter lived in lower middle class and three-fifths in working class residential areas, but by the eve of the First World War the latter had reduced to just over a third. Nowhere might the impact of location have been expected to be greater than in London, but in practice Baptist bridegrooms marrying in working class Bethnal Green at the turn of the twentieth century were only slightly more likely to be from manual backgrounds than in leafy Lewisham (55.3 per cent compared with 42.1 per cent). In both boroughs the mainstay of Baptist congregations were clerks (27.1 per cent), retailers (10.6 per cent), skilled workers (32.7 per cent) and the semi-skilled (10.9 per cent). Yet the story was different again in Bacup, Lancashire, in 1966, where three-fifths of members were shoe and slipper workers, with the remainder professionals, local government officials or cotton workers. Otherwise, the modern evidence relates not to members or attenders but to the affiliates covered by the British Social Attitudes surveys for 1983-2008 (Table 36), 61.9 per cent of whom claimed to be regular worshippers (once a month or more). Their occupational profile was not that much different from all adults, although they were somewhat more likely to be non-manual workers (61.6 per cent against 56.2 per cent). Registrar General classes II and III dominated, with 74.0 per cent of professing Baptists, compared with 72.8 per cent in the population.
Table 35: Occupational structure of the Free Churches in Liverpool 1837-1905 (%)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Baptists</th>
<th>Congregationalists</th>
<th>Wesleyan Methodists</th>
<th>Primitive Methodists</th>
<th>United Methodist Free Churches</th>
<th>New Connexion</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total number</strong></td>
<td>900</td>
<td>1,267</td>
<td>1,098</td>
<td>301</td>
<td>128</td>
<td>85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>NON-MANUAL</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional</td>
<td>4.8</td>
<td>4.3</td>
<td>3.8</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>2.3</td>
<td>3.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Merchants/ lower professional</td>
<td>24.6</td>
<td>24.5</td>
<td>16.4</td>
<td>16.6</td>
<td>10.9</td>
<td>25.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dealers/shopkeepers/ clerks/other</td>
<td>34.6</td>
<td>28.3</td>
<td>27.1</td>
<td>29.9</td>
<td>35.2</td>
<td>27.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>MANUAL</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Skilled workers</td>
<td>24.9</td>
<td>29.7</td>
<td>29.9</td>
<td>30.6</td>
<td>30.5</td>
<td>29.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Semi-skilled workers</td>
<td>7.9</td>
<td>9.1</td>
<td>15.5</td>
<td>13.6</td>
<td>14.1</td>
<td>11.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unskilled workers/ labourers</td>
<td>2.9</td>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>6.6</td>
<td>4.3</td>
<td>7.0</td>
<td>2.4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Congregationalists**

As Hurwich’s study of Warwickshire confirms, denominational boundaries in the early days of Nonconformity were far less distinct than they were subsequently to become. In particular, researchers have found it difficult to differentiate between Presbyterians and Congregationalists. What stands out from Table 29, however, is how much more affluent these two groups combined were than either the Baptists or Quakers, especially notable being the greater number of gentry, merchants and tradesmen and the lower proportions of yeomen/husbandmen and artisans. Fragmentary evidence from the Evans List of 1715-1729 suggests that tradesmen may even have been in a slight majority in many Congregational chapels, the remainder being divided fairly evenly between gentry, yeomen and labourers. There were some conspicuous exceptions, such as Alston Moor in Cumberland where the adherents were mostly labourers in the lead mines. Again, geography must have played a part, since at Bury St Edmunds three-quarters of new Congregational members between 1670 and 1691 were artisans, particularly in textiles, while at Great Yarmouth three-fifths of baptisms in 1705-1725 were the children of seamen or soldiers and nearly one-quarter of artisans. In late eighteenth-century Colchester shopkeepers (21.4 per cent) and artisans (51.3 per cent) predominated, and in three West Riding towns 86.4 per cent were manufacturers and 8.1 per cent engaged in commerce.

The baptismal/birth registers in Table 32 are, once more, our principal source for the early nineteenth century, covering 34 English counties in the case of the Congregationalists. The table, and the underlying county-level data, provide some support for the middle class image which Congregationalism was to acquire in the Victorian period. Certainly, its composition appeared very bourgeois in London, Middlesex and Surrey, while in Lancashire, Norfolk, Nottinghamshire, Staffordshire, Worcestershire and the West Riding there was a much higher proportion of businessmen than in the population as a whole. Moreover, in nearly every English county the Congregationalists attracted abnormally large numbers of retailers and white-collar workers.

On the other hand, in the aggregate, only around one-quarter of them were in non-manual occupations, with another quarter in the skilled working class and just under...
one-half semi-skilled or unskilled. Although, relative to the wider society, Congregationalism did attract an unusually large contingent of the labour aristocracy and higher skilled, in every English county apart from Middlesex more than one-third of its baptisms in the 1830s were from the poor (Watts’s groups IX-XI), in two-thirds of counties above 40 per cent were, and in nine counties over one-half. The proportion reached 63.1 per cent in Essex and 65.4 per cent in Cumberland. Noteworthy was Congregationalism’s appeal to weavers in Cheshire, Lancashire, Warwickshire and the West Riding; miners in Cumberland, Derbyshire, Shropshire, Staffordshire and the North Riding; framework knitters in the east Midlands; shoemakers in Northamptonshire; and mariners in Durham. In the overall Nonconformist prosperity league table, the denomination generally occupied third place, after the Quakers and Unitarians, but ahead of the Baptists and Methodists.54

In the case of Congregationalism, Watts was able to extend his analysis of the baptismal/birth registers to cover Essex, Leicestershire, Middlesex and the West Riding for the years 1840-1869 (Table 37). This suggests some upwards occupational drift during the mid-century, especially in Middlesex and North London where notable features were the increase in Congregational white-collar workers from 12.0 per cent in the 1830s to 33.7 per cent in the 1860s, and a fall in the bottom three categories from 28.7 to 11.1 per cent. Across all four counties, however, this effect was less in terms of the expansion of the non-manual component (which remained at just over one-quarter) than in a shift from the poorer groups to the upper working class. Furthermore, 43.3 per cent of Congregationalists still came from categories IX-XI, and the mean proportion of unskilled was actually higher in 1840-1869 than in 1800-1837. Since baptismal registers often now recorded the chapel connection of the father of the baptised, Watts was able to attempt a comparison of the occupational profile of members and non-members. In some chapels the former were clearly of a higher social status than the latter, but the disparity was far from consistent.55

Further London Congregational evidence has been presented by Crossick and McLeod. Members at two Kentish London chapels studied by Crossick for the 1870s were mostly retailers, white-collar staff or skilled workers. This was also the case for the fathers of children baptised at a third, except that the balance was more strongly in favour of skilled workers (57.3 per cent) and 8.7 per cent were semi-skilled or unskilled.56 Among bridegrooms in Bethnal Green and Lewisham at the turn of the century there was a similar dominance of the lower middle class and skilled working class, this owing much to the one-third who were clerks.57 The same support base was to be found in Liverpool (Table 35), but here the non-manual contingent was as high as 57.1 per cent, skilled workers accounting for 29.7 per cent and semi-skilled or unskilled 12.4 per cent. A broadly similar position was evident at Bradford in the early 1880s, with an above average number of servants kept, although one of the five chapels examined (serving a semi-rural iron-manufacturing community) did register 61 per cent manual workers (albeit four-fifths of them were skilled).58 Craft and industrial workers were dominant in Oldham at mid-century.59 They were numerous in Huddersfield, too, but equalled by merchants, manufacturers, farmers and tradesmen.60 Imperfect data for four Cumbrian causes highlight a strong presence of shopkeepers and artisans in the late Victorian period, but there were also many domestic servants in Carlisle and Kendal and miners and labourers in Aspatria.61

For the twentieth century, 84 per cent of Greater Manchester Congregationalists in 1966 were in lower middle class or skilled occupations, with only 6 per cent semi-skilled or unskilled and 10 per cent in the Registrar General’s top class of professionals and higher managers.62 National data from the British Social Attitudes
surveys for 1983-2008 (Table 36) show United Reformed Church and Congregationalist affiliates to be significantly more likely to be in non-manual employment than the population as a whole, 68.3 compared with 56.2 per cent, with above average numbers of professionals (class I) and, particularly, the intermediate class II. This trend is likely to be accentuated once the two-fifths of irregular or non-attenders at Reformed churches are discounted.

Table 36: Occupational structure of people professing allegiance to the Free Churches in Great Britain 1983-2008 (%)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<tbody>
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<td>3,839</td>
<td>5,454</td>
<td>4,636</td>
<td>723</td>
<td>275</td>
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<td>33,532</td>
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<tr>
<td>RG I</td>
<td>Professional</td>
<td>4.9</td>
<td>3.7</td>
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<td>7.7</td>
<td>12.7</td>
<td>13.5</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Intermediate non-manual</td>
<td>26.2</td>
<td>28.3</td>
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<td>32.1</td>
<td>30.6</td>
<td>28.9</td>
<td>42.4</td>
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<tr>
<td>RG IIIIIN</td>
<td>Skilled non-manual</td>
<td>26.7</td>
<td>27.5</td>
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<td>26.4</td>
<td>27.1</td>
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<td>19.6</td>
<td>21.5</td>
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<td>14.9</td>
<td>16.8</td>
<td>12.7</td>
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<td>Semi-skilled manual</td>
<td>16.7</td>
<td>17.2</td>
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<td>14.4</td>
<td>16.1</td>
<td>14.1</td>
<td>13.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RG V</td>
<td>Unskilled manual</td>
<td>5.9</td>
<td>6.9</td>
<td>6.4</td>
<td>5.2</td>
<td>7.2</td>
<td>4.5</td>
<td>4.2</td>
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<tbody>
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<td>Number</td>
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<td>4,636</td>
<td>4,962</td>
<td>4,319</td>
<td>696</td>
<td>723</td>
<td>291</td>
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<td>33,532</td>
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<td>Professional</td>
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<td>11.1</td>
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<td>14.9</td>
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<td>15.3</td>
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<tr>
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<td>14.4</td>
<td>16.1</td>
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<td>15.3</td>
<td>13.4</td>
<td>13.1</td>
<td>8.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RG V</td>
<td>Unskilled manual</td>
<td>5.2</td>
<td>7.2</td>
<td>7.2</td>
<td>4.5</td>
<td>4.2</td>
<td>4.7</td>
<td>3.4</td>
<td>4.2</td>
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Table 37: Occupational structure of Nonconformity in seven English counties 1840-1869 (%)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of counties</th>
<th>Congregationalists</th>
<th>Primitive Methodists</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Adults/fathers [number]</td>
<td>4,105</td>
<td>2,580</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I  Gentlemen/independent</td>
<td>0.2</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MIDDLE CLASS</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II  Business</td>
<td>2.7</td>
<td>0.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>III Professions</td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td>0.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IV Farmers/yeomen</td>
<td>3.1</td>
<td>0.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V  Food and retail</td>
<td>13.2</td>
<td>5.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VI  White collar</td>
<td>7.4</td>
<td>1.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UPPER WORKING CLASS</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VII Labour aristocracy</td>
<td>8.0</td>
<td>1.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VIII Higher skilled</td>
<td>21.6</td>
<td>11.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>POOR</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IX Lower skilled</td>
<td>14.8</td>
<td>10.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>X  Depressed</td>
<td>5.6</td>
<td>3.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>XI Unskilled</td>
<td>22.9</td>
<td>65.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Part 3 of the article will consider the occupations of Methodists and also contain a general conclusion.

NOTES AND REFERENCES

Jack Wood, The debate is usefully summarised in Paul Richard Van. Confusingly, the 6 per cent of Quakers who Sheila Wright, According to the records of births, marriages, and burials, the proportion of traders among Wiltshire Friends increased from 28.8 per cent in 1689-1750 to 51.9 per cent in 1751-1800, with a corresponding decrease in manufacturers and artisans from 53.7 to 25.9 per cent: calculated from a series of brief articles by Norman Penney, ‘Quakerism in Wiltshire’, Wiltshire Notes and Queries vol.2-7 (1896-1913).

Confusingly, the 6 per cent of Quakers who were craftsmen were included in the ‘upper middle’ class category.


Ibid., pp.315-316


Ibid., pp.178-181

Wright, Friends in York, pp.109, 111, 154-161, 180-181

David Rubinstein with Olivia O’Toole, Faithful to Ourselves and the Outside World: York Quakers during the Twentieth Century (William Sessions, [2001]) pp.4-7


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Source: marriage registers; recalculated and aggregated from Richard Vann and David Eversley, Friends in Life and Death: The British and Irish Quakers in the Demographic Transition, 1650-1900 (Cambridge UP, 1992) pp.70-1, 112-113


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Source: multiple sources; recalculated and aggregated from Davies, The Quakers in English Society, 1655-1725, pp.151-154

Source: multiple sources; recalculated and aggregated from Vann, Social Development of English Quakerism, pp.74-75

Source: multiple sources; recalculated and aggregated from Stevenson, Social and economic status of post-Restoration Dissenters’, pp.338-341, 351-357


Source: marriage registers; recalculated and aggregated from Charles Wallace, ‘Religion and Society in Eighteenth Century England: Geographic, Demographic and Occupational

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36 Source: death registers; Isichei, Victorian Quakers, pp.288-291
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43 Mark Smith, Religion in Industrial Society: Oldham and Saddleworth, 1740-1865 (Clarendon Press, 1994) p.131
44 Chadwick, ‘Church and People in Bradford and District’, pp.153-163
47 McLeod, Class and Religion, pp.309, 311
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51 Watts, The Dissenters, vol.1, p.350
52 Bradley, Religion, Revolution and English Radicalism, p.67
54 Watts, The Dissenters, vol.2, pp.317, 322
55 ibid, vol.2, pp.597-599, 677-680
57 McLeod, Class and Religion, pp.309, 311
58 Chadwick, ‘Church and People in Bradford and District’, pp.153-165
59 Smith, Religion in Industrial Society, p.131
63 Source: unpublished analysis of the merged dataset for the British Social Attitudes surveys, 1983-2008
64 Source: baptismal registers; recalculated and aggregated from Watts, The Dissenters, vol.2, pp.718, 733-734, 739, 743-744, 746, 751, 774

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How Walter Henry Owen avoided the bailiffs: a Lincolnshire farmer between the wars

JOANNA LOXTON

Introduction

Following the First World War the British agricultural industry was plunged into a recession, which was prolonged by the global slump of the 1930s. Walter Henry Owen from Lincolnshire was one of the farmers who weathered this difficult period, a feat he put down to ‘hard work, an accounting system which gave early warning of future financial difficulties and legacies which gave welcome assistance in times of great difficulty’. This article analyses the data from Owen’s accounts and valuations for the period between 1920 and 1939 to identify the factors responsible for his survival, and provide a uniquely-detailed piece in the complex jigsaw of the economic structure of farming in this period.¹

Walter Henry Owen was a Lincolnshire man, born at Sleaford in 1892. In 1912, aged 20, he emigrated to Western Australia to pursue a farming career—like many young men in more remote rural districts, he perhaps saw little future in working the land at home. By October 1914 he had cleared 200 acres, but he then volunteered for the 10th Light Horse Regiment of the Australian Mounted Division, with whom he served at Gallipoli, Sinai and Ghezirah, capturing Beersheba and Jerusalem as part of the Egyptian Expeditionary Force. He became a staff sergeant at the Australian Depot Stores in Ghezirah, where his responsibilities included managing the accounts. Owen was one of the last to leave Egypt, in August 1919, having served 5 years and 42 days—with 12 days’ leave, one severe wound and two rounds of dysentery to his credit. On returning home to visit his parents he found his father unable to work, and decided to stay and make his home with them.²

He applied for the tenancy of Bridge End Farm, Horbling, eight miles from Sleaford at the western edge of the Lincolnshire Fens in the south-east of the county, taking possession in August 1920. Bridge End was approximately 120 acres in size, for £218 annual rent. It lies beside the causeway which carries the main road from Boston to Grantham (now the A52), and none of its land was more than 15 feet above sea level. The farm was part of the Crown Estate under the direction of the Commissioner of Woods, and had been let via the property agents J. Carter Jonas & Sons. He remained at Bridge End until 1937, when he moved to another Crown Estate property, North End Farm in the neighbouring parish of Swaton. This farm, in the village High Street, was on slightly higher ground (up to 35 feet above sea level) and covered about 290 acres, let at a rent of £350 per annum.³ The coloured map on the back cover shows the area between Horbling, Swaton and Sleaford.

British agriculture before 1919

Between 1871 and 1911 the proportion of the national workforce employed in agriculture fell from 15 per cent to 8 per cent, and of GDP derived from agriculture
from 14 per cent to 6 per cent. Previously granted a generous measure of government protection, home food production was opened up to international competition in order to feed the population, which had quadrupled since 1801. The repeal of the Corn Laws in 1846 eventually resulted in a dramatic and prolonged fall in agricultural prices, ushering in the miserable decades known as the Great Agricultural Depression. Farming in the period between 1875 and 1939 is frequently characterised as failing—in ‘a state of chronic depression’ or ‘a downward spiral’, temporarily alleviated by the First World War I. Despite these problems, however, the volume of British agricultural output remained consistent. The relative success of meat and dairy production over arable farming during this period prompted a major increase in the area under permanent pasture. In Lincolnshire, once the leading wheat producer in the country, arable acreage fell by around 25 per cent between 1895 and 1914.

State control of food production was introduced in World War One when Lloyd George’s government initiated a ‘radical food production policy’. Vast areas of pasture were broken up and ploughed, being replaced with crops when the 1917 Corn Production Act guaranteed minimum prices for wheat and oats. While Walter Owen marched across the Biblical deserts, the amount of arable land in England increased by 1,596,000 acres. Across the arable heartland of eastern England, these policies reasserted the dominance of crops in the local economy. In retrospect it can readily be seen that wartime protectionism created an artificial boom in agriculture, but the passing of the 1920 Agriculture Act, and extension of the Corn Production Act, made it appear that the protective hand would extend into the time of peace. An unparalleled rush of land buying, fuelled by the recent success of farming and a landowning class prepared to sell after decades of low rental incomes, saw over 6 million acres purchased between 1918 and 1921, almost exclusively by tenant farmers. It seemed that agricultural prosperity had returned and that there were major opportunities in farming, not for the great landowners but for their erstwhile tenants.

The experience of Walter Henry Owen

Sadly for the optimistic yeomen, this was not to be the case. In March 1921, almost a year after Owen moved into Bridge End, the Agriculture Act was repealed, causing an immediate and devastating fall in prices. Many farm products lost between one-third and one-half of their 1918-20 value. These prices were still higher than they had been before the war, but many of the very numerous new farmers lacked sufficient capital to see them through, and banks (unlike landlords) were not willing to reduce payments in hard times. The numbers of bankrupted farmers in the 1920s and ‘30s far exceeded those of the previous depression of the 1870s, because the number of small landowners was so much higher the second time around. In more remote rural areas such as the Lincolnshire Fens, the effects of the depression were particularly keenly felt. Owen witnessed many of his neighbours fall in the slump that enveloped the first two decades of his English farming career, and he was one of the few in his locality fortunate enough to survive.

Even before the drop of prices, Owen faced a serious problem with the condition of his farm. Under the terms of his lease, he had to pay the outgoing tenant, Joseph Wilson, the current value of the holding when he took possession. He paid £113 1s 6d; the value of the land was £173 6s 6d, less dilapidations of £60 5s. Under Wilson’s tenancy nearly 35 per cent by area of the property was run down, there was no stabling available for farm horses (without which ploughing or heavy work could not be done) and the largest field was ‘in a disgracefully condition; it had not been fallowed for 7
years & so far as I could gather had had no manure of any description used for a very considerable period ... a very serious handicap to me". 16

From the first Owen had intended to run Bridge End as a mixed-farm enterprise, with his income coming from both livestock and arable. 17 Although he had saved over £600 of capital during his time in Australia and the army, this was immediately used up by the purchases of implements, seeds and horses necessary for arable production, in paying Wilson’s £113, and in the labour required to run the farm and produce his first harvest. This left Owen with a £200 overdraft, a large proportion of his arable land out of commission, and no available capital to stock his farm with beasts, other than three pregnant sows and a few chickens. 18 He was dependent on the crops, mainly wheat, to meet his ongoing costs and raise more money to invest in the business and begin the arduous and labour-intensive work of improvement. But a combination of ‘foul land’ and a wet British summer meant that the harvest was small and of poor quality. On top of this, the price crash occurred just as the harvest was ready to be sold. 19 All forces, human, elemental and economic, were against Owen and his burgeoning business. He was the only able-bodied man on the property, providing for his elderly and dependent parents, but his first financial year at Bridge End Farm was celebrated with a loss of £60 4s 4½d. 20 He employed two labourers at 48s 6d a week each, and one woman at 22s 6d, this being the bare minimum of hands necessary to run the semi-derelict farm. He had cut his living expenses to the bone, but rent and rates totalling £120 were looming and he had little possibility of acquiring any cash until the next harvest. 21

In part, Owen attributed his survival to the fortuitous receipt of legacies at times of greatest need. The only one to which there is reference in his correspondence was the encashment of his War Gratuity Bond—shares which he had purchased when he joined the Australian Mounted Division in 1914. The bond was cashed for £128 5s 5d in August 1921, with which he could meet his most urgent liabilities. The description of this as a ‘legacy’ is misleading, for in order to receive it Owen was forced to engage in a war of words as persistently as his unit had engaged the Turks at Jerusalem. His initial application to the Commonwealth Office of Australia was rejected, on the grounds that only cases of ‘stringent necessity arising from business circumstances’ could be granted. 22 Battle was then joined, and flurries of mail criss-crossed the Pacific in which Owen alternated between begging, emotional blackmail (cataloguing his list of services to the Australian Army) and persistence to gain his way, responding to one rejection by offering to meet personally with the Australian prime minister to state his case. Owen got the money on his fourth application. Although this was an anxious and frustrating situation for him, it is thanks to the repeated rejections that we know so much of Owen’s impecunious state in this period, for he habitually kept drafts of his outgoing mail. 23

Owen’s survival through the initial crisis was also eased by more spontaneous generosity from his landlord. It was not in the interests of the Crown Estate to lose a tenant at a time when another would be difficult to find, especially for a farm in dire need of careful husbandry. In the first crucial years of his tenancy the rent for Bridge End was remised from the expected £218 per annum to £195 19s 7d in the April 1921 financial year, £206 7s 3d in 1922 and £187 17s 3d in 1923; after this it returned to the normal rate. 24 Owen was also able to obtain an extended period of credit from his primary seed provider and a further £100 overdraft extension from the bank in June 1921. 25

Following a bad first year, how did Owen’s fortunes develop in the ensuing decade and beyond? Figure 1 shows Owen’s profit and loss margin for the financial years between 1920 (when he took Bridge End Farm) to 1937 when he moved to North End. The
figures, taken from his account books, were calculated by combining the valuation figure at the beginning of the financial year with total expenditure, and comparing it to the valuation at the close of the financial year plus total income.26 Overall, his profits grew during the inter-war period, but the unstable economic situation meant he suffered frequent slumps into deficit. The graph shows the severe effect of the global depression in the early 1930s, which ended a brief period of growth. His small profits were immediately consumed by the needs of the farm, providing little opportunity to rebuild his farm capital. Without this insulation he could not be free from the threat of bankruptcy. Even in good times a farmer’s income could fluctuate enormously, because it depended on many separate factors such as the value of land, labour costs, prices, and yields.

The price crash in 1920 was precipitated by the return to the free market following the First World War, but during the global depression of the early 1930s the government reintroduced some measures of support for agriculture. In 1932 the Import Duties and Wheat Acts were passed; these placed import duties on foreign food and provided subsidies for home-produced wheat, which were subsequently extended to milk, bacon, pigs and fat cattle. The effect was to reduce imports by 13 per cent between 1932 and 1934 and promote a wheat revival, with its acreage increasing by over 500,000 acres by the outbreak of the Second World War.27 The subsidies brought a measure of stability to agricultural incomes in the years before 1939, though this is obscured in Owen’s case by his move to North End. This disrupted the normal working of both farms, ensuring a temporary reduction in income, while his expenditure rose as he stocked his larger farm.

**Valuation**

Analysis of the profit/loss margin is, however, of only limited use because it is the amalgamation of three separate strands of information. However, data from the accounts and valuations reveal the trends in valuation, expenditure and income over

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1. **Profit and loss on Bridge End Farm for selected financial years**

1920-1937

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the inter-war period, showing how Owen managed his land. When he took possession of Bridge End Farm the useable land (about 82 acres) was valued at £113 1s 6d. This amount was the ‘tenant-right’ of Owen’s predecessor and was paid to him on vacating the farm. Official valuations were carried out on the farm at the beginning of each financial year in order for the accounts to be compiled, providing separate valuations for the tenant-right (the land), the livestock and the deadstock. This last was all items needed to run the farm, such as machinery and tools, manure, fertiliser and feed, as well as any harvested arable produce not yet sold.

Figure 2 shows the development of the values of land, livestock and deadstock between 1920 and 1940, derived from figures in the annual account books, which also records the numbers of stock kept at any one time. The overall value of the property and stock increased consistently over the inter-war period, indicating that the wild fluctuations in profit/loss margins were essentially due to income or expenditure. The graph shows that Owen increased the value of Bridge End Farm almost fourfold during his tenure, before moving to North End, which was clearly a much more valuable holding. The values of livestock and land both increased sharply in the early years of Owen’s tenancy, but in later years the value of land and deadstock seemed more connected. This indicates that his priorities in the early years were both improving the land and stocking the farm with beasts; once this work had been done the value of arable production could increase. Also, the increased stability of wheat following the introduction of the subsidy justified more heavy investment in this sector of income.

Owen’s livestock comprised working horses, cattle, pigs and fowls. He did buy sheep in 1931, but sold the entire flock the same year and did not repeat the investment until he moved to North End. He bred animals for meat, for although dairying was one of the most successful branches of farming in this period Owen did venture on that road.
It required specialised buildings which he did not have, and was hard to combine with arable production without employing additional labour. He kept four or five working horses at all times; on them depended all the heavy arable work of the farm. Although tractors were available in the 1930s, the hefty capital investment required meant their spread was slow. In 1937 there were just 46,500 tractors in England and Wales, compared with 549,000 working horses.30 Before 1914 fowls were a rather despised adjunct to most farming enterprises, but in the 1920s their numbers increased dramatically, doubling between 1924 and 1934 as egg prices remained relatively stable in an otherwise turbulent period.31 The number of Owen’s fowls varied from year to year, but was rarely below 150 individuals. In contrast the number of pigs and cattle varied, as they were sold in bulk for meat production. There could be anything between five and eighty pigs on the farm in any given year, although the number of beasts rarely dropped below thirty. The railway network was Owen’s vital connection to the wider agricultural market. He sent his animals to their ultimate destination on it, and received seeds and new livestock in return.32

Land use

Annual valuations and inventories were carried out every year on the farm, in which all plots of land were itemised, measured, and their functions recorded. This allows Owen’s approach to land use to be seen. Figure 3 shows the acreage of land devoted to the growth of cereal crops, roots and grass. The figures are taken from the official valuations and inventories; none survives for the years 1921-1926.33 These figures are necessarily estimates for Owen, like all farmers, alternated the crops planted in each field, together with fallow periods, to avoid exhausting the soil. In 1920 only 82 of Bridge End Farm’s 122 acres were useable, and of these 82 acres almost 22 were ‘no claim’—that is, not in use for agricultural purposes. That included the farmhouse, buildings and garden. By 1927 Owen had restored the land that had
been crippled by his predecessor’s shoddy management, including Plot 309, the largest field. Only two acres were ‘no claim’. In 1937 he moved to North End, a property over twice the size of his former home at Bridge End. Owen’s primary change to the land use of Bridge End was to use more of it, putting 60 additional acres into use within seven years. This was an arduous task, involving de-weeding each acre by hand.

The cleared land was mostly devoted to cereal production, always the largest crop in terms of acreage. From the mid 1930s onwards their dominance increased over the other sectors of production, as it was now easier to make profits from them thanks to government policy. Owen’s main cereal crop was wheat, although he also grew oats and barley, peas and beans. Lincolnshire had been almost exclusively geared towards wheat and cereal production, but in periods when the price of wheat was not consistent Owen, like many farmers, devoted time to building up livestock which could be turned to cash quicker and had a more stable value. The land dedicated to pasture was used as grazing for cattle, or mown and turned into hay for winter fodder.

Root crops were traditionally grown with livestock as they also provided winter fodder, although they did not have much value on the market. Owen concentrated mainly on potatoes, which were a profitable root, and sugar beet. This last was a new crop in the United Kingdom, largely replacing the traditional root crops such as mangolds and turnips because it was a cash crop in its own right, as well as providing fodder. There had been an English sugar beet industry since 1909, but the passing of the Sugar Industry (Subsidy) Act in 1925 promoted its growth, particularly in the eastern counties, where many of the factories were situated. The Act, an early example of government support of agriculture, provided direct—albeit declining—subsidies to producers of the crop in order to develop the new industry.

Expenditure

Figure 4 shows Owen’s annual expenditure from 1921 to 1939, taken from the annual account books for this period. Reflecting the higher value of livestock, although not
the amount of land they used, Owen spent more on purchasing and feeding the
animals than he did in buying the necessities for arable production. His expenses
broadly rose and fell in line with the rise and fall in prices, showing that although his
income was reduced, so were his expenses (even if not to the same extent). Certainly
the prices of animal fodder and fertilisers were lower during periods when the price of
crops was also low. After the depression of the early 1930s his expenses rose
consistently, revealing the heavy financial investment it took to run a farm successfully.

Owen’s rent had been reduced in the initial years of the post-war slump and his
landlords lowered his rent again between 1931 and 1934 in response to the global
depression. Only the cost of labour did not fall in line with other prices. It rose
consistently, and was single biggest expense in several years. A minimum wage for
agricultural labourers was first introduced in 1917—prior to this their pay varied
according to regional patterns and economic trends. After the war the 1924
Agricultural Wages (Regulation) Act re-set the minimum wage: the average rate for
unskilled labourers in Lincolnshire was 36s a week. At a time of depressed prices the
effect was to push the cost of labour out of kilter with other expenditure. It did not
change in line with prices. In the depression of the 1870s labour commonly accounted
for 20 per cent of total expense, but in the 1920s and 1930s it often reached 30 per
cent, and as a percentage of Owen’s expenditure, wage outlays hovered around that 30
per cent mark.

Incomes
Owen’s income was derived from sales of cattle and pigs for meat, of crops, and of
eggs. He also made small but consistent sums from the sale of apples, and of rabbits
captured on the farm. Figure 5, compiled from the account books, shows Owen’s annual

![Bar chart: Annual income from Bridge End and North End Farms 1921-1939](image)

5. Annual income from Bridge End and North End Farms 1921-1939
income between 1921 and 1939.38 Once the farm had been stocked with livestock, its income was largely dependent on this sector during the 1920s price slump. Although income from this source steadied out in the 1930s, arable improved dramatically. The income from meat came almost evenly between pigs and cattle, with eggs making up around 5 per cent of the total. Throughout the 1920s and up to 1931 potatoes were the most profitable arable crop, and once sugar beet was established it made as much as corn. Once the wheat subsidy was introduced in 1931, the amount of money made from wheat increased, making it more worthwhile to grow. Wheat once more became the most profitable of the three crops, and although the other crops continued to make money it easily outstripped them.

Conclusions

The key factors in Owen’s economic survival during the inter-war period were unremitting hard work and a flexible approach to the management of his business. He renovated Bridge End Farm and ensured that every possible acre was in production, an enormously difficult task which had to be carried out while running the rest of the farm and keeping meticulous accounts. The latter were crucial in his decision-making; by looking over them and seeing what was selling well, and how the prices of the various products compared, he could adapt his farm to suit conditions. When the price of wheat was slashed in the 1920s he focused on building up the income from livestock and potatoes, which had more stable prices. He introduced sugar beet in 1925; it proved a profitable crop so he increased it. But he did not abandon wheat production, allowing him to increase the amount he produced when prices improved. Owen was aware of this; hard work and an ‘early warning’ accounting system were the keys to his survival.

The records

The farm records which Walter Owen produced are now held at the Museum of English Rural Life, University of Reading. He himself placed them on permanent loan in the museum’s archive on 5 May 1967. The archive holds the surviving records for hundreds of other farms and estates around the country, with the class heading FR (Farm Records), followed by a three-letter suffix corresponding to the county of origin, and a rolling number. Owen’s collection is FRLIN5: the fifth collection of farm records relating to Lincolnshire. It is subdivided into seven numbered categories:

1. Correspondence (1911-1956)
4. Diaries (1922–1953)
5. Leases (1920 & 1937)
6. Valuations (1920–1944)
7. Sundry Papers (1920–1956)

Within these, items are stored in date order and each numbered individually. FRLIN5/2/3, for example, is the third account book (1922-1923).

Owen’s records are in excellent physical condition (he clearly knew how to care for them) and very consistent. Account books are present for every year, as are all valuations from 1927, and, thanks to his thoroughness, they are an excellent source for research. As well as the standard financial information, the account books also contain details of the labour used throughout the years. The farm diaries, which were
not used for this investigation, also include hold day-to-day information about the running of the farm, including the weather, and the dates when each cycle of sowing and harvesting was begun.

Historic farm and estate records of sufficiently good quality (like Owen’s) can be used together to reconstruct detailed pictures of the economic structure of farming and the use of land. Owen’s collection provides a picture of the western edge of the Lincolnshire fens between 1920 and 1956, but that picture would become more detailed if the records of other farmers in the same district were used for comparison, both at the same period to appreciate the variation of the local area, and over time to show changing land use.

No source, it seems, can match the fine detail of a well-kept set of farm records. Unfortunately farm and estate records of this quality are hard to find. Among the farm collections at the Museum of English Rural Life, only a handful contain a complete series of accounts. Most of these are for large estates, and the holdings relating to smaller farms are generally very disappointing, many containing one or two items. Farm and estate records are also widely dispersed: there cannot be a public archive without a selection of them relating to the local area. Records of large estates were particularly sought after as archival collections for local record offices (although some still maintain their own holdings) but that was much less the case with smaller farms. There are of course national surveys and studies of or about agriculture, such as the 1801 crop returns (a form of arable census over much of the country) and the records of the ‘1910 Domesday’, while census records allow us to investigate agricultural employment figures and the tithe surveys are an excellent view of landholding. But all these sources cover limited periods or areas. Farm and estate records are potentially a rich source of information for the great social and technological upheavals that occurred across rural England, both in the inter-war period and in every other. Unfortunately, records of the quality of Walter Owen’s stand like fertile archipelagos in an otherwise empty contextual ocean.

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JOANNA LOXTON is a history graduate from the University of Birmingham, and subsequently completed a Masters of Archives and Record Management at the University of Liverpool. This article (her first foray into publication) began life as part of the assessed work for the Master’s course. She currently works in records management in London.
Opinion: 'No longer the 1948 show' – more responses from readers

Editorial preface: The article by George and Yanina Sheeran, “No longer the 1948 show”—local history in the 21st century’, which was published in the November 2009 issue of The Local Historian, produced a range of responses from readers. The authors have agreed to reply in the November issue, but in the meantime others have written, and two extended contributions are printed below. If you would like to contribute to this debate, please feel free to send comments (preferably by email to agcrosby@waitrose.com).

Martin Bashforth (York)

The debate initiated by George and Yanina Sheeran is very interesting, but it is just a debate. If there is a problem for ‘local history’ there is a need for solutions and that means practical actions. Waiting for developments in the academic sector and expressing the hope that there will be more funding and support from public sources represent more passivity and in the current climate a utopian dream. I would suggest that the example of people combining locally to celebrate their histories provides a more hopeful scenario, though such groups are a minority and often live hand to mouth. While they may occasionally seek public funding from the lottery or from the local authority, or may secure some other form of practical subsidy such as space at a local library or archive, they are not generally dependent on them and can function largely from their own resources, initiative and enthusiasm.

Among such groups are parish, neighbourhood and village history societies appealing to a cross section of local people, by no means all of whom are necessarily white and middle class. Very often their keenest supporters may not be native to the area but have adopted a local ‘identity’, as incomers interested in their new surroundings and the local heritage. They play an important part in building a sense of participatory local community. Silkstone near Barnsley has witnessed such developments, centring for example on an old wagonway and the creation of a new stained glass window to commemorate a nineteenth-century mining tragedy.

Equally important are those groups based around minorities—ethnic, religious or political. Mention has been made in the correspondence of Black History societies, but an encouraging trend is represented by attempts in some areas to form ‘radical history groups’, the best surviving examples being in East London, Bristol and Nottingham. These are based around activists seeking to recover and celebrate local traditions of political and social radicalism, not simply as some form of alternative heritage, but as a means of grounding the continuing struggles in which they take part.

Several of the contributions to the debate have highlighted the issue of dependence on the academy for legitimation. I would suggest that, as well as a significant element of snobbery that regards the uncertificated as unable to attain to some elevated and outdated sense of historical objectivity, some of this derives equally from the rather
‘top down’ character of past versions of ‘history from below’, as espoused by historians such as Hobsbawm, Thompson and even, to a lesser degree, Samuel.

I acknowledge that, for my own part, I have benefited in terms of inspiration from this tradition (as well as from studying for a higher degree at the University of York late in life) but I have come to believe that ‘history from below’ needs to be just that, in practice as well as in principle and attitude. For that insight I thank the occasional conferences on Public History, held at Ruskin College and organised by Hilda Kean. These have represented fruitful occasions for mutual and cross-disciplinary engagement between academics, archivists, museum curators, freelance historians and artists, community organisers, family historians, students and activists. The atmosphere engendered at Ruskin represents the best in the mixture of practice and theory, including postmodernist insights. A phrase coined by one of the contributors to the last conference still rings in my ears: ‘emancipatory history’. Such a concept may not appeal to everyone but it strongly highlights the sense that there is not just one ‘history’ to which we must all aspire, but multiple histories in tension one with another. By loosening ties with both the Academy and the State, I would suggest that ‘history’ as a practical discipline might be renewed in ways that will yet surprise.

Paul Anderton (Newcastle-under-Lyme)

One can only be disappointed to see local historians condemning the article by the Sheerans more at the level of specific vocabulary, phrases, and statements of fact than in the stratosphere of their main argument. References to ‘ageing white adults’ and their ‘Anglo-centric’ interests should not incite Disgusted Tunbridge Wells-type responses. But this is the characteristic of too much supposed local history: parochialism and focus on the particular. It's always the trees that attract attention, too rarely the forest.

It is indisputable in my view that local history has never commanded in its own right the respected place it deserves in the academy. Insofar as the subject has achieved a status in academic structures it is surely equally indisputable that this is under grave threat of destruction. Those who hide their heads in the sands of flourishing local and family history societies, bookshop shelves of volumes of captioned photographs, reminiscences and heritage trails or, for that matter, in the erudite publications of record societies, do local history no service by refusing to recognise the dangers of losing most of the hard won toehold in universities acquired by a previous generation of local historians. So, the Sheerans were inflammatory and over-wild in generalisations, their presentation was subject to some inconsistency, they do not appear to have led by example in their own publications, and they certainly offered no solution to the problems they identify. But they did point to some uncomfortable truths and only local historians can rescue themselves from the double-pronged attack on their academic status. On the one side are government financial policies, and on the other the intellectual arguments of those in the ranks of the establishment who decry local history.

Mark Smith responded with the article I would most like to have written—with some modification. He took the Sheerans on at their own game, never had recourse to personal abuse, paid his readers the compliment of being able to distinguish between ‘modernist’ and ‘postmodernist’ history, indeed, never derided theory or the value of looking beyond the empiricist approach. He accepted that there were positives as well as negatives in the Sheeran view of the current state of local history. If all local historians could meet criticism in the same spirit of academic level headedness we should have a lot more to celebrate.
Smith in particular emphasised the distinction between two crises with which the Sheerans are concerned, but did not sufficiently distinguish: a funding problem for those university structures where local history had won an accepted place, and a separate longer-running matter of a ‘perceived crisis in local history as a subject of academic activity’. Smith wisely advocates looking much more carefully at the points of contact between the two than is often done. Here he uses discourse strategy against the Sheerans by pointing out that in adopting the trope of ‘anxiety’ they reveal their true intention of persuading local historians to do what their nature tells them not to, simply to save themselves from destruction. One of Smith’s own modes of discourse is flashed up by the apparent throw away reference to the invasion of Iraq—an appeal to a popular opinion to tarbrush the mode of Sheeran discourse. Is there, too, a hint of irony in the way that Smith isolates the discourse of nostalgia by visualising the Sheerans peering through their ‘vicarage window’. What they see is a ‘gentle unravished English landscape’ of local history smiled on by the shades of Ruskin, Morris and Tawney, but all too battered now by a process of restructuring akin to a Parliamentary enclosure act. As Smith puts their view, ‘the small farmers of lifelong learning academia’ have no alternative but accept the modernity, or rather the post-modernity, of current modes of historical inquiry.

I hope there is no irony in Smith’s description of the Sheeran’s analysis of the ills besetting local history as ‘a model of clarity’. His five point summary of this, and his acceptance that the ‘remedy must be radical’ and urgently applied so as to gain ‘a position of respect in the academy and a justification of local history activity’ within an instrumentalist model of university education, is surely deserving of the highest praise. The problem in what follows, however, is that like the Sheerans, Smith has no prescription for any pill or potion likely to cure the diseases. This is a plural noun because there are two intertwined but distinct conditions (already identified by Smith), although Smith conveniently forgets the financial, university structures problem to concentrate on the intellectual issues.

Essentially, he finds that the Sheerans are wrong to see local history dying when such writers as Eamon Duffy (The Voices of Morebath) so brilliantly exemplify all that is excellent in local history. After all, researchers hiding under other labels have infected the bloodstream of the historical profession with techniques and approaches pioneered in local history to such an extent that local history should be celebrated for this success, not damned as failing. Further, he finds his own role as an examiner of doctoral theses reveals far more variation than is allowed by the Sheerans in the characteristics of historical inquiries across the academic spectrum. There is no consistency in the acceptance or rejection of modernism, postmodernism or new agenda issues (presumably gender, ethnicity, and so on) so that mainstream history is not as homogeneous as the Sheerans imply. Indeed, Smith does not find the Research Assessment Exercise (RAE) a threat to traditional empirical and narrative histories at the mainstream level, and implies that this clears the way for local history success in the same tests.

Finally, Smith brilliantly turns their own guns back against the Sheerans by reminding them of what they pronounced in their 1999 article in TLH on the matter of the validity of historical inquiries. Smith properly praises their story of ‘The Great Tradition’ as ‘a little gem of narrative history’ by which they seek to demonstrate the validity of their analysis. Yet, in 1999 the Sheerans declaimed that ‘historians do not discover truths; they write narratives, even though they might portray this as analytical writing.’ Collapse of stout party!
Thereafter, Smith is no help. Indeed, he verges on the complacent. He acknowledges
the need to accept some of the Sheeran’s points, summarised as local historians being
‘more self-critical’, engaging in theoretical debates and practising postmodernist
methods where these appeal, but only to enrich what he calls ‘the discipline’ of local
history, not to pursue mere approval from mainstream academia. He recognises as
valid a complaint that local history can be charged with ‘naïve empiricism’, but says it
is the naivety we should challenge, not the empiricism. He concludes by refusing to
face the immediate crisis found devastating outside Oxford, principally brought on by
funding withdrawal for local history in universities. Instead, he seeks refuge in what he
terms ‘demographic projections for Britain over the next three decades’ during which
the proportion of the population counted as aged will so much increase that ‘the
political agenda might even catch up’. This virtually accepts that local history is for the
bored, leisure-rich retired; that Jack in Oxford is OK, so life-long learning elsewhere is
of no consequence; that the future of local history is in going underground in other
academic fields, and as long as doctoral theses and the occasional scholar of the
quality of Eamon Duffy (he might also have quoted David Underdown’s work on
Dorchester or Christopher Hill on Windsor Park poaching with equal validity) pop up
with studies of particular communities at very specific points in their evolution there is
no cause for concern about the future of local history.

I beg to disagree. Oxford in the late Victorian age pioneered life-long learning in
provincial English industrial communities; the Workers’ Educational Association
sprang out of this academic stream, as did university departments of adult education
exemplified in North Staffordshire at the University College from which emerged
Keele University. Academic validation of the teachers and what they taught in the
multitude of classes congregated around most universities, as they too expanded in
number in the 1960s and 1970s, underpinned the quality of the work done (Alan
Rogers in Nottingham epitomises this). Local history, mostly as antiquarianism,
existing long before this galaxy of institutions was created, but it gained greatly from,
indeed was transformed by, the new academic impulse thus generated. Mark Smith
does not address the vital question inherent in the presentations of the Sheerans: from
where, in the absence of structural location in the only bodies politically empowered
to authenticate academic validity, does local history acquire its next generation of
scholars?

Smith, and those whose responses to the Sheerans were published in TLH in May
2010, imply that local history really doesn’t need a place in the academy in its own
right. It has, it seems, a kinetic energy of its own. This will continue to propel it along
academic lines, pushed every now and then by people whose studies win postgraduate
degrees under MA regulations, or who produce MPhil, or PhD theses. It doesn’t
matter whether they are guided by mainstream history supervisors, or their colleagues
in cultural studies, economics, geography or whatever other fields are open to aspiring
students who plan to localise their inquiries within particular communities or
topographical areas. As long as Alan Sutton and his ilk will publish all the rest of the
work of those who say they are local historians we don’t need to worry. Local historians
unable or unwilling to go down the degree route don’t need opportunities to train:
what’s the internet for if it’s not to provide self-educators with all that they need? The
gaps in adult education can be filled by the occasional course run by the county
archive service or town museum staff. And, of course, there’s always the U3A, a
multitude of societies with programmes of talks by ‘experts’, networks of family history
groups, opportunities to volunteer for heritage projects, and work as blue badge
guides.
Of course, if local history is a chimera, a misleading figment of the imagination, undifferentiated from local studies made by demographers, social scientists, geographers, biologists, economists or whatever other academically respectable disciplines universities continue to fund and give structural status to, then we don’t have worries. A genre of literature called local history will no doubt survive and flourish, but who will bother to distinguish this from antiquarianism, or even fiction? An investigation by an economist into the employment opportunities in a given district in the 1950s, for example, to compare with those currently available to measure the variable rates of change as between types of activity can be a substantial contribution to local history. It will be conducted according to academic criteria as defined by economists, however. Its range of interests, the data collected, the modes of analysis, the form of presentation—statistical tables, pie charts—the objects of the whole operation will be those determined by the discipline of a social science to serve the purposes of economists. Nothing wrong with that. If published, there will be accepted institutional authority to give it a seal of approval — indeed, to train the economist in the first place to carry out the task. The fact that there will be no similar mode of operation for local historians does not matter.

I say it does matter, so I must supply an answer. This needs another article. Put simply, an Institute of Local History to be established irrespective of whether the discipline succeeds in retaining its toe hold in the academy or not. Properly established, it can both support the subject in university structural terms and act as an independent authority validating the researches and conclusions of local historians everywhere.
Record society publications

EVELYN LORD

Over many decades, county record societies have produced a scholarly corpus of transcriptions with thoughtful and informative introductions that tell the reader about the documents being transcribed and what they contain. Many of these deal with records which otherwise would not be accessible to the local historian, and the editions help to preserve the records by limiting the amount of handling they receive. Today, however, primary sources are also available from family history societies on CD or microfiche (most county family history societies have published CDs of parish registers, census records and monumental inscriptions), while commercial firms are publishing CDs of primary sources and there is a great amount of material available on the web. Do local and family historians still need the scholarly volumes produced by record societies, and who do record societies see as their audience?

Many societies have published (or plan to publish) cases from the thirteenth-century eyres, visitations by royal officials and itinerant justices to hear criminal or civil pleas. The Suffolk Records Society’s 2009 volume is The Civil Pleas of the Suffolk Eyre of 1240. Civil pleas dealt with actions of dower, essoin, novel utrum, novel dissein and other actions and, yes, you will probably need to consult the glossary frequently when using this volume. Basically, they were about the ownership and transfer of land. How valuable is this for the local or landscape historian? It identifies who lived in a settlement in 1240 and what property was under surveillance, but because the eyre covers only one year and one property at a time it is impossible to build up an overall picture of landholding or the society inhabiting that settlement. For that other documents, such as manorial records or feet of fines, are needed. An example in this volume (no.993) records that ‘Ralph son of Gilbert of Walsham gives one mark for licence to agree with Argentela of Walsham concerning a plea of land by surety of Walter son of Robert of Walsham’. I feel this tells us precisely nothing, and the editor does not know whether this is Walsham le Willows in Suffolk, or a Norfolk Walsham. If it is the former, we have the magnificent two-volume set of The Court Rolls of Walsham le Willows, already published by the same society and transcribed by the excellent Ray Lock. Those volumes are a model of their kind, with a clear and well-presented introduction which can be usefully compared with the introduction to the eyre volume and its densely-packed prose. It is essential for the non-specialist to read the introduction carefully in order to understand what the text is about—and a shorter and much clearer explanation of the eyre and how it acted can be found in A.R. and E.B. De Windt’s introduction to the 1286 eyre of Huntingdonshire. Although on the positive side the entries for the Suffolk eyre have been translated from the Latin, it did occur to me that the record society has chosen one of the most boring eyres in existence, and I feel that this may be a shelf moulderer.

So, who are such volumes are for? What is their market? Is it the long-term subscribers who have forgotten to cancel their standing orders and have many of these volumes, dusty and unloved, on their bookshelves? Or are these volumes for academics working on relevant topics, or are they perhaps meant to be accessible to the general reader (perhaps a family historian searching for a family member, or a local historian working on a specific location or topic)? Are accurate but, dare I say it, pedantic transcriptions which make no allowances for a wider market what is really needed today?
Port books which contain customs records are evidence of contact with the wider world and of the internal and external trade of commodities. A new addition to such works is welcome, especially one that deals with King’s Lynn, one of the most important east coast ports (including not only the port of Lynn but also the creeks of Wells and Burnham). In a useful introduction the editor of The King’s Lynn Port Books 1610-1614 explains the contents of the port books, the customs system in the seventeenth-century, the overseas trade of Lynn, and biographical details of its prominent merchants. All this is good stuff. Should the user read the entire contents of such a volume? Certainly the introduction is essential, but the rest of the transcribed text can be exploited as appropriate. I decided to give the contents of the King’s Lynn Port Books a test run. For the purpose of seventeenth-century customs Scotland was classed as ‘overseas’, and I am working on maritime trade from ports on the East Neuk of Fife. I tried to trace trade with ‘my’ ports (Anstruther, Crail and Pittenweem). Here I hit a snag. There was indeed trade between these ports and King’s Lynn, but using the transcription was frustrating. First there are two indexes (a general one, and an index to the text). Second, the presentation of the text is confusing. It is unclear whether goods are coming into or out of the port, and at which date—it is necessary to turn to the beginning of each section to find out. Only after I had identified ships from my ports could I eliminate those which appeared to come from the East Neuk of Fife but on closer examination did not. If I, who have used the port books for the East Neuk in the Scottish National Archives (and so had some idea of what I should be looking for) found this difficult, how is a family or local historian, encountering this information for the first time, going to cope?

This port book can be compared with an earlier publication, the Lincoln Record Society’s The Port Books of Boston, 1601-1640 published in 1956. Here R.W.K. Hinton, the editor, used a tabular form to present the information. A sample of the actual entries is reproduced at the start of each year, but the entire year’s entry is on a clear and accessible table that contains date, ship, tonnage, master, where from, the merchant whose goods it was carrying, and the goods and the duty paid on them, divided into ‘in’ and ‘out’. This was much easier to use, but of course does lose the exact form of the original entries. Should the record society have published a complete transcription of each entry, and is the summarised table ‘dumbing down’ or a useful addition to historical research?

A related question concerns Latin: should it be translated (as in the Suffolk eyre) and should Roman numerals be converted into Arabic? Ever since W.G. Hoskins used the 1523 lay subsidy to good effect in his paper on Exeter merchants, historians have accepted that this is an extremely useful source. The Bristol and Gloucestershire Lay Subsidy of 1523-1527 is the latest volume in the Gloucestershire Records Series. The volume has a detailed and scholarly introduction which covers the political background to the tax; a chronology of the taxation; the amount to be paid and when; the personnel involved in the collection; and what the records contain. The records of the subsidy itself are divided into the 1523 Anticipation, the first payment in 1524, pre- and post-memorial, through to the fourth payment. There are lists of names, which are of great value to family historians and others (who can use the lists to compare and contrast poverty and wealth between and within settlements). The drawback to this volume is that the transcripts have been left in the original Latin with Roman numerals. This of course is how a scholarly publication of a transcription should be presented, but is it relevant today, when many researchers cannot read Latin? This and other publications that do not translate into the vernacular could be seen as elitist—who are these publications for?

How Bedfordshire Voted, 1685-1735 vol.2 1716-1735 is another list of names, some with occupation added, plus details of how everyone on the list voted. The introduction contains a summary of volume 1 and a discussion on the political background to the elections of the 1720s for the Borough of Bedford and the County of Bedfordshire. Poll books are fascinating documents. Not only do they show who had the franchise, and why they had it, but a series of poll books can show changes over time. For towns it is possible to
identify political zones. The books themselves are normally in tabular form and this is reproduced in this volume. The London Record Society’s *The Apprenticeship of a Mountaineer: Edward Whymper’s London Diary 1855-1859* seems at first an odd choice, but the title is misleading. Edward Whymper started this diary at the age of 15 and it reflects the social life of a mid-nineteenth century south London suburban family set against the background of the Crimean War and the Whymper family’s work as wood engravers.

Finally *The Establishment of the Hearth Tax 1662-1666*, a List and Index Special Series, is not a transcript of a primary source, but complements the British Record Society’s Hearth Tax series. The volume discusses why the tax was established and administered, with biographies of the administrators and collectors, as well as the financial aspects of the tax, and the taxpayers themselves. In view of the debates surrounding the hearth tax, and what it can or cannot tell the local historian about wealth and poverty in the seventeenth-century, everyone using the hearth tax should read this volume.

I have played devil’s advocate about these volumes: I will now freely admit that I would far rather have a book of transcripts, no matter how it is presented, than a CD. But there is a review of CDs in this issue of *The Local Historian* (not by me!). The editors of all the volumes reviewed in this article are to be congratulated on their scholarship and dedication in transcribing what are often difficult records. I very much hope that record societies continue to flourish.


**The King’s Lynn Port Books 1610-1614** edited *G. Alan Metters* (Norfolk Record Society vol.73 2009 xiv+262pp ISBN 978-0-9556357-2-4) £18+£3.50 p&p from Hon Secretary, NRS, 29 Cintra Road, Norwich NR1 4AG


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Reading a good book is a pleasant way to pass the time, whether travelling on a train or plane, during sleepless night hours, on holiday, or simply for something to do. Books are sources of information for research, for teaching, or simply important because reading is something that historians do. But printed books are not the only reading material: serial publications and newspapers have been around for centuries and within recent decades new media—CDs, DVDs, web-pages, i-books—have emerged. Despite earlier gloomy prognostications, these modern forms of publication have not replaced books, but they do offer material in different formats, some of which can be searched very quickly to extract information. What follows is a review of various CDs intended for a readership of historians. As well as reviewing their contents, this article also comments on their ease of use. In general, although comfortable with surfing the net or using word-processing packages, many people are wary of loading and opening CDs on their computers (perhaps, illogically, for fear of introducing viruses—such risks are far greater from the net). Instructions for opening CDs are frequently minimal because, given the variety of computers and operating systems, they cannot be too specific. For anyone using Microsoft Windows, the easiest way into the CD/DVD drive is via ‘My Computer’ in ‘Windows Explorer’ or via the CD/DVD drive window that pops up when a disc is inserted. The disc is opened by double-clicking on the file icon.

The files of several of the reviewed CDs were created in Adobe Portable Document Format (pdf) and can be viewed on virtually any computer because Adobe Reader is available to download free of charge (from http://www.adobe.com/uk/). It is necessary to be familiar with Adobe Reader to get the best out of a document, but it is relatively easy to use and has many extra features that enable the reader to navigate and exploit the files to their best advantage. The bookmark facility is especially useful, as it provides an easily read on-screen index. The ‘page thumbnails’ are more cumbersom e as they are exactly what they say: any writing is too small to read when trying to locate particular topics. Adobe Reader has a search facility that can look for a word or phrase within the document. On the toolbar, in the drop down-menu by the ‘Find’ box, click on ‘Open Full Reader Search’ and then enter a search term. It is sometimes better to search on a word without ticking the ‘Whole word only’ box, because this allows any longer word, such as plurals or ‘misspellings’ with added letters, to be returned as well. The results of a search are listed in the search screen and can be located within the document by double clicking on the search result.

According to their website, Anguline Research Archives, founded by Guy Etchells and Angela Petyt, is ‘an organisation dedicated to bring rare books on CD at an affordable price, to the local history researcher and to the family history researcher’. ARA produces on CD digital versions in pdf of out-of-print books and invites potential buyers to suggest other books to be digitised. Currently they have over 400 titles in their catalogue. These digitised books can be read and searched in Adobe Reader. In some respects it is inappropriate to review the actual books reproduced by ARA,
because they did not publish them and neither are they new—so this review looks at their new format more than their content. ARA CDs do not have any accompanying instructions but on each CD case is noted: ‘Machine searchable. A digital version of the original book, in PDF format. Viewable on any computer using Adobe Acrobat Reader’. In each CD the single pdf file is bookmarked with the original contents page of the digitised book(s) and this enables easy navigation. The pages are fully searchable and the results of searches using the Adobe Reader search facility are returned very quickly.

The *Churchwardens’ Accounts of the town of Ludlow in Shropshire 1540-1600*, edited by Thomas Wright, comprises transcripts of churchwardens’ accounts covering the period that was, in effect, the first 60 years of the English Reformation. These accounts give an insight into how the momentous religious changes occurring during that period affected, and were carried out in, one urban parish. The search facility makes it easy to find, for example, the numerous instances when the windows in the parish church had to be attended to. This book would be of interest to both local and ecclesiastical historians. The CD of the *North Riding of Yorkshire Quarter Sessions Records of the 17th and 18th Centuries*, edited by J.C. Atkinson, comprises the seven volumes published by the North Riding Record Society, a massive undertaking both in its original form and in digitisation. The Society’s aim was to include some sort of record of every entry, whether in detail or in brief. Consequently the books record all the business conducted by the sessions—not only crimes tried, but also lists of papists (a search on ‘recusant’ returns 460 instances), oaths of allegiance (68 instances), indentures and various aspects of local government. As well as containing hundreds of names—useful for family history—they are also detailed sources for local history. For example, a search on ‘road’ (as a whole word only) returns 152 results, some relating to outstanding road repairs, others to individuals blocking the highway, yet others to the derivation of road names; however, searching for all occurrences of ‘road’ in a word, returns 290 instances, including the variant ‘abroad’, used when describing vagrants as those who ‘wandered abroad’.

The *Constables’ Accounts of the Manor of Manchester* (reitled on the CD as *Manchester Constables’ Accounts*), edited by J. P. Earwaker in three volumes, cover the years 1612-1647 and 1743-1776. These are some of the earliest surviving constables’ accounts and Earwaker provided a verbatim transcript of the text, including special symbols for contractions. In dealing with matters of law and order, much of the constables’ time was spent punishing vagrants and moving on the poor who were harried towards their place of settlement. During the civil war, the constables were busy enabling the defence of Manchester including, in 1646, levying a rate for paying not to have Scottish troops quartered there. The accounts include lists of ratepayers in 1648, 1651, 1659 and 1666: arranged by street, these constitute a directory of ratepayers in those years. There is also a document relating to an outbreak of plague in 1605-1606, noting various disbursements. The eighteenth-century accounts are incomplete, but it is lucky that they survived at all, having been sold as ‘Waste Paper’ in 1851. They include references to illegal ‘combinations’ of weavers in the 1740s and to the arrival in Manchester, in December 1746, of the Young Pretender and his followers. Containing over 1,000 pages of digitised text, this CD makes accessible key documents relating to the development of one of the country’s major cities.

These three CDs relate to a particular place or area, but a fourth reproduces selected decisions from one of the central courts. *A Series of the Decisions of the Court of Kings Bench 1732-1776* upon Settlement Cases is a rather dry collection of three volumes of legal cases. However, since they relate to pauper settlement they provide insights into
the social history of the period. Each volume begins with lists of the cases in chronological order and in alphabetical order of place making it easy to ascertain at least one of the parishes involved in each. Although of limited use for family and local history, this particular CD would be of interest to anyone studying the application of the settlement laws. The search facility is again very useful for locating particular terms: a search on 'pauper' brought up 1,076 matches in 977 pages. Unfortunately the original typesetter reproduced the clerk's long 's', which is similar to an 'f', and although the difference is reasonably clear in the digitised pages, the search facility reads this 's' as an 'f'.

ARA should be congratulated on their enterprise. That these rare books are now readily available is a boon for historians and they have been digitised to a high standard, unlike some print-on-demand reproductions. In pdf they are much easier to search than an actual book, although they have retained the original indexes, and the quality of the inbuilt 'searchability' of these publications is excellent. The CDs are reasonably priced and are certainly cheaper than any copies of the originals that might still be available.

*Letters from Regency Scotland* is a different kind of CD publication. In essence it resembles a record society volume as it presents the transcribed text of a particular set of documents—in this case, transcripts of letters from members of the Berry/Barclay family of north-eastern Scotland, mainly dating from 1810-1820 and saved in pdf. Before being bequeathed to the Aberdeenshire Archives in 1989, the letters had been owned by Miss Eleanor Berry of Kemnay. The main correspondents are Dr George Barclay (1792-1819), his wife Emma (née Berry) (born c.1798, married 1819, died 1837) and her father Walter Berry (1754-1833). Although from Regency Scotland, the numerous letters were also sent to a fairly small circle *within* it. As they deal almost exclusively with family matters, there are few references to events elsewhere in Scotland, let alone the wider world, so they would mainly be of interest to descendants and local historians.

The text is a paginated document set out exactly like a book, commencing, somewhat curiously, with a section entitled 'Notes and Index', which provides an alphabetical list of people and places mentioned in the letters. Page 25, headed *The Berry/Barclay Letters' Index* is the key page, a list comprising 'Table of Contents', followed by 'Letters 1' through to 'Letters 34'. By left-clicking on 'Table of Contents', the user is taken to pages 27 to 29, which set out the contents of the various sections of letters (1 - 34), and explain the coding that the editors have given to those sections. By left-clicking on the title of a letter section, the user is taken straight to its first page. There are no instructions regarding this: I found it by trial and error. It would have been helpful to have an explanatory page at the beginning of the disc, followed by the contents of page 25. In fact, the order of presentation of the material is peculiar. There is no introduction to the letters on the CD, although there is a brief outline of their history in the notes in the CD case. After the letters there is a section entitled 'Walter Berry 1754-1833', not listed in the table of contents but, again, mentioned in the notes on the case. This biography outlines much of the personal narrative in the letters; indeed, it would have been better to have presented it as the introduction, because it makes sense of the letters, which are not arranged in chronological order but by correspondent and then by date. The search facility in Adobe Reader removes the necessity to compile a subject index, but this is problematic because without a subject index, the reader does not necessarily know what subjects are present and might miss, for example, details of grain prices in a letter written on 19 February 1815. Presumably the pdf/CD format was chosen because it is cheaper to produce (and
post) than a book, but this particular CD is not easy to navigate, not least because there are no Adobe Reader bookmarks for the various letters, which fill 297 pages.

To celebrate the fiftieth anniversary of the Bricket Wood Residents’ Association (BWRA), Rosemary Wenzel compiled *50 Years in Bricket Wood*, a large selection of documents relating to the history of the Association itself and of this south-west Hertfordshire ‘village’ in general. ‘Prohibitively expensive’ to publish in book form, it was decided to produce the compilation on CD. Many of the documents are pdf images of pages from the BWRA’s newsletter, together with various, mostly recent, photographs. The first, and largest, section (222 pages) mainly comprises a series of biographies of Bricket Wood residents past and present, although on what basis they were selected is unclear. Other sections include the ‘Abbey Line’, the single track railway between Watford Junction and St Albans Abbey stations; local commons and woods; the roads in Bricket Wood and the origins of their names; and Road Stewards, the people who distribute BWRA newsletters and collect subscriptions for each road. Perhaps the most interesting section for an outsider is ‘The Golden Triangle’ which outlines the fight in the 1980s against various proposals to develop the land in Bricket Wood between the M1, M25 and A405. This CD comprises a series of files created in pdf. Since the bookmark facility has not been built into it, one has to rely on the thumbnails to move around each file. The search facility works very slowly. As a record of the last 50 years in Bricket Wood, this compilation of document facsimiles would interest local residents, but the lack of an introduction and of a list of the documents reproduced limits its wider usefulness.

Although based on similar records to ARA’s *North Riding Quarter Sessions*, the *Hertfordshire Quarter Sessions 1588-1619*, published by the Hertfordshire Family History Society, is a completely different kind of CD, being a database rather than a pdf document. Discovered in the archives of Hatfield House, the sessions rolls presented here became known as ‘the Hatfield Sessions’ but in fact cover most of the county. The contents of the CD are based on an 8-volume catalogue compiled many years ago by an archivist at the Hertfordshire Record Office (now Hertfordshire Archives and Local Studies [HALS]). Not surprisingly, as it has been produced by a family history society, the initial emphasis is on names. When the database is first opened the main ‘text’ tabulates entries in the records in alphabetical order of surname. The columns are: Surname; Forename; Parish; Extra Address (for example, ‘hamlet’, if within Hertfordshire, or county, if outside); Rank or Occupation; Reason in Court (including, for example, ‘juror’, or ‘jury defaulter’, as well as ‘victim’ or ‘stealing XYZ’); Sentence/Commitment (‘fine’, ‘gaol’, etc). All entries also have a Roll/Case number, which identifies in which roll the case can be found. For any entry, by clicking on the ‘Details’ and then ‘Case details’ buttons, a full transcript of the relevant court hearing is revealed, including details of the roll itself, such as the session date and membership of the jury. The database can, of course, be searched by name, but also by any of the other columns, which makes this CD an excellent resource for local and social historians as well as family historians. The records can also be sorted by any of the various columns: sorting by Roll/Case number puts the records back into their original order, enabling a study of the business of the various sessions, making this a valuable resource for legal historians.

When using the CD for the first time, it is necessary to install the programme onto your computer, a process which is clearly explained in the accompanying leaflet. Once installed, the contents of the disc can be searched and sorted; it is also possible to print search results. By clicking on ‘Help’, then ‘Contents’, an introductory section is revealed, providing definitions of various legal terms and a list of the hundreds in
the county and their constituent parishes; the accompanying coloured map is rather basic but clearly shows the hundreds and their detached parts. Clicking on ‘Help’, then ‘Menu’, reveals hints concerning the toolbar headings. The HFHS, who received tremendous support for this project from HALS, is to be congratulated on producing such a comprehensive, eminently usable and useful CD.

Another database on CD is the Index to Testators of English late Medieval and early Tudor Wills published by the Richard III Society. This index is in the form of a Microsoft Excel table which lists the testators of over 28,000 wills that were published in serial publications, books and other printed matter between 1717 and 2000. The listed wills were written, or proved in an English ecclesiastical court, between 1 January 1398/9 and 24 March 1540/1. The purpose of the index is to enable the user to ascertain whether a particular person’s will, or part of it, has been published and is therefore more readily accessible than the original. The Excel column headings are: Surname; First Name; [Date] Made; [Date] Proved; Place [of Residence]; County; [Printed] Source; Series; Pages; Substance; Memo (i.e. notes). As it stands, the user can scroll down the Surname column to search for a particular name; however, if the Excel filter function is enabled, searching for a name is much easier. The filter function also enables searching for wills according to the different column headings, for example, wills from a particular place; however, as the day/month and year in the date (either written or proved) have not been entered in separate columns it is not possible to filter by year, which would have been useful. Although only a basic knowledge of Excel is required to use the database, users with more advanced knowledge can manipulate the contents to provide results for more complicated searches, particularly sorting. The accompanying booklet describes the background to the Society’s Wills Project, of which this CD is one of two products, and also detailed information about the sources consulted and the format of the entries. The list of sources covers 25 pages in an additional Word file on the CD. Since 2000, the terminal date of the sources, several editions of medieval wills have been published, including, for example, nearly 1,500 in the Suffolk Record Society’s first volume of wills from the Archdeaconry of Sudbury’s register ‘Baldwyne’. Perhaps the Richard III Society will publish a companion database to update this one from time to time—maybe on their website?

The other part of the Society’s Wills Project was the publication in 2008 of transcripts of the wills, dated 1479 to 1486, contained in the Prerogative Court of Canterbury’s register Logge; another Word document on the CD lists all 379 Logge testators. Although it is clear from the ‘Substance’ column that many of the wills have been published only as partial abstracts, this CD enables the user to locate those published versions, some in very obscure publications: in their original form, many of the wills are in highly abbreviated Latin and therefore virtually inaccessible.

There is no doubt that there are certain advantages to publication on CD, not least the way in which they can be searched for particular subjects, although quality of their ‘searchability’ is variable. The durability of CDs, and of digitised images in general, however, is another matter, and is a particularly ‘hot potato’ among archivists and historians. In addition to the Manchester Constables’ Accounts, sixteen other books, or series of books, edited before 1900 by J. P. Earwaker, are still available to read in Cambridge University Library. I wonder how many of the CDs reviewed here will still be readable in 2120?

**CDs and books mentioned (in order of appearance)**

Anguline Research Archives, 51 Bank Street, Ossett, West Yorkshire, WF5 8PR, website http://anguline.co.uk (all CDs post free to any destination worldwide)
Churchwardens’ Accounts of the town of Ludlow in Shropshire 1540-1600 edited Thomas Wright (first pub. Camden Society 1869 200pp; digitised version on CD 2009) £10 from ARA (as above)

North Riding of Yorkshire Quarter Sessions Records of the 17th and 18th centuries edited J. C. Atkinson (first pub. North Riding Record Society 1884-92 7 vols 2583pp; digitised version on CD 2008) £20 from ARA (as above)

Manchester Constables’ Accounts 1612-1647 & 1743-1776 edited J. P. Earwaker (first pub. Manchester Corporation 1891-2 3 vols 1095pp; digitised version on CD 2008) £17 from ARA (as above)

A Series of the Decisions of the Court of Kings Bench upon Settlement Cases (1732-1776) edited J. Burrow (London 1768-72 3 vols 977pp; digitised version on CD 2009) £14 from ARA (as above)


50 Years in Bricket Wood, compiled Rosemary Wenzercul (Bricket Wood Residents’ Association 2009 CD no ISBN) distributed free to residents; enquiries to Mrs R Wenzercul, 27 Ashridge Drive, Bricket Wood AL2 3SR

Hertfordshire Quarter Sessions 1588-1619 compiled Janet Pearson and Donald Hanson (Hertfordshire Family History Society 2009 CD ISBN 1 903245 559) UK £20 overseas £21.50 from HFHS Book Sales, c/o 24 Ashurst Road, Barnet EN4 9LF


The Logge Register of PCC Wills, 1479 to 1486 edited Lesley Boatwright, Moira Habberjam and Peter Hammond (2 vols Richard III Society 2008 ISBN for 2-vol set 978-0-904893-18-2) £35+£7.50 p&p (in UK), sales details as above

HEATHER FALVEY is secretary of the Hertfordshire Record Society and has recently co-edited a volume of fifteenth century wills for the Suffolk Records Society. She is also a member of BALH’s Education Committee and of the Research Committee of the Richard III Society.
Review article: relationships with historical geography

ALAN CROSBY

ENGLISH GEOGRAPHIES 1600-1950 Historical essays on English customs, cultures and communities in honour of Jack Langton edited by Elizabeth Baigent and Robert J. Mayhew (St John’s College Research Centre Oxford 2009 ix+150pp ISBN 978 0 95449756 9) £25

We tend to compartmentalise our subjects and then stick within a familiar zone of our own making. Thus, local history is part of a ‘discipline’ called history, at the edge of which runs a boundary. Beyond that lie various other territories, some of them semi-familiar (such as archaeology) and others de facto incognita (such as geography). Yet in reality, and especially in a subject such as history, there are innumerable links with other subject areas, and some of the perceived gaps are in fact bridged. I can write this more confidently than some, since I began as a geographer and my doctorate is in geography, but then I mysteriously metamorphosed into a historian. I look at life from both sides now.

This fascinating book is a festschrift for Jack Langton, one of the leading historical geographers of the last half-century, whose work in bridging the perceived divide between the two subjects has been of major importance. Its editors highlight a strong argument that geography is not a discipline in its own right, but rather a perspective on our world, a concept which could with value be considered when the meaning and identity of local history is discussed: ‘Jack sees himself as a geographer who writes about the things which preoccupy historians, especially economic historians. His definition of historical geography would be that geographical perspective, revolving around the material conjunction of land and life, whose subject matter is shared with and whose findings are of interest to historians’. Langton has argued that geography does not have its own subject matter, but instead asks questions, from a particular perspective, about subject matters which it shares with other inquiries. Can we draw parallels with history? Is local history, perhaps, essentially a distinctive perspective on subject matters which are of more general and widespread interest? Above all, should not we as local historians pay far more attention than we do to the work of historical geographers, who are so often ploughing parallel furrows and mining adjacent seams?

Jack Langton was born at Standish in Lancashire and after periods at Aberystwyth, Manchester, Cambridge and Liverpool Universities he was, from 1980 to 2009, university lecturer in human geography at Oxford, and fellow of St. John’s College. The festchrift has been edited by two of his research students, now themselves distinguished scholars, and four of the contributors were also supervised by Langton. The volume is in part a tribute to his great skills as a teacher, and begins with an outstanding ‘personal and intellectual’ biography which raises many challenging and stimulating questions about the nature of the subject and the way it is practised. Rather than providing a perfunctory listing of the events of the subject’s life (in the way of so many festschriften) it seeks to place him firmly in an intellectual context.

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Two main themes are evident in this selection of papers. The first concerns forests, defined of course in their proper sense as ‘places set apart’—the hunting chases and wooded areas that were so important in the landscape, economy and society of much of England from the early medieval period until the nineteenth century. The second theme is ‘networks’, the linkages, groupings and alliances basic to the structure of society in the same period. The first paper, by Sarah Bendall, looks at the mapping of Needwood Forest in Staffordshire, one of the larger of the many forest estates of the Duchy of Lancaster. This is placed within the framework of duchy policies towards land management, highlighting the growing significance of mapping as an instrument of business policy. The paper is a welcome case-study of the importance of local map-making, and includes a listing of 60 maps and plans of Needwood Forest, the great majority dating from the 1760s and 1804-1836. Following the forest theme (for some of Langton’s most important work has been on the subject) Robert Mayhew considers them ‘as a geographical imaginary in English literature, c.1600-1800’, showing how the perceived personae of forest and woodland, the specialised landscape which they represent, the moral and physical values with which they were imbued, and the space and place which they occupied, were used as imagery in novels, poetry and drama by writers from Shakespeare to Johnson.

Jon Stobart, whose work as a regional historical geographer will be familiar to many readers of *The Local Historian*, has provided an important paper on ‘networks, friendship and trust in eighteenth-century provincial England’. Basing his detailed analysis on probate records he focuses on the example of the city of Chester. The paper develops the not-unfamiliar idea that by using the evidence of those appointed as executors, serving as witnesses, referred to as beneficiaries, appraising inventories and identifiable as kin, we can reconstruct the social, business and professional networks of early modern communities. But he adds an important dimension, placing these networks in a spatial framework which introduces the factor of geographical proximity. This careful and stimulating analysis draws our attention not only to the complexity of urban society, but also to its strong bonds and networks, providing food for thought for any local historians who might be considering such themes.

Andrew Hann analyses the management of the Ditchley estate in Oxfordshire between 1700 and 1750, from the viewpoint of the wages paid to labourers and (a particularly revealing aspect to the paper) the extent to which, and means whereby, they were paid in kind rather than cash. He charts the transition, during the first half of the eighteenth century, towards cash payment, and argues that this fundamentally altered the circumstances of the agricultural labouring population, allowing the landowner to exert substantially greater control over labour terms and conditions. Hann also reports the parallel process whereby the form of renting on the estate was altered, so that leases were ever less likely to include the entitlements to assets and resources which ‘shielded labourers at Ditchley from the market’. He suggests that although some commentators have proposed that wage payments at market rates benefited the labourers, in reality the imperfections in the market, and the exceptional durability of ‘custom’, meant that local wage rates in the 1720s and 1730s were considerably below those noted by other researchers for elsewhere in southern England.

Michael Freeman’s paper considers nearby Whichwood (now known as Wychwood), looking at recorded crime in that royal forest area between 1760 and 1850. He focuses particularly on the offences of wood-stealing and deer-stealing, in the context of the ‘customary’ forest community. Using quarter session records and private papers of the Cornbury Park estate (seat of Lord Churchill, forest ranger in the early nineteenth century) the analysis looks at the place of abode of the thieves, showing a dramatic
contrast between deer-stealers (many of whom were from the nearby towns of Burford and Witney and other places where the inhabitants did not exercise common rights in the forest), and wood-stealers (the majority being from villages adjacent to the forest, and among the thieves a significant proportion of women). The socio-economic analysis of the culprits, and the attempts to place these thefts in a broader context and to establish wider trends, provide a satisfying link between place, people and process. The evidence suggests that the crime of wood-stealing, for example, was often indicative of an organised trade, often by groups of local people, with the urban markets (especially Oxford) as the destination for the stolen wood.

Whichwood disappeared in the late 1850s, disafforested and some 2000 of its 3750 acres grubbed up within 18 months, the remainder staying as woodland but privatised and henceforth out of reach of the ‘customary community’. The same fate seemed to await Epping Forest but, as Elizabeth Baigent explains in her paper, that destiny was averted as a result of high-profile campaigning in what has generally been interpreted as one of the earliest victories for the conservation movement. The paper tells the story but focuses particularly on the different narratives of participants and politically-focused commentators, arguing that credit for saving the Forest in the late 1870s was subsequently claimed by a variety of pressure groups with differing social, political and geographical constituencies. She argues that although working men were often seen as the beneficiaries of the action to save the Forest, they had little direct role in that process, and that the claims to be saviours were contested between often competing upper middle class and professional interest groups, many of whom held idealised ‘wholesome’ images of the ‘modern’ working man which bore little resemblance to the impoverished, uncouth or unruly reality.

The final paper, by Martin Purvis, considers the economic and financial circumstances and condition of the co-operative movement in North West England between the wars. Proposing that ‘exploration of variation in the state of local markets is potentially valuable in increasing understanding of both retail developments and the underlying socio-economic fortunes of interwar Britain’, he analyses the fortunes of the different societies in the region. The paper charts the ‘ebb and flow of sales’ between the various sub-regional groupings identified in the reports and annual proceedings of the Co-operative Union, and seeks to assess the impact of economic turbulence. The paper addresses the question of how downturns could be countered by ‘brighter, better and smarter shopping facilities’, but also suggests that historians and others who have investigated inter-war retailing and shopping have paid remarkably little attention to the wider economic context. It is argued that local circumstances need to be considered—the differing experiences of mining communities and cotton districts in Lancashire, for example, suggest that investigation of local case-studies may materially contribute to the national or regional picture.

This attractive book, which is produced to the highest standard and is excellent value at £25, demonstrates the real and important overlap between historical geography and local history. It forcefully reminds me that Journal of Historical Geography ought to be a key source for those engaged in local history research (and, of course, that historical geographers would be well advised to read, and subscribe to, The Local Historian). It’s a two-way traffic.

ALAN CROSBY is editor of The Local Historian. His academic training was as a geographer, and his doctorate is from the University of Oxford. Much of his published work concerns landscape history, for which a traditional Oxford geographical background has been invaluable.
**Reviews**


Interest in medieval parks shows little sign of abating and this latest addition to the literature is a welcome and significant step forward, providing a much-needed national overview of the subject. Based on research undertaken for his doctoral thesis, Stephen Milesen takes a fresh look at the evidence and reviews and challenges some long-accepted theories on various aspects of early park history, including the very reasons for their creation.

For many years historians have questioned the importance of hunting as a leisure activity for medieval kings and the aristocracy. Many parks appear to have been too small to accommodate a satisfactory hunting expedition and the few records which exist seem to imply that most hunting was undertaken by servants tasked with providing venison for the lord’s table. Besides their function as ‘venison farms’ the practical and economic uses of parks, as private reserves of pasture, timber and wood, have also been stressed in recent years and their use as hunting spaces by the social elite has been downplayed by many writers (including me). Hunting has been considered even less important in late medieval parks, when park landscapes were more frequently associated with grand houses and when economic conditions favoured ‘mixed use’, such as stock fattening and wood production.

Drawing on a range of evidence, Milesen seeks to re-establish hunting at the heart of medieval aristocratic life and posits the theory that the primary purpose of parks of all sizes and throughout the medieval period was to provide a space for recreational hunting. Building on this assertion, he examines the other potentially important purposes of a park, with chapters on economy, landscape and status. Establishing and maintaining a deer park required substantial financial resources: while it was possible to derive income from a park, Milesen finds that this was generally incidental to the main purpose of creating a hunting preserve. In the chapter on landscape the evidence for deliberate arrangement of features in the park for aesthetic effect is examined and found to be relevant to only a minority of cases. Part I of the book concludes with a critical assessment of the role of parks as status symbols.

The second part comprises a groundbreaking study of the effects which park-making had on different sections of society, from the king and aristocracy to peasants and townsfolk. Park creation was often of far greater concern to the neighbouring aristocracy than it was to the king, potentially restricting their hunting rights or access to wood and waste. Bitter disputes sometimes ensued but perhaps were as much concerned with conflicts over perceived social status as with loss of resources. Emparking also had a direct, practical and economic effect on the lives of ordinary people, when it resulted in a loss or restriction of access to land (arable or meadow) or resources (pasture and wood on manorial waste). A stated aim of the book is to stimulate further debate and I have no doubt that this will be the case. Access to that debate will, regrettably, be limited by the high price of the book. Its appearance in paperback will be keenly anticipated.

Anne Rowe

**Catholic Gentry in English Society: The Throckmortons of Coughton from Reformation to Emancipation** edited by Peter Marshall and Geoffrey Scott (Ashgate 2009 xiv+282pp ISBN 978 0 7546 6432 1) price not known

This edited collection of essays is family history writ large. As the title indicates, the lives of various members of the Coughton branch of the Throckmorton family are interwoven with one grand, and one perhaps lesser known, narratives of British ecclesiastical history. Put another way, family members, both male and female, serve as prisms through which to view the
vicissitudes and religious sensibilities of those who remained steadfast adherents of the ‘old faith’.

In the opening chapter the editors provide an extremely helpful overview of the various scholarly contributions to the book and the manner in which the Catholic Throckmorton exemplified ‘the impulse to be at once thoroughly English and loyally Roman’. Thereafter, the contributions are arranged chronologically. This facilitates engagement with particular periods and events, such as the regime of Henry VIII, the Gunpowder Plot, the Civil War, the Restoration, the long eighteenth-century and the early Victorian era. What they clearly illustrate is the skill and guile, combined with a degree of luck, which enabled the Throckmorton not only to maintain their standing in society, alongside other Catholic gentry families and their Protestant neighbours, but also to thwart those who might have weakened their Roman Catholic faith.

They also highlight the attributes and achievements of some of the key members of the dynasty, including Sir George Throckmorton (c.1489-1552), who had the challenging task of staunchly defending the ‘old faith’ while demonstrating loyalty to his almost exact contemporary, Henry VIII; Agnes Throckmorton (c.1570-c.1648), who epitomised the resilience of a Jacobean recusant widow; and Sir John Courteney Throckmorton (1753-1819), ‘moderniser, anti-clerical, reformer’, who was closely associated with the progressive Catholicism of Cisalpinism and undertook two continental tours, which serve as the focus for one of the chapters. As the saga unfolds there are many opportunities for reflecting upon the changing nature of the challenges the family faced, from a time when to remain loyal to the ‘old faith’ was literally a matter of life and death to a period in the nineteenth century when, although its ‘social and political standing … was enhanced [its] status and influence in the English Catholic Church lessened’.

While the book affords many important insights into the recusant way of life and the political, social and cultural milieu that the Catholic gentry had to negotiate, it is more a work for specialists than generalists. Most of the contributors assume a considerable amount of prior knowledge on the part of the reader and without this some of the chapters are difficult to follow. The one on Coughton and the Gunpowder Plot is a case in point. It is labyrinthine in its complexity and contains multiple references to an overwhelming number of different individuals and families, with a view to establishing links and the existence of both formal and informal networks. As a result, it is sometimes extremely difficult to see the wood for the trees. Nevertheless, for those with the necessary expertise, this book can be thoroughly recommended not only as a fascinating read but also as an inspiration to local historians interested in undertaking their own research, into other recusant families and localities associated with Roman Catholicism in England between the Reformation and Catholic Emancipation in 1829.

ROGER OTTEWILL

AN ANALYSIS OF THE HISTORIC FABRIC OF FIFTY BUILDINGS IN THE CENTRAL AREA OF BROMYARD, HEREFORDSHIRE by Duncan James (Bromyard & District Local History Society 2009 152pp no ISBN) available from Bromyard Local History Centre

This report was prepared for the Bromyard Local History Society with lottery funding, and is the seventeenth in a series of studies of aspects of the town’s history. It analyses the structure and siting of fifty buildings in the centre of the town. The report is well produced, the analysis sound and thorough, and the book well illustrated by copious photographs, floorplans and sketches (although with a rather idiosyncratic layout). The explanation of the history of building layouts, which is often such a difficult exercise when so much is disguised by later changes, is well managed and presented, and fulfils the original brief effectively. Problems of access to some buildings have prevented a complete analysis, but this limitation has been overcome in providing an overall picture of the historic town centre.

At times the relationship between buildings is unclear because they are presented in numerical order, rather than in street order, meaning that the reader has to ‘keep crossing the street’. This was probably a difficult choice for the author, since the buildings have been renumbered from their original sequence. Another minor gripe is that there is only one map (which identifies all
the buildings surveyed); mapping the buildings with surviving elements from earlier centuries would have been useful.

The main problem, though, is with the brief itself. The report has fulfilled its purpose as a local history study, but this research deserves a wider audience than just the local history society. To achieve this would require some contextual setting: where does Bromyard sit in its surroundings? What made Bromyard develop as it did? How does it relate to neighbouring towns? Since market towns achieve their character and prosperity from their surroundings and industries, each of these questions might help to explain why the buildings of Bromyard developed as they did. An introductory chapter which answered these questions would enable this valuable research to be compared with that for other towns and other counties. The author, it is true, places some of the buildings in the context of other buildings in local towns, but the true value of research of this sort is that it should provide the chance to add to, and reassess, similar work elsewhere.

IAN HINTON


The first of these three volumes is the impressive product of an integrated research project on Rye and its hinterlands funded, co-ordinated and managed by the Romney Marsh Research Trust. It is a considered, convincing and scholarly account of the town from its origins circa 1000 to 1660, expanding on previous studies, drawing on additional documentary material, and aligning it with archaeological and architectural evidence unavailable to previous authors. It traces the fluctuating fortunes of Rye over this period, attributing boom and bust, expansion and contraction, to location, royal and religious patronage, wars, licensed and unlicensed piracy, the discontinuity of the Black Death and the replacement of the previous elite by emergent families, Huguenot immigration and repatriation, inundations and silting. These factors are set in the context of its membership of the confederation of Cinque Ports and its economic hinterland inland, coastwise and cross-Channel. Capitalising on the vulnerability of its nearest rivals to silting and storms, Rye became established as the pre-eminent port along this stretch of the south coast.

The town exhibited an enviable ability to reinvent itself, promoting a very wide range of crafts and trades that left an indelible mark on the townscape. Thus, ship-service for the Crown was augmented by transporting pilgrims and when this function was abrogated by the western ports it was superseded by the timber trade, for construction, shipbuilding and firewood. Irrespective of the significance of any particular trade, the fundamental raison d’être throughout was maritime activity. When Tudor affluence evaporated Rye reverted to fishing and a role as a local market. Trade with London on one hand and Calais on the other was ephemeral whereas the more immediate hinterland afforded a more secure long-term future. Restricted within its ‘island fortress’, Rye’s commendable versatility and adaptability facilitated its adjustment to prosperity and adversity, displaying vacant plots when it stagnated and sub-division, plot-size division, infilling and extensions, including attics and garrets, at the height of its prominence.

Understandably there are areas of uncertainty, conjecture and speculation, but the debates and conclusions are justified by analogy with a wigwam, where individual poles might fall but together they support each other and stand up to scrutiny. Some of the maps are over-reduced but this is a minor caveat in a lavishly and pertinently illustrated book. Evoking a continental hill town suspended in time and space, and crowned with St Mary’s church, the seductive attraction of Rye is attributed to the vicissitudes it has experienced. The authors have expertly persuaded the buildings to relinquish their secrets and expose the lives of their inhabitants. This book will be the authoritative work on the history of the town for the foreseeable future.
The companion volume, *Rye Rebuilt*, analyses the historic built environment of Rye over 300 years. Investigations began on this over thirty years ago, and the book forms part of a wider survey of vernacular buildings in the Rape of Hastings, embracing 36 parishes and four towns in the High Weald which form a nationally significant collection with a distinctive character which could be called a pays.

Part 1 discusses the development of Rye between 1350 and 1660 with chapters devoted to the infrastructure, defences, institutional buildings and medieval housing. It charts fluctuations in growth and the emergence of distinctive zones—religious, administrative and commercial—within the compact area of 36 acres on the island site. Part 2 is a gazetteer and inventory of 111 individual historic houses, one-tenth of them pre-1540, illustrated by the authors. In 1565 Rye possessed 530 households, and was among the largest towns in south-east England. The authors debate a number of issues including the origins and rectilinear configuration of the town, but stop short of defining it as a ‘planned new town’, preferring an ‘evolutionary’ explanation. It might be anticipated that a book covering 350 years and over thirty years in the making, and with contributions by numerous collaborators, would be ‘patchy’, but the firm guiding hands of the authors ensure that it is textually tight and of a uniformly high standard.

Eleven miles from Rye is New Romney, which now lies two miles inland but in common with other places along this stretch of the coast was once a thriving port. The Sea and The Marsh explores the relationship between the town and the sea in a broad historical context, involving its role as a Cinque Port, its development from its eighth-century origins, governance, and its connection with skumerie (licensed piracy). Using extensive contemporary sources, building evidence and the results of a succession of archaeological excavations—culminating in a dig in 2002 at Southlands School, on what was once the medieval foreshore—the book furnishes a definitive interpretation of the peak of prosperity and subsequent decline of a Cinque Port from the end of the thirteenth-century, when natural disasters (including storms and silting) and the increasing draught of merchants vessels meant increasing isolation.

The authors challenge assumptions such as Beresford’s proposition that New Romney was an Anglo-Saxon planted town, advancing a convincing alternative that the burgage plots represent a thirteenth-century replanning. They confront the implications of overlordship by the archbishops of Canterbury, and consider the association between Old and New Romney. Medieval parishes are reconstructed, quarters are identified, welfare provision assessed, and demographic shifts considered. Persistent efforts to keep the watercourses and harbour open ultimately failed and before the end of the seventeenth century New Romney had forfeited its status, privileges and influence as a Cinque Port, abandoning the sea and turning inwards to the marsh for its income, largely from sheep grazing.

The small and once important port of New Romney is fortunate to be the subject of such a thorough forensic examination of its topography, medieval structure and economy and the physical and environmental factors which shaped it. Written by well-informed and sympathetic scholars, this copiously illustrated monograph bears the hallmark of authority.

**SPENCER THOMAS**

**LAND, AGRICULTURE AND INDUSTRY IN NORTH-WEST ESSEX** Spotlights on land remembered by Geoffrey Ball (Saffron Walden Historical Society 2009 85pp ISBN 978-1-873669-024) £7.50

This book consists of a series of articles, previously published in the Saffron Walden Historical Journal, on various aspects of the land, agriculture and industry of north-west Essex. Each chapter deals with a different topic, giving a flavour of the area around the town at different points in the past. Geoffrey Ball’s background is agriculture, although as an advisor and later in marketing rather than as a practising farmer; and this helps him to provide informed commentary on many of the aspects of topic. The seven chapters provide an eclectic mix of information about the agriculture in the district between 1086 and the early-twentieth century. Ball begins with an overview of how local farming was conducted, considering the manorial and open field systems. Subsequent chapters include case studies of three farms: the Victorian
Home Farm at Audley End, Horham Hall Farm near Thaxted in 1807, and Mitchells Farm at Little Walden. Each provides fascinating information not just on the farm described, but also about the source materials employed and the role of each farm in the wider community.

Two chapters deal with the major industries of north-west Essex—wool and malting. The former traces the wool trade from Domesday until its major decline in the late-eighteenth century, referring particularly to the town of Saffron Walden. As well as setting the history of sheep husbandry and the woollen industry in its wider context, it gives much interesting detail about the way it was carried out in the area, including the mechanics of cloth production. Illustrations of some of the implements employed help to bring this once-crucial industry to life. Social history is not ignored, with references to the Woolstaplers’ Hall in Saffron Walden and the annual Bishop Blaize procession, the last of which was held in 1778. The chapter on the malting trade of north-west Essex and east Hertfordshire up to c.1914 refers particularly to floor malting. The operation of the industry and its importance to the region are clearly explained and, again, a variety of illustrations help to recall this vanished trade.

Another chapter deals with a canal that never was. It would have linked the Stort Navigation to the Brandon River in Suffolk, providing a route north-east to the Great Ouse and The Wash. Various plans were suggested in the later-eighteenth century, including one from 1789 which would have brought the canal to Saffron Walden. None came to fruition, because of the opposition of the owners of the Audley End estate through whose land it would have run. This chapter provides a fascinating vignette, does not fit particularly well with the subject matter of the rest of the book.

Geoffrey Ball’s research is of a high standard and a full list of references is included so the interested reader can follow up any points of particular interest. However, the chapters do show their origins as a series of separate articles rather than a book written on the theme of the title. There is little attempt to provide links between them, which is unfortunate—the material is of considerable interest but remains a series of unconnected topics. I recommend this book to anyone wanting to find out more about agriculture and associated industries in this part of the country, as it provides an excellent starting point for further research as well as being an interesting read in itself.

HILARY WALKER

THE LANHYDROCK ATLAS edited by Paul Holden, Peter Herring and Oliver Padel (National Trust and Cornwall Editions 2010 400pp ISBN 978 1 904880 32 5) £150

Few publications in Cornwall have been anticipated with as much excitement as the Landhydrock Atlas. This reproduction includes full colour versions of all 258 maps and is worthy companion to Gascoyne’s 1699 map of Cornwall and Richard Carew’s 1602 survey of Cornwall, both published by the Devon and Cornwall Record Society. Together, they offer us a ‘door into the lost world of life in the seventeenth century’ in Cornwall and beyond, though from opposite ends of that century.

Generally agreed to be the work of Joel Gascoyne and his team of surveyors, these estate maps were commissioned in about 1693 by the Robartes family of Lanhydrock. One of Cornwall’s newer gentry families, they held ‘the most scattered estate of any in the county’. The maps, reproduced at about half-size, cover no fewer than 111 different parishes, more than half the Cornish total. Although spanning the county from Jacobstow to Land’s End, there is a marked concentration in mid- and west Cornwall, including Lanhydrock House.

The publication comprises two important chapters of original research on the Robartes family, and the Cornish landscape of the maps, ‘a countryside riddled with discontinuities and taut with dynamism’. Prehistoric brick-shaped fields, and open field strips or stitches farmed intensively for four out of every ten to twelve years counter the notion of Cornwall as a pastoral county. On the other hand, we learn that moorland was essential terrain to grow hay for over-wintering stock away from the farmyard. Buildings are rarely shown in detail but they include churches, dovecotes, mills, fish cellars, a market house, holy well and even a ‘cage’ or prison. The maps
show tenant farms, not freeholds. Roses, marigolds, carnations, tulips and strawberries, reflective of the late-seventeenth century horticultural interests, form the centres of compass roses, while exquisite vignettes of social life include tin-miners, and a milkmaid.

The book is a visual delight which should be welcomed by all those interested in early maps, archaeology, farming, estate management, parliamentary and industrial history, and fishing. Lists of neighbouring landowners and individual field names had to be omitted for lack of space, but the volume is otherwise well-indexed and easy to use. A swift check on ‘cross’ and ‘well’ field-names revealed that the former were located by roads and the latter near farmsteads. A major achievement for all concerned, the Lanhydrock Atlas should inspire and be the starting point for much new and original research.

JO MATTINGLY

BLEEDING, BLISTERS AND OPIUM Joshua Dixon and the Whitehaven Dispensary by Michael Sydney (Stainburn Publications 2009 199pp ISBN 978 0 9563881 0 0) £14.05 from www.stainburnpublications.co.uk

Bleeding, the use of opium for the relief of pain, and blistering were standard practices in medical treatment during the lifetime of Joshua Dixon, an Edinburgh qualified physician who worked in Whitehaven, Cumberland for more than forty years until his retirement in 1823. Although geographically isolated, Whitehaven had grown from ‘the obscurity of a small fishing village [into] arguably, the second most important port in England’ in the eighteenth century, and was in touch with the world by sea. Far from being buried in West Cumberland, it is clear that Dr Dixon, ‘a prolific writer of tracts and papers’, was in regular contact with, and received information about advances in medical knowledge from, scientists and physicians in Edinburgh, London and Liverpool. He was elected to the Medical Society of London in 1789. Michael Sydney gives many examples of Dixon’s adoption of new techniques and treatments, such as the management of croup and fevers, the ‘bringing back to life of persons apparently drowned’, and the prevention of smallpox.

In this excellent book Sydney tells of the establishment and progress of the Whitehaven Dispensary, where those too poor to pay for the services of a doctor could receive treatment. The book has chapters on topics such as fever, scurvy, scrofula and syphilis, smallpox, childhood infections, public health, other doctors in the town and the dispensary, its benefactors and subscribers. In the first years of the dispensary’s operation Dixon worked to prevent smallpox by inoculating a healthy person with the fluid from an infected person’s blister, thus inducing what was hoped to be a mild attack and creating immunity from the disease. By 1801, Dixon’s Annual Report wrote of the new procedure of vaccination using cowpox fluid and he was soon using that method. Indeed, such was the state of knowledge and practical application of new procedures by medical practitioners in Whitehaven only four years after Edward Jenner published his observations in a booklet on vaccination, that not only do we find the method in regular use in the Dispensary but also that Joshua Dixon has become an expert in theory and practice of vaccination.

The first chapter traces the history of Whitehaven and the Lowther family’s role in developing the coal industry, port and the planning and growth of the town. The population was about 9,000 in 1760 but had grown to 16,000 by 1785. The coal industry was developing and the town was seriously overcrowded. Although more were planned, a total of 390 houses for colliery workers and others were built. Contemporary accounts range from the positive (with emphasis on the dry, sandy soil, constant fresh air, good ‘generally commodious and comfortable buildings’ and the separate, convenient, rent free houses for colliery workers) to newspaper reports of insanitary conditions, damp cellars, overcrowding, dung strewn streets, frequent accidents and the prevalence of disease and hunger.

Only those who could afford to pay for medical care could receive treatment and Dixon and others in the town had their private practices. Dispensaries were funded by subscription and Joshua Dixon was instrumental in obtaining funding for that which opened in 1783, a year later than the one in Carlisle. Dixon was meticulous in his record-keeping and reports, and other
documents (and their survival) have given Michael Sydney a rich source of material. He must be congratulated on the way in which he has extracted and used examples for this fascinating narrative about Whitehaven. The book offers a wealth of information about medical practice, social conditions, health and disease, the establishment of the Dispensary, its subscribers, and the care of poor working people in this Cumberland town during the later-eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. *Bleeding, blisters and opium* is an interesting and informative book—local history viewed from a different perspective. It is warmly recommended to anyone interested in the history of West Cumberland and of medicine in provincial England.

MARGARET SHEPHERD

**COKE OF NORFOLK 1754-1842** A biography by Susanna Wade Martins (Boydell 2009 xi + 218 p. ISBN 9781843834267) £50

Coke of Norfolk remains one of the best-known of all eighteenth-century landowners. His reputation as an agricultural improver and his political career have ensured that he is regularly referred to in a wide range of academic articles. However, despite his familiarity to historians of the eighteenth century, this is the first full-length biography to appear in a century. This book, then, is perhaps overdue, and it is certainly a most welcome addition. It takes a broadly chronological approach, starting with his childhood in Derbyshire and London before going on to discuss the major themes of his adulthood: his political career, his inheritance and management of his Norfolk estate, agricultural improvements, and life in and around Holkham.

Susanna Wade Martins is steeped in the history of rural society in Norfolk in the long eighteenth century and she brings this background to the present study. The research base for this volume is impressive, and Wade Martins is to be congratulated for producing an eminently readable and wide-ranging biography. The intertwining of agriculture and rural society, politics and patriotism, and family and community are achieved with skill, and present a rather more rounded picture of Coke compared with previous assessments. He emerges not just as the agricultural improver, but as somebody who was equally at home in the cut and thrust of high politics in the late eighteenth century. Such diversity of interests undoubtedly made writing this biography a complex and challenging project, and it reminds us of the pivotal role in society of men of Coke’s social class. For these reasons this book must be highly recommended to all with an interest in the history of East Anglia, agriculture and politics in the eighteenth century.

It is not entirely clear for whom this volume is intended. Local historians will find this an extremely valuable and informative study, but unfortunately the price tag will place it beyond the pocket of most. At the same time, the content would probably disappoint the serious academic researcher looking for a detailed, contextualised assessment of Coke of Norfolk. The text concentrates on delivering a narrative and this biography generally lacks context and analysis. While the empirical base is strong, the style is almost like a work of fiction in places, with rather too much speculation and assumption. This will undoubtedly fail to satisfy the potential academic audience for this book. Moreover, Wade Martins simply does not engage with any of a series of long-standing debates in political or social history, such as those over eighteenth-century patriotism and nationalism, or the role of the great landowner in agricultural improvement. This book would undoubtedly and deservedly attract a wider audience, especially in East Anglia, if a cheaper paperback was produced. But despite my criticisms I have no hesitation in recommending it to local historians seeking to deepen their understanding of eighteenth-century rural society.

ANDY GRITT


Published under the wing of the Suffolk Records Society, the Suffolk Charters series offers a wonderful range of volumes which give access for the more general reader to great amounts of
archive material. David Dymond’s volume is an outstanding example in this series. Unlike other volumes which mainly focus on monastic cartularies, this deals with the charters of a single Suffolk parish which lies nine miles north-east of Bury St Edmunds. A remarkable gathering of 462 charters from a range of sources (but mostly from the Suffolk Record Office) stretches from 1215 to 1678, the majority being from the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries.

As might be expected by those familiar with David’s two Norfolk Record Society volumes on the last years of Thetford Priory, the study is exemplary in that its supporting material, both in the 41-page introduction and in an appendix of notes on people, a glossary and a very detailed index of people and places, add to the value of the text. In the introduction the Stanton scene is very clearly set. David lived in the village, and explored it, for many years. He sets the scene of its contrasting chalk and heath topography, its manorial structures including close links with the chamberlain of the abbey of Bury St Edmunds and its agricultural systems. The details of its manors, sub-manors and proto-manors, six ‘hamlets’ outside Stanton Street, two churches and land divisions of fields, wents, wongs and furlongs are discussed. The large heath and its openfield land, some of which still existed in 1800, its valuable meadowland and its poorer pastures, are all mentioned. David points out that four groups of people occur in nearly all the charters: the principal parties, witnesses, tenants and previous owners. As charters are concerned with ‘freem en’, the status of freem en, sokem en and mollm en is distinguished.

Over half of the charters were grants of heredity which detail the many land units, local place-names and names of principal parties to reveal a remarkable picture of the evolution of a parish between 1215 and 1678. All sorts of fascinating miscellaneous detail appear and David Dymond provides very useful footnotes. For example, in 1279 the points of the compass are first mentioned in a charter providing greater clarity about the layout of a property. In 1303 charter 65, a quitclaim of Richard Aylmer to the Abbot of Bury or his tenants in the vill, lists ‘messuages, houses, buildings, land, meadows, grazing, pastures, turbaries, water, fisheries, rights of fold, ways, paths, commons, men, homages, rent, wards, relief and escheats on all revenues’. Jumping to 1612, charter 447 is a bargain and sale of one ‘newly built messuage with an adjoining orchard’, a useful piece of dating. In 1447 a tenant was told he could take ‘wyndefalle tym ber’—except after strong winds! The litigious Suffolk freem en would have had fun with definitions of wind strength!

By 1447, in charter 297, a very great degree of detail was given in a seven-year lease of Micklefield Manor by Simon Fincham to Andrew Wethyr of Stanton. Land was to be sown with rye after three ploughings and well-manured by his fold. The straw of six quarters of rye and barley was to be provided every year for building maintenance. A shepherd was to be provided for the agreed number of sheep with hurdles and an iron sickle. Corn and hay were to be stored only in the grange of Micklefield. This degree of detail of conditions of tenure almost matches those of the detailed farm leases of the eighteenth century.

The delight to medieval, late medieval and local historians is the very domestic nature of the information to be gleaned from so many of the charters transcribed by Dymond and his two colleagues, Peter May and Ray Locke, to whose memory he dedicates the volume. We have here a remarkably detailed picture of a Suffolk parish in this period and, accepting that there are great regional differences, these charters give us a priceless account of the way in which a small piece of England functioned between 1215 and 1678. The care taken in introducing them and commenting on them makes this a volume of great interest to a much wider readership than those just living in Suffolk.

CHRISTOPHER BARRINGER
RECENT PUBLICATIONS IN LOCAL HISTORY

Only books and pamphlets sent to the Reviews Editor are included in this list, which gives all publications received between 1 February and 1 May 2010. Most books are also reviewed in this or a future issue, or on the BALH website. Publishers should ensure that prices of publications are notified. When addresses are quoted prices usually include postage and packing. Other books should be obtainable through normal book-selling channels and retail prices are quoted. The Reviews Editor is Dr Evelyn Lord, Book Reviews, PO Box 649, Cambridge CB1 0JW. Please note that all opinions and comments expressed in reviews are those of the reviewer—they do not necessarily represent the views of the editors or the British Association for Local History.

LOCAL AND REGIONAL STUDIES

East

THE ECCLESIASTICAL HISTORY OF THE PARISH OF ST PETER PARMENTERGATE Rev. William Hudson ed. Mary Rodgers (King Street Publications 2009 ISBN 978 0 9559320 1 4) from King Street Research Group, Wensum Lodge, King Street, Norwich NR1 1QW


TIBERIUS OF THE FINGERS VILLAGE Putley 1685 until now Jean Ila Carrie (Owlstone Press 2009 ISBN 978 0 95644555 0 6) £18 from publisher, 35 Owlstone Road, Cambridge CB3 9JH

THREE CENTURIES OF A HEREFORDSHIRE VILLAGE Putley 1685 until now Jean Ila Carrie (Owlstone Press 2009 ISBN 978 0 95644555 0 6) £30

TURIN back the PAGES IN RAVENSHED compiled Philip E. Jones (Nottinghamshire County Council 2009 ISBN 978 0 902751 64 4) £3.99 + £1.05 from author, 40 Regina Crescent, Ravenshead, Nottingham NG15 9AE

WARWICKSHIRE HEARTH TAX RETURNS Michaelmas 1670 ed. Tom Arkell with Nat Alcock (Dudgale Society vol.43 and British Record Society Hearth Tax Series vol.7) £35

North


WHERE LYEUTH THE BODIES A guide to the church of St Michael & All Angels, Barningham, North Yorkshire (Barningham Local History Group Publication no.1 2009 no ISBN) £10+£1 p&p details of these and four publications below from http://barninghamvillage.co.uk/publications/

A CHILD OF HOPE Memories of a Victorian childhood on a Teesdale farm (Barningham LHG Publication no.2 2010 no ISBN) £5+£1 p&p

COUNTED BARNININGHAM Census returns 1841-
1911  (Barningham LHG Publication no.4 no ISBN) £10+ £1 p&p

BARNINGHAM PARISH MINUTES 1894-1931  (Barningham LHG Publication no.5 2010 no ISBN) £5+£1 p&p

THE CIVIL WARS IN LANCASHIRE 1640-1660  

ESSAYS ON THE HISTORY OF NORTHELLERTON H.L. Fairburn  (Hudson History 2010 no ISBN) £6 inc. p&p from Harry Fairburn, 4 Hatfield Road, Northallerton DL7 8QX

FAMILY HISTORY IN LANCASHIRE Issues and approaches ed. Andrew Gritt (Cambridge Scholars Publishing 2009 ISBN 978 1 4438 1343 3) £35 from CSPPO Box 302, Newcastle upon Tyne NE6 1WR


A HISTORY OF HAWORTH from earliest times Michael Baumber (Carnegie Publishing 2009 ISBN 978 1 85936 156 6) £20


JOHN DENTON’S HISTORY OF CUMBERLAND ed. Angus Winchester  (Surtees Society vol.213 ISBN 978 0 8544 0689 9) £50


South West, West


Northern Ireland


Family history


General


FLOAT Pilkington's glass revolution David Bricknell  (Crucible 2009 ISBN 978 1 905472 11 6) £20


SEALS AND SEALING PRACTICES Elizabeth A. New  (British Records Association: Archives and the user no.11 2010, ISBN 978 0 900222 15 3) details from brrecass@btconnect.com

JOURNALS AND NEWSLETTERS RECEIVED

The more substantial articles in these journals are noted below, but we do not give a full contents list. Most journals are listed alphabetically by geographical location, not title of publication; general journals are at the end of the list.

Ayrshire Notes  [Ayrshire Archaeological and Natural History Society] (no.39 Spring 2010) £2 details from www.aanhs.org.uk: John Johnston, the 'Harry Patch' of Trafalgar; Black Friday; the east coast fishing disaster of 1881; Lilia Hamilton, 1858-1925

Cake and Cockhorse  [Banbury Historical Society]  (vol.18 no.2 Spring 2010) £2.50 from BHS, c/o Banbury Museum, Spiceball Park Road, Banbury OX16 2PQ: the original Banbury cake shop mural; Burton Dassett: recent archaeological discoveries
Archives: annals of the Barningham Local History Group (no.1 October 2009) Why the canon said ‘no’ to weevils; Barningham’s big cheese in the days of Queen Victoria (no.2 December 2009) Our first class deliveries; Barningham village green 1900 (no.3 January 2010) Barningham’s farming Browns; Barningham in young Victoria’s day; census in Barningham (no.4 February 2010) Lost in the snow 110 years ago; why cheesemonger John Todd fled from Barningham; (no.5 March 2010) Clockmakers; Wilkins, the widow Hoslop and a Todd; the Milbank girl who set her heart on Byron meeting; house histories

Bedfordshire & Luton Archives Records Service Newsletter (no.83 Spring/Summer 2010) free from archive@bedford.gov.uk

History in Bedfordshire [Bedfordshire Local History Association] (vol.5 no.3 Spring 2010) from 2a The Leys, Langford, Bedford SG18 9RS The Women’s Land Army in Bedfordshire during WWI

Bristol and Gloucestershire Archaeological Society Newsletter (no.66 February 2010) from BGAS, 7 Parr Close, Churchdown GL3 1NH Northleach: a planted town

Charlton Kings Local History Society Research Bulletin (no.56 2010) £9.50 details from Miss J. Pearce, 23 Battledown Close, Cheltenham GL52 6RD The Eagle Gates; White Friars: a brief history; Charlton Kings UDC; 125 (Cheltenham) Squadron Air Training Corps; Moses Bradshaw; Bafford Farm; St Mary’s churchyard extension; Kings House 1989-2009; Royal Hotel in Horsefair Street

Cheltenham Local History Society Journal (no.26 2010) details on http://www.cheltlocalhist.btk.com Cheltenham in the 1700s; Ockley Farm; railway mania in Cheltenham; Rodin in Cheltenham; St Paul’s Practising School Memorial Board; housing the poor: medical assistance to the poor in the 19th century Cheltenham; MPs for Cheltenham 1928-2005; Cheltenham Horticultural Society in the 1850s; cinema in Cheltenham

Cheltenham Local History Society Newsletter (no.66 March 2010) from Kath Boothman, 35 The Park, Cheltenham GL50 2SD How an old Cheltonian saved the Irish Wolfhound

The Dunnington: Dunning Parish Historical Society newsletter (no.71 Spring 2010) £1.50 from DPHS, Old Schoolhouse, Newton of Pitcairns, Dunning PH2 0SL Dunning schools: a short history; St Serf and the tabby cat; Dunning water-powered sawmill

Durham County Local History Society Journal (no.75 February 2010) £5 from John Banham, 21 St Mary’s Grove, Tudhoe, Spennymoor DL16 6LR In Chancery: John Cookson’s legacies; Joseph Bouet 1789-1836; William Henderson and the building of Durham town hall 1848-1851; reclaiming the Tynside Scullers

Eastbourne Local Historian (no.155 Spring 2010) details from www.eastbournehistory.org.uk Mead during the Second World War; primary and secondary schools in the Willoughby and Bourne Street area; Miss Rolls’s Rolls Royce; seal and coat of arms of the borough

Essex Archaeology [Essex Society for Archaeology and History] (vol.39 2008) £20 details from Michael Leach, 2 Landview Gardens, Ongar CM5 9EQ The Rounds of Witham during WWI; archaeology of A133 Little Clacton to Weeley by-pass; Late Bronze to Iron Age enclosure at Hall Road, Haybridge; Roman road and Iron Age and Romano-British settlements in The Rodings; Old Slaughterhouse, Stour Street, Manningtree; East and Middle Saxon estates of Westminster Abbey; the Bohun Family in the early 14th century

Farnham & District Museum Society Journal (vol.15 no.9) £15 from Mrs P, Heather, Tanglewood, Parkside, Upper Hale, Farnham GU 10 0JP The Big Stink: main drainage arrives in Farnham; Wrecclesham: amalgamation of farms

Forest of Dean History and Preservation Society (no.15 April 2010) Framlingham in the 19th century; gas production in the 19th century, with particular reference to East Suffolk

Friern Barnet Newsletter [Friern Barnet & District Local History Society] (no.41 April 2010) details from www.friernbarnethistory.org.uk On the buses in 1955; evacuation: before and after; walk to the shops in 1951

Gloucestershire Archives Newsletter (March 2010) details from foga@glostergloucestershire.co.uk

Hampshire Field Club & Archaeological Society Newsletter (no.55 Autumn 2010) details from Museum & Archives Service, Chilcomb House, Bar End, Winchester SO23 8RD Bottom Pond Farm, Owdensbury and the Winchester Haard; a possible Roman road at Bighton and Meolsbed; earlier name of Andover Hundred; evolution of a rural landscape; Titchfield: landscape detective at Canterton; Bursledon Bridge; paintings at Palace Gate, Olipham; stable and barn at Mill Court, Binsted; Nicholas Wheeler: probable builder of Mill Court barn and stable

Hedon History [joint newsletter of Hedon Museum Society and Hedon and District LHS] (no.39 Spring 2010) details from sue@jch.karoo.co.uk Hedon Mill; cottage life 1937-1946; memories of Hedon; Holderness in the Front Line; the Home Guard

Herne Hill Society Newsletter (no.110 Spring 2010) from HHS, PO Box 27845, London SE24 9XA Memorials in the Carnegie Library, Brixton: the history of rail on the road

Herts Past & Present [Hertfordshire Association for Local History] (3rd ser. no.15 Spring 2010) £13.00
from Dr G. Gear, Nicholls Farmhouse, Lybury Lane, Redbourne AL3 7JH churchwardens’ accounts; Primrose League of 1901; Merchant Taylors School, Ashwell 1669–2001; the landed gentry

**Hexham Local History Society Newsletter** (no.56 Spring 2010) hay time

**The Herald** [Ilkeston and District LHS (no.3 April/May 2010) details from klby.bvy@ntlworld.com Canary Girls of Chilwell; Ilkeston Advertiser 14 January 1910; train-spotting

**Hornsey Historical Society Bulletin** (no.51 2010) £5+£1.50 pp from HHS, The Old Schoolhouse, 136 Tottemham Lane, London N8 7EL Stapleton Hall, Streod Green; Sir Francis Cory-White and the Welsh connection; John Henry James; builder, developer and public servant in Wood Green; Dr Barton and his Airship; Gerrit van de Linde

**Honeslaw Chronicle** [Hounslow and District History Society] (Spring 2010) £1 from Miss A. Cameron, 16 Orchard Avenue, Heston TW5 0DU Underground structures; history of St Stephen’s Road

**Journal of Kent History** [Kent History Federation] (no.70 March 2010) £8 Remembering Farningham’s wartime heroes; ‘completest medieval town in England’; Sittisborough Agricultural Association

**Leatherhead & District Local History Society Proceedings** (vol.2 no.3 2009) details from L&DLHS, 64 Church Street, Leatherhead KT22 8DP Little Bookham: the heart of Surrey? Ashstead’s early trackways; John Astridge of Ashstead; from the Long House to Milner Nursing Home

**LTVAS Newsletter** [Lower Test Valley Archaeological Society] (January 2010) details from Mrs B. Langdon, ‘Wolvesdene’, Whitenap Lane, Romsey SO51 3RS Ridge School minute book

**Hindsight: Northamptonshire Local History Magazine** (no.16 March 2010) £3.50 details at www.northants-history.org.uk Northamptonshire transporters pt.2; Ratcliffe & Jefferies Brewery, Northampton; Harrington and Thope Underwood; former turnstile buildings at the British Timber site, Duston; tracing old and new lands

**Pinner Local History Society Newsletter** (no.111 Spring 2010) details from Sylvia Venis, 128 Canonbury Avenue, Pinner HA5 5QF history of the Palace Theatre, Waltham

**Rickmansworth Historical Society Newsletter** (no.87) £1 from Geoff Saul, 20 West Way, Rickmansworth WD3 7EN the Poor Law & the workhouse; Chandlers Cross Iron Chapel; parish fire engine; from the Watford Observer: Spring 1910

**Saffron Walden Historical Journal** (no.19 Spring 2010) £2.50 from SWHS Publications, 9 High Street, Saffron Walden CB10 1AT Brocwooden, Brook Walden; Audley End village; the Moat Farm murders; new documents; Woolstaplers Hall; 18th century elections; Essex poll books; a trail through our crime records; causewayed enclosures and stone circles

**Scottish Local History** (no.78 Spring 2010) £18 from Scottish History; School of History, Classics and Archaeology, University of Edinburgh, 17 Buccleuch Place, Edinburgh EH8 9LN Eliza Fraser and Castle Fraser; letters from a Jacobite transported to Virginia after 1715; Kelvinside Racecourse; the Open University MA in History; John Bathgate and the Peebles Railway Company; John Brown: master mason; Portobello: the rise of a seaside resort

**Send & Ripley History Society Journal** (vol.6 no.211 Mar/Apr 2010) from Norman Carpenter, Ufford, 106 Potters Lane, Send, Woking GU23 7AL Sendholme and Boughton Hall; Lt Col Bill Hak: a prisoner’s tale

**Wandsworth Historian: journal of the Wandsworth Historical Society** (no.89 Spring 2010) £3 from WHS, 119 Heythorp Street, London SW18 5BT Wandsworth Borough News in retrospect; Wandsworth, Putney and Wimbledon: the Battersea bounds west of the Wand; a Battersea childhood; Royal Masonic Institution for Girls 1852 to 1934

**Wandsworth Historical Society Newsletter** (no.236 April 2010) details from www.wandsworthhistory.org.uk archaeology news; an Edwardian schoolboy remembers

**The Link: Wessex Newfoundland Society** (no.81 March 2010) William Grey: missionary, architect and artist; a 17th century well sheds light on early settlement

**Forest Clearing** [Wyre Forest Historical Research Group] (vol.3 no.3 March 2010) 50p from Two Pines, Beach Hay, Bayton, Bewdley DY14 9NF Forest folk; high days and holidays in Habberley

**More Yatton Yesterdays** [Yatton LHS] (no.9) £4 inc. pp from Mrs P. Denny, 15 Derham Park, Yatton BS49 4DZ Place-names in North Somerset; St James, the missing chapel; Bilbie Cottage, Yatton and Clifton Links; 1st Cleeve & Claverham Scouts; memories of a Yatton junior school; communications around Yatton

**Conservation Bulletin** [English Heritage] (no.63 Spring 2010) subscription enquiries to: mailinglist@english-heritage.org.uk People engaging with places; places matter to people; psychology of engagement; acting locally

**Friendly Societies Research Group Newsletter** (no.19 March 2010) details from D.Weinbren@open.ac.uk St Michael’s Fellowship; freemasonry; Blackheath and Australia; Friendly Societies war memorials

**The Historian** [Historical Association] (no.105 Spring 2010) HA, 59a Kennington Park Road, London SE11 4JH Gladstone and the London May Day demonstrators 1890; Charles Gilpin; Cambuskenneth books; Lord Rochester’s Grand Tour 1661-1664; Food, history and a sense of place?
Local History Magazine (no.127 Jan/Feb 2010) £22.50 p.a. from LH M, Doric House, 56 Alcester Road, Studley B80 7LG New archives policy? Using historical novels; the longest pier in the world

Magazine of the Friends of The National Archives (vol.21 no.1 April 2010) £2.50 details from tnaeditor@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk Britain in 1959; living the poor life in nineteenth century Nottinghamshire

Open History: magazine of the Open University History Society (no.111 Spring 2010) £5 from OUHS, c/o 77 Marford Crescent, Sale M33 4DN Fulke Greville and the king’s jewels; churches of Jersey; George and John Armstrong of Castleton; grammar schools 1941-1966; the core community of Woodstock

REVIEWERS IN THIS ISSUE

Christopher Barringer trained as a geographer at St John’s College, Cambridge, and now regards himself as a landscape and local historian. After 25 years as resident tutor in Norfolk for Cambridge University Board of Extra Mural Studies he became the first director for Continuing Education at the University of East Anglia, before retiring in 1995. He has written on the Lake District, the Yorkshire Dales and Norfolk topics and edited a range of local studies published by his students on Norfolk market towns and villages.

Andy Gritt is a senior lecturer in history at the University of Central Lancashire where he is also Director of the Institute of Local and Family History. He has published widely on the rural history of the north west of England. His current research is on education, welfare and the family in nineteenth and twentieth century Lancashire.

Ian Hinton is in the process of completing his PhD in Landscape History at UEA after taking early retirement. He is closely involved with the researches of the Norfolk Historic Buildings Group and teaches archaeology and vernacular architecture part-time in the School of Continuing Education at UEA.

Jo Mattingly is a small museums adviser in Cornwall, and a Council member of the British Association for Local History.

Roger Ottewill retired in 2008 after 35 years in higher education. Having completed an MRes in History at the University of Southampton in 2007, he is now working towards a PhD in Church History at the University of Birmingham. He has contributed articles to, among others, The Local Historian, Southern History and Congregational History Society Magazine.

Anne Rowe is a landscape historian in Hertfordshire with a particular interest in the county’s parks. She teaches for the University of Cambridge Institute of Continuing Education and the WEA and her book on the medieval parks of Hertfordshire was published in 2009.

Margaret Shepherd is an Emeritus Fellow of Wolfson College, Cambridge. She was born and educated in Penrith in Cumberland. She is the author of From Hellgill to Bridge End Aspects of economic and social change in the Upper Eden Valley in Westmorland, and an emeritus fellow of Wolfson College, Cambridge.

Spencer Thomas was Head of Geography of the now University of Chichester for nearly 30 years until his retirement. He has published an eclectic range of articles on the local history of his adopted county of Sussex.

Hilary Walker is a part time Ph.D. student in the School of History at the University of East Anglia with a particular interest in the lives of artisans in the eighteenth century.

Back cover: extract from Bartholomew’s half-inch map sheet 25 (Fenland) circa 1955, showing (bottom right) Bridge End and Swaton, the location of the two farms which Walter Henry Owen occupied between the World Wars [see article by Joanna Loxton, pp.224-234]

Inside back cover, above: ‘The Laxey River runs down to the sea’: the mouth of the river below Old Laxey, between the breakwater and the pier, with Laxey Head in the background. The V-shape of stones in the foreground was constructed to enable nets to be placed to catch fish. The land at the top of the cliffs on Laxey Head is Abbeylands (Patricia Newton) [see article by Patricia Newton, pp.191-207]

Inside back cover, below: The walls at Agneash, above Laxey (Patricia Newton) [see especially p.196]