The Peasant Land-market in Berkshire
during the later Middle Ages.

by

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SUMMARY

Small-scale traffic in land was endemic in peasant society and is reflected in the earliest surviving court rolls of the thirteenth century. During the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, a fall in the manorial population and the leasing of demesne land made more land available to the peasantry.

Entry fines fell and rents remained virtually stable. The decay of the traditions of customary inheritance and the relaxation of seigneurial prohibitions on the alienation of villein tenements, brought into existence a free market in customary land, in which entire villein holdings changed hands rapidly.

This peasant land-market differed in scale and in effects from that of the thirteenth century. Leases and copyholds for lives, and for terms of years, became increasingly common. Village society became increasingly polarised as many middling tenant families declined, and a small group of richer peasants took advantage of the active land-market to build up
composite holdings. Often, lessees of the manorial demesne, sometimes sheep farmers and employers of wage labour, these richer peasants appeared to be the founding generation of a prosperous yeomanry, but in many cases their prosperity was short-lived, and considerable instability was a chief characteristic of the period.
CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This study, like much work on agrarian history, owes many of its ideas to Tawney. In 'The Agrarian Problem in the Sixteenth Century' published fifty years ago, Tawney pointed out the importance of land transfers among peasants as one of the factors that helped to dissolve the class structure of medieval village society, and to prepare the way for the new agrarian relationships of the Tudor period. Tawney saw the accumulation of holdings, along with the colonisation of new land, the spread of small enclosures, and the leasing of manorial demesnes, as the foundation of later yeomen fortunes.

Many studies of medieval estates have shown attention to the considerable amount of traffic in villein land, and more recently, Professor Postan, in his introduction to a collection of Peterborough villein charters, has discussed the origins and characteristics of the villein land-market. Although the existence of such a land market has never been in dispute, it seemed an important enough element in peasant

society to be worth studying in detail and, in particular, on a local basis; in an attempt to find out if and how peasant land transactions changed the class structure of individual villages, and whether their tendency was to 'level up' or rather to increase social differentiation. To have any value, such a study should ideally be based on an analysis of the peasant land-market, in one manor, as revealed in manorial court rolls, over a period of two centuries.

Such material is, of course, very rare; perhaps only the records of the Bishopric of Winchester can provide it. It is also necessary to have some indication of the composition of the manorial population at the beginning of and end of the period; this can only be gained from a series of rentals or surveys and custumals well spread out over these two hundred years. This kind of material, although it has severe limitations (see Chapter II) is more readily available.

The following study is based on a group of nine Berkshire manors for which there is a plentiful supply of fourteenth century and fifteenth century court rolls, and
for a good series of rentals or surveys. In the case of Coleshill, there are both these kinds of evidence, besides ministers' and farmers' accounts covering most of the period and it has been possible to study this village in much more detail than the rest, and to give an outline account of nearly all the peasant families who held land there at the time. (Chapter V).

Inasmuch as they were chosen purely on the merits of their surviving records, these manors are a random sample. Fortunately, they are distributed among the main regions of the county and are to that extent representative (see Map at end). Woolstone, Brightwaltham and Letcombe Regis are villages of the chalk Downland region,¹ the foremost sheep-producing area of the county in the middle ages. Mackney, Coleshill, Sotwell Stonor, and South Moreton are all in the flat plain known as the Vale of the White Horse; a dairying and mixed farming region in the middle ages. Speenhamland and Englefield are both in the Kennet Valley. The village of Eastrop, near Highworth lies just over the Wiltshire border. It has been included here, firstly, because it was geographically in the same

¹ Woolstone and Letcombe Regis are both long, narrow parishes, including some flat land in the vale to the north, but with most of their acreage on the Downs.
region as Coleshill; secondly, because it was part of the same estate, and thirdly, because the two villages were in many ways closely connected.

As far as ownership is concerned, these manors are also fairly representative. Four were held by ecclesiastical corporations: Eastrop and Coleshill by Edington Priory; Woolston by St. Swithin's; Winchester; Letcombe Regis first by Cluny and then by Westminster Abbey; Speenhamland was held by an important lay family (Despencers); Sotwell, South Moreton, Englefield and Mackney by a succession of smaller lay landlords.

Of course, these villages included only a fraction of the total tenant populations of the county; their development in the later middle ages cannot be taken to be representative of that of the Berkshire peasantry as a whole, even though many elements seem to have been common to all of them. Moreover, in concentrating on the subject of the villein land market, it has been necessary to look very cursorily, or not at all, at much interesting

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material, and many important subjects. Nothing is said here, for instance, about the legal status of copyholders as far as the King's courts were concerned. Nor has it been possible to deal at all thoroughly with the land transactions of freeholders who may have been of similar economic standing to their villein neighbours. The question of peasant agriculture is only touched on (in Chapter VI) insofar as it affected landholding and social structure, although the Berkshire court rolls have a mass of information on the subject. Taxation returns have only been used for supplementary information; wills only in the negative sense that it appears that few of these Berkshire tenants made them. These are severe limitations, and confine both the scope of this study and the methods it employs. Nevertheless, even this limited evidence illuminates some aspects of social change in the later middle ages.
CHAPTER II

SOURCES AND METHODS

The bulk of the material available for the study of the Berkshire peasantry during the middle ages stems from the working of the manorial system, rather than from the needs of the central government. That is to say, we depend on ministers' accounts, manorial court rolls, rentals, surveys and custumals, rather than on tax assessments or on such national surveys as the Hundred Rolls. The most important limitation of our evidence is thus its scope, rather than its quality or quantity. Stemming from the needs of the seigneurial administration, it is concerned primarily with those properties which chiefly interested the lord - his land, his assets in cash or kind, and his tenants.

Its limits are set, both geographically and symbolically, by the boundaries of the manor, not the village, and only when the two were co-terminous can we say with any truth that the records tell us about such and such a village. Much land could lie inside the village, but outside the manor, and this land will not appear in the manorial records. Similarly, many villagers were not tenants of the lord, and although they may appear incidentally in the court rolls, we shall not find their names
in rentals or surveys relating to the place.

In the majority of cases with which we are concerned here, manor and vill were co-terminous. In the case of Sotwell Stonor and South Moreton, the manor was only a part of a larger geographical unity, and in these the tenant population discussed will be even more of a legal fiction than was generally the case. But even where manor and vill were the same, two further difficulties arise. However clear the customary boundaries of the manor may have been - and in some cases they may still have been in dispute - we cannot expect the peasant's economy to have strictly conformed to them. It was natural for a man living in a village divided between two manors to have held lands in both; it was equally natural for a peasant to hold land in two neighbouring villages. Many must have done so, and as subsequent evidence will show, 'absentee landlordism' was not at this time a prerogative of the rich. With information available for a fraction only of the villages in the county, it is inevitable that much land held by the peasants with whom we are concerned, must have escaped our notice.

Another class of tenant will also, to some extent, be under-represented here: those who held their land not
directly from the lord, but from other tenants. The importance of this sub-letting is discussed below, but it seems that this class was not necessarily 'invisible' as far as the records are concerned. The fact that these under-tenants were farming their land in much the same way as their neighbours were, means that they appear in the court rolls in connection with purely agrarian matters often enough to make their presence known. If it is true that 'a man could not in his lifetime avoid amercement for something' (Denholm-Young) we can be sure of not losing sight of these tenants altogether.

The rentals, customals and surveys, then, on which Chapter III is chiefly based, deal only with what may be called the 'recorded manorial population'; that is to say with those heads of households who held their land directly from the lord of the manor concerned. The court rolls, which provide most of the material for Chapters IV, V and VI, also deal basically with this group, but with reference also to peasants outside its confines who were living, or farming, in the village. The ministers' accounts, while concerned chiefly with the lord's reserves from the manor, reflect changes in the peasant economy in-so-far as it impinged on the seigneurial economy. They
have been used for this purpose in Chapter VI, particularly in the sections concerned with peasant sheep-farming. The ministers' accounts also occasionally provide a valuable supplement to the court rolls, for their 'Fines and Perquisites' paragraphs record receipts from land transactions and the deaths of tenants.

The Inquisitiones Monarum of 1341, although quite unreliable as a guide to agricultural values, have been used, in Chapter II, for their often very vivid comments on the state of the countryside.

EXPLANATORY NOTES

1. Much of the evidence on which Chapter III, IV, and V are based, consists of the accumulation of many references to peasant land transactions. Where such references are plentiful enough to warrant it, a summary history of the tenant or family in question is given in the APPENDIX, and the tenant's name given in the text in capitals. (All Coleshill tenants have been treated in this way). The APPENDIX is arranged alphabetically, under manors. Where only occasional references exist, they are indicated by a footnote.
2. The following abbreviations have been used:—
R: rental. R. followed by date indicates rental of that date.
C/R: court roll. C/R followed by date indicates court roll of that date.
A/C: minister's account. A/C followed by date indicates account of that date.
VT: virgate.
M: messuage.

3. Calendar years have been given in place of regnal years in the text, but in footnotes and APPENDIX documents have been cited by the form of dating they themselves employ. Ministers' accounts are cited by the date of the beginning of the year of account, e.g. A/c for Michaelmas 1404 to Michaelmas 1405 is cited A/c 1404.

4. Except in direct quotations, marks have been translated into £. s. d.

5. Modern spellings of place-names have been adopted, but contemporary spelling of surnames, with their variations
have been retained.

6. All documents quoted are in the Public Records Office, except where otherwise stated.
CHAPTER III

POPULATION AND SOCIAL STRUCTURE

This chapter outlines some of the important changes that took place in the social structure of nine Berkshire villages during the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. The description of medieval village social structure is hazardous enough even with the assistance of the Hundred Rolls. None survive for Berkshire and the following studies have of necessity to be based primarily on manorial material: on custumals, rentals, and court rolls. Supplementary information is provided by the lay subsidy returns of 1332 and by the occasional but vivid comments of the Inquisitiones Nonarum. The limitations of this kind of evidence have been discussed above, but it is important to bear in mind throughout that we can necessarily only concern ourselves here with the recorded manorial population; that is to say not with villagers, but with tenants, and in general, only those tenants who held their land directly of the lord.

Even within the confines of this somewhat limited and legalistic group, however, it is possible to measure such factors as changes in the number of tenants, the relative importance of different social classes, the extent of 'turnover'

1. Except for extract rolls, which give no information about tenants and tenements.
in the peasant population and, in some cases, to trace the
descendants of thirteenth century villagers or the forebears
of those of the sixteenth century.
Woolstone, Brightwaltham and Letcombe Regis are all manors on the Berkshire Downs. This chalk downland was prime sheep country throughout the middle ages, by far the most important source of Berkshire wool, and in all three villages sheep rearing was an important part of the economy of both the lord and his tenants.

There are signs that the whole of this region, however, was suffering some kind of a decline in the mid-fourteenth century. The Inquisitiones Nonarum of 1340, while they undoubtedly reflect both an exceptionally bad harvest and the parishioners' natural desire to reduce their tax assessment by undervaluing their land and stock, nevertheless record some serious and long-standing economic troubles. Many downland villages were clearly in a poor state. At Lambourne 'six carucates ... which used to be ploughed and sown now lie almost uncultivated because of the poverty of the parishioners'. 1 At Compton, near Ashbury, the tithes of lambs and fleeces are only worth 10 marks 'for many causes viz. that there are only two folds of sheep in the parish'. 2 At Letcombe Basset 'the greater part of the land .... is untilled because of the poverty of the men of the village

... and there used to be many more sheep ... than there are now.¹

WOOLSTONE:

At Uffington, the parish in which the village of Woolstone lay, the assessors only reported that the spring corn had failed,² but there is reason to think that Woolstone, too, at the mid-century was experiencing less transitory difficulties than this and that it continued to do so.

The yearly accounts of the Hordarian of St. Swithin's Winchester, to whom the manor was assigned on the obedientiary system, show that total receipts from the manor fell from about £73 in 1330 to £60 in 1335, £36 in 1382, £30 in 1401 and remained at only about half the early fourteenth-century level throughout the fifteenth century.³

The Black Death made a considerable impact on manorial revenues; it meant a 75% drop in corn sales, a loss of a large proportion of receipts from tallage, a drop in the income from rent and entry fines, and difficulty in obtaining customary labour.⁴ The manor as a financial unit recovered by the 1370's but, as in so many cases, the plague crisis had accentuated tendencies already in operation: the change-over.

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1. Inq. Non. p. 4.
2. " " p. 6.
3. Obedientiary Rolls of St. Swithin's, Winchester, Hants. Record Soc. 1892. Hordarian's Rolls, p. 253 et seq. See also V.C.H. Vol. II.
to hired from customary labour quickened, leaseholds increased, entry fines only occasionally reached their early fourteenth-century peak. In general, the impression of decline that the Hordarian's figures give is accurate. By 1420 St. Swithin's found it more profitable to become a rentier, and from then on first some of the demesne land, and later all the demesne, stock and rents, were let to a succession of firmarii.

Woolstone Tenants

Although Woolstone records contain only sparse references to peasant crops and stock, the almost complete run of court rolls from 1326 to 1421 gives a good deal of information about the social structure of the village, the peasant land market, and, in particular, about changes that took place immediately after the Black Death.

According to a custumal drawn up for St. Swithin's Priory in 1221, Woolstone then had a recorded manorial population of 53 tenants. Of those, the most substantial

1. See Chapter IV.

2. This was in conformity with a general policy of the Priory at about this time: its manor of Silkstone was farmed from 1396, Chilboton by 1444, others probably earlier. cf, J.S. Drew's transcript of the material relating to these manors (typescript).

were 10 virgators, each with almost exactly the same sized holding of 20 acres of arable and 7 acres of downland pasture ('super montem') 30 'cottagers' holding 10 acres of arable and \(\frac{1}{2}\) to \(1\frac{1}{2}\) acres of pasture corresponded to half virgate; and there were 10 'parvi cottarii' holding a curtilage or a fraction of an acre (6 of the cottagers held one of these smallholdings in addition to their basic 10 acres). There were three millers.

This custumal is valuable in two ways: First, simply as giving a list of the names of the early thirteenth century tenants. Certainly it may not be a complete list, but a minimum one, and certainly some of those names are very tenuous and hardly rate as surnames, at all. But it will be interesting to see how many of the more permanent seeming of these names (i.e. those which are not Christian names or purely occupational) survived in the village between 1221 and the earliest Woolstone court rolls of the fourteenth century, and thence to find out the extent of 'turnover' in that period.

Secondly, the custumal gives a clear impression of a rigidly stratified society. No tenant held more than one full holding (although some of the half virgators have a little extra land). All but one of the 'cottage' holdings are exactly equal in size, and of the exception it is carefully noted that 'he holds one acre of meadow more than anyone else
of the same tenure.' It is possible, of course, that this rigid and formal picture of the social structure of the village conceals a totally different reality, in particular that it conceals the existence of sub-tenancies and sub-tenants. But, judging by the efficiency with which the Priory's representatives detected the illegal sub-letting of even one acre of land, and that on a short lease, during the fourteenth century,¹ it does not seem likely that many sub-tenancies went unnoticed when such an important document as this custumal was drawn up. (The custumal, after all, recorded the various obligations of labour services and it was in the Priory's interest that it should be as accurate as possible.) Nor is it likely that the custumal ignores other ways in which the tenurial structure might have been altered: there is no reason, for instance, why it should not record the accumulation of whole tenements if it was capable of recording that Walter de Molendino held five acres more than his neighbours.

A gap of more than a hundred years separates the date of this custumal from that of the earliest surviving Woolstone accounts and court rolls, and it would not be surprising if not one of the surnames from the earlier document were to appear in the later. In fact, 11 surnames

¹ e.g. S.C.2 154/78 courts of 1347 and 1348.
recur: a turnover of 80%. (This isolated figure has little meaning but it is interesting to note that a similar turnover was common in the fifteenth century over a period of only about a third of the length).

There is no late medieval rental which might show, in comparison with the custumal, what changes in population and social structure had meanwhile taken place. A list of tenants' commuting services in 1434 suggests that the landholding population had dropped drastically, as do the tallage figures, but these are very unreliable indications. A better source are the land cases recorded in the court rolls and, indirectly, in the reeve's accounts.

The plague hit Woolstone hard. Although it is impossible to give any figure for the number of deaths, the first post-plague account of 1352 shows thirteen half-virgates in the lord's land on account of the pestilence, and this was after three years in which most vacant lands might have been taken up by new tenants. Even taking the number of landholders in 1349 to be what it was in 1221 - and it was almost

1. A/6 1434/5 10 virgators, 5 half-virgators, 2 small-holders, 2 houses - a total of 19.
2. See V.C.H. Berks vol. II pp. 185/7.
certainly much lower - this would mean that almost a quarter of the landholding population had died or left and a corresponding, or perhaps a higher, proportion of the landless.

Few of these 13 heads of household's left surviving relatives capable of farming, or willing to farm, their land, for later in the year new tenants had taken over all the vacant holdings, 10 of which were split up among two or more people to hold 'at farm until another shall come to claim the whole tenement.'

New tenants were only willing to take up their land on new and favourable conditions (see below, Chapter IV). In addition to the changes that these new tenures brought with them, the last part of the fourteenth century saw the accumulation of land and the building up of composite holdings by a few peasant families. This is the tendency which, even in the absence of any document describing the social structure of fifteenth-century Woolstone, we can assume to have most fundamentally altered the social situation described in 1221. The court rolls make it clear that a Priory official drawing up such a document would have had to record not the clear-cut virgator, half-virgator, and cottager classes of the late thirteenth century, but a much more variegated society, with tenements of very varied size and composition, many leaseholds, and at the top of the scale a few outstandingly large peasant holdings built up in the mobile conditions of
the late fourteenth and early fifteenth centuries.
BRIGHTWALTHAM

Two documents, separated by a period of over 120 years, list Brightwaltham tenants and their holdings in the late thirteenth century and in the reign of Henry VI.¹ This is a long gap, but an exceptionally good series of court rolls, from 8 Edward I to 28 Henry VI² links the two and makes it possible to see how some of the changes which the later rental reflects had come about.

The custumal of 1284 divides the Brightwaltham tenants³ into five groups: 'tenants holding freely', virgators, 'cottars' holding a half-virgate, villeins holding 'gavelland' or assarted land at money-rent, and the 'tenants of a tenement once belonging to Richard of Wallingford.' Some of these categories overlapped: two of the villeins held some of their land by free tenure, and nearly all of the assarted land was held by virgators or half-virgators in addition to their basic holding. Taking these duplications into account we can reckon the recorded manorial population as comprising:

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2. With occasional rolls of T. Edward IV, and Henry VII.
3. And the tenants of the tithings of Hertley and Conholt, not considered here as these were not geographically part of Brightwaltham.
4 freeholders (one the Rector of Brightwaltham)
8 virgators, and two groups of heirs each holding a virgate
17 half-virgators or cottars
11 tenants holding assart land only\(^1\)
4 cottagers (3 of whom were women)
5 tenants of Robert of Wallingford's divided holding
- a total of 49 recorded tenants.

By the early fifteenth century the number of recorded tenants had dropped to 29 and the social structure was very different. The large middle class of half-virgators (described as 'half-yardlanders') which had formed about a third of the tenants of the late thirteenth century, had almost completely disappeared. The village population was now much more 'polarised', almost evenly divided between 11 tenants of a yardland or more and 12 'cottagers' with only 4 half-yardlanders between them.\(^2\)

The plague probably accounted for part of the population drop: a court-roll of 1349 records 12 deaths among the more substantial heads of householders alone.\(^3\)

\(^1\) Several of these were relatives of virgators or half virgators.
\(^2\) Two of whom had additional holdings.
\(^3\) S.C.2 154/69 3 April 1349
Turnover, over such a long period was, of course, high: four surnames of 1284 appear in the rentals of 1426-8. But the evidence of the court-rolls about the changes in tenancies that took place shows that the plague alone cannot account for the changes in social structure and that in particular it was connected with the decline of many middling peasant families. Brief accounts of the families of 1284 who can be traced in subsequent court rolls illustrate this tendency.

**Freeholders and virgators of 1284.**

**FULK**

The land which Robert Fulk held freely in 1284 descended regularly in the male line throughout the fourteenth century and was held by his namesake and descendant in R.1426-8.

**BISOTHEWODE**

Some of the Bisothewode land went out of the family, by surrender or failure of heirs, in the 1290's, the rest descended within the family until 1367. Then a further half-virgate was lost by the marriage of a Bisothewode widow. Robert Bisothewode who held in the late fourteenth century granted away or sold most of his land before his death in 1429. There were no tenants of his name in R.1426-8 and the family's land was split up between two different tenants.
DE CRUCE's land passed twice by inheritance to his descendants during the fourteenth century. Some of it was lost by forfeiture in 1368, some by surrender in 1399. There are no de Cruce's in R.1426-8.

DE EVERSOLE. (Three male members of this family, all virgators, held in 1284.) The land descended twice by inheritance in the late thirteenth century. In 1331 William de Eversole lost all his land in a law-suit. There are no de Eversole's in R.1426-8.

WARNER (of Stretend).

It is difficult to trace the descent of this land. The holding of 1284 passed out of the family's hands on the tenant's death some time between 1284 and 1299. But a Ralph Stretend, who died in 1383, may have been a relative, as may a Robert Stretend in 1441. There are no Warner's or Stretend's in R.1426-8.

JUVENIS, YONG, YONGE

This is only one among the virgator families of 1284 that also appears in R.1426-8, and its history is unusually well-documented. All but one of the references to the Yongs concern their acquisition of land or its retention by inheritance. They were evidently a prosperous and powerful peasant family until the mid-fifteenth century, at least,
after which they took over the Brightwaltham demesne as farmers and concentrated on this rather than on their tenant land.

1284 Richard Juvenis held 1 virgate
1303 Richard's holding descended to his son, Walter
1334 Half cottage formerly John Yonge's taken by M. Durnour
1386 William Yonge took cottage and 12 acres
1394 William's son Richard took messuage, virgate, toft and 13 acres
1403 William Yonge took messuage and virgate
1408 William died, leaving messuage, virgate and 3 tofts to his widow

R.1426-8 The Yong family between them held
2 messuages
2 yardlands (1 acquired in 1425)
4 cottage holdings 1 " " "

Before 1409 Richard Yonge was firmarius of Brightwaltham and in 1428 demesne land.

1431 John Yonge I left the manor.
1432 Richard Yonge illegally sold 1 virgate
1438 John Yonge II inherited messuage, virgate, 3 tofts.
1440 Richard Yonge sold 2 messuages, 2 virgates, 1 cottage, to two tenants and sublet 2 more of his holdings.
1441 John Yonge was firmarius of Brightwaltham desmesne.

Another member of the family was Firmarius in the 1480's.

B. Cottars or half-virgators of 1284

FABER

Ralph Faber's land descended within his family until 1340 when John Faber 'being poor' surrendered two half-virgates to two other tenants. His widow succeeded to his remaining land in 1349, but there is no subsequent mention of the family.

DANGER

Simon Danger exchanged his holding for a much smaller one in 1294. The name does not appear in subsequent court-rolls.

JURDAN

It is hard to tell whether Jurdan was a family name or not. (The 1284 entry reads 'Agnes, widow of Jurdan the shepherd'. Jurdan occurs as a surname in court rolls, of the 1380's. There were no Jurdan's in 1426-8. John Jurdan left the manor in 1387.)
SMOKYER

The Smokyer family appears in court rolls until 1402, when William Smokyer, a half-virgator, left the manor. There are no members of the family in R.1426-8.

BURGEY's land went to his widow in 1296.

PARLEFRENS, PARLEFRENCH

Part of the Parlefrench holding was taken by the Rector of Brightwaltham in 1301, and was still held by his successor in R.1426-8. There were still two (male) tenants with this name in 1334 and 1386, but none appears in the Rental.

WADEL's land went to another tenant some time before 1334. There is no further mention of the family.

Similarly, HEYWARD's land was held by another tenant in 1294, Page's by 1289, Messager's by 1299. The de Londre's family still held in the mid-fourteenth century, but John de Londre's land went to another tenant in 1352.

CURTEYS

The Curtey's family is one of the very few that can be traced in the court rolls until the early fifteenth century. Robert Curteys held gavelland in 1284, and this, or another family holding descended by inheritance within the family until the late fourteenth century. Then in 1380 John Curteys
surrendered a half-virgate 'to the use of' another tenant, and in 1394, some Curteys land was also taken by another tenant. Some land remained to the family though, for in 1407 Walter and Cristina Curteys inherited a holding 'once Sarah Curteys', and in the same year the surrendered land was regained. In 1426-8 Thomas Curteys held a yardland and a cottage called 'Courteys' - obviously part of the family holding. This Thomas left the demesne with his family, in 1434. He had surrendered the greater part of his land to the use of another tenant just before he left, and should rightly, by manorial custom, have forfeited all his holding in the manor. But he managed to regain part of his land by an ingenious arrangement, and he became although still a villein, in effect an absentee landowner.  

1. C/R Jan. 13 HVI: Thomas Courteys has left the demesne, who held - a messuage and virgate called 'Wyndy's', messuage and cottage called 'Burgeys', and a messuage and cottage called 'Courteys'.

Same court: Thomas Curteys surrendered 'Wynds' to the use of John Tyler.

C/R June 13 HVI: Thomas Aylewyn purchased Wynds. Fine £2.0.0. Joan, sister of Agnes, the wife of Thomas Curteys, claimed and recovered the tenement. Thomas Aylewyn bought it from her, paying 13/4 entry-fine which sum Curteys had paid to the said Aylewn ex assignatis domini and thus Thomas Curteys is tenant, and pays heriot. And the said Thomas Curteys, villein, is living outside the demesne at Emborne with his three sons Thomas Richard and John, and three daughters Joan Agnes and Matilda, all legitimate.
Although, as we have seen, many of these peasant families can be traced as landholders, throughout part of the fourteenth century, only the Yongs, Curtey's and Fulkes appear in the early fifteenth century rental, and only the Yongs were clearly 'thriving'. Of course, some changes of tenancy can simply be accounted for by the remarriage of widows, as in the case of Bisothewode in 1367 (Juliana Bisothewood m. John Duk who took over her land), Burgeys (widow inherited 1296), Willeamec (widow inherited late thirteenth century), Faber (widow inherited 1349), and some of the de Londres land. But in the case where male tenants held, other factors, of which the failure of heirs is one, must have accounted for the disappearance of so many family names.\(^1\) Instances of such disappearances are Messager after 1297, Heyward after 1294, Wadel after 1334, de Eversole after their unsuccessful suit in 1331, Parlefrench after 1386, de Cruce after 1399, Danger after 1303, Page after 1351, Jurdan after John Jurdan's flight in 1387, Smokyer after William Smokyer left in 1402. And, of course, several of the tenants of 1284 cannot be traced in the court rolls at all.

\(^1\) i.e. The disappearance of these families as landholders, see Ch.2.
It is interesting that many holdings descended within the family by inheritance until sometime in the fourteenth century and were then 'lost'. Lost to whom? There seems to have been no shortage of new tenants. In some cases these new tenants were old-established families which appear in the custumal. The Curteys holding in 1430, for instance, included the land of Burgeys and Wynd - three thirteenth century names. The Yongs, in 1426 held land that had once belonged to at least six different families who had been their social equals in 1284. Many holdings 'lost' in the fourteenth century went to families whose own names had disappeared by the fifteenth.

But by 1426 by far the greater part of the villein land at Brightwaltham was held by 'new men' who had taken up land in the manor in the last part of the fourteenth century or in the (undocumented) years between 1408 and the date of the rental.

1. The exceptions are: Newman, first mentioned as tenants in 1302
   Smyth, "    "    "    "    "    " 1340
   Maydgood "    "    "    "    "    " 1349

The dates of the first references to the other tenants of R.1426-8 are as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tenants</th>
<th>Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fox</td>
<td>1362</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bandes</td>
<td>1403</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Owghtred</td>
<td>1394</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marten</td>
<td>1405</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Knyght</td>
<td>1394</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wodeward</td>
<td>1367</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aylewyn</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Aylewyn - No previous ref. (N.B. no court rolls between 1408 and date of rental).

Reeve    ditto
Maryott  "
Bony    "
Letcombe Regis was one of Berkshire's many manors of ancient demesne. A detailed extent of 1274\(^1\) and a custumal of T.Ed.1 or Ed.11 give a clear picture of a stratified society very like thirteenth-century Woolstone. There was a small upper class of 5 tenants with over one virgate, 30 virgators, 20 half-virgators and 16 or 17 cottagers or small holders.\(^3\) In addition, there were 9 'wicks' or dairy farms in the low-lying meadows of the village which were by far the most valuable assets of the tenants who held them. (8 virgators and 1 half-virgator). Sheep and cattle rearing were obviously important in this, as in most of the neighbouring villages: there was common pasture for 400 sheep and 2 mark's worth for cattle; and the demesne pasture was assessed at 16 times the value, acre per acre, of the demesne arable.

The next comparable account of the manor\(^4\) is separated from this extent by a gap of about 180 years. A lay subsidy return of 1332\(^5\) suggests that turnover meanwhile was almost complete, for very few surnames (8) survived even during the 58 years 1274-1332.

By 1445, of course, the social structure of the place had altered almost unrecognizably. Instead of a society

---

1. S.C.12 5/50  
2. S.C.12 14/32.
3. Three of the half-virgators, one of the virgators and two of the larger tenants were also millers. There had been 5 mills there in 1086.
4. S.C.12. 1/1
5. E.179. 73/7
with a large middle group of virgators and half-virgators and a much smaller group of cottagers and richer peasants at either end of the scale, there had taken place by the mid fourteenth century a development very similar to that at Woolstone. There were/large composite holdings, composed as follows:

1. Messuage and 2 virgates.
   Mill.
   Messuage and half-virgate.
   Quarter virgate.
   10 acres meadow.

2. Messuage and croft.
   Mill.
   Messuage and half-virgate.
   5 cottages.
   8 acres

and two smaller composite holdings:

3. Messuage; 1½ virgates
   Mill.
   5¼ acres.

4. Messuage and virgate.
   Messuage and half-virgate.

and two holdings of basically 1 virgate;

5. Messuage and virgate
   2 cottages. 2 acres.

6. Messuage and virgate.
It is improbable that these six tenants were the only landholders in the village - it is just possible that they were the only freeholders. In no sense can this rental be used as a guide to population. But it does show how some villagers, as at Woolstone, had been accumulating tenements and building up substantial farms. It would be interesting to know whether the privileges of tenure on ancient demesne had done anything to facilitate this process.

---

1. The heading of the rental is torn and reads: 'Rentale manerii ibidem cum membris eiusdem ( ) Wodehill renovatum 10 Jan. ( ) post conquestum 33 de redditus lib. ten. ( ) Annunc. B.V.M. et St.Mich.'
SPEENHAMLAND AND EASTROP

The two manors discussed below lay in very different geographical and agricultural areas. But they had one factor in common: that they were both very close to - virtually suburbs of - a borough, and they are considered together in the hope of discovering a little about the effect of town and village on each other.

SPEENHAMLAND

Speenhamland lies in the Kennet valley, near Newbury (of which it is now virtually a part). Newbury, after a period of decline in the fourteenth century, was a thriving town during the fifteenth, regaining its earlier medieval status as an important weaving and trading centre on a main route between London and the West.¹ The economy of the surrounding villages must have been closely linked with that of the borough. They did not, however, necessarily follow Newbury's lead towards late-medieval recovery and Tudor prosperity, as the history of Speenhamland tenants during this period shows.

In 1376 Speenhamland was a village of smallholders and burgesses. A rental of that year² shows that of 35

¹. V.C.H. Berks. vol. II. p. 198
². S.C.11 Roll 68.
tenants, 18 had burgage holdings\(^1\) of unspecified size and the remainder crofts, houses with gardens, odd acres of meadow, or small enclosed pastures. This rental is followed by five others which suggest that the landholding population dropped between 1376 and 1428, and then remained virtually stagnant.

**Recorded manorial population**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Tenants</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1376</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1428</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1453</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1456</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1546</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1564</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Although these figures indicate a virtually stable population, turnover was considerable. Only five surnames which appear in R.1376 recurred in R.1428. Between R.1428 and R.1546 turnover was proportionately rather lower, with the same number of names recurring. (In view of this instability, it is interesting that very few Speenhamland holdings had names which derived from their owner's surnames; nearly all were geographical.)

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1. These burgages probably consisted of a house in the town itself and land in the open fields.
2. S.C.12. 5/59
3. S.C.12. 5/60
4. S.C.12. 5/61
The ease with which burgages could be transferred\(^1\) made for a great deal of subletting. The legality of such proceedings, though, means that the rentals record sub-leases quite openly, and thus present a clearer picture of the tenurial situation than would the rentals of a manor where subletting was forbidden. Although there are no fifteenth-century court rolls for Speenhamland, sub-tenancies are shown by entries such as 'Johannes Squire pro tenement\(^2\) in quo manet Willemus Smith'. The 'chief tenant' of one rental might be the sub-tenant of the next — this John Squire was leasing land from John Norreys in R.1454.

Freedom to alienate land also meant freedom to build up composite holdings, and this tendency was clearly at work during the fifteenth century. Here, as before, it is necessary to distinguish between the accumulation of small accretions of land, and the formation of much larger units.

By far the richest man in Speenhamland in the late

\(^1\) Pollock & Maitland: Hist. of Eng. Law, vol. I p. 645: 'Sometimes the free power of alienating his tenement is conceded to every burgess, sometimes it is distinctly said that he may make a will or make an heir; but in general the power, very commonly assumed, of bequeathing burgess tenements 'like chattels' seems to have been ascribed to custom rather than to express grant.'
fourteenth century was William Wode. Wode was not just a villager; he held land in neighbouring villages and sub-manors elsewhere in Berkshire. He was never a knight, but we should class him as a landowner of the knightly class. The Speenhamland rental of 1376 is endorsed with a rental of 'certain of the Wode lands and tenements in Newbury, Speenhamland and Spene and from whom they are held.' Wode's land was a small lay estate and he would not be included in a discussion of peasant holdings were it not for the fact that he was clearly involved with the local peasantry. A list of his holdings there will show how active he had been in the local land-market and how, through subletting, he had become the effective landlord of many Speenhamland peasants. (The names of Speenhamland tenants¹ are underlined.):

From the Earl of Pembroke William Wode holds by charter:

- a chief tenement in which he lives, with cottages on each side and a garden.

- A tenement once John Falley's.

- A parcel of land ... recently acquired from William Miles.

- A shop acquired from Katherine Abberbury, sublet to John Smith.

¹ i.e. those which appear on Speenhamland rentals.
- A tenement which John Colnette held, sublet to John Smith.
- A butcher's stall, sublet to Robert Bocher.
- A tenement called Campodonne, sublet to John Dyer.
- A tenement called Deconnes, sublet to John Champs.
- A tenement called Marchant, sublet to Edward Townesend.
- A tenement called Poppardes, sublet to Edward Townesend.
- A tenement called Leycestor.
- Various lands and tenements which he acquired from William Brykenyle and which were recently Wodehay's and Cotes' two messuages with a garden, croft, and 25 acres.
- Land over Bolter's.
- 1 croft called Colpeper's.
- 1 meadow which he acquired from Roger Lovekyn, sublet to John Clerk, later to Thomas Knyght.
- 6 acres sublet to John Pole.
- 1 meadow.

From the Prior of St. Bartholomew:
- 13 acres of land in Speenhamland.

Wode, with his 8 subtenants and over 20 acquisitions of land, must have made his presence felt in the village as a landowner much more immediately than did the distant Despencers who were the lords of the manor.

A similar, though smaller, accumulation of land was the holding of the Abberbury family in 1428, as far as we
can tell from the rent paid for it\(^1\) (R.1428 does not give sizes of holdings). Katherine Abberbury, the 1428 tenant, was also holding 3 burgages in Newbury in 1436. By 1453 the family holding had been split up between nine different tenants and it is possible to see from the descriptions then given that it had consisted basically of 4 burgages, 3 meadows and an unspecified amount of arable. The Abberbury estate, like Wode's, was, however, much bigger than this purely local evidence suggests.\(^2\)

But, powerful as both these families were, neither appears to have included in the late fourteenth and early fifteenth century, a landowner of any consequence in Speenhamland after about 1450.

The third important family there in the fifteenth century were the Benets, and here again we are faced with a large holding which was not simply that of a thriving peasant, although it includes much peasant land. The Benets were not 'outsiders' in the sense that Wode and the

---

1. Katherine Abberbury paid 12/10. Only three other tenants paid rents of over 5/-.
2. I.P.M.
Abberbury's were; they were Newbury men and one at least was a fuller there. They do not appear to have had any land in Speenhamland much before 1428 when two members of the family held large composite holdings there. Two Benets still held in 1453 but their holding had diminished by R.1458 and the sixteenth-century Benet had only 'a tenement, ... his mede...' and 'his lands in the field.' It seems probable that the Benet fortune, such as it was, was based on the fifteenth-century borough rather than the fourteenth-century village.

Again, John Norreys, who had a considerable amount of land, much of it sublet, during the 1450's, and whose descendant, Sir John Norreys, was one of the largest landowners of 1546, was clearly no peasant.

There are, in fact, only two Speenhamland families which look like those of 'thriving peasants'.

The Squyers in R.1428 (3 tenements, 3 cottages), who do not recur in R.1453.

- The Botelers who held 4 burgages, gardens, and meadow land in 1453, 5 tenements, a croft and a 'place' (placeam) in 1458. Neither of these families appears to have been holding land in the village in the sixteenth century, and by that time very few fifteenth century names are found

1. The name does not appear in R.1376 or any fourteenth century lay subsidy returns for Speenhamland.
in the Speenhamland rentals; their place having been taken by a host of new tenants, many of whom may have been, like 'Richard Herd of London', absentee landowners or 'outsiders'.

In general, Speenhamland shows a very different development to that of a purely agrarian manor. It was not a self-centred community producing a peasant aristocracy from its own ranks, but essentially a suburb, closely involved with the nearby borough, and dominated not by local yeomen but by local gentry and burgesses. These, rather than the peasantry, took advantage of the freer land market which burgage tenure made possible.
EASTROP (now Eastrop-in-Highworth) lay just outside the Wiltshire borough of Highworth and provides another example of a village closely connected with a town economy. Its population, however, differed in some important respects from that of Speenhamland. First, although Eastrop and Highworth fields were adjacent, and many tenants held land in both, Eastrop was a separate manor with a separate court. Although many of its tenants may have had property or interests in the town, they are nowhere described as burgesses. Second, the Highworth region is and was totally different to the Kennet valley. Highworth was near the two important sheep farming regions of the Lambourne Downs and the Wiltshire Downs, not far south of the wool centre of Cricklade. Prosperity in this region depended on the wool market and the important local figures, as we shall see, were butchers and graziers, rather than weavers, fullers, or merchants. The impact these people made on the economy of villages like Eastrop was considerable (see below).

Internal changes in social structure are hard to estimate as we have only one Eastrop rental - for 1473.

1. Proceedings against offenders under the Statutes of Labourers show that high wages were being paid in the towns of this area and suggest that the Black Death had resulted in a shortage of labour and possibly a drift of population to the towns. 'Offenders against the Statutes of Labourers in Wiltshire'. Thompson J.A. Wilts. Arch. & Nat. Hist. Soc. Magazine 33.

2. S.C.11 Roll 704.
A further difficulty stems from the fact that the majority of Eastrop tenants were freeholders (26/38) and bore no obligation to transfer their land through the machinery of the manorial court. Nevertheless, incoming freehold tenants were liable to payment of relief, which was recorded, and freeholders charters were often enrolled on the manorial court rolls; so that it is possible to trace many, if not all, of the transfers of free land.

The Lay subsidy returns for Eastrop of 1332\(^1\) gives us some idea of turnover, although, of course, the number of taxpayers bears unknown relation to the number of tenants. There were 26 taxpayers in 1334\(^2\). 15 of these surnames appear in the early fifteenth-century court rolls, which start in 1422, three continued to be mentioned up to the 1450's, three recur in a rental of 1475\(^2\).

Only for 1473 do we have even a rough guide to the number of tenants, and then the information about the size of freeholders is very thin. Briefly, R.1473 gives the names of 38 tenants; 12 customary and 26 free. Of the customary tenants: 5 were smallholders, 4 had tenements of 2 virgates, 2 had substantial farms (the size of the remaining tenement is not given.) The freeholds are not

described, and their rents, being nominal, are no clue to their size, but several of them seem to have been smaller than half a virgate, three were probably virgates, 1 consisted of a messuage, 2 cottages, and 3 virgates. Several, of course, may have been fragments of the much larger estates of absentee lords although there are no Inquisitions Post Mortem relating to tenants.

By far the most important holdings in the village were undoubtedly the farms 'Hungerfordscourt' and 'Mandevilles', both held by customary tenants in 1473 although they were far from being villein tenements in origin. Their rents were far higher than those of any other holding and occasional descriptions of their land shows that they were substantial yeomen properties.

'Mandevilles' was probably in origin the manorial demesne and manor-house of the family who held Eastrop before its acquisition by Edington Priory. In the early sixteenth century, and probably in the fifteenth also, it consisted of the 'chief messuage' with 3 virgates, 6 acres of meadow and 3 enclosed pastures called 'Courtescloses'. 'Hungerfor's' (possibly once land of the Lords of Hungerford) in 9 HVII had 7 virgates, 14 acres of meadow, a close with

1. 'Hungerfordscourt' £3.6.8. 'Mandevilles' £2.10.0, compare 18/- or 19/- for customary 2-virgate tenements.
a sheep house and pasture for 22 cattle, 22 horses and 210 sheep.

There was a third holding of comparable size but of different character and origins. It was described in a charter which was produced in court in 1426.¹ It was evidently the result of the piecemeal accumulation of land by a small freeholder - 12 different parcels of odd acres, half-virgates, messuages and crofts - collected during his lifetime and thenceforward conveyed by charter and inheritance as one tenement.

Apart from the description of these three larger holdings, there is only slight evidence of the accumulation of property. In some cases a particular holding would be acquired mainly because of the market rights attached to it², for in general tenements which included lands in Highworth or stalls in Highworth market were much more highly rented than purely agrarian ones.

But in general, it seems that the greatest value of all was attached to the possession of grazing land and rights. The really important people in Eastrop were not those with the most land, but those with the most sheep.

¹. SC.2 208/53 October 5 HVI
². As for instance, William Ketom's copyhold, described in 1439 as 'courtillage', dovecot, 2 stalls in the market with 40 acres arable and meadow.' Ketom had fairly extensive buildings also: 'grange, stable, hall with rooms and a kitchen.'
and these, by the end of the fifteenth century, had come
to dominate the economy of the village.¹

¹ See Chapter VI.
This manor, lying in the south-eastern, woodland part of the county, was from the mid-twelfth century until 1585 in the hands of the locally powerful family of Englefield. The Englefields traditionally had a keen eye for their rents and profits, with the result that there is a large collection of rentals and rent-rolls for the manor. These make it possible to measure the manorial population and turnover of surnames much more thoroughly than can be done in the case of most of the manors discussed here.

The fourteenth and fifteenth-century rentals show a very slight population increase between 1331 and 1349, followed by a fall throughout the rest of the period:

**Recorded manorial population:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Population</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1331</td>
<td>69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1348 or 49</td>
<td>71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1349</td>
<td>67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1402</td>
<td>53 to 55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1441</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1474</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1496</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. S.C.11 Roll 57 m.5
2. "" m.6
3. "" m.7
4. " Roll 58
5. " 12 " 59
6. " 12 5/32
7. " 12 5/33
The steepest decline, on these figures, was between 1441 and 1474. However, the appearance of a very large number of new surnames in the rentals of 1348 and 1349 suggest that there may have been a large loss during the plague, which was quickly made good, and concealed, by an influx of new tenants.

A comparison of the surnames in each rental, gives the following information about turnover in this village: of 47 surnames listed in R.1331, 23 recurred in R.1349. By that date 39 new surnames had appeared, all but three of which had done so just before 1349 or earlier in the same year.\(^1\) This represents a turnover of 51% in 18 years.

Between R.1349 and R.1402

14 names recurred
20 new names appeared, 17 of which were probably post 1374.\(^2\)

Turnover 79% in 53 years.

Between R.1402 and R.1441

13 names recurred
16 new names appeared

Turnover 62% in 39 years.

1. i.e. they do not appear in R.1348

2. i.e. they do not appear in an (incomplete) rental of that year.
Between R. 1441 and R. 1474:
6 names recurred
18 new names appeared.

Turnover 79% in 33 years.

Between R. 1474 and R. 1496:
11 names recurred
13-18 new names appeared.

Turnover: 55% in 22 years.

In spite of this high turnover there were a few peasant families who evidently withstood whatever forces were making for instability: in R. 1402 there were three tenants whose forebears had held land in R. 1331, and a descendant of one of those is found in R. 1496. But the general picture is one of considerable instability, particularly after the plague crisis and between 1441 and 1474. In this last period, new tenants outnumbered old by three to one, and the active land market which this reflects, together with the fact of a falling population provided the opportunity for the accumulation of land by the few. Large composite holdings were probably rare before this time; but the 1474 rental has careful marginal notes, giving the names of subsequent tenants, and from these it

1. Not including 1 group of unnamed heirs.
2. Not including unnamed heirs.
3. The only large composite holdings in 1331 were two of 3 virgates, held by knight service; the largest in 1401 consisted only of 2 tenements.
   No information for 1402.
is clear that many peasant holdings had been engrossed by a few powerful villagers. In particular, one Tovy, as the corrections in the Rentals show, had taken over much of his neighbours' land.

**Tovy holding after 1474**

**Corrected to**

**Original entry**

De heredibus Willelmi Moyller

De "Thoma" Parker pro messuagis et terris liberis eodem

De Johanne Englefield
SOTWELL STONOR

The material relating to this and to the following manor is very thin, but it does give some indication that the tendencies at work on the Downland and woodland region were also found in the rich arable country of the Vales of the White Horse.

Three rentals for Sotwell Stonor show that between 1361 and 1425 the recorded manorial population dropped by 50% from 34 to 17 tenants, and had probably dropped still further by the beginning of the sixteenth century.

The earlier two rentals do not give the size of tenements, but it is clear that by 1509 the village land was very unevenly divided: five composite holdings were outstanding, built up of half-virgates, crofts, closes, and cottage holdings formerly in the possession of 5 or 6 peasant families. Eight tenants also had composite holdings but these only amounted to a cottage with an appartment close or a very small acreage of arable.

1. S.C.11 Roll 4; R's for 1361 and 1425.
2. R.1509 is for Sotwell Stonor and the neighbouring manor of Sotwell St. John combined.
3. P.T.O.
3. Composite holdings at Sotwell Stonor. 1509

Agnes Pope, widow, held at will:

- 3 messuages and 3 half-virgates called 'Lanes', 'Prunkes' and 'Slades'.
- Messuage, 2 virgates, 3 buttes called 'Burstodes'.
- Close called 'Shekers'.

Ambrose Pope held at will:

- Messuage and half-virgate called 'Popes'.
- Messuage and 11 acres called 'Sadlers'.
- Messuage and 8 acres called 'Bords'.
- Messuage and 1/4-acre meadow.
- Messuage and 10 acres called 'Lymmes'.
- Messuage and half-virgate called 'Stephyns'.

Robert Bord held at will:

- Messuage and half-virgate lately held at Benewell.
- Messuage and half-virgate, called 'Steves'.
- Cottage and 1 acre.
- Cottage and 2 acres.
- 1 enclosed pasture called 'The Shekey'.
- 9 buttes.
- 2 virgates lately held by Stephyns.

William Wyke:

- 2 messuages, 2 half-virgates called 'Buttlers'.
- 1 virgate
- 6 buttes.

William Wyke at will:

- cottage called 'Coldharborowe'.

Isabel Martin, widow: 2 messuages, 2 half-virgates called 'Douglas' and 'Foresters'.

- 30 acres anciently (called) 'Penyes'.
Between these two extremes there stood only two tenants who could fairly be described as neither cottagers nor yeomen; one with a half-virgate; one with two virgates.
There are two late medieval rentals relating to South Moreton, one of 1451 and one of the early sixteenth century. But the lay subsidy assessment of 1332 and 20 court-rolls of T Edward III - T Henry VI give some idea of late fourteenth and fifteenth century developments. Particularly useful are the lists of 'recognizances' incorporated in the court-rolls of 1361-2 and 1368. Although these are very far from being complete lists of tenants they can help us in establishing in some cases how long a peasant family held its land.

The 1451 rental names about 24-26 tenants (some names are illegible) of whom:

- 8 were virgators
- 3 were half-virgators
- 4-6 were cottagers

There were two larger holdings of 1½ and 2 virgates and one, of unspecified size, held by the Firmarius.

By the early sixteenth century the recorded manorial population had dropped to 17, comprising

- 5 virgates
- 3 cottagers
- 5 tenants holding composite tenements of over 1 virgate
- 4 tenants with tenements of unspecified size.

Apart from giving an impression of a slight fall in population and a tendency towards composite holdings during the fifteenth century, this information provides an inadequate picture of social change. The court rolls, however, tell us something about the 29 South Moreton villagers who were assessed for tax in 1332, and about the origins of the tenants of 1451 and the early sixteenth century.

Of the tax-payers who also appeared in the court rolls, two were local gentry rather than peasants: Henry Hasy, lord of the sub-manor of Ruses, and De Yonge, whose descendant was lord of the same sub-manor in 1375. Several families seem to have disappeared as landholders during the late fourteenth century,

The SWIFTs between 1399 and 1451
The PODELIS by the 1380's
The SCARLETS in the 1360's
The SANGUINE family, although it is mentioned in court rolls up to 1436, appears not to have been thriving in Moreton: one member of the family left in 1381, one in 1430, one in (or before) 1436.

The RANDOLPH and BROWNING families (discussed below, Ch. IV. pp.) were the only two that were evidently thriving during the fourteenth century, but only the

BROWNYNGS still held land in R.1451.

A search for the origins of the tenants of 1451 confirms this impression that the late fourteenth century was in some way a difficult time for many Moreton villagers; only three of the 19 surnames of R.1451 appear in the late fourteenth century court-rolls.

A similar impression of instability is given by the high turnover between this rental and that of the early sixteenth century; only four surnames from the former recur in the latter. Clearly, the fifteenth century at South Moreton was a time of opportunity for 'new men'. 
COLESHELL

Five Rentals, of 1348\(^1\), circa 1379\(^2\), 1394–5\(^3\), 1424\(^4\), and a survey of 1520\(^6\), although varying in scope and reliability, give a rough guide to the population of Coleshill during the later middle ages and show changes in its social structure.

The Rental of 1348 is partly illegible and probably incomplete, but that of c.1379 is minutely annotated and corrected. Changes of tenure were noted and the new tenant's name written in above the old. It may have been because these alterations had become too extensive that the next rental, of 1394–5 was drawn up, for this 'Examination of Rents' incorporates all the corrections and additions made to R.1379 (and was itself later copiously annotated.) It is clear that we are concerned here with a seigneurial administration capable of keeping a close watch on land transfers, and that these two documents, at least, accurately report the contemporary tenurial situation.

In 1379 there was a recorded manorial population of 51 tenants, divided as follows:

| 6. | L.R.2. 187 |
16 tenants holding more than 1 virgate
15 virgators
10 half-virgators
10 cottagers

Thus, about a third of the unfree tenants were fairly substantial peasants by the standards of the village and nearly all were 'sufficiently provided with land'. Coleshill, on this showing, was a prosperous village community. But another entry in the rental modifies this impression: 14 cottages were 'in the lord's land, almost derelict' and three valuable parcels of meadow, generally leased, lacked tenants. Fourteen empty cottages incontrovertably point to a diminished population, but the fact that they were no more than cottages shows that it was not the ranks of the more important tenants that had suffered. On the contrary, half the tenants with a basic holding of a half-virgate or more had accumulated small additional parcels of land. For instance, Nicholas Neel holds:

A messuage and virgate formerly
John at Mulle's.
A messuage and virgate formerly
John Stormy's.
8 acres of arable and 4 acres of meadow
formerly Nicholas at Wyke's.

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1. Kosminsky; Studies in Agrarian History of England, This describes peasants with at least of half a virgate (Kosminsky takes the average virgate to be 30 acres. At Coleshill it was between 22 and 25 acres.)
Richard Tokkenham, similarly, has added three tofts which formerly belonged to John Hardy, John Caull, and John Clive, to his original half-virgate.

Not only small holdings have been accumulated in this way. Nearly every entry on the Rental reads 'At A.B. pro (size of holding) quondam C.D.' or 'nuper C.D.' In by far the majority of cases the surname of this 'quondam' owner is different from that of the 1379 tenant. In fact, only in four cases is it obvious that the holding concerned was in the hands of the same family during the previous tenancy. But there is a difficulty of interpretation here. Do 'quondam' and 'nuper' mean something different? And, if so, how should we translate them? Some help is provided by the terminology of the Coleshill court-rolls, which seem to use 'quondam' to mean 'former' in a general sense, and 'nuper' to mean 'immediately previous'. But we cannot assume that such a usage was consistent, or that it was necessarily employed by the compiler of the rental. He obviously considered that there was a distinction worth making between the two words, and it is important for our own purposes to know whether an entry 'de J.C. pro uno messuagio et una messuago et una virgata quondam Juliane at Yate' is evidence of a recent land transfer from at Yate to J.C., or whether 'quondam Juliane at Yate' is merely a description that had

---See-Table.
become customary generations ago and had remained attached to this particular holding through the years despite many changes of tenancy.

Following the use of the court rolls, then, we shall take 'A.B. holds land *quondam* C.D.'s' to mean that C.D. held the land once and may have been its most recent tenant, and 'A.B. holds land *nuper* C.D.'s' to mean that C.D. was almost certainly the most recent tenant.

On this interpretation, the names of the 'quondam' and 'nuper' tenants, and the distribution of these phrases, are revealing. Only four holdings were held by the same family during the previous tenancy. As we shall see, this impression that inheritance had been greatly undermined is borne out by the evidence of the court rolls (see Chapter IV.) The source of peasant land is also interesting; although six small parcels had been acquired from the demesne, no larger holding had been created in this way. It appears that the balance between tenant and demesne land had not yet been seriously altered. Thirdly, there is a distinct trend reflected in the way that the previous tenants are described; nearly all the half-virgates are described as 'nuper A.B.' rather than 'quondam A.B.' while exactly the reverse is true of larger holdings. It seems that the large-scale had taken place earlier than the small scale changes of tenancy.
These are limited conclusions when compared with the detailed picture of land-transactions provided by the court rolls. (See Chapter V.) But the earliest surviving Coleshill roll dates only from 1377 and such evidence, although vivid and detailed, is only in a very limited sense retrospective. The 1379 Rental does at least give an indication of what had been happening in the village earlier in the fourteenth century. The predominant feature was an active peasant land market and conditions which had provided the opportunity for 16 peasant families to build up and maintain holdings of between 25 and nearly 100 acres, and which had also made possible much accumulation of small parcels of land, chiefly by the virgator class.

By the time of the next Rental, of 1394-5, the total number of tenants had fallen very slightly, from 51 to 44; the number of tenants with more than one virgate remained the same (and was therefore a larger proportion of the whole); the number of virgates had fallen by 3; of half-virgates by 5; of smallholders by 1.

But this apparent stability needs to be contrasted with two other facts: the large turnover of surnames between the two rentals and the exceptional number of land transfers which took place on this manor during the 1390's (see above).
29 surnames found in R.1379 are missing from R.1394-5, and 15 new names have gone some way to replace them. This represents a turnover of 64% in only 15 years. But although a very large number of land transfers must have taken place during those 15 years and although, as we shall see, this was a time of decline or extinction for many peasant families, the overall recorded manorial population was not substantially affected. It seems that there was still sufficient demand for land to fill vacant holdings and to prevent their accumulation *in the lord's land.* (The account rolls confirm this: the lord was only losing a small fraction of his expected rent income at this time through his inability to find tenants).

By 1424 the situation had changed drastically. The recorded manorial population had dropped from 44 to 18. Land worth £1.13.10 was *in the lord's land* through lack of tenants and was being leased out piecemeal, and 3½ virgates (about 80 acres) of what had once been tenant land had been permanently taken into the demesne. The demesne was at farm, and all the tenants' labour services had been commuted. There had been a great deal of small-scale enclosure: altogether 22 'closes', generally named after their tenants, are specified. Clearly, the village changed more dramatically during these 29 years than at any other period covered by our documents.
The Rental of 1473 does not describe holdings in detail, nor does it consistently give the names of previous tenants. It indicates a slight recovery of population (from 18 tenants in R.1424 to 22 tenants in R.1473). As well as the demesne arable, farmed since before 1424, the manor-house, parsonage, and some valuable grazing land were now also out at farm. The administration seems to have adopted a new attitude towards rents by this time; holdings in this rental are no longer described in terms of virgates, or fractions of a virgate, and their rents are no longer based on the customary payment of 10/10 for a virgate (together with its commuted services) which appears as the standard rent in all the previous rentals. Rents were now much more variegated, and if we could discover the size of these 1473 tenements, we should probably find that they were rented at so much an acre.\(^2\)

The survey of 1520 is divided into two parts. The first, headed 'Free Tenants' is concerned with the sub-manor of Lynt (in Inglesham, just north of Coleshill. Lynt tenants are not included in this discussion.) There follow, under 'Custumary Tenants' the names of 23 tenants - again a slight recovery in the recorded manorial population - 5 or 6\(^1\) of whom held more than one virgate, 7 or 8\(^1\) virgators, five

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1. 1 name is illegible.
2. See Table 2.
half-virgators and four smallholders (including the vicar.)

Thus, nearly all the tenants were 'sufficiently provided with land' and almost a quarter were fairly substantial landholders. One of the virgators was also the firmarius, a descendant of the firmarius of 1474.¹

One of the most striking aspects of these rentals, apart from the severe drop in population that they indicate, is the very large turnover of surnames, and by inference, of tenants. A turnover of:

- 64% in the 16 years between 1379 and 1395
- 86% " 29 " 1395 and 1424
- 78% " 49 " 1424 and 1473
- over 50% " 47 " 1473 and 1520

suggests a high degree of instability. Nevertheless, in spite of this instability, and in spite of the population drop, the social structure of the village does not, on the face of it, seem to have changed very radically. The 'upper class' of villagers with more than one virgate formed much the same proportion of the whole recorded manorial population at the end of our period as at the beginning, and similarly, the proportion of recorded smallholders did not change very much. The resolution of this apparent contradiction can only be found in a detailed examination of the histories of the individual peasant families among whom these changes were taking place. (see below Chapter V.)

¹ See KYPPYNG.
These nine villages vary in size, ownership, and location. The evidence relating to them varies in scope, reliability, and date. Nevertheless, there were common tendencies at work in all of them, which can briefly be outlined as follows:

1. A fall in the recorded manorial population.

2. A high degree of turnover among tenants.

3. The increasing polarisation of village society with the growth of large composite holdings and the sharp decrease in the numbers of the 'middling' peasantry, notably the half-virgators.

4. The instability of peasant land-tenure.

So far we have only considered changes in village society in outline, as they reveal themselves in rentals, surveys, customals, and lay subsidy returns. But all four developments relate to the central theme of the peasant and his holding. They can only properly be understood in the light of detailed studies of peasant families and, in particular, in certain important changes that took place in the working and effects of the peasant market in land.
I. THE THEORY AND PRACTICE OF VILLEIN LAND-TRANSFERS

Two of the elements in villeinage which most mattered to the villein himself were the security of his tenure during his lifetime, and his right to pass on his land to his heir. 'In theory, a villager, if he was also a villein, held his tenement at the will of the lord. His lord could oust him at any time at pleasure. In practice, nothing of this sort happened. If the villein rendered his customary services and paid his customary rents, he was secure in his tenure. When he died, he was succeeded in possession of the holding by the person who was his heir according to the custom of the manor ... In this course the holding descended from generation to generation in a family line'.

Thus, at a time when 'the lawyers were saying that the serf could have no heir but his lord', manorial custom not only accepted the principle of heritability among villeins but evolved strong and precise rules governing the descent of tenements within the family. Homans was concerned with the situation as it stood in the thirteenth century, but even in

the later middle ages, when the institution of customary villein inheritance had been severely undermined, there was clearly preserved in the communal memory of villagers a strong sense of the concept of the 'right heir' and of the rights on a man's land owed to the next-of-kin. The very longevity of these concepts in an age when they no longer reflected current practice testifies to their earlier strength and the important place that they held in men's minds. But the expectations of the villein's heir rested on the assumption that his patrimony would descend intact, and that the tenant had no right to diminish it or grant it away. If we may properly speak of a main principle governing the organization of families in the champion country of England, this principle was that an established holding of land ought to descend intact in the blood of the men who had held it of old ... There was a strong sentiment against what was called 'alienation'. This sentiment gained much of its strength from the fact that it was shared by lord and villein alike. The lord felt it because the fragmentation or the diminution of villein holdings might prejudice the performance of the labour services based on them. The villein felt it in his capacity as an heir who would be deprived of his

1. See below CH. IV. Part II.
2. Romans: op. cit. p. 195
birthright if the family land fell into the hands of strangers. As Homans shows, both these interests expressed themselves in practical restrictions on alienation, by limiting the time during which land could be alienated, demanding that all alienations should be licenced and made through the manorial court, and by asserting - in a form of 'retrait lignager' - the superiority of the claim of the heir over any grantee's interest in the land.\(^1\)

How successful were these restrictions? Homans draws a parallel between the widely-held sentiment against alienation and the feeling that the king ought not to alienate parts of the royal demesne and thus endanger his capacity to "live of his own". But just as this feeling was felt particularly strongly precisely because the Crown was alienating land, so, too, the traditional rules about inheritance and about the inalienability of villein holdings might well have been endangered by a very different economic reality. (In general, manorial custom is often written down just when it was being infringed or called into question.) In fact, some of the earliest surviving court rolls show that this is just what was happening during the thirteenth century and there is no reason to doubt that the process had origins much earlier than the date of the earliest

\(^1\) Homans: op.cit. Chapter XIV. passim.
manorial evidence. It is only common sense to suppose that a certain amount of traffic in land was endemic in village society for that the principle stimuli to such traffic were such natural demographic factors as the size of the peasant family, and the age and capacity of the tenant. Large families in any age needed, and could cultivate, more land than small families. Ageing men, or widows without sons, lacked the labour power necessary to farm their holding and perform the services that the lord demanded. 'Families of various sizes might occupy villein holdings of equal size, and very varied and complicated groups might be found occupying villein virgates. There were often several generations living on the virgate ... Thus, behind a full land allocation might be concealed overcrowding of the land .... Behind the equality of the 'typical' villein holdings, in other words ... was concealed a very considerable stratification, leading to accumulation of resources in some households and extreme want in others'.

In Postan's phrase, there were 'natural sellers and buyers' on the Peterborough estates, and similar evidence

for an active small-scale peasant land market has long been known to exist. Miss Levett found in the Register of St. Albans, 'From 1240 onwards a stream of sales, leases, surrenders, enclosures, exchanges, transfers of all kinds ... it is noteworthy that the greater majority of them are concerned with small and irregular plots ... regular virgate holdings form a minority of the entries.'¹ Maitland noted 'a brisk traffic .... in small parcels of land'.² Kosminsky that 'from at least as early as the beginning of the reign of Edward I there are numerous cases of ... inter-peasant leasings, for short-terms (sic) and for money-rent' and quotes Petrushewsky who found that 'for the most part the leases concern very small plots.'³ Similarly the active peasant land market on the Peterborough estates during the thirteenth century, although Postan has not yet analysed it specifically in these terms, seems to have been chiefly composed of dealings in small parcels of land, although a few cases of virgate-transfers can be found.⁴ Tawney, although he in general tends to treat the

5. Tawney: op. cit. pp. 78-79
peasant land-market as a late-medieval phenomenon, observes that 'even before the end of the thirteenth century it is by no means unusual to find land changing hands pretty rapidly, both by transfer and by lease ... such examples of what might be called petty land speculation could be multiplied almost indefinitely'.

There is no doubt that this peasant land market was common in very many thirteenth-century villages and was probably as old as village society itself. But was it a solvent of village society? Did it profoundly affect the class structure? It seems that, until the fourteenth century at least, it was in too small a scale to do so. Although it may have had considerable effects on the relative wealth of different peasant families, and although it certainly must have meant that the picture of a rigidly stratified society given in our late thirteenth-century customals, concealed a much more irregular distribution of land, it did not undermine this stratified society completely. Postan, reviewing the effects of the very active land-market, reflected in the Peterborough villein charters, concluded that 'land transfers capable of achieving a permanent re-shuffle in the social structure

of the countryside were not the current and temporary adjustment to changing individual circumstances which I have treated as a permanent phenomenon of village life. Postan contrasted the two processes in these terms: 'if leases were the appropriate instrument for the latter, sales were an equally appropriate instrument for the former. But the difference between the two is not just the difference between permanent and temporary transfers, but a difference of scale; the late medieval land-market, with which we are concerned here, was on a far larger scale than that which Miss Levett found at St. Albans; Miss Page at Crowland, Maitland at Brightwaltham; Postan at Peterborough; for the thirteenth century. It was on a larger scale, both in the units of land and in the total bulk of land transferred, and in its effects.

2. The difference between sales and leases, and between inter-peasant sales and surrenders to the lord, is in any case not as easy to detect as Postan suggests. See below: pp. 83-85.
3 F.M. Page: The Estates of Crowland Abbey. Cambridge 1934. See also-
During the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries two changes in the economy of manorial lords profoundly affected the economy of their dependant peasantry; the commutation of labour-services, and the leasing of demesnes.

It is impossible to give a firm date for the final commutation of labour-services on all of the manors we are concerned with here. In many cases, our evidence consists solely of rentals or custumals, and court-rolls, which are not reliable from this point of view. Moreover, the commutation of services was a gradual process, and one which could be reversed. At Brightwaltham, for instance, the Black Death temporarily increased the ratio of hired to customary labour, but works were re-imposed from the 1350's. At Woolstone the effect of the plague was to effect many permanent conversions of tenure from labour to rent. At Coleshill, where the amount of demesne arable diminished by two-thirds between 1316 and 1421, labour services were finally commuted between 1385 and 1421; probably finally undermined by the leasing of the demesne.

But for the other manors we have very little information. Several fifteenth-century rentals list
services owed by tenants - as indeed some of the Coleshill documents do after 1421 - but there is no means of knowing what proportion of the services owed to the lord were ever performed. The fact that we cannot give a final date for its extinction does not alter the fact that in Berkshire, as elsewhere, the system was obsolescent from the mid-fourteenth century at least.
The process of demesne leasing is easier to date for, even where we lack the evidence of ministers' accounts, court-roll references to 'firmarii' give us a date by which it had begun. These firmarii may only have leased a part of the demesne, and, of course, incidental references to these do not often show at what point they first became lessees, although in one case, the court roll recorded the farmer's lease. It is certain that all or part of the manorial demesne at Coleshill was leased by 1422; at Woolstone by 1423; at Brightwaltham by 1409; at Eastrop by 1423; at South Moreton by 1452; at Sotwell Stonor by 1453; at Mackney by 1471; at Englefield by 1474.

(At Letcombe Regis the demesne was at farm to a group of peasants, possibly as representatives of the vill as a whole, in the thirteenth century, and of course it is quite possible that the fifteenth century farming of these manors was not an entirely new development, but merely a

1. Sotwell Stonor.
2. S.C.6 743/14 (Farmer's A/C.)
3. S.C.6 757/5 " "
5. S.C.2 208/53 21 Oct. 2 H.VI. " "
6. S.C.12 5/52
8. S.C.2 154/40 F. St. Andrew 49 H.VI. (ref. to Farmer)
9. S.C.2 154/23 M.18
10. S.C.2 153/35
resumption of a much earlier policy.) In general, our evidence confirms the conclusion reached by Miss Latham, that the bulk of the manorial demesne was farmed on the average Berkshire manor by about the mid-fifteenth century. (The question of what kind of men these 'firmarii' were, and of how big their commitments were, is an interesting one, and is discussed in more detail below.)

The commutation of labour services 'meant that one great force making for equality between the holdings of different tenants was removed.' The lord no longer had a vested interest in keeping villein tenements intact: the virgate was no longer the basis of assessment for labour-services, but for tent. Rents could easily be divided among tenants, added together as a charge on a single tenant, as the tenements themselves were added and divided. 'Rents' and 'tenants', not 'villeins' and 'works' were the properties which interested the lord now. The sources reflect this

1. Latham op. cit.
2. See Chapter VI. pp. 207-211
shift of emphasis, not only in their terminology, but in their character. Rentals become more common than customals, and their very layout changes, ranking tenants by the amount of their rent and often omitting all but the most summary description of their land.¹

If the lord was no longer interested in the integrity of tenements, even less so was the 'firmarius' when he came to take his place between the village community and the seigneurial authority. His role was not simply that of the economically most important villager: he had a certain non-economic authority of his own. At Woolstone, the farmer leased half the profits of the manorial court² and presumably attended it with an eye to these profits. At Coleshill the farmer customarily began as the lord's rent collector.³ At Brightwickham, in 1433, the farmer was engaged in leasing land to other tenants without the cognizance of the manorial court.⁴ At Eastrop his counterpart clearly had the ear of the lord's 'supervisor' and interceded with him to obtain special concessions for his

¹ Interestingly, these late medieval rentals are also inferior as documents; they had less permanent value, as tenements changed hands quickly, and were often very poorly written. Possibly, these seigneurial administrations concerned could no longer afford good scribes.

² Woolstone. Farmer's a/cs. passim.

³ See William KYPPING, junior.

⁴ S.C.2 153/73 June 11 H.VI.
Changes in the lord's policy led to changes in seigneurial attitudes. Not only did the lord no longer have an interest in keeping tenements intact and in restricting alienation; he now had a positive interest in regulating and profiting from such alienation. Our records do not enable us to say anything about seigneurial policy towards peasant land transfers during the thirteenth century. Postan considers that by the turn of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries lords were often successfully regulating the hitherto illegal small-scale traffic in land, evasion had become less frequent, transfers by surrender (i.e. in the manorial court) more common. The attitude of the manorial administration showed signs of stiffening. This is all the more true in the period we are concerned with. Not only was the seigneurial bias against alienation obsolescent, but in regulating alienation the lord found a valuable source of income open to him at a time when his other revenues were at best static, at worst diminishing. The lord made money every time a villein tenement changed hands; the outgoing tenant paid him a heriot, the incoming relatives.  

1. S.C.2 208/43 April 3 H.VI. Marriage of John Cubbell.  
2. Postan & Brooke. op.cit. Liii.  
4. Page. op. cit. "By the middle of the fourteenth century the heriot was regarded as a due paid on any transfer of customary land." See below for the mechanism of customary land transfers.
tenant an entry fine. An example from the Woolstone court rolls show how profitable land-transfers among his villeins could be to the lord: In 1332 Walter at Sherde surrendered a messuage and half-virgate to his son William. He paid a cow worth 10/- as heriot and William paid an entry fine of £1.0.0. Walter then provided himself with land, in the customary way, by marrying a rich widow; he paid £5.0.0. for licence to do so and for her land.\(^1\) In all, the lord made £6.10.0 on these transactions, with no outlay at all. Profits of this order could only be made at times when entry fines were high, and, as we shall see, entry fines over the whole of our period seldom reached the levels that obtained in early fourteenth-century Woolstone.\(^2\) Nevertheless, it is clear that the lord might have a considerable fiscal motive in regulating and licensing the peasant land market.

Tenants, too, came to have a certain incentive to transfer their land openly, in the manorial court. Transfgers made in court probably had a greater security than those made unofficially and illegally. When a lease was

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2. See below pp. 36–102
made between two tenants with the lord's licence, some of its terms, such as its duration, and any reservations made in favour of the grantor, were recorded in the court roll and could be referred to, in case of dispute, by either party.\(^1\) At Woolstone, tenants valued the written word quite highly and were prepared or compelled to pay fines for the privilege of having their leases enrolled. With the growth of copyhold the manorial court became increasingly a court of record.\(^2\)

The traditional machinery of surrender and admittance, by which customary holdings were transferred, and through which the lord had earlier been able to limit transfers or to keep a check on the descent of tenements, was easily adapted to the new situation in which he no longer wanted to regulate the transfer of customary land, but merely to participate profitably in it.

This is not to say that lords in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries were successful in demanding that all peasant transactions should go through the proper channels of the manorial court. The fines and heriots which represented his profits were precisely the reason for his tenants' 

\(^1\) (see 3 previous page).
\(^2\) See below CH. IV. PART II.
anxiety to escape the 'proper channels'. By the nature of the court-roll which only records licenced transfers, or illegal transfers that had been successfully detected, we cannot hope to discover how much land changed hands secretly. The fact that there are few presentments in our records for illegal land transactions can be interpreted in either of two contradictory senses; either that there was a great deal of illegal conveyancing, only a small part of which was detected, or that detection was so easy that very little escaped the notice of the seigneurial administration.

Two factors are relevant here: the nature of the seigneurial administration, and the level of entry fines. An absentee landlord, such as the Despencers, lords of Speenhamland, known only to his villagers through his rent-collector, would be unable to keep a close watch on illegal transactions among his tenants, especially, as is likely, he had put the demesne lands out at farm. In contrast, the resident lord of a small manor like South Moreton, or the resident bailiff or reeve strictly accountable to an ecclesiastical bureaucracy like that of St. Swithin's, or Edington Priory, would both have been closely involved with the life of the village. In short, they would have been in a good position to know if A. were ploughing acres which
should have been held by B. (A third situation was that in which there was no legal bar to inter-peasant trans-
actions - as among the many small freeholders of Eastrop\(^1\) -
which appear openly recorded in the rentals, although not in the court rolls.) In any of these situations it was probably harder to detect short-term leases than sales.

The second factor, the level of entry fines, is self-evident. At a time when entry fines were high, the incentive to avoid them by transferring land out of court would be equally high. When the customary entry fine was only, say, two capons, as it was at Coleshill for some 120 years\(^2\), a tenant might think the price well paid for the security which enrollment of the transaction would bring. As the evidence of the entry fines will show, peasants were prepared to pay very high prices for security of tenure during the later middle ages.

It may be helpful to give examples of the main types of villein land transfers. Although there is no rigid formula for these transactions, the wording is very similar in the court rolls of most of these manors. (Probably they are drawn from too small an area to permit regional variations). The principal element in all villein transactions was that of surrender and admission.\(^3\)

1. See below pp. 138.  
2. See below pp. 93.  
3. Homans. op.cit. p.129.
the outgoing tenant surrendered the holding to the lord, and the incoming tenant was admitted to the holding by the lord. A simple case of surrender and admission would run as follows:

Venit Walter Chunte .. et sursum reddidit in manu domini unum messuagium et unam dimidiam virgatam terre ... per cuitus redditionem accidit domino de Herietto ... et super hoc venit Willelmus Smyth et cepit de domino dicitum messuagium et terram tenendo sibi ... secundum consuetudinem manerii ... datè de fine ...

This formula made clear the lord's superior interest in the land, recorded the ending of one 'estate' and the beginning of another, and ensured that the lord profitted, through his receipt of heriot and entry fine.

'Feudal theory ... did not know of purchases and sales of land, but only of grants and surrenders.'

In fact, sales and purchases between villeins were common, as Homans noted, and they employed the legal fiction of the "surrender to use".

Rogerus Spemcer venit ... et sursum reddidit unum messuagium et unam virgatam terre ... ad opus Willelmi Jefferys ... Willelmus ... cepit ...

1. Homans. op. cit.
'The idea of one man being seised of land to the use (ad opus) of another was a familiar enough rota in the manorial sphere'.

These 'surrenders to use' between villeins have generally been assumed, firstly, to represent only sales, and, secondly, to be the only form which such sales could take. But it is quite possible that the same formula may have been used for inter-peasant leases for long terms; the only evidence is the formula itself, and that can bear either interpretation. It is equally possible that many inter-villein sales are concealed under the ordinary 'surrender and admission formula'. Tawney quotes a Duchy of Lancaster court roll in which a tenant, having taken a tenement, 'instanter', surrendered it to another, and deduced that he had bought, and was selling the land.

"'Instanter' is 'remarkable'", Tawney comments; but there are many cases in the court rolls of a new tenant taking up land as soon as it was surrendered; sometimes the court roll says that the new tenant 'statim venit' sometimes 'super hoc venit', sometimes 'tunc venit.'

2. Tawney. op. cit. p. 81
more often the surrender and admission are merely written down as one entry. But in any of these cases, can we be sure that what we are witnessing is merely a simple case of surrender and admission and not a concealed sale?

If A. surrenders his land just when B. needs it, and B. is on hand in court to take it, and the scribe records the transaction in one paragraph, is it not possible that B. has 'persuaded A' to make the surrender, that money has previously changed hands, that this is, in fact, a sale? If this is so, then the real number of direct inter-peasant transactions in our court rolls is far higher than a simple calculation of inter-peasant leases and direct 'surrenders to use' would lead us to suppose.

(Examples of inter-peasant leases, with the formula most commonly employed, are given below, in a discussion of the peasant land-market at Woolstone.)
II. THE DEMAND FOR CUSTOMARY LAND.

The relaxation of seigneurial pressures in favour of preserving a rigid tenemental structure would not by itself have led to important social change, although it would almost certainly have accelerated the growth of the small-scale land market which flourished in thirteenth-century conditions. A further important factor transformed the peasants' situation during the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries; the fall in population. Whether this fall was mainly the result of the plague of 1349 or whether, as the Nonae Rolls suggest, it was already felt earlier in the century (perhaps after the famine years of its second decade), it had far reaching effects on the village economy. More land was available from vacant holdings and, later, from those parts of the demesne which the lord no longer wished, or could afford, to cultivate himself. Sons no longer had to wait until their fathers' death or retirement for their patrimony when there were empty holdings.

1. 'For the study of the English peasantry in the late Middle Ages, the fourteenth century is extremely important, since it was in that century that the two best things to have happened to the peasantry as a whole took place. The first half saw the great families of 1315-17, and the second half was overshadowed by the great plague of 1349 and its recurrences.'

lord's hand', or unwanted demesne acres, available for rent. Compare the position, for example, of William the sprot of Woolstone, who had to pay £3. 6. 8. entry fine to succeed to his father's land in 1308\(^1\), with the position of Woolstone tenants a century later, who could obtain tenements three times the size of Sprot's for about a fifteenth of the price.\(^2\) Again, compare the position of Richard Causwell of Coleshill, who paid £6.13.4. for a tenement (and possibly a wife) in 1316\(^3\), with that of John Basset, who took up exactly the same holding in 1386 and paid no entry fine at all.\(^4\)

Dr. Titow has made an interesting comparison between 'colonizing' and 'non-colonizing' manors in the thirteenth century. He found that on the first, where plenty of land was available to peasants, there were very few marriages with widows and apparently next to no cases of widows remarrying more than once ....\(^5\), in comparison with the latter, where land was in short supply, and marriage with widows was common. Much the same phenomenon is found in our records if we contrast not two kinds of manors, but

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1. S.C.6 756/3
2. See Table I.
5. Titow. op.cit.
the early part of our period with the later part. Compare

the entry fine of £5.0.0. that marriage with a wealthy

Widow

Woolstone was felt to be worth in 1332, \(^1\) with the almost

complete absence of marriage with widows found there a

hundred years later, when there were cheaper and more

attractive ways of acquiring land.

These fines which the lord demanded 'pro ingressa''

habendo' from every tenant (except, in most cases, a widow)

newly taking up a villein tenement, are a good, although

not infallible, guide to the demand for, and supply of,

customary land. Regulated only by custom\(^2\), they were much

less conventionalised than rents and, over a period of

time, reflect the best price that the lord could get for

a holding. They have two chief deficiencies as evidence

for our purpose. They have only a tenuous connection with

the real, agricultural value of land (although the differ-

ences in fines charged for holdings of apparently the same

size show that this was, to some extent, taken into account.)

\(^1\) S.C. 2 154/77. Hocktide court 1332.

\(^2\) Entry fines later became fixed, often at some multiple

of a year's rent for the holding, but the extent to

which they fluctuated during the fourteenth and fifteenth

century suggests that this was not yet the custom. Miss

Latham considers that they were fixed at this time only

by the 'lord's ability to demand and the tenant's

ability to pay.' Latham. op. cit.
Secondly, they tend to exaggerate even the 'conventional' value of land in that the lord was anxious to recoup through entry fines the losses that he was liable to make through the 'ceiling' of artificial stability which custom imposed on his rents.¹

Our supply of information about entry-fines is necessarily scattered, both geographically and chronologically (although such information has the advantage that it can be found both in court rolls and in ministers' accounts).

The information about entry fines which is provided by two good series of court rolls: for Woolstone from 1308 to 1417, and for Coleshill from 1379 to 1496, give us some indication of the demand for customary land on these manors in the first and second halves of our period respectively. Entry-fine figures from Hackney, South Moreton and Sotwell Stonor together provide supplementary information covering the whole period, while isolated examples from Letcombe Regis indicate a little about the earlier situation.

This material has obvious deficiencies as evidence beyond those general limitations indicated above. The first is the difference in the size of tenements conveyed. Quite often this is not given, and even when it is given

¹. See Tawney, op. cit. pp. 304-308, and Table 2.
the difference in the size of the virgate from manor to manor often makes it impossible to calculate the acreage involved. This difficulty can be avoided, however, if we avoid comparisons between one manor and another and compare only the level of fines on the same manor at different periods.

A more serious difficulty is presented by the question of whether these fines relate to all the land available to the peasantry, or to only a part of it. The availability of land from other sources, from assart or from the demesne, would slacken the pressure on the customary land to which, in general, these figures relate. It is almost certain, however, that very little, if any, colonizing was being carried on at either Coleshill or Woolstone during the period we are concerned with, and it is on the Coleshill and Woolstone figures that the heaviest reliance is placed. For these manors, too, there are enough ministers' accounts available to give a clear idea of the amount of land which tenants could obtain on lease from the second source; the demesne. For the other manors these entry fine figures can be accepted only with the reservation that

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1. The only reference to colonising in the Coleshill records is from a very early account, of 1316.
S.C. 6. 743/4
A permanent addition of one virgate to the available customary land was made in 1367 S.C. 743/6
they show only the state of supply and demand in available tenant land, and that they may thus minimise the demand for land as a whole.

Woolstone:

Reference has already been made to the steep drop in entry fines at Woolstone between the early fourteenth century and the early fifteenth century. We can date this decline fairly precisely. The Black Death evidently had as severe short-term effects on entry fines as it did on other aspects of the economy of this manor. By far the majority of fines between 1308 and 1348 were over 13/4. Between 1348 and 1390 only four fines reached this level, two of which were marriage fines and entry fines combined. From the 1390's entry fines rose again, although never to their earlier peak of over £6.0.0. The high fines that were paid at Woolstone at the turn of the century were for holdings that were much larger than those granted earlier; for composite holdings of up to one and a half virgates granted together. Many of these composite holdings also included a 'toft' of unspecified size, which may have greatly increased their value. The concessions (discussed below pp.104/6) which the lord was forced to make in order to fill vacant holdings immediately after the Black Death.

1 See Table I.
the many small demesne leases during the fifteenth century,
the fact that not many tenements remained 'in the lord's hand'
for long, suggest that although the pressure on customary
land may have slackened during this period there were still
plenty of tenants at Woolstone who were willing and able to
take up additions to their holdings if 'the price was right.'

**Brightwaltham**

Entry fines at Brightwaltham were highest in the period
1281-1349. Immediately after the Black Death, when vacant
tenements were probably split up and let piecemeal, fines
temporarily dropped. Fines tended to rise again from 1367,
with isolated high fines of £2 or £3. (One of these high
fines, however, was paid for a composite holding.) The
trend in the entry fines figures is by no means clear, how-
ever, and the position is probably best expressed as
follows:

Between 1281 and 1351, the average fine for a complete
holding was 23/-.
Between 1351 and 1407 the average fine
was 16/-. This suggests that pressure on available land
slackened off after the Black Death; an impression
confirmed by the evidence of peasant land transactions
(see below.)

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1. See below pp. 110.
2. See Table I.
3. See Table I.
Coleshill

Coleshill from 1377 to 1496 was virtually a 'buyer's market.' Entry fines, with perhaps three exceptions, remained at a level which varied between the nominal render of two capons (or 6d) and, at the most 10/-.. Moreover, in nineteen years holdings changed hands with no entry fine being paid at all. In three cases this concession was made because the new tenant was the widow of the former tenant, in two cases because the tenement concerned did not include a messuage, in many cases because the tenant undertook to repair the holding. But equally often the concession was made without any explanation, and we can only assume that in these cases the lord was in no position to demand an entry fine, or that the incoming tenant was in a strong enough position to refuse payment.

This had not always been the case. Although the Coleshillcourt rolls only survive from 1377, a reeve's account of 1316 shows that the level of fines at the beginning

1. See Table. I.
2. Heriot at Coleshill was paid on the messuage. This rule appears to have applied to entry fines as well.
of the century was probably very much higher. The reeve in that year accounted for £6.13.4. 'de fine Ricard i Carswell,' a higher fine than was paid at any other time during the period.

The record of land 'in the lord's hand' shows that Coleshill was severely depopulated between 1379 and the mid-fifteenth century, and that the fall was particularly steep between 1395 and 1424. The Priory at this time was clearly having difficulty in finding tenants and was in no position to exact high entry fines from those that were forthcoming. Lack of tenants made considerable inroads on the expected income from rent, as the following figures show:

In 1338, out of an 'assized rent' of £23 odd, £16.14.0 was paid.

- 1385: £16.17.0
- 1395: £18.10.0
- 1404: £17.13.0
- 1421: £12.12.0
- 1424: £17.0.0

For the rest of the period between £17.0.0 and £19.0.0 was paid. Shortage of tenants, however, only partially accounts for the low level of entry fines at Coleshill; part of the explanation lies in the fact that, especially

towards the end of our period (between 1433 and 1459 in particular) many tenants preferred leasing demesne land and particularly demesne grazing land and piecemeal and short-term leasing of vacant holdings, to the permanent acquisition of new customary tenements. For these, as the entry fines make clear, supply far outran demand.

South Moreton, 1 Mackney, 2 Sotwell Stonor 3, Letcombe Regis 4.

South Moreton, with £20 paid in 1326 5 shows the highest entry fine found in any of our sources, and the fines paid there throughout the fourteenth century and until 1437 were in general higher than those paid at Woolstone at any period.

Similarly, Mackney between 1426 and 1472 and Sotwell in 1422, 1425, 1501 and 1509, saw entry fines that would have seemed astronomical at Woolstone at the time.

But the explanation of these high fines, discussed more fully below (777.) lies in the fact that they were paid for valuable concessions as well as for land. The South

1. See Table.1.
2. " "
3. " "
4. " "
5. S.C.2 154/43 F. St. Edmund 19 Ed.II.
Moreton villagers who paid fines (in essence 're-entry' fines) of £1.0.0 in 1361 did so in order that the lord should release their land from the obligations of villein tenure. Those at Mackney in 1426, 1455, 1459 and 1466, and those at South Moreton in 1387, 1430 and 1437, who paid fines often of several pounds, did so in order to secure the reversion of their holdings to their children. The high fines paid early in the sixteenth century at Sotwell were paid, as at Woolstone, for large composite holdings. The Letcombe Regis fines, although few in number, bear out the impression that, with the exception of payments for special conditions of tenure) the level of entry fines was highest during the early part of our period. This would confirm the evidence given in Chapter II of a general fall in the tenant population over these two centuries, by showing that the demand for available customary land was no longer pressing so hard upon its supply.
III. THE PEASANT LAND-MARKET.

1. Introduction.

Customary land was available, its price was falling, the restrictions on its alienation were slackening and the manorial courts provided the machinery through which holdings could be transferred; such were the necessary conditions for a free market in land, and all were present, or coming into being, during our period. Ideally, we should like to extract from our evidence at this point statistics of the number of land transactions made in each year, the size of unit transferred, the ratio of inter-peasant transactions to transactions between peasant and lord, the proportion of sales to leases. But the records at our disposal are of such widely varying quality and coverage that any overall figures would be largely meaningless. To conflate the evidence of the land-market at Coleshill, where we have a run of almost 180 court rolls for a period of 120 years, with the scattered rolls from Sotwell or Hackney, for instance, would produce a most misleading result. Even when a good series of court rolls survives, as at Woolstone, we cannot always be sure that there is a roll extant for every court that was held (and if we check the Woolstone court rolls with the section dealing
with court perquisites in the minister's account for the relevant year it becomes clear that many rolls are missing).

There is a more serious objection to giving overall statistics; the level of activity in the peasant land-market, and its fluctuations, were not mainly affected by national, or even county-wide influences, but by intensely local factors. The price of grain, for instance, may have had a long-term effect on the traffic in customary holdings, but a much more immediate and noticeable impact was made by such factors as the decline of a handful of families, the lord's policy towards his demesne, the peasants' ambitions for his children. Even the Black Death, by far the most generally felt influence, had totally different effects in different villages. This is not to argue that national economic trends had no effect at all on the social situation in these various different places; this would be to fractionalise and localise the subject too far. Nor is it to argue that there are no developments common to the peasant land market in all our manors, and as we shall see, there were some very important common developments; merely that in this context, general overall statistics are less revealing that the sum of studies of individual manors.
The first impression given by a study of late medieval peasant land transfers is that of the speed with which land changed hands, and the scale on which it did so. We are no longer dealing with Maitland's 'brisk traffic in small parcels of land' but a brisk traffic in complete virgates and half-virgates, in which sixty acres could change hands in a single transaction, and a villein holding change hands five times in as many years. In concentrating our attention, in the following pages, on these 'land transfers capable of achieving a permanent reshuffle in the social structure of the country-side',¹ we are not wilfully ignoring a mass of small-scale dealings of the type that abound in the thirteenth century rolls. Land transactions involving only a few acres played a decreasingly important part in the conveyancing business of the manorial courts.² Possibly such transactions had 'gone underground' and were being carried out without licence; possibly land was now available so cheaply that small scales and acquisitions no longer attracted the peasant. In any case, such transactions (involving holdings of less than half a virgate),

¹. Postan. op. cit. pp. L. IX.
². " " 
which Postan describes as 'the current and temporary adjustment to changing individual circumstances, .... a permanent phenomenon'\(^1\) are not considered in the following analysis, (although they are later taken into account when discussing the building up of peasant fortunes.)

We have noted the slackening of seigneurial restrictions on alienation, but another, even more important, set of restrictions was also crumbling. For centuries one of the influences dominating the way in which villein land should change hands was not merely the seigneurial will but the body of custom relating to inheritance. The late medieval court rolls show that these customs, which had dominated village life in the thirteenth century and probably long before, were breaking down completely. The causes of this process are not far to seek: its effects were of great importance.

Chief among the causes was the slackening of pressure on land. In a period of land shortage a tenant would be reluctant to relinquish even a part of his holding unless he was capable of farming it; hence as Postan noted, the old, childless and infirm predominated among thirteenth century settlers of land. In such a period, too, heirs would cling to the customs which preserved the integrity of

\(^1\) Postan op. cit. loc. cit.
their patrimony and which ensured their eventual succession; for there was no other source of land available to them. Such conditions form the background to the rigid inheritance customs which Romans described. But when, in our period, the supply of customary land increased in relation to the demand for it, the social situation changed too. Sons no longer had to wait impatiently for their patrimony, as land was available from other sources. Younger sons, excluded from holding the family land by the rules of primogeniture (or elder sons excluded by the custom of Borough English) could obtain small holdings and support themselves. Aging tenants could exchange their large holdings, which they could no longer work, for smaller holdings.

The long-term social consequences of this change were not as rosy as this picture might suggest, as the subsequent accounts of the peasantry on these manors will show. Its immediate effect on the land-market, with which we are concerned here, were two-fold. Firstly, it stimulated the traffic in land, and was in turn increased by that traffic. Changes in tenure were no longer only occasioned by the death of the tenant, and the rule governing such changes came to be that there was no rule at all. Land changed hands at random, governed only by the laws of supply and demand.

Secondly, the decline of customary inheritance, with all
its disadvantages, brought about a situation which itself had almost as many disadvantages. Customary inheritance had been based on certain human needs which did not change; fathers still wished their land to descend to their sons, and sons wished it too, even when both were eager to shed the burdens of customary tenure. Heritability may have decayed in the period of population decline, but its advantages came to be felt as soon as it had done so. Tenants began to consider heritability a privilege worth paying for, and lords were not slow in charging them for the privilege. New devices were evolved to bolster up the principle, previously embodied in manorial custom, that land 'ought to descend intact in the blood of the men who had held it of old.' The most important of these devices were payment for reversion, leases for lives, and copyholds.

The following studies trace the process outlined above in the court rolls of eight manors and attempt to show what influences they had on the social structure of the communities concerned.
II. THE DECLINE OF INHERITANCE AND THE GROWTH OF NEW TENURES

Woolstone

As the Hordarian of St. Swithin's Priory, whose revenues in part depended on it, noted, Woolstone Manor was on the decline during the late fourteenth and fifteenth centuries.

As we have seen, the effects of the Black Death considerably diminished the Priory's receipts from the manor until about the 1370's. The influence on the peasants' economy was equally striking.

The level of land market activity was always lower at Woolstone than it was at Coleshill, and it fluctuated less. Nevertheless, there were three distinct 'peak years' in which far more than the usual amount of land changed hands; immediately after the Black Death, in 1368, and in 1390.

The plague crisis was a time of opportunity for those Woolstone tenants who survived it. Pressure on land had been heavy before 1348, as the level of entry fines shows, but now the lord needed tenants; (customary labour was in short supply) and was prepared to make concessions in order to get them. Few of the thirteen tenants whose holdings were vacant after the plague apparently left surviving relatives capable of farming their lands or willing to do

1. See Table.
so. The years that followed saw a considerable shaking-up in the tenurial structure in which the conventions of customary inheritance were abandoned and new tenures were introduced.

Ten of the thirteen empty holdings were split up among two or more tenants 'to hold at farm until anyone shall come to claim the whole tenement' or 'until a tenant shall be found who will perform the due and accustomed services'. Such tenures involved two principal elements; they were leaseholds, not ordinary villein tenements held 'according to custom of the manor', and they were held for money-rent, not labour services. Such commutations, made at a time when shortage of tenants put the incoming tenant in a good bargaining position vis-a-vis the lord, were common on the Bishop of Winchester's estates immediately after the Black Death: 'the taking up of an escheated tenement was apparently the best way of commuting services.'

In fact, during the next few years several of these broken-up holdings were re-assembled by new tenants who were anxious for extra land. But the special conditions which the lord had attached to them, introduced as a temporary expedient, became permanent. The qualifying clause 'until anyone shall come to claim the whole tenement'

became a formality, and the tenancies were seldom, in fact, interrupted by the appearance and substitution of another tenant more acceptable to the lord. These owners became, in fact, privileged leaseholders, with considerable effective, if not official, security. Their entry fines were low, and they had the advantage of paying money rent at a time when the lord was still exacting a considerable amount of labour-services at Woolstone.

The effective security of these tenants is well illustrated by the history of some of the tenants who acquired land just after the Black Death.

Of seven new tenants who took up 'empty' half-virgates in the early 1350's 'to hold until any other shall come to pay the accustomed rents and services due therefrom', two were still holding the same land, on the same terms, in the 1380's, one until 1377, one until 1364, one until his death in 1368. Only once was the permanency of these tenures challenged. WILLIAM HULLE, in 1369¹, was ordered to prove his right to his land and quoted the court roll of 1349² which recorded his admission. He was ordered to produce a copy but apparently never did so. When he died,

2. Not surviving.
in 1377, this land was distinguished from his other holdings by being held 'ad certum redditum' and had become a copyhold in fact, if not in name.¹

These privileged leaseholds, of the immediate post-plague era, although they increased the amount of land held at lease, did not initiate the tenure. It is impossible to say how far back leases to villeins began, but the earliest Woolstone minister's accounts, of 1308² does not mention them. The first (unambiguous) case is in 1345 ... 'de firma Thome filii Juliane Hanekyn et sororis eiusdem pro duabus cotagiis ... ad terminum vite eorundem.'³ As we have seen, the number of leaseholds increased when empty tenements were farmed piecemeal, and by the 1390's the 'firme' were of sufficient importance to rate a separate paragraph.⁴ The majority of these concerned small amounts of land, fractions of vacant tenements or odd acres of meadow; only in the 1390's came the beginning of leasing whole tenements for a term of years.

¹ S. C. 2 154/80 No.1  
² S. C. 6 756/3  
³ S. C. 6 756/11  
⁴ Total receipts from 'firme' of demesne land:
   1380's   c. 10/-
   1411     c. £1.0.0
   1430's   £2.0.0
(These figures exclude leases of vacant tenements.)
Inter-peasant leases, often made illegally, are harder to trace. Three made in 1347 show that they might be on a minute scale and might therefore go undetected by the manorial authorities. For the peasant, small leaseholds whether of demesne land, part of a vacant holding or of a neighbour's unwanted acres, were an ideal way of accumulating land, involving none of the risks and expenses of taking on a whole extra holding or the burdens of villein tenure.

The court rolls do not show any trace of inter-peasant leases before 1339, but from that date onwards such leases became fairly common. Some were made openly in court where a fine for licence to lease was paid and the transaction and its terms recorded on the court roll. Some were made without licence, and subsequently detected. The following figures show that the process reached some kind of a peak in 1346-7, but that it was never on anything but a minute scale.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Inter-peasant leases</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1339</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1341</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1346-7</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1385</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1396</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1399</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1413</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1414</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(These figures include both licenced leases, and presentments for leases made without licence, and count each lease only from the first year of its term.)

The court rolls do not generally give the terms of these leases, but the roll of 1347 is more explicit; 'Johannes atte Mulle qui tradidit et dimisit Stephane de Cauntbury IV acras et dimidiam ad colendam per V. annos elapsos ac etiam Willelmo atte Hulle III acras per unam croppam habendam et similiter Roberto Martyn licentia dat domino de fine pro dicta convencions ratificanda 2/-.' Stephanus Willelmus et Robertus pro dicta convencione tenenda et habenda dant ... de fine 1/3. Willelmus atte Hulle ita quod colere possit unam virgatam terre quam Cristina atte Hurne tenet per duas croppas habenda ... dat de fine 6d; et similiter Roberto Martyn tres acras per unam croppam habendam sine licentia, dat domino de fine pro dicta convencione ratificanda 2/-.' 'Stephanus, Willelmus et Robertus pro dicta convencione tenenda et habenda dant .... de fine 1/3.' 'Willelmus atte Hulle ita quod colere possit unam virgatam terre quam Cristina atte Hurne tenet per duas croppas habenda ... dat ... de fine 6d.'
These entries do not show the price that the sub-tenants paid for the land, but it can be assumed that the lessors expected to recoup at least the amount that they had paid to the lord in fines for permission to lease.

Such transactions were not only made between customary tenants of the manor: the presentment of Richard atte Mulle in 1339 'quia tradidit terram suam liberis et extraneis 'ad colendam sine licentia' shows that there was a market for unwanted villein land outside the confines of this limited social group. The majority of the leases, however, were customary tenants. A case in 1385 suggests a possible motive for such leases other than the purely financial one:

'Walterus atte Fleote qui tenet unam cotagium cum curtilagio ... non trahit moram super predictum tenementum sed elongavit bona et catalla sua et moram trahet super Longcot et dictum cotagium dimisit ad firmam sine licentia.'

Many examples of tenants sub-letting or selling their land as a preliminary to leaving the manor can be found in the Coleshill court rolls, and although there are no other specific references to the process in the Woolstone records it is very probable that some such arrangement lay behind the many cases of tenants being ordered to 'move their

2. See Chapter V.
dwelling' back on to their own land.

One reason for the fact that inter-peasant leasing did not make more headway at Woolstone lies in the fact that land leased from the lord was more attractive to tenants. As we know nothing of the rents charged by peasants among themselves, we cannot say whether the price of demesne land was a deciding factor here. We have seen that after the Black Death the lord was prepared to break up holdings and commute services in order to get tenants. It is possible that tenants saw a further advantage in leasing demesne land or part of vacant tenements over leasing a few acres from a neighbour, and that this advantage lay in the nature of the land itself. The very large number of presentments of tenants who let the buildings on their holdings fall into disrepair, suggests that they were interested only in that part of the holding which lay in the open fields. On the analogy of Coleshill, peasants may have been anxious for extra pasture, too, rather than for extra arable; there is not enough information about peasant stock-farming in the Woolstone rolls for us to be able to verify this. Woolstone lay in prime sheep country, though, and it is quite possible that sheep farming played a part in the peasant economy, and that extra
grazing land was obtainable from the lord, not from the villagers.¹

This, too, might account for the very small number of recognizable inter-peasant sales: 1 in 1332; 1 in 1337; 1 in 1348; 1 in 1351; 1 in 1378; 1 in 1390; 1 in 1394; 1 in 1397. A tenant wishing to acquire an entire new holding could do so from the lord as easily as from his neighbours (and possibly pay a lower price for it.) The figures of receipts from 'firme' in the minister's accounts confirm this impression. The yield of leases of demesne land rose from 10/- in the 1380's to £2.0.0 in the 1420's; the number of leases of vacant holdings rose from three to four in the 1390's, to six in 1413, to eight or nine in the 1430's. These figures severely underestimate the real amount of leasehold, as many small leases of divided tenements were accounted together under the heading 'yield of various lands leased this year.'

Although the availability of land at lease from the demesne tended to 'dilute' the process of inter-peasant leasing, it did not mean that the social structure remained

¹ When the court rolls give details of peasant leases or sales, the land is generally said to be leased 'to cultivate' or for a certain number of crops, suggesting that only arable land was involved.
stable - far from it. As we have seen, the Black Death was an important turning-point in that it brought new land 'on to the market' and enabled tenants to obtain favourable terms from the lord. But, quite apart from this sudden crisis, the population was being slowly diminished by a slow drain of families away from the village. The figures of such 'emigrations' in the court rolls are not large:

One tenant is recorded as having left the manor in 1308, 1 in 1329, 1 in 1332, 1 in 1340, 1 in 1346, 2 in 1372, 1 in 1374, 1 in 1376, 1 in 1379, 1 in 1383, 1 in 1385, 1 in 1396, 1 in 1409, 1 in 1413.

Nevertheless, if we consider, firstly, the court rolls only record emigrations by tenants, not by the landless (in whom the lord had no direct financial interest); and, secondly, that many male tenants who left must have taken their families with them, it becomes clear that, quite apart from losses in the Plague, there were many fewer landholders, or potential landholders in the village at the end of the century than at the beginning. By the 1390's this must have created a situation that, although much less dramatic than the post-plague situation, was very similar to it. The land market responded in much the same way; much more land changed hands in the 1390's and early fifteenth century than had done so since the plague.
There were special concessions to be gained from the lord at this period too; tenants took up large composite holdings at low entry fines. For instance, in 1415 John Conburgh took up a messuage and virgate once Stephen Carter's, a toft and half-virgate once Richard Ballard's ... paying an entry fine of £1.0.0. The lord exempted him from paying 16/8 of his fine in order that Conburgh should repair the buildings belonging to the holding. ¹ In 1417 John Foxton, the smith, took up a messuage and half-virgate with a mill, and another half-virgate with a toft. ² Foxton paid an entry fine of £1.6.8, but a tenant had paid £6.13.4 for the mill holding alone in 1325. ³

Composite holdings were, of course, generally built up more gradually than this. Most of the 'capciones terre' of this period involved single virgates or half-virgates. And, of course, the accumulation of entire holdings in this way was not incompatible with small leaseholds; an aspiring peasant would obtain land from any source available.

WILLIAM ATTE HULLE, for instance, in addition to the virgate he inherited from his father, acquired:

2. S.C.2 154/82 " " 1417
3. S.C.6 756/4
1 virgate leased from another tenant
3 acres " " " "
1 acre " " " "
2 acres " " the demesne
2 cottages and curtilages
½ virgate vacant after the plague.

Hulle was a sheep-owner and the employer of at least three highly-paid servants or farm labourers.

The building up of composite holdings such as Hulle's was the process which, in the absence of any document describing the social structure of fifteenth-century Woolstone, we can assume to have most fundamentally altered the social structure described in the custumal of 1221.

During the early fifteenth-century there were about a dozen powerful peasant families at Woolstone, and the different ways in which they laid the foundations of their fortunes illustrate very well the way in which the land-market fluctuated.

Four owed their prosperity to the favourable conditions immediately after the Black Death¹; four to the brisk land-market of the late 1380's and 1390's²; and four to their acquisition of double holdings in the early years of the fifteenth century.³

1. SMITH. WYLYNS. HANEKYN. HULLE.
2. CARTER. THATCHER. POLTENE. TAYLOR.
3. CONBURGH. FOXTON. PETewardyn.
The prosperity of this small group contrasts strongly with the failing fortunes of other tenants; of Piron, who left the manor a pauper in 1329, of Ballard, who surrendered all his land in 1348, of the seven families: Senyer, Neel Jurdan, Hasel, Atte Hulle, Guldprenn, Atte Fleote, who left the manor during the 1370's and 1380's. Indeed, in many cases it was on the failure of the latter that the prosperity of the former rested.

Clearly this may have been a period of opportunity - it was not one of stability. The Woolstone court rolls show that the customs of family inheritance was in decline, and was given its death-blow by the plague crisis. The court-rolls of the 1320's, 1330's, and 1340's show the system of family inheritance still firmly established. Each of the tenants whose death is recorded during these years was succeeded by an heir from his immediate family; i.e. in 11 cases by the widow; in four cases by a son; and in one case by a tenant not stated to be a relative, but who bore the same name. Moreover, two of the three 'surrenders to use' in the same period were between members of the same family.
After the plague, the situation changed dramatically. Widows continued to inherit their husband's holdings, and in a few cases, sons or daughters inherited from their father, but by far the majority of transactions from 1349 onwards were in no way regulated by the traditional customs of inheritance. The following figures sum up the situation (and, dealing with two fifty-year periods, rather than pre-and post- Black Death, underestimate the effects of the plague.)

Between 1308 and 1358 there were 19 land transactions involving two members of the same family, to 52 'non-family' transactions.

Between 1358 and 1408 there were 6 'family' to about 50 'non-family' transactions (not including leases.)

Although the freeing of the land market from the old restrictions of inheritance meant opportunity for accumulation, there are signs that Woolstone tenants were anxious for the security of the written word.

William Kynne in 1372\(^1\) produced a copy of the court roll which recorded his acquisition of his holding in 1349. William at Hulle in 1364\(^2\) paid 13/4 'pro quadam convencionem'.

---

1. S.C.2 154/79 Martinmas court 1372
inter ipsum et (another tenant) facta habenda et inrotulanda'. In 1368 the court was ordering him to produce, and presumably expected him to possess, a written record of his tenure.¹ (As we have seen, lessees of even very small amounts of villein land paid fines in 1346 to have their leases 'ratified'²). Although copyholds are not mentioned by name in the surviving Woolstone records, it is in such written agreements that the germs of copyhold lay.

¹ S.C.2. 154/79 Martinmas court 1368.
² See above pp.108
Brightwaltham

The previous chapter has shown how many middling peasant families seem to have 'disappeared' during the fourteenth century, especially during its later years, and how in many cases this disappearance was marked, if not caused, by the failure of tenants to pass on their land to capable heirs. Only in the case of a few families can we illustrate this decline in detail, and from this point of view the late thirteenth century custumal proved a convenient starting point. But the court rolls, apart from information about individual families, provide firm evidence of a general decline in inheritance at Brightwaltham. If we divide all the villein land-transactions in the court rolls,¹ as before, into 'family' and 'non-family' transfers, we find that:

between 1280 and 1300 family transactions were 56% of the total

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Period</th>
<th>Transactions</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1280-1300</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1300-1340</td>
<td></td>
<td>37%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1340-1362</td>
<td></td>
<td>40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1362-1382</td>
<td></td>
<td>34%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1382-1402</td>
<td></td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1402-1409</td>
<td></td>
<td>19%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. Included in these calculations are transactions involving tenants in the tithings of Hertley and Conholt. They refer, therefore, to a slightly larger group than the recorded manorial population of the village of Brightwaltham itself, discussed in Chapter III.

2. See Table 4.
As elsewhere, a large proportion of inheritance is accounted for by inheritances by widows. For instance, four of the seven successions in 1348 were by widows. If we omitted succession by widows, the fifteenth-century court rolls would show only nine 'family' to 58 'non-family' successions.

This information, coupled with the entry-fine figures, suggest that from the late thirteenth century until the Black Death, the pressure on land was considerable; tenants were willing and able to pay fines of up to £3.6.8. for holdings, and land did not stay in 'the lord's hand' for long. The Abbot of Battle, it is true, had the power to compel the election of a new tenant to fill a vacant holding, but fines for exemption were low, and it does not seem that there was much need to resort to compulsion in order to find new tenants. Heirs were generally forthcoming when a tenant died; widows were in demand.

The Black Death began to reverse this situation. The first immediately post-plague court roll records the death of ten of the most important tenants, and this figure, relating only to tenants holding directly of the lord,

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2. S.C.2. 154/69 3rd April 1349.
1. See Table I.
severely underestimates the real number of losses. Although six of these dead tenants were survived by capable heirs who inherited their land, it was from this time that the gradual decline of inheritance dates. Some empty holdings may have been broken up in order to get tenants, for the court rolls from this date show low entry fines being paid for small parcels of land.

The 1380's and 1390's saw a greater change. This was the period at which customary inheritance and 'family' transactions declined most steeply. It was just at this period, as we know, that so many middling peasant families at Brightwaltham 'faded out'. Land transactions reached a peak in 1394 and 1395, which was only surpassed once during our period, by the many shifts of tenancy after the Black Death.

Some of these transactions during the peak years represent the acquisition of land by the newcomers who figure so largely in the 1426 rental. (For example, John Knyght took up land in 1394-5; John Wodeward married a dead tenant's widow and took over his land in 1397-8; these were small acquisitions, but they were the foundation of the much larger holdings these families held in the fifteenth century.)
The terms of tenure changed, too, over the period, although the actual chronology of the change is hard to date, and many different kinds of villein tenure existed side by side. There was an increasing tendency, however, to record the terms on which a tenant held his land other than by the conventional phrase 'secundum consuetudinem manerii'. However, similar the position of the tenant who held in this way may have been to that of the man holding 'ad voluntatem domini', the manorial authorities thought the difference worth noting, and the decline of the former term may mark the decline of conventional villein tenure. What replaced it? Four types of tenure are principally represented in the Brightwaltham transactions; leases for terms of years, leases for lives, hereditary tenure and tenure at the will of the lord.

Leases for terms of years were by no means unknown in the thirteenth century. The court roll of 1244 gives two examples; of tenants leasing holdings for one year and six years respectively. Further examples are found in 1333 (12 years), 1341 (10 years), 1343 (7 years), 1351 (7 years). There were six cases in 1386; four for 10 years, two for 7 years; two in 1389 (10 years and 9 years); two in 1394
It seems that terms of 10 years were the most common, and that such leaseholds were predominantly, although not exclusively, a feature of the 1380's and 1390's, but the available figures do not permit any further generalisation. Leases for lives are found more frequently, and, again the fact that the first case occurs in 1301 suggests that only the absence of more thirteenth century records makes this tenure seem a fourteenth century phenomenon. Leases for one or two lives are found in 1301, 1339 (3 cases), 1340 (3 cases), 1341, 1342, 1349 (4 cases), 1351, 1367, 1380 (3 cases), 1381, 1382 (3 cases), 1383 (2 cases), 1384, 1386 (2 cases), 1390, 1399, 1401, 1403, 1404, 1406, 1407 (7 cases), 1408. Leases for three lives occur twice: in 1380 and 1407.

Hereditary tenure marked by grants to a tenant to hold to himself and his heirs (tenendo sibi et hereditibus suis) must

1. Vinogradoff: Villeinage in England. Oxford 1892 pp. 330-331: 'There is no doubt that the lease-system was growing in the thirteenth century and that it is not adequately reflected in our documents.'
have been much prized. The phrase occurs in 1302 (and is referred to in 1328), in 1348-9, 1351, 1381-2, 1389, 1390, 1394-5 (4 cases), 1399 (2 cases), 1397-8, 1402, 1407, and 1433. Again, it seems that the 1380's and 1390's saw the greatest increase in this tenure, but again the shortage of evidence, especially for 1408-1423, makes it impossible to discover any firm trend.

Tenure 'ad voluntatem domini'. This phrase denotes less a different kind of tenure than a difference of procedure. Tenements held at the will of the lord were, in this context, ordinary customary tenants 'their essential features being that the tenant does not possess any instrument recording the transaction, but has, if necessary, to appeal to the records of the court or even to its memory.' The clause 'ad voluntatem domini' occurs chiefly in the court rolls of 1420's and 1430's at Brightwaltham, once in conjunction with a lease for two lives, once with a grant of hereditary tenure. Does this distinction of tenements held 'at will' imply that the holdings to which it was not applied were held by copy of court roll? There is only one firm reference to copyhold, in 1407, but the fact that the

1. Campbell: op. cit., p.121. 'A "copyhold in inheritance" was next to a freehold, the best tenure one could have from the point of view of security.'

2. Tawney: op. cit., p.47.
'at will' clauses only occurs in the later records makes this a reasonable assumption. If it is true, Brightwaltham would have been developing, as far as tenure is concerned, on much the same lines as many other manors at the time.

Inter-peasant leases, probably much under-represented in the court rolls, occur in small numbers in the rolls of the late thirteenth century and the first half of the fourteenth. (1 case in 1294, 1 in 1333, 1 in 1341, 1 in 1342, 1 in 1349).¹ Sales between tenants may often have been concealed by the formula of surrender and admission in the manorial court, but explicit inter-tenant sales in the form of 'surrenders to use' occur only twice, in an isolated couple of cases in 1367. The fifteenth century provides a sharp contrast in this respect; such sales became very common then, and in a transaction of 1435 even the legal fiction of the 'surrender to use' formula was dropped, when Thomas Aylewyn 'purchased' a villein tenement.² Two presentments were made of sales out of court. But although a good deal of land may have changed hands in that way, Brightwaltham tenants may well have found that with the demesne at farm and labour-services no longer important, the manorial court was now no longer the agent of seigneurial discipline, but a convenient machinery for what had

¹ 2 cases in 1434, 2 in 1435, 2 in 1439, 2 in 1441, 3 in 1442, 1 in 1445, 1 in 1446.
² S.C.2 155/73. June 13 H.VI.
virtually become a free market in land.
The Mackney court rolls are much fewer in number than those which survive for the other manors considered here, and they cover only the later part of the period. They show, nevertheless, a decisive preponderance of non-family over family land transactions.¹ At Mackney, as elsewhere, tenants were evidently feeling the disadvantages of this decline of inheritance. During the period covered by the court rolls, they can be seen endeavouring to keep land 'in the family' by taking leases for two or three lives. Thus William Wychelæ took a half-virgate in 1377 with his wife and son for the term of their lives.² High prices were paid for reversions, and an entry of 1455 suggests that tenants were buying and selling reversions among themselves; John Downe paid 12 marks 'for licence to grant to William Browne the reversion of a messuage and two virgates, a cottage, two acres and a close, for the term of his life after the death of the said John Downe'.³ Downe clearly expected, at least, to get his money back from the grantees and probably to make a profit on the transaction. (This must have been considered a valuable holding for the 12 marks or more

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1. The ratio is 11 family to 6 non-family transactions.
2. S.C.2 154/39
3. S.C.2, 154/41
which Browne paid would not include the entry fine.

Mackney differed from the other manors in one respect. From early in the fifteenth century, its tenants were successfully obtaining tenancies which, although not then described as such, were essentially those prized 'copyholds of inheritance' later to be considered 'next to a freehold the best tenure one could have from the point of view of security.' These appear, from 1426, under the formula: A.B. took land 'tenendo sibi et suis/voluntatem domini'. The question of whether such a formula did, in fact, ensure that the tenements descended to the tenant's heirs cannot be answered from the Mackney court rolls, which are not plentiful enough to enable us to follow up the subsequent history of the families involved. Certainly Mackney peasants put a high value on it; entry fines of £4, £5, and £8 were paid for holdings on such terms. The tenure is found again in two transactions made in 1466, when two tenants took land 'tenendo sibi et suis ad voluntatem domini'. Again, high entry fines were paid (£534. and £40.0.0) and there is no sign that the stipulation 'at the

2. See Table.
3. S.C.2 154/41. Feast of David. 6 Edward IV.
will of the lord' diminished the desirability of these privileged copyholds. A phrase in a court toll of 12 Edward IV\(^1\) suggests that Mackerley copyholders, even those holding 'at will', had successfully been resisting the lord's claim to the right to resume their holdings for such offences as non-payment of rent: when John Letkyn took up a smallholding that year, it was stipulated that the lord had the power to seize the land if the rent was withheld, or if damage was done 'haec copia in aliquo non obstante'. This implies that Mackerley tenants had achieved a far greater degree of security of tenure than had those at, say, Woolstone or Coleshill, where not only were forfeitures common, but the lord's right to enforce them was apparently never challenged.

\(^1\) S.C. 2. 154/1 October 12 Edward IV.
SOUTH MORETON: 1322-1456.

As the previous chapter has indicated, South Moreton was a village where the late fourteenth century seems to have proved a time of decline for many peasant families and yet where, in contrast, many newcomers were successful in building up large holdings during the fifteenth century. How can we explain the fall of the first and the rise of the second?

The court rolls show that here, as elsewhere, inheritance was in decline. Of the recorded land transfers, 'non-family' outnumber 'family' transactions by 18 to 4. The decline was by no means complete. The BROWNING family's land, for instance, was kept within the family by a series of inheritances throughout the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, and it was probably precisely this security of tenure that was the basis of their long-lived prosperity. There were two taxpayers of this name in the lay subsidy return of 1332.¹ In R.1451 a Richard Brownyng held what had probably been family land for several generations, and three other members of the family were also tenants, with two half-virgates and a cottage respectively. A torn

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¹ E.179 75/7.
rental of 1492 suggests that there were still at least three Brownyngs holding in South Moreton in that year, but by the date of an early sixteenth century rental there were apparently no more tenants of that name in the village and another family had taken on part of their land.

The Randolf family provides a good contrast and illustrates how a peasant family, initially probably of much the same standing as the Brownyngs, could quite quickly 'disappear'. The Randolfs were acquiring a good deal of land during the fourteenth century; leasing land from other tenants in 1341, paying a heavy entry fine (10 m.) for a half-virgate in 1340, buying their land out of villeinage in 1361. In the 1380's the family probably included at least two tenants with sizeable holdings of well over a virgate and additional closes and crofts, but by 1451, and possibly by 1399, all the Randolf land had passed to other tenants.

Clearly heretability, and an adequate supply of heirs, was desirable. Only after the breakdown of customary inheritance did its advantages come to be felt, and tenants

endeavoured either to reinforce it or find some substitute for it. At South Moreton, the transition from villeinage to other forms of tenure is particularly clearly marked: in 1361 four tenants came into court and paid fines of up to £1.0.0 to release their land from villeinage and hold it instead 'ad terminum vite'. The typical formula ran: 'Willemus Scarlat fecit finem de (sic) iabenda una virgata terre .... prius in villenagio ad terminum vite ... £1.0.0.' To release land from villeinage was clearly not equivalent to commuting the labour-services due from it; one of these conversions ends with the phrase 'et tenet carucam domini cotidie'. Scarlet himself owed boon-services, and subsequent references in the court rolls show that labour-services were far from being extinct on this manor at this time. These expensive conversions of tenure were followed, the next year, by what appears to have been a thorough enquiry into the tenures of all South Moreton tenants. The rolls mutilated, so that it is only possible to read some of the entries, but these are enough to show that copyhold was by that time known on the manor. At least two tenants are said

1. S.C. 2. 154/43. Court of 35 Edward III.
2. e.g. A list of recognition payments of 1399 notes the services owed from the majority of tenants listed. S.C. 2. 154/44. St. Luke 20 R II.
3. S.C. 2. 154/43. St. Gregory 36 Edward III.
to be holding 'per scriptas' and one 'per scriptas ad terminum'. In the 1380's there were further, although less explicit, references to written agreements between lord and tenant which must have approximated to copyhold: Roger Brownyng and his wife, taking up a tenement in 1384, agreed to give heriot 'as in the indentures', and this formula was repeated in three other acquisitions of land in the same court, and twice on the creation of long leaseholds (4 and 2 lives) in a court of 1387.

Some such written convention as to the amount of heriot due from the holding, and the occasion on which it was to be paid seems to have been one of the essential characteristics which differentiated these tenures from the villein- age in which the land used to be held. The three transactions in 1384, two in 1387, which have just been quoted, laid particular emphasis on it. By the 1430's copyhold, or some kind of tenure by written agreement, had become the predominant tenure: stipulations about heriots were even more heavily emphasised and it is clear that the privilege of

1. S.C.2. 154/44 November 8 Ric.II.
2. S.C.2. 154/44 St. Luke 11 Ric. II.
3. See Table.
paying heriot only on the death of the last tenant named in the copy, indenture, or "writing" was a prize for which the lord was able to demand, and the tenant willing to pay high entry fines.\textsuperscript{1} In fact, one transaction, in 1437, shows very clearly that agreements about heriots were the important factor in these tenures.

John Cotwell and his wife and son took up a virgate that year, to hold for their three lives. It was agreed that the lord should receive a heriot after the death of the last of them \textit{et predictus Johannes dat de fine pro ista concessione habenda X marcas}.\textsuperscript{2}

Of course, it is impossible to be sure about the motives of lord and tenant in such cases. The lord of South Moreton may have been exacting high entry fines from his tenants in the fifteenth century merely because custom had fixed their rents.\textsuperscript{3} Certainly, it is difficult to see why exemption from paying two beasts to the lord as heriot over a period of two generations, should have been considered worth such special emphasis and such large payments. One possible explanation may be that these agreements exempted the tenants from paying heriot on alienation. Unfortunately the court rolls do not record any subsequent alienations.

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{1} See Table I.
\item \textsuperscript{2} S.C.2. 154/45. March 15 H.VI.
\item \textsuperscript{3} See Table II.
\end{itemize}
by these tenants, so, there is no means of telling whether this was, in fact, the case.

Another possible explanation lies in the symbolic nature of the heriot; it symbolised the ending, albeit temporary, of the tenant's 'estate' in his land, and its return to the lord. This is precisely what fifteenth century copyholders were anxious to avoid. If they could not secure copyholds of inheritance, they were determined to establish the principle that their estate should not terminate, even symbolically, until the death of the last member named in the copy.

Legal security, however, did not mean economic security at South Moreton, any more than it did anywhere else. By 1440 copyholds, of any of the types we have mentioned, were possibly the predominant tenures. In the 1430's five tenants took up copyholds or very long leases and neither they nor their heirs were still in possession of their land by 1501. The sole representative of any of these five families was the descendant of Richard Tyler, and he was merely a cottager. The important South Moreton tenants; Leyver, Whichley, and Cowper, were then new men who had built up their fortunes out of the holdings left empty by

1. S.C.12.5. No.54. Rental of post 17 H.VII.
fifteenth century copyholders, whose attempts at security had proved to be empty formulae.
SOTWELL STONOR: 1366-1434

The Sotwell Stonor court rolls cover only a very small part of our period, and thus permit no general analysis of the land-market there. They show, however, the situation which the trend away from customary inheritance and towards new tenures could create.

At Sotwell during the fifteenth century, the ancient customs of inheritance were observed only in the case of widows. This is not to say that the rights of other heirs had been completely forgotten or were openly admitted to have lapsed. After Thomas Cowper died, sometime before 1424, the new tenant for his land was only allowed to take it on when it was found that Thomas had left no blood relations on the manor. But heirs must, in the majority of cases, have been lacking, or unwilling to take on the family land, for 'non-family' outnumbered 'family' transactions 15:3.

Sotwell tenants were following much the same course as those at Mackney; buying reversions and taking up leaseholds for lives. Here, too, they were prepared to pay large sums for holdings with this degree of certainty of tenure: we have comparatively few examples of acquisitions of land.

at Sotwell, but the majority (7/12) of them were made by tenants taking land with their wife and one child.

There are two recorded purchases of reversions: in 1422, on the death of Richard Slade, his widow resigned her right in his land, whereupon his mother inherited with reversion to her other son, daughter-in-law, and grandson. In 1420, John at Wode took up a large composite holding 'with reversion to his wife and son', but these did not differ in essence from leases for lives. In fact, of course, it is often impossible to distinguish these tenures from copyholds for lives; the history of copyhold must go back much further than specific references to it by name suggest. When a tenant took land in the manorial court it may often have happened that he was given - or more probably sold - a 'copy' of the transaction without the fact being recorded. Tenants at Woolstone and many other manors may have paid special fines 'pro inrotulando' their tenancies, but this is not to say that when we do not come across such fines, or specific references to 'writings' or 'indentures' copyhold has not yet made its appearance. It is often mentioned incidentally, particularly when a tenant's right was challenged. This is the case at Sotwell:

1. S.C.2 154/62 October 1 H.VI.
2. S.C.2 154/62 March 9 H.VI.
an early sixteenth century list of "the copyholders in Whatcombe and Sotwell"\(^1\) gives the dates of the copies of nine tenants, none of which is earlier than the reign of Henry VII, but there are signs that the tenure was known much earlier.

In 1422, John Bailly, marrying the widow of Thomas Doget, produced a copy in court showing Doget's - and his widow's - right to his holding.\(^2\) In 1433 John Pope, on the death of another tenant, produced a copy by which he had previously been granted the dead man's land (or perhaps its reversion).\(^3\)

Lists of recognition payments, in 1366, 1422, 1425, and 1430\(^4\) served the purpose, from the lord's point of view, of reviewing the holdings, rents, and tenures, of at least the more important of his tenants. They may possibly have been occasioned by changes in the lordship of the manor, but they may also have been accompanied by grants of copies.

Whatever their cause, these lists of recognitions are useful in enabling us to see how the very uneven division of land reflected in the 1507 rental\(^5\) dated back to the

\(^{1}\) S.C.2. 154/64 m.2
\(^{2}\) S.C.2. 154/62 October 1 H.VI
\(^{3}\) S.C.2 154/62 Feast of St. Edward 11 H.VI.
\(^{4}\) S.C.2 154/61. 154/62 October 1 H.VI, March 3 H.VI, 9 H.VI.
\(^{5}\) See Chapter III.
early fifteenth century. In 1509 the POPE family held
between them the biggest composite holdings in the
village. An earlier generation of Popes had been active
in accumulating land before the 1430's; recognition pay-
ments were made in 1425 by John Pope, senior, for a five-
part composite holding. Between them the Popes held six
half-virgates, besides odd acres in tofts and crofts. In
1430 there were four Pope tenants with composite holdings,
and two of them were conjointly farming the adjoining
manor of Sotwell St. John for 10 years at £26 a year.
The Popes were not above selling land to each other. In
1433 John Pope, senior, probably as an old man, divided
up his holding and sold it off to his two sons. Thus
far had the conventions of inheritance declined: Between
the 1430's and 1509, the Pope holding expanded consider-
ably, but the family retained the nucleus of these earlier
acquisitions. By the sixteenth century they may not
actually have been resident on the manor, although holding
the biggest tenancy there. A court roll of 1503 shows
that Ambrose Pope left the manor that year, but took up
a large holding in the same court (possibly two tenants
of the same name were involved.

The remaining composite holdings of 1509 were held
by comparative newcomers.
EASTROP.

Eastrop was a village of many tiny freeholds. This fact profoundly affected the nature of the land market there. Freehold was the most prized form of tenure. 'The Yeomen who held all or part of their lands in this fashion knew that they were fortunate. Chief among its advantages was that of providing a secure title which commanded the full protection of the law.¹

The heir to freehold land, besides being sure of his right to succeed to his patrimony, was able to do so on payment of a relief which, being geared to the rent for the land, was kept artificially low. He could not be 'outbid', as many an heir to a customary tenement must have been in times of land shortage, by a neighbour willing to pay a higher price for the land. Even the poorest free tenant could ensure that his land never eschaeted to the lord by enfeoffing others to the use of his heir, just as was done by landowners at the other end of the social scale. Thus, John Avenall of Eastrop before his death enfeoffed John Offyngton and John Parker with the minute holding of 3½ acres. When Avenell died

¹ M. Campbell: The English Yeomen under Elizabeth and the Early Stuarts. p. 117.
the homage were in vain ordered to produce his heir to do fealty and pay relief for his land. She was already in possession, one of the feoffees, quite legitimately, having leased it to her for life. The heir continued in possession, apparently undisturbed, with none of the parties having performed the necessary fealty or paid the relief.¹

The security of tenure which these freeholders enjoyed was at the root of the greater stability and lower turnover at Eastrop compared with the other manors considered here.² The predominance of freehold had a further effect, which also distinguished this from other manors, of retarding the growth of new tenures. It meant, primarily, that there was little communal incentive, such as we have seen at South Moreton and elsewhere, for acquiring the security afforded by copyholds or leases for lives. The growth of such leases was notably slow at Eastrop at a time when it was making such headway elsewhere. Only eight cases can be found in the court rolls of a tenant taking land with his wife and child. Four

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1. S.C.2. 208/53 10 and 12 H.VI; also similar transactions by Stone in S.C.2 208/54. June 33 H.VI.
2. See Chapter III.
of these cases date from the very end of the period and three involve members of the same, very powerful and prolific family of CUBBELL. In two cases exceptionally high entry fines were paid.

This slow development of new tenures does not mean that customary inheritance was still well established: far from it. There are only four cases of customary tenants (other than widows) succeeding to family land, and here again, three cases involved members of the Cubbell family. Probably the need for heritability was felt: three cases of payments for reversions suggest that it was.¹

Copyhold here made slow progress; copies are only mentioned specifically three times: again a Cubbell was involved. Here, as at South Moreton, the origins of copyhold were connected with written agreements about the amount of heriot due from a tenement and when it was to fall due.

Although the comparatively low level of entry fines does not suggest that the pressure on available customary land was very heavy, the security, heritability, and miniscule rents of their free neighbour's land must have

¹ S.C.2. 208/53. Court of June 7, 12 H.VI.
S.C.2. 208/40. Court of April 13, 17 H.VI.
S.C.2. 208/55. Court of Michaelmas 10 H.VII.
been a considerable annoyance to Eastrop villeins, many of whom could have 'bought them up several times over'.

The ease with which free land could be alienated by lease or sale meant that many inter-peasant transactions must have taken place here out of court. Subletting was common; the rental of 1474 shows that the Edington administrator had permitted at least eleven free tenants to sub-let their holdings, if we can interpret in this way the eleven entries which run: 'De A.B. pro libero redditu suo soluto per C.D.'

There are two cases of licences to sub-let and about nine cases of illegal sub-letting and sales subsequently legalised by payment of a fine. These cases, and references such as one in 1424 when 'it is ordered to enquire into those who are illegally occupying various parcels of land belonging to John Cubbell's holding,' one in 1426 when the homage was ordered to 'distrain upon the tenants of land and tenements lately Richard Berton's and afterwards John Brugge's, who is dead;' show that illegal sub-letting was probably common among the unfree.

1. S.C.2. 208/53 Court of 3 November 3 H.VI.
2. S.C.2. 208/53 Court of 28 April, 5 H.VI.
It was probably made much easier when the demesne was out at farm.

The mixture of tenures at Eastrop, and the multiplication of small inter-peasant leases, led to considerable confusion. Often a tenant held both free and villein land. The compiler of the rental of 1474 was apparently quite capable of distinguishing those who held freely and those who held in villeinage, although he did not distinguish the different types of free tenure; sergeanty, knight service and socage. But occasionally the court, and perhaps the tenant himself, 'do not know how he holds this land', or 'do not know whether he holds by knight service or by socage.'

Not all free tenants held by charter, and could produce written proof of their claim as Thomas Stone, for instance, did in 1420, when he came into court and showed the charter by which Ralph de Mandeville had granted to Thomas' ancestor what amounted to a small free estate.¹ Perhaps, in view of this, and of the small size of many of these freeholds, it is surprising that there was not more confusion.

¹ S.C.2 208/53 October 5 Henry VI; and see charter similarly produced by Robert Whone in the same court.
The predominance of freehold, besides slowing down the growth of new tenures and keeping down the level of turnover, had an important effect on the social structure of the village; it meant that there was little opportunity for the accumulation, such as we have seen elsewhere, of large composite holdings of customary land. Quite simply, there was not enough of such land available to make this possible. The chief source of land open to the aspiring unfree tenant was the demesne, although he could hope to add to his holding piecemeal by sub-letting land from his neighbours. Thus it was that the only really large holdings in Eastrop during the late fifteenth century were the two large leasehold farms, Mandevilles and Hungerfordscourt, which had been carved out of the manorial demesne.
The excellent series of rentals relating to Englefield makes it possible to trace the working of the land-market there further than the few (26) surviving court rolls would otherwise allow. The very high turnover figures show that the system of customary inheritance must have been in decline, and the fact that the turnover was exceptionally high after the Black Death suggest that the plague must have had much the same effect in hastening that decline that it had at Brightwaltham and Woolstone. (The number of land transactions recorded in the court rolls is really too small to permit any valid analysis, but the ratio of 'family' to 'non-family' transactions over the whole period, for what it is worth, was 7:12. Three of the 7 'family' transactions involved the families of freeholders; if we considered villein land-transactions alone the preponderance of 'non-family' transfers would be much more striking.)

The territorial situation at Englefield was complicated. Firstly, there was a higher proportion of free land there than on our other manors (Eastrop and Speenhamland excepted.) The rental of 1331 gives the names of twelve freeholders out of a total recorded manorial population
of 69. In 1474, there were still twelve freeholders, who by then formed a much higher proportion of the recorded manorial population. The court rolls show the growth of leases for lives; as in the case of William Whyte, who took up a cottage and 6 acres in 1370 to hold for the term of his life and his wife's,¹ and of Richard Northwell, who took a half-virgate for the lives of himself, his wife and his son.² Leases for shorter periods are also found: for 12 years in a case in 1361³, and for 7 years.⁴

The court rolls are too sparse for us to be able to document the growth of new tenures more fully, but that there had been such a growth, and that simple tenures in villeinage 'according to the custom of the manor' was obsolescent, is shown by an entry made probably late in the reign of Edward III:

'And it was ordered in the last court that all tenants should show in this court that they held their lands and tenements "ad terminum vite, annorum, per copiam vel cartam"'.

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1. S.C.2. 154/23 Court of held Amnunc. B.V.M. 44 Ed.III
2. " " Undated court roll No.18
3. " " Court held F. St. Ambrose. 35 Ed.III.
4. " " No. 18.
Seven tenants thereupon came into court and showed their copies; by which they held their tenements for life; an eighth claimed to hold a half-virgate on lease for seven years 'et nihil monstravit per scriptas.' We have, unfortunately, no further information about the growth of copyhold: by 1525 it was clearly the most usual unfree tenure, and the one required from the lord. In that year:

'All customary tenants are to show their copies to the seneschall and those without copies shall have a day to require them from the seneschall under pain of forfeiture'.

It does not seem that the security bestowed by copyhold spelt security of any other kind. The history of the eight copyholders mentioned in the Edward III court roll was much the same as that of the South Moreton counterparts. None of them appeared to have been important tenants in the village in the fifteenth century, and indeed by 1474 nearly all of the Englefield holdings were unimportant in comparison with the large composite tenement which had been pieced together by Thomas Tovy, a 'stranger'.

1. S.C.2. 154/25. Court of 6 April. 17 H.VIII.
2. See Chapter III.
COLESHILL. 1377-1520

Although the average number of land transactions per year did not appreciably rise at Coleshill during this period, there were three clearly marked 'peaks' in the land market there. In 1380-1382, 1391-1392, and 1427 and 1428.¹ These 'peaks' are not very impressive in terms of the number of transactions that they represent (11 in one year is the highest figure) but they are significantly above the overall average of between one and two transactions per court.

Even this figure is much higher than any found in the Woolstone rolls, and slightly higher than the 'peak' figure at Brightwaltham, both of whose records are of comparable size. It is important here to bear in mind the size of the total village population concerned, for this gives the figures their real significance. Coleshill at this time probably had a population of well under fifty households. Two years in which nineteen changes of tenure took place would surely have seemed a period of great social change in such a small community.

How far are these peak years economically significant, and how far do they merely reflect chance demographic factors, such as an exceptional number of deaths, or the

¹ See Table 4.
coming-of-age of an exceptional number of young men in need of land?

Of the 19 transactions in the years 1380, 1381, and 1382 (taken together) five transactions were caused by death, two by tenants leaving the manor, six by tenants surrendering their land. Of the 14 holdings which thus came on to the market, five were immediately taken up. In all, 10 tenants acquired new holdings in these years.

In 1391 and 1392 (taken together) there were two deaths, two sales, two surrenders, and two forfeitures. One of the dead tenants was succeeded by his widow. There were three new acquisitions of land.

In 1427 and 1428 (taken together) there were three deaths, three forfeitures, and five surrenders. One tenant left the manor. Four tenants were presented for illegally subletting their holdings, one of whom subsequently surrendered his. Three of these holdings were immediately occupied, one by the widow of the previous tenant and her second husband.

It is clear that a particularly active land-market although indicative of a keen demand for land, was not by itself an index of local prosperity, nor did it simply
reflect random demographic causes. If we take the phenomenon of tenants surrendering all their land or leaving the manor, to be an index of some kind of decline, we can see that these years must have been critical ones for Coleshill villagers: nearly half the transfers in 1380-1382, and in 1390-1391, and a quarter of the transfers in 1427-1428 were caused in this way. The real meaning of these crisis periods can only be understood in terms of the history of the individual peasant families concerned, and these are discussed in a later chapter. Some more general aspects of the land market, however, must be considered here.

Some evidence has already been produced for the decline of inheritance at Coleshill. The 1379 rental showed that only a small proportion of the tenements recorded there had been in the hands of the same family during the previous generation. The high turnover figures already given confirm this impression of the decline of family inheritance. Firmer evidence is provided by the court rolls. Leaving aside inheritances by widows, which we have seen was universally the longest-preserved of all inheritance customs, there are only five unequivocal cases of family inheritance in the court rolls.

1. W. Chapman, succeeded by his son in 1396, T. BAKER succeeded by his ? son, then by his daughters between 1381 and 1395, ODHAM by a relative, HALLE by his son in 1426, SAUNDERS by his ? son in circa 1449.
Occasional purchases of reversion among members of the same family are further proof of the decline. It is interesting to see that, as at Eastrop, inheritance seemed to be becoming a prerogative of the rich; all the five cases we have quoted involved the more prosperous families of the village.

The devices which tenants evolved elsewhere to keep their land within the family seem to have been comparatively slow to develop at Coleshill. Copyhold was firmly established by 1551, but none of the copyholds referred to in the rental of that year bears an earlier date than 20 H.VIII. By far the majority of grants of land by the lord were to a tenant and his wife "to hold for their lives according to the custom of the manor", and from 1428 the clause 'ad voluntatem domini' was always added. Leases for three lives were rare. (They are found in the case of SOLAS in 1448, PLEYDELL in 1496, and POLEYN in 1386, but in the last case the tenant had previously paid for the reversion to go to his son). Grants to a tenant 'and his heirs' were unknown.

The absence of these favourable tenancies is surprising, in view of the fact that the lord was having

1. e.g. TAYLOR 1458, POLEYN 1385, SOLAS 1448.
difficulty in finding tenants throughout this period\(^1\), particularly in the early 1420's when land 'in the lord's hand' reached a peak of 22 holdings plus others too numerous to be specified.\(^2\)

We have seen how the low entry fines reflect the existence of a 'buyers' market' for tenant land. Perhaps it is here that the explanation lies: entry fines were so low that there was no fear of an heir being 'outbid' for his father's land, if he should, in fact, desire to inherit it. (The court suggests that he seldom did so desire). Consequently, there was no great incentive for tenants to ensure their sons' succession by the devices that were evolved elsewhere.

\(^{1}\) See Chapter III.

\(^{2}\) A/cs of 1421, 1422, 1423. S.C.2. 743/14, 17, 18.
CHAPTER V.

THE TENANTS OF COLESHILL: 1379 to 1520

The following chapter is an attempt to analyze the working of the peasant land-market in a village community in terms of the histories of the tenant families involved. In many cases these 'histories' amount to no more than a few presentments from the court rolls, or an entry in a rental. In no case have we more than fragmentary information about the landless. Few details of peasant agriculture are given, except where they are of exceptional interest, as in the case of large peasant sheep-flocks. But in some cases it has been possible to build up quite a coherent picture of a peasant family and its land, and the accumulation of these short 'histories' does much to fill in the outlines of social change at Coleshill, which have been sketched in Chapters III and IV.

The material is arranged as follows:

1. The tenants of R.1379.
2. Tenants not in R.1379 but appearing in late fourteenth-century court rolls.
3. The tenants of R.1424.
5. The tenants of R.1473.
6. Other late fifteenth-century tenants.
7. Conclusion.

All references to land transactions by these tenants, and the more important references to them in minister's accounts, are given in APPENDIX A, which is arranged alphabetically by surnames.
The tenants of over 1 virgate

JOHN BROK exchanged his 3½ virgate holding for 2 virgates and a 7 year lease of 1 virgate. Although he was probably alive in 1422, he is not mentioned in the 1424 rental, or in subsequent court-rolls.

RICHARD BOLLE had held his 2½ virgate holding since 1368, when it first became part of the manor. He had probably died by 1386 when another tenant took over.

JOHN CLERK'S 2-virgate holding was acquired by JOHN BROK (above) probably in 1395; by that date he was reduced to a half-virgater. By 1401 he had left Coleshill for Faringdon.

WILLIAM CHAPMAN was succeeded by his son in 1396. (See below for the Chapman family as a whole).

THOMAS AT FORDE still held his two virgates in R.1395 but this land was in the lord's hand in 1421 and Forde does not appear in the 1424 rental.

NICHOLAS NEEL. By 1395 one virgate of Neel's was in the lord's hand and another had been taken by John Taillour.

WALTER NORMAN died in 1382, succeeded by his wife. By 1395 another tenant held his two virgates.
JOHN CUBBELL (See below for Cubbell family) paid chevage for absence from the manor in 1392, but may possibly not left permanently as he is listed in R.1395. He is not in R.1424.

JOHN HOGGES surrendered all his land in 1384 'causa impotentatis'.

HENRY BATEMAN's holding was unchanged in R.1395 and he was alive in 1399. As his name is not in the defectus section of the account for 1406 or in R.1424, he probably died or lost his land between these dates.

THOMAS JORDAN similarly 'disappeared' between 1395 and 1424, possibly between 1406 and 1424.

RICHARD TOXHAM surrendered a toft and half-virgate in 1381 'paying no heriot because the lord has enclosed the land of the said toft in a certain separate field.' In 1395 he still held the remaining virgate as well as three cottages and various old parcels of grazing land; known to have been alive in 1404, he probably died before 1424.

WILLIAM CRYPS is better documented. In 1382 he abandoned his holding, refusing to farm it any longer or to find another tenant. The land was confiscated, but Cryps had by then left the manor, taking his stock with him. In default of a beast for heriot, his goods were sold (or auctioned).
A third of his land was taken up in the following year - what became of the rest is uncertain. The circumstances of his flight, and the fact that the land had deteriorated during his tenancy by 30/- suggest that Cryps had virtually gone bankrupt.

JOHN LOK in the years after 1379 was adding various small parcels of demesne and parsonage land to his holding; one of the few tenants to take land from this source rather than from vacant tenements on the lord's hand. His widow succeeded him some time before 1394, but surrendered the land in that year and two years later was granted, on generous terms, the more easily manageable holding of a messuage and close. Roger Lok, possibly a landholder, possibly her son, was alive in 1400, but the name does not appear in R.1424.

WILLIAM LEVESON AND ROBERT PREOST were co-partners of a messuage, virgate, 5 acres arable and 3 acres meadow (in addition to holding a virgate holding each). Leveson died in 1381 when Thomas Hulle took over his separate virgate. After Preost's death in 1384, Hulle took over the partnership's land with Nicholas Mayllard. Probably the land was traditionally divided in this way.
The Tenants of 1379: Virgators.

ROGER AT BRUGGE still held his highly-rented 'free-holding for life' in 1395. It had belonged to his family in the previous generation, but in or before 1399 was acquired by another tenant who unsuccessfully claimed that this was orthodox free land.

THOMAS BAKERE was succeeded by John Bakere, probably her son. When he acquired another messuage and virgate in 1390, he apparently passed on the family holding to his two sisters or daughters, for in R.1395 each held part of it (N.B. the cottage at a higher rent than the virgate). No Bakers appear in R.1424 but these two 'heiresses' may well have married by then, being well provided for.

THOMAS KIRKEBY took up another ½ virgate in 1380 but by 1395 this had passed to another tenant and his original holding was in the lord's hand.

ROBERT CHAPMAN (possibly brother to WILLIAM CHAPMAN, see above) made two acquisitions of land soon after 1379 (besides a good deal of short-term leasing); a messuage and half-virgate in 1379, and the garden of the parsonage on a ten-year lease in 1382, and a croft of unspecified size. He still held, officially, this land in 1395, but he paid chevage for absence from the manor in 1392, his house was
in ruins in 1397, and he may well by then have left Coleshill, as his son is known to have done in 1399.

ROBERT WYNNYNG in 1379 still officially held a virgate which had probably previously belonged to his father, but in fact he had by then illegally left the manor and gone to live at 'Benerle'. For many years the homage were regularly ordered to recover him, but the lord evidently met with little co-operation from the village. Then his wife, Agnes, died, and the court roll recording this fact, reveals the circumstances of his flight. During his service as reeve of Coleshill he had got deeply into debt. Unable to pay his arrears he had preferred to leave and make a living elsewhere. His wife was apparently allowed to continue farming his land without prejudice (although she probably did not recover the reeve's quittance of rent). On her death the holding went to JOHN BAKER (see above). Her son soon afterwards took up half a virgate but some time before 1390 joined his father 'the homage do not know where'.

WILLIAM STANLAKE died in 1397. During his tenancy his holding had gone downhill, and when JOHN CLERK took it on two years later he was exempted from a year's rent so that he could get the land into good shape again. By 1425 when William Kyppyng held it 'a close called Stanlakes' had been
created and the rent may have been raised. There are no Stanlakes in R.1424.

JOHN ODAM in 1383 formed one of the working (and possibly crop-sharing) partnerships noted in connection with Robert Preost and William Leveson. He and John Mathen, later described as his relative, together took on a toft and 1½ virgates, undertaking to do all accustomed services for the virgate and commuting these of the half-virgate. Heriot, it was agreed, was to be paid on the death of the surviving tenant. In 1391 Odam's status changed drastically. He sold his original virgate to John Govayr, and sold out his share in the partnership to his partner. What happened to the partners or their land after this is unknown.

THOMAS ODAM had acquired another virgate by R.1395. All his land was in the lord's hand in 1421 and in 1422 was divided among the tenants in exchange for tenant land taken into demesne.

JOHN TAYLOR. Taylor is one of the few legible surnames in the fragmentary rental of 1348, which mentions William Taylor, cottager. By R.1379 this particular cottage was occupied by a family with a different name and a John Taylor was a virgator. He held 1½ virgates in R.1395. This land was in the lord's hand in 1406. R.1424 mentions 'Taylors-close' and the name is mentioned in a correction to the
Rental: "from (Christian name illegible).... Taylor holding in Burkirdstone 7/8 beside 4d assised rent payable at Burkirdstone." Evidently this family still had a sizable holding elsewhere, and much later, in 1458, appeared again as tenants at Coleshill. In that year James Taylor came into court and took up a messuage for himself and his wife Joan, arranging with the lord that on the death of either the survivor was to pay 3/4 as heriot. This 'commutation in advance' also probably secured the reversion of the messuage to the survivor. There are no Taylors in R.1473.

JOHN HERT had increased his holding to 2½ virgates by R.1395 but William Duyk held his land by 1424 and his cottage had gone to still another tenant.

THOMAS SHEPHERD is not subsequently mentioned in Coleshill records (but see JOHN SHEPHERD, ½-virgator, possibly his brother.)

SIMON WHYDING died in 1382, when his land went to another family.

JOHN HOGHURD - no subsequent mention. He was no longer holding land in R.1395.
Of course, there are several tenants who do not appear in R.1395 and who acquired land in the manor between 1395 and R.1424. They are included here.

**Omitted tenants: tenants with holdings of a virgate or more.**

JOHN POLEYN in 1385 took up a messuage, toft, and 2½ virgates with pasture for 50 sheep in Northmede. This specification of grazing rights other than by the usual formula 'cum pertinenciis' is noteworthy, and may represent a valuable addition to the holding. Possibly Poleyn was a 'foreigner' interested in acquiring extra grazing rights. The impression that he was not an ordinary customary tenant is reinforced by the terms on which he took up this land: he paid £1.6.8. entry fine — much higher than the usual rate — for which he was granted a lease for three lives; a comparatively rare procedure at Coleshill. He was to be liable to payment of heiroth, as was his wife, was to owe suit of court, hidage, and all 'forimsec services'. He was obliged not only to keep his buildings in good repair, but to build a new sheep-cote ('avla bidentium') within four years. R.1395 confirms Poleyn's superior status by describing him as 'Free tenant for life by agreement with the lord'. The name does not appear in subsequent rentals or court rolls.
THOMAS AT HULLE. The Hulle family had held, and lost, land in Coleshill before 1379, for in that year Richard Lynt paid rent for two virgates 'which John at Hulle' held. In 1381-2 Thomas Hulle, probably as quite a young man, took over a share in the PREOST-LEVESON partnership, and by 1395 was farming in partnership with Nicholas MAYLLARD. An entry in the account for 1422 shows that all Hulle's land had by then been enclosed by the lord in the 'separate pasture at Wick'. In 1426-7 he and his wife rented two 'gardens' which cannot have provided an adequate living. When Thomas died in 1427 his widow was allowed to succeed him as tenant with the usual proviso 'while she remains single and chaste'. These conditions were not fulfilled and the holding (2 half-virgates) was forfeited next year on her illegal marriage to WILLIAM KYPPYNG, junior. The forfeiture, however, was little more than a formality, performed to satisfy the requirements of 'custom', for in the next court Kyppyng took over his wife's land; the 6/8 fine which he paid was evidently enough both to secure him the land and legitimise the marriage.

JOHN BRAY had probably also been briefly involved in the PREOST-LEVESON partnership. In 1396 he sold out his share to Nicholas Mayllard, who had taken it over. After this transaction he seems to have been landless. (See also
Ralph Bray).

John Bassett sold all his land to Thomas Rylle in 1388-9.

Thomas Rylle. (See above).

Henry Gybochen surrendered his two holdings just before the compilation of R.1379. The land had greatly deteriorated during his tenure and was still in the lord's hand in 1406.

John Streote left the manor in the early 1380's, with two other (male) members of his family.

John Dale had acquired a messuage and virgate in 1395. He took up a further half-virgate in 1399, which was in the lord's hand in 1406 and was later taken permanently into the demesne. Dale does not appear in R.1424.

Thomas Smyth. This, like all occupational surnames, has to be treated with caution. Although the majority of surnames were probably well established by the fifteenth century, some were still variable. 'Mulleward' for instance, was at Coleshill the name given to the miller at the time, and passed on to his successors at the trade. Nevertheless, there does seem to have been some continuity of craft within the Smyth family. In 1379 Thomas Smyth surrenders his holding called 'the Smithesplace' and in the rental
of that year William Smyth held 'a forge once William Faber's.' The Thomas Smyth that we are concerned with here held the forge 'and two virgates which he claims to have acquired from Roger AT BRYGGE in fee simple.' This was a shaky claim, for although at Brygge may have been free, his land was not, and it should have changed hands in court according to custom. Another tenant held Smyth's land by 1424.

   JOHN SAWYER in 1395 held a messuage and virgate which had once belonged to John BROX, one of the richest tenants of R.1379. There is no subsequent mention of him.

   HENRY LACY's land was confiscated by the lord in 1392-1393. The court-roll does not give a reason.

   THOMAS SWELE in 1395 held two half-virgates, one of which he had acquired in 1384, and two small additional parcels of land. No subsequent reference.

   JOHN HARDY took up a messuage and virgate in 1395. No subsequent reference.

   JOHN GOVAYR held 1½ virgates in R.1395 but is not in R.1424. His descendant acquired a half-virgate in 1427-8 and surrendered part of his land in 1451.

   JOHN MATHEW held 1½ virgates in R.1395; no subsequent reference.
JOHN WYKE, similarly, held two virgates in R. 1395: no subsequent reference.

JOHN CUBBELL was farming two virgates at the end of the fourteenth century, and leasing odd acres from the demesne, probably to supplement his supply of pasture for his flock of some 70 sheep. He left the manor in the 1390's.

RICHARD CUBBELL, possibly his son, held a virgate and close in the 1420's. He, too, probably had a considerable amount of stock, for at one point he bought 30 acres of standing hay from the lord. When he died in 1427, his widow held his land, but forfeited it on her marriage to a 'foreigner'. Another Richard CUBBELL, also a virgator, probably of the same generation, was leasing out his holding and making his living as a miller in the 1420's. He surrendered his land in 1428. A third Richard CUBBELL (possibly identifiable with the miller; there is no evidence either way) held a virgate and two closes in the 1440's and owned a flock of at least 50 sheep in the 1450's.
Tenants of R.1379: tenants with half a virgate.

These smaller tenants, like their kind everywhere, left little of their history in the records. The rentals record their names, but the court rolls are, in general, uninformative about a class whose stock was not large enough to be involved to any great extent in trespass cases, and whose conveyances of land may possibly have been on such a small scale as to escape the attention of the lord's officials.

Very few of the surnames of the smallholders of R.1379 re-appear in R.1424; even fewer than is the case with the larger tenants whose histories have been outlined above. Although the evidence permits only the barest indication of what happened to these insignificant tenants and their land, the accumulation of these scanty references does, I think, have some meaning.

JOHN EDWARD took up a messuage and 1½ virgates released by the death of JOHN PREOST, but he had either died or surrendered this land by R.1395.

RALPH CARTER left the manor in 1381. He was either a pauper or he took his belongings with him, as he paid no heriot 'because he has no goods or chattels.'
WALTER LEGH no longer held by 1395.

JOHN DUYKE bore one of the few surnames that recur in both R.1395 and R.1424. In 1395 he was described as a 'cottager' but by 1424 the family had prospered to the extent of including two landholders, with 1½ virgates each and two closes between them.

JOHN ABEL surrendered his half-virgate in 1381. Either he, or a relative of the same name, described as a pauper, surrendered a half-virgate in 1391 and was classed as a 'cottager' in R.1395.

HENRY ABEL surrendered his holding in 1388-9, but held another half-virgate by R.1395. There are no Abels in R.1424.

JOHN LEVYNG surrendered all his land because of his inability to work it in 1381.

JOHN POMERLAY died in 1380 and Agnes POMERLAY's land went to John Preost between 1379 and 1387. These were the last survivors of a Coleshill family of the early fourteenth century.

JOHN MULLE exchanged his holding in 1382. He was probably a cottager in 1395. The name does not appear in R.1424, but it may have been an occupational surname.
JOHN ALEYN had evidently lost some land by 1379 for another tenant then held 'a virgate once John Aleyn's, but he himself was then still a half-virgator. He was said to have left the demesne in 1381 'with no goods or chattels' but R.1395 records John Aleyn, cottager, possibly a relative.

'Omitted' half-virgators

WALTER MARTIN took a half-virgate in 1388. In 1392 'John Martin, Schlatter' (? slater) and Walter Martin both had their holdings confiscated as a punishment for not performing labour services and falling into arrears with their rent; this is why neither appears in R.1395.

JOHN SHEPTON took a messuage and half-virgate in 1391 but does not appear in R.1395.

JOHN NAPPER surrendered his holding in 1391-3, paying his heriot in cash because he had no stock.

THOMAS ELYS took up the smithy holding in 1395.

ROGER GOURDY and JOHN WHITTOCK held half-virgates in R.1395. No subsequent reference.

AGNES LOK LOKES, widow of the John Lok who held in 1379, surrendered her late husband's holding in 1394, taking in exchange a messuage and close. She was probably still alive in 1404, but there is no-one of this surname in R.1424.
WALTER CHUNTE and his wife held a half-virgate from the early 1370's until they surrendered it in 1381.

Tenants of 1379: cottagers and smallholders.

ROGER HURDE. Another of the few surnames that re-appears in R.1424. Roget at Hurde was a cottager in 1379; Henry HURDE a half-virgator in 1424. Neither appears in the intervening rental.

RICHARD PURYTON in 1379 and 1395 was tenant of a smallholding in the neighbouring vill of Bescot, part of which belonged to Coleshill manor. Although R.1424 does not include it, the name Purton crops up frequently in the Coleshill records until the 1480's.

'Omitted' cottagers and smallholders.

ROBERT RYNGEWOODE died a pauper in 1391.

JOHN GILLMORE, a cottager in R.1395, is not subsequently mentioned.

JOHN COUPER held the mill in 1395 on a four-year lease, and rented a cottage in 1398.

The tenants of 1379: Conclusion.

This information is difficult to summarise without imposing an arbitrary symmetry which the evidence does not

1. This was probably a place-of-origin surname: there are several villages called Purton in the neighbourhood of Coleshill.
warrant. First, there are a large number of tenants about whom we know no more than that they held land, for instance, in 1379, but do not appear in the rentals of 1395 and 1424. This is not startling: death must have accounted for many.

A man of an age to hold land in 1379 - say fifteen years old - would have been thirty-one in 1395 and 60 in 1424. In fact, of course, the majority of tenants in 1379 must have been much older than this; a sizeable proportion of them must have died by 1395 and very probably all would have been dead by 1424. But while the death of a tenant is not an economically important fact, the death of a sur-name is. Very few of the tenants whose death is recorded were succeeded by a son or a daughter.¹ A man's widow, it is true, held his land after his death, but it was seldom that she continued to farm it for long. If she did not remarry, and cases of remarriage are few, she was likely to surrender the land in favour of a smaller holding.² As elsewhere, the customs of inheritance had broken down, undermined here, it seems by the tendency to short-lived

¹. CHAPMAN, ODAM, BAKER.

². E.G. Agneslokh.
tenancies and the active market in land.

If many of the tenants died without heirs, many left the manor. Three members of the STREOTE family in the 1380's. JOHN ALEYN, once a virgator but now apparently a pauper, in 1381; Ralph CARTER, also a pauper, in the same year; WYNNING, the reeve and his son before 1379; William CHAPMAN in 1391; CRYPS, unwilling or unable to farm his land, in 1382.

Other families, while remaining on the manor, were obviously declining. Four of the half-virgators of R.1379 were classed as 'cottagers' in R.1395. Many families were reducing their holdings: LENYNG, HOGGES, STANLAKE, GYBOCHEN ODAM and LACY, MARTIN, LEGH, ABEL (a 'pauper in 1391') CHUNTE and BRAY among them.

Again, age may have been an important factor: an old man would be anxious to reduce his commitments.

How can one account for the remaining family names which disappeared between R.1379 and R.1424?

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1. Although this may have been due merely to a change in terminology. The tenants concerned are DUYKE and MULLE, CLERK and ALEYN.
Firstly, a large number of tenants surrendered all, or nearly all their land; at least eight tenants are known to have done this: (HOGGES, ODAM, GYBOCHEN, ABEL, LEVYNG, NAPPER, LOK, CHUNTE). Two more forfeited their holdings: (LACY, MARTIN). An even larger group is formed by those who were succeeded by other tenants, but, whether because they had died, or surrendered their land, is unknown. Some, like BRAY and BASSETT, may have sold out to other tenants. Some may have become sub-tenants. But in the case of nineteen tenants we know only that others held their land by a certain date. (BROK, BOLLE, FORD, BATEMAN, JORDAN, BRUGGE, KURKEBY, HERT, SHEPHERD, HOGHURD, DALLE, SMITH, SAWYER, SWELE, HARDY, EDWARD, LEGH, ABEL, SHUPTON.) We can assume that one of the following explanations must account for these changes of tenure, although we cannot, of course, decide which is the more likely: The tenant had either:

- surrendered all his land to the lord
- sold it to another tenant
- left the manor
- died without heirs

In contrast, some peasant families were obviously prospering, or at least retaining their holdings intact: (GOVAYR, CUBBELL, BAKER, CHAPMAN, TAYLOR, HERT, POLEYN, HULLE, MAYNARD, DALLE, among the larger tenants, DUKE, DAVE, FURYTON among the smallholders). But not all of them
even these comparatively stable families survived into the fifteenth century. It is especially interesting that there are a few families (e.g. EDWARD, KYRKEBY) who could with equal justification be classed either among the 'prospering' or among the 'disappearing' peasants. A tenant who seemed to be acquiring land on quite a large scale at one stage in his career, might be found quite soon afterwards to have lost a large part of his holding through sale or surrender, or even to have become completely landless. Many tenancies lasted only for very few years. Such instability was a very important feature in late-medieval village society and one which runs through the histories of many Coleshill tenants.

Conditions in the village at this time, although they spelt decline for some families, cannot have been universally unattractive, for new tenants were moving into Coleshill and, to some extent, replacing the old families that had 'disappeared.'
The tenants of 1424

The period between the rentals of 1424 and 1473 saw no such dramatic drop in population as took place between 1379 and 1424; in fact, there was probably a slight recovery. Nevertheless, the same characteristics of instability, short tenures, accumulation of land by a few peasants, and the apparent economic extinction of others, were still present. It is necessary at this point to refer back to the figures for the total number of land transactions, which rose steeply in 1427-8, to the amount of land 'in the lord's hand which reached its fifteenth century peak in the years 1421 - 1424, and to bear in mind that after 1421, possibly earlier, the demesne arable was at farm.

Tenants of 1424 with over one virgate.

JOHN FOX in 1424 held four virgates and a cottage, all probably acquired between 1379 and 1406. In 1430 he had left the demesne to take the job of bailiff on another manor. By this time he held only one virgate and nothing accrued to the lord as heriot 'because he has no goods of his own'. (Various goods of the lord's in his possession were valued). His house by then was in ruins.

THOMAS HALLE. The Halle family first acquired land in Coleshill in 1381, when Thomas Halle took up 1½ virgates, paying the large entry fine of £1.0.0. Unusually, there
were seven witnesses to the transaction; The Prior of Edington himself, the seneschall, two brothers from the Priory, and two 'clerks'. By 1424 the Halle holding consisting of 2½ virgates. Thomas' widow succeeded him in 1424 or 1425, and in 1426 surrendered her land to her son Richard, who added to it another two virgates and two tofts. This would look like the foundation of a substantial peasant fortune (well over 100 acres) were it not for the fact that only two years later Richard Halle surrendered the entire holding. Eventually, like so much Coleshill land, it went to the KYPPING family.

THOMAS CARSWELL. The Carswell family, judging from the number of appearances they make in the court rolls, played an important part in the village, but they never accumulated land on a large or permanent scale, and nothing more is heard of them after the middle of the fifteenth century. Their origins in the village went back at least as far as the beginning of the previous century, however, for an account of 1316 refers to Richard Cromwell. Alice Carswell, a cottager, was apparently the only member of the family holding in R.1379, but Thomas CARSWELL was leasing a considerable amount of pasture in 1404 and had by then probably acquired the two virgates he held in
R.1424. He died in 1437. John CARSWELL, virgator, leased out his land in 1434 and left the manor two years later 'with no goods or chattels.'

However, the Carswell's importance lies not in the amount of land they held, but in the light that the court rolls throw on their activities as sheep-owners and employers of labour - perhaps surer indices of status. Throughout the 1420's Thomas Carswell was presented for a series of offences typical of the prosperous peasant; he 'maliciously annoyed several tenants in the Christian and secular courts', he frequently exceeded his stint with his horses, geese, and sheep. In 1427 he was charged by four different tenants with seven trespasses by his sheep in their corn. The year before he had taken part, with a dozen others, in what looks like a case of communal pulling-down of the lord's fences. Carswell had a sizeable flock of probably well over 400 sheep and the many over-stocking and trespass offences of which he was guilty highlight the chronic shortage of pasture in the village, even for a tenant who could afford to lease expensive extra grazing land from the lord. In fact, fines for overstocking the commons, when they occurred as regularly as did Carswell's, must have taken on the nature of rent for pasture. For instance, Carswell one year grazed 40 sheep for 19 weeks on
the lord's land without licence. Trespass on this scale cannot have gone un-noticed for so long; there must have been a tacit agreement to allow him to do so, and to accept the shilling with which he paid in lieu of rent. Carswell's 'serviens' is mentioned in 1423.

WILLIAM BOYNTON. BONETON. This family had also held in Coleshill during the fourteenth century, but they seem not to have been landholders in 1379. William Boneton held two virgates in 1424, but they had passed to the CUBBELL family five years later.

LAURENCE DYKER held 1½ virgates in R.1424 which he surrendered ten years later.

WILLIAM CUTTULL in 1424 held 1½ virgates. He leased John Carswell's virgate in 1434. Robert SKYNNER held all Cuttall's land by 1447.

'Omitted' tenants with over one virgate

JOHN PAYNE in 1445 took up a half-virgate which he exchanged for a virgate two years later. He had acquired a further virgate before his death in 1457.

HENRY FRANKELYNE in 1450 took over the large HALLE holding of two messuages and 2½ virgates, but two years later left the manor with all his goods and chattels.
WILLIAM WYLKYNs in 1487 took up a messuage and three virgates near the bridge. He was the village miller at this time but had surrendered the mill before 1492.

WILLIAM BAYLY took up a half-virgate in 1429 and two virgates in 1430. From the conditions attached to the latter transaction, it seems that he was not an ordinary customary tenant; he was probably a free man and a 'foreigner'. He did fealty 'with the condition that he shall be obliged to behave well as a customary tenant ... and above all customs'. He may have left the manor the following year. A William Bailly was active in Coleshill in the 1490's, illegally subletting his land.

RICHARD CATON took over Bailly's land in 1432.

JOHN SOLAS took up two virgates in 1448, securing the reversion to his son, who may have inherited out of court.

ROBERT SPENSER took up a half-virgate in 1424 and another virgate a few years later. He left the manor in 1429, leaving his holding in very bad repair.

Tenants of 1424: Virgaters

ROBERT WORKMAN's land was taken up by Richard CUBBELL five years later.
WALTER AT FOLDE. Land belonging to an earlier generation of this family was surrendered in the late 1370's by Henry GYBOCHEN and remained in the lord's hand until 1372. The holding was then split up; part was taken by another tenant, the rest was probably taken into demesne. Walter at Folde, virgator in 1424, 'left his land' in 1429. There was apparently no stock from which the lord could claim a heriot, and as the holding needed extensive repairs, some of Folde's goods were seized and auctioned off to meet the cost.

RICHARD HELPS' virgate went to another tenant between 1424 and 1429.

RICHARD CUBBELL died in 1428. His widow held his land for a year, then forfeited it by her marriage to a 'foreigner.'

ROBERT TRYGNELL died in 1449, evidently with no heir except his widow who was allowed to continue to tenant until the Michaelmas following his death.

ROBERT DUKE added two closes in 1437 to his virgate and close of 1424.
HENRY RUSSELL, who had taken up a virgate in 1427, surrendered his holding, by then diminished by half, twenty years later, and leased a cottage instead. He must by then have been an old man, and this must have been a common procedure among older tenants unable to farm their original holding.

JOHN STONE was subletting his virgate in 1427, when he was ordered to 'move his dwelling back to the said holding'. Two years later he was reported to have left the manor, but he may have departed earlier, when he first sub-let his land.

(ROBERT DEY was also convicted of sub-letting in the same court - there were four cases in all - but as no seizure of his land is recorded, he probably obeyed the lord's injunction to call in the lease. For this reason it is unknown how much land he held.)

The tenants of 1424: half virgaters.

HENRY HURDE. ROGER HURDE, cottager, appears in R.1379; John Hurde, alias Newe, left the manor in 1427, but a Robert Newe held 1½ virgates in R.1395. It is uncertain to which of these families the Henry Hurde of 1424 was related, especially as Hurde may have been an occupational surname.
JOHN RICHE, a pauper, surrendered his land in 1423, although he still appears in R. 1424. An Alice Riche, half-virgator, is mentioned in an annotation to R. 1379.

GEORGE NICHOLAS, a cottager in R. 1395, took a half-virgate in 1398. By 1427 he was illegally sub-letting his holding, and it was forfeited in that year.

WILLIAM GREGORY, after adding two closes to his half-virgate of 1424, left the manor in 1429 'the homage do not know how or why.'

JOHN GOVAYR held 1½ virgates in R. 1395 and acquired another half-virgate in 1427, but R. 1424 only ranks him as a cottager. Possibly two tenants of the same name are involved.
'Omitted' half-virgators.

(Only those tenants holding, or chiefly mentioned, before 1473 are mentioned here, and those holding after 1473 after the section of the tental of that date.)

JOHN BRIDPORT: took up a half-virgate in 1427.
JOHN COMPTON: a half-virgate in 1432.
JOHN AMBROSE alias WATT: took a half-virgate in 1449.
JOHN WARNER died in 1452. His widow inherited his holding.

None of these are subsequently mentioned.
RICHARD ROLFE left the manor in 1452. This was certainly a hurried flight, for the rent collector was ordered to distrain upon his standing corn to raise money for repairs to Rolfe's holding and to meet his arrears of rent.

THOMAS SKILATTER left the manor in 1435, almost a pauper, for his goods and chattels were valued at 3/4 and granted to the farmer towards repairs to the messuage.

WALTER WEBBE took a½ virgate in 1458. ROBERT WEBBE surrendered a cottage in the same year. There is no further mention of the family.

The Tenants of 1473

This rental gives very little information about the size of holding, the normal entry running only 'A.B. pro redditu tenementi sui ....'. Thus, it is impossible to
classify tenants by the amount of land they held. Although rents are no longer based on the formal 10/10 per virgate which obtained in 1424, which would be a reliable indication of the size of holdings, nevertheless there is a handful of tenants who paid significantly higher rents than the rest and who were obviously the more substantial landholders.

THOMAS AYSSHE, for instance, paying between £1 and £2, and also renting the mill in 1463, completely changed his land; having surrendered a messuage and two virgates, he then took up a further messuage and three virgates. An obvious motive for such a transaction would be consolidation of strips; and a case of direct exchange by licence from the lord appears elsewhere in the court rolls. Aysshe's new holding went to another tenant in 1468.

WILLIAM AYSSHE also held in R.1473 probably a half-virgate.

WALTER PURTON probably holding two virgates, probably left the manor in the late 70's.

THOMAS TETTEBURY was leasing land in Coleshill in the 1450's and 60's. He died in or before 1480.

ROBERT ANGELL. The only court roll reference to the family is in 1458, when John Angell leased a cottage. Robert Angell probably belonging to a different generation,
held approximately a virgate in 1473.

JOHN JAYE held over one virgate; the only other reference is to his overstocking the common in 1446.

THOMAS SAUNDER. An earlier generation of this family is represented by John Saunder, appearing in the court rolls about the middle of the century, holding three virgates by 1449 and evidently a substantial peasant. Thomas Saunders' name then begins to replace his, once for overstocking the common with 20 sheep, and constantly for failing to repair the buildings belonging to his holding. Saunder had very probably been sub-letting his land, for in 1493 his goods and chattels were distrained on and in 1494 he temporarily forfeited his holding, and was forbidden to alienate or sell it without licence. Five or six years later Saunder surrendered a virgate and died the following year. He left a half-virgate, paying no heriot 'because he was not admitted as tenant (possibly coincidentally the former tenant of this land, and the tenant who immediately took up the virgate Saunder had surrendered, were the same).

HENRY PEPPYS. Peppys surrendered his 1473 holding (probably a virgate) in 1479-80, taking on instead the somewhat
speculative liability of two virgates in such poor condition that he was specifically exempted from payment of heriot on this account, and assigned a year's rent and another half-virgate. Although he seems to have improved the land considerably, Peppys surrendered his two virgates in 1487; neither he nor WILLIAM PEPPYS, who took up a half-virgate in 1490 appear in subsequent court rolls.

THOMAS, WILLIAM, and JOHN BOUCHER. As always when several members of a family appear simultaneously in the records, there is a problem of distinguishing the different generations. John, Thomas, and William Boucher may have been brothers. Thomas' holding in this rental is probably a half-virgate which he acquired in 1450 and which went in 1480 to Henry Peppys (see above), probably on his death (he had by then held land for thirty years). William Boucher similarly acquired a half-virgate in 1454, which was held by ROBERT HEREFORD in 1480, again probably on Boucher's death. WILLIAM PLEYDELL probably took John Boucher's land in 1490, and he, too, was probably dead by then. The Bouchers were tenants in Coleshill in 1520 when Walter Boucher had a half-virgate and were well-established copyholders under Edward VI.

1. Walter Boucher's widow and John Boucher with two virgates in R.5. Ed.VI.
WALTER BURBACHE, probably a half-virgator, surrendered his land before 1480.

JOHN HYNDE, half-virgator, died in 1486, succeeded by his widow. His heriot was paid in money ('ex convencione') by agreement.

WILLIAM SKYNNER was probably also a half-virgator. It is difficult to disentangle the history of his family and their land, although a reasonable amount of information is available. The half-virgate which Skynner held in 1473 had been acquired or inherited in 1460. He had previously (1449) held 2½ virgates which he surrendered in 1463. (A Robert Skinner was farming in Coleshill in the 1440's, but there is no clue as to how much land he held.) Neither member of the family appears directly in court rolls or rentals subsequent to 1473.

EDWARD COKE; half-virgator. A similar dearth of references after R.1473. THOMAS MASTALL held his land in R.1520.

'Omitted' late fifteenth century tenants

ROBERT HEREFORD, previously a half-virgator, increased his holding by a virgate in 1480, paying entry fine 'pro ingressu et statu habendo'.

THOMAS COLBROND took a half-virgate in 1491. He was probably not a native customary tenant, for he agreed to
pay heriot 'when it shall occur' - this condition would have been taken for granted with an ordinary villein. In 1492 he was given permission to exchange his land with Walter BOUCHER. Each tenant did fealty and was formally admitted, but paid no fine. By 1500 Colbrond held two virgates.

RICHARD PALMER surrendered a cottage and a half-virgate in 1492 (presumably he had acquired this holding after R.1473) and a messuage, virgate and close in 1500.

THOMAS FYLTON took Palmer's half-virgate (above) immediately upon its surrender. He left the manor in 1499.

JOHN WHETEALE took a half-virgate in 1493 which he forfeited in 1499 for illegally sub-letting.

JOHN JACARD held a half-virgate in an outlying section of the manor in Buscot (a neighbouring village) in 1527.

THOMAS PLUMMER took a cottage in 1496 and illegally leased a virgate from William BARYLL in 1498.

JOHN CUBBELL II must have been a more important tenant than the other members of his family, for having surrendered 3 virgates in 1466, he still held a virgate in 1473. He, too, had a sizeable flock of sheep.
ROBERT CUBBELL, whose name begins to appear in the Coleshill court rolls in the 1420’s, may have belonged to an Eastrop branch of the family. If so, he was an important figure in both villages, holding three virgates and two closes in Coleshill, and probably a fairly large holding in Eastrop as well. He owned at least four horses and 200 sheep. He was stockman (instaurator) for all the Priory’s manors in 1432, bailiff of Coleshill parsonage and reeve of Eastrop.

JOHN CUBBELL III was the most successful of all the Cubbell family, but he had not apparently made his career in the village, but in the town. In 1506 it was presented that 'John Cubbell, nativus regardaus huivs manerii' was living near Newbury, and said to be worth 100m. Repeated orders to bring him back were, naturally enough, unsuccessful.
Firmarii

Part at least of the demesne at Coleshill was leased sometime between 1406 and 1421, probably as part of a general policy of demesne leasing adopted by Edington Priory on all its manors.

WILLIAM KYPPING, SENIOR, the first firmarius, was one of a family which established itself in the village during the first half of the fifteenth century. From 1421 (possibly earlier) to 1432, he leased 106 acres of arable land, 10 acres of meadow, various additional pastures, the glebe lands, parsonage stock and the tithes of corn and hay. He had the use of some of the farm buildings and was responsible in part for their upkeep. He was officially obliged to answer for the crop of 84 acres but it is doubtful whether this part of his contract was carried out.

It was not until his lease came to an end that Kypping acquired any customary land. On his 'retirement' he took on a large holding and the farm of the demesne was passed on to his son. In contrast, this firmarius, WILLIAM JUNIOR was already a considerable local figure. He had been collector of rents during his father's lease, was sub-letting
a virgate holding in 1425, and in 1429 really established himself by his marriage to a rich widow. By the early 1430's he was probably farming, besides the demesne, some 110 acres.

The family still contained two fairly substantial tenants in the late fifteenth century, who between them took over most of the land their predecessors had accumulated. But by 1520 there were no more Kyppynge in the village and their land had been taken over by the prosperous sixteenth-century yeomen who had succeeded them.

WILLIAM SCLATTEFORD, Firmarius from 1456-1467, was a substantial tenant in 1473, but does not seem to have held any customary land before that date. His descendant held in 1551.

WILLIAM WHELOR, firmarius in 1473, and THOMAS WHELOR, in 1520, do not seem to have held any customary land at all.
Fifteenth century Coleshill presented many of the characteristics already shown to have been present in the fourteenth century; the disintegration of inheritance customs, except in the case of widows; sudden declines of fortune not always to be explained by the advanced age of the tenant, and sometimes presaging his departure from the manor. Again, individual histories bear out the impression given by the land transaction figures of a crisis in the late 1420's and early 1430's: 7 tenants, probably with their families, left Coleshill between 1427 and 1432, while only four 'emigrations' are recorded for the rest of the period.

There were more cases of sub-letting during this period, but again we probably only have evidence of the most blatant and large-scale cases; those involving a whole tenement rather than a few acres, and judging by the accompanying injunctions to 'move his dwelling back to the said holding', those in which the tenant was probably living or farming outside Coleshill as well.

But the outstanding feature of fifteenth century Coleshill was the rise of a peasant aristocracy which came to nothing. The figures who dominate the records: the CARSWELLS, KYPPYNGS, CUBBELLS, HULLES, and BAKERS, seem at
first glance to be the founding generation of a prosperous yeomanry. They were building up large holdings, making advantageous marriages, and securing the reversion of their land to their sons. Some were sheep-farming on a moderate scale and two, at least, were prepared to take on the responsibility of leasing the demesne. They were rich enough to employ servants and farm labourers, and to entice the lord's famuli away from him; and powerful enough to over-run their neighbours' rights of common.

And yet, of the rich yeomen families of the village in the mid-sixteenth century, not one had fifteenth-century antecedents there. Of the names, CHAMFENYES, PLEYDELL, PERFECT, SKLATTERFORD, and WEXES, who were the richer copyholders of the 1550's, only Sklatterford appears before the very end of the fifteenth century, and the Sklatterford of 1551 was by no means an important tenant, although his predecessor had been the farmer of the demesne.

Moreover, the new tenants who moved into the village around the mid-fifteenth century - BRIDPORT, COMPTON, AMBROSE, BAILLY, WEBBE, do not seem to have been able to consolidate their position any more successfully than had

the older-established families; none of them appear in R.1520.

Why were the conditions of the fifteenth century, apparently and initially so favourable to the establishment of a peasant aristocracy, eventually inimical to it? Or, to put the question in another way, what was it in the resources or policy of these families that at first established them to build up a strong position and then prevented them consolidating it?

These questions have a wider relevance than to Coleshill alone, and the following chapter will consider some tentative explanations with reference to all the manors which we have been considering.
I. Previous chapters have shown how, during the later middle ages, the fall in population and the leasing of manorial demesnes brought more land on to the peasant land-market, and how this market was gradually freed from the restrictions of customary inheritance. Late fifteenth and early sixteenth century rentals have shown how a small class of tenants was able to take advantage of this situation to build up large holdings. The court rolls illustrate the process by which tenants, by holding long leases and copyholds, tried to counteract the decline of inheritance, and to ensure the heritability of their land. But the high 'turnover' figures prove that, for many, this bid for security was unsuccessful: the theme of the decline, of many middling peasant families from Woolstone and Coleshill, while not necessarily a sign of individual economic failure;¹ tells us something about the villages concerned, and is perhaps a sign that for these families at least, they could no longer provide an adequate livelihood.

¹ For examples of prosperous peasants leaving the manor, see, e.g. John CURRELL at Coleshill and Eastrop; CURTAYS at Brightwaltham.
In short, this was a time of increased stratification in village society: 'the increased negotiability of land led to an intensification of peasant economies, not its moderation.' This development is paralleled in other regions. For instance, Dr. Hilton has described how, in Leicestershire 'a new social stratification of the peasantry took place. Those peasants who were already richer than their fellows could take advantage of the economic embarrassment of both lords and poor peasants... Even at the height of the Middle Ages class differentiation among the peasantry was very marked; this differentiation was even greater on the eve of the dissolution... amongst those cultivating their own land... great social differences existed... These inequalities were not simply the (somewhat exaggerated) inheritance of the medieval village: they resulted from the breakdown of the old village structure; we have seen the breach in customary tenures in the fourteenth century. The break-up of demesnes and of traditional tenements meant the growth in importance of various forms of leasehold tenure... Leasehold tenure was, in fact, not only, not even primarily, the symbol of the lost security of the customary tenant. It was also

the characteristic tenure by which men were shortly to enter the ranks of the gentry held their land.¹

Nearer to Berkshire, in Wiltshire, "the more enterprising manorial tenants in the later fourteenth and fifteenth centuries were in a strong position... A fresh field of investment of their ready money was ... opened to the tenantry."²

What was it in late-medieval conditions that brought prosperity to one tenant and decline to another? Why, for example, was it that, of the customary tenants who held land in Brightwaltham in 1284, the YONGE's survived to become rich local yeomen in the fifteenth century, while a dozen other families: BISOTHEWODE, DE CRUCE, EVERSOLE, FABER? JURDAN, and SMOKYER among them, lost all their land or left the manor during the fourteenth? Why did the POPES prosper at South Moreton, the CUBBELLS and CARSWELLS at Coleshill, TOVY at Englefield, while so many of their neighbours disappeared from the records? Were purely demographic factors, as Postan suggests, vital in determining who were the 'natural buyers and sellers' of land?

Did these families decline, or appear to decline, for instance, merely because they could not produce enough male heirs? This was certainly a factor which could mean the extinction of a line further up the social scale, and it was equally relevant to the peasantry. A sufficiency of able-bodied males in a peasant family was important not only as a source of heirs who would carry on the family name, but as a source of labour-power to work the holding. One reason that the CUBBELLIS at Coleshill, and Eastrop managed to retain their land so successfully for so long was simply because the family was so prolific.

An adequate supply of sons did not of itself ensure prosperity, and a large family, as has often been pointed out, could be a burden on a small tenement. When WILLIAM KYBBULL left Eastrop in 1441 with his two sons and four daughters,¹ or when THOMAS CURTAYS left Brightwaltham with his six offspring in 1435², we suspect that these large families, although not necessarily poor, had found it difficult to make an adequate living in their native villages.

Although it is impossible to extract any firm evidence from our records about the size and composition of peasant

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¹ S.C.2. 208/54 8 June 20 H.VI.
² S.C.2. 153/73 June 13 H.VI.
families, the terms in which leases for lives were couched give some indication as to the availability of male heirs. There are very few cases of a tenant taking land to hold with his wife and daughter; in these clauses sons overwhelmingly preponderate.

Another factor which may have contributed to the apparent extinction of families, through transference of holdings to the female line, is the custom of inheritance by widows, which as we have seen, was by far the most durable and firmly-entrenched of all inheritance customs. Extensive inheritance by widows who later remarried and whose land then went to their second husbands, would have the effect of permanently removing tenements from one family-line to another. (Good examples of the extinction of families in this way are HULIE and NORMAN at Coleshill). Titow has shown how the existence of many marriages between young, landless, men and older widows well provided with land could result in a situation where 'the family holdings had a way of wandering about, and the notion of a family holding passing down from father to son, from generation to generation, belongs to the same brand of fiction as that of the 'typical manor'. ¹ Family holdings certainly 'had a way of wandering about' on the manors we have been

¹. Titow: op.cit. p. 31
considering, but it does not seem that the cause of this lay in a high proportion of land-transfers made on the re-marriage of widows. Such marriages seem to have been rare, and if anything rarer at the end of the period than at the beginning. Moreover, as the accompanying table shows, female tenants, whether widows or not, formed a decreasing proportion of the total recorded tenant population. (The high figure for Englefield in 1349 probably reflects an exceptional situation caused by the death of many tenants in the Plague.)
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MANOR</th>
<th>Total No. of Tenants</th>
<th>Female Tenants</th>
<th>No. of Widows</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>BRIGHTWALTHAM</td>
<td>1284</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1424-6</td>
<td></td>
<td>29</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LETCOMBE REGIS</td>
<td>1274</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1445</td>
<td>?</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SOTWELL STONOR</td>
<td>1361</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1425</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SOUTH MORETON T.H.VIII</td>
<td>1451</td>
<td>24-26</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>17</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SPEENHAMLAND</td>
<td>1376</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1428</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1453</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1458</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1546</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ENGLEFIELD</td>
<td>1349</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1402</td>
<td>53-55</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1441</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1474</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1496</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COLESHELL</td>
<td>1379</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1395</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1424</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1473</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1520</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WOOLSTONE</td>
<td>1221</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EASTROP</td>
<td>1473</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. There is an obvious contradiction here: the higher proportion of women tenants in earlier rentals suggest that widows were not remarrying as extensively than as later: the court rolls show that this was not the case. Possibly widows who had remarried still appeared in the the earlier documents under their own name, not their husbands.
As such demographic factors are so hard to trace in the records, and as they would presumably have had an equal incidence among all classes of peasants, it seems that we must look elsewhere for an explanation of the striking differences in the economic history of peasant families.

It is possible to isolate certain common factors in the histories of those families that we know to have declined. The first of these factors is the size of the holding. The half-virgators have been by far the most vulnerable. 'The village smallholders and labourers were ... the harvest-sensitive element in rural society... it is their mortality that largely accounts both for the height and for the fluctuations of overall mortality .. In all the pre-industrial societies for which evidence is available, the size of holdings greatly influenced the demographic record, births as well as deaths, of peasant families.'\footnote{Postan and Titow: *Heriots and Prices on Winchester Manors*. Ec.H.R. Second Series, Vol.XI.}

Although we cannot say anything about the death-rate among peasants of this class, the evidence points clearly to a widespread decline in their importance, to which a higher death-rate may well have contributed.
At Brightwaltham the half-virgators, who formed a third of the recorded manorial population in the late thirteenth century were only a sixth of it in the early fifteenth. By far the majority of tenants who 'disappeared' as landowners in the interval came from this class. At Letcombe Regis the large middle class of half-virgators, again a third of the tenant population in the thirteenth century, appears to have disappeared completely by 1445. At South Moreton, although there are no surviving rentals earlier than 1451, the half-virgators have disappeared between that date and the early sixteenth century. At Coleshill their decline is particularly well marked. JOHN EDWARD, RALEPH CARTER, WALTER LEIGH, JOHN ABEL, JOHN LEVYNG, JOHN ALEYN, WALTER MARTIN, JOHN NAPPER, WALTER CHUNTE, are all good examples of declining half-virgators.

The cottagers seem to have been a more economically resilient class, forming much the same proportion of the recorded manorial population at the end of our period as at the beginning. This is not surprising; the cottagers were in a way a residuary class, constantly replenished by tenants who for one reason or another were diminishing their holdings, or who could only manage
smallholdings; widows, younger sons and brothers, ageing or affrayed tenants, wage-labourers. (Although we cannot distinguish the classes that were chiefly affected, the inquisitiones Nonarum contain many references to the decline and emigration of peasants. Some of these have already been quoted (Chapter III) as they relate to villages in this study, but several others are of interest in this connection. At Boxer (?) 140 acres were uncultivated 'pro paupertate tenentium'; at Peasmore 60 acres were similarly uncultivated. At West Ilsley, a third of the arable was untitled and 'tenentes omnino per inopiam recesserunt'. At Streatley 'parochiani ville predicte depauperantur ita quod terre pro defectu tenentium iacent inculte'. The greater part of the land at Basildon and Highworth was untitled for similar reasons. Many of the figures in the Nonae Rolls may have been severely underestimated by the local jurors, but such facts as these would have been hard to fake.)

About the landless, or near-landless we have practically no information. We can infer, though, that their ranks must have been swelled by those tenants we know to have surrendered all, or most of, their land. Many of these may have left the village, many more must have died without the fact being recorded. The lord could claim no
heriot from a landless man, and the only financial interest he retained in the emigrant was the very small sum which he could exact - with difficulty - as chevage.

How did those that remained in the village support themselves? Many must have become wage-labourers and worked for the lord, or for other lords, or for their richer neighbours. With the decrease in customary services, there must have been considerable demand for local wage-labour, and cases of offenders against the Statutes of Labourers show that wage-workers might be in a favourable position vis-a-vis their employers.\(^1\) At Coleshill, the fourteenth-century ministers accounts show large numbers of labourers hired for harvest work and mowing\(^2\), and it is reasonable to suppose that many of these were local men.

References to the employers of customary tenants are fairly common, although so scattered that it may be impossible to tell if the practice was increasing or not. (At Woolstone


2. e.g. A/c 1391. S.C.6 743/9. 'In xlix hominibus et mulieribus locatis pro i die pro bladio domini sarculando .. 18/1. These 'men and women' are distinguished from 'customary tenants' who were also paid. All thrashing was done 'ad tascham' at this time, but there is no means of telling whether the threshers were customary tenants, outsiders, or landless villagers.
the examples come mostly from the 1370's and 1380's, but as several of them are concerned with the payment of excess wages, this may merely reflect the increased control the manorial administration was taking in the subject after the re-enactment of the Statute of Labourers).

The 'serviens' of William atte Fleote is mentioned in 1369, when he broke the lord's pinfold to get back some of his master's confiscated stock.¹ Atte Fleote had another 'serviens', mentioned in 1381². Other Woolstone employers were: William HANEKYN³; John and Richard Gauntbury⁴; Stephen CARTER, whose servant was accused of taking excess wages 'against the statute' in 1375,⁵ John Redewynd, clerk, whose servant left him because his wages were not paid⁶, John Polhampton the smith⁷, and Thomas Froille. The most interesting cases concern the servants of William ATTE HULLE. Three were

2. S.C.2 154/80 " " 1381.
presented for taking 'excessive' \( \text{e.g.} \) wages in 1374 and 1375\(^1\); one of them provides a vivid example of 'upward mobility'. John Poltene, employed by Hulle, probably as a farm labourer in the 1370's, rose from the ranks to take over a holding that had belonged to his employer's wife and, later, to acquire four other holdings.\(^2\)

At Eastrop, tenants' employees are mentioned in 1428 when Richard Cubbell's servants were accused of taking his sheep from the lord's pinfold (where his son John had put them)\(^3\); and in the will of Nicholas Fortey in 1474\(^4\), but there must have been many in the village, especially on the large leasehold farms.

At Coleshill 'servientes' are first mentioned in 1377\(^5\) when John atte Hulle claimed 10 years arrears of wages from his master. An interesting entry occurs in 1392 when William ? Howhurd was accused by Henry Bailly of taking away Bailly's shepherd to work for him instead. The damage to Bailly from this loss was reckoned at 40/-\(^6\).

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3. S.C. 2 203/43 8 July 6 H.VI.
5. S.C. 2 154/1 Sat. before F. SS. Simon-Jude. I R.II.
6. S.C. 2 154/1 14 May 15 R.II.
There are scattered references to employees throughout the court rolls, but of course, very many of these wage-labourers never appeared in the documents at all.

There was evidently competition among tenants for the available labour supply: the 'excessive wages' which Woolstone labourers were able to demand is proof of this, as are several cases of tenants 'abducting' their neighbours workers. Even more striking is the evidence from Coleshill that there was competition for labour between tenants and their lord: in 1398 a very interesting ordinance was proclaimed in the manorial court, and re-proclaimed the following year.

'Preceptum est omnibus tenentib quod non occupant decetero famulos domini in servicio suo'.

The immediate occasion for this ordinance was probably a case in 1398, in which John ALEYN, the lord's shepherd was accused of working for HENRY CHAPMAN while employed by the lord, but it probably reflects a long-standing source of conflict. The exceptionally high wages, by Berkshire standards, that were paid at Coleshill during the fourteenth century show that wage-labourers there were in a good

1. William Hulle paid 11/- and 13/4 in 1374, but in general the wages paid are not stated.
2. S.C.2. 154/1. 25 Jan. 21 R.II. and 4 Oct. 22 R.II.
3. See V.C.H. Berks. Vol. II. 'Economic and Social History.'
bargaining position. Over the border, in Wiltshire, threshers and 'labourers', often itinerant workers, were accused of many offences against the Statute of 1351.\textsuperscript{1}

The fact that agricultural labourers could command high wages must have made unpaid labour on the demesne, where it remained, all the more irksome. The Coleshill court rolls of the 1370's and 1380's contain many examples of refusal of labour-services, sometimes by a dozen tenants at a time, and in 1377 'omnes tenentes qui operant tempore autumnalis non operaverunt prout magnem rumorem aliorum diversorum tenentium'.\textsuperscript{2} At Woolstone what looks like a concerted refusal to work took place in 1343, when 18 tenants neglected to bind the lord's corn and 17 did their harvest work and threshing badly.\textsuperscript{3} The difficulty in exacting labour services must have swung many lords in favour of commutation.

The fact that he could get well-paid employment locally made a great deal of difference to the position of the landless, or near-landless man. A cottager and his family

\begin{itemize}
  \item \textsuperscript{1} J. I. L. No. 1018 (Assize Roll 26 Ed. III) and see Thompson. \textit{op. cit.}
  \item \textsuperscript{2} S. C. 2. 154/1. Sat. before P. SS. Simon & Jude. 1 R. II.
  \item \textsuperscript{3} S. C. 2. 154/79. F. St. Martin 1343.
\end{itemize}
could not live off their land, but they could supplement their income by working for others. The half-virgator, in a bad year, quite probably could not live off his land either, but the demands of cultivating it may well have meant that no such respite was open to him. The many actions for debt in the court rolls show that peasants very frequently had to borrow from their richer neighbours.

The Coleshill ministers' accounts show that tenants very frequently fell into arrears with the rent. For instance, the account rendered there in 1423-4 by the Firmarius, rent-collector, and Messor, shows that arrears of rent amounted to £45.11.2½ (including rent for the mill) out of a total accumulated debt of £105.3.10½.

Clearly, there is no universally valid figure for an 'adequate provision of land' for a peasant family. A smallholder with 15 acres in an area with good land might be better off than one with twice that number where the soil was poor. Although the evidence is not available in our sources, which would permit calculations of peasant budgets, it does seem that the half-virgaters were more vulnerable, as a class, than their richer or poorer.

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1. See Postan & Titow: 'Heriots & Prices' for death-rates in this class.
neighbours.

One important factor in the security of such smallholders was, and continued to be until the eighteenth century, their rights of common. Such men were, in a way, artificially protected by the open-field system, which provided them with cheap pasture for their stock, and arable of roughly equal value to their neighbours'. Their position was thus undermined in two ways during our period by two developments which accompanied the rise of the yeomanry: enclosure, and massive trespasses on the common land by peasant sheep-owners.

II. The common factors in the rise of richer tenants in village society are easier to isolate. They were outlined by Tawney and have since become commonplaces of medieval agrarian history. The most important — although by no means the only — ways by which peasants improved their position were by: 1. Demesne leasing; 2. accumulation of holdings; 3. enclosure; 4. specialisation.

1. Demesne leasing. The 'firmarii' in our records were of two types; local men and outsiders. At the beginning of this period of demesne leasing, the former probably predominated. That customary tenants were available who
were prepared to take on the financial responsibility of the demesne, is some indication of local prosperity. The best examples of local firmarii were the YONGES at Brightwaltham, a family which included at least two, and possibly three, firmarii in the fifteenth century, and who were substantial customary tenants as well. Richard Combe, who farmed Woolstone in the 1440's and 1450's, was a Woolstone tenant in the 1420's. Many firmarii, although not manorial tenants, were 'local men' in the sense that they came from nearby villages: such were Bergh, from Eastrop, firmarius at Buscot (near Coleshill) and very likely Westrop at Woolstone. When firmarii were manorial tenants, they were generally, as we should expect, substantial ones. The POPES at Sotwell and CUBBELLIS at Eastrop, YONGES at Brightwaltham, were all among the largest leaseholders in their village before they leased the demesne.

Another category of firmarii were those who established themselves in the village after taking over the demesne, as the KIPPYNGS, and probably the SKLATTERFORDS did at Coleshill. Some firmarii were previously members of the manorial administration: Kyppe was rent-collector at Coleshill; BEVYN was messor.
(Probably ministers' accounts, if they survived, would show that this was the case in many other villages). Three times the lease was passed on from one member of the family to another.

Some firmarii, in contrast, were strangers or new-comers to the village, as were George at Woolstone, Crypse at South Moreton, Wilton at Englefield, Fourde at Mackney, Ford at Sotwell. This is especially true of later firmarii, and in some cases the first, local, firmarius was succeeded by an 'outsider' (as was POPE by Ford at Sotwell, KYPPING by Whelor at Coleshill). (Gras found this development at Crawley: 'While the first four farmers were Crawley tenants, the others were apparently from elsewhere. And this was to be typical of the subsequent period. As more and more capital was required to carry on the business of agriculture, outsiders came to have an advantage').\(^1\) One of the Eastrop firmarii, Bally alias Viteler, was probably a local businessman.

Although the firmarius is one of the prototypes of the successful late-medieval peasant, the fore-runner of the prosperous yeoman at the home farm of the sixteenth century, few of these men seem to have established any

\(^1\) Gras. 'The Economic and Social History of an English Village.', Harvard Economic Studies. VOL. XXIV. p.83.
permanent fortune in their localities, and even fewer of them seem to have had descendants of any note in the district under the Tudors. There were certain disadvantages in the farmer's position. His capital assets were probably not large, while his liabilities might be considerable. At Coleshill, while we do not know the sum that was paid for the 12 years' lease of the demesne land which William KYPPING took, it is clear that his responsibilities were considerable:¹ The demesne arable, the dairy herd, and a considerable amount of grazing land. He had to answer for the crop of 84 acres in bad years as well as good, and was responsible for certain repairs which might prove expensive. Whether the cause was his inability to meet his commitments, or merely his unwillingness to do so, the farmer must often have run into debt: Kyppying's debt in 1443 stood at over £10², Sklatteford's in 1464 at £15.12.3.³

At Woolstone the firmarius broke off his contract with a suddenness which suggests some kind of financial disaster: in 1440 no farm was paid 'quia .. firmarius fugavit se et bona sua unacum stauro maneri viz LXXVII Bidentibus v vaccas (sic) IV bobus IV animalibus X q½ frumenti XIV q. ordei et alic stauro mortuo ..

¹. See under William Kyppyng, in Appendix, for a fuller account. The 'farm of the demesne' brought in £15.13.4 S.C.6 747/6.
³. S.C.6. 746/21
Even if firmarii were capable of raising the £10, £20, or £30 required to cover their rent each year, another factor was permanently working against them; they leased only those parts of the demesne which the lord, with all his superior resources, did not find it profitable to cultivate himself. At Coleshill, for instance, the lord was gradually almost abandoning arable farming in favour of stock-farming during the late fourteenth and fifteenth century. He leased the unwanted arable, and reserved the valuable grazing land. Similarly at Woolstone, the Priory reserved enough pasture for its sheep - its primary concern - and leased the arable and some of the other stock.

Only a study of a great many more farmer's accounts and indentures would allow any conclusion about the profitability of demesne leasing at this period; but the fact that few of the firmarii in our records founded enduring fortunes, even on a modest scale, suggests that it might have been a precarious undertaking.

2. See below. p. 222.
2. If demesne leasing was not, at this period, any guarantee of economic success, even less so, it appears, was the accumulation of customary land which so profoundly altered the social structure of so many fourteenth and fifteenth century villages.\(^1\) Were the yeomen of the sixteenth century the descendants of the richer tenants we have seen to be emerging on several manors and who provide such a contrast to their declining neighbours? Often the absence of later evidence prevents us discovering whether or not there was such a link. The account of Coleshill tenants shows that prosperity of the late-medieval peasant aristocracy was short-lived. This development seems to have been paralleled at Speenhamland, where the Abberbury, Wode, and Benet holdings had disappeared or were much diminished by the sixteenth century, by which time Sir John Norreys Kt. was the largest tenant.

At Englefield the chief tenant after 1474 was a comparative newcomer; at South Moreton the Henry VII rental is dominated by the names of men who had settled in the village only in the later part of the fifteenth century. There are some notable exceptions such as the POPES at

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1. See Chapter III.
Sotwell Stonor, and doubtless if there were more villages with plentiful records for the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, many more links could be established. But this seeming lack of continuity between medieval and Tudor yeoman is paralleled in the history of more important Berkshire families: '... a feature of the country's history has been that very few families of significance held land in any quantity before the sixteenth century. Almost alone of more modern landlords Eyston of East Hendred and Pusey of Pusey recall pre-Reformation lay estates.'

Did improvements in technique account for differing peasant fortunes? Our sources reveal very little about peasant land-use, but they give incidental information about two aspects of this subject; enclosure and peasant sheep-farming.

3. Enclosure

Berkshire by the early sixteenth century was a county of small-scale enclosures and little population. Beresford has summed up the results of the 1517 enquiry as follows:

the force of depopulation was not strongly felt in this country. In 1517 the jurors reported that 670 people had been evicted and 120 houses decayed between 1488 and 1517, but when their reports are examined in detail, it will be found that the majority of offenders had done no more than enclose a few acres with the consequent decay of one or two houses in a village ... Substantial evictions were few and an examination of the one-inch map and of the Nomina Villarum does not suggest that many villages had disappeared between 1316 and 1488. The inference is that Berkshire settlements were so firmly planted and (in the West) so firmly linked to a degree of pastoral husbandry alongside the arable that opportunity failed to match any will to enclose that may have been present among the Berkshire gentry. The offences reported in 1577 reflect an early piecemeal enclosure movement of the kind that was to be felt in the Midlands half a century later, but the Elizabethan 'decay of hospitality'¹. Tawney found that 'In Berkshire the average size of an enclosure is 32 acres ...

the lords play a much smaller part in enclosing. They are responsible for 42 percent of the acreage enclosed in Berkshire ... does this not suggest that in parts of the country ... there is much small enclosing by small men?¹

With two notable exceptions² our documents, when they refer to enclosures at all, bear out this impression that there was 'much small enclosure by small men' in our period. Nearly all the fifteenth century rentals contain references to tofts, crofts, and small (presumably enclosed) pastures held in severalty.³ At Speenhamland, for instance, William Wode's holding included cottages, gardens, 'a parcel of land, two crofts, two meadows.'⁴ Boteley's in 1458 included a croft, a meadow, and a 'placea'; Hode's, in the same year, two crofts.⁵ In 1546, although most of the arable was still in the open fields, many tenants had 'meadows' or 'plots'.⁶ At Sotwell, in 1509, the process

3. At Sotwell Stonor in 1502 the Prior of Wallingford and Sir William Rede 'iniuste inclusaverunt communem apud Monkeyndon' S.C.2. 154/64. Oct. 17 H.VII.
4. See Chapter III.
of enclosure had evidently not gone as far, but five closes are mentioned. At South Moreton, three tofts are mentioned in R.1451, closes in a rental of T.H.VII.

The Letcombe Regis rental for 1456 shows that enclosures formed part of the large composite holdings of that date: Richard Petworth, for instance, held five cottages and two crofts.

At Woolstone, although there is no rental which might mention enclosures, scattered court-roll references indicate that the process was at work. In 1382 William Consayll was in mercy for grazing his sheep in Stephen Wylkyn's close. In 1372 William Yynne took up a 'close next to the lord's curla'. In 1351 William Colles took a croft which Agnes Pleystowe had held. The Coleshill references are much more plentiful. R.1379 mentions fire tofts and crofts but the real increase in this kind of enclosure took place between that date and 1424. R.1424 lists about 25 closes:

3. S.C. 12 1/1
5. S.C. 2 154/79 F. St. Martin 1379
6. S.C. 2 154/78 1351
R. 1473 and R. 1520 do not list as many and it is possible that by this time small enclosures had become so common that they were included under the general description 'tenementum'. By 1520 almost every holding had its close attached, mostly containing about half an acre, and most, it appears, consisting of pasture rather than arable. By 1520 almost every holding had its close attached, mostly containing about half an acre, and most, it appears, consisting of pasture rather than arable.

The court rolls from the 1380's contain many references to tenants' enclosures, and again most seem to have been for pasture. For instance, in 1387 Henry Wallysh brought a plea of trespass against Thomas Jurdan, accusing him of pasturing his draught stock on his separate meadow and of damaging his haystack; in 1389 Thomas Rywe accused John MATHEN and his wife of taking hay and grazing their sheep on his close.

Several cases of disputes between tenants over enclosures show that this new development could cause trouble. A case at Woolstone in 1391 shows what form this could take:

1. A map of Coleshill in 1660 shows that most of the arable still lay in (3) open fields, while there were very many small meadows and enclosed pastures.
2. S.C. 2 154/1 Tues. after F. St. Martin 10 R.II.
'Johannes Kynne senior nimis usurpavit super solum clausi Willelmi Consail et ibidem fregit quemdam haiam mortem ... preceptum est dictam haiam amovere et bundas inter partes predictos fingere ubi antiquitus stabant'.

It is possible that similar signeurial pressure may have supported tenants in their objection to new enclosures both at Woolstone and elsewhere, and thus delayed their development, but I have found no other cases.

The lord's enclosures, being on a larger scale, could cause much more trouble. At Coleshill a long series of fence breaking offences and ordinances show that this was a deep-rooted cause of dispute. There were quite large enclosed areas of demesne pasture at Coleshill in the fourteenth century, the largest of which 'Fresden' contained at least 66 acres.

From 1385 there are references in the accounts to a 'new pasture' and to 'seperalis domini' and 'magnum seperalis'. With the fall in the tenant population more land was taken into demesne and enclosed; the account of

1. S.C.2 154/81 Hock. 1391
2. S.C.6 743/7
1421 shows 'in defectu (15 tenements) in manu domini ob defectu tenencium ed quod terra inde includitur infra separalem. 1

Another enclosed pasture, called Oldehays is referred to from 1422 2 and a 'seperalis iuxta curiam' in 1424 3 (Oldehayes, or the area which corresponds to it, was under the plough at one time, but I have not been able to discover at what date. It bears distinct marks of ridge and furrow).

Other vacant holdings were added to the enclosed pasture in 1424 and 1425, and the lord was prepared to exchange land with his tenants in order to increase his enclosures. In 1422 Sowthedonne pasture, formerly leased to George NICHOLAS, paid no rent 'nee decetero quia conceditur tenentis domini pro eorum communa ut excambio pro pastura vocata oshull qui quidem southedonne solebat firmari Waltero Baylly cum Aliis Parcellis pro 106/8 per annum ultra aliam parcellam eiusdem pasture nuper dimissa ad firmam pro £4.13.4. p.a. qui remanet in manu domini - 20/- was received from the tenants for their new common. 4

By 1520, 400 acres had been enclosed and were kept in demesne for the lord's stock and much other enclosed grazing land was rented out to the Firmarius.

The lord's enclosure policy evidently met with some resistance from his tenants: in 1425 it was ordered that no tenant should pasture his stock in the lord's separate field, or allow them to cross it; and five tenants were presented for this offence. There were many fence-breaking offences and in 1449 an ordinance was proclaimed 'ex assensu et consensu domini huius manerii et tenentium suorem quod omnes fractores et asportatores haiarum domini et tenentium decetero pro qualibet vice amercientu...

1 3/4 absque alia gratia inde habenda.' The offences did not stop, however (one was presented in the following court) and the ordinance was repeated in 1457. An earlier case, in 1428, shows that there could be concerted, if not planned action by tenants: fourteen tenants were presented together for fence-breaking that year. Of course, some of these fences may have been temporary ones in the open fields, not round enclosures. In that case, these fence-breaking offences would not be evidence of any clash between

1. S.C.2. 154/2 18 Oct. 4 H.VI.
2. S.C.2. 154/1 25 April 27 H.VI.
the lord and his tenants over enclosure as such. But that there was a conflict between the lord's economy and that of his tenants, and between the tenants themselves, is shown by the development of peasant sheep-farming.

4. Peasant sheep-farming: Berkshire, and particularly the Downland area, was an important wool-producing region in the middle ages, and the accounts of ecclesiastical estates who held land in the county - the Bishopric of Winchester, Edington and St. Swithin's Priories, Westminster Abbey - contain much information about large-scale sheep farming. We are only concerned here with the small-scale producer, whose total output may have been low, but whose existence and activities were of importance in the development of village society. 'The typical sheep farmers of the fifteenth century were the peasantry, with a sprinkling of new men from the towns ... it was the day of the small man'.

Peasant flocks, although their size and numbers are hard to estimate, were important in much of this part of England. In Wiltshire there were 'considerable number of small sheep farmers on the ... downs, and some were probably to be found on every manor in or near

the hills'. Large villein flocks are found on the estates of the Duchy of Lancaster, the Lords Hungerford and the Bishop of Winchester. Inter-commoning disputes in many downland villages show that this grazing land was well-stocked during the fifteenth century, although the Inquisitiones Nonarum suggests that there had been a considerable decline in Berkshire sheep-farming by 1341. There is scattered evidence in our records for peasant sheep farming at Mackney, Letcombe Regis, Sotwell Stonor, Woolstone and Brightwaltham, but by far the fullest and most coherent information comes from the two manors belonging to Edington Priory, Coleshill and Eastrop.

At Coleshill both lord and tenants were raising sheep in the late middle ages. The Priory diminished the area it kept under cultivation by two-thirds between 1316 and 1421, when it leased the remaining demesne arable and concentrated almost entirely on sheep, dairy farming, and breeding horses, keeping a flock of 1000 to 2000 sheep.

1. R. Scott: 'Medieval Agriculture' in V.C.H.
2. Payne: Agrarian conditions on Wiltshire Estates ... B.I.H.R. 1940.
   1367 - ? 1405 - 181.
   1385 - 148 1421 - 84 (leased)
   1390 - 188
throughout most of the period, and trebling its amount of cattle between the 1390's and the mid-fifteenth century. In the interests of this policy, as we have seen, enclosure and consolidation of grazing land took place, and the pasture of vacant holdings was taken back into demesne.

Leases of pasture give an indication of the growing importance of stock farming in the peasants' economy. In 1316 there were no such sales 'because there is plenty' (abundant) and for lack of a buyer. From 1367 to 1406 the tenants were buying between £1 and £8 worth of agistment, herbage, pasture, and hay. This amount dropped sharply between 1406 and 1421 in which year, the account noted, much land that had formerly been leased was needed by the lord for his own stock. From 1433-1459 there was a sharp rise in total purchases of grazing, when the amount ranged between £10 and £34. By 1459, when much extra grazing land temporarily came onto the market (the Priory kept no sheep at Coleshill between that date and 1465,) there seems to have been a reduction in peasant stock-farming, for much of it was leased to 'outsiders', many of
them from the neighbouring village of Eastrop. From 1443 account was rendered for grazing leased by 'instaurator bidentium et animalium domini ac estraneorum. Pressure on the common grazing land was quite heavy. The amounts paid for extra pasture testify to this, as do the many cases of trespass with sheep and of 'overstocking' the commons in the court rolls.

In 1387, for instance, W. CHAPMAN with 116 sheep, John CUBBELL with 31, Matilda BAKER with 112, Thomas HULLE with 54, Robert DOLLE with 57, overstocked the lord's pasture, and three of them confessed to grazing their sheep on the sown field. In 1397 John TAILLOUR and his companions with 68 sheep, Nicholas MAILLARD and his companions with 86, Thomas OBAM with 26, Thomas HULLE with 144, John at Wyke with 70, and again with 60, similarly exceeded their stint. The stint - the number of animals a tenant was allowed to pasture on the common land - varied with the size of the holding. In the sixteenth century it stood at 22 sheep, 2 horses and 2 oxen per virgate but

1. e.g. A/c 1460. S.C.6 746/14: '£2.13.4 de firma xxx AC. in Ynglesham sic vend diversis personis ... et sic dim. tenentiis dom de Esthrop decetero ... £3.13.4 de firma pasture voc Oldehayes et VIII AC. prati de dominico sic dim Roberto Pollard. £1.3.4 de firma pasture voc Horse-close ... sic dim. Thome Boucher de Hyworth ... 17/6 dr firma XXI Ac prati voc Durneford ... dim Ricardo Bevyn'. Bevyn and Pollard were both Eastrop tenants.

there is no means of knowing whether it was the same in the fifteenth century. The phrase 'with his companions' (cum sociis) in the case noted above suggests that some of the sheep owners had joint flocks, but it occurs very rarely. 1 With one exception, flocks at Coleshill ranged between less than 10 sheep (flocks as small as this would be unlikely to be involved in overstocking cases and are thus underrepresented in the rolls) to 120.

Apart from the many overstocking and trespass cases, a series of manorial ordinances illuminates the kind of conflict that could arise.

In 1383: Any villein tenant selling pasture for sheep shall have from the buyer in return half-an-acre of well-manured arable in return for the pasture belonging to a virgate. 2

In 1422: No tenant shall pasture his sheep in Edytchfield from reaping until the F. of St. Luke each year. 3

In 1440: No tenant is to stock the common pasture over his stint. 4

1. S.C.2 154/1 26 Jan. 20 R.II.
2. Although the tenant had his own shepherd.
3. S.C.2. 154/2 27 May 10 H.V.
4. S.C.2. 208/43.
In 1493: Any tenant twice charged with overstocking with draught stock shall pay 1/8 for each beast; with sheep 6/8 for 20 sheep.\(^1\)

In 1494: No tenant shall sell the pasture belonging to his holding to any stranger, but to his neighbours if any of them need it.\(^2\)

The figures for Eastrop sheep flocks are very interesting. They show that peasant stock-farming there was on such a large scale that the local sheep owners must have, in effect, been dominating the economy of the village. Repeated injunctions to tenants not to exceed their stint or infringe the communal arrangements about pasture were useless. The stint of free tenants was apparently recorded in their charters; a free tenant was allowed to pasture 50 sheep for each virgate, 25 for each half-virgate, 12 for each quarter-virgate. The customary tenant was allowed 50 sheep for each virgate, with a ram and three draught animals. These stint figures come from a manorial ordinance of 1466\(^4\), but its references to 'the usual custom' show that it was a much older arrangement. Significantly, the

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1. S.C.2 154/4 27 April 8 H.VII.
2. S.C.2, 154/4 18 April 9 H.VII. 3. See Table 3.
stint at Eastrop was twice that at Coleshill. Besides recording peasant flocks of 20 to 300 or 400 sheep, the Eastrop figures show that local graziers were also usurping the customary tenants' right of common. William Gynnere of Hampton, Thomas Martyn of Westrop, John Williams of Highworth, Edward Pencote of Inglesham, William Gaye and Thomas Fylton of Sevenhampton, Thomas Robyns of Shrivenham, the firmarius of the Abbess of Godston, who pastured such large numbers of their sheep on Eastrop commons; although all local men, were 'outsiders' in the sense that they were not customary tenants of the manor and consequently had no rights of common there. (Possibly they had bought grazing rights from Eastrop tenants; a manorial ordinance of 14 H.VII forbade such sales, and prescribed severe penalties.\(^1\). Trespass on such a scale, and overstocking on a similar scale by Eastrop peasant sheep-farmers themselves must have done much to disrupt the agrarian arrangements of the village. (Indeed, in a year such as 1499, with nearly 1000 sheep straying on the lord's and peasant's barley, it is hard to see how normal agriculture was continued at all.)

In villages such as these, it is clear, peasant sheep farming was of great importance. But can we say that 'it

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1. S. C. 2 208/55 27 April 14 H.VII.
was the day of the small man?" There were several small peasant flocks, of less than 50 sheep, at Coleshill, and a few at Eastrop as well. But their owners, particularly if they happened to be tenants of small holdings with, consequently a small stint, may have found it difficult to compete successfully, especially towards the end of the fifteenth century. When there was enough pasture available, small-scale sheep farming may well have been a paying proposition. But with the lord a sheep farmer himself, and often a cattle farmer as well, with rich graziers from the neighbourhood prepared to pay good prices for hay and grazing land outside the confines of their own villages, pressure on the available pasture became considerable. The Coleshill accounts show that when the lord needed pasture, peasant needs might go by the board. In such circumstances, villages in sheep country might come to be dominated, not by the enclosing

1. Besides the examples of "outsiders" trespassing at Eastrop, the Coleshill court rolls show that much the same process was found there, e.g. in S.C.2. 154/3 5 Aug. 25 H.VI: A list of messor's attachments gives the names of trespasses by seven men from neighbouring villages, S.C. 2 154/3 27 June 26 H.VI lists eleven such offences. At Mackney trespasses with up to 160 sheep and, in one case, 39 oxen by tenants from Moreton are reported T.Ed.III. S.C.2. 154/39.
landlord of a later period, but by a handful of local men.

III. Status.

Many of the thriving peasants that we have encountered in the records of these nine villages conform to Miss Campbell's description of the Tudor yeomen: 'A group of aggressive, ambitious, small capitalists, aware that they had not surplus enough to take great risks, ... (but) determined to take advantage of every opportunity, whatever its origin, for increasing their profits.'

Such a man at Coleshill, for instance, could accumulate three or four virgates (60-80 acres) for nominal entry fines. His rent per virgate was seldom more than about 10/- . Some of his land might have been improved by enclosure, and he could lease additional pasture or arable from the lord. He might have a house and buildings worth £7 to £10, on which the lord would do the major repairs. He might own a flock of over a hundred sheep, and three or four horses, and employ three or four farm labourers. He might hold office in the manorial administration, or hire the mill to which all the manorial tenants owed suit. If

1. Campbell. op. cit. p.104
he had a son, he could ensure, at a price, that his son inherited his land - and his family might be prolific enough to ensure that when a member of it died, no one but another member took over his holding. His relatives might be powerful men in a neighbouring village, sheepowners on an even larger scale, also manorial officials and farmers of the manorial demesne there. Some of his relatives who had left the district might have prospered in the towns or gone abroad as soldiers; one might be rumoured to be worth a hundred marks. This is not a fictional peasant. All these examples are drawn from the history of the CURBELL family at Coleshill and Eastrop. Parallels could be found, and have been quoted, among the POSES at Sotwell and the YONGES at Brightwaltham; the CARSWELLs at Coleshill, the AT HULLES at Woolstone; and, if we had more court roll evidence, probably in many other Berkshire villages.

More sixteenth century evidence might modify this impression, but this peasant aristocracy apparently came to nothing. Yet, in their time, their fortunes must have seemed secure. The houses which Edington Priory built for its tenants at Coleshill - investments of up to £10

1. e.g. A/c 1433. S.C.6 744/17 and A/c 1437. S.C.6 744/22.
were built for the kind of men who would soon call themselves yeomen, but whom the lord was careful to call 'nativi'. This question of status was important. It was by no accident that when the homage at Coleshill was ordered to compel Richard CUBBEILL, worth a hundred marks, to return from Newbury to his home village, he was described as 'nativus domini regardans huius manerii' and that another member of this well-to-do family was described as 'nativus domini de sanguine.' It is well known that personal servitude was quite compatible with economic prosperity, and the growth of such prosperity among his tenants might well have stimulated a lord to emphasise their legal unfreedom.

The incidents of personal servitude - the payment of merchet, leywrite, recognitions, chevage and tallage chief among them - were found all over Berkshire in the fifteenth century and long survived the commutation of labour-services. Merchet and chevage, in one form or another, are found in the court-rolls of all the court-rolls of the manors we have been considering, recognition payments

1. See Table of local sheep-flocks.
2. S.C.2 154/4 22 Oct. 21 H.VII.
3. See Savine: 'Bondmen under the Tudors'. T.R.H.S. N.S. XVII.
on many. At Woolstone the villeins were heavily tallaged. In fact, there are surprisingly few cases of villeins deliberately seeking to free themselves from the bonds of personal villeinage. Most of these cases come from one manor - Woolstone - and even there the villeins seem to have been concerned with specific aspirations for themselves or their children, rather than with personal freedom as such. Many South Moreton tenants paid fines in 1361 to release their land from villeinage (and possibly to convert it to copyhold) but they were more concerned with tenure than with personal status. However, an interesting case from Sotwell shows that bondage could still be profitable to a lord and a burden to his tenants. Ambrose POPE, a tenant at will of 1½ virgates and some 30 acres in a rental of 1509. On the dorse of a Sotwell court roll of 1510 appears the following petition, possibly of the same date, and perhaps presented in Chancery. It highlights the anomalous position of a man who obviously considers himself, and was considered by his neighbours, as a substantial yeoman, yet who was technically still his lord's bondman. (The spelling has been
Lamentably complaineth and showeth him unto your most noble grace your continual orator ...

Ambrose Pope of Sotwell within the county of Berkshire; your councillor Sir Adrian Fortescue Kt. hath at many diverse times but late hath (sic) gainsaid your poor orator to come before him as his bondman and so hath received of him £4 in money whereas that the said Sir Adrian Fortescue menaced and threatened your poor bondman if that he ever would deny that he was bound unto him he would cast him in perpetual prison by reason whereof your poor orator for fear of such imprisonment in no wise durst not displease him but hath recompensed and paid unto him all such sums of money as he ever required of him and as yet he never saw any manner of writing of the said Sir Adrian Fortescue whereof he should claim a shilling of such bondage of him or of his predecessors never offending him in their lives contrary to your Grace's laws that any man can tell of wherefore if it would please your Grace your said orator hath at all times paid your Grace's (?) levies and all other payments toward the maintaining of wards and the like as a true and faithful subject hath in his house sufficient harness to help your Grace if need thereto should require and is at all times at your pleasure both body and goods to his life's end and desiring your most abundant Grace to be moved with pity so that the said Sir Adrian Fortescue may not
from henceforth trouble nor vex your poor orator except he can exhibit before your Grace sufficient writing authentical whereby he may lawfully require such bondage of your poor orator or else to recompense and pay him again all such sums of money as he hath wrongfully taken and withholden away from him at that your Grace would grant to your (?) goodman (?) bondman) such writing under your seal conserving the promise that he may no more be further troubled or vexed by the said Sir Adrian Fortescue and his successors ...

Pope, like many of his contemporaries, had great faith in the written word. Fortescue hardly needed 'any manner of writing' to prove his right to tallage his own villeins. But was Pope a villein? The Pope family were certainly customary tenants in the fifteenth century; his ancestors paid recognition fines and transferred their land by surrender and admittance in the manorial court. The 1509 rental states clearly that he held 'at the will of the lord', and a relation in the same rental owed week-work. But the Popes had also included one copyholder; John Pope who produced his copy in court in 14332 and it was possibly the family's possession of at least one, possibly more

1. S.C.2. 154/64 F. SS. Simon & Jude. 1 H.VIII.
than one, written title to its land that Ambrose Pope based his claim to personal freedom.

In general, though, the personal implications of villeinage, where they survived, were irksome rather than onerous, and in one particular — ease and security of transfer — villein land even had advantages lacked by freehold. What mattered to a peasant in the fifteenth century was very likely less whether he had to pay for permission to marry off his daughters or to leave the manor but, firstly, whether he had opportunity, and secondly, whether he had security. We have seen that the fifteenth century village offered considerable economic opportunity to thriving peasants and that they were not slow to take advantage of it. The question of security is harder to investigate. Clearly the kind of security that regular customary inheritance bestowed was a thing of the past. But did the new tenures — copyholds and leases for lives or for years — offer any greater security? Certainly the customary tenant who still held his land without benefit of written record might now be in a precarious position, for the custom which had protected his ancestor's tenure had been undermined; in his case
'the will of the lord' was an all-important factor. Forfeitures of holdings for illegal sub-lettings, non-payment of rent, or unlicenced marriage, show that this was not an empty phrase. The question of the legal security of copyholders, can only be settled by an examination of the attitude taken toward it by the central courts, which is beyond the scope of this study. But on the question of economic security of the emerging yeomen of the later middle ages, our records speak clearly; their prosperity, although impressive, was short-lived, and the new men' of the Tudor age supplanted them.
APPENDIX 1, 2, 3, 4, 5.

The following abbreviations have been used:

R: rental
M: messuage
Vt: virgate
A/c: minister's account
L.S: lay subsidy assessment

'Quondam' has been translated throughout as 'once'.
'Nuper' " " " " " 'late' or 'Lately'.
'Prius' " " " " " 'former' or 'formerly'.

References have not been given for rentals and surveys, as these are quoted so often, and have already been given in the relevant sections of Chapter III.

As much condensation was necessary, the court roll references have been translated and, except in exceptionally interesting cases, summarised.
APPENDIX 1.

BRIGHTWALTHAM TENANTS


BISOTHEWODE, William. Warin.

C. 1283
Sept. 1293
S.C. 2 153/57
Mon. after F. St.
Vincent 24 Ed. I
S.C. 2 153/67
Thurs. after F. St.
Vincent 25 Ed. I
S.C. 2 153/67
Sat. after Epiph.
any. 15 Ed. III
S.C. 2 153/69
Thurs. before F. St.
Barnabas 41 Ed. III
S.C. 2 153/69

John B. ½-vt.
William B. surrendered tenement to lord before his death.
Warin B. took land once John B's.
Fine £1. 0. 0
John atte Grene took tenement once Stephen B's.
John de Spathwode leased 7 acres from another tenant for 10 years.
John Southwode died. Daughter succeeded to his holding of m. ½-vt. and married John Duk, who paid £2.13.4 for land and marriage.

BURGAYS, BURGEYS. William. Adam.

C. 1283
Mon. after F. St.
Vincent 24 Ed. I
S.C. 2 153/67

William B. ½-vt.
Adam B. died, succeeded by widow, who paid fine for licence to re-marry.

DE CRUCE, AD CRUCEM AT CRUTCH.

C. 1283
F. St. Margaret
24 Ed. I
S.C. 2 153/67

Richard de C. 1-vt. and assart.
Richard ad C. succeeded by son John. Fine 4 m.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Details</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>20 Jan. 8 H.IV</td>
<td>Walter Carter took toft and curtilage once Sarah C's, to hold with wife.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S.C. 2 153/72</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June 8 H.IV</td>
<td>Walter Baylly surrendered m. and once J.C.'s, to Thomas C.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S.C. 2 153/72</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S.C. 12 5/23</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8 H.VI</td>
<td>T.C. who holds m.vt. 'Wyndys' and m. and cottage 'Burgays' and m. and cottage 'Curtays' has left the manor.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jan. 13 H.VI</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S.C. 2 153/73</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Brightwaltham Tenants.

CURTAYS (contd.)

Jan. 13 H.VI
S.C.2 153/73

June 13 H.VI
S.C.2 153/75

(T.C. surrendered "Wynds" to the use of John Tyler.

T.C. repurchased Wynds through Thomas Aylewyn and is living at Emborne with 3 sons and 3 daughters.

(See note 1. in text)

DANGER

DAUNGER, Simon

C.01283 53/67

Wed. after ex. Holy Cross ? 22 Ed.I.
S.C.2 153/67

Simon D. ½-vt.

S.D. surrendered holding to lord, who granted him m. curtilage, and 2 acres of his former holding.

DE EVERSOLE: Osemund, Robert,
EVERSHOLT: William, Adam, Henry.

C.1283

Robert E. 1 vt.
Adam E. 1 vt.
Henry, son of Adam 1 vt.

Wed. after Ex. Holy Cross ? 22 Ed.I.
S.C.2 153/67

Osemund succeeded by son Robert.
Fine 5 m.

" "

F. St.Leanard 5 Ed.III
S.C.2 153/69

Robert de E. Illegally sub-let holding to Ralph Taillor.

William de E. lost his land in a suit brought by Walter de Herdewyke who claimed to hold from his grandfather.

FABER. Ralph, John, Richard
John, Geoffrey.

C.1283

Ralph F. 1 vt.

Thurs. after F.St.
Denis 14 Ed.I
S.C.2 153/67

John F. succeeded to his brother's holding. Fine fl. 0. 0
Brightwaltham Tenants.

FABER (contd):

Mon. after F. St.
Vincent 24 Ed.I.
S.C.2 153/67

Sat. after F. St.
Andrew 32 Ed.I.
S.C.2 153/67

F. St. Andrew
14 Ed.III
S.C.2 153/69

Friday before Palm
Sunday. 23 Ed.III
S.C.2 153/69

Ralph F. succeeded by his son Richard. Fine £1. 0. 0

Geoffrey F. took 2 m. 6 a. Fine ½ m. To hold 'hereditate'.

John F. surrendered 2 m. 2 half vts.

John F. died, widow succeeded to ½-vt.

FULK, William, William, Robert

C. 1283

Wed. after F. St.
Edmund 17 Ed.I
S.C.2 153/67

Wed. after F. St.
Leonard 30 Ed.I.
S.C.2 153/67

Thurs. before F. St.
Barnabas. 41 Ed.III
S.C.2 153/69

9 June 8 H.IV
S.C.2 153/72

William Fulc. 14½ m. assart, freely.

William F. succeeded by his son William.

W.F. took croft called 'White-croft, of 7 acres.

Robert F. died, who held m.vt., succeeded by son William.

William F. died, who held 1 m. 14½ ac. succeeded by Robert Yne and his wife, daughter and heir of W.F. 3/- relief.

Robert also took 15 acres held by W.F. to hold for life.

Robert F. 15 acres 'by deed' 14½ " 'by copy'.

R.1426
S.C.2 5/23
**Brightwaltham Tenants.**


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<th>Date</th>
<th>Event Description</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>13 Nov. 10 R.II S.C.2 153/70</td>
<td>John J. took 14 acres. Fine l/-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thurs. past F. Incarn. 11 R.II S.C.2 153/70</td>
<td>John J. who held 2 m. 26 ac. 'in bondagio' left the manor.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>C. 1283</td>
<td>F. St. Andrew 32 Ed.I. S.C. 153/67. Richard J. 1 vt. m. 5 acres.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13 Nov. 1386 S.C.2 153/70</td>
<td>M. Durnour took cot. once John Y's. Fine 1/8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S.C.2 153/72 3 Dec. 1408</td>
<td>William Y. took toft and 13 ac. Fine 1/-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>William Y. died. Widow Marion succeeded to: m.vt. once Walter Y's; toft and cot. once Parlefrensc'h's; toft and cot. once Elyats; and toft and cot. which she had held 'conjunctim' with William Y.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Brightwaltham Tenants.

**JUVENIS YONGE (contd.)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Details</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>R. 1426</td>
<td>John Y. m. and yardland 'Wynds', Richard Y. m. 'Yonges', Y. cottsett. Wetherherde'</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4 Oct. 4 H.VI
S.C.2 153/73

Thursday after Pentecost 10 H.VI
S.C.2 153/73

18 Sept. 17 H.VI.
S.C.2 153/73

9 May 19 H.VI.
S.C.2 153/73

John, son of Richard, took 'Yonges'.

John Y., aged 20, son of William Y. villein, has left the manor and is living at Wolvely with John Fettleplace.

J. Yonge took m.vt. 'Yonges', 3 tofts, 1 cottsett called 'Nymans' 'Hadles', and 'Sketes'.
Fine £1. 0. 0

Richard Y. surrendered m.vt. called 'Crouchmans' and 1 cot. to use of John London; and m.vt. once Southwode's to John Hamond.

Robert Strete had been occupying land called 'Baillys' and 'Bagges' by permission of Richard Y.
R.Y. Firmarius.

**PARLEFRENS** Alice. William.

**PARLEFRENSCH** Elias. Baldwin.

C. 1283
Sun. before St. Lawrence 29 Ed.I
S.C.2 153/67

21 April 1334
S.C.2 153/69

13 Nov. 1386
S.C.2 153/70

Rector of Brightwaltham took cottage once Alice P's.

Elias P. took tenement. Fine 4/-

Baldwin P. took cottage and 2 ac.
Fine 2 capons.
Brightwaltham Tenants.

SMOKYER, Richard. Ralph.

C. 1263
Thurs. after F. St. Katherine. 27 Ed.I
S.C.2 153/67

Thurs. before St. Leonard 8 Ed.III
S.C.2 153/69

18 Oct. 5 H.IV
S.C. 153/72

'vidua' Smokyer. ½-vt.
Richard S. took land once Geoffrey atte Stretend's. Fine 4 m.

Ralph S. took tenement once Wadel's. Fine 10/-.

William S. villein, who held m. ½-vt. left the manor.

WARNER OF STRETEND. Geoffrey

C. 1283
Wed. after Ex. Holy Cross. 1294.
S.C.2 153/67

Thurs. after F. St. Kat. 27 Ed.I
S.C.2 153/67

Palm S. 23 Ed.III
S.C.2 153/69

Thurs. after St. Katherine 7 R.II
S.C.2 153/70

9 May 19 H.VI
S.C.2 153/73

Geoffrey Warner. 1-vt.
(Geoffrey William took tenement formerly Geoffrey of Stretend's.)

Richard Smokere took tenement formerly Geoffrey of Stretend's.

Robert S. died; widow succeeded to m.vt.

Ralph Stretend died. Widdow surrendered all claim to his m.vt.

Robert Strete .... subletting land from Richard Yonge.
APPENDIX 2.

WOOLSTONE TENANTS

CARTER, Stephen I, II.

Robert

1338
S.C.2 154/77

1374
S.C.2 154/79

1395
S.C.2 154/81

1391
S.C.2 154/81

A/c 1396
S.C.6 757/18

1404
S.C.6 757/21

CONBURGH, John.

1415
S.C.2 154/82.

HANEKYN, William I. Alice.

A/c 1337
S.C.6 756/8

A/c 1352
S.C.6 756/12

A/c 1354
S.C.6 756/13

S.C. trespass with 16 sheep.

S.C. took m.vt. on death of his father S.C. to hold in bondage for services previously owed. Fine £1.0.0

Henry atte Watere took m.½-vt. lately S.C.'s.

R.C. son of S.C. took m.½-vt. once John Yonge's; ½ m. from Wykland.

Fine 13/4.

3/4 from fine of R.C. for m.½-vt. once Stephen Preost's.

R.C. holds tenement once S.C's.

J.C. took m.vt. once Stephen Carter's, toft ½-vt. which Henry atte Watere held.

Fine £1.0.0 of which 16/8 pardoned.

W.H. paid £5. 6. 8. for m.vt. once his father's.

4/4 from W.H. from the works of ½-vt. once John le Hert's, granted to W.H. 2/4 chief rent.

" " nothing this year because John le Hert holds it 'per consuetudines et servicia' this year.

6/- from W.H. for the works of ½-vt. once Juliana Wyche's.
Woolstone Tenants

HANEKYN (contd.)

HANEKYN, William II.

ATTE HULLE, William I, Joan.

William II.
Woolstone Tenants

ATTE HULLE (contd):

A/c 1354
S.C.6 757/13

A/c 1354, 1355
S.C.6 757/14

A/c 1359-64
S.C.6 757/16 to 19.

Chop's holding held by Stephen Wylkyn.

A/c 1359
S.C.6 757/14

A/c 1364
S.C.6 757/19

J.H. took 2 acres of Wykond at 1/- p.a.

1355
S.C.6 757/14

W.H. paid 13/4 for enrollment of an agreement made between him and John atte Hurne.

1359
S.C.154/79

W.H. ordered to show his claim to Bullock's holding ... said that he received it from Nicholas Heywode, then Hordarian and lord of the manor 'et inde ponit se super rotulum curiae et habebit diem ad ostendam recordum curiae ad proximum'.

1364
S.C.6 757/19

William le Hurt, and John Poltone 'servientes' of W.H. took 13/4 in wages.

1369
S.C.154/79

Robert le Smyth " " took excessive wages.

1374
S.C.2 154/79

W.H. died, who held m.vt. once Richard atte Hulle, his father's; m.vt. once Richard atte Hurne's; toft and ½-vt. 'ad certum redditum'; 2 ac. of Wiklond.

1375

1377
S.C.2 154/80

J.H. widow of W.H. claimed m.vt. once atte Hurne's and m.vt. once atte Hulle's; 'et testatum est per totum homagium quod consuetudo manerii vult quod dictas tenuras debet tenere post decessum mariti sui absque fine ... dum se gerit in pura vidvatate.'
Woolstone Tenants.

ATTE HULLE (contd):

1378
S.C.2 154/80
J.A. paid 10/- fine for remainder of her husband's land.

1388
S.C.2 154/80
J.H. surrendered m.½-vt. and 2 ac. Wyklond.

1415
S.C.2 154/82
William atte Hulle who held m.vt. once W.H's died, succeeded by widow.

ATTE HULLE, Thomas

A/c 1337
S.C.6 757/8
6/8 fine from T.H. 'ita quod ad omnes ordines ? premoneri possit et a domino ... recedere.

ATTE HULLE, Richard

A/c 1334
S.C.6 757/6

A/c 1334-61
S.C.6 757/6 to 16
10/- for commutation of works of above ½-vt. (held by R's son Henry in A/c 1364)

1342
S.C.2 154/77
R.H. £2.0.0 for cottage and curtillage.

A/c 1354
S.C.6 757/13
R.H. 6/8 for works of ½-vt. once Wydie's.

A/c 1355
S.C.6 757/14
" " " nothing because he surrendered it.

1368
S.C.2 154/79
Surrendered cottage and curtillage.

(before) 1372
S.C.2 154/79
R.H. left demesne.

FOXTON, John

1417
S.C.2 154/82
J.F. took m.½-vt. called Willemot's with watermill, toft and ½-vt.
which Walter Petewardyn held.
Pays 2/- for commutation of ploughing services. Fine £1. 6. 8.
Woolstone Tenants (contd):

PETEWARDYN, Walter.

1405
S. C. 2 757/22
A/c 1409
S. C. 6 757/25

W. P. took m.½-vt. with mill, toft and ½-vt. Fine £1.10.0.
W. P. leased ½-vt. once Thomas Brydd's for 15 years, commuting works at 5/- p.a.

POLTENE, John

1374
S. C. 2 154/79
1388
S. C. 2 154/80
1389
S. C. 2 154/80
1392
S. C. 2 154/81
1407
S. C. 6 757/23
1420
S. C. 2 154/82

J. P. 'serviens' of William atte Hulle.
J. P. took m.½-vt. formerly Joan atte Hulle's.
J. P. took cottage formerly John Shepherd's.
J. P. took m.½-vt. once Chop's.
Leased holding once Hasel's.
Surrendered toft and ½-vt.

TAYLOR, William, Margery; Stephen, Thomas.

1376
S. C. 2 154/79
1372
S. C. 2 154/79
A/c 1394
S. C. 6 757/16
1412
S. C. 2 154/82
1413
S. C. 2 154/82

W. T. carpenter ... charged more than allowed by the statute.
S. T. £1.13.4 fine for m. vt. once M. T.'s.
T. T. took m. vt. toft, ½-vt.
T. T. left demesne.
Woolstone Tenants (contd):

THATCHER, William, Walter.

A/c 1394  S.C.6 757/16
William T. £1.0.0 for m.½-vt.

"  " 13/4 for "  
William T. leased ½-vt.

A/c 1396  S.C.6 757/18
Walter T. bought m.vt. from Agnes Priour. Fine £2.6.8.

A/c 1407  S.C.6 757/23

A/c 1396  S.C.6 757/18

WYLKYNNS, Stephen

1351  S.C.2 154/78
S.W. took m.vt. surrendered by Christina W. £1.10.0

A/c 1352  S.C.6 757/12
S.W. leased 1 ac. from Prest's holding.

1355 - 1364  S.C.6 757/14 to 19

A/c 1354  S.C.6 757/13
(Prest holds his complete holding).

S.W. and Henry Smith hold 2 ac. from Jordan's holding.

1390  S.C.2 154/81
S.W. sold Chop's holding to John Shrivenham.
APPENDIX 3.

SOUTH MORETON TENANTS

BROWNING, Nigel, Roger 1, Matilda, William, Roger 2, Agnes, Christina, William, Nicholas, John.

L.S. 1332
E. 179 73/7
No. 9 (T. ed. III)
S.C. 2 154/53

N.B... 1/8
Roger B... 8d.
Matilda B. married without licence
William Bithemore, the lord's villein, who had left the manor ten years before...
Roger B. her father, paid £2.0.0 for exemption from further charges on her account, and for manumission.

35 Ed. III
S.C. 2 154/43

36 Ed. III
S.C. 2 154/43
(partly illegible)

Nov. 8 R. II
S. C. 2 154/54

July 8 H. VI
S.C. 154/45

William B, villein... decault of suit.
? B... holds m.vt. m.½-vt. in villeinage.

Roger B. and Agnes his wife paid fine of 2 marks for m.vt. once Nigel B's. Roger 'to pay heriot' as in the indentures'.

Christina B, who held m.½-vt. 1 ac. i r. died.
Thomas Rothwell, lord of South Moreton, granted a tenement which William B. 'ad firmam' to Nicholas B. (William's son) and ½-vt. and 1 ac. and 1 r. to hold with his wife and (?) son) John B. Fine 6 m.
Nicholas, his wife and John B. to pay 1 capon at Christmas for each year that they do not dwell on the said holding. (This is probably a copy: reference to seal of Thomas Rothwell which is not attached.)
South Moreton Tenants.

BROWNYNG (Contd:)

R. 1451
S. C. 12 5/52
Richard Brownyng: cottage.
John Brownyng: l vt. called 'Brownyngs',
tenement and ½-vt. lately Shepherdes.
Robert Brownyng: tenement and ½-vt.
Alice Brownyng: cottage.

R. 1442
S. C. 11 Roll 61.
John B... Robert B... (torn).

R. post 17 H. VII
S. C. 12 5/54
William Heyward: m. called 'Brownyngs'
½-vt.

PODELL Walter, Robert, Joan,
William, Nicholas, Alice.

L. S. 1332
E. 179 73/7
Walter Pudell ... 1/4

14 Ed. III
S. C. 2 154/43
Robert P. £6.13.4. for ½-vt. once
his father's.

15 Ed. III
S. C. 2 154/43
Robert P. and Joan P., his mother,
leased to Thomas and Robert Randolf,
vileins, 9 acres to cultivate
for 14 years.
Thomas and Robert (Randolf) to pay the
lord 10 m. for a messuage and ½-vt.
to hold in villeinage, as appears
in the proceeding roll. And from
the said Joan shall have 1/9 of
the crop yearly as dowry as the
custom of the manor demands.

35 Ed. III
S. C. 2 154/43
William P ... m ( ) ac. croft.

" 

36 Ed. III
S. C. 2 154/43
Nicholas P. paid 6/8 fine 'de
harenda m. croft et 3 ac. quod prius
tenuit in villenagio ..' with his
wife.

... P. villein default ...
SOUTH MORETON TENANTS.

PODELL (Contd:)

1 R. II
S.C. 2 154/44
Oct. 1381
S.C. 2 154/44
Nov. 8 R. II
S.C. 2 154/44
R. 1451
S.C. 12 5/52

J. Randolf took 2 crofts once W.P's.

Alice P. left manor.

Wm. Boucher took ½-vt. called 'Podells'.

'Podyls' toft held by W. Lever.

SCARLET. Robert William.

E. 179 73/77
L. S. 1332.
35 Ed. III
S. C. 2 154/143

Robert S.

William S. m. vt. and 2 acres.

" " paid £1.0.0 for m. vt.
and 2 ac. 'prius in villenagio ... ad terminum vite'.

Mich. 41 Ed. III
S. C. 2 154/43
June 14 H. VI
S. C. 2 154/45

W. S. died, who held m. vt. 'in bondagio'.

Robert S... living off the manor.

SANGUINE. Nicholas, Thomas, Robert.

E. 179 73/7
L. S. 1332
19 Ed.? II
S. C. 2 154/43

Nicholas S.... 8d.

N. S. paid 13 m. for m.½-vt. in villeinage on death of his mother,
and exemption from service as reeve shepherd, or tithingman.

Oct. 5 R. II
S. C. 2 154/43
15 R. II
S. C. 2 154/44

Thomas S. villein, left demesne.
SOUTH MORETON TENANTS.

SANGUINE (contd.):

8 H.VI  
S.C.2 154/45  
Richard S. villein, living at Draytonswyke.

14 H.VI  
S.C.2 154/45  
Robert S... living off the manor.


E.179 73/7  
L.S.1332  

6 Ed.III  
S.C.2 154/43  
T.R. did fealty to Henry Husey, to the prejudice of Thomas de Saunderville, his lord, for a virgate holding in South Moreton. Lands and goods seized.

15 Ed.III  
S.C.2 154/43  
T. & R.R. leased 9 acres from R. & J. Podell and 'purchased m.½-vt. to hold from the lord in villeinage for 10 m.

35 Ed.III  
S.C.2 154/43  
T. & R.R. did fealty. R.R. paid £1.0.0 fine ('de habendo) mut & 2 ac. quod prius tenuit in villeinage ad terminam vite'.. " as above for ½ vt.

41 Ed.III  
S.C.2 154/43  
R.R. took m.vt. 'in bondagio' Fine 10 m.

1 R.II  
S.C.154/44  
J.R. took 2 crofts, to hold for life.

7 R.II  
S.C.2 154/44  
R.R. who held 3 m. 2 half-vts. died.

8 R.II  
S.C.2 154/44  
J.R. took m.vt. for life with wife; wife shall pay heriot 'as in indentures'.

R.1451  
S.C.12 5/52  
1-vt. 'Randolf's held by J.Langthorne. 1-vt. once J.R's held by Coterell.'
**SOUTH MORETON TENANTS. (Contd.)**

**SWIFT. William I, JOHN. WILLIAM II.**

| E. 179 73/7 | William S...... 3/11½ |
| L.S. 1332 | |
| 15 R.II | J.S. took 1 cot. |
| S.C. 2 154/44 | |
| 20 R.II | W.S. recognition for 1-vt. 2 ac. |
| S.C. 2 154/44 | 'holding called Swifts'. |
APPENDIX 4. SOTWELL STOROR TENANTS

POPE, Thomas; John senior; John junior; Robert senior; Robert junior; Ambrose.

Rental 35 Ed. III T.P.... 3/10
S.C.11 Roll 4

3 H.VI
S.C.2 154/62

John P. senior: recognition for
m.½-vt. called 'Sterres'.
m.½-vt. called 'Pynkes'.
m.½-vt. called 'Notebemes'.
3 ac. Frelond.
Toft.

John P. junior: recognition for
m.½-vt. called 'Popes'.
m.½-vt. called 'Forsters'.
m.½-vt. Called 'Childes'.
2 tofts, 1 croft.

9 H.VI
S.C.2 154/62

John P. senior 'de novo cepit'
m.½-vt. called 'Sterres'.
m.½-vt. called 'Dulles'.
1 ac. Frelond.

J.P. senior and J.P. junior; farm
of the manor of Sotwell St. John
for 10 years at £26. 0. 0

Robert P. Senior 'de novo cepit'
m.½-vt. called 'Notebemes'.
Toft, curtillage, and ½-acre called
'Cowherdes'.

3 ac. called 'Frelund'.
m.½-vt. called Pynkes'.

11 H.VI
S.C.2 154/62

Robert P. junior... m.½-vt., croft
and toft. called 'Cephayes', croft.

John Pope, senior, surrendered m.½
vt. called Sterres, m.½vt. called
'Pynkes'; 3 butts called 'Frelund'
'to the use of' Thomas Pope, his son.

John P. senior surrendered m.½-vt.
'Dulles'; 1 ac. Frelond, to Robert
P, his son.
POPE (Contd.)

17 H.VII
S.C.2 154/64
Ambrose P. who held m. 2vt. lately held by Robert Boteton, left the manor. Heriot 2/6.

" "
Ambrose P. took m. 2vt. 5 ac. Fine £5. 0. 0

" "
Thomas P. took m. called 'Kynges' and 3 closes surrendered by William Braunde'.

R. 1509
S.C.11 Roll 66
William Pope: holds at will; cottage, close, ½-ac. works three days in autumn.

Agnes Pope, widow: holds at will; 3 m. 3 half-virgates called 'Lanes' 'Prynkes', 'Slades'.
m. 2-vt. and 3 butts called 'Burstedes'. 1 close called 'Sheker'.

Ambrose Pope holds at will:
m. ½-vt. called 'Popes' m. 11-ac. 'Sadlers'
m. 8-ac. 'Bords'
m. ½-ac. meadow.
m. 10-ac. 'Lymmes'
m. ½-vt. 'Stephyns'.

No. 16 (undated)
S.C.2 154/62
John Wade took m. ½-vt. called 'Popes'; 11 ac. called 'Sadlers'; m. 8 ac; m. 10 ac. called 'Lymmes'
m. ½-vt. called 'Stephyns' lately held by Ambrose Pope.
Fine £3. 0. 0

S.C.2 154/64 v.
Petition of Ambrose Pope. (See Chapter VI).
APPENDIX 5. EASTROP TENANTS

CUBBELL, William I.

E.179 196/8

William Cubbul

John, son of Robert

Oct. 6 H.VI
S.C.2 208/53
Took m.vt. surrendered by Robert C. in same court.

July 6 H.VI
S.C. 208/53
J.C. shut three sheep belonging to Richard C. in lord's pinfold. (probably as messor).

April 19 H.VI
S.C.2 208/40
J.C. has left the manor and is living at Coventry.

Sept. 17 H.VI
S.C.2 208/53
Robert C, father of J.C., the lord's villein and rent-collector, who had left the demesne, ordered to bring him back. Homage to enquire into the names of those (children?) who have fled with J.C.

John, son of John

June 9 H.VI
S.C.2 208/53
John Colas surrendered cottage 'to use of' J.C.

April 17 H.VI.
A.C.2 208/40
J.C. forfeited above holding for illegal subletting.

23 H.VI
Surrendered m.vt. Taken by son Richard 'nativus domini de Sanguine'

John, son of Thomas

17 H.VI
Took cottage forfeited by J.C. in the same court.

Nov. 22 H.VI
S.C.2 208/54
'Has left the demesne and is with the Earl of Suffolk.'
EASTROP TENANTS.

CUBBELL (Contd):

Thomas
April 5 H.VI  S.C.2 208/53  Took m.vt. lately William Lane's.
June 34 H.VI.  S.C.2 208/54  Surrendered cottage.
F. SS. Philip & James. 7 Ed.IV.  S.C.2 208/41  T.C. who held 1 cot. 7 ac. m. & 7 ac. called 'Hungerford' died.

Richard, son of Thomas
(possibly identical with Richard, below)
June 34 H.VI  S.C.2 208/54  Took cottage surrendered by Thomas (above)

Robert, son of Thomas
Oct. 34 H.VI  S.C.2 208/54  Took cottage and curtilage.

Richard - Joan
Nov. 8 H.VI  S.C.2 208/53  Took 2 m. 2 vt. and 1 cottage.
June 20 H.VI  S.C.2 208/54  R.C. villein 'causa debilitate sua', paid lord 2 oxen as heriot for his holding, remaining tenant for life. After his death, holding to remain to Richard Vyncent.

Richard - Christina
Nov. 23 H.VI  S.C.2 208/54  Took 2 m. 2 vt. lately Robert C's.
EASTROP TENANTS

CUBBELL (Contd:)

William II - Isabel. William III

April 13 H.VI  
S.C. 208/53  
I.C. widow of W.C. who held 2 m.  
2 vt. died.  
William C. came and claimed to hold in reversion; by payment of 6 capons fine by previous agreement 'as appears by a copy shown in the present court dated '5th year', to hold for life.

June 20 H.VI.  
S.C. 2 208/54  
W.K. has left the demesne with 2 sons and 4 daughters and is living at Culnham.
APPENDIX 6. COLESHILL TENANTS.

ABEL, Henry

R. 1379
? 12 R. II
S. C. 2 154/1

H. A: M. ½-vt.
H. A: ordered to surrender ½-vt.
for felling trees without licence
and 'wasting' his holding.

ABBE, John

R. 1520

J. A. 1 cottage and 1 acre, lately
Henry Peppis', afterwards Robert
Webbe's.

ABEL, John

R. 1379
4 April R. II
S. C. 2 154/1

J. A. M. ½-vt.
J. A. surrendered ½-vt. 'causa
impotentatis' no heriot 'because
he had no goods or chattels.

ALEYN, John

R. 1379
7 Oct. 4 R. II
S. C. 2 154/1

J. A. M. ½-vt. lately Alice Alfrynch's
1 cottage lately Alive Vylt's.

John Neel: M. vt. once J. A's.

27 April 4 R. II
S. C. 2 154/1

J. A. who held M. ½-vt. has left
the demesne.

R. 1379

J. A. 1 cottage lately Alice Vylt's.

AMBROSE, alias WATT, John

27 Sept. 28 H. VI.
S. C. 2 154/3

John Ambrose alias Watt took
M. ½-vt. lately Robert Trygnell's.

16 Oct. 37 H. VI.
S. C. 2 154/3

John Wattys surrendered above
holding. No heriot 'because he has
no goods or chattels.'
COLESHEILL TENANTS

ANGELL, John, Robert.
Oct. 37 H.VI.
S.C.2 154/3
R.1473
J.A. took 1 cottage.
R.A. for rent for his holding 11/5½

AYSSHE, Thomas
Vigil St. Luke
6 Ed.IV.
S.C.2 154/4
" T.A. took in 3-vt. surrendered by John Cubbell, once Robert Carswell's.
" T.A. surrendered in 2-vj. lately John Duykes', once Robert Naseby's.
R.1473 T.A. for rent for his holding £1.13.0½
" " " " " " mill £2.6.8
COLESHILL TENANTS.

BAILLY, Henry.
A/c 1390, 1391
S.C.6. 743/8,9
H.B. leased enclosed pasture of Freshden and 66 acres from demesne.

BAILLY, William
6 June 9 H.VI
S.C.2 154/2
W.B. granted 2-vt. lately held by John Fox, who had left the manor.
Obliged to observe all customs of the manor under penalty of £5.0.0

22 Nov. 8 H.VI
S.C.2 154/2
W.B. took ½-vt. lately William Gregory's.

8 Oct. 10 H.VI
S.C.2 154/2
W.B. left tenement of ½-vt. No heriot because he had no stock.

BAKERE, John
F.St.Luke 13 R.II
S.C.2 154/1
J.B. took M.vt. formerly held by Robert Wynning, who had left the manor.

R.1395
J.B. M.vt. lately Wynning's and 1 croft of pasture.

BAKERE, Thomas
R.1379
T.B. M.vt. once Walter le Heye's.
cottage once William Hayward's.

27 April 4 R.II
S.C.2 154/1
T.B. has died. Widow Margery inherits.

BAKERE, Margery
R.1395
M.B. inherits, as above.

BAKERE, Matilda
F.St.Valentine
10 R.II
S.C.2 154/1
M.B. cottage once William Hayward's.

R.1395
M.B. overstocked the lord's pasture with 112 sheep.

BARON, Thomas
R.1379
M.B. M.vt.

R.1395
T.B. cottage ½-ac. meadow.
2 ac. from demesne.
Cottage once T.B's vacant.
COLESHILL TENANTS.

**BASSETT, John**

Vigil Annunc. B.V.M. 9 R.II  
S.C.2 154/1

J.B. took m.vt. called Carswell's place.

? 12 R.II  
S.C.2 154/1

J.B. surrendered m.vt. 'to the use of' Thomas Rylle.

**BATEMAN, Henry**

R.1379

R.B. m. 1½-vt½ once Nicholas dt Gardino's

R.1395

**BOLLE, Richard**

Edington Chartulary  
Lansdowne 442 f.73

Grant by William of Edington ... of manor of Coleshill ... and reversion of all lands and tenements which Richard Bolle, his wife and son hold in Larkeby and Caldecote.

A/c 1368  
S.C.6 743/6

Increment to rent of R.B. and John Swon for 'Larkeby' newly acquired (de novo adquidito) from Thomas de la Mare.

R.1379

R.B. m. 1½-vt. 'Larkeby'  
1-vt. called 'Caldecote'.

1 May 9 R.II  
S.C.2 154/1

John Poleyn took m. and toft called 'Caldecote' and 2½ vt. which R.B. held.

1. Possibly Calcutt in Glos.

**BOLLE, Robert**

Thurs. before Pentecost 13 R.II  
S.C.2 154/1

R.B. took toft and 1-vt. surrendered by John Noymann in same court.

R.1395

R.B. m.vt. lately (illegible)  
m.vt. lately John Blakynghe's.
COLESHILL TENANTS.

BOUCHER, BOCHER, Henry

3 Oct. 25 H.VI.
S.C.2 154/3
H.B. firmarius of Fressden.

BOUCHER, BOCHER, Thomas

21 Oct. 29 H.VI
S.C.2 154/3
T.B. took m.½-vt. lately William GRYGGE.
R.1473
T.B. for his holding.
26 May 21 Ed.IV.
S.C.2 154/4
Henry Peppis to repair tenement lately held by T.B.

BOUCHER, BOCHER, William

9 Oct. 34 H.VI
W.B. took m.½-vt. lately Skynner's
S.C.2 154/3
W.B. for his holding.
R.1473
John Collys took m.½-vt. lately W.B's.
7¼ April 19 Ed.IV.
S.C.2 154/4
W.B. exchanged holdings with Thomas Colbrond.

BOUCHER, BOCHER, Walter

W.B. m.½-vt. once Walter West's.
S.C.2 154/4
Isobel, widow of W.B. ½-vt. once Walter West's.
R.1520
Survey 1551

BOUCHER, BOCHER, John

R.1473
J.B. for his holding
for toft and 1-vt. lately Mulleward's.
R.1520
William Pleydell for m.vt.
lately J.B's.

BOUCHER, BOCHER, John

Survey 1551
J.B. m.2-vt. once William Pleydell's.
BRAY, RALPH

? 3 R. II
S. C. 2 154/1 No. 6
R.B. surrendered his holding.

"  
R.B's land in the lord's hand, leased for sowing.

3 or 4 R. II
S. C. 2 154/1 No. 5
Whole homage amerced because they falsely presented that R.B. had surrendered his land.

S. C. 2 154/1
Sat. before Michaelmas.
12 R. II
Walter Martin took m.½-vt. which R.B. once held.

BRAY, John

13 Jan. 19 R.II.
S. C. 2 154/1
J.B. surrendered m.1¾ vt. 'to the use of' Nicholas Mayllard.

BRIDPORT, John

3 July 6 H. VI
S. C. 2 154/2
J.B. took m.½-vt. lately Richard Mulleward's.

BROK, John

R. 1379

J.B. m.vt. once Juliana Mannyng's.
M.½-vt. once William atte Knolle's.
m.1-vt. lately Hugh Boneton's.
2½ acres from demesne

17 June 3 R. II
S. C. 2. 154/1
J.B. surrendered all the above land, holding atte Knolle's for a further 16 months.

"0
Leased 7½ acres 'for sowing' (ad seminandam).

R. 1395
J.B. m.2-vt. lately John Clerk's, formerly John le Riches.

4 Oct. 22 R. II
J.B. leased 1-vt. 'non edificatam' for 7 years.

18 Sept. 1 H. VI
J.B. pledge for repairs.
COLESHILL TENANTS.

ATTE BRUGGE, Roger
R. 1379
19 Feb. 1 H. VI
S.C. 2. 154/1

R.B. m.vt. once William de Ponte's.
Thomas Smyth did fealty and by that claimed to hold a messuage and 2-vt. as those which he required from R.B. in fee simple and by service of 18/- p.a. and suit of court, and relief.

26 April 8 H. VI
S.C. 2. 154/1

Robert Cubbell took 2-vt. called Bruggeslou, lately belonging to Brigge's holding ('nuper de tenura Briggs')

BURBACHE, Walter
R. 1473
26 May 21 Ed. IV.

W.B. for his holding.
Walter Reve took m-½vt. lately W.B's.
COLESHILL TENANTS.


<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Event Date</th>
<th>Entry</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>E.179 73/7</td>
<td>R.1379</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Correction to</td>
<td>R.1379</td>
<td>T.C. has exchanged part of l-vt. for a cottage and 2 acres.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Vigil ? Annunc.</td>
<td>John Basset took m-vt. called 'Carswell's Place'</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>B.V.M. 9 R.II</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S.C.2 154/1</td>
<td>A/c 1404</td>
<td>T.C. leased pasture for £2.14.0 and 9/4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S.C.6 743/11</td>
<td>27 May 10 H.V.</td>
<td>T.C. allowed the ditch at the bottom of his close called 'Bruggesclose' to remain uncleared.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S.C.2 154/2</td>
<td></td>
<td>T.C. with 11 other tenants grazed 100 geese in Oshull for 5 weeks without the lord's permission.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18 Sept. 1 H.VI</td>
<td></td>
<td>T.C's buildings in disrepair.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S.C.2 154/2</td>
<td></td>
<td>T.C. pastures 3 mares in common field after the corn was carried over his stint (ultra extentam; possibly 'beyond the time allowed')</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19 May 2 H.VI.</td>
<td></td>
<td>'John, servant of T.C.' (serviens T.C.) presented for catching rabbits with snares within the lord's warren.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S.C.2 154/2</td>
<td></td>
<td>T.C. broke the assize made regarding the pasture of sheep.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 Nov. 3 H.VI</td>
<td></td>
<td>T.C. m.2-vt.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S.C.2 154/2</td>
<td>R.1424</td>
<td>T.C. (and others) pastured 4 mares on the lord's land lying in the enclosed field (in cameo separale)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>18 Oct. 4 H.VII.</td>
<td>T.C. maliciously annoyed (maliciose vexavit) several of the lord's tenants in the Christian and temporal courts.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>S.C.2 154/2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
COLESHILL TENANTS.

CARSWELL (contd).

10 Oct. 6 H.VI.
S.C. 2 154/2
T.C. occupied Oshill pasture for 19 weeks with 400 of his sheep.

25 Oct. 7 H.VI.
S.C. 2 154/2
T.C. 'broke' the lord's pasture before the allotted time.

" 
T.C. occupied a cottage called 'Syrons' from Christmas to Easter.

4 Dec. 7 H.VI.
S.C. 2 154/2
T.C. (and 13 other tenants) broke the lord's fences at Oldhayes next to Langslade.

22 Nov. 8 H.VI.
S.C. 2 154/2
Pleas of trespass between T.C. and 5 tenants for 7 separate trespasses with sheep in their corn.

A/c 1437
S.C. 6 744/22
Heriot of T.C.

T.C. was reeve in 1406 collector in 1405.

CARSWELL, John

? 12 H.VI
S.C. 2 154/3 No.3
J.C. sublet his 1-vt. called 'Chapman's'.

? 13 H.VI.
S.C. 2 154/3 No.4
J.C. who holds 1-vt. called Chapmans' gives 2 capons yearly for licence to sublet it to William Cuttull while it pleases the lord.

28 Nov. 15 H.VI.
S.C. 2 154/3
J.C. who held Chapman's left the demesne by night, with all his goods and chattels so that the lord has no heriot.

CARSWELL, Robert

25 April 19 H.VI.
S.C. 2 154/3
R.C. trespass

R.C.'s holding called 'Workman's' in disrepair.

Vigil St.Luke
6 Ed. IV
S.C. 2 154/4
John Cubbell surrendered in 3-vt. lately R.C.'s.
COLESHILL TENANTS.

CARTER, Ralph. Simon.
27 April 4 R. II
S. C. 2 154/1

? 3 R. II
S. C. 2 154/1 No. 6

"R.C. who held m–½ vt. has eloigned himself (se elongavit) and fled from the lord's demesne". No heriot because he has no goods or chattels.

S.C. leased 1½ acres of a vacant holding.

CATON, Richard
14 Nov. 11 H. VI.
S. C. 2 154/3

R.C. took m.2- vt. and a close called 'Inardsclose' lately William Bailly's to hold for life.

CHAPMAN, Henry.
15 May, 19 R. II
S. C. 2 154/1

? 13 H. VI
S. C. 2 154/3 No. 4

H.C. paid 24 capons for reversion m. vt. called 'Chapman's', m. vt. called 'Rountes' and 1 cottage to hold after the death of his father, William Chapman, tenant for life of the above land.

'Chapman's' held by John Carswell.

CHAPMAN, Robert
R. 1379

? 3 R. II
S. C. 2 154/1 No. 6

30 April 5 R. II
S. C. 2 154/1

R. 1395

A/c. 1421
S. C. 743/14

R.C. m–vt. once Elias Randolph's.

R.C. leased 1 acre of glebe.

R.C. leased parsonage garden for 10 years and took m.½–vt. lately at Hurne's.

R.C., lately Hugh at Hurne; for m.½–vt. lately Elias Randolph's.

1½ vt. lately R.C.'s in the lord's hand.

CHAPMAN, William
R. 1379

R. 1395

W.C. m. vt 'in bondagio'.

m. vt. and a croft lately John de Aula's.

1 cottage lately Elias Capellanu's.

W.C. as above.

1 cottage lately W.C.'s, afterwards Hoghurd's, in the lord's hand.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CHAPMAN, Thomas</td>
<td>26 Jan. 20 R.II</td>
<td>T.C. son of Robert Chapman, villein has left the demesne and is living with Thomas Waldon of Ashbury.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>S.C.2 154/1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CHUNTE, Walter</td>
<td>? R.II</td>
<td>W.C. took m.½-vt. 1 with his wife for their lives.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>S.C.2 154/1 No.5</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Michaelmas 5 R.II</td>
<td>W.C. and his wife surrendered above holding.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>S.C.2 154/1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COKE, Edward</td>
<td>2 Sept. 31 H.VI.</td>
<td>E.C. took m.½-vt. abandoned by Richard Rolfe, who had left the manor.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>S.C.2 154/3</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>COLBROND, Thomas</td>
<td>25 April 6 H.VII.</td>
<td>T.C. took m.½-vt. lately held by Margaret Hynde. No entry fine because the tenement is completely in ruins.</td>
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<td>S.C.2 154/4</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td>18 April 9 H.VII</td>
<td>T.C. exchanged holdings with Walter Boucher.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>S.C.2</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3 Oct. 16 H.VII</td>
<td>T.C. surrendered 2 m. 2 vt.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>S.C.2 154/4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COMPTON, Robert</td>
<td>14 Nov. 11 H.VI</td>
<td>R.C. took m.½-vt. lately Roger Townesende's.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>S.C.2 154/3</td>
<td>Richard Rolfe, who held m.½-vt. lately R.C.'s</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2 Sept. 31 H.VI</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>S.C.2 154/3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COUPER, John</td>
<td>A/c 19 R.II</td>
<td>J.C. leased mill and fishpond (piscaria).</td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
<td>S.C.6 743/10</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4 Oct. 22 R.II</td>
<td>J.C. miller, took cottage to hold with his wife Agnes, for their lives.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>S.C.2 154/1</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Name</td>
<td>Reference</td>
<td>Details</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------</td>
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<td>-------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CRYPS William</td>
<td>R.1379</td>
<td>W.C. m.vt. and 1 croft. m.½-vt. lately held by Hugh atte Hurne's.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>27 April 4 R.II</td>
<td>W.C. who held m.vt. lately Richard Darres and m.½-vt. called Hurneplace, has left and afterwards in open court refused to find a tenant for ('plenare') the said holding. It was ordered to seize the said lands and tenements into the lord's hands. Two heriots taken.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>S.C.2 154/1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CUBTULL, William</td>
<td>A/c 1422</td>
<td>W.C. commuted works of 1½-vt.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>S.C.6 743/17</td>
<td>(W.C. ½-vt.) crossed out and 'because within the enclosed field' written above (quia infra separalem).</td>
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<td></td>
<td>R.1424</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3 Oct. 25 H.VI.</td>
<td>Robert Skynner surrendered m.2-vt. lately Cuttull's to John West.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>S.C.2 154/3</td>
<td>W.C. was collector of rents in 1429 and 1430.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CUBBEELL, John 1.</td>
<td>R.1379</td>
<td>J.C. m.vt. once Juliana atte Yate's. m.vt. once John atte Streote's. 2 acres from demesne.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>R.1395</td>
<td>J.C. as above.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>S.C.2 154/4</td>
<td>J.C. for rent for his holding 12/1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>R.1473</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
CUBBELL, John 1.

R.1379 J.C. m.vt. once Juliana atte Yate's.
R.1395 m.vt. once John atte Streote's.
J.C. as above.

CUBBELL, John 2.

Vigil F.St.Luke J.C. who held 3 vt. lately Robert
6 Ed.IV. Carswell's surrendered them. Taken
S.C.2 154/4 by Thomas Aysshe in same court.
R.1473 J.C. for rent for his holding 12/1.

CUBBELL, Richard 1. - Christina.

19 May 2 H.VI. Message and close in lord's hands
S.C.2 154/2 granted to R.C.
R.1424 R.C. 1 vt.
10 Oct. 6 H.VI. R.C. who held m.vt. died. Widow
S.C.2 154/2 Christina inherited to hold 'while
4 Dec. 7 H.VI chaste and single'.
S.C.2 154/2 C.C. married John atte Mulle of
4 Dec. 7 H.VI 'Shalyngford' without licence, and
S.C.2 154/2 forfeited her holding.

CUBBELL, Richard 2.

3 July 6 H.VI. R.C. set up a sub-tenant on his
S.C.2 154/2 customary holding without licence
(constituit sibi subtenantem in
tenemento suo quod tenet de domino
secundum consuetudinem manerii
sine licenta). Ordered to move his
dwelling back to the said holding
on pain of forfeiture.

25 Oct. 7 H.VI. " " "
S.C. 2 154/2
4 Dec. 7 H.VI. Moved, and surrendered his holding.
S.C.2 154/2
CUBBELL, Richard

27 June 26 H.VI. Took m.vt. surrendered by John Warner and 2 closes.
S.C.2 154/3

19 Oct. 5 Ed.IV. R.C. who held lately J. Warner's, died.
S.C.2 208/41

CUBBELL, Robert

26 April 8 H.VI. R.C. took m.vt. lately Robert Workman's.
S.C.2 154/2

2 closes 'Forde's' and 'Taylors'.
2 vt. called 'Bruggesloud'.

Correction to R.1424

R.C. holds: 2 vt. lately William Boynton's.
1 vt. lately Workman's.
1 cottage, 2 closes 'Forde's' and 'Taylors' conceded with
2 vt. lately William Bonet's.

R.C. was collector of rents in 1427 and 1428.

KYBBELL, John

CUBBELL, John

22 Oct. 21 H.VI. John Kybbell 'nativus domini regardans
S.C.2 154/4

huius manerii' is living at Brynham near Newbury. The said J.C. is worth

100 m. in goods and chattels.

R.1520

J.K. (entry illegible).

CUBBELL, Thomas

was the lord's stockman (instaurator) in 1452.
DALLE, Robert

30 April 5 R.II
S.C.2 154/1
R.D. took m. vt. formerly held by Simon Whydyng, whose death is recorded in the same court roll.

DALLE, DOLLE, John

F.St. Mary Magd. 19 R.II
S.C.2 154/1
R.1395
4 Oct. 22 R.II
S.C.2 154/1
A/c 7 8 R.IV.
S.C.6 743/13
J.D. took m. vt. anciently called ? Fanes.
J.D. m. vt. lately Fanes' afterwards Thomas Kyrkeby's.
J.D. took 'unbuilt' (non-edificatum) ½-vt. lately Abell's.
1/2 vt. lately J.D's in the lord's hand.


R.1379
J.D. cot.2 ac. (granted to T. Carswell for part of 1 vt.)
3 ac. from demesne.
R.1395
J.D. m. vt. and 2 acres from demesne.
R.1424
R.D. for a holding lately Smythe's.

DUKE, DMYKE, John l.

R.1379
J.D. m.½ vt. once Richard Duke's.
R.1395
J.D. ? ½-vt.
R.1424
Richard Spenser, corrected to J.D.
1 vt. with close called 'Somertons-clos.'
28 Nov. 15 H.VI.
S.C.2 154/3
1 vt. lately J.D.'s in the lord's hand.
DUKE, DUYKE, John 2.
27 June 26 H.VI.
S.C.2 154/3
J.D. surrendered m.½-vt. lately Lawrence Dyker's, ordered to find another tenant.

7 Oct. 26 H.VI.
S.C.2 154/3
J.D. took 2 vt. lately William Cuttull's, abandoned by John West who is recorded as having left the manor in the same court. To hold for his life at the will of the lord.

16 Oct. 37 H.VI.
S.C.2. 154/3
J.D.'s holding in disrepair.

17 April 4 Ed.IV.
S.C.2. 154/4
m.vt. lately J.D.'s in the lord's hand.

Vigil F.St. Luke
6 Ed.IV.
S.C.2 154/4
Thomas Aysshe surrendered m.2-vt. lately J.D.'s, afterwards Robert Naseby's.

J.D. was messor in 1448 and 1451.

DUKE, DUYKE, Robert.
R.1424
William, Edith.
R.D. m.vt.
W.D. ½-vt.
R.D. 1 close called 'Crypsys' (and 1 close called 'Collecote')
John Mulleward alias Hayward, corrected to Edith Duke, 1 cottage lately Syrons.

8 April 4 H.VI.
S.C.2 154/2
R.D. exchanged ½ acre with William Fox.

10 Oct. 6 H.VI.
S.C.2 154/2
Edith Duke took cottage lately Syron's.

13 April 17 H.VI.
S.C.2 154/3
J.D. son of Robert Duke, took 1-vt. once Forde's, to hold with his wife Alice at the will of the lord.

A/c 16 H.VI.
S.C.6 744/22
2 closes, Taylor's close and Forde's close granted to Robert Duke with 2 m. 2 vt. lately Robert Beynton for one year from the holding called Brygges place in addition to the said holding.

R.D. was collector of rents in 1421-6, 1432 & 1433.
DYKKER, Lawrence

R. 1424  1½ vt.
29 April 13 H. VI.  L.D. surrendered 2 m. 1½ vt.
S.C. 154/3
EDWARD, John
R. 1379

? 3 R.II
S.C. 2 154/1 No. 6

Vigil (?Annunc).
B.V.M. 9 R.II
S.C. 2 154/1

Sat. before Michaelmas 12 R.II
S.C. 2 154/1

ELYS, Thomas
F. St. Mary Magd.
19 R.II
S.C. 2 154/1
R. 1395

J.E. m. ½-vt. 1 rod meadow, 'Lawmannes'.

J.E. took m. ½-vt. formerly Ralph Bray's. (This land is described as 'Lawmannes' in 12. E.II.

J.E. took m. 1¾- vt. and ¾-vt. lately Robert Preost's, to hold with his wife for their lives.

W. Martin took m. ½-vt. called 'Lawmannes' which Ralph Bray held.

T.E. took m. ½-vt. once William Smyth's, and forge, once W. Smyth's.

T.E. holds as above.
ATTE FOLDE, Philip; Walter.

? R. II
S.C. 2 154/1 No. 3
R. 1424
28 April 5 H. VI.
S.C. 2 154/2

H. Gybochen surrendered tenement called 'Phippes attefolde'.
W.F. 1-vt.
W.F. surrendered m.vt.

W.F. presented William Kyppyng and John Fox in court at Shrivenham. It is ordered that no tithing man should make presentments in a foreign court.

W.F. who held m.vt. left it. His goods were valued at 19/- (? and sold) to cover cost of repairs, a list being read in court and attached to the court roll.

26 April 8 H. VI.
S.C. 2 154/2.

AT FORDE, Thomas

Lay subsidy 1534
R. 1379
R. 1395

Henry at Forde. 2/-
T.F. m.2-vt. once Walter de Coleshulle's.
T.F. m vt. lately Richard Eng. (illeg.)
1 toft and 1 vt.

FOX, John

R. 1424
8 April 4 H. VI
S.C. 2 154/2
6 June 9 H. VI.
S.C. 2 154/2

J.F. 2 vt. 1 Cottage.
J.F. who held in 2 vt. left the demesne for E.... where he holds the office of bailiff. No heriot because he had no goods of his own.
J.F. was messor in 1421

FRANKELYNE

23 Oct. 9 H. VI
S.C. 2 154/2
14 Nov. 11 H. VI.
S.C. 154/3

H.F. took 2 m. 2¾ vt. lately Thomas Halle's.
H.F. who held as above, left the manor with all his goods and chattels.
FYLTON, Thomas

12 Oct. 8 H.VII.  S.C.2 154/4  
T.F. took cot. and ½–vt. surrendered by Richard Palmer in same court, to hold with his wife for their lives.

19 Oct. 15 H.VII  S.C.2 154/4  
T.F. tenant at will, left his holding.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>R.</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>GILLMORE, John</td>
<td>1395</td>
<td>10 Oct. 6 H.VI</td>
<td>J.G. 1 Cottage.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GOURDY, Roger</td>
<td>1395</td>
<td>7 May 29 H.VI</td>
<td>R.G. ½-vt. lately Levyng's.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GOVAYR, John</td>
<td>1395</td>
<td>22 Nov. 8 H.VI</td>
<td>J.G. m.vt... formerly Pinnok's. ½-vt. lately Luke Coke's.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GREGORY, William</td>
<td>1424</td>
<td>22 Nov. 8 H.VI</td>
<td>J.G. took ½-vt. later Walter Folde's of which the messuage and close are granted to Robert Mulleward.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>J.G. to provide another tenant for cottage and curtilage.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GYBOCHEN, Henry</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Ordered to repair his house.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>H.G. surrendered his villein holdings, one called 'Gybochensplace' and one called 'Phippesattefolde'. The holdings have deteriorated to the value of 10/-, which it is ordered to levy for the lord's use.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td>Land of H.G.'s leased for sowing:</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1½ acre to John Edam</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>3 rods to Thomas Jurdan</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2 acres to Simon Carter</td>
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<td></td>
<td>½ acre to Mulleward ?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>½ acre to William Leveson</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>½ acre to John Brokke</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Michaelmas 5 R.II
S.C.2 154/1

T.H. took m.vt. lately Nicholas Wyke's and ½ vt. and ¼ vt. lately William le Reve's, surrendering by William Leveson in same court. 7 witnesses.

R.1424

28 April 5 R.VI.
S.C.2 154/2

A.H. surrendered m.1¾ vt. No heriot because she is a widow. Richard Halle came and took toft called Taylor's. Toft called Forde's. 2 vt. called 'Bruggesland' and 1 quartron of land once T.H's, his father's.

25 Oct. 7 R.VI.
S.C.2 154/2

R.H. surrendered all the above land.

HARDY, John

J.H. lately John Neel, formerly John Aleyn: m.vt.

HEREFORD, Robert

17 Oct. 20 Ed.IV.
S.C.2 154/4


R.H. was the lord's stockman 'instaurator) from 1453 to 1458)

HERT, John

R.1379

9 May 17 R.II
S.C.2 154/1

J.H. took ½-vt. once John Lawmannes, with the pasture and meadow belonging to the said ½-vt. with an adjacent curtilage wholly reserved to the lord. To hold with his wife.

R.1395

J.H. m.vt. ½-vt. lately Ralph Bray's, and formerly Lawman.
HOGGES, John
R.1379
Wed. after Holy Trinity 7 R.II
S.C.2 154/1
J.H. 2m. 2 vt.
J.H. surrendered 2 m. 2 vt. 'causa impotentatis.'

HOGHURD, John
R.1379
J.H. m.vt. lately John Gybochen's 1 cottage.

AT HULLE,
HULLE, Thomas, Lucy.
R.1379
Richard Liente for a vt. which John atte Hulle held.

Michaelmas 5 R.II
S.C.2 154/1
William Leveson, who held m.vt. lately Nicholas at Wyke's, and half of 1 vt. and quarter of 1 vt. lately William le Reve's, died.
T.H. came and took this land, to hold on same terms as W.L. Fealty witnessed by 7 witnesses. including Rector of Edington, seneschall, and three clerks.

R.1395
T.H. and Nicholas Mayllard (q.v.) ½-vt. lately William Reve's, toft and 1 vt. lately W. Reve's.
T.H. m.vt. lately Leveson's, formerly N. Wyke's.

R.1424
1 vt. lately T.H's included in the small pasture at Wyke. (includitur in p. a seperale de Wyke).
½-vt. lately T.H's as above.
¼-vt½
T.H. ½-vt.
½-vt.

28 April 5 H.VI.
S.C.2 154/2
T.H. took orchard (pomarium) and garden to hold with his wife Lucy for their lives while they remain on the manor. T.H. not to fell or lop trees (schrudando) except for fencing (closebote).
AT HULLE (contd).

3 July 6 H.VI.
S.C.2 154/2

T.H. died. Widow Lucy claims to hold land ‘while she keeps herself single and chaste’.

25 Oct. 7 H.VI
S.C.2 154/2

L.H. married William Kyppyng junior without licence. Forfeited holding.

4 Dec. 7 H.VI.
S.C.2 154/2

William Kyppyng junr. took m.vt. lately T.H’s, to hold with Lucy, his wife.

HURDE, Henry
R.1424

H.H. ½ vt. lately Kerdyse’s.

HYNDE John. Margaret.

A/c. 1463
25 Oct. 1470
S.C.2 208/41
R. 1473
Tues. before Nat.
St. John 2 H.VII.
S.C.2 154/4
25 April 6 H.VII
S.C.2 154/4

Close at Hiderwyke sold to J.H.

J.H. took cottage lately Edward Cooke’s and 12 acres arable, for life.

J.H. for his holding ... 7/-

J.H. who held m.½-vt. died.

Thomas Colbrond took m.½ vt. lately held by Margaret Hynde. No entry fine because the holding is almost in ruins.

(fere totaliter in decasu).
JACARD, John

5 April 18 H.VIII
S.C.2 154/4

J.J. took ½-vt. in Buscot.

JAYE, John

30 Oct. 25 H.VI.
S.C.2. 154/3
R. 1473

J.J. overstocked common with sheep.
J.J. for rent for his holding.

JURDAN, Thomas

R.1379

T.J. m.1½ vt. and 1 rod of meadow.

? 3 R.II
S.C.2 154/1 No.6

T.J. leased 3 acres from vacant tenements.

R.1395

T.J. M.1½ vt. as in R.1379
KYPPYNG, William senior, Firmarius 1421-1432

A/c 1421
S.C.6 743/14

(A/c of William Duyk, rent-collector, W.K. Firmarius, John Fox, Messor.)

Defectus para: Certain acres of meadow of vacant holdings mown with demesne.

Firma para: From demesne land leased for sowing; nothing this year because at farm.

Pasture of Southey, at farm.
20 acres meadow: at farm.

Yield of the dairy: Nothing, because the cows are leased to the Firmarius.

No wages paid to bailiff or other servant 'because at farm'.

Crops:
W.K. Firmarius answers for 40 ac. arable sown with wheat.
Ditto 30 ac. arable sown with barley.
3 ac. " " " oats
4 ac. " " " pulse.

A/c 1421 (Parsonage) £5. 6. 8 farm of titles of sheaves and hay of demesne land and tenant land, except for the tithes of 128 acres which the lord reserved for his own stock.

To hold with the use of the great barn.

Crops: No return, because at farm.

A/c 1422
S.C.6 743/17.

As 1425 with 10/- received from W.K. as part of farm and repairs to certain manorial buildings and 106 acres arable and 10 acres meadow ... granted to W.K. by indenture this year.

£1.13.4 for 30 cows leased to W.K.

A/c 1423
S.C.6 743/18

As before, with £2.0.0. allowed to W.K. 'for his crop' (de vescura sua) for the past three years at 6/8 p.a. as in agreement.
KYPPING, William (contd):

A/c 1425
S.C.6 744/1

As before, with £1.0.0 for victualling 1000 sheep, hereafter charged as a fixed rent.

R.1424
Correction:

W.K. Firmarius: 2 closes.

14 Nov. 11 H.VI.
S.C.2 154/3

W.K. 2 m. 2½ vt. lately held by Henry Frankelyne who had left the manor.

KYPPYNG, William, junior: Firmarius 1433-1455
Rent collector 1432, 1436-1440.

19 May 2 H.VI
S.C.2 154/2

M.vt. lately John Mulleward's granted to W.K.

5 Nov. 3 H.VI
S.C.2. 154/3

W.K. took m.vt. 'Stanlakes'.

3 July 6 H.VI
S.C.2 154/3

W.K. illegally sub-let his holding.

25 Oct. 7 H.VI
S.C.2 154/3

W.K. married Lucy, widow of Thomas Hulle, without licence.

4 Dec. 7 H.VI
S.C.2 154/3

W.K. granted permission not to dwell on his holding as long as he is a tenant and remains within the demesne.

W.K. took m.vt. lately Thomas Hulle's to hold with his wife Lucy.

" ...

23 Sept. 17 H.VI
S.C.2 154/3

W.K. who held 2 m. 2 vt. lately Hulle's and 1 vt. 'Stanlakes' died.

KYPPYNG, Thomas, senior.

7 Oct. 26 H.VI
S.C.2 154/3

T.K. took m.vt. 'Fordes'.

16 Oct. 37 H.VI.
S.C.2 154/3

T.K. took 2 m. 2 vt. and close previously held by W.K. junior.

R.1473

T.K. 2 tenements and 1 vt. lately John Cubbell's.
KYPPYNG, Thomas, junior

3 Oct. 25 H.VI
S.C.2 154/3
T.K. took m, close, 2½ vt.

5 Aug. 25 H.VI
S.C.2 154/3
T.K. surrendered m.vt. lately Thomas Sklatter's. (probably acquired in 1435.)

R.1520
T. Pleydell holds land once T.K's.
T. Whelor " " " "

KYRKEBY, Thomas

R.1379
T.K. m.vt. once Robert France's.

? 3 Ric.II
S.C.2 154/n0.6
T.K. took m,½-vt. lately Thomas Streote's, for life.

F.St. Mary Magd.
19 R.II.
S.C.2 154/1
Robert Dolle takes m.vt. anciently called Frances'

R.1395
1 vt. Lacy, formerly Kyrkeby, in the lord's hand.
LACY, Henry

Thurs. before St. Andrew 16 R. II S. C. 2. 154/1

H. L. who held a 2 m. 2 vt. died.

Heriot 1 mare with foal not yet weaned, no more because he has no more animals. The lord is owed 1 acre of best corn as heriot.

LEGH, Walter

R. 1379

W. L. m. \( \frac{1}{2} \)-vt. lately William Faber's

R. 1395

Thomas Elys: \( \frac{1}{2} \)-vt. lately William Faber's (Elys had taken this land in 19 R. II).

LEVESON, William (see also PREOST, Robert)

R. 1379

W. L. m. vt. once Nicholas Wyke's.

half share in (pro mediate) m. vt. once Walter Reve's.

5 ac. lately Robert le Reve's.

3 ac. meadow.

3 acres from demesne.

Michaelmas R R. II S. C. 2 154/1

W. L. who held as above, died.

Thomas Hulle took over holding.

LEVYNG, John

R. 1379

J. L. m. \( \frac{1}{2} \)-vt. lately Alice Levyng's.

1 acre from demesne.

J. L. surrendered m. \( \frac{1}{2} \)-vt. 'causa impotentatis'.


R. 1379

J. L. m. vt. once Robert Wakefield's.

\( \frac{1}{2} \)-vt. from the glebe (de personatu') 1\( \frac{1}{2} \) acre from demesne.

9 May 17 R. II S. C. 2 154/1

Agnes Lok surrendered above land, which was taken up immediately afterwards by Robert Newe.

F. St. Mary Magd. 19 R. II S. C. 2. 154/1

A. L. widow of J. L. took messuage

R. 1395

A. L. m. vt. once Whittock's.

4 Oct. 21 R. II S. C. 2 154/1

A. L. took 2 acres and (rest illegible probably small amount of pasture).
LOK (contd)

A/c 5 H.IV
S.C.6 743/11

19 Feb. 1 H.IV.
S.C.2 154/1

1/- from commuted services of A.L.

Roger Lok. Trespass with two mares.
MARTIN, Walter John.
Sat. before Michaelmas, 12 R.II S.C.2 154/1

W.M. took m.½ vt. called Lawmannes which Ralph Bray held.

Thursday before F. St. Andrew 16 R.II S.C.2 154/1

Seizure of m. ½- vt. which John Martin, "sclatter" held, for arrears of rent and withdrawal of services, and of ½- vt. which Walter Martin held.

MATHEN, MATHEN, John
BR.1395

J.M. 1 vt. lately William attter Knolles ½ vt. " " "

MAYLARD
MAYNARD, Nicholas
S.C.2 154/1 R.1395

John Bray surrendered m. l¾ vt. to the use of 'N.M.

N.M. m.vt. lately ( ) formerly Newe's.

N.M. and Thomas Hulle, Toft and 1 vt. lately William Reve's.

N.M. was Reeve in 1404 and 1405.

ATTE MULLE, John
R.1379
Thur. after F. St. Martin 6 R.II S.C.2 154/1 R.1395

J.M. m. ½-vt.

J.M. granted ½-vt. called Norman's except for 2½ acres in the lord's enclosed field, belonging to the said ½-vt. given in exchange.

J.M. l cottage.
MULLEWARD, Joan, John 1, John 2. Richard, Alice.

10 Mar. 1 R.II
S.C.2 154/1
Joan M. surrendered m.vt. lately Robert M's 'causa impotentatis,' her husband's.

? R.II
S.C.2 154/1 No. 3
John M. left the lord's demesne at La Cote with his son William Rolpe.

29 May 1 H.VI
S.C.2 154/2
John M. who held 1 vt. left the demesne.

19 May 2 H.VI
S.C.2 154/2
William Kyppyng took above land.

R.1424

John Mulleward alias Hayward:
1 cot. lately Syrons.
R. Mulleward. Close called 'Barons-close'.

18 Oct. 4 H.VI
S.C.2 154/2
R.M. took m. lately Hunte's, 1 vt. lately Folde's, to hold for life.

10 Oct. 6 H.VI.
S.C.2 154/2
R.M. took holding forfeited in same court by George Nicholas.

22 Nov. 8 H.VI
S.C.2 154/2
John Bridport took m.½-vt. lately Richard Cubbell's, to hold with his wife Alice for their lives.

MULLEWARD, John

8 Oct. 10 H.VI
S.C.2 154/2
"John Mulleward of Coleshill in the county of Berks, husbandman" (poaching rabbits).

13 April 17 H.VI
S.C.2 154/2
J.M. surrendered water-mill, and took m.vt. called 'Chapmannes' to hold with his wife Joan for their lives at the will of the lord.

R.1473

Alice M. 1 vt.

A/c 1466
S.C.6 746/25
1 vt. of J.M.'s in the lord's hand.
MULLEWARD, John (contd).

17 Oct. 20 Ed. IV  J.M. surrendered m. vt. lately
S.C. 2 154/4  Robert Anger's.
R. 1520  J. Perfytt. Toft, close, 1 vt.
lately Richard M's.
NAPPER, John
? 15/160
S.C.2 154/1 No.34
J.N. surrendered m.½ vt. because he has no stock.

NEEL, Nicholas
Edington Chartulary.
B.M. Lansdowne
Mss. 442 f.174
Grant by John Neel, junior, heir of John de Coleshill, to Ralph Grey Kt. and Thomas Grey.

R.1379
M.N. m.vt. once John de Monendino's m.vt. once John Stormy's.
8 ac. arable, 1 ac. meadow.

R. 1395
John Taillor. m.vt. lately N.N's.
1 vt. once John Stormy's in m.d.

NEEL, John
R.1379
J.N. m.vt. once John Aleyn's.

R.1395
" " " " "
in the lord's hand.
(And see under PREOST, John).

NEEL, Robert
Thurs. before Nat. R.N. took m. 15½ acres.
St. John. 15 RII.

L.S. 1334
E.179
R,1395
Roger le Nywe ... 6/10½
Robert Newe ... (illegible)
Thomas Newe. m.vt. lately John Hogge's
½ vt. lately Pomeloy's (? Pomerlay's)
2 cottages (Agnes Webbe and Richard Make 1).
NICOLAS, George.
4 Oct. 22 R.II
S.C.2 154/1
C H.VI.
G.N. Took cottage and ½-vt.
G.N. forfeited holding because he
'did not dwell on the said holding
(non trahit moram suam super
tenementum suum.)'

NORMAN, Walter
R.1379
Ralph Carter, m. ½ vt. lately Richard
Norman's.
W.N. m.vt. once John Eustace's.
m.vt. once Walter Syres'.

30 April 5 R.II
S.C.2 154/1
W.N. who held 2 m. 2 vt. died.
Widow Isabella claimed to hold
his land in free bench.

Thurs. after F.
St. Martin 5 R.II
R.1395
S.C.2 1541 Isabella married John
Wyke (q.v.)
John Wyke. 2 vt. lately W.N's.
ODAM, Thomas

R. 1379
T.O. m.vt. and 3 r. meadow, lately Thomas atte Wyke's.

R. 1395
T.O. m.vt. and 3 r. meadow, lately Thomas atte Wykes' and m.vt. lately Boneton's.

A/c 9 H.V
1 vt. lately T.O's in the lord's hand.

S.C. 6 743/14

ODAM, John

R. 1379
J.O. m.vt. once John Pynnok's.

20 April 14 R.II
J.O. surrendered m.vt. 'to the use of' John Govayr and his wife, for the term of their lives, reserving the whole crop to J.O. until Michaelmas.

J.O. surrendered curtilage and (illeg.) amount of land 'to the use of' John Mathen, similarly reserving the crop.
PALMER, Richard

12 Oct. 8 H.VII
S.C.2 154/4
R.P. surrendered cottage, ½-vt.

3 Oct. 16 H.VII
S.C.2 154/4
" " m.vt. close and 1 acre meadow.

PAYNE, John

26 Oct. 24 H.VI.
S.C.2 154/3
J.P. took m.½ vt. lately William Duyk's.

5 Aug. 25 H.VI.
S.C.2 154/3
J.P. took m.vt. surrendered in same court, by Thomas Kyppyng junior.

7 Oct. 26 H.VI
S.C.2 154/3
J.P. surrendered m.½ vt. lately W. Duyke's.

11 Oct. 36 H.VI
S.C.2 154/3
J.P. died. His 2 m. 2 vt. remain in the lord's hand.

PEPPYS, Henry. William.

R.1473
H.P. for rent for his holding.

26 May 21 Ed.IV.
S.C.2 154/4
H.P. surrendered m.vt. lately J. Duke's and took m.2 vt. lately Walter Purton's, m. ½-vt. lately Walter West's.

3 H.VII
S.C.2 154/4
W.P. took m.½-vt. lately John Hervis.

PERFECT, PERFYT, John. Noah.

11 Oct. 36 H.VI
S.C.2 154/3
J.P. took water-mill.

R.1520
? P. toft, close, 1 vt. lately Richard Mulleward's.
J.P. m.2 vt. 2 closes.

Survey 1551
Noah Perfect m. & close, 3 vt.
J.P. 1 tenement, 2 vt. garden, orchard.
PLEYDELL, PLEIDEELL, PLEDILL, Thomas. William.

22 Oct. 12 H.VII
S.C.2 154/4

T. P. took m.½ vt. lately held by his mother, to hold with his wife and son for their lives.

R.1520

T. P. m. vt. lately held by Thomas Kypping, meadow called 'Adamslane'.

W. P. m. vt. lately John Boucher's 'Clerkenwell'.

6 April 21 H.VIII
S.C.2 208/43

W. P. surrendered 2 vt. and 2 closes once held by Wm. Kyppyng, no heriot by the forms of the indenture made regarding it, and another holding called Slatehouse, with 2 vt. and 2 closes, all of which belonged (pertinavit) to Thomas Whelor before him, and 1 vt. called 'Clerkenwell' and m vt. called Bridge, once Thomas Whelor's; m.½- vt. called Perfyt's, and all the other holdings, messuages, lands and cottages which he held from the lord.

Survey 1551

W. P. holds at will: The Slatehouse. Rectory and tithes of corn and hay.
POLEYN, John

1 May 9 R. II S.C. 2 154/1

John Poleyn took 1 messuage and a toft called Caldecote and 2½ vt. with meadow which Richard bolle held before him to hold to himself and his wife Christine for the term of their lives, paying £1.6.8. yearly at the usual terms ... in equal portions, with ¼-lb. of pepper at Michaelmas, and one heriot after the death of the last of the said John and Christina, and doing suit of court from three weeks to three weeks. And the said J. & C. shall have pasture for 50 sheep in Northmede with the lord's sheep. J. & C. shall do all forensic services ... as the other tenants. And after the death of J. and C., the said messuage toft, and land, with the said pasture, shall remain to John, the son of J. & C., who shall pay such fine to the lord as the other tenants pay or as they agree between themselves to pay. And J.C. shall repair and maintain all the buildings (domos) there adequately and well and shall build a new hall (anla) at their own expense within four years ... They pay as fine for having entry £1.6.8.

POMERLAY, John, Agnes.

A/c 10 Ed. II S.C. 6 743/4

Richard P. ploughman.

R. 1379

Agnes P. m.½-vt. lately Nicholas ?

8 Oct. 4 R. II S.C. 2 154/1

J.P. who held m.½-vt. died.

Michaelmas 5 R. II S.C. 154/1

John Mason took m.½vt. lately J.P.'s.
PREOST, Robert (see also LEVESON, William)

R. 1379

R.P. m.vt. once Walter Nywe's.

'half share in (pro mediate) m.vt.

½ acres arable

½ acre meadow

once Robert Reve's.

Wed. after Holy Trinity 7. RII

R.P. who held as above, died. Heriot
1 ox and 3/6 cash for half a mare
assessed at 7/- and no more because
3/6 remains to his widow Isabel.

PREOST John.

Tuesday after
F. St. Martin 10 R. II
S. C. 2 154/1

J.P. took m.§-vt. lately Pomeloy's
to hold with his wife for the term
of their lives.

15 May 12 R. II
S. C. 2 154/1

J.P. took m.vt. lately John Neel's
which J.N. had surrendered out of
incapacity... paying no heriot
because he had no goods or chattels,
to hold to the said J.P. according
to the custom of the manor.
J.N. shall have yearly, by the
lord's grace and with his licence,
½ acre for sowing, which J.P. shall
plough yearly and sow with his own
seed from good dry corn, well
winnowed. And the said J.N., by
the agreement, shall have a place
made in the hall (avia) of the said
messuage for a bed, with free
entrance and exit without interfer-
ence from the said J.P. And the
said J.P. to build a new granary
(grangia) with two bays (de duobus
copulis) and two 'braketes' within
3 years. He gave two capons as
fine; pledges for the fine, the
agreement, and the tenure; Thomas
the vicar, and John Mathen.
PURYTON, Richard Walter.

R.1379 and R.1395
R.P. messuage, curtillage in Buscot.
9 acres 'at farm'.

R.1473
? P. for his holding.

26 May 21 Ed.IV
Henry Peppys took m. 2-vt.
S.C.2 154/4 lately Walter P's.
RICHE, John, Alice.

R.1579
(c.rection)
1 Oct. 2 H.VI
S.C.2 154/2
R.1424

A.R. m. ½-vt.
J.R. surrendered m. ½-vt. No
heriot because he had no goods.
J.R. ½-vt.

ROLFE, Richard.

2 Sept. 31 H.VI

R.R. who held ½-vt. left the demesne.
No heriot because he had no stock.
Rent-collector ordered to seize
(blank) acres of barley to meet the
cost of repairs and rent.

RUSSELL, Henry.

10 Oct. 6 H.VI
S.C.2 154/2
27 June 26 H.VI
S.C.2 154/13

R.R. took 1-vt. lately Kerdys for
his life.
H.R. surrendered ½-vt.; took
cottage called the Forge.

RYLLE, Thomas

15 May 12 R.II
S.C.2 154/1

John Basset surrendered m.vt. 'to
use of' T.R. 3/4 as price of
Basset's heriot granted to T.R.
for repairs.

RYNGEWODE, Robert

Thurs. before
Nat. St. John
15 R.II.
S.C.2 154/1

R.R. who held cottage and ½-vt.
2½ acres died. No heriot 'because
he had no goods'.
SAUNDER, SAUNDERS, Thomas, John.

14 Oct. 18 H.VI
S.C.2 208/40
T.S. took cottage, curtilage, toft, and 1-vt. for the term of his life at the will of the lord.

3 Oct. 25 H.VI
S.C.2 154/3
J.S. surrendered m.2vt. on behalf of R. Skynner.

27 June 26 H.VI
S.C.2 154/3
J.S. surrendered 2 m. 2-vt.
T.S. took 1½-vt.

25 April 27 H.VI
S.C.2 154/3
T.S. ordered to provide a tenant for m.½ vt. lately Dyker's.

27 Sept. 28 H.VI
S.C.2 154/3
Surrendered above holding.

2 May 35 H.VI
S.C.2 154/3
T.S. overstocked common with 20 sheep.

C/Rs of 4-21
Ed. IV
T.S. to repair his holding.

22 Oct. 14/15
H.VII
S.C.2 154/4
T.S. surrendered m.vt. taken by W. Graunger in same court.

18 May 16 H.VII
S.C.2 154/4
T.S. who held m.½-vt. formerly W. Graunger died. No heriot because he had not been admitted as its tenant.

SAWYER, John, Philip.

Sat. before Mich.-aelmas 12 R.II
S.C.2 154/1
P.S. sold a certain building called the bakehouse (domus pistrina) from his holding without licence, to the value of 10/-.

SHEPHERD, Thomas, John.

R.1379
T.S. m.vt. once Thomas Forde's.

27 May 10 H.V.
S.C.2 154/2
Land in the lord's hand.
m.½-vt. lately John Shepherd's.
SHUPTON, John

20 April 14 R. II  S.C. 2 154/1
J.S. took m. ½ vt. once Pomerlay's.


3 Oct. 25 H. VI  S.C. 2 154/3
R.S. surrendered m. 2- vt.

27 Sept. 28 H. VI  S.C. 2 154/3
W.S. took m. 2½ vt. lately Halles, surrendered by Thomas Kyppyng in same court.

A/c 1463  S.C. 6 746/19
Sale of heriots of W.S. and R.S.

R. 1473
W.S. for rent for his holding ... 5/5¼.

SKLATTERFORD, SCLATTERFORD, William, Firmarius 1456-1467, poss. 1468.

Henry. John.

R. 1473
H.S. for rent for his holding £1.14.11½
Ditto for his messuage 11. 0
William Whelor for farm of manor house lately H.S's £4. 0. 0

Tues. before Nat.  S.C. 2 154/4
St. John 2 H. VII
H.S. took m. 2vt. surrendered by H. Peppis.

R. 1520  S.C. 2 154/4
J.S. m. 2½ vt.

Survey 1551  S.C. 2 154/4
J.S. m. 2½ vt. £1. 14. 1½

SKLATTER, Thomas

29 April 13 H. VI  S.C. 2 154/4
T.S. left demesane and abandoned his holding. Goods valued at 3/4 granted to Firmarius for repairs.
SMYTH, Thomas

? 2 R. II
S.C.2 154/1 No.3

T.S. surrendered his holding called 'le Smythsplace' which he held for life. Gave 6/8 for damage done to the holding.

T.S. took m.½ vt. surrendered in same court by Walter and Alice Chunte.

4 Oct. 22 R. II
S.C.2 154/1

T.S. surrendered ½-vt called 'Smythes'.

23 April 22 R. II
S.C.2 154/1

'T.S. who holds a forge (fabricam) from the lord in order to serve him by his craft (de arte sua) before all others according to custom, on October 9th, when asked to shoe the horses of Brother Adam and John Elys, refused, to their great damage and against the said custom. It is ordered to distrain him before the next court. '

19 Feb. 1 H. IV
Sec.2 154/1

'T.S. came. He did fealty and by that claimed to hold a messuage and two virgates... In Coleshill as those which he acquired from Roger atte Brugge in fee simple and by service 18/- p.a. doing suit and giving relief.

R.1424

Robert Deye, for holding lately Smythe's.

SOLAS, John

27 June 26 H.VI
S.C.2 154/3

J.S. took m. 2vt. to hold with his son for their lives.

J.S. was Messor in 1449.

SPENSER, Robert

19 May 2 H.VI
S.C.2 154/1

M.vt. lately Thomas Sometons granted to R.S.

22 Nov. 8 H.VI
S.C.2 154/2

R.S. who held in 2 vt. left the demesne. Tenement is in ruins and badly kept up. (male reperata). Damage estimated at 14/-
STANLAKE, William

R.1379
26 Jan. 20 R.II
S.C.2 154/1

W.S. m.vt. once Elias Boneton's.
W.A. has died. Tenement has deteriorated. Two tenants have hay sold to them by W.S. in their possession, which money it is ordered to levy from them for the lord's use.

R.1395
A/c T.H.IV
S.C.6 743/13

M.vt. once Stanlake's in the lord's hand.

STONE, John

10 Oct. 6 H.VI
S.C.2 154/2
3 July 6 H.VI
S.C.2 154/2
22 Nov. 8 H.VI
S.C.2 154/2

J.S. took m.vt. left by R. Workman who had left the manor.
J.S. presented for sub-letting has holding and ordered to re-occupy it.
J.S. who held as above, left the manor.

STREOTE, Gunnilda

? 3 R.II
S.C.2 154/1 No.6

Land of G.S. in the lord's hand leased for sowing.

STREOTE, John

Wed. after Holy Trinity 7 R.II
S.C.2 154/1

John Streote, villein by blood (nativus sanguine) for licence to live outside the demesne until the feast of Holy Trinity next year, pays one bar of iron (ferri pedalem), pledges William Rolfe and Gunnilda Streote (ха) and shall do so annually as long as G.S. lives within the village.
(ха) Rolfe's wife, in a C/R of 7 R.II

STREOTE, William

Sat. before Michaelmas, 12 R.II
S.C.2 154/1

William Streote, villein, gives as chevage (capitagium) for licence to live outside the demesne for the term of his life, one ploughshare, yearly.
STREOTE, William (contd:)

Wed. after Michaelmas 7 R. II
S.C. 2 154/1

W.S. is living at Wooton Basset. Afterwards he came and gave one ploughshare as chevage.

STREOTE, Henry

Wed. after Holy Trinity 7 R. II
S.C. 2 154/1

2 Nov. 18 R. II
S.C. 2 154/1

13 Jan. 19 R. II
S.C. 2 154/1

H.S. has eloigned himself.

H.S. (with William Strode) pays chevage for licence to be released from the tithing and live outside the demesne.

SWELE, Thomas

Tues. after F. St. Lawrence 7 R. II
S.C. 2 154/1

14 May 15 R. II
S.C. 2 154/1

A/c 15 R. II
S.C. 6 743/9

R. 1395

T.S. took M.½ vt. in Coleshill called 'Normanne's'.

T.S. took 6 acres once William Selewyn's.

10d from a piece of uncultivated (terra frisca) sold to T.S.

T.S. ½-vt. lately Walter Streotes, formerly N...... ½-vt. lately W.S.
TAYLOR, William John

R. 1348
William and Matilda Taylor: 1 cottage.

R. 1379
John Taylor, m.vt. once John Cynnor's.

R. 1395
J.T. lately Nicholas Neel. m.vt.
formerly John de Molendino's.

J.T. ½-vt. lately Nicholas atte Wyke's. 1 r. meadow.

1½ vt. lately J.T's in the lord's hand.

A/c 1406
S.C. 6 743/13

TETTERBURY, Thomas

A/c 1465
S.C. 6 746/23

A/c 1474
S.C. 6 747/6

2/- from 9 acres of Bordland leased to Thomas Tettebury.

A/0 1474 T. T. paid for mowing Snowsyke meadow.

TOKKENHAM Richard

R. 1379

R.T. m.vt. lately John Early's.

½-vt. lately Thomas Selewyn's.

3 tofts: John Clerk's, John Caul's John Hardy's.

R.T. surrendered 1 toft and ½ vt. lately William Ferrer's† no heriot because the lord has enclosed the land belonging to the said toft in a certain separate enclosure.'

Toft and land remained in the lord's hand.

R. 1395

A/c 19-20 R.II
S.C. 6 743/10

Pasture in Nether Orchard leased to R.T. for four years, this year the fourth.
TRYGNEILL, Robert. Agnes.

27 June 26 H.VI R.T. surrendered cottage called 'le Forge'.
S.C.2 154/3

25 April 27 H.VI R.T. who held m.vt. died.
S.C.2 154/3 Widow Agnes admitted as tenant until Michaelmas.
WARNER, John; Edith.
6 June 30 H.VI
S.C.2 154/3
J.W. who held m.½-vt. died, succeeded by his widow.

WEBBE, Walter; Robert.
16 Oct. 37 H.VI.
S.C.2 154/3
W.W. took m.½-vt. surrendered by John Wattys.
R.W. surrendered 1 cottage to John Angell.

WHELORE, William; Thomas.
R. 1473
W.W. for farm of the chief messuage lately William Slatterford's and Benehill pasture, as appears in the new indenture. £15. 13. 4
W.W. farm of Rectory. £5. 6. 8
R. 1520
T.W. 1 vt. lately Kyppyng's.
Chief messuage, arable, and pasture £26. 0. 0

WHEATEALE, John; Christina.
27 April 8 H.VII
S.C.2 154/4
J.W. took m.½-vt. to hold with his wife for their lives.
19 Oct. 15 H.VII
S.C.2 154/4
J.W. forfeited holding.

WHITTOK, John
R. 1395
J.W. ½-vt. lately Richard Duke's m. and cottage, lately Swon's.

WHYTTING
WHYDYNG Simon
R. 1379
S.W. m.vt. lately (erased)
30 April 5 R.II
S.C.2 154/1
S.W. who held m.vt. lately William Cryps', died.
Robert Dolle came and took the said land.
WORKMAN, Robert
R. 1424
22 Nov. 8 H. VI
S.C. 2 154/2

R.W. l-vt. 1 cottage.
John Stone who held l-vt. lately
R.W's ....

R.W. was messor in 1423, 1424, 1425
ATTE WYKE, John

L.S. 1334

E.179

Michaelmas 5 R.II
S.C. 2 154/1

Thurs. after F.
St. Martin 6 R.II
S.C. 2 154/1

R. 1395

13 Jan. 19 R.II
S.C. 2 154/1

John atte Wyke. 4/4½

William Leveson who holds m.vt. lately Nicholas at Wyke's.

J.W. married Isabel, widow of Walter Norman, and took m. 2 vt.
which W.N. held.

J.W. m.vt. lately William Norman's and formerly Carpenter's.
m.vt. lately William (illegible).

J.W. and Robert Chapman, having one plough (unan caruoam habentes) ought to plough and harrow one acre for sowing barley... J.W. did not harrow his share of that acre, to the lord's damage.

WYNNING, Robert. Agnes.

R. 1379

? R.II
S.C. 2 154/1 No. 3

R.W. m.vt. and croft once Elias Wynnyn's.

A.W. villein (nativa) has died.

Heriot: 1 ox which the reeve shall take now but shall restore to Robert Wynning, husband of the said Agnes when at any time he shall return to the manor of Coleshill and satisfy the lord, by sufficient security, of his arrears from the time when he was reeve of the said manor.

The lord granted R.W. ½-vt. lately John Abel's.

Thurs. after F.
St. Martin 6 R.II
S.C. 2 154/1

Thurs. before
Pentecost 13 R.II
S.C. 2 154/1

R.W. villein, has left the demesne; it is not yet known where he is living. His goods were seized by the lord because he was reeve of the manor and found owing great sums on his account. Afterwards John Baker came and took up the messuage and virgate in which R.W. used to live, to hold for the term of his life.
TABLE I. ENTRY-FINES

These fines, except where noted otherwise by brackets were paid for entry into complete villein holdings; that is to say, virgates or half-virgates, or multiples of a virgate.

'M' denotes a fine paid for land taken up on marriage.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Entry</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tr>
<td>1379</td>
<td>2 capons</td>
<td>£2. 0. 0</td>
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<tr>
<td>1380</td>
<td>2 capons</td>
<td>3/4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1381</td>
<td>2 capons</td>
<td>6/8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>£1. 0. 0</td>
<td>24 capons</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1382</td>
<td>6 capons</td>
<td>2 &quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2 &quot;</td>
<td>2 &quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1385</td>
<td>2 &quot;</td>
<td>6/8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1386</td>
<td>£1.6.8(granted extra pasture rights)</td>
<td>2 capons</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2 capons</td>
<td>3 &quot;</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2 &quot;</td>
<td>2 &quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1388</td>
<td>6 &quot;</td>
<td>2 &quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1390</td>
<td>2 &quot;</td>
<td>2 &quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1391</td>
<td>24 &quot;</td>
<td>6/8 M.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1 &quot;</td>
<td>1 capon</td>
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<td>1392</td>
<td>2 &quot;</td>
<td>4 &quot;</td>
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COLESHILL 1379 - 1496
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<th>Entry</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<td>1430</td>
<td>2 capons</td>
<td>8d</td>
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<td></td>
<td>3 &quot;</td>
<td>6/8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1/-</td>
<td>3/4</td>
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<tr>
<td>1431</td>
<td>2 capons</td>
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<tr>
<td>1432</td>
<td>2 &quot;</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>1435</td>
<td>1/8</td>
<td>6/8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1438</td>
<td>2 capons</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>1439</td>
<td>1/8</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2 capons</td>
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<tr>
<td>1445</td>
<td>1 3/8</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>1447</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>10/-</td>
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<td>1447</td>
<td>6/8</td>
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<tr>
<td>1448</td>
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</tr>
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<tr>
<td>1449</td>
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<td>1/-</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>1450</td>
<td>8d</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>1451</td>
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<td>1452</td>
<td>1/-</td>
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## ENTRY FINES - COLESHILL (contd.)

Transactions on which no entry-fine was charged:

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<th>Reason</th>
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<td>?</td>
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<tr>
<td>1381</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Widow</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1382</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1 widow</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1 undertook repairs</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2 no messuage</td>
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<tr>
<td>1388</td>
<td>1</td>
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<td>1390</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>?</td>
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<td>1</td>
<td>probably no messuage</td>
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<td>1395</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1 - smithy only</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1 - messuage only</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>3</td>
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<tr>
<td>1396</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>tenement probably in disrepair</td>
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<tr>
<td>1398</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1424</td>
<td>1</td>
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<td>1432</td>
<td>1</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>1447</td>
<td>3</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>1452</td>
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<td>widow</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1458</td>
<td>1</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>1466</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>1481</td>
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<td>1491</td>
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<tr>
<td>1494</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>(exchange of holdings)</td>
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<tr>
<td>1496</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>tenement in disrepair</td>
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**ENTRY FINES:**

**SOUTH MORETON 1326 - 1437**

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<th>Amount</th>
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<td>1326</td>
<td>£ 8. 13. 4</td>
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<td>£20. 13. 4</td>
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<tr>
<td>1340-41</td>
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<td>(prob. mid XIV £ 2. 0. 0 M)</td>
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<td>1367</td>
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<td>1361</td>
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<td>(Fines to release land from villein tenure)</td>
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<tr>
<td>1361-2</td>
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<td></td>
<td>(3. 0)</td>
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<tr>
<td>1384</td>
<td>£ 1. 0. 0</td>
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<td></td>
<td>? no fine</td>
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<tr>
<td>1387</td>
<td>£ 5. 3. 4</td>
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<td></td>
<td>4 lives</td>
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<tr>
<td>1391</td>
<td>(£ 1. 0. 0)</td>
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<tr>
<td>1430</td>
<td>£ 4. 0. 0</td>
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<td></td>
<td>For 3 lives</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1436</td>
<td>£ 1. 0. 0</td>
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<tr>
<td>1437</td>
<td>£ 6. 13. 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>&quot; 3 lives</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
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<td>&quot; 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>£ 6. 0. 0</td>
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<tr>
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<td>&quot; 3</td>
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## ENTRY FINES:

**BRIGHTWALTHAM 1281-1449**

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<th>Fine</th>
<th>Year</th>
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<td>5.0</td>
<td>1332</td>
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<td></td>
<td>£1.</td>
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<td>£3.</td>
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<td>10.0</td>
<td>1333</td>
<td>1.1.0</td>
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**ENTRY FINES:**

**BRIGHTWALTHAM (Contd.):**

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<td>1367</td>
<td>£2. 13. 4</td>
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<td>? 1376</td>
<td>£3. 0. 0</td>
<td>(2 tenements)</td>
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<td>1380</td>
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<td>1394</td>
<td>6. 8</td>
<td>6. 8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>? 1402</td>
<td>8. 0</td>
<td>16. 0</td>
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<td>£2. 13. 4</td>
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## ENTRY FINES

### SOTWELL STONOR - 1422-1509

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<td>1422</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>( 3. 4 )</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>( 6. 0 )</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>( 6. 8 )</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>( 10. 0 )</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1425-6</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>1431</td>
<td>( 2. 0 )</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1432-3</td>
<td>( 13. 4 )</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1433</td>
<td>1. 8</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>6. 8</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1. 8</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1501</td>
<td>£2. 1. 0</td>
<td>£3. 0. 0</td>
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<td>1509</td>
<td>£2. 1. 0</td>
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(Holdings of less than ½ virgate are bracketed).

1. Composite holding.
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<tr>
<td>1376</td>
<td>13.4</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>1426</td>
<td>17.8 granted to tenant and his heirs.</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>£4.0.0</td>
<td>&quot; &quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>£2.0.0</td>
<td>&quot; &quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(£ 3.0)</td>
<td>&quot; &quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(£ 6.7)</td>
<td>&quot; &quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>£6.13.4</td>
<td>&quot; &quot;</td>
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<tr>
<td>1455</td>
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<td>paid for reversion</td>
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<td>1456</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>1457</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1465</td>
<td>2 foals</td>
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<tr>
<td>1466</td>
<td>£5.3.4 granted to tenant and his heirs.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
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<td>&quot; &quot;</td>
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<tr>
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<td>£1.13.0</td>
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<td>1472</td>
<td>(£ 10.0)</td>
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## Entry Fines

**Woolstone - 1308-1417**

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<td>13. 4</td>
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<td>1341</td>
<td>5. 0</td>
<td>3. 4 M</td>
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*Part of tenement.*
### ENTRYS FINES

**WOOLSTONE (Contd.)**

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<td>13. 4</td>
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<td>1416</td>
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<td>1417</td>
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<td>13. 4</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>£1. 0. 0 (2 tenements)</td>
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</tr>
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<td>3. 4</td>
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## ENTRY FINES

**LETCOMBE REGIS**

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<tr>
<td>1368</td>
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<tr>
<td>1370</td>
<td>£5. 0. 0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1450</td>
<td>£5. 0. 0</td>
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<tr>
<td>1450</td>
<td>£2. 0. 0</td>
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**Total:** £323
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<tr>
<td>1353</td>
<td>(1.0) Lease.</td>
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<tr>
<td>1357</td>
<td>6 bushels pulse</td>
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<td>1361</td>
<td>4.0 (3 lives.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>£1.0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1459</td>
<td>6.8</td>
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<td>13.4</td>
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TABLE 2
RENTS OF CUSTOMARY HOLDINGS

1. These figures are taken from rentals of the date indicated. In several cases it has not been possible to discover the rent for a single virgate or half-virgate and in these cases only the range of rents is given. A further difficulty comes from the fact that the late fifteenth or sixteenth century virgate may not be strictly comparable with that of the fourteenth or fifteenth century; and the phrase 'tenementum' may conceal very great variations in size, value, and composition.

Steep rises in rent are in some cases attributable to the commutation of labour-services, whose cash value was then added to the tenant rent. This was the case at, for example, Coleshill between 1395 and 1424; at Brightwaltham in the early fifteenth century; and possibly elsewhere.
### TABLE 2. (contd).

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<td>1283</td>
<td>Virgate</td>
<td>5/4 plus services</td>
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<tr>
<td>1426</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
<td>10/-, 12/-, 14/-, 16/-</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Coleshill</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>1379 &amp; 1395</td>
<td>Virgate</td>
<td>3/- plus services.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1424</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
<td>10/10</td>
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<tr>
<td>1474</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
<td>8/3½ to 11/-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1520</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
<td>11/-</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Englefield</strong></td>
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<td>1331</td>
<td>Half-virgate</td>
<td>3/6 to 7/-</td>
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<tr>
<td>1402</td>
<td>All rents</td>
<td>2/- to 13/-</td>
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<td>1474</td>
<td>Half-virgate</td>
<td>12/-, 17/-</td>
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<td>1496</td>
<td>Customary holdings</td>
<td>up to £3. 4. 0</td>
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<td><strong>Letcombe Regis</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>1274</td>
<td>Virgate</td>
<td>5/7¼ to 8/-</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Half-virgate</td>
<td>1/9 to 3/-</td>
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<td>1454</td>
<td>Virgate</td>
<td>11/- (1 case)</td>
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<td><strong>Sotwell Stonor</strong></td>
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<td>1362</td>
<td>Holdings</td>
<td>2/- to £1. 0. 6.</td>
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<td>1425</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
<td>4d to £1. 19. 10</td>
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<tr>
<td>1509</td>
<td>Half-virgate</td>
<td>10/- (1 case)</td>
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<td>RENT</td>
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<td>Virgate</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Half-virgate</td>
<td>8/- to 13/4</td>
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<td>Post 17 H.VII:</td>
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<td>Virgate</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Half-virgate</td>
<td>9/-, 10/-</td>
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These figures are taken from presentments for overstocking and trespass with sheep in the Eastrop court rolls from 1422 - 1501.¹

In some years, particularly the early years of T.H.VI the messor's attachments which contain details of trespasses, were written on a separate 'schedule' or 'extract', once attached to the court rolls, but now lost. For these years no figures can be given. The names of sheep owners who were not Eastrop tenants have been underlined.

Manorial ordinances concerning sheep have been briefly indicated. Figures taken from presentments for overstocking (and thus only minimum numbers) have been marked *. Cases in which the roll only states the offence, without the numbers involved, have been omitted.

---

¹ S.C.2 208/14, 40, 41, 42, 54, 55, 56, 72, 82.
S.C.2 154/4
<table>
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<td>T. Palmer</td>
<td>200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>R. Cubbell</td>
<td>200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>J. Godeman</td>
<td>140</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>T. Cubbell, Junior</td>
<td>300</td>
</tr>
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Ordinances

Oct. 1428  Inquiry into tenants exceeding stint.
April ? Ed. IV No tenant to allow his sheep into sown field until corn is all carried.
Oct. 1493  Re-enactment of 'ancient custom': No tenant to 'break' East Field before Michaelmas; le Garston before F. St. Luke; North Field before F. St. Martin or before the firmarius of the chief messuage has done so.
Oct. 1494  No overstocking with sheep or draught stock.
F. St. George 1498 No tenant to pasture sheep below 'Horsyngdyche' before F. St. Martin.
20 Oct. 1499 No tenant of Sevenhampton has common on the Eastrop side of Cryckeladesway.
Oct. 1466  No free tenants to pasture more stock than is stated in their charters.
Stint 'by ancient usage' for free tenants
50 sheep per virgate, 25 per half-virgate
12 for quarter-virgate.
Customary tenants: 50 sheep, 1 ram,
3 draught stock.
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<td>No tenant, free or customary, to enter separate field with his stock or sheep before the customary day. No tenant to lease sheep pasture belonging to his holding, or pasture for draught stock, if any of the lord's tenants wishes to have it. No tenant to drive his stock or sheep across the new fence and ditch recently made at 'Lamlese'.</td>
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<td>No tenant to sell pasture to any stranger but only to the inhabitants of this manor. Inquiry to be made into stints to be made before next court.</td>
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<td>Agreed by common consent that the common pasture called 'Fortys' shall be enclosed (erit seperalis) from F. St. Edmund to F. Holy Trinity next.</td>
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**TABLE 4 (Contd.):**

**COLESHELL: Land Transactions** 1377 - 1500

<p>| Year   | 1377 | 1378 | 1379 | 1380 | 1381 | 1382 | 1383 | 1384 | 1385 | 1386 | 1387 | 1388 | 1389 | 1390 | 1391 | 1392 | 1393 | 1394 | 1395 | 1396 | 1397 | 1398 | 1399 | 1400 | 1400-1422 | no rolls | 1422 | 1423 |
|-------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|--------|---------|------|------|
|       | 0    | 1    | 3    | 7    | 11   | 8    | 0    | 3    | 0    | 4    | 0    | 3    | 0    | 2    | 5    | 6    | 0    | 2    | 3    | 8    | 0    | 0     | 0       | 2     | 0    |
|       | 1424 | 1425 | 1426 | 1427 | 1428 | 1429 | 1430 | 1431 | 1432 | 1433 | 1434 | 1435 | 1436 | 1437 | 1438 | 1439 | 1440 | 1441 | 1442 | 1443 | 1444 | 1445 | 1446 | 1447 | 1448 | 1449 | 1450 | 1451 |
|       | 0    | 2    | 1    | 11   | 10   | 5    | 5    | 2    | 3    | 0    | 1462 | 1463 | 1464 | 1465 | 1466 | 1467 | 1468 | 1469 | 1470 | 1471 | 1472 | 1473 | 1474 | 1475 | 1476 | 1477 | 1478 | 1479 | 0    |
|       |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      | 0    |</p>
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### TABLE 4 (Contd:)

**WOOLSTONE**: Land transactions (excluding leases) 1308 - 1417

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</table>
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S.C. 2. 208/60.v.
S.C.11. Roll 807
S.C.12. 26/58
L.R.2. 187.

EASTROP

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S.C.12. 5/29
S.C.12. 5/32.
S.C.12. 5/33.
S.C.12. 5/37.

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S.C.12. 14/52
S.C.12. 5/50
S.C.12. 1/1

SOTWELL STONOR


SOUTH MORETON

S.C.12. 5/52
S.C.12. 5/54

SPEENHAMLAND

S.C.11. Roll 68
S.C.12. 5/59
S.C.12. 5/60
S.C.12. 5/61
S.C.12. 5/62
S.C.12. 5/69
S.C.12. 5/64
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S.C.2. 208/40, 41, 43.

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S.C.2. 208/53, 40, 54, 55, 41, 42, 72, 82, 56, 14.
S.C.2. 154/4

ENGLFIELD

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S.C.2. 154/34, 35, 36.

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S.C.2. 154/139, 40, 41.

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SOUTH MORETON
S.C.2. 154/43-46.

WOOLSTONE
S.C.2. 154/77-83
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S.C.6. 743/4 - 21
    "  744/1 - 24
    "  745/1 - 22
    "  746/1 - 25
    "  747/1 6-13

WOOLSTONE

    "  757/1 - 26
    "  758/1 - 17

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V. MAP The Map of Berkshire at end is reprinted from MAJOR: 'General View of the Agriculture of Berks', London, 1813.
EXPLANATION

- Vale of White Horse coloured Green
- The sandy Tract prevailing. Soil, Loam & Gravel
- Stone brook, Sand &c.
- The remainder of the Vale proper & the Thames Meadows, rich cultivated Loam at the upper end & at the lower gravelly.
- Chalk District coloured Red
- Down, Light black earth on Chalk prevails
- Flint Chalk Gravel & Loam
- Vale of the Knuts coloured Blue
- Post Land, Gravel Loam & Clay
- Strong Clay & cultivated Loam
- Poor stone & sandy soil
- Forest District coloured Yellow
- Gravel, Clay, Loam &c.
- Harty, Sand & Gravel

Map of Berkshire Exhibiting its four natural divisions, marked by Dotted Lines & their subdivisions as connected with Soil & Surface.