Abstract

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The Rural Community through the Eyes of the Land Agent on the Marquis of Anglesey’s Dorset and Somerset Estate: William Castleman and His Sons c1812-1854

This thesis explores the socio-economic and political history of the rural community on the Marquis of Anglesey’s Dorset and Somerset estate through the correspondence, rental accounts and estate vouchers of the Castleman family. Existing historiography which relates to both the role of the land agent and the rural community remains sparse. The research for this study has taken a new and unique approach which challenges many of the existing theories. Through close textual analysis it has examined six broadly defined themes which relate to all aspects of the rural society. Firstly an in depth and detailed survey of how the rural community was organised, worked and changed over time was undertaken. Secondly it investigates the tripartite relationship between landowner, agent and tenant rather than the more traditional affiliation of landowner, tenant and labourer. Using this new configuration the archive explains how this association worked in practice with regard to estate improvement, repairs and functional schemes to relieve tenant distress. Thirdly this thesis surveyed the political landscape of Milborne Port and in particular it sought to define the role of the election agent in pre-reformed England. Fourthly it analyses the labouring poor, with particular attention to the issue of low wages, under- and un-employment and the role of the landed estate in the economy of makeshifts. The plight of the poor culminated in the Swing riots of 1830 and this archive provides new and important information in the ongoing debate of this phenomenon. Fifthly the estate vouchers which contain the minutiae of estate life have never been examined and yet in the absence of recognisable accounts these contain essential quantitative information. Finally this thesis assesses the ways and means that large estates sought to exert social control, through the creation of a deference community, education and the accruing of rental arrears. Significantly this study illustrates the pivotal role played by the land agent in maintaining the equilibrium within the rural community.
Acknowledgements

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General Comments

All record office documents beginning D/ANG/ are from the Dorset History Centre.

They have been reproduced in this thesis with their original spelling and capitalisation of letters.
Map of the Estate Villages of the Marquis of Anglesey

This map is not to scale but simply to demonstrate the location of the main estate villages.
Chapter 1
Introduction

Overview

This chapter will analyse the key perspectives which are under consideration within this thesis, conduct a brief summary of the historiography and outline the main research questions which will be applied to all themes across the thesis and evaluate the sources and methods employed while undertaking the research and writing up. The main objective of the investigation carried out has been to examine the socio-political and economic history of the rural community of the Marquis of Anglesey on his Dorset and Somerset estates through the eyes of William Castleman, the main land agent and his sons between c1812 and 1854. The estate is located in the Blackmore Vale and basically stretches between Milborne Port and Stalbridge. During the eighteenth century the estate was brought together by Peter Walter through the purchase of a number of different estates. On his death it passed to Sir Nicolas Bayley of Plas Newydd, Anglesey and was to be held in trust for his eldest son Edward who unfortunately died in 1756. The property and land then passed in trust to his younger brother Henry William Bayley, Lord Paget who became 1st Earl of Uxbridge in 1784. In 1812 the estate then passed to his son Henry William 2nd Earl of Uxbridge who in turn became 1st Marquis of Anglesey in 1815 when he was recognised for his efforts at the battle of Waterloo. He held the estate until 1854 when on his death it passed to his son who within short order sold it off.

In 1780 the estate had consisted of a number of villages in Dorset. The estate in Dorset was comprised of the following villages: Bradford Abbas. Clifton Maybank, Sixpenny Handley, Gussage St. Michael, Kington Magna and Nyland, Manston, Marnhull, Stalbridge, Stour Provost and Todber, Stourpaine, Thornford and Wyle and in Somerset Charleton Horethorne, Cheriton, Henstridge, Temple Coombe, Coombe Abbas, Horsington, Kingsbury Regis, Milborne Port and Wyke, Maiden Bradley, Yarnfield, Stotford and Norton Ferris. Parts of the estate were sold in 1789, there was a further important sale in 1825 when Clifton Maybank was sold, Milborne Port went in 1837, Charleton Horethorne and Temple Coombe in 1848, Thornford in 1849, Sixpenny Handley in1850, Stour Provst and Todber in 1851 and then Stalbridge and the remainder of the estate in 1854. Farming was a mix of both arable and livestock.
predominantly sheep. The population of the estate is hard to establish as the rental accounts simply name the tenants but not the size of the families and for most of the period no accurate census returns exist. The number of tenants and the way in which numbers rise and fall is explored in more detail in chapter 7.

The Marquis of Anglesey although fêted as a hero was at the centre of a famous scandal when he had eloped with Lady Charlotte Wellesley (Char) the sister-in-law of Arthur Wellesley. Henry Wellesley offered to take Char back but she refused and Anglesey’s family had tried to persuade him to return to his wife. His first wife then began divorce proceedings but it was only in Scotland that the law provided the same remedy to both wife and husband and as Anglesey looked to alleviate her suffering it was thus to Scotland they resorted. All in all the proceedings cost the Marquis £55,000. The death of his father in 1812 revealed the family were deeply in debt although there was extensive estates in Somerset, Dorset, Staffordshire and Anglesey as well as lead, copper and coalmines which between 1819 and 1835 brought in £76 200 per annum. Despite this vast income the family overspent by some £1600 per year. The Marquis was appointed twice as Lord Lieutenant of Ireland although the first was cut short when he was recalled. He also held the lord lieutenancies of Anglesey and Staffordshire, constable of Caernarfon Castle, ranger of Snowdon Forest and captain of Cowes Castle. Although he frequently sailed at Cowes there is no evidence to suggest he visited his estates in Dorset and Somerset once he had inherited and therefore was archetypical absentee landowner. It is for this reason William Castleman was employed.

Castleman first appears in the estate records in 1804 when he was paid £31 10s 0d for his work in the case of Place v Burt. He already had connections with the estate as his father had taken a lease for lives on land at Stalbridge in 1766, one of the lives being that of his infant son William Castleman junior. Little is known about the life of Castleman senior apart from he acted for the estate in an official capacity steward of Stalbridge Weston Manorial Court in 1781. He died in 1792 aged 77 and was buried at Hinton St Mary. His son took over the rental books from Admiral Aylmer and then c1814 replaced the local agent Cox who had been dismissed and was later taken to

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3 www.oxforddnd.com, entry for Henry Paget, 1st Marquis of Anglesey.
court over some of his practices. Castleman did not solely work for the Marquis of Anglesey but was also associated with the Bankes estate at Kingson Lacey, Chisletts and Rawlence in Wimborne and as steward of the Hanham estate. A family history of the Fryer family suggests that Castleman had links with the notorious smuggler Issac Gulliver indeed his son married Gulliver’s grand-daughter. However it has not been possible to prove anything more substantial. What is not in doubt is the respect commanded by Castleman and on his death in 1844 the Marquis of Anglesey stated he was an ‘amiable and zealous man of business’ and the agent-in-chief commented ‘I have never received more satisfactory information in matters of detail of accounts from any of Lord Anglesey’s agents’. It is this level of precision that has created the basis for this thesis and a unique prism through which to explore agrarian society.

Through a meticulous study of the surviving estate records and close reading of the newly discovered source material the focus of this research makes it possible to forge a greater historical understanding of how a rural community was organised, managed and changed in the chosen timespan. This archive has created a unique historical prism which allows the researcher to encompass and intertwine all aspects of the agrarian community instead of exploring its individual elements. This refined case-study analysis explores this context through three key perspectives. Firstly, it provides an in-depth and detailed survey of the tenant farmers that worked on the estate and the complex relationships that evolved over time between themselves landowner and agent. The economic viability of the estate was dependent upon a careful balancing of socio-political relations and therefore the central aim of this thesis is to retrace those dynamics over time. It will specifically explore economic tensions in bad harvest years, the coming of early democracy, land agent schemes to provide support for tenants under stress, and more widely land agent initiatives like essential repairs and improvements to the estate to protect its long-term future. Using archival material never researched before, the thesis investigates a rich seam of tenant farmer records including rental accounts and estate vouchers in order to exhibit how these schemes actually operated. The estate vouchers are the raw material from which the accounts were assembled. Whenever the agent received monies or paid for goods this was recorded on a small piece of paper and from these the various accounts could be compiled, they worked in

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5 D/ANG/B5/15 Letter from William Castleman 19 April 1814.
6 http://booty.org.uk/booty.weather/musings/Fryer_family.htm
7 Dorset History Centre background to the Marquis of Anglesey.
much the same way as a receipt or petty cash voucher would today. Secondly it will conduct an investigation of William Castleman the chief land agent and the way in which he conducted himself as election agent for the Borough of Milborne Port. This archive is rich in details which aids our understanding of this important aspect of rural life and includes private letters, political correspondence and local newspaper interest at a pivotal time in local electioneering before the Great Reform Act of 1832. Historians have suggested that it is almost impossible to define the role of the election agent in the early nineteenth century but this thesis proposes that the information held within this archive is so complex and detailed that the opposite is in fact true. The third new perspective focuses on the exchanges between land agents, tenant classes and the broadly defined labouring poor. This will facilitate an investigation of historical perspectives such as the makeshift economy, the economic context of setting the poor rates, and more widely how farmers interacted with the land agent and those that actually worked the estate. The Dorset section of the estate was badly affected by the Swing riots and therefore Castleman’s correspondence offers important contemporary insights into rural unrest in an area of the country still largely understudied. Successive land agents in this thesis, study function as an historical prism to explore themes of social leadership, social conditioning and paternalism. The Castleman archive thus provides a unique and new awareness of the complexity of rural society in the aftermath of the Napoleonic Wars as agriculture faced the challenges of low prices and periods of deep depression.

**Historiography**

The key historiography relating to the role of the land agent remains rather antiquated. Apart from the relatively new research carried out by Sarah Webster on the Egremont estates little has been written within recent years to add specifics to the more general information already in existence. Perhaps the most referenced source on landed society in the nineteenth century was written by F. M. L. Thompson in 1963. While a section on estate management is included within this book it is nevertheless a broad survey of the period and the depth of information is by necessity thus brief and cursory. In the same year David Spring published his seminal work on the administration of estates in the nineteenth century and made passing reference to a small number of estate managers. While an important addition to the literature it is frequently disparaging of attorney/agents and failed to consider any who worked outside the more recognised
great estates. Furthermore no consideration is given to the impact of agents on smaller or less well-known properties. Gordon Mingay wrote extensively throughout his career on many aspects of the farming and rural community. His two edited volumes on *The Victorian Countryside* (1981) and his joint publication with J. D. Chambers, *The Agricultural Revolution 1750-1850* first published in 1966 have been used extensively across all the debates herewith examined. Both provide the researcher with a general overview of the period under discussion. Turner, Beckett and Afton are regarded as the established experts on agricultural rent from 1690 to 1914. Nonetheless they admit that creating a rent index was not without its problems and accounts were rejected because they proved ‘unacceptably’ time consuming to extract the data. They therefore their study was based on a comparatively small and unique sample. The rental accounts of Castleman are charge and discharge accounts and the methods used in their formulation means they would have been excluded from this analysis. The extensive estate vouchers provide a quantitative element to the research conducted into this estate. However there is little if any secondary material against which to compare findings or even the data therein contained. It is not until we turn to the poor within the estate that the most recent research has been undertaken, notably by Steven King on the poor laws and Carl Griffin and Peter Jones on the Swing riots. By examining the rural community and the estate through the prism of the Castleman archive, this thesis will bridge the gap which thus exists between the older established writers and the micro-study approach undertaken here. A detailed and comprehensive study will add specific details to the previous generalisations of the multi-faceted role of the land agent and the complexities of the rural community within a small geographical locality.

Thompson suggested that both modern and contemporary literature portrayed pastoral society as one controlled by ‘superior and possessing classes’ where the inhabitants lived in fear of being punished for acts of perceived disobedience, essentially a deferent society. It consisted of a concealed antipathy and hatred towards farmers, parsons, squires and landowning aristocracy amongst the lower classes of agricultural workers and labouring poor. These sentiments usually remained hidden beneath the surface but occasionally erupted into bouts of violent words or disruptive actions. Another ideological perspective advocated that any potential divisions or

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attempts at individualism were smoothed over by ‘social leadership, social conditioning and paternalism. Similarly conflict lay at the heart of this relationship, but instead of discord landowners used the art of mediation to bring about a modicum of social harmony. Although no longer believable there remained an artificial image of village life as a happy and harmonious society of simple thatched cottage serenity supported by landlord compassion. However the record left by Castleman allows these myths to be dispelled. Instead using his unique position it is possible to explore this community from a new and previously under-researched perspective. The collection offers an unbroken record of more than forty years of estate management history between c1812 and 1854. The diverse nature of the documentation illustrates the role and position of the agent within it. It affords an insight into the variability and scope of the work undertaken by the men who managed rural England. Considering the enormous amount of data which has survived the agent remains a little discussed and frequently anonymous figure within the history of agriculture. He is almost as elusive as the tenant farmer.

**Key Research Questions**

The overall driving aim of this thesis is to ask new questions and provide new perspectives about the rural economy and society in the period of the agricultural revolution and at the start of the golden age of farming. It brings to bear the sources of a particular land agent and offers the sort of micro-detail missing from so much of the general historiography reviewed in chapter 2. This thesis will seek to answer six key research questions. Firstly through close textual analysis it will question why the role of the land agent was of fundamental importance to this and many other rural communities. The land agent sat equidistant between the landowner and the rest of society and was expected to provide security and bring prosperity to both parties. In the event of economic depression, poor harvests and natural disasters the financial survival of the whole estate rested on the agent’s business acumen and imaginative schemes to keep the estate viable. Secondly, it asks how will a single estate micro-study add to our understanding of the organisation of rural society and how do the findings fit within the greater literature relating to estate management? Thirdly how did an absentee

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10 The Marquis of Anglesey deposit at the Dorset History Centre in Dorchester contains more than 10,000 documents.
landowner and his estate interact with its labouring poor? Generally in the years leading up to the Swing riots of 1830 it has been assumed that agricultural labourers faced under- and un-employment but the estate vouchers in particular reveal considerable benevolence towards this section of society by the Marquis of Anglesey and a desire to help when conditions became desperate. Fourthly, what do the Swing riots reveal about the local community in this area of Dorset? How does this information differ from previous debates which have taken place within the general discourse relating to this episode of unrest? Fifthly, tenant farmers were afforded political status by their landowner and the right to vote formed an intrinsic part of the basic bond between landowner and tenant. Milborne Port was extremely bothersome and yet Castleman was expected to manage the political expectations of the Marquis of Anglesey. By concentrating on the small nomination borough of Milborne Port an examination of the skills required by the local agent to encourage the tenants to vote for a certain candidate will be determined. What penalties might be wrought on malcontents and how does this study define the role of local parliamentary agent? It will explore the conceptual theory of deference communities and examine whether any society could in fact be classed as totally deferent. Finally this thesis will examine how estate vouchers and rental accounts can be utilised to determine the state and financial situation of the rural community? Whilst previous research has sought to investigate the records of individual farmers little attention has been paid to the extensive range of information contained within this under explored section of the agricultural archive. Therefore an enquiry into the range of data thus encapsulated will be conducted. By using the mainly uncatalogued and short vouchers of this archive a true sense of how landlords spent their money will be obtained. These documents form an important part of the prism through which the record keeping of the land agent might be viewed. The lack of previous research into the significance and value of these vouchers is not an indication of their worthlessness, but, instead a symptom of the many hours of study required to shift and sort the thousands of pieces of paper that have survived. This thesis will uniquely attempt to consider how historians can use the vouchers to enhance and further our understanding of the Marquis of Anglesey and his agent’s relationship with the rural community.
Sources and Methods.

This thesis will use as its main primary source the surviving archive of William Castleman as it pertains to the Marquis of Anglesey’s Dorset and Somerset estate deposited in the Dorset History Centre, Dorchester. The record consists of three main components; the first is the letters and correspondence between the Marquis, his agent-in-chief and William Castleman. The opinions of the Marquis are evident from the comments he has personally written in the margins of many of the letters which were then returned to his local agent. (Fig 1) These direct comments provide a candid and unique insight into some of the most important issues of the day which relate to leases, relief of the poor, Catholic emancipation and free trade. The second body of documents is the bi-annual rent accounts and which cover the entire period under examination. The third and final element of this body of historical knowledge is the estate vouchers. Overall there are more than 10,000 individual pieces of paper all of which contain potentially useful and important new information.

This archival collection is not without its problems. The most obvious is its vast size; as a result letters have been chosen to demonstrate the different themes which appear throughout this thesis. In order to achieve an in-depth overview of the corpus of material contained within this body of research emblematic examples have been chosen to highlight specific case studies. The only year for which there is a scarcity of surviving letters is 1831 although no apparent reason for this dearth has been uncovered. This collection has only been basically catalogued and this has therefore necessitated many hours of research to discover exactly what it is contained within it. While the letters and estate vouchers have been stored in years, frequently material appears out of chronological order. Each of the rental accounts has been given separate folio numbers but these are the only individual items to have been so treated. In order to maintain a semblance of organisation all sources have been footnoted according to the folio number within which they appear although this does not necessarily follow any chronological pattern. The estate vouchers have been the most difficult of all the documents to research as they run into many thousands. It is beyond the scope of this PhD to be able to do anything more than briefly survey this section of the archive and to choose a number of samples which add depth and quantitative data to the thesis as a

During the Castlemans occupancy as agents there were two agents-in-chief John Sanderson 1814-1836 and Thomas Beer 1836-1855.
whole. In the main the handwriting is clear and concise as Castleman often used a clerk, probably because his own handwriting is not easy to read, (Fig 2) or decipher.

Letter from William Castleman with comments by the Marquis of Anglesey.\textsuperscript{12}

![Image of a letter with handwritten text]

Fig 1.

\textsuperscript{12} D/ANG/B5/32.
Sample of William Castleman’s handwriting

Fig 2
One major weakness of this archive is it one-sidedness, the letters which have survived are those from the estate personnel rather than outsiders. Irene Jones a local historian of the Dorset town of Stalbridge while on holiday in Anglesey in 1990 began enquiring there about the Stalbridge estate. She found the archivist of Bangor University sitting on six sacks of paper relating to the Marquis of Anglesey’s Dorset and Somerset estate and promptly set about having them transferred to the Dorset History Centre. It is assumed that the records were deposited in Bangor when the house came under the auspices of the National Trust.

The literature which forms the mass of the historiography for this thesis was frequently written during the 1960s and 1970s when rural and agricultural history were more popular. The recent publication by Hoyle on farmers while containing at least a modicum of their history is still far from perfect. His publication relies heavily on the records of individual farmers who by the act of simply creating any form of documentation were rare and unique in their own right. Rab Houston has just published his latest work which explores social relations and economic life on landed estates between 1600 and 1850. This book mainly concentrates on the celtic areas of the United Kingdom and in that sense is a useful addition to the present historiography but adds little new information to that already in existence for southern English estates. Publications relating specifically to the land-agent are even more unusual and it has been necessary to seek information from contemporary manuals and more recent edited volumes. In fact no other publication or research has sought to use a collection of agent’s records as a mode of investigating how the rural community was organised, worked and changed in the first half of the nineteenth century. The methodology employed was to research and create a general overview of the available material and then to apply the specifics as unearthed from this historical source. Therefore at the beginning of each chapter there is included a synopsis of the current known literature followed by the case studies from the archive which illustrate how Castleman acted as prism through which to view the socio-economic and political complexity of rural society. This sort of micro-study will provide substance to some of the high level

13 http://www.dorsetlife.co.uk/2009/05/stalbridges-historian/
14 The provenance of the records are added to through the letters of John Sanderson and Thomas Beer agents-in-chief and the Castleman’s connections to Wimborne. The estate records of Beaufort Staffordshire have until recently been stored in the Staffordshire archive but many of these are now being moved to Dorset.
observations which have been made on the operation of the socio-economic aspects of the rural community in this period, but will seek to take that literature in new directions.

Chapter Structure

This section will briefly examine the chapter structure of this thesis and will give a broad overview of the themes and ideologies examined. The role of the land agent played a pivotal role in the organisation and management of both the estate and the rural community. As the Marquis of Anglesey was an absentee landowner Castleman functioned as his personal representative within the locality.

Chapter 1 provides a brief overview and in essence acts as the introduction to this thesis and body of research.

Chapter 2 undertakes a comprehensive overview of the historiography relating to the land agent and the rural community.

Chapter 3 is in essence a case study of the tenantry on the Marquis of Anglesey’s Dorset and Somerset estate.

Chapter 4 will examine the labouring poor and agricultural labourers upon the estate.

Chapter 5 forms an in-depth study exploring the political landscape of Milborne Port.

Chapter 6 this chapter investigates the relationship between education and social control.

Chapter 7 concentrates on the rental accounts and estate vouchers.

Chapter 8 this final chapter forms the conclusion and will draw together and reflect on the various themes which have formed this corpus of research.
Chapter 2

Historiography

The historiography of English agriculture from the sixteenth century onwards has been shaped by the debates which have taken place over the timing of the agricultural revolution.¹ Various calculations have been tendered as to the start and finish of this phenomenon, while others have suggested that no such transformation ever took place. Our understanding of the agricultural revolution its causes, consequences and processes have often been taken as received wisdom.² These deliberations, have, in the main, neglected the most important component of agricultural history – the people who lived, farmed and worked the land. This thesis investigates and examines the socio-economic and political landscape of the rural community instead of surveying changes which are alleged to have taken place. Rather than explore changing crop rotations, the introduction of mechanisation, improvements to soil and buildings, the introduction of new fertilizers and grasses this historiography will briefly examine the more general literature relating to estate management and the rural community. Further consideration will then be given to the rise of the great estate, changing tenurial patterns, land agents, the rural community, poverty amongst the labouring poor, the Swing riots, election agents and the politics of Milborne Port, education and the estate, and finally rental accounts and estate vouchers. This single estate study will explore the ways in which micro-history can be used to illuminate and enhance our understanding of the major debates relating to the rural society. Reay theorised that ‘The advantage of placing a small community under the microscope was it becomes possible to see and explore the complexity of social interaction and economic processes’.³ This thesis will not ask what do we still need to know about the rural community but will instead use the surviving archive of William Castleman and his sons’ land agent to the Marquis of Anglesey to forge a greater historical understanding of the convolutions of the rural community in the first half of the nineteenth century. Consequently this research will create a new and unique understanding of the way in which this society functioned and worked. In order

² A number of discussions have taken place as to the timing of the agricultural revolution. Kerridge suggested that it took place between about 1550 and 1750, Chambers and Mingay proposed it occurred from around 1750 to 1880 and Thirsk argued there was no revolution but two intense periods of change. ³ B. Reay, Microhistories: Demography, Society and Culture in Rural England, 1800-1930 (Cambridge, 1996), p. 258.
to recognise how this close textual analysis differs from previous generalisations this chapter now turns to the more conventional arguments relating to agricultural historiography. Firstly, it will explore how the great estates were created, and then examine the Marquis of Anglesey Dorset and Somerset holdings against this accepted view.

The Rise of the Great Estate

The great landed magnates were able to amass large amounts of land ‘because they shaped the law to favour accumulation and constrain fragmentation’. Habbukuk had argued that in the sixty years after 1690 ‘the drift of property’ had gravitated towards the large estate and resulted in a fall in acreage owned by the landed gentry. The percentage of land held by the great estates varied from county to county. It has been proposed, that a major and significant factor in the expansion of large estates, was the introduction in the late seventeenth century, of the legal mechanism of strict settlement. Through its use landed dynasties were able to ensure the security of their holdings, from one generation to the next. It was usual for settlement to be made either at the eldest son’s coming of age or on the day of his marriage and then repeated in this manner *ad infinitum*. Strict settlement was effective in two ways. Firstly, the present owner’s powers were limited to that of life tenant and at his death; his son was hindered in the same way meaning in reality that it was virtually impossible to sell off any of the land or raise a mortgage against it. If the person on whom the succession was settled died, before inheriting, the estate had already been effectively settled for two lives and secured succession was assured. Contemporary radicals argued correctly that this system perpetuated the landed and ruling classes.

In 1876 John Bateman published the findings of the greatest survey of land in Great Britain since Domesday (excluding London). The supporters and defenders of the landowning classes had hoped this study would prove that landownership was held by a diverse number of people. Bateman’s calculations, Beckett has argued instead substantiated and agreed with those who claimed that landownership was monopolised.

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by a small elite group. The largest of these was the Duke of Northumberland who owned 186,000 acres. The study also revealed other considerable land holdings which included ten estates that contained at least 60,000 acres and forty-nine which had more than 30,000. It was assumed land had been accumulated at the expense of the smaller owner occupiers. In Cumberland only thirty-eight per cent remained in the hands of minor landowners and in Nottingham this figure was even lower at twenty one per cent. Holdings were frequently fragmented and around seventy-five per cent held land in more than two counties and more than fifty per cent in three counties or more. The Marquis of Anglesey when he inherited in 1812 controlled more than 100,000 acres spread across Dorset, Somerset, Staffordshire and Wales.

Marriage and inheritance were both significant factors in the rise of the great estates. Owners of the largest of these, occasionally, attracted heiresses and were able to assimilate both old and new money. Strict settlement acted in the same way as primogeniture and ensured estates survived intact as they passed from one generation to the next. New lands, when purchased or acquired through inheritance or marriage were amalgamated into current holdings. Strict settlement remained an essential tool in preventing the break-up of the great estates. The Marquis of Anglesey was not bound by strict settlement in Dorset and Somerset and consequently sold off the most unprofitable parts of the estate whenever possible.

Understanding how estates formed is a crucial element in comprehending why the Marquis of Anglesey ran his Dorset and Somerset estate in a specific way. He inherited this holding from Peter Walker but the main family holdings were at Beaudesert, Staffordshire and Plas Newydd, Anglesey, a considerable distance from the south of England. Instead of managing the land himself, he employed, William Castleman as agent, who then played a vital role in establishing the tenurial patterns of the estate.

**Tenurial Patterns**

In order to understand how tenurial patterns developed Overton argued it was first necessary to explore the impact of the ‘medieval legacy’. In the early middle-ages

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9 Overton, *Agricultural Revolution*, p. 35.
technically all land belonged to the crown, the monarch distributed it to his lords and in return they provided the king with a number of services. The definition of these services found expression in the nature and detail of this tenure. Mingay, Overton and other historians when discussing tenure have tended to repeat existing studies and a systematic study of the rural community has portable implications for the whole country. The legal theory of landholding is complicated and this explains why so many early nineteenth century land agents were attorneys, men who were well versed in the legalities of land law and tenure. Although many thousands of manorial surveys have survived they still do not provide the researcher with an easy way of ascertaining who farmed the land. The landlord’s interest rested almost entirely in the person[s] responsible for ensuring the rent was paid in full and on time. In the south of England and particularly Dorset as much as ninety per cent of the land was copyhold or for lives usually three.

Hoyle argued that at the end of the sixteenth century it was difficult to convert copyhold to leasehold tenancies. Customary tenants had become aware of the benefits of the former and frequently gained the support of the equity courts if the landowner attempted to force change and instigated legal proceedings. Before 1650 against a background of gentry and noble weakness, both financial and legal, customary tenures became extinct. This resulted in an increase in the number of freehold tenants; however after 1650 as the economic situation changed and became less conducive to small farmers this was reversed. The copyhold tenement could be transformed into a leasehold tenancy by three main methods. Firstly, the interest of the copyhold tenant could be purchased by the owner of the manorial rights. Secondly, the freehold might be purchased by an investor or large farmer who then leased the land back on rack rents. Finally the copyhold might simply be converted to leasehold.10

While Hoyle and French have written about the changing patterns of tenure in the early modern period there is less material relating to the early nineteenth century. A major contributory factor in the waning interest of large landowners in commercial farming was poor agricultural prices.11 Mingay and Daunton have both proposed that by the end of the seventeenth and beginning of the eighteenth other forms of investment

began to have an impact on estate finances. There were now other ways of raising money and these included mortgages, the Funds, great trading and financial companies, originally these had been unsafe but were now more secure. These arrangements remained attractive whilst low prices continued. Estate viability may well have become less secure as landlord absenteeism increased. Alongside, the more national approach taken by Clay on ‘lifeleasehold’ in the west counties of England between 1650 and 1750, this thesis will seek to explore the leases granted by the estate. It will then compare this micro-study against the general assumptions of historians which include Mingay, Daunton, Hoyle and Clay. Castleman like many agents had a pivotal role in the drawing up and granting of leases. In order to understand the rural community and the importance of this research it is intended here to explore the relevant historiography which related to his role

**Land Agents**

There is no detailed historiography relating to the land agent, and this lack of literature extends to his role and relationships within the rural community. A small number of micro-studies exist within local history journals but even these are relatively rare.\(^\text{12}\) Contemporary writers of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries have supplied modern historians with a number of theories of good estate management which existed for the period in question. Although a useful source of knowledge they do not necessarily reflect the realities of the role undertaken by these men. They certainly fail to give an overall impression of its complexities. In general these books, pamphlets and treatises followed a similar pattern; this is exhibited in J. Lawrence’s 1806 publication where advice was offered on planting, fertilizers and the office of stewardship including accounts and cultivation.\(^\text{13}\) Brown’s *The Book of the Landed Estate* written sixty years later followed a parallel structure, although some of the chapters were now specifically aimed at the administration of a landed estate. Despite the survival of numerous publications and a corpus of archival material the land agent remains an under-researched and studied figure.


Thompson stated the nature of an agent’s employment was so personal and ‘its duration so long’ that many did not feel the need to form a professional body.\(^\text{14}\) This hardly explains why over the years so few studies of individuals have been carried out. Richards argued the agent’s main value lay in two basic functions; firstly he needed to be ‘self-effacing’ and this would allow all the credit for the successful management of an estate to go to his employer. Secondly and importantly considering the broad themes explored by this thesis he was expected to encourage a ‘reciprocation’ of respect between a landlord and his community.\(^\text{15}\) There has it seems been a lack of understanding from historians as to the importance of the land agent in maintaining social harmony. Consequently much of the historiographical literature has alluded to the economic function of estate management through the collection of rents and the drawing up of accounts and leases. One of their main purposes it has been stated was to ensure tenant farmers worked effectively and efficiently and made a profit without unduly damaging the soil. Historians have argued that we know little about English farmers during the early nineteenth century but actually the same might be said about those men who managed rural England. Ultimately the land agent exerted enormous influence within rural society and this thesis will concentrate on the form and function of these interactions.

**The Rural Community**

The rural community is not necessarily an easy concept to define. In its simplest form it might be described as a distribution of houses and other residential units with their associated landscapes features such as farmsteads, workshops and street patterns. It has been suggested to this must be added other various non-landscape ideologues which include: the function of settlements, the three dimensional aspects of religion, industrialisation and socio-economic variations.\(^\text{16}\) Jennings in 1968 proposed that it was impossible for one writer to do ‘full justice to the wealth of material available’ and this seems to have been the general historiographical approach.\(^\text{17}\) Historians have in the main either created broad general publications which seek to cover a given time frame or taken a chronological approach. Horn has used this methodology in her consideration


of the rural world between 1780 and 1850, whilst this publication is a useful general synopsis of events at the end of the eighteenth and early nineteenth century it does not provide the detailed sequence that this micro-study achieves. The other stance taken has been to produce edited volumes which relate to specific topics, the largest of these is the *Agrarian History of England and Wales*. This publication sought to generate a very broad and sweeping description of the historiographical development of agriculture from just before the Norman Conquest up to the beginning of the Second World War. It does not however contain any form of meticulous and exhaustive study relating specifically to the rural community. Mingay too published an edited volume on the Victorian countryside which explored through the writings of many of the prominent agricultural historians of the late 1970s and 80s. None of these works seek to define the rural community through the prism of the land agent although they contain brief chapters and statements relating to the form and function of the role. Traditionally rural society has been studied through the conventional mode of a macro-history, using illustrative examples from different localities and regions. This thesis will deliver a unique and rarely investigated method of examining in detail a small geographically bound estate through a detailed and continuous data set. It will create a meticulous micro-study against which in future it will be possible to compare and contrast national, regional, local trends and phenomenon in a way that at present is inconceivable.

**The Labouring Poor**

During the period at the beginning of the nineteenth century covered by this thesis, the vast majority of the population of England were simply known as the ‘labouring poor’. Thus agricultural labourers and the other poor of the estate were encompassed under this umbrella description. Mingay attempted to cover labouring life in his *Victorian Countryside* and while this contains many useful points of reference it lacks the continuity of a single author and covers briefly many of the broader themes relating to this section of society. Much of our recent knowledge of the agricultural poor arises from the work of historians such as Keith Snell. He stated that his *Annals of the Labouring Poor* set out
...to help answer the need ... for a ‘reorientation in research methods ... with a greater stress on how attitudinal change is to be measured and on systematic comparison between different social and regional contexts’.\textsuperscript{18}

Furthermore Snell contended that the methodology which different scholars had adopted did not encourage either discussion or agreement. He suggested there were two main ways of approaching the task, the first, was by an assessment of the standards of living and the second by examining the changing quality of life. The most appropriate way to undertake the latter he advised was to explore the ways in which the contemporary poor assessed the economic and social changes which affected them.\textsuperscript{19}

While the labouring poor do not have their own voice within the estate archive the correspondence and vouchers of the Castleman family allow a unique and rarely glimpsed view of the ways and means large landowners dealt with their poor. Castleman understood that keeping the labourers in employment placed less stress upon the poor rate and ultimately cost the tenants less. Case studies of the nature of this thesis are rare where all aspects of the rural community are considered through the prism of one family of agents. This allows for a detailed investigation into the labouring poor and explores the ways in which the fortunes of the poor were intricately linked with the economic success or failure of the tenant farmers. This stance has in the past been rarely taken.

King and Tomkins argued that the ‘economy of makeshifts’ was a statement which aptly described the sporadic, intermittent and frequently inadequate strategies of the poor for ‘material survival’.\textsuperscript{20} In the past parish records have been used by historians to gauge the levels of poor relief although this has varied from region to region. Williams contended that the south and east of England faced an ever growing poverty problem between 1780 and 1834. Real wages either fell or remained stagnant alongside the financial difficulties or failure of rural industries exacerbated the problem. It resulted in a rapid rise in the cost of relief as well as in the numbers that applied for help. However she stated that precise quantification of the contribution of relief to labouring households is hard to establish and analysis of the amounts paid is even

\textsuperscript{19} \textit{Ibid}, pp. 3-4.
\textsuperscript{20} S. King and A. Tomkins, \textit{The Poor in England and Economy of Makeshifts} (Manchester, 2003), p. 1.
rarer. Like King and Tomkins, Williams explored the wide ranging survival strategies of the poor which included any ‘self-provisioning activity’ income in cash and kind from parish, local charities and friendly societies. However all of the above misses out one major consideration which this thesis will explore and that is the manner in which estates participated in the economy of makeshifts. Castleman found work for labourers, encouraged the tenant farmers to keep them in employment during periods of economic recession even though the temptation was to dismiss them, made one off payments to parishes when levels of poverty rose rapidly, and contributed to food, coal and clothing funds. The role of the agent in monitoring relief is seldom discussed and it has only been through a close examination of the vouchers that the estate’s benevolence has come to light. By 1830 the situation of the poor within the countryside finally erupted into violence and culminated in the Swing riots.

The Swing Riots

The Napoleonic Wars had created an agricultural boom, but even before its conclusion agricultural prices were beginning to fall. To add to this some 250,000 men were demobilised from the armed forces and flooded the rural labour market. The agricultural recession which followed ensured that those hiring labour did so sparingly and it was frequently left to the parish to aid those who remained under- or unemployed. The narrative Captain Swing written by Hobsbawn and Rudé more than forty years ago has continued since its publication to dominate the literature on this period of unrest. Jones regarded this research as ‘innovative and crucial to the emergence of a new history from below’. Historians have since argued that this study relied heavily on both the Hammond’s and the authors’ previous studies of rural protest. Rather than being analytical in nature this seminal work is narrative in character and attempts to place the riots within the context of an economic, political and statutory framework. It failed to fully comprehend the variety of local causes which were implicit in the outbreak and which have since made Swing hard to categorise. This thesis

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23 E. Hobsbawn and G. Rudé, Captain Swing (London, 19690, p. 15.
explores the local element of the unrest as it affected two different areas of the Marquis of Anglesey’s estate.

More recent historiography has been dominated by Jones and Griffin particularly in the form of discussions relating to whether Swing constituted a movement or not. The extent of the riots remains contentious and under discussion with each successive generation of writers on the subject suggesting that the scale of unrest has previously been under-estimated both in terms of the number of participants involved and their geographical spread. The riots did not follow any previously witnessed pattern and there does not appear to have been any controlling influence. Mingay proposed long before Griffin that some semblance of organisation had to exist particularly at the local level. The estate correspondence illustrated the level of confusion which surrounded when and if the rioters would attack. It exemplified the differences in the scale of destruction which could occur even within the same county and in areas reasonably close together.

This thesis argues that even though Hobsbawn and Rudé conducted an in-depth broad survey and Jones and Griffin have continued to research this area, micro-studies still have much to offer. By close examination of Castleman’s letters it is firstly, proposed that the Swing riots were not the beginnings of rural incendiariism but a continuation of an ongoing process. Secondly, local reactions were tailored to the scale of unrest. Finally a comprehensive examination of this archive provided an analysis of how an individual estate dealt with both the troubles and their aftermath. The riots were a reaction to both continuing poverty and often definable local causes which varied from area to area and region to region. This study adds further details and deepens our understanding of conditions within the rural community both before and after 1830. Riots in France in July of the same year had caused concern but political reform was already under discussion by the government. Castleman played a significant role in estate politics and is a further indication of the multi-faceted role of the agent.

**Election Agent and the Politics of Milborne Port**

The Marquis of Anglesey held the patronage of the borough of Milborne Port but, remained an absentee landowner; his representative in these matters was his agent William Castleman. This chapter will assess the role played by men like Castleman in the management of the affairs of a small nomination borough. Smith avowed it was
virtually impossible to define who or what constituted an election agent before the 
Corrupt Practices Act of 1883. However this thesis will assert that by a fastidious 
survey of the correspondence pertaining to political management and electioneering it is 
possible to find many characteristics which can still be found within the modern 
political aide.

Deference communities have been the subject of considerable debate by both 
Moore and O’Gorman. Through an examination of the difficulties faced by 
Castleman in controlling the borough it is fair to claim that while Milborne Port 
appeared to contain all the physiognomies of a deference community but in actuality 
matters were not that simple. The Marquis’s tenants, if, unhappy with decisions or 
election results would exert their own political influences by directly petitioning 
parliament. Alongside the arguments of deference ran a second longstanding debate on 
the political awareness of those eligible to vote. Thompson had declared that ‘most 
English tenants do not have strong political views’; however in the light of this case 
study this appears to be a somewhat naïve and one-dimensional approach to early 
nineteenth century politics. It is intended within this thesis to demonstrate the political 
awareness of the tenants on both national and local matters.

This small borough was the centre of a local power struggle for its control even 
though at its height it appears to have had an electorate of just over 170 people. Both 
sides expanded their housing stock and sought to influence the voting population to 
change sides. This case study illustrates the vast sums that might be expended, as well 
as the ways and means each side used to encourage the electorate to vote for a particular 
candidate. The Hogarth cartoon from the election series captures the intensity of 
canvassing and the wheelbarrow of gold a promise of what might be if a particular 
candidate was returned. Besides dealing with the tenants and drawing up lists of the 
electorate Castleman also dealt with the various candidates. In order to achieve success 
at the polls anyone wishing to stand needed the backing of the Marquis of Anglesey and 
chapter 5 will explore how these issues were dealt with. Once the election was over and 
those who had been successful returned to parliament Castleman’s work was not

System (Sussex, 1976), and F. O’Gorman, Voters, Patrons and Parties: The Unreformed Electoral 
27 Thompson, English Landed Society, p. 204.
completed. He needed to account for the sums spent by collecting, collating and then paying the sums owing from the bills presented and when taking into account the various foibles of those involved this could prove to be a difficult task. This chapter will consist of an intricate case study which explores in details the role of the election agent and will add depth to the arguments and discussions already raised by Smith

**Hogarth: The Election, Canvassing for Votes**.  

Fig. 3

Milborne Port was disenfranchised as a result of the Great Reform Act of 1832 and the borough ceased to exist as a political entity. As a result of the cessation of elections the estate was able to save considerable sums of money. They no longer needed to entertain the tenants or wine and dine them when it appeared parliament might be dissolved. Castleman continued to act on the Marquis of Anglesey’s behalf influencing tenants at county elections to vote in his Lordship’s interests. However the

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Marquis had no patronage in any of the surviving boroughs or at county level and so this was of considerably less intensity than before.

While this chapter does not contain any new information on the history of Milborne Port it has set out to explore instead how politics worked at a local level. It details the type of entertainments and methods the estate explored to maintain voter loyalties and the problems encountered when another patron tried to wrest control. The information thus gleaned from the estate archive develops our understanding of the role of the election agent and his relationship with the rural community in a way that has not been previously undertaken.

**Estate, Education, and the Agent**

A case study of the relationship between the estate, agent and education is considered here. Education of children in the early nineteenth century was a somewhat haphazard affair and frequently it was the local rector, vicar or minister who took charge of setting up schools and Sunday schools. The estate invested monies in a variety of different ventures and provided land for the establishment of different establishments. During the nineteenth century both the Anglican and non-conformist churches attempted to control education. The state and the established Anglican Church were both an integral part of the constitution and it was feared that any change to the status of the national religion could possibly bring changes to state structure. Much of the literature relating to the early nineteenth century centres on this discussion or the ragged schools which began to appear in the new industrial cities. Horn concentrates on all aspects of childhood within Victorian England and while this of course includes schooling it is frequently concerned with the latter half of the century. In her book on rural education only the first chapter debated schools and teachers of the ‘old type’ but in general it deals with the period immediately before and after the Education Act of 1870. Detailed studies of educational establishments in the first half of the nineteenth century are rarer possibly because they remain hidden in the archives. Snell declared that Sunday schools were once perhaps the most important but are now amongst the most neglected of religious and educational subjects and are easily pushed to one side by historians.  

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It is not the intention for this chapter to enter the debate over the control of education but it will instead seek to determine how an estate and its agent interacted with those who sought to educate the labouring poor. In the rural community there seems to be little understanding of the struggle taking place at the national level. One school in particular does not fit into any category but stands out as an example of what might happen when people were left to their own devices. Not all the educational establishments studied were traditional schools, one man attempted to set up a flax manufactory. It was his intention to teach the boys the whole process of producing linen from the preparation of the ground, to the planting of the flax and then its treatment once harvested. Castleman acts as a prism for an alternative view to that usually taken of education. It is intended to use his correspondence and unique analysis to establish exactly what impact the estate had on education, why it rendered its support and what effects it expected from its investment. The Dukes of Portland only reacted after the Education Act of 1870 and at Holkham the Earls of Leicester were reasonably indifferent. That cannot be said of the Marquis of Anglesey for when Castleman wanted to cut the funding provided to a specific school it was unilaterally opposed by the Marquis and the agent-in-chief. By using the land agent and his records as a prism this chapter will view rural education from a unique and unusual view which has rarely been taken. Much of the information relating to funding is not found in the correspondence but instead it is contained in the vouchers a little investigated source of knowledge and information.

**Rental Accounts and Estate Vouchers**

The main key text for the examination of rental accounts is the work of Turner, Beckett and Afton. They took an estate centred approach, although they found that this presented unforeseen problems as there was no consistency in terms of the archives generated or the material that was contained within them. 30 Once having decided upon a methodological approach there were still obstacles to overcome. A number of identified archives were rejected because it was simply too time consuming to extract the data they contained. The result is the rent index they created is not necessarily accurate and is itself unique. It is more than possible with the modern technology available to extract

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The information available and if the index was constructed today the results might well be very different. The rental accounts of this estate are extensive and being charge and discharge accounts the information is not obvious. Due to the enormity of attempting to investigate all the rental books – there are more than 80 - a sampling of the books every five years to Lady day has allowed an examination of rents paid to be undertaken. These accounts also allow for a fair and reasonable assessment of the level of rent arrears. When compared to the correspondence it is possible to isolate the indicators which explain why arrears might have fallen or increased.

The estate vouchers are even more problematic as practically nobody has ever sought to discover just what might be hidden within them. During the early nineteenth century the demand for numerical knowledge was part of a rapidly expanding bureaucracy. The numerical information once collected and organised would have been utilised to shape estate policies. King intimated that this collection of numerical data provided a ‘comparative framework’ which transformed the understanding of poor law officials and ratepayers. There are similarities between the estate and poor law voucher and Castleman used the medium of the voucher to record the minutiae of estate life. They are important because they form the final side of the prism created by the land agent. The vouchers form a quantitative element to the research carried out and the detail contained in this section of the archive has rarely been found elsewhere. It is hoped this thesis will raise their status as their importance has yet to be recognised by historians.

**Conclusion**

This historiography has explored the existing literature and concludes that while a considerable amount of research has already been undertaken into all aspects of the rural community it remains fragmented or out-dated. Historians including French and Hoyle have researched extensively into the early modern period but cease their studies around 1750 and the early part of the nineteenth century remains neglected. Thompson, Spring and Beckett have frequently concentrated on the aristocracy and landed society but this thesis seeks to do neither. Instead it aims through a micro-study to examine and explore the socio-economic and political landscape of one estate to provide an in-depth

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analysis of the form, organisation and function of its management and the relationships which existed at its heart. Its uniqueness rests on the new and innovative research of using the archive relating to William Castleman to project a different viewpoint on the people who lay at the centre of this society. Furthermore this will survey all the components of the rural community within one study an approach which has rarely been taken by other scholars. It is argued that in order to really appreciate the mechanisms of rural identity and society it is essential to connect all the components under one umbrella.
Chapter 3

The Marquis of Anglesey, Agent and Tenantry

Tenants were the foundation of an estate. It was upon their success or failure that economic viability rested. Successful management required a careful balancing of socio-economic and political relations. The Anti-Corn Law League typified the farmer as a ‘rustic dullard, an ignoramus, a servile retainer who unthinkingly followed the landowners’ lead in politics and county affairs’.\(^1\) As the farming class included men with a multiplicity of characteristics, financial status and ‘attainments’ this critical interpretation is neither appropriate nor indeed correct.\(^2\) The English system of landlord and tenant was one of a partnership in which the risks of farming were shared. The landlord provided the principal requirements to necessitate good farming with well-maintained buildings and land. The tenant supplied the stock and working capital as well as the crucial skill and expertise.\(^3\) A landowner was also expected to protect and sustain his tenants during periods of economic recession, poor agricultural prices and disease amongst the crops and livestock. This usually took the form of rent allowances and abatements. As part of their partnership tenants were expected to farm the land in a responsible manner, safeguarding the fertility of the soil and keep the buildings in a good state of repair. Despite leasing the land the landlord retained ownership over the soil and it was the responsibility of the agent to ensure that it was farmed in a profitable and reasonable manner.

Yet the tenant farmer continues to remain an elusive figure in the historiography. In 1968 Jones wrote ‘Of the three agricultural classes, landowners, farmers and labourers, it is surprising that we know least about the economic condition of the middle group … the business history of the farm is unwritten’.\(^4\) During the intervening forty five years little has changed. Hoyle in his recent edited volume on the English farmer stated that while their role in capitalist farming is well understood we still have little comprehension of them as either a social group or as individuals. Although this work is a welcome addition to the existing literature it selected farmers

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for the quality of their surviving records and thus continues to perpetuate the problem.\(^5\) This thesis contends that there is another way of examining the farming class within the rural community and that is by close contextual analysis of the land agent’s records. The surviving archive of the Marquis of Anglesey contains more than 3,000 letters, copy letter books, bi-annual rental accounts covering more than forty years and in excess of 10,000 estate vouchers. These records create a prism and one facet provides a myriad of detailed information relating to the tenantry.

The chapter will explore a number of aspects relating to the socio-economic circumstances of the tenantry through six broad but interconnecting themes.\(^6\) Firstly, it will explore the type of men who became agents. Secondly, an appraisal will be undertaken of the changing pattern of land tenure during the nineteenth century. Thirdly, it will evaluate the effects of economic hardship. Fourthly, it will analyse the effects of local disasters and the schemes put in place by the estate to aid tenant distress and relieve poverty. Fifthly, it will explore the historiographical background to the poor rate and investigate why people appealed. Finally, the landlord tenant partnership will be explored through the repairs and improvements carried out on the estate particularly drainage. This estate archive provides a unique case study which will create a greater understanding of how the rural community was formed, organised and operated in the first half of the nineteenth century. The general assumptions of historians including Mingay, Thompson and Spring will be considered and analysed. It is suggested that the close contextual analysis undertaken here will deepen both our understanding of the tenant farmer and the rural community for a number of reasons. Previous studies have either been edited volumes covering larger timeframes or researched specified themes which used a wide variety of data from many sources. A different approach has been taken here, by using Castleman’s correspondence and other records it has been possible to trace the fortunes of individual tenants and to isolate examples of how the estate aided and assisted its farmers when needed. It will create an in-depth and detailed study against which future studies can be compared and will help to establish local, regional and national patterns of estate communities in future years. This chapter will begin by surveying the men who became agents, who they were, where they came from and their role within the rural community.

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\(^6\) Political perspectives will be considered separately in chapter 5.
Agents

The role of the land agent originated in the bailiffs and stewards of the great medieval estates and developed as a profession during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.\(^7\) The amassing of property in the hands of the aristocracy and landed gentry during the latter part of this period created a demand for expert estate managers. The aim was to free the landowner from the day to day burdens of estate management and allow him to devote his time to state affairs or the various leisure activities which were becoming more prevalent.\(^8\) Land agents were often unpopular and frequently viewed as ‘rapacious, untrustworthy and weak willed’.\(^9\) Rab Houston’s latest publication surveys social relations and economic life on landed estates between 1600 and 1850 and stated that regardless of region the agent’s role was as an intermediary between lord and tenant. Generally he was expected to provide advice and local knowledge, whilst representing the farmer’s situation but without advocating it. In general this frequently gave the agent considerable power.\(^10\) Despite his social position studies of individual agents are relatively rare and those who are remembered were usually those who were ‘successful, notorious or well recorded’.\(^11\)

Land agents generally came from the ‘middling’ or middle section of society. They were frequently the younger sons of the country gentry, farmers, lawyers or members of the clergy.\(^12\) Shrimpton alleged a ‘special relationship’ existed between a resident agent and his employer. He argued that by living and working on an estate the agent’s fortune became extremely closely intertwined with the financial success or failure of the landowner. It produced a close bond that stretched farther and wider than financial agreement or gain.\(^13\) On this estate both owner and agent were absenteees, yet as will be demonstrated both deeply understood the complex relationships which

existed within the rural community. The ties that bound the Marquis of Anglesey and the Castleman family were encompassing, complex and multi-functional.

The extent and role of the agent depended on the size of property and the interests pursued by the owner but, might include: responsibility for the home farm, the house, gardens and parks, leasing farms and land, collecting rents, surveying the estate, compiling the accounts, acting as political agent and administering the poor law, however, this list is not exhaustive. There were in fact two types of agent, the first, was full-time and salaried and ran a single estate, Francis Blaikie at Holkham fell into this category. Those who formed the second category were independent professional men who often worked for a commission and looked after a number of smaller estates or specific properties of a large landowner. Technically Castleman was a member of this group as he worked for the Bankes family at Kingston Lacey and for Chisletts and Rawlence estate agents based in Wimborne, Dorset. However Castleman was salaried at £500 per annum, payment of this remuneration appeared in the rental accounts at Lady Day and Michaelmas.

During the nineteenth century land agents were in effect the men who administered rural Britain. They found themselves in control of some of the largest business enterprises in the country with enormous responsibilities which would seem daunting even today. With limited communications and poor roads a great deal of time might be spent travelling in less than ideal circumstances. Castleman described the appalling weather conditions in early 1820

The heavy fall of snow which took place the first day of the Audit at Stalbridge rendered the Road to Wimborne totally impassable for a Carriage consequently I was forced to return on horseback and to leave behind me nearly all my papers.

The distance between Castleman’s home and Stalbridge was approximately 23 miles and in deep snow and freezing conditions it was undoubtedly a most unpleasant journey. (See map). The amount of travelling required was echoed by John Grey of Dilston who managed lands in the north of England for Greenwich Hospital estates. He wrote ‘I was almost killed in the first year and a half; for I rode over every farm and

16 D/ANG/B5/26 Letter from William Castleman 5 January 1820.
every field’. The biography of Grey written by his daughter stated ‘He constantly had to spend from five to eight hours a day on horseback, visiting works of draining, building etc.’ On top of Castleman’s travelling around the estate there are frequent references to meetings in London, Cowes and even to the Isle of Anglesey in order to carry out estate business. Given the amount of time spent travelling in difficult conditions it is hardly surprising that there are frequent references to his ill-health and to the poor health of his son Edward later in the 1840s.

Although an agent’s duties might be onerous there were always compensations according to Richard Colyer. Due to the uptake of the role by the large number of younger sons of landed families it was considered a ‘respectable’ position. The agent was frequently accepted in local society almost as an equal and many individual land agents often associated more with the landed gentry than with other managers or members of the rural community. Castleman was personally extended an invite to spend Christmas 1820 at the Marquis’s Staffordshire home. Spring has suggested that rural enclosure, the development of mineral extraction, and the increased use of strict settlement brought the landed aristocracy and gentry into ever more frequent contact with the legal profession. In fact the era has been described as ‘the great age of conveyancing’. The interaction between the two groups readily converted into land agency and management. By the early nineteenth century lawyer-agents were to be found on the majority of estates and it was not until the 1870s that this ratio began to change.

The aristocracy’s employment of lawyers to manage their estates was against the advice of many contemporary agricultural writers, who believed that many attorneys disregarded their responsibilities in favour of their own private practice and in fact knew little about agriculture. E. Laurence wrote of the county solicitor in 1731,

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21 D/ANG/B5/26 Letter from William Castleman 22 December 1820. It explains that he is unable to visit Beaudesert over the seasonal period for two reasons. Firstly, his ‘bilious attacks … totally preclude’ such lengthy travel and secondly, he had an engagement at Milborne Port on the 28 December.
24 Ibid, p. 593.
I have known Instances where a Country Attorney has been Steward to seven or eight Noblemen, and others, and yet has done nothing else but attend the Court-keeping and collecting of Rents; by which means the Tenants have taken advantage of doing what they would with their Farms, quickly lessening the Value of the Estates by Over-ploughing, &c. I have also observ’d on my Surveys that these sort of indolent Stewards are commonly against their Lord’s Estates survey’d and mapt, for fear of opening a New Scene: And yet their very warmness against Surveys and Improvements (calling the one unnecessary and the other unpopular) has been the occasion of putting all Oeconomists upon them.

Part of the hostility towards lawyer-agents stemmed from the theory that land management was becoming too complex and intricate for men who lacked commitment and had no formal training. Beckett proposed the swapping of the title ‘steward’ to ‘agent’ reflected a conscious desire to professionalise the role. By the nineteenth century it was becoming obvious that management was more convoluted and problematic than simply endorsing the legal relationship between owner and tenant. Owners of the great estates in particular were quick to recognise that substantial knowledge and business acumen were essential attributes in overcoming the problems faced by agriculture in the 1830s and 1840s. Moves were made away from the utilisation of London barristers to verify accounts and instead independent auditors were appointed. This process was relatively slow and during the 1850s there were a number of scandals involving solicitors. The most prominent of these related to the case of Henry and Cheslyn Hall of New Boswell Court, Lincoln who were accused of abstracting money from their trusting clients. It was alleged they pretended to effect mortgages they did not effect … sold out stock which they had no authority to sell out … rendered false accounts, cooked and spiced in a manner which would have satisfied the critical palate of Mr George Hudson himself.

This was of course the extreme, the majority were hardworking conscientious men who strove to improve estates whilst striving to undertake the day to day management, oversee the tenants, supervise the administration and drawing up the accounts.

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27 Ibid.
28 Ibid.
29 Spring, *English Landed Society*, p. 62. George Hudson was born in Howsham Yorkshire in 1800. He became the first millionaire railway magnate, elected to York City Council in 1835 and became Lord Mayor in 1837-8. Unfortunately, his luck ran out and he became associated with fraud and under-hand financial practices. Oxford Dictionary of National Biography.
Marshall proposed the theory that a resident manager (agent) needed to be an accomplished agriculturalist but also required other important qualities. He stated

He should be a man of fair character – of upright principles and conciliatory manners:- to set an example of good conduct to the tenants and to become their common counsellor and peace maker …’

However no agent was able to satisfy the entire rural community in all circumstances. Amongst the estate correspondence there are a very small number around 4 hostile letters. There is no way of knowing how many may have originally been received. A letter was sent to the Marquis in 1817 addressed from Shaftesbury and signed ‘A well wisher of my Country and a true Born Englishman’. This communication derided all those who had recently been involved in the management of the Dorset and Somerset estate, the writer testified

I think your Lordship would find great cause for complaint against some of your Lordship’s Stewards which has had the management of them and did I dare to presume to give my opinion to your Lordship it would be to place a man in that situation (but not a Lawyer) that is more on the spot and one who would be ready to hear anything that the Tenants has to say and would be at hand to do anything that is wanting to be done.

It is probable the derogatory lawyer comments are a reference to Castleman who was himself an attorney. It is hardly surprising that the author defined his recommendations by submitting an alternative option. The proposed candidate was one ‘who bears good character’ and ‘is a good accountant (his occupation being that of school teacher’.

In January 1819 another angry letter was received. This time the grievance was levelled at the holding of the local court at Handley and stated ‘Your Lordship’s confidence has been grossly abused by your country steward Castleman in respect to your accustomed privilege of holding a court at Handley in the country of Dorset which has always been supported with laudable jealously by your Lordships Predecessors’. In essence it had been the custom in the past to hold a general hunt on the day the court was opened and it had ‘been deemed a right in the memory of Persons

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31 D/ANG/B5/22 Letter dated 1817 from an anonymous gentleman in Shaftesbury complaining about the various stewards and agents who have been running the estate.
32 Ibid.
33 D/ANG/B5/25 October 21 1819 Anonymous letter which is signed a Dorsetshire Gentleman October 21 1819 Anonymous letter which is signed a Dorsetshire Gentleman, the underlining in the above reference is taken from the original document.
near an hundred years of age most living and without doubt many years beyond any memory.34 The problem had started the previous year when he had been accused of attempting to destroy this

‘long established Right’ Furthermore in the past former stewards had ‘exerted their endeavours to suffer no encroachment and regularly opened the court at 8 o’clock in the morning when the Tenants and People commenced their Hunt now last year Castleman never opened the Court till near one o’clock clearly on Purpose that the people might have no time for their Diversion or to kill any Deer’.

The contempt of the writer for Lord Anglesey’s agent is quite clear when he described William as ‘this great little man’ and commented ‘He has done your Lordship so essential an injury that the Punishment of being discharge from your service is very inadequate to his Deserts’.35 There are of course always two sides to any tale and fortunately Castleman’s reply to the above challenge has also survived. William saw the whole incident as possibly injurious to his own life for he communicated to Lord Anglesey

I held the Handley Court last year at the risqué of my own life and was insulted in the grossest manner by a mob of 4 or 500 Lawless Fellows because I had not opened the Court two hours before the time I had fixed by the notice for the purpose. In defiance of my Remonstrance, the Jury as soon as they were sworn left the Court with the rest of the Mob to pursue their Diversion of Deer Hunting and it was impossible for me to proceed with the Business and after waiting there 2 Hours I closed the Court at one o’clock the time I had fixed without any of the Peace Officers for the ensuing year having been appointed.’36

On hearing attempts were going to be made which would infringe the rights of Lord Rivers in the same manner as the previous year William Castleman took the decision not to hold the court. He believed the Marquis of Anglesey would not want any encroachment on the rights of Lord Rivers, a decision that was acutely accurate, for in the margin of the letter the Marquis has written ‘You have acted most correctly’. This episode is important because it illuminated the fragility of the relationships within the rural community. William Castleman was obviously not a man to be bullied by the tenants and when the need arose was more than willing to take a stand even when faced by a large mob that may have been a threat to his life. It also revealed how the work of the land-agent entailed more than simply dealing with the running of an agricultural

34 Ibid
35 Ibid.
36 D/ANG/B5/25 Letter from William Castleman 9 November 1819 within which is a reply to the accusations of the anonymous letter of October of the same year. All underlining are copied from the original document and are not my own.
estate. There was an equal if not greater role which dealt with the wider community. William appeared to have understood the thought processes and beliefs of his employer, capable of acting on his own to further such beliefs and understandings. The above is not the only occasion when William Castleman is taken to task or complaints made. During the Swing Riots one of the peculiar characteristics of the unrest were the letters sent to landowners threatening violence or even death. As William was a landowner in his own right he did not escape the attention of the inimical rioters and was himself the recipient of such a letter within which the writers threatened ‘we will dash out your brains’. It is surprising that there is so little hostility between agent and tenant, perhaps this is testament to Castleman’s skill in dealing with all aspects of the rural community.

Castleman formed the middle of a prism and on the opposite side to the landowner stood the tenantry. A good agent needed to balance the needs of the owner and the farmers as both were needed to forge a firm base on which to rest the estate’s fortunes. Mingay declared that ‘much of an agent’s time was absorbed by day to day dealings with tenants’. He listened to their grievances, made enquiries when the issue of repairs was raised, considered any breaches of lease or husbandry covenants and explored the possibilities of rent rebates and abatements. This, however, appears far too simple an explanation of the large range of tasks which these men were required to carry out. In the absence of the Marquis of Anglesey the tenantry would turn to Castleman to act as intermediary and had no choice but to trust him to represent them openly and fairly. This collection of documents illustrates the intricacies of the relationships within the rural community and uniquely provides an understanding of both their fragility and strength. Previous studies of either agents or farmers have failed to explore either. One expression of the relationships which existed between landowner, agent and tenant are represented within the tenurial patterns of landholding within the estate.

**Tenurial Patterns**

Contemporary agricultural writers including Young stressed the importance of long leases and advocated security of tenure was important to a farmer if he were to invest his capital in expensive, long term improvements. A lease of fourteen to twenty-one

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years renewable every seven was frequently believed to be the ideal. The legal theory of landholding was complicated and might explain why so many agents, at least until the middle of the nineteenth century, were attorneys. Agricultural historians have and continue to be interested in the mobility of English tenant farmers. The length of occupancy of farmers and their families had a direct impact on a number of factors including husbandry practices and improvement of the land. Stead contended that it reflected estate management policies and the family relationship or bond with the land in the wake of capitalist farming. He claimed perhaps unsurprisingly that his research indicated the turnover of English rack rent tenants on private estates varied considerably and was affected by the general buoyancy of agricultural prices. Tenurial continuity could be affected by different issues. A landowner with a sense of social responsibility might, in an attempt to appear as a good landlord not want to disrupt long established families. Another reason to allow tenurial continuity may have been the assured voting habits of a given farmer. Importantly many tenants had developed over a period of time an understanding of local soil conditions and their own network of business contacts. All of these dynamics could be used in the tenants’ favour when it came to re-negotiating the terms of any new lease.

Clay suggests that landlords in the western counties of England let their lands in a substantially different way to the rest of the country. In the east and Midlands if landlords granted leases – many preferred annual tenancies – they were usually of the fixed term sort and for a given number of years which did not usually extend beyond twenty one years. Consistently owners charged a rack rent that is a rent which indicated the full value of the land. To the west of the Pennines and south of the Peak District instead of annual tenancies or leases for years land was rented ‘lifeleasehold’. Fines were charged for tenancies as a lump sum and afterwards a small annual rent was paid which did not reflect its realistic value. Leases for long periods of sixty or even ninety nine years might be used as well as copyhold for lives the two types were commonly known as lifeholds. It is important to understand the different ways in which land

39 Chambers and Mingay, The Agricultural Revolution, p. 46.
41 Ibid, p. 188.
could be let and held because within the Marquis of Anglesey’s estate all of the above forms were used.

Leases had drawbacks, when agricultural prices were falling; long leases and copyholds were more attractive to the tenant, the opposite being true when prices increased. Paying the fines which periodically became due when names were added seemed worthwhile to the lessee as the land was secured for the next generation. These fines could add valuable funds to the landlord’s coffers but perhaps even more importantly lifeholders were frequently responsible for repairs and this was very appealing when prices for agricultural produce were low. Where a high proportion of the value of leased lands had been received in the form of fines making a conscious decision to relinquish them could for a while seriously reduce the amount of income received. The shift from copyhold and lifehold tenancies was made easier through the introduction of the mortgage which allowed owners to raise money independently of the estate. It negated the reliance on fines which had basically raised a capital sum from the land; the tenant farmer was then allowed to keep any profits above and beyond the rent call. Fines varied according to the size of the property being leased, Stead maintained that the fines paid by tenants on the grant or renewal of lifeholds were often arrived at by negotiation between landowner and tenant. The first step in the process was to establish the value of the land, this might have been easy to achieve when the proprietor was resident on the estate but often harder in the case of an absentee. Employing an experienced agent of the stature of Castleman who was skilled in land valuations could help to negate these problems. However in the southwest owners and agents usually decided this ‘by book’. Detailed examination of the estate records would locate the name of the holding, ascertain by how many lives it was held, assess the quit rent and other dues paid by the tenant, explore how much had previously been paid in renewal fines and acquire a rough guide as to the acreage before coming to an agreed figure. Although the Castleman correspondence and records do not give any information as to how the level of fine was arrived out they have provided an idea of how much money a landowner might raise from fines. (table 1)

List of Lifehold Leases and Other Documents Sent to Lord Anglesey for His
Execution 13 November 1825

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Lifeholders Names</th>
<th>Fines</th>
<th>Lords Rent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Charles Bis</td>
<td>20.0.0</td>
<td>0.2.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>William Clapcott</td>
<td>52.10.0</td>
<td>0.2.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Silas Cole</td>
<td>40.0.0</td>
<td>0.2.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thomas Crew</td>
<td>45.0.0</td>
<td>0.2.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John and Mary Gray</td>
<td>122.0.0</td>
<td>0.9.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>George Grimes</td>
<td>40.0.0</td>
<td>0.2.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Frederick Harris</td>
<td>45.0.0</td>
<td>0.2.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Samuel Harris</td>
<td>167.0.0</td>
<td>0.6.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>William Lemon</td>
<td>40.0.0</td>
<td>0.2.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Benjamin Parsons</td>
<td>85.0.0</td>
<td>0.2.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Robert Sansom</td>
<td>20.0.0</td>
<td>0.2.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John Seymour</td>
<td>36.0.0</td>
<td>0.3.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Samuel Seymour</td>
<td>20.0.0</td>
<td>0.2.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do</td>
<td>40.0.0</td>
<td>0.2.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John Talbot</td>
<td>30.0.0</td>
<td>0.2.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>James West</td>
<td>48.0.0</td>
<td>0.2.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>850.10.0</td>
<td>4.11.2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1

Again in March 1836 the execution of ten leases produced fines of £354 a not insignificant sum and a further reminder of the lucrativeness of this aspect of estate management.\(^{47}\)

Raising a mortgage could help to bridge the income void when switching from leasehold to rack rents. Daunton argued that the rise in land values after 1710 corresponded with a fall in interest rates. This allowed larger landowners to raise considerable sums of money which might be used for further acquisitions. In the Marquises of Anglesey’s case his father had left the estates with heavy debts and mortgages were raised simply to keep the estate viable. Beastall proposed tenant farmers became more willing to exchange their conventional leases as ‘tenant right’ began to

\(^{46}\) D/ANG/B5/67 Details of the fine collected in November 1825 although this document is amongst the paperwork for 1846.

\(^{47}\) D/ANG/B5/48 List of leases executed 30 March 1834.
compensate the departing incumbent for any improvements undertaken. The capital invested which could include: drainage, fencing, new buildings or the application of artificial fertilizers would continue to be of benefit for many years after the incumbent at the time had departed. However for the entire period under research in this thesis tenant right remained at the owner’s discretion and it was not until the Agricultural Holdings Act 1875 that it obtained a legal framework. It is hard to establish the number of tenants who rack rented and those who held land in more traditional forms as the rental accounts do not differentiate between the two. It has been suggested that tenants who rack rented were more likely to fall behind in their rent payments, and this in turn caused managerial problems. However this does not in fact appear to be the case. In January 1823 the Marquis of Anglesey commented in the margin of a letter that had been sent to him by William Castleman

It will not do to grant any Leases at present & comparing all my Tenantry at will with those who have Leases I have no hesitation of expressing my great dislike to Leases. I see no advantage in any way whatever to the Landlord but on the contrary every possible disadvantage. Their charges for all repairs are greater – They pay less Rent & have larger Arrears & are never satisfied. This is really the difference between them.

This outburst from the Marquis had been occasioned by Withers whose lease was due for renewal at Michaelmas and who was demanding an abatement of £243 4s 0d on a rent of £558 12s 0d. Although Castleman indicated the current poor agricultural prices might justify this enormous allowance he could not advise his ‘Lordship to accept it without first making the attempt to realise a higher rent’. However the Marquis supposed it would be better to keep Withers – a respectable tenant – rather ‘than take an adventurer at a trifling advance of Rent’. Castleman was adamant that anyone taking a farm at this time was ‘generally anxious to secure long terms’ and claimed that there was ‘not much probability of my being able to procure a perfectly good and responsible Tenant on a holding from year to year’. The Marquis insisted that in taking Wither’s offer it was to be fully understood that if prices improved he would raise Wither’s rent.

51 D/ANG/B5/32 This is an extract taken from a Letter written by William Castleman in January 1823 and which the Marquis of Anglesey has commented on and then sent back to him.
52 Ibid.
53 Ibid.
Ultimately he decided that no further leases were to be granted. Castleman did not agree with the Marquis on this matter and in February he replied:

I think I shall be able to convince your Lordship that the opinion which you express respecting Leases being unavailable is, at least with regard to Dorset and Somerset Tenants erroneous. I am sure that without them within the last four years hundreds of pounds must have been sacrificed not only in regard to repairs but also in Rental from mismanagement of the Property.\(^{54}\)

Initially it had been believed that leases ensured tenants would take care of the land granted, repairing the buildings upon it and carrying out improvements when required. Other landowners eventually came to the same conclusion as Lord Anglesey and leases were viewed as the instrument of slovenly farming. The consensus of opinion now perceived that tenants with long leases would carry out sufficient work throughout the year to pay the rent and no more. Instead of investing any surplus capital back into the farm it was periodically spent in paying the obligatory fines.

Despite all the problems and drawbacks of the various leases and his dislike of the system, leases did not disappear from the Dorset and Somerset estate but, remained in common usage and there is little doubt that the continued used of the lease upon this estate was agent driven. Among the records of 1823 one document has survived which illustrated the sheer complexity of the leasehold system and the variety of leases which might be granted on one estate. (Appendix 1). In April the Marquis signed twenty two leases for ten years, four for twelve years, the Capital Bailiffs received leases for 99 years and 5 leases for lives were granted. Gussage Farm (750 acres) was rented out on a corn rent for twelve years. Thompson argued that produce rents were seen as a fair way of splitting the profit and losses created by changing agricultural prices equally between landlord and tenant, but were not widely adopted.\(^{55}\) However Turner, Beckett and Afton suggested that out of the Agricultural Inquiries of the 1830s emerged a need to adjust rents according to the value of grain. Therefore corn rents grew in popularity.\(^{56}\) The lease at Gussage also had cultivation covenants attached. A four field system was to be used and no more than 120 acres could be sown annually with wheat this was expected to yield approximately fifteen bushels per acre at £13 per load, and equated to rental of £585. Using 480 acres for grain left a further 120 acres available to plant with sainfoin

\(^{54}\) D/ANG/B5/32 Letter from William Castleman 8 February 1832.
\(^{55}\) Thompson, *English Landed Society*, p. 243.
or which could be left as ley. Every four years 300 acres were to be chalked at one bushel per acre. The landlord was to pay half the costs while tenant was to pay all the tithes and taxes and to keep the premises in good repair for which rough timber would be supplied.\textsuperscript{57} Rent was to be ascertained by taking the average price of wheat each quarter day for the county of Dorset. It was not the only land on the estate leased using this mode. In fact the estate themselves were tenants of Winchester College and the rent on farms at Sherborne Wyke and Bradford were determined using this method.

Covenants could be incorporated into any lease and these might include rotation, husbandry, improvement and repair clauses. The most famous crop rotation leases were those of Thomas Coke at Holkham. The aim was to ensure that the tenants farmed in a manner that was beneficial rather than injurious to the soil. Castleman both used and enforced covenants. In 1814 he recorded ‘I have let the farm for one year with the \textit{precise} course of Husbandry to be practiced on each piece of land during that Term’ in the event of breaking any of the terms penalties ‘by way of extra rent’ would be charged.\textsuperscript{58} In 1823 he had stressed to the Marquis ‘I do enforce the performance of the Covenants, & by these means keep the farms as far as possible from being injured by neglect or misconduct’. Furthermore ‘I have two men at Stalbridge whom I pay to give me information of anything going wrong there’.\textsuperscript{59} Two main rivers the Cole and Stour ran through the estate and this left it prone to flooding. In 1832 the tenants appeared reluctant to clear out a brook which ran through their land and Castleman decided to make an example of one of them. He wrote to the Marquis

\begin{quote}
I [had] been compelled to resort to legal measures to compel a person at Henstridge to cleanse a part of a Brook adjoining his land which completely obstructed the Water and rendered the cleansing above of Lord Anglesey’s Tenants and others negatory. This man has since done what was necessary and has paid the Costs and his Neighbours below him have from a fear of similar proceedings done their duty likewise.\textsuperscript{60}
\end{quote}

Unsurprisingly the rest of the tenants affected by the same Covenant quickly set about their duties and there was no further need to resort to legal measures. In 1842 William filed another court case and obtained judgement

\begin{quote}
in the ejectment against this man, who lately ploughed up some of the Pasture land which lately fell into hand, and on which he has sown wheat, and I shall
\end{quote}

\textsuperscript{57} D/ANG/B5/67.
\textsuperscript{58} D/ANG/B5/15 Letter from William Castleman 16 November 1814.
\textsuperscript{59} D/ANG/B5/32 Letter from William Castleman 8 February 1832.
\textsuperscript{60} D/ANG/B5/44 letter from William Castleman 1832.
turn him out of possession immediately and take his crop as a compensation for the wilful injury done by the conversion of the Pasture into Arable. An expensive mistake for he lost his home, farm and crop. This incident emphasised the importance of meadow and pasture land within the cultivation systems of the estate and the penalties for illegal infringements.

Another occasion when Castleman was forced to act in order to uphold the terms of the lease concerned Mr Yeatman who in 1840 leased the shooting over the manor of Stalbridge for a term of eight years. A covenant had been inserted within this agreement, by which the tenant would at all times during the period of the lease destroy the rabbits, ‘so that they shall not at any time in the Judgement of the Marquis’s Steward do any material damage to the tenant’s crops or to the timber or Underwood in the Coppices.’ The estate reserved the right that should any of the above occur they would employ ‘other’ persons to kill the rabbits but not by ‘Guns or Gins’. It appears that Yeatman ignored this clause and by late 1843 Castleman had received complaints from a number of tenants and despite talking to the keeper any attempts to resolve the situation had been ignored. At the Audit he reported ‘I found the Mischief had become so serious that it was necessary to take some steps’. One inspection of the land farmed by Mr Parsons revealed that the rabbits had eaten the tops of around three acres of wheat and ‘injure the turnips and swedes nightly’. However so serious was the problem Castleman appealed to the Marquis for advice and approval of the next steps which should be taken. These were already laid out in the agreement but for once possibly because of Yeatman’s status as magistrate within the community he was not inclined to act on his own without support. However this clash between estate and tenant does reveal the power – even as late as 1843 – which covenants and clauses bestowed on an estate when tenants did not adhere to their part of the agreement. This explains Castleman dedication to the survival of the existing tenurial system.

Leases on this estate were specifically encouraged by Castleman. He believed they provided the estate with the best form of security in ensuring tenants’ farmed the land in a reliable and responsible form and yet gave the estate the necessary powers to legally penalise and evict those who broke the rules or accrued large arrears. Castleman’s actions are diametrically opposed to the Marquis of Anglesey; his reliance

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62 D/ANG/B5/60 Letter from William Castleman 28 December 1843.
on the legal framework bestowed by the lease was probably a reflection of his legal background. While historians have debated extensively the changes in tenurial patterns, this refined case study indicates that in this area of Dorset and Somerset little changed. The socio-economic balance which had been present in 1812 remained constant and intact in 1854. Further detailed case studies can only benefit our understanding of the extent to which tenurial patterns did change and to what degree these were affected by local conditions. Castleman was convinced that leases provided greater security during periods of financial downturns. This chapter will now seek to assess why these economic problems occurred and then the ways in which the estate sought to aid recovery or mitigate losses.

**Economic Hardship**

The Marquis of Anglesey inherited his estates in 1812 just as agriculture was becoming more unstable. During the Napoleonic Wars both landowners and farmers had profited from high prices which were often the result of food shortages caused by poor harvests and blockades. Ernle argued that other contributory factors between 1765 and 1815 included: improper practices by corn dealers, population expansion, the consolidation of land holdings and the end of open field farming, the depreciation of currency, the weather, war and fiscal policy. With peace high grain prices fell dramatically. The 1813 harvest was one of the best in history and Stratton recorded the resultant drop in wheat prices from 123s 10d a quarter in January to 67s 10d in November. At the beginning of Castleman’s agency the problem of rent arrears had been compounded by the dismissed and disgruntled ex-steward Cox. It appeared he actually encouraged tenants to withhold their rent. The situation was explained in a letter to the Marquis and although this related mainly to the arrears of Baldwin and Biles it indicated the havoc which might be caused by a resentful man. In December 1814 Biles had failed to appear at the recent audit and owed around £800 which equalled approximately more than a year and a half’s rent. He had refused to pay anything ‘until [his] Lordship had made him satisfaction for the injury he had received by failing to keep the promises made to him by Cox of new buildings on his farm’. Enquiries had left Castleman to declare

66 D/ANG/BS/15 Letter from William Castleman 21 December 1814.
I have ascertained and can prove by unquestionable Testimony the means taken by Cox to influence Biles and some of the other Tenants to resist paying their rents till these alleged Damages had been ascertained and paid for what I know from various quarters that he is using the most disgraceful means both open and secret to make some of the Tenantry dissatisfied and is in going to them to employ his Son-in-Law Chitty to support their alleged Claims by Law.\textsuperscript{67}

Although there must have been great temptation to evict tenants whose arrears were either large or who refused to pay it was not necessarily financially the best option, particularly during periods of falling agricultural prices and rents for the letter continued

In determining any steps to be taken with respect to Biles or Baldwin your Lordship should be apprized that by distraining on them at this time by which they would most likely be forced to quit their farms the rent of these farms would most unquestionably be reduced on a new letting; but against this disadvantage your Lordship must consider [the risk] you run of leaving the rent now due by allowing them any longer to continue thereon.\textsuperscript{68}

Thompson argued that at the end of the Napoleonic Wars there was no depression. Instead there was a series of ‘short crises’ primarily caused by good harvests and consequent low prices. If somewhat more severe, they were in effect little different from similar incidents which had arisen during the war years. The first crisis took place in 1814-1815. By 1817 although some members of the tenantry were witnessing signs of recovery others were still in deep crisis. Castleman recorded

\begin{quote}
The Corn Farmers this year are beginning to recover themselves but the Grass Farmers are very much distressed. I have received several notices from the latter to quit.\textsuperscript{69}
\end{quote}

A further example of the poverty being experienced by the tenant farmers can be found within an anonymous letter of the same year which was signed ‘A well-wisher of my country and a true born Englishman’

\begin{quote}
No-one nobleman or Englishman in the Kingdom has added more lustre to, or supported the character of a true born Englishman more than your Lordship and from the conviction that every true lover of his Country will do his utmost to lighten the distress which is so universally felt … every person must be well aware that among the whole of the community that none have felt it more than the Farmers, from whom it is communicated to all other branches of society, which must point out the necessity of their being relieved in an effectual manner.\textsuperscript{70}
\end{quote}

Evidence for the shoots of the above recovery can be found in an increase in rents paid and a subsequent fall in the level of rent arrears. At the audit for Lady day 1817

\textsuperscript{67} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{68} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{69} D/ANG/B5/22 End of year report from William Castleman to Marquis of Anglesey 20 December 1817.
\textsuperscript{70} D/ANG/B5/22 An anonymous letter written to the Marquis of Anglesey dated Shaftesbury 1817.
Castleman reported an increase in remittances from £5,700 on Lady day 1816 to £7,727 10s 3d an increase of 26 per cent. During the same period arrears fell from £12,483 2s 9d to £8,044 18s 10d a decrease of 35 per cent. The most serious of the post war problems occurred in 1821-1823 when the return to the gold standard created a deflationary effect on prices. During periods of financial uncertainty the agent had to juggle the idea of allowing arrears to accrue or give notice to quit, perhaps accepting a lower rent from the incoming tenant. During the 1821-22 crises Castleman recorded the increase in tenant indebtedness as the Marquis allowed arrears to increase. (Fig 4.) During this crisis long established farms finally failed. In 1822 a distraint was levied on Samuel Harris Junior of Stalbridge although his arrears were relatively small at £297 10s 10d. This move had been undertaken with some reluctance as sadly this family had been long standing tenants of both the Marquis of Anglesey and his predecessor Mr Walters. Securing at least some form of payment towards outstanding arrears was at the heart of any legal action undertaken. The estate does not however appear to be without sympathy. After the goods of the Harris family had been sold Castleman ordered the return of their household goods, he stated that they ‘were of little value in any case’. There were few problems re-letting Harris’s farm and by renting it to two tenants inside of one he was able to procure an increase of £18 9s 6d per annum on the previous rent. In 1834 Castleman’s compassion was once again apparent in the case of Baker who he described as ‘a very old and considerable Tenant of Lord Anglesey’. As a result of the loss of his sheep through the rot he had lost everything but his household goods and was now in such distress that Castleman sought a donation from the estate of £10 or £20.

The estate was not always as benevolent as demonstrated by the case of Daw and Barrett who had dishonestly driven off their herd of cattle. The Marquis insisted Daw and Barrett were prosecuted, and that this measure be ‘adopted for the discouragement’ of any future tenants who might attempt the same. Although Daw and Barrett applied for the debt to be discharged under the Insolvent Act, the estate opposed the action and ultimately the pair found themselves sentenced to eight months imprisonment. While the Marquis did much to support those to whom he leased land there were times when financial expediency had to be at the forefront of any decisions made.

71 D/ANG/B5/22 Letter from Castleman 20 December 1817.
72 Thompson, English Landed Society, p. 231.
73 D/ANG/B5/46 Letter from William Castleman 18 October 1834.
Another tenant who found himself in a precarious economic situation in 1822 was Bishop. When it appeared that Castleman might need to level a distraint on the farm he had the entire stock valued. This assessment provided a clear insight into the contents of a tenant farm upon the estate. The livestock had a total value of £1437 and included 7 cart horses, 1 hackney, 20 working oxen presumably for ploughing, a small number of milking cows and poultry, nearly 700 sheep and 200 pigs. Stored crops probably intended as feed are recorded as old wheat, new wheat, barley, oats, beans, peas, vetches, hay and potatoes. Standing crops were again a mixture of 72 acres of wheat and 10 acres of vetches and the two combined equated to £1239 5s 0d. The implements of husbandry were listed as 4 waggons, 5 dung pots, 7 ploughs, 4 pair of harrows, 2 pairs of drags, harness, yokes and chains, a threshing machine, winnowing machine, barn tackle and sacks and worth £124. Household furniture was recorded as being in very good condition and contained 10 feather beds and priced at £150. The total value of the

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D/ANG/B5/32 Particulars of the rent arrears due at Michaelmas 1822.

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entire estate was estimated at £2950 5s 0d. Bishop also had a number of sheep out ‘at keep’. Castleman calculated that even if the entire farm effects were sold the sum raised would still not be sufficient to liquidate the arrears. Although the commercial aspect of paying rent was a matter for landlord, agent and tenant there is no doubt that at each audit the amount of rent paid was a good indicator of the financial health of the estate. Both the Marquis of Anglesey and those who rented his land or property looked to Castleman for solutions during those periods of fiscal recession. Between 1814 and 1836 there was almost always, a percentage of the estate population seeking rent abatements or quitting their farms because of financial ruin or distraints enforced by the estate. However Castleman was aware that elsewhere the situation was different for he wrote in 1822, ‘I am happy to find that the Distress which pervades this part of the Country does not prevail in other districts where Lord A has property’.  

Poor weather in 1828 and 1829 caused severe flooding on the estate. Stratton described both summers as wet with disappointing harvests. In August 1829, Highmore, one of the largest tenants on the estate wrote to Castleman and described the conditions on his farm. He stated that his entire flock of about 900 sheep had been attacked with the coathe and some 600 were now dead, the remainder were in a poor state. Moreover he was worried that if he restocked the land with a new flock they too would soon be infected. In addition a ‘great part’ of his hay and grass had been either totally ruined or washed away in 1820 and 1829. Further costs had been incurred in cleaning the ‘river, trenches and ditches’, the ground was so wet that quicksets (hedges) would not grow, the beasts became ‘chilled’ and spring crops would not thrive. Highmore wanted Castleman to entreat on his behalf with Lord Anglesey in the hope that a further reduction on his rent might be allowed. On Highmore’s behalf a letter was sent to the Marquis and while it stated that he had received the same allowances as everyone else it was believed he had lost the most. Castleman thought the losses equated to half of his invested capital and the payments he had received were considerably less. The loss of his fodder meant he had been drawn ‘to new modes of stocking and managing his farm’ which had proved very costly, therefore it might be assumed that he was a deserving case for special treatment.

75 D/ANG/B5/31 William Castleman 22 Feb 1822.
76 Stratton, Agricultural Records, p. 102.
77 D/ANG/B5/42 Letter from Highmore 11 August 1830.
78 D/ANG/B5/42 Letter from Castleman 22 September 1830.
illustrated the manner in which the agent was expected to represent the farmers. Highmore was not the only tenant to lose stock although he was the hardest hit; others lost varying amounts of sheep and cattle. The case of Highmore is an emblematic illustration of the relationship between tenantry and agent, whereby the agent understood the difficulties the farmers faced, assessed each on its merit and then intervened with the Marquis of Anglesey when appropriate. While it has been suggested by Beastell that agents might on occasions tyrannise local populations in the main the welfare of the tenants was at the heart of the majority of decisions made. The problems faced by the estate in 1828-9 illuminate with specific detail how this idea worked in practice.

The weather conditions between 1832 and 1836 produced above average harvests, Stratton described 1834 as ‘a bumper harvest’ and that in 1835 as ‘excellent’. These above average yields sent the price of grain tumbling until in December 1835 it fetched a mere 35s 4d a quarter. This fall prompted Castleman to write to the Marquis

You will easily conceive that I have had complaints from the Tenants of the Corn and Sheep Farms on account of the long continued low prices of wheat and that numerous applications have been made for Reductions of Rent.

The situation for many was dire and the problem had been exacerbated by the failure of the turnip crop in the winter of 1835 ‘the consequences of which’ were not yet fully known. Furthermore

The price of wheat for the last two years has been almost ruinous to the farmers and has I am convinced in general not produced one sixpence to pay rent.

The above examples all needed an agent who was able to think creatively in order to find methods and schemes which would support those in distress and find ways of aiding recovery. It is to these ideas, plans and systems this chapter now turns.

80 Stratton, Agricultural Records, p. 103.
81 D/ANG/BS/48 Letter from William Castleman to Lord Uxbridge 22 July 1835.
82 D/ANG/BS/48 Letter from William Castleman 21 January 1836.
83 D/ANG/BS/48 Letter from William Castleman 21 January 1836.
Relief of Tenant Distress

During periods of economic difficulty the tenants looked to the agent to persuade the Marquis that they were deserving of help. The Marquis looked to the agent to keep the estate profitable and the farms rented. Even the Handley tradesmen who were reliant on a buoyant economy petitioned Castleman when they faced hardship in 1832

Your Petitioners are all Living in and belong to the Parish of Handley in which place we have maintained our Familys in an Humble and Industrious manner to the present time, but through the Depression on all Business we cannot find full Employment and consequently many of us who have large Familys must apply for help to the same quarter where the Labouring Poor are under necessity of looking in large numbers unless there is some Remedy to remove our Distress. 84

Thus financial distress affected the entire community and needed to be dealt with swiftly. Thompson inferred that agents communicated with one another on many questions but fails to specify what these might be. 85 Castleman’s correspondence relating to the various measures he set in place presents evidence of these networks in practice. Help was not always delivered in terms of an abatement on rent other methods were also used. In 1820 the solution was fairly simple

In consequence of the Agricultural distress, Lord Shaftesbury, Mr Bankes and the other principal Landholders in the Neighbourhood have concurred in the resolution of postponing their Christmas Audits till the beginning of March which has had some beneficial effect on the Markets but the present prices of Corn and Sheep are so low that it is clear that persons who are now forced to sell are not only not raising anything for rent but are actually sinking a part of their Capital … In short the Complaints of the yeomanry in this part of the Country are as general and well founded as they were in 1814 and 1815. 86

This letter works on four levels; firstly, it revealed that Castleman alongside the other large landowners – Lord Shaftesbury owned some 15,000 acres and Mr Bankes 13,200 – had acquiesced to the decision of postponing the audit. Secondly the decision had already had some effect on the market. Thirdly if the tenants had already had to resort to using their capital any surplus had been spent and the situation must therefore have been ongoing and not new. Finally by making reference to the earlier period the extent of the depression and the depth of the financial difficulty was both conceptualised and quantified.

84D/ANG/B5/44 ‘Humble Petition of the Tradesmen and others of the Parish of Handley Dorset’ 1832.
85 Thompson, English Landed Society, p. 159.
In 1829 and 1830 the situation was more complicated. The poor weather in 1828 had already caused problems for the arable farmers and in April 1829 Castleman reported ‘The last year’s crop of Corn was not only extremely deficient in quantity and defect in quality but it was generally injured by the Rains. The Crops of Hay too were much damaged by the same cause’. However as already discussed above, the sheep and cattle farmers required the most assistance and this came in the form of a considerable reduction in rent (Table 2). As in 1820 the inference from the correspondence is of a synchronisation of effort between the major landholders in the area

I know some large Landowners where Farms have been severely visited with the Coath have made considerable allowances to their Tenants; and Sir L Lethbridge [owned c. 9,000 acres] told me the other day that at his last Audit he had made Abatements on his Corn and Sheep Farms of the Difference in Value between each Tenants annual growth of Wool at 1/6 per cent and I believe many others have done the same.

In the immediate aftermath of the Swing riots which occurred in 1830 the estate allowed an immediate ten per cent allowance on but this appears to have been more a quick fix reaction to an unprecedented outbreak of rioting. Generally the ideas used by Castleman to relieve tenant distress in the above period of crises appear to be of reasonably standard practice. Chambers and Mingay stated that temporary abatements were usually freely given to keep farmers in occupation. After the Napoleonic Wars landowners also took on a greater responsibility for the fixed capital on farms thus relieving the tenants of substantial outlays. In 1835-6 in the aftermath of the Swing riots the scheme which the estate implemented was much more inventive. The plan Castleman intended to implement had already been applied to tenants on his own property. Overall tenants were granted a ten per cent allowance. However, only five per cent would be granted immediately and this was reliant on payment in full at Michaelmas of the half year’s rent. The estate would not ask for contributions towards any outstanding arrears. No allowance was to be granted to those tenants whose rent was less than £20 per annum allowance. However, only five per cent would be granted immediately and this was reliant on payment in full at Michaelmas of the half year’s rent. The estate would not

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87 D/ANG/B5/41 Letter from William Castleman 6 April 1829.
88 D/ANG/B5/41 Letter from William Castleman 30 September 1830.
89 Chambers and Mingay, *Agricultural Revolution*, p. 129.
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<th>Particulars of other losses by Flood &amp;c</th>
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ask for contributions towards any outstanding arrears. No allowance was to be granted to those tenants whose rent was less than £20 per annum. The remaining five per cent was to be retained until the tenant had expended at least half of the sum being allowed in ‘draining, trenching or other improvements … on the inclosed Meadows and Pasture land on his farm’ which were to be specified in writing and approved by Castleman. The work had then to be completed to Castleman’s satisfaction and vouchers produced of the ‘Actual’ expenditure exclusive of the carriage of materials which each tenant was to find gratis. The costs of this programme were to be found by each individual tenant from the second half of his allowance. Any reasonable sum incurred by William Castleman in ‘ordering surveying, measuring or inspecting the work in its progress and on its completion’ would be deducted. These improvements had another impact or perhaps it could be said that Castleman had an ulterior motive for he wrote

On Mr Bankes and the other estates under my Agency as well as on my own estates in this Neighbourhood this plan of Improvement is in full operation by which the surplus labourers who would otherwise have been a charge on the their parishes have been in full and profitable employment (for I have directed that they shall work by the piece where it is practicable so that both the industrious and the lazy are paid in proportion to his exertions and neither can have just cause to complain) and this measure has I trust aided in keeping the pauper population in this Neighbourhood orderly and in bringing them to submit to the Provisions of the Poor Law.\textsuperscript{90}

The ideas incorporated within this plan of action seem to embody all that was expected of the land-agent. Not only did the scheme set out to relieve the tenants who were essential for the well-being of the estate but it also limited the amount of poor relief paid in the estate parishes. At the same time the tenants had to undertake certain tasks which meant the quality of the land was not just maintained but also improved and therefore its value sustained. This letter of January 1836 is important because it is one of the most detailed in explaining the type of ideas that abounded for relieving the tenants when times were hard. It is also emblematic of the working relationship between tenant and landlord as controlled and directed by the land-agent. More importantly it illustrated once again how the land-agents in a given area would get together and decide between themselves an acceptable level of relief to all parties. Castleman wrote to the Marquis

\textsuperscript{90} Ibid.
I have had conversations with several extensive Land-Agents on the subject and one of them told me that if the rental on the farms on one of his Agencies were not reduced 30 per cent all the tenants would quit.\(^91\)

However in this case Castleman showed his ability to read between the lines for he informed the Marquis that the agent in question was ‘however a considerable Tenant of the same property’.\(^92\) Castleman understood the tenants needed assistance but inferred the above Agent was exaggerating the situation so that he might gain a larger rent allowance. The 1836 strategy was a local solution to a national problem. It revealed the ways a good agent could produce a scheme which both relieved the tenants and was simultaneously of benefit to the estate. Under Castleman’s plan not only were the tenants given an allowance against their rent but the whole scheme was aimed at keeping the labourers in employment. The in-depth detail provided by this correspondence is rarely found in the secondary literature but this level of information provides a local reaction to financial distress. If un- or under-employment became a problem the poor rate would need to be increased putting further financial pressure on the tenants. Almost every year up until 1836 different groups of farmers faced economic hardship and this varied according to weather, the national price of produce and devastation caused by disease. Little research has been carried out on the individual schemes of relief, Castleman and the other agents within the locality simply reacted to conditions as they occurred. Further micro-studies are needed in order to ascertain how these varied from area to area or even estate to estate and will in time provide further evidence of agent networks and cartels. This area of research reveals considerably more about landowner/tenant partnerships in practice than any other section of the archive. During periods of financial hardship the tenants had a tendency to dismiss their labourers and Castleman believed in the long term this had a detrimental effect as they looked to the parish for relief and put pressure on the poor rate.

**Poor Rate**

The poor rate was levied in most places on the immovable property within a parish and included: land, cottages, gardens, shops, inns parish houses and other buildings.\(^93\) Englander advocated that because the rate was set by individual parishes there was little

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\(^91\) D/ANG/B/48 Letter written 17 June 1835 by William Castleman.

\(^92\) *Ibid.*

uniformity, regularity or fairness in the assessment. In agricultural areas, poor relief was administered by the parish vestry. This consisted either of all the ratepayers in the parish and known as an open vestry or a smaller number of 5 to 20 ‘substantial householders’ who had been nominated by the other ratepayers called a select vestry. A landowner who rented out his land rather than occupying it was generally not a ratepayer and therefore not part of the vestry. The makeup of the parish vestry could have a substantial impact on the amount of relief in rural areas. A large percentage of the ratepayers stood to profit from the payment of outdoor relief to their able-bodied labourers. Underwriting relief through this system meant that taxpayers who did not employ labour for example shopkeepers, artisans and family farmers subsidised those who did. It was in many circumstances within the rural community it was more cost effective for labour-hiring farmers to pay those workers affected by seasonal employment in poor relief rather than wages as this was supported by the entire body of parish ratepayers rather than just the individual.

The size of each ratepayer’s contribution was determined in most cases by ‘the annual value of lands and tenements occupied’. The initial assessment was usually levied on all parishioners whose rateable value was above a given minimum generally somewhere between £1 and £5. Boyer has acknowledged that the share of the poor rate paid by labour-hiring farmers is hard to determine because the data simply does not exist. However in some cases it is possible to reconstruct the information from the parish poor books. Boyer contended that labour-hiring farmers were the wealthiest occupiers in most agricultural parishes. Thus their contribution to the poor rate can be predicted by assuming that all ratepayers with a property value larger than a given amount hired labour. Historians have conjectured that families could farm around 30 to 50 acres without employing outside help. The average rateable value which was determined by the parish seems to have fallen into a range of 14s to £1 per acre and this equated to around £21 to £50 per family. Working on parishes in Cambridge, Essex and Suffolk it appears the average share paid by non-labour hiring families was 17.2 - 25.2% and by labour-hiring 74.8 – 82.8%.

96 Ibid.
97 Ibid, p. 96.
The problem with the above methodology is that it may exaggerate the percentage paid by those who hired labour. Most farmers were tenants rather than owners and Blaug decreed that farmers gained or lost on relief spending according to the state of the harvest. Outlay on relief increased when the harvest was poor but the price of grain was at its highest and returns maximised. The opposite being the case when harvests were good. Poor relief thus fluctuated with the income of farmers. It is therefore hardly surprising that most complaints occurred about the ‘onerous burdens of the poor rates’ in years when poor weather actually produced ‘agricultural prosperity’. McCloskey argued that it was possible that landlords frequently paid much of the poor rate by accepting lower rental incomes and thus ensured that farmers were rated at a lower rate than the land was worth. This worked because the rate was levied on the occupier and one paying a smaller rent would be liable for a smaller tax. 

The above historiography of the poor rate provides an important background to the economic and historical perspectives of setting the poor rate. The correspondence of Castleman provides an important case study into land agent involvement in this process. Importantly the tenants turned to him when attempting to appeal the tax levied as did the Marquis. Payment of this rate for a period of six months or more had political significance and was perceived to form part of the right to vote. In 1818 a petition was filed against the election result at Milborne Port and it was claimed that a number of voters swore they had been in possession and paid poor rates for six months and it was proved in fact not to be true and this part of the petition was upheld. In August of the same year due to an enormous increase in the poor rate at Charlton, Castleman was forced in the manner suggested by McCloskey to find ways of making a financial reduction in the taxation of the tenants. He reported to the Marquis that he had let Uphills and Foots farms to Mr Phillips ‘at a less reduction of rent than I expected’ but he was ‘so well satisfied of the prospect of the reduction of the Poors Rates that he has agreed to take them on himself in future’. In 1820 Castleman visited Milborne Port and completed a new ‘poors rule’ and assessed all those who were entitled to be so

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100 D/ANG/B5/23 Minutes of a meeting between William Castleman and William Payne 27 October 1818.
101 D/ANG/B5/32 Letter from Castleman 18 August 1823.
under the ruling of the Quarter Sessions.\textsuperscript{102} The influence of the agent in setting the rate is further illuminated in 1822 when Castleman simply reported ‘I have made a new Poors Rate during my stay at Milborne Port’.\textsuperscript{103}

The tensions of setting the rate in a small nomination borough are evident in a letter written by Castleman in 1826 in relation to Milborne Port. Apparently ‘some evil spirits’ had attempted to ‘excite’ commotion by insisting that stock in trade be assessed to the poor rate. This would have necessitated making enquiries into the private circumstances of individuals and ‘from a desire to keep this place as quiet as possible’ Castleman opposed the measure. Sir William Medleycott another major landowner in the borough had directed his tenants, two of whom were the overseers to withhold their agreement to the rate unless the stock in trade was assessed. Consequently Castleman did not believe the tradesmen would appeal. However if in the future Medleycott was to split his political interest from the Marquis’s the voters would no longer support him as most of those who lived in the vote houses were involved in trade. One bonus of Castleman’s actions in this case was an increase in his own popularity and he stated to the Marquis

\begin{quote}
I know that I never was, and from the situation I hold I never can be a very popular character here: but the course I have pursued has received some very distinct marks of approbation.\textsuperscript{104}
\end{quote}

Both the tenants and the Marquis would appeal when necessary against the valuations assessed. In 1823 Rob Davis of Yenston Farm sought Castleman’s assistance in trying to obtain a reduction in his poor rate. Davis was described in the correspondence as an ‘industrious and … good a Farmer on any on your Lordship’s Property’. Castleman testified that the old poor’s rate was ‘palpably unjust’ and after attempting to get it reduced had been forced to give the churchwardens and overseers notice of appeal. In consequence of the hearing a new rate was set by a local land surveyor but was not lowered to a rate Castleman considered satisfactory and subsequently the overseers had raised the valuation on the Marquis’s land. He believed that another appeal was justified but in this case the cost should be borne by Davis himself. It was discovered on enquiry that Davis had signed a vestry resolution agreeing to abide by the changes. However the threat of legal action alarmed the parish to such an

\textsuperscript{102} D/ANG/B5/26 Letter from William Castleman 9 December 1820.
\textsuperscript{103} D/ANG/B5/31 Letter from Castleman 11 May 1822.
\textsuperscript{104} D/ANG/B5/37 Letter from Castleman 5 January 1826.
extent Castleman not only hoped for a successful conclusion on Yenston Farm but also that of Ironwood. In any case Davis’s lease expired at Lady day 1824 and Castleman proposed by taking into account the farm’s other outgoings a reduction in rental and thus a reduction in the poor rate might be sensible. This situation would have the same solution as Phillips and by a similar manipulation of the rent charged the poor rate would be lowered.

The Marquis of Anglesey and other landowners who rented parcels of land were themselves subject to the poor rate as occupiers and in 1838 he himself appealed against the tax levied on the underwood at Handley. Appealing was expensive and would explain why tenants either banded together to spread the cost or just accepted an unfair and higher rate because in the long term this was the most cost effective action. Castleman had advised the Marquis of the cheapest way to pursue a legal settlement of the issues.

If you will take the trouble of perusing the Act of 6th and 7th William 4th C.96.38.6 you will see that the Justices assembled in Petty Sessions have the power vested in them of hearing and determining Appeals against the Poor Rates in their respective Divisions subject to an Appeal to the Quarter Sessions against their decision. An Appeal may therefore at an inconsiderable Expense be heard and decided at the Petty Sessions which are held in this Town and I should rather recommend that course to be taken than to appeal to the Quarter Sessions.

The document for this case although not directly related to the tenantry is important because it illustrated the reasons why appeals occurred and gives an insight into the mentality of the rural community, the Marquis of Anglesey and his agent Castleman. The appeal rested on several factors. Firstly, that he was being overcharged in respect of the underwood. Secondly, the Marquis claimed he was charged on a different scale and at a higher rate than James Piper, Stephen Walsh and other occupiers of Farms. Thirdly he was being charged higher in proportion for his underwood than J. Waddington was for his in the same parish. Fourthly, the rate levied contained no charge or assessment on any person or persons in respect of the ‘Impropriate or Vicarial’ tithes of the said parish. Fifthly, it was declared that a close named Garston Ground, let by Sir Henry Fane and occupied by Mr George Garland had been omitted in both the rate and the assessment. Finally William Parks had been under rated in respect of Woodcotts Farm.

105 D/ANG/B5/23 Letter from Castleman 2 June 1823.
106 D/ANG/B5/54 Letter from Castleman 20 March 1838.
and that the level set was once again on a different scale to that used for Elizabeth Biles and other farms. At the appeal the Churchwardens and Overseers were requested to produce evidence of the present rate and the previous two for the relief of the poor as well as all: books, maps, valuations, terriers, papers and all minute books or record of proceedings from any vestry meeting from 1834 onwards.\footnote{D/ANG/B5/54 Appeal against the poor rate 5 April 1838.} In this instance the appeal was successful and on 20 April 1838 Castleman reported ‘I have the satisfaction to inform you that the Petty Sessions have this morning quashed the Hanley Poor Rate with \textbf{full Costs}'.\footnote{D/ANG/B5/54 Letter from Castleman 20 April 1838.} The poor rate put extra pressure at times on already stretched finances, but the tenants expected the estate to assist in these matters just as readily as they would in terms of impairs and improvements. Although this tax was levied throughout the country the secondary literature on the matter is at times inadequate or scanty at best. More meticulous micro studies would provide a greater idea of the variation of rate and its administration within rural communities and add greater knowledge to the financing of poor relief at the local level. Castleman was not necessarily popular but he was above all the Marquis’s representative and therefore expected to act on the tenant’s behalf where and when necessary on their behalf. The best illustrations of landowner and tenant relationships can be found through the examination of repairs and improvements on the estate.

\textbf{Repairs and Improvements}

Landlords generally established over a period of many years a working relationship with their tenants. The nature of this association has been portrayed as ‘relaxed, interesting and encouraging’ .\footnote{T. W. Beastall, ‘Landlords and Tenants’, in G. E. Mingay (ed.), \textit{The Victorian Countryside Vol. II} (London, 1981), p.428.} However on the Marquis of Anglesey’s Dorset and Somerset estate this rapport had to be fostered through his agent Castleman who acted as his personal representative. Absenteeism on behalf of the landowner was not necessarily harmful to either the estate or the tenants. Many aristocrats held scattered holdings and the difficulties of travel on poor roads meant that outlying estates would only be visited occasionally if at all.\footnote{Beckett, ‘Estate Management’, p. 592.} Research by Beckett in Cumbria has revealed that absenteees would often ensure that the properties they were least likely to call on were put into the hands of men who would manage then efficiently and profitably.
The landlord tenant partnership was unified and exemplified within the execution of some of the more laborious improvements especially drainage, land clearance, marling and repairs.\textsuperscript{111} At the commencement of Castleman’s agency in 1814 the estate was in a poor state of repair and in 1815 he stated ‘I am sorry to say the farms are in a shocking state’ of repair.\textsuperscript{112} The late nineteenth and early twentieth century agricultural writer C. E. Curtis had declared

\textit{Repairs} are always a difficult subject … But it may be noticed that the basis of the contract should always be that the premises are in good and tenantable repair at the time of entry by the tenant and the liability undertaken by him should be worded in accordance with this assumption.\textsuperscript{113}

William Castleman during the early part of his agency ordered the preparation of ‘field books’ for the entire estate. He suggested these would ‘show the quality & actual state of every field in hand on the whole property, the number & kinds of stock kept on each farm with observations for the alterations & improvements’ of buildings and land.\textsuperscript{114} Furthermore it was intended that these books would be updated annually. As a result of Castleman’s observations in 1818 a survey was undertaken and a detailed list of repairs drawn up. The only schedule which appears to have survived is that which pertained to Robert Davis at Yenston Farm. It divided the work required between Davis and the estate. In reality there is little difference between either landlord or tenant requirements. Both entailed an amount of thatching and the repair of walls, and roofs in order to put both the farm and its buildings into a decent state of repair. Altogether the Marquis expended some £41 12s 8d. It is assumed that agents in the past had neglected the estate’s responsibilities for the schedule stated ‘When the repairs have been done … as stated the whole of the Marquis of Anglesey’s Covenant in the lease of Yenston Farm will be fulfilled’.\textsuperscript{115} By 1822 the majority of the work on the estate which had been outstanding appears to have been completed and Castleman wrote in his report that the repairs on all the farms were in general ‘satisfactory’.\textsuperscript{116}

The landowner was recognised as the chief provider of capital for improvements in the nineteenth century and under drainage was seen as perhaps the most important.

\textsuperscript{111} Wade Martins and Williamson, ‘The Development of the Lease’, p. 127.
\textsuperscript{112} D/ANG/B5/16 Letter from William Castleman 22 May 1815.
\textsuperscript{114} D/ANG/B5/23 Letter from William Castleman 7 March 1818. The field books do not appear to have survived and there is no indication from the correspondence that they were regularly updated
\textsuperscript{115} D/ANG/B5/25 Schedule of repairs at Yenston Farm 1819.
\textsuperscript{116} D/ANG/B5/31 Report on the General State of the Tenants, Disbursements and Repairs 18 April 1822.
Lord Ernle had argued that it was the panacea for most of the problems experienced by both arable and pastoral farmers. Heavy un-drained land was difficult to cultivate in wet seasons, the growing season was shorter, it quickly became overgrown with ‘moisture loving’ plants which stole important nutrients, it checked the growth of grass, had a tendency to become water logged. Expensive manure or fertilizer was rendered ineffectual if applied to wet land as it quickly became too diluted to be of any benefit. More importantly as 1829 proved in Dorset saturated pastureland could prove injurious and fatal to feed stock off. Wet summers in the south caused problems not just in terms of poor quality hay and crops it had a disastrous effect on livestock particularly sheep. Long periods of warm damp weather provided the perfect breeding conditions for the small water snail *Lymnaea Truncatula* the host of the liver fluke. When sheep are grazed on infected land they ingest the snail, while cattle might be affected it is the sheep that in the main fail to thrive and mortality occurred in high numbers.

Drainage it was argued by Chambers and Mingay formed one of the chief tenets of the agricultural revolution. Kerridge refuted the impact of drainage and stated that it was of ‘limited application’ and maintained that trench drains were an old idea. The bottoms of this type were typically filled with brushes, brushwood, stones or cinders and then covered with turves. The ridge and furrow system of ploughing had always acted as a simple form of drainage funnelling the water in a chosen direction. Most historians are in agreement that field drainage could not be advanced until a new method of producing cheap and effective drain pipes and tiles had been perfected. Phillips stressed the importance of this invention was best assessed in terms of the amount of land drained. Considerable academic debate on the issue of quantifying the number of acres drained has produced great variations with the lowest figure around three million and the highest around fourteen million acres.

Even after draining had been recognised as an improvement where the landlord should shoulder a substantial percentage of the cost, the amount expended was dependent on either the financial buoyancy of the estate or the sum an individual owner was prepared to invest. On the Buccleuch estates in 1804 when drainage was first mentioned in the accounts allowances were granted to the tenants for half the costs.

From 1822 onwards changes meant the estate now provided half the outlay spent on draining materials and the labour was found by the tenants, both systems remained in use until the 1880s. A similar mixture of shared expenses was found on the Marquis of Anglesey’s Dorset and Somerset estate. The vouchers contain numerous allowances made to the tenant farmers in relation to under-draining with costs being deducted from their rent. In 1831 on land around Stalbridge the estate spent £740 on turf-draining, the quarrying of stone for benching, the construction of open carriers and back ditching. The style of these projects reflected the types of drainage described by Kerridge. However the best illustration of a landowner-tenant partnership for this type of improvement was through an indenture made between the Marquis and Ralph Ironside which was executed in 1820. The contract ordered that Ironside was ‘to forthwith effectually drain the said Bradford Leaze in a proper and incontrovertible measure’. It included precise sums to be paid for certain aspects of the work. For example Ironside was to ‘dig the carriers’ at ‘eight pence per Grad’, the small work ‘at two pence farthing per Grad’ and for the underground drains’ he was to receive a further ‘eight pence per Grad’. The aim of the project was to drain the springs which arose in the hills surrounding the Leaze in order to effectively drain the lower ground (Fig 7). The agreement stated that the work undertaken was to be of sufficient strength that the cattle when passing over the structures would cause no harm. On completion of the exercise Ironside was to be recompensed with an additional ten pounds for his labour. A number of vouchers have survived for this arrangement and Ironside in fact received a total of £91 18s 0d. Other expenses included a payment of £4 12s Od to John Spencer for keeping the cattle who usually resided on the Leaze. John Custard was paid £2 for ‘measuring the open and underground draining and drawing the leading carriers to the principle springs’. Finally Cridling (the mason) was remunerated for himself and a boy to draw up the large cover stones to go over the top of the large carriers. The Marquis consented to pay for all the stone and other materials necessary to construct the carriers and the drains, this included bearing the cost of carriage. Further evidence of the amounts the estate expended on drainage can be found with the estate vouchers and within this thesis are dealt with separately in chapter 7.

121 D/ANG/B4/54 Estate Vouchers for 1831.
122 D/ANG/B5/26 Drainage Indenture made with Ralph Ironside 21 February 1820.
123 D/ANG/B4/45 Vouchers for 1821.
124 Ibid.
The indenture between the Marquis and Ironside is an important document for two reasons; firstly it provides a clear historical perspective of the landowner/tenant relationship in practice. Although it was written approximately a decade after the Buccleuch schemes had been operational there are many similarities in the way in which the finances and labour are supplied. This would suggest that landowners understood their part in drainage schemes and that this attitude was national rather than local or regional. Although Chambers and Mingay have declared drainage an integral part of the agricultural revolution this phenomenon was not the driving force on this estate. In fact because of the Marquis of Anglesey’s personal poor financial situation the evidence suggests that drainage was carried out to make the estate more viable by allowing the meadows and pastures to be used for longer periods. After a close study of the vouchers and correspondence the only materials that seem to have been used are those which the estate could produce.

Drainage is usually discussed in terms of under-ground projects. Phillips argued that under draining was an agricultural technique which was used to improve the condition of soil or crop production. Its overall aim was to remove the surplus water from the soil.125 Large parts of the estate were low-lying and in 1830 Castleman sought an Act of Parliament to divert the course of the Cole and Stour rivers. The previous bill had failed because Castleman against his better judgement had been persuaded to accept a more southerly diversion of the Stour. He had noted that when Flaw of Nyland had thrown the mud out of the Stour on the section adjoining his land there was a marked difference during the ‘late wet season’.126 In 1829 Castleman employed a surveyor to investigate the damage caused by the recent floods and to estimate the ‘expediency’ of extending the existing drainage. Flooding continued to be a constant problem and for the third time in 1830 the majority of the hay and after grass had again been destroyed. William reported to Sanderson the agent in chief

I am in great hopes that the Drainage will be effected by a Legislative Enactment in the next Session … the Measure is of great Importance as the Tenants who have property adjoining the Rivers Stour & Cale have been the greatest sufferers, not only by the loss of Stock but by the loss of their Hay… On Courtney’s Farm alone 25 Acres of Land were totally unproductive last year.127

126 D/ANG/B5/41 Stour and Cole Drainage 1829.
127 Ibid.
This second scheme is not a landowner/tenant partnership but instead was the estate seeking to improve the lives of its tenants, taking its responsibilities seriously. This chapter has sought to explore a number of social and economic themes which affected all those who lived and worked within the estate. The surviving correspondence of Castleman has afforded a unique and rarely taken historical perspective of the day to day management of this estate.

Map of Bradford Hill Showing the Springs to be Drained\textsuperscript{128}

\textsuperscript{128} D/ANG/B4/45 Estate Vouchers for 1820.
Conclusion

The tenant farmers formed an essential component of the rural community. At the centre of all relationships within the rural community stood the land agent and on this estate and elsewhere he played a pivotal role in balancing socio and economic conditions and relationships. Castleman acted as intermediary between the tenants and the Marquis of Anglesey and sought his advice particularly when they required financial assistance. The fragility of relationships within the rural community was illustrated by the incident at Hanley Court in 1819. This proved that the tenants and other members of the rural community were prepared to riot when they felt unfairly treated or their rights threatened. Historians have argued that a substantial proportion of an agent’s time was absorbed by their dealings with the tenants. To a certain extent this was true, but even within this sphere there were a myriad of tasks, it was not simply a case of collecting the rent on Audit day. One of the biggest challenges Castleman faced was the financial problems of the Marquis himself, yet he still had to balance, repairs, rent rebates, election costs and improvements where necessary.

Mingay and other economic historians have argued that the agricultural revolution brought about changes to farming practice which set out to increase farming efficiency.129 Agricultural changes have always been slow but this estate does not appear to have been effected by this phenomenon. The estate was in a dire state at the beginning of Castleman’s agency and immediate measures were put in place to remedy the situation. Improved drainage was an essential improvement especially when the financial costs of the ‘coathe’ are analysed. However the methods used are not of expensive modern tile drainage. Despite the Marquis’s personal problems the estate were more than willing to share the cost of undertaking these schemes and the Ralph Ironside indenture is an emblematic example of a landlord/tenant partnership. Further evidence of the help and assistance afforded by the landowner were illustrated in 1836 when the estate allowed a ten per cent rebate on rent. Arrears were allowed to accrue throughout the period studied and tenants only evicted had reached a level at which there was no possible chance of them being redeemed. There can be little doubt that the

Marquis attempted to protect and sustain his tenants in times of hardship, although it was Castleman who designed and enforced any schemes.

Historians have discussed in detail the perceived changing tenurial patterns of the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries and yet in this remote corner of Dorset leases continued to be issued right up until the sale of the estate in 1854. Much of their survival is probably the work of Castleman who perceived the legal framework which they provided as an essential form of both estate and tenant security. Castleman was succeeded by his two sons who continued his working practices. Clay argued that the west of England rented its land in a different pattern to the rest of the country. On this estate the Marquis disliked the system but appeared to be guided by his agent who was after all his representative in the locality. Castleman used the various clauses he had inserted to ensure the tenants adhered to their agreements and would readily revert to the courts when circumstances.

It would be fair to surmise that the Anti-Corn League’s typical farmer being a servile retainer or ignoramus is far from the truth. The tenants in Dorset and Somerset survive despite the difficult farming conditions of the early nineteenth century. The hostile letters received by Castleman demonstrate the agent’s unpopularity at times, but unless many have been destroyed it is testament to his people handling skills that they were so infrequent. This archive is a rich source of the exchanges which occurred between the differing strata of the rural community. It seeks using a previously under-researched archive and area of England to ascertain how these worked in practice. This estate suggests that the impact of an assertive and efficient agent could work well for both the landowning classes and the tenants. The Marquis trusted Castleman to make sound business decisions because above all else it was his responsibility to guarantee profitability, the tenants were an important part of this process. This micro-study has provided vital new information into the workings of the rural society and it is hoped will provide a base on which a larger study can be based.

Chapter 4
The Agricultural Labourer and the Rural Labouring Poor

This aim of this chapter is to explore and examine the socio and economic aspects of the agricultural labourer on the Marquis of Anglesey’s Dorset and Somerset estate. Previous studies have investigated the tenants and labouring poor as two separate entities but this thesis suggests that both groups were deeply intertwined and reliant on each other. One of the most influential and comprehensive works on the village labourer was written by the Hammonds but this concentrated on enclosure and the last labourer’s revolt or the Swing riots. However this is a simplistic approach, and the difficulties experienced by the labourers had a variety of causes many of which were uniquely local in origin. The poverty experienced by the labourers Digby argued remained hidden behind a certain ‘quaint rusticity’ which induced nostalgia rather than an urgency to put into place remedial solutions. However in Dorset The Times newspapers published a number of articles and letters which emphasised the plight of the labouring poor within the Dorset countryside. The county became synonymous with poor living conditions and low wages. An expanding population and a shortage of employment were the over-arching difficulties during the first half of the nineteenth century. Statistics suggest that for every three people living in England in 1781, there were four in 1811. Under- and un-employment became acute, particularly in the more rural areas. Horn argued that despite the growth of industry and especially canal building which employed large numbers of subsidiary tradesmen, the number of people involved in agriculture continued to rise in the first half of the nineteenth century. In 1801 about 35 per cent of the population were employed in an agrarian capacity but this was in reality represented a fall of around 10 per cent over the preceding three decades, but because the population had expanded this figure still equated to a rise. In 1831 761,348 families worked the land compared to 697, 353 twenty years earlier. In the south it was not until the second half of the nineteenth century that rural areas witnessed a general decline in the numbers of agricultural workers.

During the eighteenth century English society had been grouped according to ranks and orders rather than classes. Categorization of society began to change in the latter decades, particularly amongst those who constituted the middling orders. Class as a general concept began to work its way into everyday usage. By the beginning of the Victorian Age the separation of communities into this form of grouping had become the accepted norm. However the use of this phraseology soon had other connotations as the idea of ‘social class’ became associated with radical reformers, political struggle and class conflict. During the nineteenth century it became common place to use the term peasantry as a derisory way to describe the English ‘rural working population’. Snell argued that this was enigmatic considering it was during this period that any remaining rights to the land were finally extinguished.\footnote{K. D. M. Snell, *Annals of the Labouring Poor: Social Change and Agrarian England 1660-1990* (Cambridge, 1985), p. 8.} Cobbett maintained that ‘Country Gentlemen’ had taken it upon themselves to consider the labouring classes as a distinct and separate caste. The peasantry he declared was a French word meaning ‘Country Folks’. However in France, Germany and Flanders it also defined a distinct and degraded class of persons who could not personally presume to be of the same class or society as the gentry or aristocracy and who were always to be kept in their proper place. England followed this lead and it became fashionable to view the labouring classes in this light.\footnote{Ibid.} Although the labourers do not necessarily appear by name within this archive they are nonetheless present.

This chapter will seek to consider the status and experience of the agricultural labour through five widely defined themes. Firstly it will explore agricultural wages particularly in the light of tenant distress. In particular it will examine the impact of women’s income on family standards of living. Secondly it will conduct an examination of the economy of makeshifts and investigate the estate’s contribution to poor relief. Thirdly, it will investigate other forms of employment other than agriculture that were available within the estate. Fourthly it will study forms of protest before 1830 before considering the Swing riots which brought the poverty stricken state of the labouring classes to the attention of the ruling elite. The latter part of this chapter will in effect undertake a case study of how the riots affected the estate and the steps taken by Castleman to maintain control. Although there has been extensive research on the labouring poor and the ways in which relief was organised, this study is more unusual.
because the corpus of knowledge for this analysis comes from an estate archive rather than parish or Poor Law union records. It will make little if any reference to poor relief through either the Old or New Poor Laws but instead will review the part played by the patronage of a large landowner in relieving the tenants upon his own land. However in order to understand how the economy of makeshift fitted into the overall pattern of relief it has been necessary to include both poor laws in the general discourse. It will use the correspondence and estate vouchers of the Castleman family as the prism through which this study will be undertaken. One of the biggest areas of debate which continues to relate to the agricultural labourers concerns their pay and thus this chapter will begin by exploring wages.

**Agricultural Wages**

There is no doubt that farm labourers’ wages varied from county to county and region to region. The poor were a highly mobile section of the population. Characteristic of the economy at this time was both seasonal and widespread under- and un-employment, as well as sporadic economic depressions. As the population expanded work in non-industrialised regions could be hard to find. In the mid-eighteenth century there was originally a disparity of wages between the northern and southern counties but Daunton has proposed this differential became smaller in the latter part of the century as the north caught up with the south. The wages of northern labourers continued to forge ahead as the south moved into a period of stagnation. Industrialisation in the northwest had led to a changed economic environment. Perhaps more importantly for those who continued to be employed in agriculture it changed the manner in which farmers formed contracts with their labourers. Hobsbawn and Rudé contended the labourers were divided into two distinct groups ‘labourers’ and ‘servants’ the former being hired by the day and the latter by the year. In terms of pay those who were employed on a yearly basis often found themselves better off than those who worked for a daily rate. Men who looked after stock were frequently better paid than labourers who worked in the fields. The best paid were people with a special skill such as expert hedgers or ditchers.

Adam Smith had assumed that real wages rose in England during the course of the eighteenth century but was pragmatic about the long term realities of the situation. He was not overly optimistic about the future security of the labouring classes because

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in England as else where ‘the demand for men, like that of any other commodity, necessarily regulates the production of men; quickens it when it goes too slowly and stops it when it advances too fast’. Thus real wages only increased when capital rose at such a rate that the demand for labour could not match the numbers required. This scenario is illustrated by the developing patterns of the north south divide at the beginning of the nineteenth century. In this instance demand for labour was considerably higher in the north as industrialisation became concentrated in urban areas and particularly in factories and workshops. As a consequence any surplus labour released from the land could readily find alternative employment. In areas which developed a manufacturing base substantial numbers of men were needed in ancillary industries which included coal, water power, the development of a transport infrastructure and machine construction. Capital was invested in these areas and economically they grew at a phenomenal rate, while in the south investment declined, or moved into non-industrial sectors such as inn-keeping or land. Daunton has produced a table which correlated the weekly wages of those involved in agriculture between 1767 and 1870 and illustrated how the differentiation of wages between north and south changed in the period just before and during that under discussion here (Table 3).

**Weekly Wage Rate for Agricultural Labourers**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1767-70</th>
<th>1794-5</th>
<th>1833-45</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Buckinghamshire</td>
<td>8s. 0d</td>
<td>7s. 4d</td>
<td>9s. 10d</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Norfolk        | 8s. 0d  | 8s. 1d. | 10s. 7d.
| Dorset         | 6s. 9d  | 8s. 3d  | 7s. 10d |
| Lancashire     | 6s. 6d  | 10s. 1d | 12s. 5d |
| Northumberland | 6s. 0d  | 10s. 3d | 11s. 9d |
| Dunbartonshire | 7s. 0d  | 10s. 6d |
| Aberdeenshire  | 6s. 0d  | 9s. 6d  |

Table 3

At a meeting in Stalbridge immediately after the Swing riots in 1830 the Reverend Yeatman stated he had been informed that upward of sixty people in the area were either unemployed or employed at inadequate wages with around twenty-five to thirty

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per cent earning as little as 2/6 per week. This would suggest that in this part of Dorset wages were far lower than any historian has ever previously supposed.

During the war years employment in the rural community had in the main increased often as a result of the breaking up of the commons and wastes bringing more land into cultivation and during the years of high prices produce was often sold to the labourers at either a fixed price or below market value. However towards the war’s end when prices began to fall farmers more often than not cut their labourers’ wages to keep production costs down. The first two decades after 1815 witnessed a fall in the percentage of land under the plough and this helped to increase under- and unemployment. Armstrong argued that the ‘shock effects’ of peace quickly wore off, but, farming took around forty years to fully recover. The number of men serving in the armed forces had masked the extent of the population increase and their discharge added to the increasing distress.

It is occasionally necessary to look beyond the estate archive to gain a complete insight into some aspects of the rural community. One of the best external sources is The Times newspaper. In August 1826 an article was published relating to the state of the poor in Stalbridge, it reported ‘two hundred women and girls are engaged, at extremely low wages, for the silk-throwsters at Sherborne, and the rest are principally labourers in agriculture’. The silk trade had been in decline since the start of the Napoleonic Wars when supplies from Turkey had been cut off. However the above letter was probably written in the wake of the passing of an Act of Parliament ‘to repeal the Law relating to the Customs’ by which the importation of wrought Silks is prohibited [and] will, from and after the fifth day of July next be repealed’. In the same year Castleman sent a petition to parliament on behalf of the silk workers and the accompanying letter he sent to the Marquis stated

It seems impossible that the alterations in the principles of our trade projected by Ministers and approved by Parliament can be carried into execution without inconvenience to particular branches.

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10 D/ANG/B5/42 Letter from the Reverend Yeatman 2 December 1830.
14 House of Commons Parliamentary Papers Online 7 Geo. IV. Sess. 1826 accessed 06.08.2014
15 D/ANG/B5/37 Letter from William Castleman relating to the Silk Trade 17 February 1826.
However the Marquis did not support the petition because Castleman concluded ‘The Parish are aware that your Lordship will not engage to support the ….petition’. Sad whether the results of his efforts worked or failed they are not recorded in the record.

*The Times* claimed that the acreage of the parish was estimated to be around 4,600 acres and ‘generally of excellent quality’ and capable of supporting at least three times the number of people who resided in the parish. Despite this the majority of the population were ‘extremely poor and wretched’. The greatest grievance in the parish was the low rate of wages paid to the ‘poor labourer’ and fuel was expensive. Women and children who picked wood from the hedges frequently found themselves reprimanded and fined at the petty sessions. A letter to the editor in May 1829 firmly put the blame for the labourers’ poverty on the greed of the tenant farmers and the extortionate price they charged ‘the poor men’ for land on which to grow vegetables. It was alleged they stated ‘We could make more by growing a crop of Lent corn’. The poor were thus driven to the ‘pay board’ where a ‘miserable pittance is doled out to them’. Manufactories were supposedly discouraged because these encouraged the labourers to become too independent. There is no doubt that for much of the period covered by this thesis the labourers on the estate lived in dire poverty, however, as will be seen in the following section the estate formed part of the make shift economy and provided a measure of poor relief to those most in need.

**Relieving the Poor and the Economy of Makeshifts**

This thesis straddles the end of the Old Poor Law and the beginning of the New in 1834. King proposed that great differences existed between what the state ‘thought’ should be provided in terms of welfare and what actually happened. He argued that by 1850 there had been some 264 general acts and more than 100 local acts all of which concentrated on the poor and the manner in which relief was administered. The main purpose of this legislation was to enable change to take place. Rather than focusing on specific attributes of the welfare system which would have simply adjusted the existing laws they contained new measures and ideas. In some respects research into poverty in

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17 *The Times*, 29 August 1826.
18 *The Times* 1 May 1829.
recent years has tended to concentrate on the provision of parish poor relief.\textsuperscript{20} Within the estate the relief provided by the Marquis intertwined with the concept of ‘the economy of makeshifts’. Tomkins and King have argued that the phrase ‘the economy of makeshifts’ is now an understood terminology between historians who wish to ‘stress’ the unequal and incongruent nature of income for poor households. It is related to the experiences of poor people themselves rather than literate accounts of poverty or the bureaucracy which surrounded poor relief.\textsuperscript{21} There is ample evidence to suggest that the Marquis actively participated in aiding the poor and was in fact renowned for his benevolence but references to either the old or new poor laws are absent. Williams proposed the economy of makeshifts included a ‘diverse range’ of other sources which helped to contribute towards the income of the poor. Research into the types of poor relief has in the main failed to address the amounts expended by large landowners on those who resided within their estates and this chapter will seek to explore the benevolence of the Marquis of Anglesey. Castleman’s correspondence will again add new and different dimensions to understanding the ways and means through which the labouring poor gained relief and add further depth to our knowledge of the makeshift economy. This thesis will concentrate on the various schemes and ruses which the estate used to keep the labourers in work or help relieve those in distress.

Digby proposed that rural philanthropy consisted of two main elements, endowed charity which was generally the product of past generosity in the form of bequests and voluntary charity or contemporary private benevolence. The commonest form of endowed charity came in the form of doles and although the charity commissioners attempted to put these to more educational uses, payments in the shape of coal, clothing, blankets, bread, meat or money continued. It was argued that this type of charity was indiscriminate and did not necessarily reach those who needed it most. Private benevolence was different; its aims were firstly, to raise the ‘moral character’ of the beneficiary, increase self-respect and aid the move towards self-sustainability. Secondly those who gave in this way exercised a ‘moral discipline’ because they chose how much was donated and where this money was spent.\textsuperscript{22} The Marquis of Anglesey’s

\textsuperscript{21} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{22} Digby, ‘The Rural Poor’, p. 594.
contribution does not fit into any of these categories and little previous research has been carried out which has studied the effect of the landed estate on poor relief.

The Speenhamland system of relief exerted considerable influence. Under this arrangement allowances were granted as an added supplement to wages. It was first used in the Berkshire town of the same name in 1795 by the magistrates in response to a number of bad harvests and resultant high prices. They concluded that agricultural wages should be augmented with poor law allowances that were based on the price of bread and size of family. This policy was described by Englander as ‘rates in aid of wages’ and was sanctioned by Parliament in 1796. Thereafter it became common practice in the southern counties.23 One of the best examples of how this worked in Dorset before Swing comes from the Sturminster Division and a letter written to the Reverend Yeatman (Table 4).

Scale in the Sturminster Division for regulating the Allowance of Parochial Relief to the Poor according to the Price of Bread

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>When the standard Quarter Loaf is sold at</th>
<th>d</th>
<th>d</th>
<th>d</th>
<th>d</th>
<th>d</th>
<th>d</th>
<th>d</th>
<th>d</th>
<th>d</th>
<th>d</th>
<th>d</th>
<th>d</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>20</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The weekly allowance to be made up, including earnings</td>
<td>s</td>
<td>d</td>
<td>s</td>
<td>d</td>
<td>s</td>
<td>d</td>
<td>s</td>
<td>d</td>
<td>s</td>
<td>d</td>
<td>s</td>
<td>d</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>For a labouring man</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>For a Woman or Boy or Girl above 14 years old</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>For a Boy or Girl of 14,13 or 12</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>For ditto 11, 10 or 9</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>For ditto under 9</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.24

In the above table the earnings of a woman having three children under the age of nine are not taken into account. In parishes where fuel was supplied to the poor at a ‘moderate’ rate, the magistrates would make a modest allowance to cover such costs. Evidence of this scheme upon the estate comes not from the estate archives but from The Times which reported that the poor at Stalbridge are ‘extremely poor and wretched,

coming within the Sturminster magistrates’ scale of allowance’. Hobsbawn and Rudé declared that allowance systems became a ‘millstone round the necks of all rural classes in southern England’. The roundsman system was another popular scheme and was the method most often used in the winter months when employment became scarcer. There are various ways in which the scheme was implemented but the basic idea consisted of sending those labourers without work on the ‘rounds’ that is to the various farmers in the parish seeking employment. Any labourers taken on would frequently be paid a much lesser rate than the work was worth. The difference would be made up by the parish. This scheme known as allowances-in-aid-of-wages was almost always attached to this system. Those who managed the poor law in the parish firstly calculated the total wage bill of the parish and the poor rate was set to cover this sum. When a farmer accepted his quota of the unemployed he was then spared from paying part of his rates. It was believed this would encourage employment as the farmers would rather take on more labourers than they really needed rather than pay the extra rates. This made good sense when there was plenty of surplus labour as it frequently cost less than maintaining men on poor relief. There is no evidence this was used on the Marquis of Anglesey’s estate until after the Swing riots.

Englander argued that Malthus’s essay on the principle of population published in 1798 became one of, if not the most important ‘foundational text’ involved in the formation of social policy during the nineteenth century. Malthus firmly believed the Old Poor Law encouraged population growth through its payment of allowances for children for three reasons. Firstly, a married man was guaranteed financial help to support his wife and their children and therefore there was no benefit in remaining single. Secondly, it endorsed bringing children into the world which a man could not hope to support and thus removed any responsibility which the ‘laws of nature’ would have naturally enforced. Finally, the allowances paid undermined the independence of the agricultural labourer. Malthus therefore concluded that the Old Poor Law was in essence a ‘bounty on population’ and was ultimately responsible for the surplus of

25 The Times 31 August 1826.
labour and the problems caused by it in the countryside. Historians have debated the validity of Malthus’s ideas from contemporary papers and birth rates. Some such as Boyer have decided he was correct, while others including Williams have argued that the returns on which these conclusions are based are incredibly problematic, not least, because it is frequently impossible to work out how many parishes in a given area answered governmental enquiries. In Malthus’s view the Poor Laws encouraged: carelessness, extravagance, idleness and insobriety, drunkenness and dissipation. Monies spent on these men and their families took vital resources away from ‘the most industrious and worthy sorts’ and spent them on the lowest and least deserving class. Despite the influential nature of his work it was not in the end the motivating force for change but a rise in the cost of relief and unrest and rural incendiarism in the form of Swing. Rural riots and industrial unrest led to the formation of a Royal Commission and an enquiry into the entire system. Its report was published in 1834 and led to the Poor Law Amendment Act of the same year.

The Poor Law Commission did not side with Malthus in fact it did the opposite and continued in the same vein of the right to relief. However it was decreed this should be both ‘effective and efficient’. Attempts were made to define those who were entitled to seek relief rather than grouping everyone together under the general term of ‘labouring poor’. A distinction was now made between ‘the self-sustaining labouring classes and the recipients of relief or charity’. This latter group was again sub-divided into two smaller groups; the first included the sick, infirm and widowed who were entitled to relief in other words the deserving poor. The second group was made up of the able-bodied under- or un-employed and it was intended that relief for these people should be curtailed to those already receiving it and to prevent those who were not from ever doing so. Under the New Poor Law the Dorset section of the estate became part of the Sturminster Union which was formed of the Sturminster and Stalbridge districts. Owners, overseers and agents looked for ways in which to mitigate poverty through self-help and allotments seemed a suitable solution.

Burchardt proposed that the allotment movement played an important part in rural relations after 1830 but has been neglected as a field of research. He suggested that a large number of accounts detailed the importance of these small plots of land in the survival of labouring families. Farmers he argued were often quoted as being hostile to allotments but in reality the situation was more complicated and the reverse was actually true with many more farmers in favour than previously supposed. Griffiths and Overton take the opposite view and contended that allotment provision was perceived to be an aspect of poor relief and therefore the responsibility of the parish overseers who were not keen to add to their workload. As most were themselves farmers they had no desire to surrender their land or take their labourers away from agricultural work at the most important times of the year or weaken their own positions by giving the labourers a degree of self-sufficiency. Given the importance of the tenant farmers to an estate the landowners and agents reluctance to intervene is hardly surprising. As will be evident from the discussion below, the Dorset and Somerset estate of the Marquis of Anglesey falls more in line with the theories of Griffiths and Overton rather than Burchardt. By 1822 as a result of a sustained period of low agricultural prices a number of the tenants were financially ruined and the farmers began to lay their labourers off. Castleman attempted to lessen the burden on the poor rate by letting a portion of one of the failed farms to the parish overseers. The idea was to portion the land as allotments to some of the more industrious labourers. Those who accepted took them on the condition that they would no longer be chargeable to the poor rates. Similar plans had previously been agreed by the Marquis and carried into effect on his properties in Staffordshire.

The system of allotments implemented does not appear to have been successful, because in 1830 when the Reverend Mason wrote to Castleman and requested for ‘the well-disposed industrious man a certain portion of Land for the employment as well as the support of himself and his family’ be found. Castleman declined the idea and explained that in the past several attempts had been made of this nature and had previously failed. He stated that this had been partly because of the opposition of Lord Anglesey’s tenants and partly because the labourers had mismanaged the land which

34 Ibid.
36 D/ANG/BS/51 Letter from the agent-in-chief to William Castleman 25 April 1822.
37 D/ANG/BS/42.
had been allotted to them. Furthermore he stated that at this particular time Lord Anglesey ‘has not an acre of Land in Hanley that is not under Lease’. Consequently the permission of the tenants would need to be obtained and given their earlier reaction this was not likely to be forthcoming. He also suggested that unless land could be procured near the occupiers’ homes then it was unlikely to be of any value and it would appear this was ‘Land the Tenants [were] most unwilling to surrender’. It is probable that the labourers had little experience in managing a plot of land however small. Given the animosity shown to Castleman by the labourers at Hanley and the closeness of this request to the Swing letter received the month before it is hardly surprising his reluctance to help. However Griffiths and Overton do not provide details of why farmers opposed allotments but this example is illustrative of local tensions in practice.

There were severe penalties for those who falsely claimed destitution or requested help where none was needed. Castleman circulated the below memorandum to try and warn and detract the labourers from falsifying claims (Fig 6)

In periods of extreme economic distress the estate would make one off payments towards the upkeep of the poor as illustrated in 1820

38 D/ANG/B5/42 Letter from William Castleman to the Reverend Mason at Hanley 3 December 1830.
In consequence of your Lordship’s benevolent Instructions expressed in Your Letter of the 23rd January I instantly made remittances towards the Relief of the Poor of the under mentioned parishes which included those alluded to in the Letters afterwards transmitted to me thro’ Mr Sanderson and Mr Lowe

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Parish</th>
<th>Amount</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Milborne Port</td>
<td>£10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Temple Coombe</td>
<td>£5.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Henstridge</td>
<td>£5.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Charlton Horethorne</td>
<td>£10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hanley</td>
<td>£8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bradford</td>
<td>£5.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>£43.15</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Swing had an enormous impact on the estate and in 1836 the plan to relieve the tenants for the first time included the labourers. Details of this scheme have already been discussed in Chapter 3 but the crux of the idea was to find employment for the ‘surplus labourers who would otherwise have been a charge on the parishes’. Castleman had sought to implement this relief scheme quickly wherever the Marquis had property so that it might have most effect when ‘the greatest numbers of paupers were out of work’. It was intended to have a three-fold effect. Firstly, it would materially provide relief to those who were liable to pay the poor rate by stabilising or lowering it. Secondly it would aid the operation of the ‘Poor Laws Amendment Act’ by finding work for the un-employed and therefore ‘keeping the people quiet’ in other words ensuring they did not have any excuse to riot again. Finally Castleman suggested it would induce them by ‘degrees to the great and beneficial change which has been affected by the Poor Law Amendment Act’. This letter appears to express Castleman’s own opinion relating to the new law. One of the problems with poverty and a poor standard of living is that it is easily observable and open to critique.

Other landowners and agents were not above commentating on the state of the labouring poor within the Marquis’s estate as happened with Lord Portman’s agent in 1838 and in his letter to Castleman he stated

I was at Gussage last week receiving the Rents for the Allotments and finding many of the Cottages very destitute of Fuel, I promised them I would endeavour

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39 D/ANG/B5/26 Letter from William Castleman 31 January 1820.
41 Ibid.
to establish a Fuel Fund for them. Lord Portman has agreed to give £5 and his Tenants £1 each and I hope you on the part of the Marquis of Anglesey will do the same, the people are very poor and have no means of picking any up.  

This suggestion hid an ulterior motive and was in reality a case of financial prudence for he continued ‘it is the only means of preventing them from breaking the fences’. The sentiments of the Marquis towards the poor in the neighbourhood are best illuminated by Castleman’s response to this letter which was sent to the agent-in-chief in which he stated ‘I need not I am sure recommend it as I know Lord Anglesey’s kind feeling towards the Relief of the Poor’.  

Despite attempts to alter the state and condition of the poor little seems to have changed and in 1846 a report was published in The Times which described the condition at Stourpaine in Dorset thus.

The first feature which attracts the attention of a stranger on entering the village, is the total want of cleanliness which pervades it. A stream, composed of the matter which constantly escapes from pigsties and other receptacles of filth, meanders down each street, being here and there collected into standing pools which lie festering and rotting in the sun so as to create wonder that the place is not the continual abode of pestilence – indeed the worst malignant fevers have raged here at different times. It may be sufficient to add … that the inside of the cottages in every respect corresponds with the external appearance of the place.

A malignant fever had broken out at Stalbridge the previous year and Edward Castleman noted that ‘No parishes but the poorest have been attacked’. Castleman Junior believed the lack of employment and insufficient support of the labourer may have played some part in the spread of the fever. However there was still a sense that it was in no small part ‘owing to the very dirty habits of the Poor themselves and the neglect by the Waywardens in allowing heaps of dirt, and filth, to accumulate in very many of the back Lanes where the poorest of the Inhabitants reside’. A sentiment reflected in the above extract from The Times a year later. Mortality was high and Castleman Junior recorded that ‘about ¼ of the persons attacked die’. The reaction to the build-up of rubbish was to call upon the waywardens and instruct them to give notice to the offending parties to clear the area up. The task was to be accomplished

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42 D/ANG/B5/54 Extract of a letter from Lord Portman’s steward 11 December 1838.
43 D/ANG/B5/54 Letter from William Castleman 12 December 1838.
44 The Times, June 25 1846.
45 D/ANG/B5/63 Letter from Edward Castleman relating to the fever which had broken out at Stalbridge 14 February 1845.
46 Ibid.
within twenty-four hours and if not the waywardens were to carry out the order themselves. If the rules were transgressed again in the future Castleman Junior stated the ‘offending party’ would be summoned before the Magistrates.

Castleman Junior like his father was no fool and fully understood the problems caused by the lack of employment during the winter months. Whilst carrying out his enquiries at Stalbridge he discovered that six or seven of the men were about to sign on the next day at the Union at Sturminster Newton. Rather than allowing the men to proceed and thus adding to the burden of poor relief Castleman Junior arranged for them to be employed widening the road a move which the waywardens had been seeking to implement. Monies had previously been made available for the cleansing of a water carrier but had not been fully spent and Edward suggested that the rest could be used to clean out Bibberne Brook and the main sewer opened. He felt that this would provide enough work for ‘3 weeks by which time the Farmers will have begun preparing for their spring crops.’ More importantly the order was given to move the privy, the most likely source of the infection from its present place into the garden. Mr Fooks the surgeon had reported ‘that he could hardly remain in the House where the Fever first broke out for the smell which arose from it’.

Parish authorities even in the same county responded to unemployment in different ways. Make work schemes were often provided by local parish authorities but on the Marquis of Anglesey’s estate matters, were not as clear cut for in this case the estate often played a leading role in such efforts. This intervention occurred long before the impact caused by Swing. All the Castlemans utilised a variety of methods and ideas in order to ‘keep’ the poor off the parish. In 1822 the stone quarries at Stalbridge were smitten with fraud despite all the regulations that Castleman had attempted to impose and were instead let to the parish overseers at Stalbridge. This was good value for the estate as they took half the value of any stone raised and sold and the remaining fifty per cent was used by the parish for the relief of the poor. After the Swing riots the estate requested from the tenant farmers a list of the extra men and boys which they could

48 D/ANG/B5/63 14 February 1845.
50 Williams, *Poverty, Gender and Life-Cycle*, p. 140.
51 D/ANG/B5/31 Letter from William Castleman 18 April 1822.
usefully employ and guaranteed the Marquis would meet the extra costs. In 1832 Castleman received an application requesting the estate’s continued support in paying the extra thirty or forty labourers who remained unemployed. However this proved problematic because with falling agricultural prices the tenants had once again begun to turn off the land those labourers whose wages they were wholly responsible for. Consequently the estate decided they were neglecting the proper management of their farms. In the light of this behaviour Castleman did not believe that the Marquis should spend any more of his own monies and turned down the application. Instead he intended to negotiate an agreement with the Overseers for the employment of any surplus labour over the winter in repairing the private roads to the farms which were impassable for much of the winter and parts of the summer. He did not think the cost would be more than £40 or £50. As a result of the problems at Stalbridge with the fever during the winter of 1844-5 Castleman Junior realised the importance of keeping the labourers in work and wrote to the agent-in-chief

It will be desirable however that provision should be made for employing the surplus Labourers during the next Winter & in the course of the Summer I will have prepared & laid before you for Lord Anglesey’s contribution Plans for the purpose.

The estate faced two main problems firstly; raising the poor rate threatened political stability and so the estate tried to find ways to keep this as low as possible. Where this estate differs from the established debate is the mix and match schemes which Castleman put into place. His understanding of the mind-set of the tenant farmer was invaluable in maintaining the fragile relationships which existed within the rural community. Secondly; there was only a small amount of industry to which the labouring poor could turn when agricultural work was unavailable. It is to these alternatives this thesis will now move.

Other Forms of Employment

During the first half of the nineteenth century the estate attempted to set up a number of manufactories. It should be noted that the main aim was not to employ the poor but to increase the number of voters particularly, in the nomination borough of Milborne Port. Castleman stated ‘keeping the increased Population of this place who are friendly to us

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52 D/ANG/B5/42 Letter from William Castleman 7 December 1830.
53 D/ANG/B5/44 Letter from William Castleman 20 October 1822.
54 D/ANG/B5 63 Letter from Edward Castleman to Thomas Beer Agent-in-Chief
fully employed is one of the principal means by which we shall defeat our Adversaries'.\textsuperscript{55} Glove-making, sail cloth manufacture and stone quarries upon the estate all provided employment as did the timber industry. Agricultural wages have already been discussed above but these alternative types of industry contributed to the entire family income especially through the employment of women.

All the members of a labouring family contributed to its income where possible. Family income rarely relied upon a single male bread-winner and it was the group’s income over the year that was important rather than the daily wage rate. Daunton suggested that a ‘crucial flaw’ existed in measuring income because many historians and economists failed to take into account the earnings of women and children. At Corfe Castle in Dorset in 1790 it is estimated that some thirty per cent of the income of a labourer’s family came from this group and in some cases women were earning more than men. The female contribution to income was not always monetary but also came through money saved by making clothes or undertaking other activities which reduced the family’s need to spend on ‘commodities’.\textsuperscript{56} Where women did financially contribute any depression which affected local industries could have a dramatic impact on family sustainability.

This thesis has highlighted the lack of employment in this area of Dorset and Somerset outside of agriculture; and this was true for both men and women. However the contribution made by women to family incomes has in recent years formed part of an on-going debate. Burnette stated that women’s wages were clearly lower than men’s and historians generally accepted that the gap was between one third and one half in favour of male workers no matter the occupation, although, she herself had previously alleged that the difference might be as much as two thirds depending on the work and location.\textsuperscript{57} Berg suggested that women’s wages were determined not by market force but by custom. This meant that whilst women’s wages were almost always lower there were exceptions and in some of the newer industries women’s pay might equal or even

\textsuperscript{55} D/ANG/B5/26 Letter from William Castleman 14 August 1820.
be higher than their male counterparts. However the volatility of wage rates perhaps indicates why men chose to remain with their more traditional forms of employment. The glove industry at Stalbridge was indicative of this problem.

Glove-making in particular employed large numbers of women and could add substantially to a family’s income. In 1820 Castleman wrote to the Marquis with the news that he had nearly completed the arrangement with Mr Ensor ‘a most respectable young man … of Property & who comes highly recommended to me as a Glove Manufacturer at Milborne Port’. Previously the Marquis had authorised Castleman to offer the making of gloves for ‘some Country Regiment’ to a Mr Taylor who had then absconded. It was anticipated the same offer might be transferred to Mr Ensor. However Ensor discovered that the leather used for military gloves was manufactured in a different manner to that generally used in the trade. He prevailed on the Marquis to find more contracts of a military nature which would allow him to produce the correct leather at a competitive price. This business flourished. In 1827 a new agreement was made with the Marquis of Anglesey whereby his rent was reduced to £37 13s 0d per annum on account of Ensor spending £260 erecting a new factory on his premises. At the height of its prosperity gloving employed a large percentage of the population. McKay declared the 1851 listed 181 men, 84 boys, 1200 women and children working in Milborne Port. It is probable the majority of the women were part-timers engaged in ‘outwork’. As this industry predominantly employed women it was an important second income. Gloves were also manufactured at Stalbridge and in 1832 Castleman reported that the women were earning 9/- per week undoubtedly more than many male agricultural labourers.

Another local industry which was established at Milborne Port in 1820 made sail cloths. Mr Plowman was one ‘of the firm at East Cokes’ from whom Lord Anglesey had ordered the sails for his yacht ‘Emerald’ two or three years earlier. It has not been possible to establish the exact relationship between Plowman and the other company or

59 D/ANG/B5/50 Letter from William Castleman 13 April 1820.
60 Ibid.
61 D/ANG/B5/26 Letter from William Castleman 14 August 1820.
63 Ibid, p. 204.
64 D/ANG/B5/44/ 20 October 1832.
whether this new business was a subsidiary or a new enterprise in its own right. Castleman hoped that the Marquis might again use his considerable influence to persuade members of his yacht club to purchase from Plowman and thus ensure his company’s viability. By 1827 the linen trade on the other hand was in a deplorable state, Feaver the tenant of a new mill and factory at Milborne Port had carried his manufactured goods as usual to the late fair at Exeter and could sell no part of them. Castleman found this most extraordinary for the raw material was actually increasing in price. He suspected this was ‘another of the hopeful effects of free trade’.  

The stone quarries produced two types of stone, the higher ground at Stalbridge and Stalbridge Weston sit on forest marble while the lower lying regions contain cornbrash. Under the Castlemans’ agency both types of stone were quarried, however this was a stop and start affair. In 1813 for example the Stalbridge Commissioners took 4,787 loads of stone which was used in the formation of new roads after the enclosure of Stalbridge Common. Fraud was an ever constant problem. In 1836 Castleman believed he had at last found a solution to this problem and reported ‘I had previously adopted several Plans which had never been effectual in preventing frauds but have at last succeeded by the cheques adopted’.  

Elias Duffet was employed as manager of the quarries at Weston and Harpits and had among other things to attend both quarries twice a day, to keep an account of the quantity and quality of stone raised, to know where the stone sold was delivered and at what price and he in turn to had procure the money from the sale. Weekly accounts were to be produced which detailed both the above and included the names of the labourers, particulars of any others employed and the wages paid to each. The labourers were paid weekly and one from each quarry was to accompany the manager to ‘verify and certify’ the account delivered. Castleman stated that a pot load of stone ‘ought to be a ton weight’ and the price fixed to this and care taken that the load did not in any way exceed it. On top of the regular workers Castleman decreed that a few paupers out of employ not exceeding five might be taken on at a ‘pauper scale of wages’. Should this group neglect their work they might be instantly discharged. Castleman though was a shrewd businessman and stated that the

65 D/ANG/B5/39 Letter from William Castleman 7 April 1827.  
66 D/ANG/B5/50 William Castleman 7 October 1836.  
67 D/ANG/B5/50 William Castleman 27 March 1836.
number employed should be monitored so that only the stone which might be required within the year was to be raised ‘so as not to incumber the land’. 68

Timber was a valuable asset to the estate. Not all soils were suitable for tree planting, however by the early nineteenth century many areas which had been previously overlooked were now being considered for use as plantations. In Dorset ash and hazel for coppice were the most widespread. 69 Planting usually took place in the spring and autumn and at the same time any young trees which were dead, dying or diseased were removed. Not all tree plantations were successful and in 1815 Castleman recorded that those at Clifton and Bradford ‘were in a miserable state, indeed there was hardly a living tree’. 70 Early in Castleman’s agency he had noted that the estate had been stripped of so much of its timber that he feared there would soon be insufficient remaining to supply the ‘ordinary repairs’. The estate was far from lenient on those who damaged the trees and timber.

Griffin has opened the debate as to whether tree maiming was in fact another form of rural protest. While this article is an important addition to the historiography of rural history Griffin is a social geographer and this is reflected within this work. In 1723 the passing of the Black Act created more capital offences in Britain than in all other European countries combined. While most of the offences related to hunting and poaching others were new to the statute. These included either cutting down or otherwise destroying any trees planted in ‘any avenue, growing in any garden, orchard or plantation for ornament, shelter or profit’. 71 Tree-maiming Griffin argued has remained almost completely un-researched as an idea. He maintained that the absence of tree maiming in accounts relating to popular protest is hardly surprising for these attacks are rarely recorded and when they are tend to be brief and cursory. Tree maiming played little part in any wider movement. 72 It has been claimed that the taking of woods from ‘parks, woodlands, copses and hedgerows’ was perhaps the most common way in which laws and rights of landed property were invaded. There is some vagueness and uncertainty over whether wood taken from fences and hedges counted as

68 Ibid.
70 D/ANG/85/15, Report from Castleman 14 June 1815.
72 Ibid, p. 95.
It would appear that the Marquis of Anglesey did differentiate between the two crimes and the correspondence in the main deals with tree damage. In fact as will be seen the courts recognised disparity in severity too.

The Morning Chronicle published in August 1826 recorded convictions from the Sturminster Petty Sessions. It stated that on Monday a poor woman had been brought up and charged with taking a stick out of a farmer’s hedge and although she had it in her hand at the time of being apprehended it could not be proven that she had stolen it. She alleged that ‘she was only picking up cow dung for fuel, and had not in any respect plundered the hedge’. The Magistrate summed up

… that to take even these turves away, without leave, was improper. The offence of taking wood from hedges was one of daily and hourly occurrence and ordered the poor woman to pay 1s 2d expenses

At the same Petty Sessions another farmer of the name Applin complained against another woman who was found taking thorns out of his hedge. The defendant claimed that she had picked up the thorns while collecting turves and in any case the amount was not ‘enough to boil a farthing’s worth of milk, but she had not taken them from the hedge’. The magistrate condemned the practice and fined her 6d and the expenses.

In 1819 two men at Stalbridge were prosecuted for cutting down the timber on their leaseholds. When challenged by the estate they insisted that they were quite within their right to carry out such an act. The estate insisted on being compensated and when this was refused Castleman took both men to court and prosecuted. As a result the magistrate ordered the offenders pay £20 costs or face committal to gaol for not less than six and not more than twelve months. The severity of this sentence was reflected in the harsh treatment meted out in 1842 when it was found in the ‘town of Stalbridge ... that many of the trees have been lopped and the Saplings and Bushes in the Park cut down’. It was impossible to determine who had committed the offence and so the Marquis set out to punish the greatest number of people and ordered the immediate withdrawal of his annual donation to the ‘Coal Fund both now and in the future’.

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73 Ibid, p. 102.  
74 The Morning Chronicle Thursday August 3 1826.  
75 Ibid.  
77 D/ANG/B5/59 Notice 25 January 1842.  
78 Ibid.
Timber was a valuable commodity to the labouring classes particularly for cooking and warmth and they might challenge the estate over its ownership. This occurred in 1827 and Castleman described a riotous mob which had assembled to prevent the cutting and taking away of a number of trees at Hanley. The mob claimed that the Marquis of Anglesey had no right to the trees as he was not ‘Lord of the Manor’. In this instance Castleman prevailed on a magistrate by the name of Sir James Hanham to issue a warrant against Adams a man against whom he believed he had sufficient evidence to bring a successful prosecution. Adams was duly convicted but was not conceived to be the ring leader that title was bestowed on one Captain Peyton who had served with the Royal Navy. Adams however was still sentenced to imprisonment. Although Castleman believed ‘Captain Peyton and his party have by their Conduct subjected themselves to an Indictment’ he continued...

…but however deserving they may be of punishment yet, I am not inclined to advise such a proceeding and perhaps as Adams, the Man imprisoned, has a Wife and 4 small Children and seemed truly penitent for his Offence before he was committed your Lordship would not object, after he has remained there about a Month, to consent to his Liberation.\(^{79}\)

In this incidence it was suggested that a certain amount of leniency be allowed, punishment but not to excess. Castleman would have been more than aware of the individual circumstances of everyone upon the estate and it may simply have been that while Adams remained in prison his wife and children were a burden on the parish. They would have continued to be so for as long as Adams remained imprisoned. The above examples demonstrate the different attitudes to wood taken from hedges and the wilful damage to valuable timber. Griffin’s article raises a number of issues but whether tree maiming in any of the above incidents was a deliberate act of protest is somewhat debatable. It is suggested here that many more close textual studies of data within local archives would need to be undertaken to prove Griffin’s theory.

Coppicing was another activity that brought significant funds into the estate coffers although at the time of the commencement of Castleman’s agency this had been handled by the estate itself. William wrote to the Marquis in 1818 stating that ‘the principle of not letting any of the Coppices was established with your Lordship’s concurrence before my Agency’.\(^{80}\) However should there be a change of plan Castleman

\(^{79}\) D/ANG/B5/39 Letter from William Castleman relating to a riotous mob at Handley 14 February 1827.  
\(^{80}\) D/ANG/B5/23 Letter 6 June 1818.
believed it was possible to put in place enough regulations to ensure their proper management. The estate auctioned off the underwood it harvested from these woodlands and in 1827 William commented that at auction this commodity although of an inferior quality to previous years had still fetched a higher price. In a similar fashion the estate prosecuted those who deliberately damaged any of the coppices. In 1828 Duffet was committed ‘to Gaol to Hard Labour’ for the depredations he caused. Working in this area was also dangerous as is proved by the death of the woodman at Clifton who was killed instantly when felling a pollard at Bradford for repairs on the estate. Although the above are some of the alternative industries apparent on the estate it is without doubt a predominantly agricultural community.

These other industries were not sufficient to take up the entire surplus work force during the economic crises of the early nineteenth century. In the period leading up to the Swing riots of 1830 under- and un-employment were a constant factor of rural life during the winter months. No one has managed to ascertain why 1830 was the year that the labourers decided to riot. The majority of historians who have studied these riots in detail suggest that contributory causes abound and vary from locality to locality and region to region. There caused great upheaval and following so close in the wake of the French Revolution a lingering fear that something similar might occur in Britain if the situation was allowed to deteriorate. It is to these riots that this chapter now turns

**Captain Swing**

A large percentage of Castleman’s correspondence for 1830 spans two main themes, distress amongst the tenant farmers and the riots which hit the estate in December. Although Swing is never mentioned in the archive there is no doubt that the two outbreaks of unrest which affected the estate were part of the rioting which occurred across a large swathe of southern England. Although it is more than forty years since Hobsbawn and Rudé’s ground-breaking book Captain Swing was published, the research they started is far from complete. On-going meticulous close textual studies are still adding to our understanding of this event. This thesis will focus its attention on a small geographically bound locality. It will use the contemporary correspondence of William Castleman to explore these riots and their impact on this estate in greater detail.

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82 D/ANG/B5/40 Letter from William Castleman 29 July 1828.
83 D/ANG/B5/15 Report from Castleman 14 June 1815.
Other case studies have investigated the outbreak of unrest through the analysis of the effect on singular counties or as in the case of Jones and Griffin used a thematic methodology. This research takes a different stance to previous enquiries by using the correspondence of a land agent to conduct a detailed micro study of a single estate. Castleman’s prism provides an overview of the reaction of the middle and upper classes; it demonstrated the idiosyncratic nature of the riots and adds new historical perspectives which are at present missing from even the most recent literature. It will focus on Castleman’s intervention both during and after the riots and the steps taken by the estate to return the locality to more settled conditions. It will argue that only by examining Swing at this parish level, will it be possible, to understand the local idiosyncrasies which were responsible for most of the riotous behaviour.

Causes

In the mid-1820s Cobbett had predicted ‘a major rural rebellion’ was coming and by 1828 anticipated this would occur in the winter of 1830-1.\(^8^4\) Other nineteenth century commentators were convinced Cobbett was right but were unable to predict the timing of such an event. Hobsbawn and Rudé concluded that the historiography of the labourer’s uprising of 1830 was not large but renewed interest by Jones and Griffin has expanded the debate considerably in recent years. Despite this recent discussion there is still little or no consensus to a defined set of causes. Hobsbawn and Rudé concluded the riots had a number of contributory factors. They maintained the dreadful condition of the labourers in the south meant all that was required was the right kind of stimulus to overcome his ‘demoralised’ state and to produce the kind of movement witnessed during the Swing riots. They do however stress that the average labourer had become rather passive and a potent incentive was required to produce a reaction. Other triggers included revolution on the continent and political crisis at home which created a mood which encompassed expectation, tension and hope. The ‘Rural Queries’ dispatched in 1832 revealed that local correspondents attributed the riots to a whole variety of causes which included; unemployment or a mixture of distress and unemployment, the antipathy of paupers to overseers, game preservers, threshing machines and the parish system of poor relief.\(^8^5\) Kent suggested that there was ‘no mystery about the causes of the Swing disturbances. They stemmed from the grinding poverty which most

\(^8^5\) Williams, *Poverty, Gender and Life-Cycle*, p. 99.
agricultural labourers faced in southern England. 86 This however seems a somewhat simplistic approach and Jones argued that the protestors did not simply project their wrath onto so general a concept as grinding poverty. 87 He declared that the demands of those who took place in the uprising illustrated their diverse reasons for taking part and this has made it difficult for historians to identify the unifying strands of Swing. 88 The Reverend Mason writing from Hanley Rectory immediately after the riots had no qualms in stating that the chief cause of the riots was ‘undoubtedly the depressed state of wages’. 89 Another contemporary who commented on the causes of the recent unrest to Castleman stated

By this time I hope peace and quietness is once more restored in your County, & that among the sober thinking part of the Inhabitants of Dorset the revolutionary or reforming mania (for with me they are synonymous terms) is somewhat subsiding. 90

It is hardly surprising the difficulty experienced by modern historians in trying to identify the causes of Swing given contemporary writers at the time could not agree.

The Hammonds had argued as early as 1911 that threshing by hand was one of the few kinds of winter work which enabled the labourer to maintain his standard of living just above starvation level. 91 Their research revealed for example that a landowner and occupier near Canterbury had written to the Kent Herald that in his parish where no machines had been introduced there were twenty-three barns and within each around fifteen men would find employment threshing corn until May. It was assumed that each of these men would have a wife and three children so one barn was responsible for the lives of seventy five people. 92 Recent research has suggested that the use of a threshing machine upon an estate or farm tended to move men’s employment from the first to the fourth quarter of the year. The evidence from farms in Hampshire, Norfolk, Nottinghamshire and Shropshire has indicated that there was an increase in the number of boys and females used. The examination of this data implied unemployment

87 Ibid.
88 Ibid.
89 D/ANG/B5/42 Letter from the Rev Mason December 7 1830.
90 D/ANG/B4/54 Letter from William Holden 21 November 1831 and found in the estate vouchers for 1831.
92 Ibid.
in the first quarter fell but only by about seven per cent which cannot be classed as statistically significant. In analysing the figures Burnett reduced the portion of employment in the first quarter by five per cent, which, equated to twenty-three percent of the mean variable. This estimate therefore denotes a substantial increase in unemployment where threshing machines were present. 93 Although the destruction of agricultural machinery and in particular the threshing machine was a focal point of the riots they were by no means the main cause. Snell has supported the idea that Swing was diverse both in terms of causes and its manifestations; although he proposed opposition to the threshing machine was probably its most common feature. 94 Castleman’s correspondence affords a different perspective, it explores the local origins of the riots over a longer timeframe and provides and in depth look at both the long and short term problems faced by the labouring poor. From this archive it is suggested that the basis for Swing originated much earlier than previously thought.

Letters between the Marquis of Anglesey and Castleman inferred that the labour dynamics within the estate changed during the 1820s. A characteristic of the early days of Castleman’s management had been the installation of a number of threshing machines powered by water. By 1814 these formed an integrated part of the fabric of the estate. In August of that year the estate incurred enormous expense when it installed a new threshing machine at Clifton. This appeared to replace an older version and the tenant was not impressed and declared that he ‘would rather have kept his old threshing machine than the new one at £1500 to £2000 expense’. 95 In order for this machine to prove cost effective it has to be assumed that labour at this point in time must have been in short supply. 96 However with the cessation of the war with France and the demobilisation of the armed forces employment had obviously risen. In 1822 action was taken on the estate against the threshing machine at Charlton Horethorne. Placards were put up around the parish and the machine was consequently destroyed

95D/ANG/B5/15 Letter written by William Castleman 13 August 1814.
96This machine in fact proved extremely problematic, Castleman stated ‘I am sorry to add that the Threshing Machine is at present useless’, it failed to thresh the corn clean. The advice taken had increased the friction within the machine to such an extent that it created a fire risk to both machine and barn.
alongside a number of farm buildings. Therefore animosity to this form of mechanisation was by no means new in 1830 and yet little research has been undertaken which explores this type of early rural incendiaryism. In 1824 the threshing machine and barn in which it was housed at Clifton Farm caught fire destroying both. However Castleman did not think it advisable to restore the threshing machine at the present time. Instead he assured the Marquis that the barn when re-built would be large enough to house and connect a new machine to the water wheel ‘in case labour should again become difficult to procure’. As under- and un-employment became more prevalent, the threshing machine was often viewed as one of the main culprits. Not replacing the machine was possibly indicative of the renewed cheapness of manual labour over mechanisation in the post war period.

By the end of the decade the situation had deteriorated even further, another wet summer in 1829 added to the distress of the rural community. Griffin argued that applications for relief had already reached record levels but few were prepared for the severity of the winter that followed. Many agricultural workers and manual labourers were laid off as the ground froze solid. The problem was further exacerbated by a general countrywide economic downturn. A *Morning Journal* extract attached to Castleman’s letter 6 April 1829 revealed how deep the recession had become.

This embarrassment is not confined to one particular department of industry. It pervades all the trading and manufacturing districts of the country. It depresses alike the cotton-manufacturer, the woollen cloth-manufacturer, the iron-smelter, the silk-weaver and all other leading manufacturers of the empire. The resources of the nation are actually paralysed and as the capitalist is pursuing an unprofitable business, the operative is starving from inadequate wages. In fact, more general distress never did prevail.

At Milborne Port and its vicinity Castleman noted the importation of French gloves had forced the owners to reduce their work force to one half. In real terms those workmen who had earned in the past twenty shillings per week would now only earn ten. Jones contended the depression within the glove trade also impacted on the women out-
workers, thus emphasising the precarious existence of the labouring poor. In 1830 the situation was further exacerbated by the outbreak of the ‘coathe’ among the sheep farmers. However a letter written by Castleman raises the question of how much under- or un-employment played in the riots for he declared

I do not believe there are many more Persons out of employ than has generally occurred at this season of the year. In a Parish like that [Stalbridge] consisting I should think of nearly \( \frac{3}{4} \) of Pasture, there is not full employment during the winter for the whole of the Labourers.

The addition of each extra factor obviously increased the chances of some form of protest within the rural community. In the end there did not appear to be a single unifying final catalyst. There appears apart from a common hatred of the threshing machine which was not new and general under- and un-employment to have been few common triggers. This suggests that localised discontent within each region was the main instigator. The small sparks once ignited formed a conflagration which quickly spread and caused great fear and panic amongst the landed classes.

**Was Swing A Movement?**

A large percentage of the recent debate relating to the Swing riots between Jones and Griffin has concentrated on the idea of whether Swing was or was not a movement. Jones proposed that all historians from Hobsbawn and Rudé onwards have tended to treat Swing as the actions of a movement. Despite this consensus, he proposed no-one had sought to define the term. Instead attention had been directed to how individual incidents were concentrated in a given area or highlighted the similarities and parallels which could be drawn. All the documented riots contained references to acts of arson against farmers and other landowners, the breaking up of threshing machines, the demand and collection of ‘doles’, the sending of threatening letters and demands for higher wages and or relief.

Griffin on the other hand advocated that Swing had many of the hall marks of a protest movement. Social movement theorists claimed that protest episodes which took place needed to share the same ideals, have a modicum of structural organisation and a unified understanding of the protest devices available. Upheaval and riot in one area would inspire others to join in, more often than not in the near vicinity. Griffin

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102 D/ANG/B5/42 Letter from William Castleman 4 December 1830.
suggested that the work undertaken by Charlesworth clearly demonstrated how protests in one area provided the inspiration for similar proceedings in another. Griffin disputed Hobsbawn and Rudé’s assumptions that Swing was characterised by a complete lack of organisation for many archives have revealed evidence of criminal gangs, work gangs or pre-existing social groupings which both recruited and pressed local people into protest groups. Social frameworks and customary relationships negated the need for a national body.  

The evidence from the Dorset and Somerset seems to fall between these two ideas. Dorset and the estate were affected by the riots in two main areas. The first covered the eastern plain which stretched eastwards from Dorchester to Wimborne with Bere Regis forming the centre of the area. The second occurred in the north-eastern part of the county. This area passed through Cranborne Chase and Shaftesbury and along the southern boundary of Wiltshire and Somerset. Salisbury was at the centre of one half of the pincer movement which moved through Wiltshire. The Swing riots did not follow any previously witnessed typical pattern. The riots spread and formed, dispersed and reformed. Certainly within the estate there appears to have been no guiding hand to act as co-ordinator. However Mingay had proposed long before Griffin that some semblance of organisation had to exist at least at the local level. It was also significant that many of the outbreaks occurred along the network of main roads in southern and eastern England. When the large numbers of rioters at Hanley are taken into account there has to have been someone who sent out the messages of where and when to meet.

**The Riots and their Aftermath**

The individuality of the riots is apparent in Hobsbawn and Rudé’s account of Swing. In this section it is intended to explore the riots as they occurred through Castleman’s correspondence. This will provide a detailed insight into what took place within two small local areas and will compliment and add to the already existing knowledge. Unlike most previous research this study will use a personal recollection to convey the confusion, worry and concerns felt by contemporaries during this period. Unsurprisingly this centred on what might happen if the riots were not quashed.

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It is unsure from the records as to when Castleman first became aware of the situation in other parts of the country and county. The alarm was first raised at Wimborne on 24 November 1830 when he heard that the mob which had dispersed at Salisbury the previous day had ‘formed different Divisions’ and were now causing ‘great Devastation’. This letter illustrated the great sense of alarm and unpreparedness felt by those running estates where the rioters were active. William stated ‘We are totally unprepared for Resistance having no military or other organised force to oppose them’. Of even greater concern was the worry that the great mass of agricultural labourers could not be relied upon to assist in quelling any riotous activities. The rioting in Salisbury so close to the estate was obviously of grave concern.

Jones recognised that requests for payments or some form of dole whether monetary or in kind was a common element of the Swing riots across the country. The expression of these demands often had a local element and could include the expulsion of parish officials or the destruction of farm machinery. At Handley the rioters certainly demanded both doles and food. However *The Morning Chronicle* on January 14 1831 reported on the Special Commission meeting in Dorset and it detailed the offences of those being prosecuted. John Dore, David Hatcher, James Stacey, H. John Ayles and Robert Pike had demanded and obtained money from the vicar at Stower Provost on this occasion however all were acquitted. At Hanley, James Thick and Robert Zillwood were also tried for obtaining money from Ben Hicks. The prosecutor’s statement declared ‘on cross examination and from the evidence of other witnesses, that it appeared Zillwood behaved in a very civil manner; and Thick appeared to be so intoxicated as not to be perfectly sensible of what he was doing’. Both were again acquitted. These men were lucky for at the same Special Commission others who were found guilty of this crime were sentenced to death.

The estate had been directly attacked at Hanley on 23 November 1830. Hobsbawn and Rudé stated that in this location the rioters were joined by all the labourers from the village and they proceeded to destroy all the threshing machines in

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104 D/ANG/B5/42 Letter from William Castleman 24 November 1830 and Jones, *The Stalbridge Inheritance*, p. 73.
105 Hobsbawn and Rudé, *Captain Swing*, p. 127.
107 *The Morning Chronicle* 14 January 1831.
the vicinity and those of the neighbouring farmers. Castleman however provided an idea of the size of the riot when he stated

… the rioters who visited Hanley were about 60 in Number, … they levied Contributions of money & Provisions on the Inhabitants & destroyed the whole of the agricultural machinery.

Although the information was brief and cursory it implied the extent of the destruction was far more severe than often supposed. Historians have proposed that the riots were a ‘true outburst of machine-breaking’ with no ulterior political motive.

In response to the Hanley riot the tenants and labourers gathered the following day to meet with Castleman’s son Henry. At this meeting it was agreed that the following scale of wages should be paid

- 10/- a week for Common Labourers
- 11/- for Shepherds and Carriers
- 8/- for Under-shepherds and under-carriers from 16 to 20
- 6/- for Stout Lads holding Plough
- 3/- for Boys under 12
- 7/- for men employed wholly on the Parish Account

Consequently the labourers were ‘prevailed on to return to their occupations in the assurance of having their wages increased’. The effectiveness of this idea is debateable for it was understood that those paid under this scheme would not be entitled to receive any form of parochial relief. Those who attended the meeting claimed the sums agreed ‘were not more than are at present naturally received by the Labourers’. The tenants and others could not place any trust in the labourers’ agreement to return to work while other riots continued in the area. Hanley was perceived by Castleman and others as being ‘a very peculiar place’. It formed part of Cranborne Chase which was believed to harbour a nest of ‘Deer Stealers, Poachers, Smugglers & every variety of lawless characters’.

Although the labourers at Hanley had agreed to return to work the estate was still at risk from other groups. On 27 November the Marquis received an anonymous
letter warning that at the ‘Great Market Day’ held at Sturminster Newton the previous Thursday the Magistrates had assembled thinking it would be a good opportunity to swear in the farmers as special constables. Almost to a man they refused citing their high rents had left them nothing to lose and it was not worth taking the oath. A similar situation was reported by Thomson Jacob. He had tried to swear in a number of special constables at Stalbridge on 27 November again to no avail as the tenant farmers sought to turn the situation to their own advantage. He recorded

As a magistrate of the Division in which Stalbridge is situated…I was there yesterday with my brother Magistrate Mr Yeatman and we could not prevail on a single individual to come forward and enrol himself as a single Special Constable … they declare unless they are assured their rents are lowered to enable them to pay the increased rate of wages to their labourers they will not move.

On 2 December Castleman took the situation into his own hands and on his arrival at Stalbridge he found two magistrates surrounded by a ‘great many persons’. The magistrates explained that none of those present would consent to sign up so Castleman confirmed I

then taking the Testament in my hand I said I did not wish to involve others in personal danger in which I was not willing to participate; upon which I was sworn a special Constable.

Consequently all but three shoemakers and one carrier took the oath. Jones firmly believed this single action probably saved Stalbridge from greater destruction when the rioters finally attacked the area. One has to question the way in which Castleman achieved this feat as amongst the estate vouchers is a receipt which recorded brandy for special constables during the riot for 16s 8d. After his heroics Castleman returned to Milborne Port where he suffered a haemorrhage brought on by his ‘unusual exertions’ and was forced to return home to Wimborne. It was while there at three o’clock in the morning on 2 December a messenger arrived with the news that the labourers had struck at both Stalbridge and Henstridge and had proceeded to destroy the threshing machines. The Reverend F. Luke, Curate at Stalbridge had written to Mr Portman the day before

113 D/ANG/B5/42 Anonymous Letter written 27 November at Sturminster Newton.  
114 D/ANG/B5/42 Letter from the Magistrate G. Thomson Jacob 28 November 1830.  
115 Jones, The Stalbridge Inheritance, p.75.  
116 D/ANG/B4/54 Estate vouchers for 1831.
and requested a detachment of Cavalry be despatched and quartered at Stalbridge. He described the ‘agitated state’ of the population and was firmly convinced that ‘very little reliance’ could be placed on those who had been sworn in as special constables. In view of the events which unfolded his ‘worst fears’ did not happen. Jones argued convincingly that the disturbance in Stalbridge was probably no more than a ‘riotous assembly’. In fact she declared there was no evidence to suggest that the threshing machine which had stood in Stalbridge Park for more than twenty years was damaged in any way. Although Stalbridge seems to have been minimally affected by the mob there was an overlying feeling that the riots sweeping eastern and southern England were perhaps the start of a much bigger revolution. This is emblematically illustrated in Castleman’s letter of the 2 December 1830 when he wrote

As to concessions to a set of … marauders of this kind they are quite out of the question, and they must be put down or we shall shortly have them for our governors.

The riots were soon over for the Marquis of Anglesey’s estate and by the 11 December a quieter situation seems to have prevailed. The troubles encountered by Castleman were acknowledged by the then agent-in-chief John Sanderson in a letter. For the estate all that remained was to prosecute the offenders, protect themselves and the estate’s property from any further action and to try and find a way to help the labourers through the long winter months.

In order to bring to justice those who had taken part in the riots Special Commissions were set up. Many magistrates had been overwhelmed by the number of those coming to trial or were criticised for being too lenient. This had necessitated governmental intervention. Griffin stated the actual number of prosecutions is unknown but it is understood 922 criminal cases were tried in eleven different courts in six towns spread across the counties of Berkshire, Buckinghamshire, Dorset, Hampshire and Wiltshire between 18 December 1830 and 14 January 1831. Lord Melbourne held rigidly orthodox values regarding the protection of property and he stated that all Justices of the Peace and Magistrates ‘will deem it their Duty to maintain and uphold the Rights of Property, of every Description, against Violence and Aggression’.

118 Griffin, ‘Swing, Swing Redivivus, or Something After Swing’, p. 460.
119 Hobsbawn and Rudé, *Captain Swing*, p. 258.
situation by aiding and abetting the dismantling of local threshing machines, attempted to negotiate wage increases and income supplements with the rioters themselves.

Jones claimed James Hobbs, George Bugby, John Sansome and James Harris were charged with riot at Stalbridge; they were cautioned and told to keep the peace. They all entered into ‘recognizances’ of £50 each. Hobbs and Harris were also charged with assaulting Robert Fookes one of the special constables to which they pleaded guilty but were discharged upon ‘recognizances’ of £50 each. This is not the entire story as a bill for Castleman’s time which was lodged in the estate vouchers gives a fuller picture. The ‘Depositions of John Davis, Robert Stay, John Stay Elisha Legg and Charles Hooper’ were taken ‘against George Eavis, James Samson otherwise Chippett, Edward Turner, Charles Bilbin otherwise Day, John Biss, Joseph Seymour and William Condon for a Riot at Henstridge in the evening of the 1st December last and destroying [the] Thrashing Machine’. Furthermore this voucher details the outcome of the trials.

… against Seymour no Bill. The other Prisoners tried - Cordon and Biss found not guilty – Eavis convicted and Transported for 7 years – Samson, Turner and Bilbin Convicted and sentenced to 3 Months Imprisonment and hard labour.

For their part in the riot at Hanley Stokes, Anstey, Samuel Zillwood, Robert Zillwood, John Read and James Hick were all indicted for breaking a ‘thrashing machine’. *The Morning Chronicle* reported that Captain Paton ‘proved that he saw the machines broken up and burnt and that all the prisoners, with the exception of Anstey, were in the mob’. Ultimately Stokes and Read were sentenced to one year’s imprisonment and Zillwood to six months. Although the riots caused great fear they were short lived and over quickly. The estate was affected by two apparently separate incidents with no indication from either the correspondence or the newspapers that these were connected or had any links whatsoever. This would suggest that Jones was correct in stating that Swing did not constitute a movement but was made up of local loosely related incidents. This local study adds another small part to the Swing narrative but to truly understand this event many more of these are needed.

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120 Jones, *The Stalbridge Inheritance*, p.75.
121 D/ANG/B4/53 Bill for the prosecution of the rioters from William Castleman in the estate vouchers for 1830.
122 Ibid.
123 *The Morning Chronicle* 14 January 1831.
Although the mass of rioting quickly dissipated in some places unrest continued to rumble on and this was the case here, at Stalbridge matters seemed to settle quickly but Hanley continued to be a problem. The measures put in place in the immediate aftermath are as local in nature as the causes of the riots. Little close textual analysis has explored how estates and small rural communities sought to deal with the aftermath of the problems and to rebuild pre-riot relationships. The Sturminster Newton magistrates tried to persuade the Marquis of Anglesey to reduce the tenant’s rents so that they might ‘employ the labouring classes of this Parish … at the same rate of Wages as the Parishes in this Division are now giving’. They believed this was the only way that the ‘Peace and Tranquillity’ of this large and extensive parish could be maintained. This two-fold communique from the magistrates could not be ignored, firstly their intention was to allow those labourers already employed an increase in wages received and secondly to allow the tenants to employ additional workers from those living on Parish Relief. It was hoped this would ‘thus remove the cause of discontent’ which had endangered their lives and property. However Castleman was of the opinion that part of the problem had been caused by the magistrates themselves and wrote to the Marquis of Anglesey:

I am sure the concessions which have been made to [the] rioters from intimidation have been and still are the great error into which [the] magistrates and others have fallen.

The estate as already discussed above took on a number of extra labourers and paid their wages. When the weather was too bad the labourers would receive parochial relief and be employed in public works as usual. Consultations were carried out with the tenants at Stalbridge and a meeting held at Uxbridge House. The minutes have survived and provide a fuller reaction to the Swing riots. Five main points were agreed firstly, that a general allowance against rent would be given to the tenants of 10 per cent. From this would be deducted any sums expended for Labour on each farm. Secondly a reduced allowance under ten per cent would be made to those who had recently taken on farms at a reduced rent. Thirdly plans and estimates were to be drawn up for the building of eight or ten cottages at Stalbridge and elsewhere. Each of these

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124 D/ANG/B5/42 Letter from the Reverend Yeatman 2 December 1830 this was written the day on which the riot had occurred in the early hours.
125 Jones, The Stalbridge Inheritance, p. 78.
126 D/ANG/B5/42 Letter from William Castleman 4 December 1830.
127 D/ANG/B5/42 Proposal of 7 December 1830.
was to be set in half an acre of land and given to the best of the labourers with families at a fair rent. If the scheme was successful the estate might build three or four such properties annually. Fourthly enquires were to be made to procure some form of employment for the labourers and making baskets in the long winter evenings was suggested. Finally Lord Uxbridge was to apply to Lord Melbourne for arms and supplies. Before leaving for London Castleman had affirmed that the labourers were to be paid eight shillings per week and this was to continue until Lady Day 1831.

It appears these measures were put into place almost immediately for on 16 December William stated that he had written to Mr Grant the Rector at Bradford and that the ‘Stalbridge Plan … is in complete operation’ and ‘everything is quiet there’. At Hanley a heightened state of tension remained and was perhaps more to do with the changes in rights over parts of Cranborne Chase. However it was exactly this type of local grievance that gave the Swing riots their individuality and the disputes over the Chase lingered on. In 1832 Castleman was still encountering difficulties with the Hanley tenants and wrote:

…you may recollect [Dibben] with his mob of 2 or 300 persons under the order of Captain Peyton and Blackwood took down the new fences of the Coppices last year has now turned his Cows into one of the Coppices insisting on their being communable all the year.

The cottages at Stalbridge were of a higher standard than many others in the town with stone walls, slate roofs, privies, iron window frames and pipes to carry water to the cottages. The nine windows which were broken by vandals perhaps indicative of the jealousies these properties attracted. Altogether the construction costs equalled £1004 10s 3d and included a labourers’ bill of some £30 8s 8d. This sum was paid to the Overseers and illustrated that those who built the properties were employed by the parish. This plan was inspired because in time the cottages became a source of income in their own right and could be assessed for Church Rates, Waywardens Rates and the Poor Rate. Some of those who worked on the building of the new houses at Stalbridge also found further employment in the construction of five new properties at Bradford. Castleman viewed the populations of Stalbridge and Bradford as ‘orderly’ and therefore deserving. The basket weaving does not seem to have developed beyond

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128 D/ANG/B5/42 Letter from William Castleman 16 December 1830.
129 D/ANG/B5/44 Letter from William Castleman 22 February 1832.
130 Jones, Stalbridge Inheritance, p. 80.
the idea stage. While historians have argued that the riots were often the result of local conditions it appears the solutions were equally diverse. During the riots magistrates and others had set scales of wages but as early as December 1830 D. O. P. Okedon had written to the Marquis of Anglesey

… convinced that no universal scale can be laid down and that every farm & parish must alter [their] scale of wages according to the Will & Skill & Strength of the Labourers.\textsuperscript{131}

Some have proposed that Swing was an extreme way for the poor to try and gain better standards of living.\textsuperscript{132} Hanley is the perfect example of a locality where the unrest smouldered under the surface and the population seemed more interested in gaining their rights back over the chase. However even here Castleman did not expect further open rebellion and wrote in 1832

No more riotous proceedings are likely to take place at present; and if they do Lord Shaftesbury, who is now in the County and at the head of the Cranborne Bench, will, I am sure, see that the laws are properly administered.\textsuperscript{133}

Despite the recent work of Jones and Griffin it still appears that in order to fully understand the impact of Swing more research at the local and parish level still needs to be undertaken. This study highlights the quality of information that can be gathered from using land agent’s records which in the past have been a previously neglected source in the study of this phenomenon.

Conclusion

The Dorset and Somerset archive of the Marquis of Anglesey alongside reports in \textit{The Times} and other newspapers affords the researcher a unique glimpse into the labouring poor on a large estate. Historians of poverty have tended to concentrate on poor relief through the parish or poor law unions. King, Tomkins and others who have researched the economy of makeshifts have focused on the experiences of the poor themselves and their narrative and agency. However this study did not set out to do either, instead it sought to discover the ways in which the estate contributed to poor relief and the survivability of those who resided within its borders. The Marquis of Anglesey was

\textsuperscript{131} D/ANG/B5/42 Letter from D. O. P. Okedon.
\textsuperscript{132} Williams, \textit{Poverty Gender and Life-Cycle}, p. 99.
\textsuperscript{133} \textit{Ibid.}
renowned for his benevolence and expended money on one off payments, coals, food and clothing. The part played by landowners in affording poor relief has tended to be overlooked perhaps due to the sheer volume of surviving records. In remoter areas during periods of economic recession the labourers were unable to seek employment elsewhere and this is reflected in the remuneration received for their services.

There has been considerable debate surrounding the disparity of agricultural wages between the north and south of England. While Daunton correlated the wage differences, the Reverend Yeatman at the end of the Swing riots indicated that wages were perhaps lower than any historian has previously supposed. The estate at this point set a weekly wage of eight shillings for its labourers for a short period of time in an attempt to calm the situation. However previous research has failed to take into account the earning abilities of other family members. It appears that at times women were able to command higher wages working in the glove industry although this was prone to fluctuations. Considerably more detailed research is needed on small and medium estates especially in the south to determine just how low wages actually were and how much women and children contributed to the family income.

The poor rate was a sensitive issue, if it was too high it might compromise the tenants’ political loyalty. In order to prevent this happening, the estate would seek ways of keeping the labouring poor in work, make subscriptions to funds which would provide relief or try allotment type schemes. The debates undertaken by Burchardt, Griffiths and Overton revealed disagreement continues to exist as to the popularity of such schemes. In Dorset neither Castleman nor the tenant farmers appeared in 1830 to be in favour of setting up allotments for the labouring poor. A slight anomaly exists within the estate because at Stalbridge and Bradford the houses which were built after 1830 had substantial gardens which were probably as large as any allotment. Areas of the estate were perceived in different lights. Castleman viewed the populations of these two places as ‘orderly’ and therefore deserving of help. Hanley on the other hand was seen as unruly and a difficult place to control and we might here be witnessing the impact of the land agents’ own opinions on the amount of help or relief offered.

Castleman constantly sought ways of getting the poor back to work. When trying to solve the problem of the stone quarries he stipulated a number of paupers might be employed. However both here and in the 1836 agricultural scheme there was
an implicit allegation that the poor might be idle or not willing to work. At the stone quarries if they neglected their work they might be dismissed and the farm labourers were to be paid only for the hours they worked. The mix and match schemes of relief set up by Castleman illuminate his understanding of the different relationships within the rural community. It was in the Marquis of Anglesey’s and Castleman’s interest to maintain the balance of societal relationships, and this was not necessarily easy. Other forms of employment on the estate were relatively scarce; the biggest was the glove-making industry which employed a large amount of women. As the newspaper extracts indicated this was a precarious form of work. After the war with France ended it was badly affected by cheap imports from the continent. Castleman did not like manufactories in agricultural districts and this is reflected in his failure to establish alternative industries on the estate.

Investigating the Swing riots through Castleman’s correspondence is a unique and rarely taken stance. This thesis argues that the causes of Swing were already in place by 1822 as exampled by the destruction of the threshing machine at Charlton Horethorne. The letters illustrated the confusion felt by those managing the land and in charge of local politics. The actual unrest was over very quickly and order soon restored, despite their short lived nature there was a worry that a greater revolution was possible. Historians have tended to concentrate on the trials conducted by the Special Commissions but the estate sought to ensure that peaceful conditions and rural relationships were rebuilt. Further studies of estates and other communities are needed to understand how the aristocracy and local officials sought to repair the damage caused by these riots. Only by uncovering the true individualistic nature of these riots is it possible to fully comprehend their contemporary impact.

This thesis has sought to extend the boundaries of the secondary literature through the exploration of a much neglected group of sources to further our understanding of the labouring poor. Rather than using the more traditional poor law records it has used the extensive archive of the Castlemans’ correspondence to seek a different historical perspective. While the paucity of agricultural wages has been the subject of continued debate it is suggested here that the impact of female contributions to the family income has yet to be fully comprehended. Uniquely this study has explored the agricultural worker alongside other groups within the rural community rather than as a separate entity. This has revealed a significantly more complex society.
than has previously been suggested. There is little doubt that each estate and locality was individualistic in the way that it was managed and in the dynamics that affected its cohesion and further micro-studies are required to ascertain the impact of local, regional and national trends on its diversity and administration. While industrialising and urbanising communities have been the subject of substantial attention, rural populations have been neglected and the overall aim of the study undertaken was to raise an awareness of its continued importance in the development of nineteenth century England.
Chapter 5
The Political Landscape

The political status the landowning elite endowed on the tenantry of their estates allowed them to participate in the decision making process. The correspondence of William Castleman provides an historical prism through which the small nomination borough of Milborne Port might be explored and examined. Elections provided the opportunity for the local balance of social and political power to be re-evaluated and reaffirmed. Whilst such authority was infrequently challenged it, nonetheless provided a check on the local landowning elite and ensured they fulfilled their responsibilities, whilst allowing anyone with a grievance the chance to complain.¹ Thus the protection and preservation of political and social stability of the rural community was a local

phenomenon. O’Gorman proposed, that when those at Westminster who formed the ‘great national parties’ looked to the constituencies for support, votes and money they were confronted with already established political groups which had their own political culture.\(^2\) It was within this framework that public opinion was fashioned and moulded.\(^3\)

This chapter will explore local rather than national politics and investigate the political landscape through the nature of the electorate, the role of the political agent and the power and influence of the landowner. The correspondence of William Castleman will act as an historical prism through which to investigate the ways and means in which the political fabric was managed and manipulated in the first half of the nineteenth century.

This micro-study is not intended to be a history of Milborne Port as this has been amply covered by the various volumes of the *History of Parliament* but its content cannot be ignored. This work explores the Borough of Milborne Port from 1604 to its demise in 1832; it lists the men who stood as MPs and describes the main events which occurred in the borough. Despite the enormous scope of this research undertaken for this publication which covers the majority if not all of the political constituencies the work undertaken gives a good overall generalist history of events. The aim of this thesis is to evaluate the role played by the local agent in constituency politics. William Castleman managed the nomination borough of Milborne Port for the Marquis of Anglesey and this chapter will seek to assess his role both before and after the Great Reform Act of 1832. This will predominantly concentrate on the tactics employed by the estate to encourage tenant loyalty. It will suggest that while Milborne Port formed the typical traditional deference society proposed by Moore; the electorate in fact exhibited considerable political awareness and autonomy of thought. This chapter through its close textual study of the borough of Milborne Port will seek to expand our understanding of local politics before the Great Reform Act and will provide more detailed knowledge of the social skills required by agents in the management of nomination boroughs. Castleman besides acting as land agent for the Marquis of Anglesey on his Dorset and Somerset estate also played an important political role both in borough and county elections. The over-riding impression from the Dorset and Somerset correspondence was the amount of time Castleman was forced to devote to this small corner of the estate. Smith has argued that it was virtually impossible before the Corrupt Practices Act of 1883 to reach a definition pertaining to the role of the


\(^3\) *Ibid*. 

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election agent although the business which they undertook was clearly understood and had been so for many years. It will be argued here, that while categorising the work undertaken by men like Castleman was not always easy, it is in fact far simpler than Smith alleged. Single focused studies do much to emphasise and explain the part played in the canvassing and organisation of borough politics by the agent and begins to circumscribe their role at least at the local level. In order to evaluate the political landscape of this borough it is first necessary to appraise its political character.

**Background to the Political Character of Milborne Port**

At the beginning of the nineteenth century large urban areas notably Manchester, Birmingham, Leeds and Sheffield which had expanded rapidly as a result of industrialisation were totally unrepresented. In contrast small boroughs like Milborne Port with a tiny number of voters continued to return two men to Parliament. County and borough politics had different characteristics. It has been argued that County constituencies contained a more standardised electorate and demonstrated a clear demarcation between members and electors. Conversely boroughs contained distinctly individual political personalities, a diverse franchise and representative capacity. The destinies of county electors like those within the boroughs were closely linked to the political fortunes of their landlords; however, few men were completely reliant upon them either politically or financially. Each county had the right to return two members to parliament until 1821 when the Grampound redistribution allocated Yorkshire two extra seats.

Historians have tended to argue that before the Great Reform of 1832 the 269 English and Welsh constituencies were mainly controlled by a combination of patronage, influence and corruption. O’Gorman has suggested the circumstances of this ‘electoral control’ was actually very precise and are best understood not by categorizing the type of constituency according to franchise (corporation, burgage, scot and lot, and freeman) but by the mechanisms used to exercise such authority. However matters were frequently complicated because the ruling elite were not necessarily a ‘fixed’ or

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‘settled’ body. The ruling elite were not above using the political arena to express personal, family or social hostilities. This occurred for example in Newark and East Retford in Nottinghamshire - both constituencies returned two members to Parliament. The problems were the result of widespread aristocratic ‘interests’ combined with a number of broad and socially disparate electorates. Moore, O’Gorman and other historians have argued that borough politics were by nature individualistic. However micro-studies of this nature can provide a base against which to compare and contrast other small ancient boroughs.

A reliable dynamic agent was a necessity and an inferior one could spell disaster at the polls. Henry Bankes had written to the then Lord Uxbridge concerning the collapse of his 1806 campaign in Dorset. He complained ‘I am informed … upon good authority that he [Uxbridge’s steward] was not inactive in canvassing against me’. In Dorset the Marquis’s patronage rested solely within the borough of Milborne Port although he had political interests in Staffordshire and Anglesey. The estate correspondence suggested that any candidate who wished to stand for parliament at county level also needed his backing and could not win without it. Aristocratic magnates habitually expended large sums in order to gain and retain control of a parliamentary constituency. Even a small borough with a tiny electorate such as Milborne Port constituted a valuable piece of property, for the power of naming an MP was a commodity which could be bought or inherited. The franchise itself was held by men who owned freehold land or property worth forty shillings or more. During the eighteenth century the term ‘freeholder’ became more loosely defined and increasingly the electorate included men who held either a lease or mortgage on an appropriate piece of land.

Milborne Port formed both a borough and a parish in the Hundred of Horethorn in Somerset. Geographically it was twelve and a half miles from Shaftesbury, two and a half from Sherborne and 117 miles from London. The History of Parliament described it as a burgage borough where the 1st Marquis of Anglesey owned outright five of the tenements and leased the other four from Sir William Medleycott, which gave him

9 Gorman, Voters, Patrons and Parties, pp. 80-81. Lord Uxbridge became the Marquis of Anglesey after the battle of Waterloo.
overall control. However this seems to over simplify the situation O‘Gorman described Milborne Port as a ‘scot and lot patronage borough’. In this type of constituency it was possible for the local landowner to purchase or build the type of properties which conferred upon the inhabitants the right to vote. This certainly happened at Milborne Port. In nomination boroughs electoral success was more often than not dependent on making the right property transactions rather than depending on the voting electorate to make the right choice. Failing to win an election was not always the end of the matter. The losing side could mount through the presentation of a petition to parliament an appeal to overturn the result. Such a petition might contain allegations regarding electoral misconduct and several were presented for the borough of Milborne Port. Two of these petitions will now be briefly examined.

In 1775 Edward Walter and Isaac Hawkins put forward an appeal against the return of the Honourable Temple Luttrell and Charles Wolsely. The foundation of this particular hearing before a committee of the House of Commons revolved around three returns being made by three different people all of whom claimed to be returning officers. Unsurprisingly each party claimed the majority of legal votes and there were mutual allegations of bribery. Part of the hearing revolved around whether rates set and collected by illegal officers gave the person who paid the tax the same voting rights as those paying scot and lot. The Counsel for Walter and Brown argued that this was indeed the case. After clearing the court the decision was passed that those who had paid the rate even though the legality of the officers was questionable were indeed entitled to vote. The committee after much legal wrangling eventually found in favour of Walter and Brown and they were duly returned as the sitting members.

A close contextual analysis of records which pertained to the petition presented before a Parliamentary Committee in 1819 revealed a number of factors which highlighted the political character of Milborne Port. On this occasion it was claimed James Noke Highmore and John Highmore had unlawfully acted as sub-bailiffs and returning agents at the 1818 election. According to U. Corbett and E.R. Daniell it was alleged they had

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10 O‘ Gorman, Voters, Patrons and Parties, p. 44n.
11 O‘ Gorman, Voters, Patrons and Parties, p. 34.
12 Oldfield, History of Great Britain and Ireland, p. 480.
… illegally rejected the votes of several persons who had good right and title to vote, and who had rendered their votes for the said Richard Sharp and Samuel Moulton Barrett Esqs and admitted other persons to vote for the said Sir Edward Paget and Robert Matthew Casberd.\textsuperscript{14}

The minutes of the meeting which, Castleman held with William Payne to, discuss the matter created an emblematic illustration of the variety of issues which faced those who managed electoral issues in small nomination boroughs. It was claimed Sir Edward Paget and Mr Casberd had made certain promises to the voters during the canvas. Payne advocated that further acts of bribery had been committed through the ‘treating’ of some of the voters before the election. He accused Castleman of promising rent reductions in return for votes, the estate policy being ‘we grant you a favour before we ask for yours’. An objection was made to a number of the voters on the grounds that they had not paid the poor rates for six months, indeed, had not been in possession of their properties for six weeks.\textsuperscript{15} Renting property to those who would vote in your interest was by no means confined to Lord Anglesey’s estate. The Earl of Shaftesbury held the patronage of Dorchester another burgage borough a short distance from the estate and he exercised his property rights to the utmost. On the morning of an election he would convey to his friends or servants parcels of waste land. These were more often than not covered in weeds or rubbish but importantly they had attached to them the ‘valuable right’ of suffrage. Using this manoeuvre guaranteed the Earl that the temporary incumbent would ensure the ‘right’ candidate was returned.\textsuperscript{16}

The petition claimed Lord Anglesey’s men had prevented opposition voters from ‘freely attending the poll’. According to Mackay a deposition by Thomas Fook provided the background for this accusation albeit from the Paget/Casberd side. During a meeting of their followers at the Kings Head they were accused of incarcerating some of the supporters of the opposition, who requested entrance to the building on the grounds of it being a public house to investigate. Fooks stated their opponents had been refused access as the room had been privately hired but the door would be left open and they could ‘call out’ querying whether anyone wanted to leave. This action duly took place


\textsuperscript{15} D/ANG/B5/26 Minutes of the meeting with William Payne 27 Oct. 1818 relating to the Petition put before Parliament. This came before a Parliamentary Committee on 6 Apr. 1819. The minutes refer to ten capital bailiffs when there were in face only nine.

but there was no reply. As ever there were difficulties concerning the capital bailiffs and whether they should or should not be resident in the borough and there were of course the usual accusations of bribery. The Sherbourne Journal reported the findings of the committee on 22 April 1819

…declaring that the Hon. Sir Edward Paget and Robert Matthew Casberd Esq. were duly elected members in parliament for the borough.

It was also established that the capital bailiffs had the right to vote although there ‘was no grant of any territorial possession’ made to them. The Journal commented that this was the third time this question had been determined on and it was hoped that finally the matter was settled. After all the effort to overturn the result another election was called three months later because Casberd had accepted the office of a ‘Welch’ (Welsh) judge! Most of the work within a political borough was carried out by the local agent who in this case also happened to be the land agent William Castleman.

**Election Agent**

Before the Great Reform Act voter allegiance to a particular party was not registered and the role of the agent was despite Smith’s allegations to the contrary relatively clear. He had a duty to protect an electoral interest, to identify and canvass voters, organise supporters, arrange various inducements and generally represent the interests of the candidate. In Milborne Port Castleman acted as agent but in this case did not work directly on behalf of the electoral contender but instead followed the lead, ideas and suggestions of the patron of the borough the Marquis of Anglesey. Historians have argued that agents might raise funds, coordinate between voters and candidates and seek patronage. Castleman’s role was very different to this, the Marquis of Anglesey as patron of the borough picked the candidate of choice and Castleman’s duty was to ensure all the tenants were canvassed and then voted accordingly. Ultimately, however, the end result was the same, the acquisition of as many votes as possible. It has been suggested that their ‘ruthless single-mindedness’ in pursuit of these aims made election agents the most unpopular men in Hanoverian England. However there is no evidence amongst the estate archive to support this theory. Curwen claimed the agent was an established and indispensable ‘point of contact’ with the voters and stated,

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19 O’Gorman, *Voters, Patrons and Parties*, p. 79.
20 Ibid.
He is the person immediately known and connected with the electors in small boroughs; he manages all their affairs; he assists them amidst all their wants and necessities.21

The agent was a man of considerable importance and as the representative of the local patron he was accountable for the implementation of electoral discipline which added to his unpopularity and as will be seen there are plenty of examples within this archive to substantiate this theory.

Many of those who acted as election agents were practising attorneys with some form of legal training and qualifications.22 Smith proposed the increase in legally trained men acting in some form of political capacity was synonymous with the rise of professionalism in electioneering. England may have been governed by the aristocratic landed elite and gentry but they increasingly became dependent on the quickly expanding legal profession for advice pertaining to the management of their estates. It is hardly surprising therefore that as politics became more bureaucratic they secured the services of the provincial attorney.23 When the agent was local the involvement was even greater for he had a personal understanding of the tenants. This gave him an intimate knowledge of the local population, their family life and financial circumstances and more importantly how they might vote on polling day.24

Today an election agent would be expected to have the same views as the candidate he represented but this was not necessarily the case in the early nineteenth century. Richard Sutton Ford agent to Mr Fitzherbert at Swynnerton Hall continued to convey his employers message of support to the sitting MP despite his own reservations and this situation was repeated at Milborne Port.25 A letter written by Castleman in 1841 alluded to the differences in the Marquis of Anglesey’s and his own political opinions

Your Lordship has alluded to my political sentiments which are well known to you but I trust your Lordship will believe that I shall in no way allow them to

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22 Gorman, *Voters, Patrons and Parties*, p. 78.
23 Smith, *‘The Election Agent in English Politics’*, p. 17.
influence or interfere with the course which my duty as your Lordship’s Agent … will lead me to pursue.  

As his steward Castleman was able to provide a unique perspective on the dynamics of the rural community within which he spent his working day. A trusted agent was an essential component of local politics and when circumstances changed was sorely missed not just for his skills but for his integrity and friendship. This relationship was epitomised by the 4th Duke of Newcastle when he recorded in his diary in December 1837

Mr Tallents my agent at Newark [had] become my confidential man of business died on the 22d. In him I have lost a real & valuable friend as well as a man upon whose Judgement [sic] & ability I could confidently rely & whose zeal & integrity were unwearedly Exercised for my advantage – He is in Every sense a most irreparable loss to me.

It was prudent to appoint agents who were trusted by members of the local community and once appointed the basic structure of the electoral organisation was in place. This could quickly move into electioneering mode as and when necessary. Two debates have underpinned much of the research on the period before the Great Reform Act. The first considers the issue of deference in a small community and the second concentrates on the level of political awareness amongst a given geographically bound electorate. Any good agent would have recognised the importance of the first and used its influence to ensure the voting habits of the tenants and any attempt to ignore the second might prove perilous.

**Deference Communities**

The hypothesis of the deferential society is a useful framework through which to explore the continued domination of the landed classes in nineteenth century politics. This concept is closely linked to Moore who suggested the poll books exposed the influence and level of deference in English politics during the nineteenth century. It did not reflect the corollary of generalised relationships but instead displayed specific affiliations within clearly identifiable groups. When the male population of an estate voted

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26 D/ANG/B5/56 Letter from William Castleman to the Marquis of Anglesey, 4 June 1841.
together in a single ‘bloc’ their behaviour both elucidated and preserved the structure of the society within which they resided. Tenant farmers who voted in line with the landowner’s request and instructions gave both credibility and authentication to his political decisions. Voting behaviour of this nature preserved the landowning classes’ right to rule. Moore maintained ‘deference’ and ‘influence’ were central tenets of the mid-nineteenth century; however they were only evident in ‘deference communities’.30 The long established, hierarchically structured, rural society was an almost perfect analogy of this form of society.31 This situation did not exist everywhere and on the Fitzherbert estate in Staffordshire the agent made it clear that the tenants were free to vote as they thought proper. On polling day the agent actually abstained stating that ‘this neutrality … leaves me most at liberty to further the wishes of my employers’.32 While the formation of political networks was almost inevitable, the social constitution of the electorate within the boroughs meant it was almost impossible for a patron to exert absolute control. Research undertaken on nineteen boroughs of different sizes has revealed a number of retailers and craftsmen who although not immune from influence were ‘robust’ enough to either resist or reach a compromise.33 Of course any that rented property or land to which patronage was attached might find themselves in the same position as one of the tenant farmers. This section will explore and examine the idea of deference and assess the political awareness of the inhabitants of Milborne Port.

It has been proposed that deference and dependence are two different ideals which operated in diverse ways and levels. The relationship which existed between the landowner and tenant of one of his large farms was totally different to the blind respect of a common servant to his socially superior employer. The landowner/tenant association was based on collectively defined roles which both sides understood and were willing to adapt in order to preserve social and political stability.34 In order to watch the borough and because he was often absent Castleman took measures to ensure he was informed of any and all tensions which existed. To this end he had set up a committee which was to meet once a fortnight and would discuss any matters which arose from time to time. However it became necessary to abandon these meetings when

34 O’Gorman, Voters, Patrons and Parties, p. 230.
Castleman realised that the ‘petty jealousies’ within the group jeopardised its objectivity, he wrote to the Marquis and stated that it was instead his intention to endeavour to visit the borough every five or six weeks in order to ‘keep matters in the right train’. Evidence from the correspondence further underlined the difficulties of controlling the electorate, even when, the voters numbered no more than a couple of hundred. There is little doubt that the Marquis attempted to exert pressure and expected Milborne Port to run as a deference community. From almost the very beginning of his agency Castleman made it blatantly clear that while the Marquis was prepared to act with ‘liberality’ towards those residing in the borough he expected them to remember the ‘favours’ he had be kind enough to bestow and act accordingly. One penalty for disobeying and voting elsewhere which could always be exercised was eviction. However there were other ways to ensure electoral compliance as one tenant discovered in 1818 when he voted ‘against the sitting Member’. Castleman wrote to the Marquis

    I have given him [Baunton] Notice at the expiration of three months to pay off the Mortgage (about £290) which he owes your Lordship on his property … if not I should advise legal steps to be resorted for its recovery.  

In return for loyalty rewards might be paid as in 1818 when Castleman instructed one of the Highmores to ‘kill a moderate portion of the Game on this Manor’ – Milborne Port – which was then to be distributed amongst those who had supported the Marquis of Anglesey’s interest at the recent election. A second debate has for many years ran alongside that of deference and deals with the political awareness of the electorate. Historians have frequently argued that the electorate had little interest in anything other than very local issues but this does not appear to be the case.

**Political Awareness of the Electorate**

It has been suggested that ‘country squires’ exhibited a specific form of paternalism. Their strongest passion appears to have been a particular type of ‘localism’ which was similar in nature to a love of history. This concept was an essential characteristic of this group of ruling elite and is emblematically illustrated by George Bankes who wrote *Corfe Castle* which was in essence the story of his own family estate. Although renowned for their ‘rough kindness’ they expected as demonstrated by the Marquis of

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Anglesey voting obedience. Authority of the ruling classes outside of their immediate families and servants lay with their employees and tenants. These interactions turned government into a personal experience; recognition by those one governed was a tenet specific and central to English politics. The main source of this authority was property and because it was held in many different guises paternalism was exercised in different ways and consequently created a society which was ‘authoritarian, hierarchic and organic but ultimately pluralistic’.

In order for the system to work two factors were essential, the first part relied on the population’s belief in this form of authoritarian society and secondly an understanding that everyone rich or poor had their own ‘appropriate duties’. These responsibilities fell into three main categories, and included an obligation to: rule, guide and help. This drive stemmed directly from his wealth and power but above all the paternal lord owed ‘protection’ to those under his ‘care’. His duties revolved around running his estate and parish ‘firmly and resolutely’ even when it occasioned sending to prison petty thieves, transporting arsonists, evicting lazy, inefficient or inadequate tenants and giving instructions to the bailiffs with regards to management strategies. He was expected to ‘exert a firm moral superintendence over the poor … guidance more than benevolence’. Secondly it was an implicit belief particularly, within the rural community that paternal authorities understood what was right, good and proper for those who relied on this style of leadership. It worked in much the same way as the relationship between father and child. Finally there was an embedded requirement to help the poor; this might be through soup kitchens, cheaper coal or the provision of housing. Roberts argued that for the paternalistic class what this really meant was a commitment to rule firmly and to lead and supervise where necessary. All of the above configurations are evident in the management of the borough of Milborne Port. The only difference being that Castleman as agent acted on behalf of the absentee Marquis of Anglesey. There can be little doubt that in this small nomination borough the Marquis

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39 Ibid, p. 4.
40 There are some similarities between the social controls implicitly embedded within paternalism and Thompson’s ‘moral economy’ While he argued that this concept could not be labelled political in any sophisticated consciousness at the same time it was not exactly un-political. Entwined within this theory was the idea of the commonweal – that is something in the best interest of and for the benefit of the community –this notion found support in the paternalistic customs of the ruling class. The population came to expect certain standards and values and thus the opposite effect occurred whereby the authorities became in ‘some measure, the prisoners of the people’.
41 Roberts Paternalism, pp. 5-6.
believed he had the right to advise and steer the tenants when it came to election time. However in practice this was not as easy as Roberts tendered and the tenants expected to be feted in return for their loyalty.

During the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century the range of politics expanded for three main reasons. Firstly the press served as a channel of communication, it printed advertisements, letters and increasingly candidate’s speeches and election committees fully understood its potential. London newspapers for example had a national circulation and could reach large audiences.\(^{42}\) Annually the bill for a London newspaper cost the estate £5 14s 0d.\(^{43}\) In 1832 Castleman and the agent-in-chief concurred this expense would cease once the borough became disenfranchised in 1832. Provincial newspapers also had a substantial circulation in July 1818 *The Sherborne Mercury* described its own pattern of circulation and stated ‘contrary to the methods usually made use of’ this ‘is chiefly distributed by men and horses hired on purpose, in a very regular, expeditious and expensive manner’.\(^{44}\) It claimed that it was distributed across ‘four counties, extending from the town of Poole … to Penzance’.\(^{45}\) Numbers of copies printed did not necessarily match readership as each individual newspaper could be read many times over by different individuals. It was possible a single edition could be read by 10-15\% of the population of a town. Both London and provincial newspapers served to place election proceedings in both a regional and national context as early as the mid-eighteenth century.

In Thompson’s view ‘most English tenants’ did ‘not have strong political views’ in fact he claimed in 1869 a witness stated they ‘do not care the least about politics’.\(^{46}\) This lack of interest revolved around the domination exerted by landowners and landlords. For the electorate, politics was not about making a selection between policies or parties but instead revolved around electing people often from the same landed class. While the landlord himself might take great interest in the choice of candidate, to the tenant it has been assumed whoever stood was an irrelevance.\(^{47}\) If this was indeed the case the expense of canvassing potential voters could have been spared as they would

\(^{42}\) O’Gorman, *Voters, Patrons and Parties*, p. 286.
\(^{43}\) D/ANG/B5/44 Letter from William Castleman 12 June 1832.
\(^{44}\) O’Gorman, *Voters, Patrons and Parties*, p. 287.
\(^{45}\) *Ibid*, p. 287.
\(^{47}\) *Ibid*. 

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simply have cast their vote where instructed. As shall be seen the Marquis of Anglesey like others expended large sums of money attempting to secure votes.

O’Gorman and Daunton both agree that the electorate were far more politically astute than earlier historians have supposed. They submitted a theory which proposed that the electorate themselves had the ability to manipulate the patron of a borough, a fact which previous research has failed to take into account. Ignoring the ‘sensibilities’ of the voters was no way to hold on to a seat. This hypothesis does not suggest any form of political sophistication in unreformed England but merely a sense the electorate could and would follow their own interests and express their own dissonance. In patronage boroughs it also paid to be aware of the mood of the non-voters as well. It was simply ‘implausible’ that an awareness of local matters indicated a complete lack of interest or understanding of regional and or national issues. A number of factors played a significant part in the development of political awareness and included: the expansion of the press which improved communications with London, the growth of religious dissent coupled with the idea of civil rights, the formation of a nationally assimilated market dependent on parliamentary approval of local turnpikes, waterways, bridges, harbours and eventually the railway. One of the main ways in which national politics was exhibited in the regions was through the use of petitioning.

Eastwood maintained that by the 1820s local politics had acquired an impressive assortment of tools which might be used to influence and shape national policy. This included resolutions passed at town and county meetings and further ‘enlargement’ of the political sphere in the form of petitioning. It became fashionable to petition parliament on any number of both local and national issues. The constituency of Reading between 1750 and 1850 sent to Parliament 432 petitions. The 4th Duke of Newcastle recorded in his diary for 5 March 1827 ‘attended at the House - presented petitions from parishes in Nott’s against an alteration of the Corn Laws’.

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48 Ibid, p. 53.
50 Eastwood, Government and Community in the English Provinces, p. 76.
51 O’Gorman, Voters, Patrons and Parties, p. 291.
52 Gaunt, Unhappy Reactionary, p. 52.
argued that at county level wider political relationships were formalised in this manner through elections, Assizes and petitioning.\(^53\)

The small borough of Milborne Port proved size was not an issue when it came to following this trend. Anti-Slavery Petitions were sent to the House of Commons in March 1824 and to both Houses in May 1826, those involved in the manufacture of gloves had petitioned the Lords against the importation of foreign gloves in May 1826. Protestant Dissenters forwarded petitions for the repeal of the Test Acts in June 1827. Anti-Catholic petitions were forward by the Protestant inhabitants in February 1829.\(^54\)

The last of which caused considerable upheaval in the Borough of Milborne Port, Lord Anglesey had been recalled from his post as Lord Lieutenant of Ireland just a month earlier for his Catholic sympathies.\(^55\) Castleman had been unaware of the Marquis of Anglesey’s support for this cause because he had written to him in 1825 about Mr Portman one of the candidates who had been canvassing at an up and coming Dorset election

I have despatched a clerk to canvas all your Lordship’s Tenants at Stalbridge, Bradford &c, &c against Mr Portman or any other Candidate supporting Catholic Emancipation and to with hold a promise of their votes in the present.\(^56\)

The Marquis returned the letter having written in the margin ‘Do not let the Catholick question be named by me as any ground for opposing any vote.\(^57\) On this occasion Castleman had totally misunderstood the sentiments of Lord Anglesey. This episode demonstrated just how difficult it could be to balance the opinions of landowner and electorate even in a small borough. Perhaps Castleman might be forgiven, for this, was a difficult issue and not everyone had the same outlook as the Marquis. For example the 4th Duke of Newcastle’s view was the complete opposite and he recorded in his diary for the 6 November 1824

Wrote this Evening to Lord Hertford apprising him that Retford is open, if he likes to start a friend there … I wish to Keep out dissenters, republicans & Rom. Catholics from the next Parlt as much as lies in my power.\(^58\)


\(^{55}\) Ibid.

\(^{56}\) D/ANG/B5/36 Letter from William Castleman 23 Sept.1825.

\(^{57}\) Ibid.

The issue of Catholic emancipation displayed the growing political awareness of the
population in both local and national politics. Through the exertion of their influence
agents such as Castleman almost compelled the voter to address national issues and
therefore forced their participation in the political process.

With the anti-Catholic petition of 1829 not only had he under-estimated the
sentiments of the landowner Castleman failed to capture the mood of the tenants. He
wrote to Nathaniel Highmore one of the tenants ‘I cannot but express my deep concern
that no one in the Borough of Milborne Port should have thought it necessary to give me
some information of the intended Petition’. Castleman had only become aware of its
existence through one of his clerks who happened to be in the area. Despite his
annoyance he did not want to be connected in any way with the petition because, once
presented to Parliament ‘it will be my duty to account to Lord Anglesey for the part I
have taken in it’. In defence of the petitioners Highmore replied that they had believed
they were acting in ‘perfect accordance with the views & wishes at all times expected
and desired by Lord Anglesey’. They had been totally unaware of his Lordship’s
‘political change of opinions … nor his retirement from Ireland’. In order to make the
Marquis’s opinion clear and to ensure that all the electorate were aware of his
sentiments Castleman replied

His Lordship’s sentiments on the Catholic question have been so marked for a
considerable time past, by various incidents, as to leave no doubt in the mind of
any one … that he was friendly to the measure.

Furthermore Castleman reiterated that ‘personal respect’ for his Lordship should have
been enough for the occupants to have ‘restrained’ from making a public demonstration
of their own beliefs. This petition was emblematic of the tensions which existed in local
politics. The electorate completely comprehended the ways in which they might present
their own convictions within the wider political arena. Castleman as political agent and
the representative of the Marquis found himself constantly striving to contain the
borough under the influence of the Marquis’s beliefs. The evidence from Milborne Port
concurred with the opinions of O’Gorman, Daunton and Eastwood and suggests the
electorate had a firm grasp of the national issues as well as those of local consequence.

59 D/ANG/B5/41 Letter from William Castleman to N. Highmore 13 January 1829.
60 D/ANG/B5/41 Letter to N Highmore from William Castleman 19 January 1829.
61 D/ANG/B5/41 Letter from Matthew Highmore 13 January 1829.
They were both willing and able to make use of the various channels open to them to influence national policy. These are not the reactions of a population who are simply prepared to vote as instructed by the local landowner. Phillips proposed that as petitions were often signed by both the franchised electorate and the un-enfranchised alike the size of the ‘political nation’ encompassed a greater body of people than previously presumed.63 The expansion of political awareness meant that effective canvassing both in the borough particularly during the years when Lord Darlington mounted a campaign to challenge the Marquis’s authority and at county level was paramount to election success.

Securing the Borough

From 1819 Lord Darlington attempted to wrest patronage of the borough of Milborne Port away from the Marquis of Anglesey. Instead of relying solely on the inhabitants who were already resident, an alternative was to add to the housing stock which would in turn increase the number of voters. This was essential when the opposition sought to use the same tactics. Consequently both landowners entered into a housing race. The opposition to the Marquis had persuaded Darlington to purchase eight acres of land so that houses might be built which would then attract voters.64 Sir William Manners at Ilchester had previously been the recipient of a similar attack by Lord Darlington and wrote to Castleman warning him what to expect. Manners explained that Darlington employed an unscrupulous attorney by the name of Metcalf ‘who is somehow related to Lady D who was once a streetwalker as everyone knows. Lord D has another more respectable attorney but Metcalf does all his dirty work. You may expect infinite trouble from them’.65 The laying of the foundation stone for the ‘newtown’ of Lord Darlington’s was recorded in The Sherborne Journal in March 1819. Ensor an inhabitant of the borough suggested the mounting of the opposition to Lord Anglesey was an act of revenge. The cows of Mr Henning a glove manufacturer and Whig (the Marquis of Anglesey was a Tory) had strayed and were captured and impounded by Thomas Pitman. When Henning met up with Pitman he ‘boxed his ears’ and this facilitated a complaint to William Castleman. As a result Castleman brought a legal

64 Jenkins, ‘Milborne Port’.
65 D/ANG/B5/28 This letter from Manners appears in the records for 1820 but was probably written the previous year.
action against Henning who was fined heavily for losing his temper and swore he would seek his revenge. 66

The threat posed by Lord Darlington and the opposition was taken seriously and resulted in the estate spending large sums of money in order to retain control of the borough. In order to thwart the challenge Castleman orchestrated the leasing of all Sir William Medleycott’s property in Milborne Port, he purchased two plots of land on which to build and ejected 23 tenants who could not be relied on to vote in the Marquis’s favour. 67 Between 1819 and 1824 McKay proposed the Marquis spent around £15,689. 68 Rumour was rife and in July 1822 Castleman reported that on arriving in the borough he had discovered a report had been brought from London probably by Lord Darlington’s agent (Feaver) stating ‘that your Lordship was very much disgusted with the concern and had offered Lord Darlington to return one of the Members which Lord Darlington had refused’ 69 Consequently Castleman believed orders had been given ‘to begin many (it is said) 14 new houses’ 70 However the commencement of work on Darlington’s houses had not begun when Castleman visited the borough a week later. According to Feaver the delay had been caused by a misunderstanding between himself and the agents in London. Castleman managed to determine that Darlington had so far ‘expended upwards of £40,000’. 71 These were vast sums of money and illustrated the importance attached to the patronage of all constituencies no matter their size.

Castleman was acutely aware that most of the industry within Milborne Port was owned by Darlington and it was imperative that he seek to establish some form of manufactory controlled by the Marquis. The essential benefits obtained from this type of enterprise included an increase in the population and tenants to occupy the new houses. An arrangement was made with a young glove maker Edward Ensor in April 1820. Castleman was delighted and wrote to the Marquis ‘He will bring with him 3 or 4 respectable journeymen with him on whom reliance can be placed’. 72 Later that year in August a similar agreement was reached with a firm of sail makers based at East Cokes to open a branch at Milborne Port. From this company the Marquis had purchased the

66 Mackay, Milborne Port, p. 137.
67 Jenkins ‘Milborne Port’, p.139.
68 Ibid. p.139.
69 D/ANG/B5/31 Letter from William Castleman to Lord Anglesey 10 July 1822.
70 Ibid.
71 D/ANG/B5/40 Letter from William Castleman 17 July 1822.
72 D/ANG/B5/26 Letter from Castleman to Anglesey 13 April 1820.
sails for his own boat the ‘Emerald’ two or three years earlier. Although Castleman wrote ‘it is of great importance to establish Plowman ... as he will employ many people’ the ultimate motive was clearly illustrated when he stated to the Marquis he ‘will become a powerful support to the Cause’. However there is one further consideration concerning the creation of an industrial base within the borough of the above genus and that is the provision of employment for the labouring poor particularly women who might have made a claim for poor relief. As the estate’s tenants were responsible for paying the poor rate any measure which kept taxes low would have been welcomed and might just have helped to sway the floating voter towards Lord Anglesey. Another option existed for increasing the electorate and this was the sub-division of closes which for the ‘purpose of making Votes (as it is in the power of the Court of Quarter Sessions) was established. Castleman felt that if this right was executed it would have given Anglesey and Medleycott great power within the borough and ‘their united interest a decided majority’. There was however one draw-back Castleman anticipated that should this move take place, the borough would be unmanageable under the present system and would instead require a ‘resident agent. He acted as both the eyes and ears of the Marquis and not just within the borough of Milborne Port but at county level too. Whilst travelling about the estate he was perfectly placed to listen and report on the state of the tenantry and any influences that the opposition might bring to bear on a tentative electorate. The role of the election agent did not begin and end with the declaration of an election but was a year round occupation.

Defeat for the opposition finally came through an exchange of land with Winchester College; in 1824 the rectory of Milborne Port was swapped for land in Dorset. ‘The attention required for bringing the matter to a conclusion’ was according to Castleman ‘very great and has taken up a great deal of my time’. As a result of Castleman’s negotiations and the successful transfer of the College property Darlington recognised he had lost the borough and thus indicated his willingness to dispose of all and any of his property in Milborne Port to Lord Anglesey. The sale took place early the following year and cost £5,901 and finally gave Anglesey complete control. Castleman however still did not totally trust Darlington and stated

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73 D/ANG/B5/26 Letter from William Castleman to Anglesey 14 August 1820.
74 D/ANG/B5 28 Letter from William Castleman 21 October 1828.
75 D/ANG/B5/33 Letter from William Castleman to the Marquis of Anglesey 15 January 1824.
‘There should at all Events be an honourable understanding that Lord D[Arlington] would not directly or indirectly give any Countenance or Support to any further opposition in the Boro’. 76

McKay stated that consequent elections were much quieter affairs. 77 Despite the cessation of hostilities voters still expected to be canvassed. This chapter will now explore the process of both canvassing and the election process.

**Electioneering**

It has been argued that the relationship between the voters and patrons was not as one-sided as frequently assumed. The voters were generally a ‘fickle and demanding lot’, who were well aware of the price of their vote and understood it could curry offices, favours, patronage and pleasures. The vote was thus their currency with which to buy the ‘wares’ of their patron. Monetary payments for time were commonplace and food and alcoholic treats meted out more or less universally. The payments and practices of electioneering and canvassing worked within a clearly understood framework of values. 78

Canvassing in unreformed England was not necessarily concerned with mobilizing support but was instead an assessment of whether an election would be contested. 79 During the canvas as many voters as possible were asked how they would vote if parliament was dissolved. The results could then be used to determine whether it was worth the expense of actually holding a poll and if not then one or two candidates would withdraw from the race and thus technically leave the constituency uncontested. In these circumstances the contest had already taken place albeit unofficially. Although no official poll was undertaken in these cases there was little difference between this and an actual election. 80 The length of time required for effective canvassing varied considerably, a full county canvas might take from six to ten weeks while a small borough a day or two. At county level it was also assumed landowners had the legal right to exert their influence. To that end anyone who wished to stand as a candidate

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76 D/ANG/B5/33 Letter from Castleman 10 December 1824
77 McKay, *Milborne Port*, p. 140.
needed to seek the approval of the local ruling elite well in advance of any election. Castleman’s correspondence added further weight to this argument and is emblematically illustrated when, in 1841 Mr Sheridan, wrote to the Marquis and proposed himself as a candidate in any future election. He had heard that the standing member for the county had intimated that he would retire when Parliament should next be dissolved and was therefore stating his interest well ahead of any competition. He was implicitly aware that he needed the Marquis’s support and wrote ‘If you can grant me the aid of your valuable assistance to secure to me this great object of my ambition I shall ever feel most grateful … I hope if necessary that I may be favoured by your active support’. Despite receiving the full backing of the Marquis of Anglesey Mr Sheridan never became M. P. for Dorset but was instead M. P. for the borough of Shaftesbury from 1845 to 1852 and then Dorchester until he retired in 1868. Voters within an estate were expected to cast their first vote in accordance with the wishes of their landlord but often their second vote was for them to dispose of as they pleased. The fact that each voter had two votes at his disposal complicated political behaviour according to Phillips and has since made it difficult to measure the conduct of the electorate. During the period for which poll books were available most constituencies were represented usually by two or occasionally three members of Members of Parliament. Therefore until 1868 voters were allowed as many votes as there were seats to be filled at an election. The double vote provided an elector with a multitude of choices, he could use both votes for the candidates of one party, he could split his votes and thus support one candidate from each party or just use one vote and discard the other, this practice was known as plumping. If only one candidate stood from a given party this behaviour was expected and encouraged by the landowner. The practice of plumping was common both before and after the Great Reform Act of 1832. This system of two or more votes meant that the electorate who resided within a given estate would expect to be canvassed. However the election agent of any potential candidate would need the permission of the landlord to do so. This was illustrated in the 1818 Somerset county election. At the beginning of July Castleman received instructions from the Marquis of Anglesey who requested his help to further the cause of Thomas Lethbridge. Castleman furnished

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81 O’Gorman, Voters, Patrons and Parties, p. 95.
82 D/ANG/B5/56 Letter from Mr Sheridan.
83 Moore, The Politics of Deference, p. 3.
Lethbridge’s agent with a list of leaseholders ‘who are votes for Somerset’ and provided information on how best to ‘canvas and influence’. Permission was also granted to call on the tenants personally.  

Gash argued that many if not most parliamentary agents resorted to bribery in order to secure votes. He stated that even after the Reform Act very few candidates were returned without some form of illegal action. Agreement between the candidates, a lack of proof and the expense of presenting a petition to parliament prevented a deluge of disputed elections. In numerous cases the easiest and surest method of procuring a vote was straightforward bribery and the price of procuring a vote was well established. At Leicester it was £1 or £2, at York £2 for a plumper and £1 for a single vote. In 1832 at Stafford the price started at £2.10s for a single and £5 for a plumper but these sums rose at election time to between £7 and £10. These figures are the lower end of the scale. It has been suggested that at Ludlow which the Clive family sought to control as a pocket borough as much as £30 was paid for a single vote and this figure climbed ever higher towards the end of the poll. There is no reference to such practice on behalf of the Marquis of Anglesey at Milborne Port amongst Castleman’s correspondence. However it is alluded to on behalf of the opposition and Castleman wrote to the Marquis in November 1820 ‘our opponents are certainly distributing money to the Votes and they have succeeded in changing some who were in our interest’. In the same letter he concluded that while he was employed watching the movements of the opposition it serves little purpose ‘if the principle – hitherto acted on of not prosecuting for bribery is to be continued’. Furthermore should this policy be allowed to continue the Marquis stood a fair chance of losing all his influence in the borough which was a most worrying prospect. Throughout the period covered by this thesis the canvas remained an essential and important part of the political process and had to be undertaken whether there was actually going to be a poll or not.

Candidates were expected to canvas in person but it was not seemly for them to do so until after the ‘day of nomination’. This left only a short time before the poll, in which to persuade, the electorate to vote for a specific candidate especially, in the case

85 D/ANG/B5/23 Letter from William Castleman 1 July 1818 relating to the Somerset County Election.
87 Ibid.
88 D/ANG/B5/26 Letter from William Castleman 29 November 1820.
89 Smith, ‘The Election Agent in English Politics, p. 15.
of a contested election. The majority of the work therefore had to be undertaken by friends, supporters or a paid agent.\textsuperscript{90} Within the borough of Milborne Port the day to day management was undertaken by William Castleman or the men he paid and instructed. In light of this small window of opportunity it was essential that the mechanics of the political machine were in place and ready to orchestrate. An idea of just how short the time frame might be was provided in a letter from Castleman to one of the candidates in 1830. It was suggested that if notice was given on the Sunday then the election might ‘take place on the Thursday following, leaving three days between the day in which the Notice is given and that of the Election.’\textsuperscript{91} Once the writs had been issued and notice given the canvassing could begin. Castleman stated to Captain Byng one of the candidates at the 1830 election that

\begin{quote}
I think you and Mr Bourne should be at Milborne Port the same night the Notice is given or at all Events by 12 or one o’clock the next Morning, so as to commence your Canvas the next day after the Notice.\textsuperscript{92}
\end{quote}

The criteria by which a candidate might be judged included family, residence, wealth, opinions and personality. A basic understanding of the constituency and its inhabitants was essential. Above all, during the canvas, the candidate needed to be visible and to mix with the electorate, it was not unusual for public and civic buildings to be utilised as meeting places and speeches given. At this point little significance was given to what the candidate said or did, the real crux was for him to be seen and displayed to as many voters as possible.\textsuperscript{93} In any case most votes were already secured through treating continued throughout the year.

Castleman had been aware of the importance of understanding the tensions which existed within the boundaries of Milborne Port. To this end he had set up a committee which met once a fortnight to discuss any matters which arose. However he was forced to abandon their meetings when he realised that the ‘petty jealousies’ within the group jeopardised its objectivity. He wrote to the Marquis stating that he would in its place endeavour to visit the borough every five to six weeks to ‘keep matters in the right train’.\textsuperscript{94} In November 1820 Castleman had complained that the friends of Lord Darlington’s were ‘treating’ the voters at a private house with free drinks. He was

\begin{flushright}
\textsuperscript{90} Smith, ‘The Election Agent’, p. 15. \\
\textsuperscript{91} D/ANG/B5/42 Letter to Captain Byng one of the candidates 14 July 1830. \\
\textsuperscript{92} Ibid. \\
\textsuperscript{93} O’Gorman, Voters, Patrons and Parties, p. 101. \\
\textsuperscript{94} D/ANG/B5/25 Letter from William Castleman 30 November 1819.
\end{flushright}
worried that some of the electorate had already changed sides. In response the estate organised the renovation of the ‘long room and Cellar’ at Canon Court one of the farms in the borough so that they might act in the same way. Strong beer was brewed and ‘Cyder’ purchased, William wrote to the Marquis that on top of the former beverages ‘I mean to buy a Hogshead of Port and another of white wine and a cask of Brandy and Rum’. He imagined the ‘purchase of the original stock will not be much short of £200’. This was not the only way to keep watch on the electorate or the opposition and Castleman had several of the opponent’s voters in his pay and from whom he received information on a regular basis. However this supposed the best way to obtain information was through male members of the electorate but Castleman cleverly realised that other sources could prove useful. He wrote thus to Anglesey in 1822

I find Mrs Owen a most zealous friend to our Cause and from her occasional communications with Feaver I get very valuable information from her.

Although Smith gave women credit as effective canvassers little is known of their role within specific political networks. Mrs Owen was the wife of a local rector and her husband had applied for the living in Ryme Intrinsica which had recently become free. Castleman wrote to the Marquis of Anglesey and advocated that it was advantageous to their cause for the Owens to remain at Milborne Port. This implied that Mrs Owen played an essential role in observing the opposition and passing on the knowledge she obtained to the ‘right ear’. Importantly this snippet of a letter insinuated that while women did not have the right to vote they were still an integral part of the ‘political nation’. The observation of voters and the need to acquire all and any information that pertained to the opposition in order to defend against possible political attack was hardly in keeping with Thompson’s uninterested electorate. Even in a small rural borough it was essential to carefully watch the voters, assess the relationships and tensions between the parties and to use every advantage presented of securing votes. There is no doubt that William Castleman fulfilled this role for the Marquis of Anglesey. Polling day itself required further expense and attention to detail.

On polling day the voters expected to be provided with food and beverages in return for turning out. Among the estate records a number of vouchers such as this one for the

95 Jenkins, ‘Milborne Port’.
96 D/ANG/B5/26 Letter to the Marquis of Anglesey 20 November 1820.
97 Jenkins, ‘Milborne Port’.
98 D/ANG/B5/31 Letter from William Castleman 10 July 1822.
1831 election dinner illuminate the extra costs involved. There would have been extra charges for music and bell-ringing as entertainment during the poll itself. The monies expended even in this small nomination borough were considerable and do much to indicate the importance of politics even at the lowest local level.

**Election Dinner 1831**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Cost</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>73 Dinners at 2/6 each</td>
<td>£9.2 6d</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 Dozen Sherry Wine</td>
<td>£18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Dozen Port Wine</td>
<td>£9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30 Mugs Punch at 6/- each</td>
<td>£9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dinners for 10 musicians</td>
<td>£1.5 s</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beer</td>
<td>£0.12 s</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Desert</td>
<td>£0.7 s 6d</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pipes and Tobacco</td>
<td>£0.5 s</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Breakage</td>
<td>£1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Messenger to Horsington and Candle</td>
<td>£0.2 s</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Servants</td>
<td>£0.10 s</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paid part of Mr Steel's Fare by Coach</td>
<td>£0.2 s</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To Milborne Port</td>
<td>£0.5 s</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Table 4**

Source: Estate Vouchers Dorset and Somerset Estate of the Marquis of Anglesey. 99

Once the election was over it was the responsibility of the local agent to collect, collate and pay the bills which related to the contest. This should have been a relatively simple exercise yet nothing in politics or estate management was without its problems. Complications and tensions existed even when it came to something as seemingly straightforward as assembling the accounts. In January 1819 Castleman reported ‘I enclose all the Milborne Port Election Bills except Mr White’s and Mr Fooks’s to whom repeated applications have been made for them by both myself and a number of others, Mr F prefers delivering his Bill in person’. 100 Once Castleman had finally managed to obtain all the receipts they were sent to the agent-in-chief for approval and then returned so that the monies might be raised to settle them. Before the approaching election of 1826 Castleman wrote to the Marquis to ask ‘exactly what Portion of the costs is to be

100 D/ANG/B5/25 Letter to Mr Lowe from William Castleman January 1819.
paid by Lord Graves and Mr Chichester and what by your Lordship’. He wanted this information because the previous election had seen him personally fund some of the payments which had amounted to ‘16 Guineas’. When these sums had been added to his account they were then been disallowed leaving him out of pocket. This time he wanted to confirm before the election was called who was responsible and for what costs. An idea of the expenses which might be incurred by the local agent whilst canvassing and organising of a borough election can be found amongst the estate vouchers. In 1831 Castleman invoiced the estate some £93. 16. 4 for his personal expenditure which included: chaise hire and drivers, turnpike usage, parchment and stamps, instructions for and drawing and engrossing the affidavits of the returning officers, time spent journeying to Milborne Port and assisting with the canvas and organising the election itself. He charged his own time at £3. 3. 0. per day except the day of election and then his fee was £5. 5. 0. Smith proposed that complaints against dishonest, incompetent or inefficient agents litter the correspondence of all political men. The final fate of small boroughs was sealed by the Great Reform Act which disenfranchised many of the smallest constituencies.

The Great Reform Act of 1832

Political change came about in 1832 through the Great Reform Act. The unreformed system had been viewed as corrupt, out-dated and in need of modernisation to meet the changing needs of a demographically diverse urban population. According to Gash the principal aim of the Reform Bill introduced by Russell in March 1831 was to gather the support of the middle-classes to the aristocracy. Politically the act had two purposes; firstly it aimed to strengthen the constitution by gaining the support of the ‘mass of public opinion’ without which the gentry would not survive. Secondly, it stopped the middle classes from allying themselves with the lower orders among whom it was acknowledged existed a general state of disillusionment. The Reform Bill did not so much seek to overhaul the electoral system but to remove from it those ‘defects’ and ‘abuses’ which occasioned most complaint. Under Lord John Russell’s proposal fifty-six boroughs would be disfranchised and thirty-one others would lose one of their two M.P.s. On the other hand forty-one towns which were without any form representation

101 D/ANG/B5/37 Letter from William Castleman to the Marquis of Anglesey 24 May 1826.
102 D/ANG/B4/54 Estate Vouchers for 1831, William Castleman’s invoice for organising the election and canvas.
would be franchised and given the right to seats in parliament. At county level the plan was to increase the members returned to Parliament for thirty-four out of the forty counties. Men like Macaulay believed that if England was to be saved from ‘catastrophe’ then reform was essential. He thought failure to reform would be catastrophic and warned those who threatened to vote against the Act, ‘I pray to God that none of those who concur in rejecting it may ever remember their votes with unavailing regret, amidst the wreck of laws, the spoliation of property, and the dissolution of social order’.¹⁰⁴ In light of the fear spread by the Swing riots in the latter part of 1830 and their association with ‘revolutionary or reforming mania’ this is hardly a surprising sentiment.¹⁰⁵ In the aftermath of the Reform Act a growing number of popular election manuals and treatises dealing with election law were published and this was seen by some historians as a move towards a more regulated system of organising the poll.¹⁰⁶

Salmon argued that the biggest difference between unreformed and reformed elections occurred before the poll took place. Before 1832 electors simply had to prove that when they turned up at the poll they were entitled to vote. This often caused long delays and it was not unusual for legal arguments to break out between rival candidates over the qualifications of their or the opposition’s voters. The Reform Act sought to separate the process of claiming the vote and casting it. The idea was to shorten the length and cost of elections and to remove party politics from the establishment of voting criteria. Under the new system electoral registers were compiled annually with the onus on the voter to register his voting rights. Each year individuals who believed they were entitled to the franchise had to submit their claim, check pre-prepared lists and lobby local officials to see whether their names and addresses had been recorded correctly. Once it was ascertained that the information thus produced was accurate they had to pay a one-shilling registration fee, ensure all local taxes were paid by a given date and then their names could be added to a provisional electoral role. Should a challenge occur the individual might be called upon to defend their ‘entitlement’ possibly in court

¹⁰⁵ D/ANG/B4/54 Letter from William Holden 21 November 1831 and found in the estate vouchers for 1831.
and perhaps with as little as three days’ notice.\textsuperscript{107} It is suggested that the enrolment process increased electoral participation. However from the estate correspondence it was clear that Castleman believed that some of those who had acquired the vote under the new Act were ignorant of the fact. He wrote to the agent-in-chief in June 1832 stating that ‘persons claiming to vote are required to have met with the particulars of their claims on or before the 20\textsuperscript{th} July’ so that any objections could be made and their names then included in the resultant list.\textsuperscript{108} Castleman was simply ensuring that if the Marquis wished ‘to throw the weight of his interest into the seat of either party’ in the event of a contested county election potential voters on the estate were duly registered.

Although Castleman assumed that under the Reform Act there was an extension of the elective franchise to include ‘Copyholders, Leaseholders & other tenants’ modern historians have debated the extent to which the electorate actually expanded in the wake of reform. Phillips and Wetherell argued the bill promised and actually delivered an overall increase in the number of voters of some fifty per cent.\textsuperscript{109} Daunton did not agree and suggested that in England and Wales in 1715 approximately 25 per cent of all adult males held the vote. However in the years leading up to 1831 this number fell to 14 per cent and the Reform Act increased the number of men those eligible to vote to a mere 18 per cent. This figure was still well short of the eighteenth century electorate. For Castleman the importance of the Reform Act lay not so much in the rise of the number of voters but in the increased influence the ‘great landed proprietors’ would be able to exert on county elections. It was with this purpose in mind that he strove to ensure that all those who were or had become eligible to vote were registered to do so within the appropriate timeframe. However the 1832 Act sealed the fate of Milborne Port and with the ending of the Marquis of Anglesey’s patronage it appears the borough became a drain on his finances rather than a parliamentary asset and it was sold off shortly afterwards.

Ultimately the disfranchisement of Milborne Port had both political and social implications. One of the sub-agents who had ‘uniformly for many years conducted himself as a perfectly honest upright man’ found himself unemployed and no further use

\textsuperscript{107} Ibid, p.54.
\textsuperscript{108} D/ANG/B5/44 Letter from William Castleman June 13 1832.
\textsuperscript{109} Phillips and Wetherell, ‘The Great Reform Bill of 1832.
could be found for him. Highmore fared a little better. A number of letters between Castleman and the agent-in-chief relating to whether this man should receive a small annual salary in lieu of his ‘long and faithful service as Agent for the Borough’ have survived. Mr Sanderson the agent-in-chief finally bowed to Castleman’s wishes and agreed to pay Highmore £20 a year, although it would appear more in the hope that he might use the money to pay off some of his rent arrears than for anything else. Feasts relating to political matters were to cease. Although the function of these had been to encourage and influence the electorate to vote for the Marquis’s interest they must have been great social gatherings. Castleman thought it prudent that the ‘Tenants of the Houses should continue to have their Bread & Cheese once a Year as usual’ so at least one tradition continued. By 1841 the Marquis of Anglesey’s influence was waning at a county level too, and Castleman wrote to the Marquis that the *Dorset County Chronicle* had published a list of voters which indicated that the rector and nine tenants at Stalbridge including some of the most influential had promised their support to Mr Bankes. The swing of voters towards the opposition he proposed was caused by the probable sale of the estate. The tenants no longer felt a sense of loyalty to their landlord and for the first time since the Marquis inherited in 1812 saw fit to lend their support to whoever might be most useful to their cause.

**Anatomology**

In conclusion this chapter has sought to anatomologise local politics. Through a meticulous and careful study it emphasises the detailed and complex nature of politics in pre-reformed England. It has revealed that although deference was expected by both the Marquis of Anglesey and Castleman it was much harder to inflict than might at first appear. Castleman in his role as election agent did not at any point take election victory as a given certainty. Instead he sought through entertaining the tenantry, paying men to observe the borough, evicting those who failed to comply with instructions and through setting up select manufactories to control the borough. When it definitely appeared the estate would be sold off suddenly the electorate became much harder to control. This would suggest that deference was given freely and formed part of the symbiotic

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110 D/ANG/B5/44 Letter from William Castleman 12 June 1832.
111 D/ANG/B5/44 Letter to the agent-in-chief Mr Sanderson from William Castleman 27 September 1832.
112 D/ANG/B5/44 Letter from Mr Sanderson to William Castleman 11 October 1832.
113 D/ANG/B5/44 Letter from William Castleman 12 June 1832.
114 D/ANG/B5/57 Letter from William Castleman 4 June 1841.
relationship between landowner and tenant. As soon as it appeared these bonds were to be broken in this case by selling off the estate, the electorate sought to find new associations which would work in their favour. Thus deference was not controlled so much by the landowner but was the preserve of the voters to bestow as and where they thought it would benefit them the most. While there was no secret ballot should a whole community decide to vote ‘en bloc’ for the opposition in theory there was little the patron of a constituency could have done and he would effectively have been powerless. It would have been financially suicidal to evict all the tenants at once. With the fluctuation in rental prices many farmers were paying higher rents than the land was worth. Although the electorate were aware that their vote was a form of currency neither they nor the landowner were prepared to test its true worth.

The evidence from Milborne Port implies that both the general population and the electorate were far more politically aware than many historians have previously supposed. In this small borough the number of petitions sent to London would suggest that people took far more interest in matters than Thompson gave them credit for. Although the petition against the import of foreign gloves was of local concern, the petitions against slavery, Catholicism and the Test Act were national campaigns. The fact that the populace of small towns and constituencies were prepared to appeal against these issues meant that generally people were well aware of events which were taking place outside their own geographically bound area.

Smith has argued that it is impossible to fully define the role of the land agent before the Corrupt Practices Act of 1883 and yet Castleman seems to act within clearly distinct guidelines. The understood responsibilities included: assuring the loyalty of the tenants, canvassing, getting the electorate to the polls, observing the opposition, raising money to pay for the election and compiling the accounts and paying the disbursements. The election agent it would appear suffers from the same difficulties which existed in determining the functions of a land agent. Both roles suffer from the same problem each was individualistic to the landowner, candidate and constituency but all election agents were expected to undertake very similar duties. Ultimately their task was to return to Parliament a given candidate. As the evidenced by the Duke of Newcastle and Mr Bankes a trustworthy election agent was a necessity no matter where in the country the constituency was based. This alone would start to define the character of all and any agents. Corruption was rife in early nineteenth century politics and the correspondence
of those involved in politics was littered with complaints about dishonest, incompetent or inefficient agents. However the increasing use of attorneys to act in this capacity like land management witnessed the move towards the professionalisation of both roles.

Close textual surveys particularly of small boroughs of the nature of Milborne Port reveal that for landowners simply owning the land did not provide a sufficient means of creating an electoral interest there had to be more. This was proved by the attempted takeover of Lord Darlington although he spent a small fortune he still failed. The tenants’ loyalties throughout this period remained albeit at times tentatively with the Marquis of Anglesey. It is hard to ascertain exactly why but it is assumed that the political rights bestowed by the Marquis of Anglesey on his tenants formed part of something much bigger. The political landscape thus formed an integrated part of the social framework of small communities. It provided social and political stability and on a regular basis reinforced within a well understood and clearly delineated framework a given landowner’s authority to rule. By keeping local taxes low, investing their own capital and aiding and supporting tenants during periods of economic depression landlords were paying the price for political loyalty. Voting in line with his given interest was the price paid by the tenants. In the case of Milborne Port it is impossible to separate out the political, economic and social relationships within the estate. The historical prism created by the surviving archive of William Castleman draws together all aspects of this rural community. Much more research needs to be undertaken at this micro-level to trace the social trends within other estates. The agent acted as the tie which maintained the balance of social, economic and political power.
Chapter 6

Estate, Land Agent and Schools

During the first half of the nineteenth century education, for the majority of children was in the main a somewhat haphazard affair. Horn suggested that much depended on local conditions, particularly the interest exhibited by landowners, village clergy, squires and very occasionally, although it has to be said rarely, by the parents themselves. Education and religion during the period under study was believed to be intrinsically linked. Many parish clerics believed part of their responsibilities and duties included the foundation of some form of basic educational establishment.¹ By the mid-nineteenth century the importance of educating agricultural labourers had been recognised by Robert Brown who included in The Book of the Landed Estate published in 1869 a section on estate schooling. He argued that success in ‘any department of business’ was totally reliant on the ‘character’ of those employed. This Brown maintained was also true for agriculture, for when ‘inferior’ workmen were employed, performance was indifferent and productivity effected.² In his opinion farmers looked at their ploughmen in terms of ‘outward bulk and quality of muscle’ rather than intelligence and this was clearly problematic. Securing the highest possible standards of education for the entire population of the rural community would benefit everyone, as all would now be equipped with the necessary skills to adapt as agriculture become more complex in its execution. The labourers were after all the class on whom success and profitability rested.³ Although a considerable corpus of research has been undertaken relating to church and elementary schools and another body of work undertaken by Keith Snell investigating Sunday Schools little, if any, investigation has been undertaken linking landowner, agent and schools within a given estate.

The conflict which existed between the Established Church and Nonconformist denominations was by the beginning of the nineteenth century an issue of paramount importance.⁴ Gash advocated that this shift towards the domination of the more

marginal issues of education was somewhat predictable.\textsuperscript{5} The rival groups were the Anglican National Society and the dissenters’ British and Foreign Society. Both used the monitory system of teaching. This worked on a pyramid type structure whereby the teacher directed the monitors, who then in turn passed on the information which they obtained to the younger pupils.\textsuperscript{6} This scheme had first been used in India by Dr Andrew Bell an Anglican clergyman with the East India Company and is consequently sometimes referred to as the ‘Madras’ system. In England the first school to use this technique was established in London in about 1801 by the Quaker Joseph Lancaster. In 1810 Lancaster and his supporters formed the Royal Lancastrian Association; whose aim was to encourage others across the country to set up schools using these doctrines. In 1814 this, became the British and Foreign School Society. In 1811 the Church of England responded by setting up their own organisation the National Society for Promoting the Education of the Poor in the Principles of the Established Church. It was more commonly known as the National Society.\textsuperscript{7} The committee included all the Anglican prelates and represented those who wished to proliferate Anglican doctrine.\textsuperscript{8}

This chapter will investigate why, despite the fact that no schools were founded by the Marquis of Anglesey, schools appeared so frequently within the estate records. There was no apparent financial reward to the estate apart from the rents paid. In fact the opposite was true and the schools cost the estate money, through annual contributions, albeit of small amounts, to a number of different institutions William Castleman’s letters and correspondence provide a historical perspective which is otherwise missing from much of the literature which surrounds the historiography of early education. Education was not subsidised, in order to create an improved class of labourer of the type described by Brown but instead was used as a form of social control. The Marquis of Anglesey and the agent-in-chief considered education as a way of moderating the behaviour of a population which was morally weak and at times rebellious. With Bourne’s flax school the idea had been firstly, to teach the boys a craft, secondly to reduce the burden on the poor rate and finally to keep them occupied and at a time in their lives when they were most likely to find mischief. This school demonstrated how vestry and estate might work together and share expenses. While

\textsuperscript{6} P. Horn, \textit{Education in Rural England 1800-1914} (London, 1978), p. 34.
\textsuperscript{7} Ibid.
vocational establishments were not a new idea. Castleman’s correspondence provides an emblematic example of this type of school and its function and management. However, the main emphasis of previous research has concentrated on the denominational struggle for control. Consequently, the result of this focus has meant little or no research has been undertaken on other aspects of educational development. This includes an exploration of the circumstances which ensued when rural communities were left to their own devices. Land agent archives have rarely been surveyed for anything other than material and data relating to land management and yet this single source provides an enormous amount of information relating to education and the diverse systems which existed. Overall, work in recent years on the history of education has been somewhat sparse and neglected. In the case of the Marquis of Anglesey’s estate, it supported a range of establishments including Sunday, Day and Vocational Schools and it is to these this chapter will now turn.

**Sunday, Charity and National Schools**

In the sixteenth century when the state took control of the Church of England, it was crucial that both parties worked together to ensure their survival. Anyone who sought to change the nature of the national religion might simultaneously or in the future seek to reorganise state structure and vice versa. By the early nineteenth century most politicians, the Whigs included, understood that the established church was an integral part of the constitution itself.\(^9\) In order to prevent any subversive tendencies forming in either universities or schools, the government had attempted to ‘license teachers’. By keeping control of education and the subjects taught, it was believed its management should come under the ‘control and auspices’ of the Church of England.\(^10\) Smith alleged all religious denominations exhibited the same motivations, but by 1850 the majority of Anglican clergy had managed to become firmly embedded within the parish structure in a way that other religious groups had not. This consequently created a sense of ‘pastoral responsibility’. Establishing Sunday schools was part of this remit.\(^11\) Snell proposed Sunday schools were instrumental in the promotion of orderliness, punctuality, sobriety,

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10. Murphy, *Church, State and Schools in Britain*, p. 1.
cleanliness, virtuousness and social discipline'. The morals taught in Victorian Sunday schools were not new but had long been the staple of education for children. Teachers were advised according to Tholfsen that children should be encouraged to discover ‘an instant, constant and cheerful obedience’. They provided a basic religious education alongside secular subjects such as reading and occasionally writing. The argument over what should be taught caused considerable contemporary debate. Men such as Jabez Bunting perceived writing as a ‘secular art’ and therefore ‘an awful abuse of the Sabbath’. For him and his contemporaries learning to read scripture was all for the ‘spiritual good’ but writing was something from which the poor might obtain worldly advantage and from which no good might come. According to Snell before the Education Act of 1870 Sunday schools played two important roles firstly in the promotion of mass literacy and secondly in the survival of different denominations. In rural areas for Sunday schools to be viable they often needed the support of both the local clergy and gentry and were usually maintained by subscriptions and donations.

The provision of village schools depended on many things, not least of which was a landowner or incumbent with an interest in educating the local population. When the Marquis of Anglesey inherited the Dorset and Somerset estate he continued to support as had his father the charity school at Stalbridge. Attendance at rural schools increased or decreased according to the work undertaken on the farm. The Second Annual Report of the National Society for Promoting the Education of the Poor in the Principles of an Established Church is a rich source for ascertaining the number of schools in a parish and the amount of children they were capable of teaching. Most of the schools mentioned in this archive have some form of religious input either in their foundation or management. The National Society’s aim for example was to found a church school in every parish.

14 Ibid, p. 129.
The Dorset District Society had been instituted as part of the National Society in 1812. It was decided that no new buildings would be erected immediately but instead it set about looking for property to rent in which schools could be established. The first school in the county opened on 2 July 1812. The society reported in its Second Annual Report that now the formula for schools in Dorset had been instituted, it would proceed with creating more and increasing their numbers. In order for this to be accomplished the county would be split into divisions similar to the present arrangements already in place for civil and military purposes. Members of the society were called upon to identify those schools already in existence which might be suitable for modelling on the ‘Madras System’. Where none were appropriate they were to investigate suitable locations and venues in which to set up day, evening or Sunday schools. Teachers while under instruction were to be maintained by the society who would also gratuitously at least in the beginning provide books, slates and or aid with the charge of fitting out the school room. They might also contribute towards the annual running costs.

Best maintained that the ‘battle over national education’ was not a war between denominations as neither Non-Conformists nor Roman Catholics in the early nineteenth century were overly interested in taking overall control. This attitude was reflected in the school at Bradford Abbas which will be discussed in more detail later in the chapter. Neither was the battle concerned with the ‘antagonistic’ principles of religious or secular education because all denominations aimed to provide the nation’s children with an education based on religious principles. Instead the main thrust of the matter revolved around the two ‘irreconcilable’ theories of doctrine and the undenominational. This argument was an extension of the philosophies which already existed within both established and dissenting churches. The conflict between the differing concepts may have been obvious in urban areas but were much less so upon the rural estate of the Marquis of Anglesey. Here the divisions were frequently more blurred and less obvious. Horn concluded that ultimately the two societies had the same objectives. In the end both sought to combat the ‘ignorance and degradation’ of the poor. Education was to

prepare the labouring classes for a life of ‘honest toil’ and to foster an understanding of their lowly position in society.\textsuperscript{21}

A small number of reformers at the beginning of the nineteenth century started to view education as a right for all. In 1807 the radical MP Samuel Whitbread unsuccessfully presented to Parliament a Bill which would have provided two years’ free elementary education to children between 7 and 14. Those who could not afford the usual one or twopence a week would be funded from the rates. The opposition included the Archbishop of Canterbury who stated the scheme was ‘likely to subvert the first principles of education … which had hitherto been … under the control and auspices’ of the Church of England. Other critics including the MP Mr Pole Carew objected on the grounds of cost. He estimated the project would need the landed interest to provide the staggering sum of around two million pounds worth of subscriptions. Others were of the opinion that teaching the labouring classes reading, writing and arithmetic would not reduce the number of social problems but would have the opposite effect and encourage a further increase in the population.\textsuperscript{22} In the end the cost of providing even the most basic of education was left to the discretion of the clergy and gentry. Research has proposed that medium to large landowners who held between 3,000 and 10,000 acres were the most generous particularly within their own parishes.\textsuperscript{23}

The estate’s attitude to the education of the poor within its boundaries was evident from the beginning of Castleman’s agency. In response to a letter from a Dr Hughes Castleman had written to the Marquis and stated ‘I believe Hanley to be one of the most disorderly parishes in the whole District of the Chase’.\textsuperscript{24} He believed that supporting the school already in existence would be most ‘desirable’ and might have some effect on the rebellious nature of those who resided in the parish. Porter argued that farmers were frequently vehemently opposed to and mistrustful of any form of education. In general they took little interest in day schools and would not contribute towards the running costs.\textsuperscript{25} However at Hanley in 1814 Castleman believed ‘I should have no difficulty in prevailing on the Tenants to subscribe something towards the Expenses’.\textsuperscript{26} At this initial stage of his investigation he was unaware of the nature of the established school

\textsuperscript{21} Horne, \textit{Education in Rural England}, p. 33.
\textsuperscript{22} \textit{Ibid}, p. 34.
\textsuperscript{23} Potter, ‘Social Institutions’, p. 895.
\textsuperscript{24} D/ANG/B5/15 Letter from William Castleman 1 July 1814.
\textsuperscript{25} Porter, ‘The Development of Rural Society’, p. 902.
\textsuperscript{26} D/ANG/B5/15 Letter from William Castleman 1 July 1814.
as the letter writer had not stated whether it was a Sunday School or one established on
either ‘Bell’s’ or Lancaster’s plan. At the start of Castleman’s enquiry it appeared that in
fact no school existed at Hanley but instead 20 to 30 children had been taught at the
sole expense of Dr Hughes. According to Hughes himself a school set up upon the
principles of Dr Bell’s plan ‘would unquestionably be the best’ however the main
obstacle remained quite simply the cost. He estimated that ‘an annual fund of £60 to
£70’ would be the minimum requirement and that the farmers would not be prepared to
subscribe the sums needed. In other words it would fall to Lord Anglesey to contribute
any shortfall in expenditure. By August 13 1814 Castleman had established that in
actual fact there appeared to be only a Sunday school at Hanley and suggested that if
Lord Anglesey choose to contribute a subscription of some ‘4 or 5 guineas a year
would be quite sufficient’. The estate vouchers provide more detail relating to this
school and in 1821 it was described as being ‘established on Dr Bell’s system’ and the
estate paid £6 6s 0d per annum or six guineas towards its upkeep and thus provided an
idea of sort of amounts that Lord Anglesey contributed to other parishes within the
estate. The sums are not large but they were regular. For example in
1821 he also donated £2 2s 0d to the Sunday school at Milborne Port and £3 3s 0d to
the parish of Bradford Abbas. From 1826 onwards donations were made of £10 per
annum towards the costs of the Sunday school at Stalbridge. The attitudes of the local
clergy are illustrated by a letter from the Reverend Luke curate at Stalbridge who
proposed the establishment of a Sunday school in his parish and this he hoped would
improve the behaviour of his parishioners. Although historians have proposed that the
provision of education was reliant on the landowning rather than the farming class on
this estate it seems the costs for the charity school at Stalbridge were spread.

The estate vouchers form an extensive body of more than 10,000 documents and
samples taken from this archive in 1820 and 1830 provide evidence of the types of
sums being donated and by whom. Initially they were paid to Harriet Mead and then
Harriet Habersham (presumably the same woman). The following table 5 provides an
indication of the names of some of those who contributed towards this charity school.

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27 D/ANG/B5/14 Letter from Dr Hughes, August 8 1814.
28 D/ANG/B5/14 Letter from Castleman 13 August 1814.
29 D/ANG/B4/45 Estate vouchers for 1821.
30 This table contains a sample of those who contributed towards this charity school. The subscriptions
were always for one girl and while the names of those who pledged money were predominantly male
there were occasionally women who too made a payment.
It must be assumed that this was some form of dame schools for all the subscriptions are towards the education of girls. At the top of each voucher it stated that the payments were towards the education of children on charity in reading &c. It has to be presumed that besides reading the girls were taught to sew and were instructed in any other useful subjects deemed suitable. From the evidence within the archive it is impossible to know whether the school had a section for boys as there is no evidence of subscriptions paid for their education. The facts would suggest that the estate tenants and their womenfolk were not against at least a rudimentary form of female education. Although the school was supported by the estate this would not continue ad infinitum.

Competition towards this charity school came from the National Society which had founded a school at Stalbridge in 1814. The parochial returns of 1818 described this institution as a ‘school on Dr Bell’s plan’ which was supported by voluntary subscriptions. At this date it contained 74 boys and 32 girls and the return concluded that the ‘poorer classes [in this parish] have sufficient means of educating their children.’

List of Sponsors to Harriet Mead/Habersham’s School at Stalbridge.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Half year due Xmas 1820</th>
<th>Michaelmas 1829 to Lady day 1830</th>
<th>Lady Day 1830 to Michaelmas 1830</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>James Parsons</td>
<td>1 Girl 5s.0d</td>
<td>Job Duffet 1 Girl 5s.0d</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Job Duffet</td>
<td>1 Girl 5s.0d</td>
<td>George Clark 1 Girl 5s.0d</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>William Scott</td>
<td>1 Girl 5s.0d</td>
<td>James Roberts 1 Girl 5s.0d</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>William Parsons</td>
<td>1 Girl 5s.0d</td>
<td>James Parsons Cole 1 Girl 5s.0d</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Charles Hockay</td>
<td>1 Girl 5s.0d</td>
<td>James Parsons 1 Girl 5s.0d</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nathaniel Baker</td>
<td>1 Girl 5s.0d</td>
<td>George Vining 1 Girl 5s.0d</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ann Drew</td>
<td>1 Girl 5s.0d</td>
<td>John Duffet 1 Girl 5s.0d</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Susan Duffet</td>
<td>1 Girl 5s.0d</td>
<td>William Mead 1 Girl 5s.0d</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Richard Cummins</td>
<td>1 Girl 5s.0d</td>
<td>William Seniour 1 Girl 5s.0d</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rob Seniour</td>
<td>1 Girl 5s.0d</td>
<td>George Parsons 1 Girl 5s.0d</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>£2 10s.0d</td>
<td>£2 10s.0d</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 5

In 1832 William proposed to Lord Anglesey that the salary of £5 per annum made to Habersham the school mistress should now cease in light of the National School’s contribution to the education of both boys and girls in the town. Although Lord

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31 A Digest of Parochial Returns Made to the Select Committee Appointed to Enquire into the Education of the Poor: Session 1818 Vol. I Ordered by the House of Commons to be printed 1 April 1819.
32 D/ANG/B4/45 Estate Vouchers for 1820 and D/ANG/B4/53 Estate Vouchers for 1830. This table provides a sample of those who subscribed to Habersham’s school.
Anglesey was according to Castleman a liberal subscriber it in fact appeared that scarcely anyone had received instruction at this school for some time.\textsuperscript{33} Lord Anglesey and the agent-in-chief agreed to Castleman’s suggestion but only if ‘unattended by any hardship or injustice towards the School mistress and a satisfactory assurance that the exercise of her functions have ceased’.\textsuperscript{34} In November Castleman wrote to Habersham with the news that her salary would cease from Christmas.\textsuperscript{35}

In light of the support of the National Society in Stalbridge the Reverend Luke proposed in 1831 the construction of a new school house but the Society turned down his application. In time honoured fashion he turned to the estate for help, requesting permission to build on a plot of land at Drew’s Lane.\textsuperscript{36} Although funds were raised for the construction of the new school a deficit remained. By stopping Habersham’s salary Castleman recommended that Lord Anglesey divert the monies instead in the form of a subscription to cover the debt incurred on the new National School.\textsuperscript{37} The buoyant position of education in this town implied that the estate encouraged education and that this ideal was reciprocated by those of influence within the estate’s boundaries.

This was not the only National School which requested the help of the Marquis of Anglesey. On the death of the 1\textsuperscript{st} Marquis in 1854 Edward Castleman received a letter from Mr J. W. Dugdale which asked whether the new head of the estate would ‘be good enough to carry out the intention of his late father in regard to the annual subscription’ which he paid to the National Society School at Kington.\textsuperscript{38} More importantly this letter provides the school’s historical background. Ten years previously the different landowners within the parish were solicited for aid towards the founding and building of a National School. The Marquis of Anglesey gave fifteen pounds and the promise of an annual subscription once the works were completed and the school established. Various circumstances prevented the plan being actioned until 1854 by which time Dugdale had obtained ‘a promise of a grant from the Committee of Council of £150, & another promise of £20 from the National Charity’. In addition promises of funding had been received from the Duke of Rutland – patron of the living – and various other friends. Finally the building of a school room which

\footnotesize{\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{33} D/ANG/B5/44 Letter from William Castleman, 20 October 1832.
\item \textsuperscript{34} D/ANG/B5/44 Letter from Mr Sanderson to William Castleman, 9 November 1832.
\item \textsuperscript{35} D/ANG/B5/44 Letter from William Castleman 13 November 1832.
\item \textsuperscript{36} D/ANG/B4/54 Estate Vouchers for 1831 Letter from Reverend Luke October 1831.
\item \textsuperscript{37} D/ANG/B5/44 9 November 1832.
\item \textsuperscript{38} D/ANG/B5/75 Letter from J. W. Dugdale September 29 1854.
\end{itemize}}
met the approval of the ‘Committee of Council’ had been achieved. The overall cost amounted to £330 and it was calculated that this would provide the education for some 80 children in a mixed school. The master needed no further training as this had been provided at the Institution of the National Society in Westminster. Furthermore now the school was in the final throes of completion the rector was seeking subscriptions for the building of a dwelling house within which the schoolmaster might reside. There can be no doubting the passion which ministers such as the Reverends Grant, Luke and Dugdale exhibited in providing educational establishments for their parishioners. Despite their enthusiasm they were nearly always reliant on the estate and other landowners to provide the funding. This cements the views of most historians that without the patronage of the local gentry and aristocracy schools would not have survived.

Milborne Port had perhaps, but not unsurprisingly, given its political importance the largest selection of schools within the estate. *The Digest of Parochial Returns* recorded in 1818 that there were five day schools which were attended by about 100 children and two Sunday schools within which about 70 were taught. Despite its political significance, there is surprisingly little in Castleman’s archive relating to educational establishments apart from references to one Sunday school. According to Mackay the Marquis of Anglesey’s vouchers suggest that the Marquis contributed towards the cost of this Sunday school almost from the moment he inherited. In the six months ending 5 April 1823 it appeared this school was being held in the Town Hall, for a note amongst the accounts from the Reverend William Owen states ‘This rent was for the Town Hall which has for several years been used for the Sunday School’. The subscription donated continued over a long period of time and even in 1833 the Marquis continued to subscribe £2 2s 0d per annum. While it might have been expedient for the estate to invest more than £15,000 to retain the patronage of this borough, education of the poor did not merit more than a few pounds a year. As will be seen it is not always easy to establish what type of school was actually in existence in a given parish but there is no doubt that the Marquis supported a number of ventures particularly in the more troublesome parishes. The estate correspondence thus bears witness to the idea that religious education could be beneficial to the local populace. While the vouchers

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indicate the estate’s support for basic education, its attitude only becomes clear when charity and other day schools are explored.

Providing enough schools and an appropriate level of financial support was not always enough, particularly, if the local population were not prepared to use the facilities provided. At Stalbridge the poor appear to have taken advantage of the opportunities offered, however at Marnhull the parochial returns of 1818 portray a very different story. The population in this parish was recorded as 1090 which was was slightly larger than Stalbridge’s 890. The provision for schooling at Marnhull was considerably more extensive and consisted of a day school wherein 40 children were instructed by a master and mistress and a Sunday school ran by the same teachers. The second establishment had been supported by subscription and attended by 130 boys and girls but due to the financial pressures at the end of the Napoleonic War this had been reduced to between 40 and 50. The parish had built ‘a good room’ in which these schools were held, in addition the returns listed four dames schools containing altogether 42 children and an evening school for 12 young men. However the significant difference between the education on offer here compared to Stalbridge was not in the standard of schooling but in the attitude of the population. The Parochial Returns stated that those who resided in the village did ‘not seem desirous to avail themselves’ of the opportunities offered.40

One example of how different rural schools could be from the accepted norm is found in the Charity schools at Bradford Abbas. The situation here was somewhat complicated and the best description of their origins and unification comes from two letters. Both were written by Robert Grant the first in 1835 and the second ten years later in 1845.41 He states that Castleman may not be aware of the ‘peculiar and somewhat anomalous nature of the Charity Schools of this Parish’.42 It appeared that around 1740, Mr Preston the then Vicar left on trust to his successor certain lands in the parish of Compton for the support of a charity school. It appeared the quantity was in fact actually eighteen acres of arable land. The school master was paid £8 8s 0d per annum and the school mistress £7 12s 0d.43 This establishment it appears was run by the

40 A Digest of Parochial Returns, p. 213.
41 In order to formulate the establishment and unification of these two schools the two letters will be not be used chronologically but instead in an order which allows their history to be told.
42 D/ANG/B5/63 Letter from the Reverend Robert Grant 6 March 1845.
43 A Digest of Parochial Returns, p. 204.
Church of England and known locally as Preston’s Charity. In 1781 as a result of the Reverend West failing to appoint a schoolmaster Messrs Reid and West inhabitants of the parish decided to establish a school of their own. To this end they invested £220 and a further £50 was raised via other trustees. All those involved had according to the Reverend Grant ‘dissented from the Church of England’ and in 1794 the Earl of Uxbridge granted a lease to a College and premises upon lives to two of the trustees namely Thomas Thompson and Mark Fooks. The idea was the land tenanted would provide enough space for a schoolhouse and a dwelling for the appointed master. In 1800 Mr West the then incumbent of the parish made a full settlement of the lands at Compton by ‘deed of alignment’ and vested them in the names of five trustees. In 1845 despite changes to the character of the schools the trust continued to be run by five trustees and these are listed as the ‘Reverend Grant, Mrs B. Cooper, S Archer Esq. Mrs J Parsons and J. Goodder Esq.’ Thomas Thompson had been a trustee of both charities and in 1800 the two schools had been united in operation although the funds at this point were not. The Parochial Returns in 1818 stated that Preston’s School contained 26 boys and girls but the school register suggests that numbers were much smaller. (Table 6).

In 1835 the original school had been destroyed by fire. Steps were taken to strengthen the union between the two schools in order to prevent any future problems between the two charities once the new school had been constructed, particularly and as a consequence of the two being ‘one in operation’ for so long although supported from different sources. After carrying out a consultation it was discovered that only one life remained on the lease and Castleman was approached to make an application to the Marquis for a fresh lease without fine and vested in the names of the joint trustees. Consequently Grant and Pretor on behalf of Prestons and Fooks and Harman on behalf of Reid and Wests met Castleman in October 1835. This application included within the lease three small tenements held by Richard Rideout which was still being held on two lives. Grant foresaw the benefits of the annexation of these additional properties as twofold. Firstly, it would detach the school from any other structures which would be

44 D/ANG/B5/48 Letter from the Robert Grant 27 April 1835.
45 D/ANG/B5/63 Letter from the Reverend Robert Grant 6 March 1845.
46 Ibid.
47 The school register taken from www.opcdorset.org/BradfordAbbas/BradfordAbbasAdmission%20Register.htm suggests that numbers were either considerably smaller or this document simply records the poor children in attendance. Appendix 2.
both more convenient and make the building more secure. Secondly and perhaps more importantly it would give the school a 60 foot long frontage and ‘it would’ then ‘have such an external character; as would give it a certain respectability in the eyes of the people, and to have an influence however small, on their character’. There was an innate assumption that the size and commanding position of the school would help to control the population of the area. The spatial linking of education and church might just exert some pressure on the behaviour and morals of the local population.

Castleman in his report to the Marquis stated, ‘I believe this school (for reading and writing) has been much improved by the attention of Mr Grant since he was appointed vicar’. Having provided the Marquis with the present and possible values of the property in question Castleman believed the crux of the matter rested on whether his Lordship was favourable to the instruction of an ‘agricultural population in writing’. His Lordship had not in the past lent his financial support to this concern. Castleman however, proposed that it was more probable that if the requested endowment was paid that the school would then attract more efficient masters who might in the future be encouraged to undertake its management. However in 1835 at the last minute Fook’s brother a co-trustee would not consent to the arrangement and therefore unification of the two trusts could not take place. On 26 June 1836 Fooks and Grant met with his Majesty’s Commissioner but Fooks could not be persuaded to change his mind and nothing further was done.

The premises were rebuilt by the then school master Mr Custard who died in 1837 and on his death Mr Thorne was appointed as school master by both charities. By 1845 the number of trustees of Reid and West’s charity had been reduced to two and they were by now both willing to revise the situation and to forge ahead with the unification of the two schools as far possible. The aim was to bring into effect the plan which had first been devised in 1835. It was once again intended to ask the Marquis to provide a fresh lease on the same terms as before free of fine and vestry in the names of the trustees of both charities. Ultimately Grant stated his aim was ‘to prevent any future collision between the 2 trusts from which the parish could suffer’. Grant stated that neither he nor his ‘brother trustees’ could consent to the arrangement unless it was

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48 D/ANG/B5/48 Letter from the Robert Grant 27 April 1835.
50 Ibid.
51 D/ANG/B5/63 Letter from the Reverend Robert Grant 6 March 1845.
distinctly understood that the schoolmaster must always be a member of the Church of England. Grant did not anticipate any objection to this point. In fact Thompson one of the trustees for Reid and West had indicated that he thought it a very proper condition. The founder of Preston’s Charity had stated in his will ‘that the boys should be brought up in the doctrine and principles of the Church of England’. On the other hand Reid and West had made no mention of the manner in which the children educated under the auspices of their charity should be instructed.\(^{52}\) From 1800 onwards the two schools shared not only the same building but the same teacher and seemed to co-exist without problem in this manner. As already discussed both the Church of England and non-conformism fought to control education but this school reflected what might happen when populations were left to their own devices in the remoter areas of the country. It is only through close textual analysis of records beyond and different to those which historians have in the past examined that a fuller understanding of how rural education worked in practice might be assessed and understood.

John Custard had been appointed as schoolmaster at Preston’s school on March 18 1800. The trustees had stated

\[
\text{We hereby constitute and appoint John Custard to be Master of the School in Bradford Abbas, originally instituted by the Rev. William Preston for the purpose of meeting … and instructing eight poor children. Inhabitants of the said Parish and Clifton Mawbank in Reading, Writing and Arithmetic according to the full intent and meaning of the Deed of Settlement of said School this day for which he is to receive a Stipend or Salary of eight pounds per an.}\(^{53}\)
\]

However, despite being schoolmaster of the two combined schools at Bradford Abbas, Custard, was not popular. When the Reverend Grant came to the parish in 1829 the trustees of Reid and West’s had given Custard notice to quit his house, because of alleged inattention to his duties. Grant gave his word to the trustees that he would ensure that the schoolmaster in future would not be found guilty of neglecting his responsibilities and obligations and no other action was taken. Further controversy surrounded this man; in 1837 an application was received by Castleman for a license to convey a leasehold tenement to Custard. Castleman stated that in general such licenses were usually granted as a matter of course. However in this instance he referred the matter to Sanderson the agent-in-chief for his sanction. Castleman held back because

\(^{52}\) \textit{Ibid.} \\
\(^{53}\) \textit{http://www.opcdorset.org/BradfordAbbas/BradfordAbbasAdmission%20Register.htm} accesses 01/07/2014.
Custard already held some properties in the parish and was unpopular among the other tenants. In fact they believed he was responsible for wilfully setting on fire two Lifehold Houses which were ‘burnt to the ground’ the previous summer. Despite this alleged illegal misconduct Custard continued to receive the support of the Reverend Grant whom Castleman described as ‘a sensible man’.\textsuperscript{54} Of course not all schoolmasters were this unpopular. In 1817 in an anonymous letter seeking to replace Castleman the schoolmaster at Marnhull was suggested as a replacement and it was stated that ‘he bears a good character’.\textsuperscript{55} Teaching did not always lead to success particularly when family problems intervened. In 1822 William Castleman received a letter seeking financial support from one Thomas Hayward, who had for the last nine years kept a day school at Marnhull which, by his own admission had been reasonably successful and supported his growing young family, ‘in a creditable and respectable manner’.\textsuperscript{56} However, probably as the result of a large number of pregnancies (the couple had nine surviving children out of eighteen, seven of whom were under the age of ten) Hayward’s wife became dangerously ill, and to compound matters he himself was ‘greatly afflicted with deafness’ and found himself heavily in debt. Rather than looking for parish relief he turned to the Marquis of Anglesey for aid.\textsuperscript{57}

The Marquis supported many of the applications which were presented to him but did not subscribe to every request. Boucher’s school at Thornhill in 1842 was a matter for much debate and a case in point. Mr Powys’s approached the Marquis through William Castleman to make a request for additional capital for this venture. Castleman responded by writing to the agent-in-chief, in case he or the Marquis were directly contacted. It appeared that while the building was very neat and ornamental its position within the parish rendered it of little use to the population as a school.\textsuperscript{58} Castleman stated that he had not been consulted in any way whatsoever on this subject otherwise he would have explained to Mr Powys that for the reasons already stated he would have been unable to advise Lord Anglesey to provide any form of subscription to this particular project. The main problem as far as Castleman was concerned was the location, there was a considerable population at Weston but this school was further away than the National School at Stalbridge.

\textsuperscript{54} D/ANG/B5/51 Letter from William Castleman 27 January 1837.
\textsuperscript{55} D/ANG/B5/22 An anonymous letter to the Marquis of Anglesey simply dated Shaftesbury 1817.
\textsuperscript{56} D/ANG/B5/31 Letter from Thomas Hayward 3 May 1822.
\textsuperscript{57} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{58} D/ANG/B5/59 Letter from William Castleman to Thomas Beer agent-in-chief 11 April 1842.
Boucher’s response to the report from Powys has also survived and he judged Castleman must have been misled concerning the location of the intended new school. He believed that while some of his tenants might not have children there were numerous families on the Common, Poole’s town and Weston which would make good use of the building. In fact he argued that the vast majority of the children who would use the school were chiefly associated with the Marquis. Although Boucher had been able to amass around £211 by donating £100 himself and receiving £110 from Mr Percy and £10 from Mr Everett it was still not enough.59 Boucher had anticipated ‘that the Marquis, who had always evinced much regard for the education of the poor, would readily have contributed the amount of our deficiency’.60 The Reverend Powys tried again on the 8 April to convince Castleman to change his mind but to no avail. Even though recognised as being sympathetic to education it appears the Marquis on this occasion took Castleman’s advice. Not all requests for money were for educational purposes some asked for basic provisions or treats. In January 1842 the Reverend Grant wrote to the Marquis requesting his help to provide ‘the Sunday School Children of this parish [Bradford Abbas with] a plain dinner on the day of the christening of the young Prince.’61 Just so Castleman and the Marquis of Anglesey remained aware of the influence of such establishments on the general population Grant finished his letter thus ‘The Parish I hope is in an improving state although the poverty is as great as ever’.62

Castleman was also not averse to withholding financial aid when the populace of a given parish had carried out alleged misdemeanours. In 1826 the Reverend Luke at Stalbridge wrote to Castleman regarding the Marquis’s subscription for clothing for the children of the Sunday school. Castleman believed that the sum alluded to in the letter had been sums which had previously been subscribed towards coals in the parish for the poor. These monies were withheld in this instance because of the behaviour of the poor ‘stealing the timber’ which had blown down in the park during the hurricane in 1825. However when it came to subscriptions and aid to the Sunday school Castleman declared ‘Anything likely to improve the morals & conduct of the rising population in that turbulent place is I am sure, deserving of his Lordship’s attention & what I shall be

59 D/ANG/B5/59 Copy of letter from Boucher to Reverend L. C. Powys 2 April 1842 and Letter from Powys 24 October 1842.
60 D/ANG/B5/59 Copy of letter from Boucher to Reverend L. C. Powys 2 April 1842.
61 D/ANG/B5/59 Letter from Reverend Grant January 19 1842.
62 Ibid.
most happy to promote’. In 1834 the curate at Hanley wrote to Castleman requesting payment of Lord Anglesey’s subscription to the charity school in the parish however the agent was reluctant to make the payment. He wrote to John Sanderson agent-in-chief

this is the person who has lately been making an encroachment of a part of Lord Anglesey’s property in that Parish of the most glaring kind for which I have laid a Case before Counsel in which you & your Co-adjustors in Lord Anglesey’s [affairs] will shortly have to decide on further legal Proceedings respecting the property in that infernal place.64

However Sanderson when he replied in February did not agree with these sentiments. He empathised with his agent’s position ‘on account of the mutinous deportment of your neighbours at Hanley’ and stated ‘wherever a delinquent individual or band conspiring in Acts of delinquency; can be detected let punishment follow for the sake of Justice; and to render it effective in the way of warning’.65 Despite this sympathetic attitude Sanderson would not subscribe to the idea of withholding a ‘charitable’ subscription given in Lord Anglesey’s name unless it could be proven that the school which it was given to support was actually instructing the children ‘in the vicious causes of many of the Inhabitants of the place’.66 This would suggest that Lord Anglesey understood the value of educational establishments as a means of socially controlling and improving the character of the populace of the estate. However, these two letters also intimated that those who were involved in teaching, including the curate, were able to indoctrinate the children and consequently their parents in subversive ideals should they so desire. Education of any kind during this period could be difficult as Mr Bourne found out at Stalbridge. The aim of schooling children was not necessarily to teach them to read or even write, vocational education set out to provide a trade.

**Vocational Schools**

The modern concept of education is teaching based and delivered within a specific school building but during the nineteenth century vocational schools were common. The school planned by Mr Bourne fitted into this category. His proposed instruction of a number of boys in the growing and manufacture of flax was discussed at a meeting of

63 D/ANG/B5/37 Letter from William Castleman 3 February 1826.
64 D/ANG/B5/46 Letter from William Castleman to John Sanderson 22 January 1834.
65 D/ANG/B5/46 Letter from John Sanderson to William Castleman 4 February 1834.
66 Ibid.
the vestry on 21 October 1823 and an arrangement agreed. Under this agreement the parish agreed to supply Bourne with fifteen healthy boys suitable in age and strength for his purposes. The parish would arrange for the boys to be sent to him at their expense for a period of five years. It agreed to provide good and adequate clothing for the first six months. An allowance of one pound seventeen shillings and six pence a week was to be paid to Bourne for the first twelve months. On his part Bourne would provide the boys with, board, lodging and suitable education for the entire five years and clothing once the parish’s initial contribution came to an end. Once the allotted time ceased he agreed to leave them as well clothed as they were when they first arrived. He was to receive the allowance in part payment of his expenses. It is apparent from the correspondence that the parish intended to claw back some of the money they had initially expended in the latter stages of this period and Bourne therefore agreed

To pay the parish one shilling a week for each boy for the fourth year and one shilling and threepence a week for the fifth year in order that [some recompense] might finally result to the parish from this arrangement. 67

Castleman intended when necessary for the estate to benefit from this agreement, it was therefore, written into the vestry agreement that Mr Bourne would in the event of a scarcity of labour arising within the parish accommodate, ‘any respectable farmer’ with three boys labour on, ‘fair and reasonable terms’. 68 Within this scheme provision was made for the religious education of the boys and it was stated that they should attend some form of worship; however, this was not stipulated as being Church of England. Instead the authorisation was simply ‘that the boys shall attend regularly such place of worship as their parents or Guardians may prefer’. 69 More importantly the boys were to be as far as Bourne’s was concerned ‘trained in the paths of virtue and instructed in the Principles of Christian religion’. 70 Initially Castleman had misgivings about the scheme and wrote to the Marquis of Anglesey ‘I am no friend to the establishment of Manufactories in Agricultural districts’. 71 However in this instance he had no objections, for the boys were to be involved in ‘spade husbandry’ and educated in the process of cultivation as well as the manufacturing aspect of the business. More importantly Castleman stated ‘I thought nothing could be worse than having active Boys of that age

67 D/ANG/B5/32 Letter from William Castleman 14 November 1823.
68 D/ANG/B5/32 Vestry meeting 21st October 1823.
69 Ibid.
70 Ibid.
71 D/ANG/B5/32 Letter from William Castleman on Bourne 14 November 1823.
unemployed and depending on parochial relief for support’.

The vestry provided financial assistance but Castleman stated that he did not believe it was right for the Marquis in the initial stages to provide a monetary contribution. Instead the estate allowed Bourne the use of any part of the park, house, garden or materials at Stalbridge manor which the tenant did not personally want. Bourne and the boys were granted free range over the house until such time as the Marquis wished for it to be returned. Bourne for his part agreed to prevent any damage by those under his care or to conspire with any others intent on causing destruction to the said premises. The estate also granted the right to any tenant to let to Bourne ‘such parts of their Arable Lands as Mr Castleman may approve to grow flax or as Garden Ground to any modest extent’.

Theoretically and on paper this seemed a good plan. When Bourne first appeared in the Stalbridge area he managed to induce Lord Digby and many other gentlemen in the neighbourhood to support him. Even Castleman was a convert to his principles. However by November 1830 Castleman and the others who had in the beginning afforded financial assistance were by now disillusioned. William stated that they ‘found that his Schemes were visionary’ and on observation unworkable. It was alleged that Bourne ‘Violated his Engagements’ with Castleman ‘by receiving Apprentices from Neighbouring Parishes’ and under the settlement rules of the Old Poor Law they were then able to claim residence at Stalbridge. Lord Anglesey’s tenants consequently insisted that he be removed as quickly as possible from the parish and the school closed. As the tenants paid the poor rate they were reluctant to add to their liability. Bourne infuriated Castleman by writing and publishing a number of abusive anonymous letters about him but he retaliated claiming Bourne was a ‘convicted Libeller’ and stated that if he had not been relieved of his position he would have been the reason for a heavy burden being placed on the poor rate. In his defence of the situation Castleman reassured the Marquis that he was not adverse to any scheme that might in the future help to relieve the burden on the poor rate. However he could not and would not sanction plans which like Bourne’s were the preserve of a ‘needy and visionary adventurer’.

Although the Digest of Parochial Returns mentions the existence of dame schools in Dorset, this is the only reference within the estate of an establishment

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72 Ibid.
73 D/ANG/B5/32 Special Vestry 21 October 1823.
74 D/ANG/B5/42 Letter from William Castleman 20 November 1830.
75 Ibid.
76 Ibid.
of this kind. This scheme worked in partnership with the vestry and other landowners in the area and the archive is relatively detailed in explaining the terms under which the agreement was set up. It seems to have had a two-fold purpose. Firstly, it removed a number of boys off of poor relief and although the vestry initially paid for this privilege, the system was such that they would have seen their money returned. Secondly the aim appears to have been to provide the boys with a trade which would have provided them with employment as adults. Despite its failure the interaction between vestry and estate to find solutions to poverty is interesting and worthy of further investigation elsewhere.

**Conclusion**

Although the Marquis did not personally nor instruct his land agent to establish any schools in his name he still played a part in the history and development of English education. Research undertaken by Monks has also begun to explore the impact of the estate on nineteenth century country schools indicates that this form of involvement is far more commonplace than previous works by Pamela Horn and Anne Digby would suggest. The Marquis of Anglesey like others in his position was fully aware of the influences that could be exerted over the population through the medium of education. Historians have suggested that by the mid-nineteenth century the Sunday school contributed ‘to the progressive destiny of the nation’. It strengthened the national character and was a major factor in making the people of England ‘good and great’. However using Castleman’s correspondence as a prism through which to observe all aspects of the rural community the indications are that most of those who set up Sunday and day schools did so for personal and local reasons. For example the Reverend Luke set up the Sunday school at Stalbridge for the express purpose of improving the behaviour and morals of his parishioners. At Hanley the agent in chief refused to allow Castleman to withhold payment to the Sunday school as it was perceived that money spent in this way was useful in calming and controlling the populations of turbulent and rebellious villages. The Marquis believed he had a duty to improve the moral character of those who lived within his estate. Hanley sat on the edge of Cranborne Chase an area which local landowners and gentry claimed was ‘conducive’ to stealing, poaching and

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78 Tholfsen, ‘Moral Education’, p. 94.
The villagers living on the edge of this area were declared to be both licentious and idle. Hardly surprising therefore that the Marquis would attempt to use all and any means at his disposal to ensure their obedience and adherence to estate policy.

While the religious debate raged over who should control education during the first part of the nineteenth century the two charity schools at Bradford Abbas existed side by side in the same building. Furthermore they shared the same teacher although their funding remained separate. Finally in 1845 steps were made to finally unite the two charities and the non-conformist trustees agreed to allow the appointment of a school master who was a member of the Church of England as part of the unification process. Religion does not seem to play any part in the way this school was run. *The Parochial Returns* recorded that West and Read’s school was tiny and only attended by fourteen boys and girls and the register for Preston’s school suggests it was either smaller or of the same size and it is thus assumed that the only way that these two schools could compete for pupils and survive was to join forces. Nothing amongst the historiography has been found of a comparative nature. However the joining together of these two religious establishments may have been more in line with Smith’s assumptions that the aim was to provide a purely religious education and denomination came second. It appears at this point to be a unique combination and only further research into estate schools will be able to ascertain its rarity.

The estate did not only support those schools which were founded by the clergy or other religious organisation, the early commitment-in-kind provided to Bourne displayed an attempt to relieve poverty long-term through the establishment of a vocational school. Although Bourne appeared to provide a somewhat different type of apprenticeship experience it quickly became clear that the scheme was unlikely to work. It ended in acrimony; he was accused of being a ‘convicted Libeller’ and ‘a needy and visionary adventurer’. Ultimately Castleman viewed him as a ‘profound hypocrite’. He was relieved of his position when it appeared that his actions of bringing boys from other parishes and allowing them to stay for more than forty days provided them with settlement status which would ultimately put a much greater burden on the poor rate. There must have been something about this man that worried Castleman from


D/ANG/B542 William Castleman 20 November 1830.
the beginning because he ensured that clauses inserted into the original agreement prevented Bourne from personally acquiring settlement status. Castleman insisted that he was not above agreeing to this type of establishment if it stood some hope of relieving poverty in the future.

The main thrust of the educational debate has focused on two main areas of research firstly, the battle between the Anglican Church and non-Conformity and secondly the establishment of schools in urban areas. Rural schools remain under researched and in particular the part played by the land agent in co-ordinating the efforts of the landed elite. It appears from this research and that undertaken by Monks that far more research is needed into the archives of landed estates in order to fully assess the part they played in elementary education. This micro-study and more of this nature are urgently required in order to fully ascertain the part played by rural education in the general historiography and its development. It has been included in this thesis because this archive stretches our knowledge beyond that of the established literature and provides a clue to the volume of material that might be available. This would provide a much greater understanding of the rural school and the later nineteenth century rural community. It also does much to suggest that the prism created by the land agent extended into all aspects of society. The fact that so many of those who sought help, advice and finance approached the agent first is indicative of not just his power and status but indicates his innate understanding of rural life.
Chapter 7

The Rental Accounts and Estate Vouchers of William, Edward and Henry Castleman

By the beginning of the nineteenth century the keeping of records was not a new process. Many have survived from the Middle Ages onwards particularly those connected to governmental practices. On private estates the survival of records is much more unpredictable. Turner, Beckett and Afton have suggested that the key principles which related to the compilation of accounts seemed to expand over time. One of the main factors in the development of record keeping was the need to supply absentee landowners and their agents-in-chief detailed information relating to the estates they owned.\(^1\) However frequently despite the presence of a land agent or steward many accounts have been lost over time. It has been proposed that the level and quantity of these records may not have been that numerous in the first place but any that were compiled must have had some form of structure. The Castleman rental accounts are unusual as they provide an unbroken run from 1814-1854. The landowner/agent system was put in place to improve the management of the landed estate and this included the collection, collation and compilation of the accounts.\(^2\) It was not unusual to divide the different areas of the estate into a myriad of different categories including: farm accounts, labour records, steward letter books, estate vouchers and a range of different memoranda. Loudon offered the following advice on the keeping and auditing of accounts

\(\textit{Clearness and brevity} \text{ constitute the excellence of accounts, and these excellencies are only to be obtained by simplicity of method.}\(^3\)

The majority of estates used a form of charge and discharge accounting and had done for many centuries although eventually this was replaced by double-entry bookkeeping.\(^4\) Some historians have argued that many estate accounts were simply ‘elaborate cash accounts’ which were presented once a year and frequently included the movement of tens of thousands of pounds. They give a general overview of the financial health of an estate and because the different incomes were usually grouped

\(^{2}\) \textit{Ibid.}
\(^{3}\) J. C. Loudon, \textit{An Encyclopaedia of Agriculture} (London, 1826), p. 703.
together in the same manner provide a means over many years of checking its efficiency. They allow the researcher to investigate the amount of rent paid, increases or decreases in rents, salaries and other expenses. Despite the importance of the accounts in providing essential data, relatively little research has been undertaken into the information they contain and what they might reveal when examined over time. One of the main problems Turner, Beckett and Afton advocated was that contemporaries knew little about the value of rents and this has left historians looking for ways in which to fill the gap and assess trends.\(^5\) Agricultural rents were the largest component of landed incomes and were the best indication of the financial position of the majority of the landed classes.\(^6\) Chambers and Mingay published one of the first usable rent indexes, but the sample used was small and biased towards the eighteenth century.

In the case of the Marquis of Anglesey the only recognizable accounts are those which dealt with rent received, those which detail cash flow including expenditure were either not compiled or have not survived. Instead the archive contains more than 10,000 estate vouchers and even less investigation has been carried out into this aspect of estate record keeping. Vouchers in particular are time consuming to extract information from but nevertheless provide a unique opportunity to add a quantitative aspect to the research already carried out on Castleman’s correspondence. This chapter will therefore firstly examine the charge and discharge account. This is essential in order to understand the rental accounts. Secondly it is expected that through a thorough exploration of the rental accounts a fuller understanding of the rents paid and arrears accrued will be achieved. However the vouchers are too numerous and too detailed to explore in their entirety, in this or indeed any PhD even one completely devoted to their contents. Even the cursory investigation carried out here reveals they contain the entire minutiae of the day to day running of the estate and include information on: the sums expended on housing stock drainage expenses, rent allowances, fire insurance certificates, sums subscribed to schools, clothing and coal funds, audit dinners, election dinners and miscellaneous payments to name just a few. On reflection a decision was made to explore a number of the vouchers relating to the landlord tenant relationship especially drainage, repairs and allowances, the economy of makeshifts and the

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Marquis of Anglesey’s contribution to poor relief and more diverse themes including the prosecution of the Swing rioters. A careful comparative study of these seemingly insignificant scraps of paper reveals the sheer scale of the work undertaken by the land agent and adds to our understanding of the landlord/tenant relationship by revealing the cost of improvements and repairs. The intention of this thesis is to raise the profile of the estate voucher and encourage other historians to research other archives in this manner. As a result the true extent of estate influence and expenditure will be uncovered and revealed. The Castleman family’s attention to detail has left a rich seam of material which the majority of historians have in the past ignored. This chapter will now turn to the rental accounts.

**Rental Accounts**

Lawrence as early as 1806 proposed that for those involved in the business of property accounts it was essential that certain ‘General Rules’ were followed. He argued that perhaps one of the most important of these was to trust as little as possible to memory or accident. All ‘memorandums of payment, receipt, bargain, agreement’ etc. should be made instantly; no monies should be paid without discharge and ‘no security, agreement, lease or valuable paper’ should be given or lent without a written agreement. He advised that all provisional, undecided or uncertain transactions should be entered into the account as soon as possible with ‘every possible explanation, voucher or reference’ in a dedicated ‘memorandum book’. The best ‘accounting-house rules’ it was counselled were to enter the various transactions under their proper heading and not to leave anything for more than a week. Furthermore all papers should be dated and secure storage provided for those that were most valuable. At the end of each year the papers accumulated should be stowed separately from those of any other. Lawrence stated that this was the ‘indispensable duty of the steward, attorney or agent’. He was not aware of any ‘precise general plan of accounts’ which were recommended for the steward or agent to follow. In fact at the end of the eighteenth and early nineteenth century he declared that all that existed were ‘mere unconnected particular books and forms or abstracts of accounts for inspection. Instead the best method of accounting was to pay due diligence to the execution of a set of books which were updated with considerable regularity. Lawrence was against keeping a multiplicity of accounts and saw these as the ‘usual refuge’ for those who had not been initiated into
the science of accounting. Moving backwards and forwards between a number of different books doubled the effort and led to a ‘vulgar and straggling system’.\(^7\)

Charge and discharge were the system used by many estates for centuries and was pre-eminently the system used by estate stewards. One benefit of this type of record was that in an illiterate society it could be worked with an ‘exchequer’ that is lines on a table to act as columns for units, tens scores, etc. Baxter likens the charge and discharge account to a sandwich with the opening and closing amounts forming the outer layers and the cash account the filling.\(^8\) The system worked thus ‘the steward was charged with the sums for which he was responsible’ that is the opening balance including the receipts and he ‘discharged’ his legitimate payments. Monies remaining at the end were either passed over to the lord (or by the nineteenth century paid into his account) or kept in the steward’s charge for the next period. The final statement of account was at the apex of a much broader system of estate record keeping which could be used to micro-manage the estate. At the top of this triangle were the rental accounts, for it was through the leasing or renting out of land that landowners received the highest percentage of their income.\(^9\) Turner, Beckett and Afton advocated that the most basic of estate accounting was found in these rental accounts. However they contain many variations and frequently changed techniques without any explanation. Most but by no means all, total the sum of monies collected at the foot of the page. It was usual to use some form of cash book to record the rents as they were collected. On many estates and especially larger ones rental accounts might consist of an abstracted annual total and this could include previous arrears, assessed rents, rents due, rents received and arrears which remained ongoing.\(^10\)

Research undertaken by Turner, Beckett and Afton has provided the most detailed and seminal text on the general long term trends of rent prices from the 1690s to around 1880. They suggest that the interest of historians in rental income has been to secure a methodology to establish the wealth of a given landowner. A general interest in land sales has been used as a means of establishing financial and economic problems

\(^7\) J. Lawrence, *The Modern Land Steward* (London, 1806), pp. 120-123.
both in agricultural price and the consequent value of land.\textsuperscript{11} When seeking to ascertain which estates to include in their research on agricultural rent they immediately rejected those who did not have adequately long rental records or did not contain evidence on acreages which had been obtained through surveys. Others contained land which was let under ancient tenures and were thus more difficult to understand. A common problem for around three per cent of the records examined was the non-differentiation between agricultural and non-agricultural usage. Of the approximate 200 estates examined another seven per cent of those originally identified as potential candidates were discarded because the material within the archive was organised in such a manner as to make extraction difficult or time consuming. Once the information was collated Turner, Beckett and Afton contended that their investigation showed a distinct pattern in the profile of English rent through three full cycles; each was composed of a plateau followed by a rise. The first plateau followed a slow slightly upward slope from 1690 to 1730. From 1750 to 1790 there is another gentle upward sloping plateau and then from 1790 to a peak between 1810 and 1815 rents nearly trebled. Unlike the first plateau rents this time did not start from a very low base rate. From around 1815 to 1850 although there was an initial drop at the end of the Napoleonic Wars rents were reasonably stable remaining at the same level throughout.\textsuperscript{12} Often one of the main problems with rent accounts is the disparity between the rent assessed by the landowner or tenant and that actually paid by the tenant. In times of economic difficulty even if the rent assessed was £100 the farmer might only pay £90. However in other years when paying off any arrears the amounts paid could rise above the requested amount. Turner, Beckett and Afton determined that a rent index based on rents received would provide a more accurate picture of changing conditions rather than one based on contract rents.\textsuperscript{13}

The Castleman family collected and compiled bi-annual rent accounts for the Marquis of Anglesey’s Dorset and Somerset estate for more than forty years, and are very precise. As with the vouchers it is impossible to conduct an in-depth and detailed examination. Therefore in order to obtain a general overview of the information contained therein starting in 1815 and ending in 1854 (when the estate was sold) a sample has been taken every 5 years at Lady day. Castleman’s accounts would have been quickly discarded from the above historians’ research because they did not meet

\textsuperscript{11} Turner, Beckett and Afton, \textit{Agricultural Rent}, p. 143.
\textsuperscript{12} Turner, Beckett and Afton, \textit{Agricultural Rent}, pp. 149-150.
\textsuperscript{13} \textit{Ibid}, p. 151.
the laid down criteria. However through an examination of the sample years it has been possible to examine: arrears, rent assessed, rent paid and those villages which were less profitable. While the rental accounts are essentially a list of payments there are occasional comments which provide a sneak glimpse of the individuals who made up the estate. Unlike the assumptions made by Turner, Beckett and Afton, the Marquis of Anglesey’s rental accounts do provide details of rent assessed and received on rent day and the level to which arrears accrued or decreased. The discrepancy between these two values is clearly evident in Fig. 8.

Fig 8.\textsuperscript{14}

However this method was not entirely accurate as William Castleman reflected in the margin of the rental page for Milborne Port property in 1825 when he stated ‘Most of the Borough Rents are reserved monthly and therefore the exact period to which each is paid depends on the day of the month of its commencement’.\textsuperscript{15} This may partly explain why arrears were frequently higher after the audit than before. Likewise many of the tenants at Hanley did not pay their rents until after they had sold their sheep in August and October.\textsuperscript{16} Once tenants found themselves in debt it often took months or years for them to pay off all the arrears accrued and with the economic crises of the early

\textsuperscript{14} D/ANG/B1/23, 33, 43, 53, 63, 73, 83, 92 and 100 These figures are taken from the abstract of rental for each year at Lady day.
\textsuperscript{15} D/ANG/B1/43.
\textsuperscript{16} D/ANG/B5/25 Letter from William Castleman 6 July 1819.
nineteenth century it is not until after 1835 that rents assessed and paid are more or less on a par. This variation in arrears is charted in Fig 9. The information as to how and when the tenants paid their rent was only available in the correspondence. An examination purely of the rental accounts would not have revealed the extenuating factors. Without this knowledge a simple survey of the rental accounts of an estate’s archives would call into question the overall accuracy of their data.

**Arrears Before and After Audit Day**

![Graph showing arrears before and after audit day](image)

Fig 9.\(^{17}\)

From analysing the abstract of rental it becomes simpler to ascertain those areas of the estate which were most unprofitable and explains why these parishes were sold off shortly after the Marquis inherited (Fig 10). At Clifton in 1815 only 60 per cent of the rent is paid at the audit, and it was subsequently sold off in 1825. The rental income at Milborne Port increased without subsequent rise in arrears when the Marquis rented land from Sir William Medleycott.

\(^{17}\) *Ibid.*
However the rise in rents was relatively low and it is assumed that the rents paid were actually small (Table 6). Milborne Port was sold off in 1837 but the decision to part with the borough was not the result of poor economic viability. Instead the Great Reform Act of 1832 brought disenfranchisement and this signalled its ultimate demise.

The rental income at Stalbridge constituted about 25 per cent of the estate revenue during the first thirty years and this rose to around 66 per cent by 1854. It is therefore hardly surprising that this was one of the last parts of the estate to be disposed of. The rise in the number of tenants in this instance appears to explain why the rental income increased.

Fig 10
A Comparison Between the Number of Tenants and Rental Income

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Rents assessed</th>
<th>Number of Tenants</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1815</td>
<td>9318</td>
<td>112</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1820</td>
<td>9244</td>
<td>195</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1825</td>
<td>9820</td>
<td>489</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1830</td>
<td>8983</td>
<td>145</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1835</td>
<td>9689</td>
<td>410</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1840</td>
<td>8664</td>
<td>137</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1845</td>
<td>8604</td>
<td>148</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1850</td>
<td>6951</td>
<td>161</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1854</td>
<td>4451</td>
<td>104</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 6.\(^{18}\)

Turner, Beckett and Afton have constructed a table by exploring the rent per acre from 29 farms distributed amongst 22 English and 1 Welsh county. The estates used in this study included the 49,000 acres of the Earl of Ancaster’s Lincolnshire and Rutland estate, the 50,000 acres of the Duke of Bedford in the east and south Midlands and around 2,400 acres on the single farm estate in Flintshire owned by the Duke of Westminster. They concluded that in 1842 rent per acre was 25.9s.\(^{19}\) By using the land valuation and net rental values of the 1845 sale particulars it is possible to make the same calculations. The land on the Marquis of Anglesey’s estate varied considerably from the above theory as can be seen from Table 7. The average price was around 24.3s per acre, but there was a large variation across the estate. The work undertaken by Turner, Beckett and Afton is of immense value. It is probably the most detailed publication on this subject; however as can be seen from the above exercise the average might be very different from the rent per acre in an individual area.

\(^{18}\) Taken from the Lady day rental accounts of William Castleman.

All of the accounts within this thesis fall into a category which Turner, Beckett and Afton would have rejected because extracting the data would have proved too difficult. However the rental accounts for the Marquis of Angelsey prove the problems which are inherent in this type of research and which can affect the overall results. It is argued here that a firm conceptual understanding and knowledge of other evidence from the appropriate archive is essential to fully understand this type of source. For example Fig 11 exhibits the enormous changes in tenant populations over the period. The peak in numbers in 1825 corresponded to the struggle for the patronage of Milborne Port between the Marquis of Anglesey and Lord Darlington. The account for that half year contained all those who resided in the borough including those living in property owned by Sir William Medleycott and leased by the Marquis and in housing formerly owned by Lord Darlington. The spike in 1835 occurred when the Marquis was beginning to consider the sale of Milborne Port and buoyant tenancy numbers were an essential factor in the valuation. Very little research has explored why tenant numbers fluctuated in what were relatively stable conditions or attempted to theorise as to the reasons why this might or might not occur. Wade Martins has suggested that at Holkham approximately 150 families held farms on the estate from 1790 to 1900. She stated that it was not always clear when a family leased more than one farm if it was farmed

Table 7.20

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of Estate</th>
<th>Acreage</th>
<th>Net rental</th>
<th>Net rental per acre</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Stalbridge</td>
<td>3937</td>
<td>6676</td>
<td>33.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Charleton</td>
<td>1255</td>
<td>1920</td>
<td>31.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Henstridge</td>
<td>446</td>
<td>655</td>
<td>29.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Temple Coombe</td>
<td>266</td>
<td>456</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stour Provost</td>
<td>142</td>
<td>306</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bradford Abbas</td>
<td>952</td>
<td>1740</td>
<td>36.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Handley</td>
<td>3034</td>
<td>2144</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gussage St Michael</td>
<td>1255</td>
<td>1114</td>
<td>17.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Todber</td>
<td>124</td>
<td>218</td>
<td>15.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kington and Nyland</td>
<td>418</td>
<td>662</td>
<td>29.8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

20 D/ANG/B5/63 General Summary of the Estate in 1845, this is a smaller estate than the one inherited in 1812, it does not take into account any lands previously sold off.
separately or in conjunction with the other holdings. 21 This still does not provide the in-depth detail of the study undertaken here into tenant numbers and their variations. Other research fails to explore rental income, arrears and tenant numbers alongside other detailed research into estate archives. It concludes that other micro studies of this nature are urgently required to fully appreciate all the variations which affect income and without these studies all we are left with are generalisations.

**Tenant Numbers 1815-54**

![Tenant Numbers 1815-54 chart]

Occasionally the rental accounts include extra information which adds to information already gleaned from the archive. Firstly they contain the only record of the salary paid to William Castleman. At the end of each he records his remuneration of £250 for the previous six months. Frequently there are notes and reminders of why rents had been broken or reasons why gratuitous allowances were paid. Rarer still are personal comments and in 1850 it appeared that even the overseers were not exempt from a life

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of crime. Edward Castleman recorded in the margin for Stalbridge, ‘This Overseer is lost, Kelly having been tried for horse stealing and transported’. Like his father before him Castleman Junior moved to protect the estate’s income and immediately levied a distrai

tian upon the property of the overseer. These types of remarks can provide an idea of why some rentals changed as in the case of Edward Chant in 1820 when both his rents and arrears were reduced by eleven shillings in consequence of his rent being higher than that of his neighbours. Although tenant right existed on the estate there is little idea of the values involved but the importance of dung was evident in 1808 when Mr R James Esq was to be paid £24 11s 4d for the dung left on his farm. However he remained in debt and this sum was only to be paid when he had discharged all sums owning, and this was not finally settled until 1815. Part of the scheme to increase voter numbers at Milborne Port appeared in 1820 when Castleman recorded £1078 18s 8d to H. Taylor for building eight new houses at Waterloo Crescent. Like the rest of the archive Castleman’s character is evident even in this more mundane record when in 1823 Sarah Balster and Charles found their gratuitous allowances withheld because they had failed to comply with the set repair schedules.

The accounts add another dimension and depth to our understanding of the rural community. They provide evidence of the income received in rental, and how this varied over the period under study. The levels of arrears which accrued can only be discovered by examining the archives of individual estate as these were not set locally, regionally or nationally but reflected local landowner and agent attitudes. These accounts alongside the estate correspondence form part of the historical perspectives and prism formed by Castleman’s record keeping. Previous research on rental income has concentrated on the debates relating to the formation of a rent index, the nature of tenure, rent arrears and regional variations and long term trends. This study is more local in nature and seeks to determine what information might be gleaned from more specific studies. The difficulties in the timing of rental payments and the variations in rental payments per acre alone are sufficient to establish the value of exploring previously rejected accounts. For this estate monetary expenditure is also couched within the estate vouchers. This chapter will now explore the rise of the interest in

numerical information and investigate the intricate detail which is contained within this much neglected source.

**Estate Vouchers**

King has suggested that the demand for numerical knowledge at the beginning of the nineteenth century was part of an overall increase in the information state. In fact he argued that the operation of power of any kind became increasingly dependent on quantitative data.\(^\text{24}\) The estate voucher and the information they contain has been almost entirely neglected and yet they provide a means of measurement and comparison between the diurnal correspondence of the land agent and expenditure. This is particularly true where there was a lack of any other form of account excepting rental. In many ways an agent provided, received and digested numerical data in a manner similar to that of the overseers and vestrymen who oversaw the Old Poor Law. On the other hand he was like the parish officials, a crucial provider of statistical information in his own right. The construction and compilation of the rental accounts, as well as the accumulation and analysis of the vouchers provided Castleman, the agent-in-chief and the Marquis of Anglesey with the necessary financial knowledge to ensure the efficient running of the estate. Castleman himself was a coroner and would have been well acquainted with officials harrying him for returns relating to his time and the costs of holding various hearings. Thus the governmental work he undertook in the greater outside world may well have influenced his style of estate management and the gathering of financial knowledge. Numerical information from the estate would not have been garnered and gathered without reference to external data and other land agents. King proposed that local and national newspapers reported trends in prices and this included the price of agricultural produce, business and farm failures, property valuations, poor rates and the cost of poor relief.\(^\text{25}\) The vouchers recorded: rent abatements, allowances, inclement weather, social and welfare provision, landlord/tenant relationships, the subsidizing of education, monies expended on housing stock and evidence of the land agent paying for local knowledge.


\(^{25}\) Ibid, p. 53.
The question of how men used numerical information once obtained is similar for both parish overseer and land agent alike. Once collected and collated the knowledge thus gathered would have aided in the shaping of estate policies, the application of rent rebates and allowances, the ability to assess expenditure necessary to maintain the housing stock and an assessment of the sums expended in education and the relief of the poor. This ‘comparative numerical framework’ according to King transformed the understanding of poor law expenditure for both officials and ratepayers and it is argued here that this process would have had the same effect on estate financial planning.26 Like the parish officials an agent received cash and paid his disbursements by whichever method was most appropriate and this created similar problems for both groups. Each had to contend with the ‘physical quality of money’ while actively seeking ways of dealing with debt management.27 Guide books were produced on the economics of the poor law and the agent similarly had access to manuals on land management which provided practical advice. The Marquis of Anglesey’s archive was indicative of this explosion of numerical information and now provides a unique insight into the detailed problems faced by the estate. The information gathered helped landowner and agent to target where investment in tenant farms, housing stock, local schools and the labouring poor was most needed. The overall aim of this section is to explore the type of numerical information hidden in the estate voucher. It will begin to define the quality of the information thus contained. Once gathered the new information acquired can be added to that gained from the more commonly explored correspondence. Together they can be used to create a deeper and closer understanding of many of the factors which influenced the management of the rural community.

Through the close textual study of the estate vouchers this thesis proposes it is possible to continue to investigate the landlord/tenant relationship which has been discussed in Chapter 3 in a more comprehensive manner. A survey of the vouchers will explore how the estate contributed to the relief of the poor and it will seek to add quantitative data to agricultural repairs and improvements. As a source there are three major problems, the first is the sheer volume that have survived, and this means the historian has to sample the archive rather than exploring it all. Secondly because for this particular estate they are uncatalogued they are not necessarily in chronological order and this adds to the amount of time required to sort and shift and finally there is little or no historiography.

26 Ibid, pp. 51-56.
27 Ibid, p. 57.
against which a comparison might be made. The first area which the chapter will explore is the landlord/agent relationship.

**Landowner/Tenant Relationships**

Hoyle in his recent publication suggested a number of different sources to explore the history of the farmer, not only are the vouchers missing but so are estate records in general. To a limited degree the tenant farmer used the landowner as banker both in periods of economic down-turn and as a source of funding for improvements and repairs. In many instances it is argued that under-draining and the construction of new buildings took place while farms were in hand but long tenancy agreements such as those in Dorset meant that alternatives had to be found. Historians have argued that because of the expense of the different drainage options landlords took responsibility for the brunt of the costs. In 1833 a witness from Wiltshire who appeared before the Select Committee on Agriculture stated that this was a project that the tenants would not undertake unless ‘they are allowed a part of the expense or the whole of it’. Caird had suggested that the work required more skills than most inexperienced farmers were able to contribute. An emblematic example of where the vouchers add a measurable quality to the landlord/tenant partnership pertains to the drainage indenture between Ralph Ironside and the Marquis of Anglesey discussed in Chapter 3. The original document which was debated pertained purely to the contribution made to the scheme by the Marquis and Ironside himself. There was no other evidence in the correspondence of any of the other external trades or skilled men involved and this in truth only provided the researcher with half of the evidence. The estate recorded a much more extensive list of payments for this scheme Table 8.

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General Statement of Bills Paid for Draining Bradford Leaze.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>£</th>
<th>s</th>
<th>d</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ralph Ironside</td>
<td>91</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>George Higgins</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thos Bartlett</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Geo Bartlett</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N Ridout</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I Spencer</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N Waltons</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I Warr</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>W Cridling</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F Woodhatch</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N Cridling</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C Notley</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N Bragg</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adam Beer for cutting and cleansing the Leaze twice</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Total</th>
<th>£</th>
<th>s</th>
<th>d</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>205</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 8.  

Even these were not the entire costs John Spencer was employed to keep ‘the cattle out of the new work of the underground drains while the Drains was making’ from ‘light to Dark’. Overall it took some forty-six days to complete the works and Spencer was paid 2d per day for his services which amounted to some £4 12s 0d. Drainage works were not swift. John Custard (probably the school teacher at Bradford Abbas) was paid £2 for the work which he had undertaken on 21-23 and 27 June ‘measuring the open and underground draining and drawing the leading carriers to the principle springs’. The drainage was described as ‘open draining 1049 poles, 4 open carriers together 139½ poles and underground draining as 2227 poles’. Wm Cridling’s (mason) receipt has also survived, he invoiced eleven days for a boy and himself to draw up a large cover stone out of the sandy road to make the top cover for the large carriers in Bradford Leaze and for which he received £2 1s 3d. He also received a payment of 16s for a labourer for a further eight days. For connecting water troughs to the spring in order to provide drinking water for the cattle another 15s. Finally he

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30 D/ANG/B4/45 Estate Vouchers for William Castleman 1821 relating to the drainage of Bradford Leaze.
31 D/ANG/B4/45 Estate Voucher pertaining to John Spencer July 13 1821.
32 D/ANG/B4/45 Estate vouchers 1820.
charged £3 3s 9d for seventeen days for himself and a boy for jointing and setting the large cover stones over the large carriers. The Marquis’s partnership with Ironside did not cease once the draining programme had finished. On 6 September 1824 a voucher recorded the payment to him by Castleman on behalf of the Marquis of Anglesey for the sum of one pound ‘for keeping the underground drains in Bradford Leaze in proper order’. Ironside does not appear in any of the tenant lists, although he may have rented the land with someone else. Unfortunately the rental accounts do not provide the name of any of the farms, fields or meadows as a point of reference so he cannot be traced through this medium either. In fact the vouchers suggest that Ironside may have been a small landowner in his own right with some of his land lying close to that of the Marquis of Anglesey. The vouchers do however supply a much fuller picture of the extent of this drainage scheme and provide a much greater understanding of the work involved in order to bring the scheme to fruition. Furthermore they provide the evidence of its continued maintenance. By separating out the information contained in this section of the archive from that of the correspondence it is possible to reflect on the importance of this source in assessing and analysing all aspects of the rural community in a way that would not be possible if simply added to that gleaned from the correspondence. The vouchers contain financial rather than large amounts of narrative data and this is their strength. The historiography relating to drainage tends to suggest that it was the ‘cure all’ of agricultural problems in the nineteenth century.

Chambers and Mingay extoll the virtues of drainage and the improvements which followed the introduction of cheap pipe production and government loans. Besides the problems of expense they also suggested that many small farmers were men of little education and as such were ‘suspicious, prejudiced and resistant to new ideas’. Kerridge however argued that trench drains had been commonplace for much longer than frequently assumed. The bottoms were lined with: bushes, brushwood, stones, or cinders and then covered with straw ropes or turfs. Other hollow drains were constructed from bored out trees. In this estate the importance of drainage is not fully apparent through the diurnal correspondence of Castleman but only becomes clear

33 D/ANG/B4/49 Estate Voucher 6 September 1824.
when a detail examination of the vouchers is undertaken. Elsewhere it is an ‘unwitting’ suggestion but not implicitly stated.

The references to under-draining within the vouchers are too numerous to mention or even count but run into the hundreds and it is intended to just examine one or two emblematic examples which appear within the archive. Tenants were granted allowances against their rent for drainage works which they had carried out throughout the year although more than one type is referenced. In 1823 Mr Chs. Toop received the sum of £3 15s 0d for walled draining for his farm at Charlton Horethorne which he rented jointly from the Marquis of Anglesey and Ralph Ironside.\(^\text{37}\) In 1830 for carrying out the improvement of 96 lug of underground draining in a ‘field called Hams Moor’ which was in the occupation of James Snook an allowance of £1 12s 0d was allowed. It is apparent from the vouchers that payment was not swift. It was not until July 1832 that James Snook signed the receipt voucher and commented ‘one half of the above allowed out of my rent’.\(^\text{38}\) Not all rebates were passed with ease and in 1820 Parsons and Mogg were allowed £2 16s 5d for underground draining. A comment has been inserted that ‘this was allowed in consequence of a conversation with Mr Sanderson [the agent-in-chief] on the subject of a claim by Mr Bugg of Land Tax’.\(^\text{39}\) In most cases the amount of drainage paid for is included although it would take an enormous effort and considerable time to ascertain the full extent of the amount of works carried out. Figs 12 are examples of the vouchers within the archive and are typical of the data which is inherent in all of them.

\(^{37}\) D/ANG/B4/48 Voucher relating to Chs. Toop August 1823.

\(^{38}\) D/ANG/B4/54 Estate Voucher relating to James Snook December 1830 and signed July 1832.

\(^{39}\) D/ANG/B4/45 Disbursement allowed to Michaelmas 1820.
There is no evidence from the estate that tile drainage was used, probably because by the time the cost had fallen to more realistic levels it had already been intended to seek a purchaser. It would appear therefore that the agricultural revolution played little or no part in this improvement but instead it was undertaken to improve the health of the livestock and to mitigate against unnecessary flooding and loss of estate revenue. The

Fig 12  

40 D/ANG/B4/54 Vouchers for 1831.
descriptions provided correspond to those of Kerridge and thus it is concluded that the work undertaken fitted into accepted but ancient practices.

Further evidence of the landowner/tenant relationship is apparent in the allowances made for repairs particularly those which were caused by adverse weather conditions. High winds appear frequently in the vouchers and in 1820 Castleman recorded paying Jeanes the thatcher £7 13s for repairs occasioned by the tempest although this event is not recorded elsewhere as being notable.\textsuperscript{41} In 1823 the autumn had been wet and in late October strong winds and gales had caused wide spread flooding, consequently J. N. Highmore was paid £13 17s 2d for the repairing the river bank which had been ‘injured by the flood’.\textsuperscript{42} He was further allowed ten per cent allowance or £73 on his rent as it appears from the correspondence that his land was low lying and liable to flood, thus washing away livestock, hay and grass. However the gale which hit the south west of England in November 1824 has become legendary. Stratton stated that ‘one of the worst storms on record hit the country in November, with great winds, pouring rain and terrific thunder, especially on the west coast’.\textsuperscript{43} The Western Flying Post reported on 29 November 1824 ‘A tempest teeming with more frightful terrors is scarcely within the memory of man’.\textsuperscript{44} It has been suggested that this was one of the worst storms ever to hit the south coast and yet it passed almost unnoticed within the correspondence. However the vouchers bear witnesses to the extent of the damage and again illustrate the expediency of searching the entire archive. For without this element the extent to which the estate suffered would not be evident. Castleman recorded that Goodridge was paid to ‘make good the pan tile [roof tiles] on the farm stall that was uncovered by the tempestuous weather that happened on the 22 & 23 Nov’ on J. N. Highmore’s farm. In order to prevent its ‘blowing off in future the roof of this stall was reeded inside’. All in all he received £3 8s 3d.\textsuperscript{45} Isaacs was paid for repairing the thatching on a building tenanted by J. Welch which had also been damaged by a recent ‘tempest’.\textsuperscript{46} However these seem to have escaped quite lightly compared to Biles who was allowed the interest of £39 6s on the cost of building a new

\textsuperscript{41} D/ANG/B4/45.
\textsuperscript{43} Stratton, Agricultural Records, p. 101. Entry for 1824.
\textsuperscript{44} http://www.dorsetlife.co.uk/2013/01/the-great-gale-of-1824/.
\textsuperscript{45} D/ANG/B4/49.
\textsuperscript{46} D/ANG/B4/49.
barn because the previous one had been blown down.\textsuperscript{47} The weather caused damage to buildings at other times too. In 1836 the estate made a payment for thatching at Yenston Farm which was occupied by Robert Davis as the roof on the stable had been blown away by ‘tempest’.\textsuperscript{48} These examples are by no means the only cases within the vouchers but have been chosen simply because they give an overview of the type of sums the Marquis and the estate were willing to expend in order to support the tenants.

The relationship between landlord and tenant was a two way process and on occasion they could expect to be taxed in order to provide financial support to a scheme the Marquis wished to sponsor. The best evidence for how this worked in practice is a voucher relating to the repair of the roof of Bradford Abbas church. Collectively those tenants who rack rented were taxed and this raised a revenue of £9 18s 11d which was then termed their share of the expenses incurred. This particular voucher serves a second but unconnected function. From the rental accounts it is in the main almost impossible to ascertain the tenure by which the land is held and although this voucher provides albeit a small addition to the information pertaining to the tenants it is still a useful tool.

\textbf{Agricultural Vouchers}

Vouchers which pertained solely to agriculture are rarer but can still add to our understanding of the way, in which the land was farmed and managed. They also include attempts by the Marquis to involve the tenantry in improvements. The Stalbridge Cattle & Prize Show Market had been established in 1832 to act as a ‘stimulus to the breeding & keeping of good stock and for the general improvement & Prosperity of the Market’.\textsuperscript{49} Castleman stated in December 1832 ‘in respect to the project of a Cattle Prize Show at Stalbridge, I think he may exercise his own discretion and put down £5 or 10 as Lord Anglesey’s Contribution. I suppose the latter sum will not go too far’.\textsuperscript{50} The evidence for the payments actually made appear in the vouchers rather than the correspondence. For example in November 1834 a payment was made towards the show by the Marquis for £5 and in July 1837 Hoddinott wrote to the Marquis thanking him for his contribution to the show. This had then been handed to

\textsuperscript{47} D/ANG/B4/49.
\textsuperscript{48} D/ANG/B4/59.
\textsuperscript{49} I. Jones, \textit{The Stalbridge Inheritance 1780-1854} (Dorchester 1993), p. 92.
\textsuperscript{50} D/ANG/B5/44 Letter from William Castleman 4 December 1832.
Mr Fooks ‘he having the management of the cash’ but unfortunately there is no mention of any amount.⁵¹ These payments continued until 1844 when they were stopped; Jones suggested this was a sign of a declining market but they started again in 1849 which indicated a reversal of its fortunes.⁵²

Contemporary agricultural literature on soil quality stated ‘whatever the subject may be, we cannot continue to produce remunerative crops without a regular and abundant application of manure’.⁵³ Farming on the estate appears to have been an individualistic experience, husbandry clauses do not appear to have been commonplace and information on how the soil was enriched apart from using ordinary farmyard manure are even rarer. Therefore any that do appear are a significant and vital component to understanding the management of the soil in this locality. Lime commonly appeared as an allowance against rent but there is no differentiation between that used as fertilizer and that used for building works. Robert Davis at Yenston had a lime kiln on his farm as it appeared in the schedule of repairs in 1819. Jones described the transportation of lime and proposed that there were kilns in Stalbridge Park in 1811 and at Sturt Farm, Stalbridge Weston in 1832 and another was constructed in 1833. In the 1841 census for this town only one man is described as a lime burner.⁵⁴ However there can be little doubt that it was also used as a dressing for the soil because in 1822 Mr Meatyard was granted an ‘Allowance for 16½ quarters of Lime for Manure’ this amounted to £2 1s 3d.⁵⁵ The difficulties in separating expenses are inherent in a voucher dated 7 April 1831. Here Harris is allowed 15/- for lime which was for repairs to a cottage which had been destroyed by fire and £10 for lime ‘to mix with manure to put on the pasture land’.⁵⁶ The correspondence in 1832 referred to Highmore purchasing lime to replace the manure lost by the death of his sheep from the ‘coathe’ and it is therefore suggested that lime was a common additive whose properties were well understood by both farmer and agent.⁵⁷ Long term depletion of the soil where manure was in short supply might be supplemented by the use of town dung and other

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⁵¹ D/ANG/B4/57 and D/ANG/B4/59 Letter from Hoddinott July 1837 contained within the vouchers for 1837.
⁵² Jones, Stalbridge Inheritance, p. 92.
⁵⁴ Jones, Stalbridge Inheritance, p. 107.
⁵⁵ D/ANG/B4/47 Voucher relating to Mr Meatyard.
⁵⁷ D/ANG/B5/44 Letter from William Castleman 20 October 1832.
urban wastes. It is assumed that it was the waste from Stalbridge which is described as ‘refuse soil’ being spread on Cummins land in 1844.

Areas of the estate were largely dependent on sheep and the vouchers contain evidence of the distress caused by the coath. Castleman produced a detailed list of the principle losses up to Lady day 1830 as seen in chapter 4. What however is evident from the vouchers are two things firstly the time that the estate sometimes took to actually evaluate and allow the rebate against rent. Secondly it appears that in some cases the sum was paid in instalments. Mr C Baker is missing from the above list but was granted a gratuitous allowance of £45.4s which was ten per cent of his rent. He was paid this, it seems, in four parts as the voucher dated 4 April 1832 was for £11 6s 0d and it stated this was one quarter of £45 4s. There are also discrepancies in the amount recorded in the loss document and that paid as in the case of Edward Sherring. His payment too was split and in 1831 he was paid £22. 15s for his losses from Michaelmas 1829 to Michaelmas 1830 but he is not actually granted this sum until October the following year. From Castleman’s correspondence it might be alleged that the coathing disaster was over relatively quickly but the vouchers reveal that instead it reverberated on for some years afterwards. When agricultural prices fell again in the bumper harvests of 1832-36 the effects on the estate from the loss of sheep revenue was still ongoing.

The estate inherited by the Marquis of Anglesey was said in 1784 to contain 2000 acres of meadow acres of pasture and a further 8000 acres of land which was presumably arable. Despite this vast amount of land little is contained within either the correspondence or vouchers as to what was actually grown. There are occasional references to the failure of the turnip crop or demands by the corn or grass farmers for relief due to poor prices. The vouchers of 1846 provided evidence of the type of grass seeds which one of the tenants actually purchased and presumably grew. G. Rowe in 1844 had purchased grass seed at 4s per bushel, hop clover at 4d per pound imperial weight, white dutch at 9¼ per pound – probably a type of turnip – and cow grass at 8½ expending £3 10s 9¾d. In 1846 the seed he purchased was exactly the same but in

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59 D/ANG/B4/69.  
60 D/ANG/B4/54 Estate Vouchers for 1831.  
61 Ibid.  
62 Jones, *The Stalbridge Inheritance*, p. 3.
much greater quantities spending £22 11s 6½. It is possible that the first consignment was bought as an experiment and its success merited planting a greater quantity. Once again exploring the vouchers adds an extra dimension to the knowledge already obtained, but again the problem remains of the time involved in drawing out these small snippets of information. A thorough and detailed cataloguing of this type of record would expand our understanding of manures used, grass seeds grown and allowances made and for what circumstances. The agricultural labourer suffered long periods of financial paucity. Sums expended by the Marquis of Anglesey on the relief of the poor are very prominent in the vouchers and it is to this contribution to the makeshift economy that this chapter will now focus.

**Poor Relief and the Make Shift Economy**

Innes argued that the strategies of the labouring poor relied on a combination of poor law and charitable provision, together with the wider economy of make-shifts as described by King and Tomkins in chapter 4. Charitable payments varied according to different localities and situations but Broad and Botelho have both emphasised the importance of charitable donations to overall relief. King suggested that the ‘language and logic of numbers’ meant the paupers began to realise the importance of numerical information which they might use at a later stage to ask for relief. The increase in numerical and comparative data provided a ‘common linguistic’ arena in which paupers and officials might come to a shared idea of entitlement. The poor were not always paid in cash but frequently received payments in kind and the vouchers of this estate bear out this assumption. Like other themes discussed in this chapter the quantitative element of the Marquis of Anglesey’s charitable contributions are only really evident through an examination of the vouchers. The correspondence does record some of the bigger payments but those in the vouchers are mostly small. The subscriptions which were paid for specific items were similar to those made by the overseers and included bread, foodstuffs, blankets, coal and clothing.

Generally the vouchers do not differentiate between the deserving and undeserving poor that is the old, infirm and widowed and the able bodied unemployed as

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63 D/ANG/B4/69 Estate Vouchers for 1846.
66 King, ‘In These You May Trust’, p. 63.
demonstrated in 1823 when the Marquis subscribed £20 towards the purchase of coals for the poor at Stalbridge during the ensuing winter. In the same year £3 3s was donated simply for the relief of the poor at Temple Coombe and £2 for coals at Todber.\textsuperscript{67} However the estate understood the problems which the sound poor faced was not necessarily of their own making and in the vouchers for 1823 one specified ‘bread supply for Charity for the Sound Poor of the Parish of Bradford Abbas from Michaelmas 1819 to Michaelmas 1820 £2 12s 0d’.\textsuperscript{68} Donations might not go directly to the poor themselves but might be used to purchase goods and foodstuffs that would be sold at reduced rates. This was illustrated in a voucher of 1847 when the Marquis subscribed £10 to the relief of the poor. Occasionally as in this case letters are found in this section rather than in the correspondence which adds to the confusion of this uncatalogued archive. The author had stated ‘Will you have the goodness to offer our grateful thanks to his Lordship for this donation which will serve to mitigate the suffering still pressing heavily upon very many among us’. Furthermore it acknowledged ‘that during the present week the Committee have sold at reduced rates to those standing in need of assistance 430 loaves of bread, 26¼ buckets of barley and 5½ buckets of week’. Importantly this letter also revealed that this was at a loss of about £7.\textsuperscript{69} High prices were further illuminated in another voucher in which the parish of Handley were allowed £20 on account ‘of the high price of provisions’.\textsuperscript{70}

The majority of payments appear to have been for coal but the Reverend Grant at Bradford Abbas wrote to the Marquis and suggested instead

… that the money might be more judiciously & beneficially laid out in providing blankets since the very poorest of the inhabitants cannot manage to purchase more than a hundred of Coal even at a more reduced price … I think you will agree with me, that those who need it the most are the fittest objects of relief.\textsuperscript{71}

Others were not above writing and requesting their usual subscriptions as did Glossop in 1831

The season of the year now arrived when the wants of the Poor call imperatively on the landed Proprietors for assistance allow me to hope you will kindly grant

\textsuperscript{67} D/ANG/B4/47.
\textsuperscript{68} D/ANG/B4/48.
\textsuperscript{69} D/ANG/B4/69 Letter from L. C. George in the vouchers for 1847.
\textsuperscript{70} D/ANG/B4/69.
\textsuperscript{71} D/ANG/B5/53 Letter from Reverend Grant, Bradford Abbas, December 11 1830.
us the favour of a few pounds … towards supplying the Poor with Coals at a reduced price.\textsuperscript{72}

This letter included the number of families which had been helped the previous year and this level of detail is missing from more or less every other record relating to the poor in the actual archive. Glossop stated ‘we were last year enabled to benefit 148 Families with 1Cwt [hundred weight] per week for 8d – being less than half price’. Fire it was considered kept the cottages dry and was ‘as sure a means as any of averting illness’.\textsuperscript{73}

Those in charge of helping the poor would if they believed the contribution to be rather less than expected request the Marquis to reconsider the amounts he had donated. Glossop did so in 1832 when he wrote

\begin{quote}
Pardon me for expressing a wish that his Lordship had granted us Five Pounds the same as I receive from the Bishop of Ely, & Sir Wm Medleycott & his Lordship being Lord of the Manor leads our expectation from him rather higher\textsuperscript{74}.
\end{quote}

The Marquis also donated towards clothing funds and in 1831 for example paid £3 3s 0d ‘to the fund for providing clothes for the poor’ and £2 ‘towards a Fund for purchasing clothing to be sold at half price to the poor of Handley’.\textsuperscript{75} There is unfortunately no way of discovering at this point whether the clothing in these two parishes would have been sold on the same basis or whether this depended on each locality.

This section of the archive has revealed important information relating to the poor on the estate including the amount of bread distributed particularly to the sound poor. It is usually assumed that the able bodied were classed as undeserving of help but the estate obviously did not concur with this sentiment but were prepared to assist all in need during the most difficult of times. Those who administered charitable donations were not above asking for their usual subscriptions and requesting for further funds when the sum was deemed to be too low. By keeping these records separate from the corpus of knowledge contained within the correspondence it once again highlights how much information may exist in records which have been overlooked because of the difficulty in extracting the data they contain. This chapter will now explore the more miscellaneous payments.

\textsuperscript{72} D/ANG/B4/54.
\textsuperscript{73} D/ANG/B5/54.
\textsuperscript{74} D/ANG/B4/54.
\textsuperscript{75} D/ANG/B5/54.
Sundry Expenses

The vouchers contain a myriad of details relating to the monies expended within the rural community and it is intended here to discuss four different types of expenses to express the diversity of the knowledge which might be gained through a full and detailed study. This however will still fail to do justice to the content of this under-researched and under-valued source. Castleman was not above paying for information and for intelligence gathering. This was not apparent from the correspondence but the vouchers suggest he had a network of people who were essentially his ‘eyes’ and ‘ears’ within the local community. Men came to him and were paid for the knowledge they imparted. The political importance of the Borough of Milborne Port was reflected in the vouchers; John Pittman was paid 10s specifically for information ‘relating to the blue party at Milborne Port’.76 In the same year Robert Sanderson was granted the sum of £1 for information pertaining to the opposite party, these are indicative of the tensions created by Lord Darlington’s attempt to take over patronage of the borough.77 Paying for political knowledge might seem obvious but Castleman was more concerned about tensions within the borough for it was these which could more easily bring about the defeat of Lord Anglesey’s candidate. In 1820 stability was affected by Milborne Port’s appeal against the poor rate. These appeals may not have been for financial but political reasons as the payment of rates equalled a qualification to vote at election times. Rather than appealing against the rate itself it may even have been a demand instead to be rated.78 In order to establish who could be trusted and who might waiver evidence became of extreme importance. To ensure he had the most up to date knowledge Castleman paid men to gather evidence and snippets of useful information. For this in 1820 William Dover and George Dyke were paid 10s each for obtaining evidence which was relative to the appeal ‘at the ensuing sessions as to the Milborne Port Poors Rate’. James Bugler’s information was perhaps more effective for he was paid a £1 and in May 1821 John Pitman received £1. 15s ‘for my expenses on a Journey to Wells and for obtaining and furnishing information on various subjects connected with the Boro’.79 The estate and in particular Castleman intended to be well prepared for both this court case and for any further problems which might occur. It was not just for information

76 D/ANG/B4/47.
77 Ibid.
78 S. G. McKay, Milborne Port in Somerset (Milborne Port, 1986), p. 94.
79 D/ANG/B4/45 Vouchers relating to John Pitman 16 May 1821.
relating to the Port or to politics that Castleman paid for. Jones stated that Castleman had a reputation for passionately chasing farmers who absconded even when the amounts owing were really quite small, less than £300. In 1831 Robert Brooksby received £5 being the reward offered for the discovery of parts of the Effects fraudulently removed by Daw & Barrett of Stalbridge from the Farm rented by them under the Marquess of Anglesey and which were discovered by me & afterwards sold under the Distress for the Arrears of Rent due to his Lordship.

Knowledge and evidence were also important in the protection of estate woodland, this was such an important commodity that in 1835 the estate paid for a night watchman to sit up at night and watch the plantations. Furthermore the vouchers not only underpinned the assumptions made from the correspondence in Chapter 4 but quantify the cost of prosecution. In the 1824-5 vouchers Thomas Woodman was paid £5 for two quarter’s salary and on conviction an extra £2 2s for the detection of Jane Bush and Jane Coke tearing down Coppice Hedge. An idea of the cost of organising the summons and deposition of witnesses is also included in the vouchers of the same year. Table 9

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>£</th>
<th>S</th>
<th>D</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>March</td>
<td>Information and summons to Joseph Beach for breaking the fence of a coppice belonging to the Marquis of Anglesey</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Deposition of one witness conviction and parchment</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>6</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April</td>
<td>Commitment for one month</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May</td>
<td>Information of Mr Welch against Robt Riman for cutting a Hick</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Summons and Deposition and Oath of one witness</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The like against Harry Riman</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Information of Mr Welch against Henry Maidment for teasing and carrying away wood from Stone Coppice and Summons</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Information of Mr Welch against Jane Coke for cutting under wood in Gasson Coppice and Summons thereon and Disposition of one Witness found Guilty and repremanded</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Table 9</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

81 D/ANG/B4/54.
82 D/ANG/B4/57.
83 D/ANG/B4/49.
84 D/ANG/B4/49.
Occasionally the vouchers rather than dealing with the more serious estate matters explored the social side of life. There are frequent vouchers for bread, cheese and alcoholic beverages. Chapter 5 discussed the treating of voters by the Marquis of Anglesey at Cannon Court. However it is the vouchers that provide some idea of the amounts ordered and given away Table 10.

**Beer Brewed at the Queen’s Head Inn and Purchased by the Estate in 1820-21**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Amount of Beer Brewed for the Estate</th>
<th>£</th>
<th>s</th>
<th>d</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1820</td>
<td>128 Gallons of Strong Beer to Cannon Court</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 March</td>
<td>66 Gallons of Strong Beer to Cannon Court</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1822</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 January</td>
<td>Gave away in the Market Place 30 Gallons of Strong Beer</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8 December</td>
<td>262 of Strong Beer to Allotment Votes</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>13</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16 May</td>
<td>66 Gallons of Strong Beer to Cannon Court</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>40</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 10.85

Beer was not the only substance purchased by the estate for entertainment purposes. A receipt from 1828 for £89 18s 8d has survived which detailed the purchase of 69 gallons of port wine, 59 gallons of ‘suspension cape madeira, and 10 gallons of best brandy’. Carriage was paid for separately and £3 was included for Mr Adams ‘for his trouble’. However it is not so much the amounts purchased but the details of how to manage the goods once they had been received which is interesting. It stated

> The Cape Madeira is clean casked from a Pipe which has been before racked and fined & put in a fresh emptied Madeira Cask with the Lees to improve.

> Let the Cape Madeira be put in a warm cellar & when fixed upon the strand draw off a small quantity from a spike & mix with the white of ½ doz[en] fresh Eggs beat up with a Whisk which you will put in at the Bung hole & Stir it up with a stick then bring it down but make a vent hole by the side of the Bung which you will leave loose about a week and then fasten it down & in about a month it will be quite fit to bottle & if you think the wine not sufficiently potent you may add 1 or 2 quarts of brandy.86

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85 D/ANG/B4/45 Bill from the Queen’s Head Inn.
86 D/ANG/B4/45 19 November 1826.
These vouchers illuminate the manner in which an agent’s role was far more diverse than perhaps at first might be supposed. In 1831 at the election the estate paid for 197 pounds of cheese and 150 gallons of beer to provide refreshment for those attending the polls. At these events music was also provided and in 1823 Castleman paid the musicians £3 10s 0d.\(^{87}\) The sums expended emblematically illustrated the amounts of alcohol which were used to entertain the tenants. The overall aim was to publically demonstrate to the voters their importance and to ensure their political loyalty.

The correspondence for 1831 only contains 9 documents and there is no information on Swing despite its impact at the end of the 1830. However the vouchers contain the details of who were charged and the costs to the estate from the prosecutions. Castleman’s personal costs were £19 15s for prosecuting the rioters. This included sums for obtaining witness statements, visiting the Prosecutor and taking instructions to prepare the brief for the coming court case. A further bill from Messitor & Co was presented to the estate for £11 17s 10d for the attendance and time of ‘Farmer Davis and other witnesses’.\(^{88}\) Castleman took great umbrage at this attempt to obtain payment. The farmers had been coerced into a ‘symbolic agreement’ with the labourers and they had demanded that their tithes and rents were reduced so that they might pay higher wages. They were even ready to dismantle their threshing machines in order to protect the labourers’ employment prospects. The tensions which this behaviour created within the rural community are evident in Castleman’s response who specified that Lord Anglesey could have nothing to Davis request. He continued that if he had intended ‘to look to his landlord for remuneration he ought … in the first instance to have communicated with me on the subject. Castleman was certain that if he had done so

\[\ldots\text{ the Ringleader would consequently have been committed to Dorchester Gaol}\]
\[\text{the night of the Stalbridge Riot, who has instead escaped with 3 Months}\]
\[\text{Imprisonment would have been transported and the expenses would have been}\]
\[\text{defrayed by Government.}\] \(^{89}\)

Castleman’s letters suggested that once he had enrolled himself as a special constable in Stalbridge that the farmers and other tenants followed suit. (Chapter 4) However once the riots were over and peace once more restored a letter was sent from the ‘Vicar, Churchwardens, Overseers, and other Inhabitant Householders in the Parish

\(^{87}\) D/ANG/B4/48.
\(^{88}\) D/ANG/B4/53.
\(^{89}\) D/ANG/B4/53 Letter from William Castleman 8 February 1831.
Bradford Abbas in Vestry’ to the Marquis of Anglesey. They requested remuneration for ‘those Persons who were engaged as watchmen during the threatened disturbances’ (Table 11). Furthermore it proposed:

Mr Joyce gave certain of us reason to understand that the Marquis of Anglesey would defray the expenses, the Men were hired on that consideration and understanding, and we trust that you will see fit to make good the promise.

As some length of time has already elapsed, we hope you will enable us to settle the matter as soon as convenient to you.

Without the vouchers all of the above information and valuable details relating to individuals within the estate would have been lost along with the correspondence.

The Names and Number of Days Worked by the Watchmen during Swing at Bradford Abbas

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>No of Nights</th>
<th>£</th>
<th>s</th>
<th>d</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>George Stephens</td>
<td>1 night</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Robt Hobby</td>
<td>1 night</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stephen Hatchard</td>
<td>1 night</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aaron Fry</td>
<td>4 nights</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>George Francis</td>
<td>3 nights</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John Davis</td>
<td>4 nights</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Daniel Astins</td>
<td>4 nights</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>George Langdon</td>
<td>3 nights</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>George Bragg</td>
<td>3 nights</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wm [__]ridland</td>
<td>2 nights</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Samuel Masters</td>
<td>2 nights</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Richard Fudge</td>
<td>2 nights</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 11.

Conclusion

The decision was made to separate from and discuss autonomously of the correspondence the knowledge and information contained within the vouchers. The rise in bureaucracy and the need for numerical statistics corresponds with Castleman’s careful collation of all the

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90 D/ANG/B4/53 June 10 1831.
estate’s financial transactions. While historians have examined and explored rental and other forms of estate and farm accounts where the information has been easy to extract they have in the main ignored the rest. A further problem regarding the information which has been previously published was highlighted by Turner, Beckett and Afton. For their rental account study they originally identified around 200 suitable archives but only about twenty five per cent of the original group was researched. By their own admission it was impossible to ensure entire geographical coverage.\(^9\) It is even harder to ascertain from the text the exact size of the sample studied or even which archives were used thus making comparisons difficult.

By using the Marquis of Anglesey’s rental accounts which would have been rejected by Turner, Beckett and Afton it is possible to acquire financial information that would otherwise have been missed if their rationale had been followed. Castleman raised the problems of compiling the accounts due to the different times the tenants paid their rents. An analysis of the abstract of rental reveals the financial problems experienced by the estate until the late 1830s. Arrears after the audit remained higher than before the rents were paid although they dropped overall. The rental accounts are the only way to estimate tenant numbers although it is impossible to ascertain whether they are included. Although tenant numbers fluctuated enormously at times rental income did not increase to the same percentage. This would suggest that on these occasions all the tenants including those with small rents were included in the account.

The value of the estate voucher as means of researching estates and tenant farmers has been very under-rated as a source. There is no doubt that shifting through the data they contain was time consuming but rewarding and has added considerable financial detail to the correspondence. The differentiation in this thesis between the different sections of the archive emblematically illustrates the problems of exploring sections of an archive in isolation. The information contained within the two individual sections explored in this chapter has added a quantitative element to this research that is missing elsewhere. The rental accounts and vouchers highlight the financial aspect of the landowner/tenant relationship in a manner that was simply not visible in any other part of the archive. Historians have debated this relationship in general terms but rarely provide a definitive argument as to the amounts spent. This archive is unique in the number of vouchers it contains and the range of themes covered. This however has meant that this thesis has only

been able to discuss a tiny percentage of the material available and it is intended to carry out a much more intricate study at a later date. In 1831 the survival of only nine letters is a great loss in the wake of Swing but the vouchers at least contained the names of the men convicted and the sentences received. Furthermore they emphasised the continued tensions in the rural community in the aftermath of the riots.

The inclusion of this chapter at the end of this thesis incorporates the final piece of the historical prism created by the records of the Castleman family. It has been possible to use the estate vouchers to explore some of the estate expenditure and to understand the central role played by the agent in the management of the rural community.
Chapter 8

Conclusion

By exploring the extensive archive of William Castleman and his sons, this micro-study has sought to provide substance to some of the high level observations which have been previously been made regarding the operation of the socio and economic fabric of the rural community during this period. It has added both depth and detail to the existing secondary literature and established a new archival approach to the study of the rural community. Historians including: Mingay, Thompson, Beckett, Spring, Thirsk and Short have all investigated different aspects of rural life, but none have studied a single estate over a given period of time. When surveyed as a cohesive entity the estate moves from being a simple economically joined group of people to something far more complex with each section being entwined with and dependent on the rest. For example the fortunes of the labouring poor were reliant on a financially buoyant tenantry and during economic downturns this section of society suffered. However any increase in the poor rate could result in the loss of the Marquis of Anglesey’s political influence and this thesis emblematically illustrates the central position of the land agent in providing social and political stability. The historiography in Chapter 1 described the out-dated nature of most of the existing material, although Hoyle has in the last year published an edited volume on the farmer, and Houston has tackled social relations and economic life on landed estates. Despite these new additions to the historiography, agricultural history continues to be under-researched and somewhat neglected. Even the more recent literature has generally continued to study the rural community from the traditional rigid viewpoint of the ‘tripartite system’ of landowners, tenants and labourers. This thesis has sought to take a different approach and introduced a fourth and under-used element, the records of the land agent, in this case, William Castleman and his sons. Using the correspondence, rental accounts and estate vouchers the thesis has introduced a new and fresh approach to both the rural community and estate management.

The aim of this thesis was to explore the socio-economic and political history of the rural community through the historical prism created by this archive. Four macro-

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level conclusions might be drawn. Firstly, William Castleman and his sons were the central and pivotal figures of this society; they stood as the middleman between landowner and tenant, between landowner and political success and above all acted as the Marquis of Anglesey’s representative in this micro-society. It is difficult to grasp the importance of a good agent, because he was much more than a simple manager. This thesis has demonstrated not just the complexity of this role but also its diverse nature which is evident throughout the entire working lives of the men studied. Their local knowledge and networks created a unique dynamic and style of management. The modern agent and secretary of the Central Association of Agricultural Valuers, Jeremy Moody recently stated that it was still almost impossible to explain and define the role of the land agent because it remained a highly individualist role tailored to the landowner’s needs and requirements. Secondly the landowner/tenant relationship extended beyond agriculture and permeated all aspects of the socio-economic and political life of this community. Whilst this relationship has frequently been referred to in passing within the historiography, the exact details of how this worked in practice are usually missing. Instead historians have continued to argue that the farmers were an almost invisible force in the countryside. This research has created a methodology by which other estates might be examined and has demonstrated the worth of the land agent’s record as an important resource. Thirdly economic problems dominated agriculture until around 1836. In the aftermath of the war with France prices fluctuated enormously and this alone was enough to cause considerable financial hardship. When coupled with poor weather and disease particularly amongst the livestock it frequently brought the estate close to economic disaster. Castleman had to constantly manage requests for rent rebates and allowances and make decisions on whether to allow arrears to accrue or to distrain against those who might never be able to pay off their debts. This was always a difficult situation as removing a tenant might mean that the incoming tenant would expect to pay a considerably lower rent and thus affect overall estate income. It is a testament to the business acumen of the land agent that any estates survived. It has been argued that Swing was a direct result of these economic problems. Finally, the agent acted as a force for social control. This was mainly witnessed through two main observations. Social control of the tenants came through the issuing of leases, and while the landowner bestowed political status, in deference communities he

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expected total loyalty in return. The labouring poor and more rebellious elements of the estate Castleman sought to control through added payments to poor relief schemes and education. The uniqueness of the archive is not just its extent but its longevity and the level of continuity which it affords and which is missing from other studies and archives. This conclusion will survey the different themes in each chapter and finally explore how this thesis has created a new methodology and source for examining the rural community.

The Tenantry

The English landlord and tenant system formed a partnership in which both parties over many years developed a working relationship. The epitome of the landlord/tenant relationship was most apparent when surveying repairs and improvements. When Castleman took over the agency of the Marquis of Anglesey’s Dorset and Somerset estate it had been neglected for some time and he was forced to institute very quickly a schedule of works and repairs. Chambers and Mingay advocated that the strength of the affiliation between landlord and tenant lay in the dual sharing of the costs and risks of farming. The landowner was expected to provide the basic necessities for good farming which included well maintained farm buildings and good soil quality. The farmer provided the stock and working capital as well as his time, skill and enterprise.³ Chambers and Mingay realised that this was the perfect scenario and many if not most fell far short of this ideal. The general historiography has proposed that some of the best managed estates were those with an absentee owner, where the agents were picked for their managerial skills. Research undertaken for this thesis has revealed six key advances in this area.

Firstly although the period of study chosen is concurrent with Chambers and Mingay’s timing of the agricultural revolution there is no sense from the archive that it reached this estate. Land was drained because this process had been neglected in the past, it was not undertaken using any new technology but using the methods described by Kerridge. There are occasional references to turnips but none as to when they were first cultivated. Kerridge, Chambers, Mingay and Overton are all very precise with their timing of an agricultural revolution but in reality matters were significantly more

blurred. This estate appears to have adopted some of the new ideas of crops and early mechanisation by installing threshing machines but there does not seem any urgency or evidence of experimentation. Flooding on the estate and the devastation caused to low lying land seemed to have been the driving factors for drainage not new forms of drainage. Although the tenants viewed repairs as essential they only formed a small part of the Marquis’s relationship with the rural community. The historical prism created by Castleman has revealed the intricate complexities of the landlord/tenant and estate which ultimately developed in ways best suited to their individual localities. More research is needed to assess how this affiliation adapted and changed and whether it varied if the landlord was absent or resident on the estate. This association was vibrant and ever changing and further detailed case studies are essential to track the trends and how it adapted in good and poor financial situations.

Secondly in order to understand the contemporary ideal of land management it is of fundamental importance to establish the type of men who became agents. Richards has suggested that a good agent was ‘self-effacing’ enough to accept and allow all public credit to be directed at the land owner while simultaneously creating respect between the landlord and the local community.\(^4\) The research undertaken here would suggest that this theory was far too simple and does not take into account what happened in the case of an absentee landowner. Castleman like many other contemporary agents was an attorney and already experienced in managing landed estates. He worked for the Bankes family at Kingston Lacey both before and during his time with the Marquis of Anglesey and for a firm of land agents based in Wimborne which gave him access to other agents and owners and helped to create a cartel style of management. As the Marquis of Anglesey’s representative unpopular decisions had to be made in order to ensure the survival of the estate. In the absence of the landowner the tenants needed to cultivate a relationship with Castleman, for he acted as the middleman. It was to the agent the tenants had to turn to ask for rebates or help. The idea of agent networks has yet to be fully understood but this thesis suggests that they played an important part in local affairs and further research would add yet another layer to the complexity or rural relationships.

Thirdly there has been extensive historical debate on the changing tenurial patterns of the first half of the nineteenth century. The general consensus of the existing literature proposed that after the Napoleonic Wars there was a movement away from long leases to rack renting. Clay has suggested that tenurial patterns were in fact regional rather than national. This equated to lifeleaseholds dominating west of the Pennines and south of the Peak District, while in the east and Midlands annual tenancies were more common. Daunton argued that tenants who rack rented were those most likely to fall into arrears. Evidence from the Marquis of Anglesey’s estate however would suggest the opposite was true. The Marquis believed that his leasehold tenants were more likely to fall into debt and were more demanding of repairs. It has been argued that the shift from long leases to rack rents was allegedly driven by the introduction of the mortgage. The fines which were collected when leases changed hands or names were added had been an important source of additional revenue. Mortgages were a means of raising money independent of the estate. The view taken by those historians who have theorised over the changing tenurial patterns is that the shift was definitive and lasting.

The research undertaken here suggests the characteristics and dynamics of the changing patterns were both more blurred and integrated than previously argued. Castleman believed that leases protected all sections of the rural community. The landowner had a legally binding agreement through which the tenant’s rent was laid down, the agent could insert clauses which might be enforced if the tenant did not comply and the tenant had the security of a preconceived relationship between himself and his landlord. Fines on this estate added substantial amounts of money to the estate’s cash flow. Despite this the Marquis still needed to borrow significant sums of money. Jones argued that the sums borrowed included £34 750 from the Castleman family themselves. The general assumption has been that the pattern of landholding changed slowly but this estate reveals that nothing in fact changed. The Marquis utilised leaseholds, rack rents and mortgages to provide his cash flow but even in 1854 the majority of the revenue from this estate came from land leased in traditional ways. Many assumptions and theories have already been made on tenurial patterns but the historiography remains very generalist in nature. Castleman used a wide variety of leases and it is possible this was common practice at least locally on the estates he

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managed. In order to fully understand the trends in landholding patterns further meticulous studies are needed to fully investigate tenurial patterns and to assess the rate of change over the first half of the nineteenth century.

Fourthly Griffiths and Overton have proposed that landowners defended their privileges against increasing opposition from all sections of society which included: labourers, radicals, political economists, manufacturers and the middle classes all of whom were forced to contribute towards the price of protectionism. Protectionism of grain had been introduced to try and keep the price above 80s. This sum was said to be the lowest at which the English grower could make a satisfactory remuneration after the costs of production had been subtracted. Continental farmers it was believed were able to produce the same grains for around half the price. In the wake of the Napoleonic wars the Corn Law of 1815 was introduced to protect the price of grain. This absolute protectionism was replaced in 1828 by a sliding scale of tariffs on imported corn which varied according to the price of that grown domestically. When the price was below 52/- a quarter absolute protectionism still applied but as the home price rose the duty due fell. These laws were ineffective and did not protect the tenant farmer from fluctuating prices which frequently created tenant distress during the 1820s. Thompson claimed that there was no depression at the end of the Napoleonic Wars but instead a series of short crises. On this estate periods of financial and economic difficulties occurred not just in line with his theories but almost continuously in the two decades from the end of the Napoleonic Wars. In 1821-22 the economic crisis that was precipitated by the return to the gold standard was so severe that many long term tenants who had albeit struggled for some time finally failed. Castleman had the farm of Bishop valued in anticipation of levelling a distraint against his arrears. Valuations of this kind provide important information and details of the type of livestock kept, crops both stored and standing, farming and husbandry implements and household goods. The nearest to this type of valuation appears in Wade Martins’s work on the great estate at Holkham when she attempted to assess the value of the Hudsons - the most famous

farming family at Holkham. However this is pure estimation as the prices which
individual items fetched at sale have been lost over the years.\(^9\)

Fifthly this study has revealed new evidence of how schemes to relieve tenant
distress were managed and worked. During the latter part of the 1820s the estate
suffered badly from flooding and disease amongst the sheep. Castleman sought to
mitigate losses through allowances and abatements on rent with up to twenty five per
cent being granted to the largest farmers. This crisis culminated in Swing and in its
aftermath all schemes which are recorded within the estate to relieve the distress of the
tenants took into account the plight of the agricultural labourer. The Castleman
correspondence suggested a degree of collusion between the landowners and agents in
the area as to the level of the relief set, when to implement allowances and the form it
should take. Historians including Thompson and Mingay have argued that agents wrote
and communicated with each other and although there is evidence here of this
communication it is implied rather than explicit. The suggestion is that agents worked
as a cartel but far more research is needed to unearth the extent of these networks and
the distances they spread from the centre of an estate.

Finally the poor rate was an important element of this landowner/tenant bond. It
had to be high enough to underwrite poor relief but too high and political loyalty could
be stretched to breaking point. Appeals against the rate might not be purely financial
but an attempt to qualify for voting rights. At Milborne Port any appeal particularly
during the period when Lord Darlington challenged the Marquis for patronage put at
risk political stability. Although the rate was levied on all parishioners whose property
value was above a given minimum its impact has been remarkably neglected. This
archive has provided a case study into the involvement of the land agent in the process
of setting the rate and the problems it might cause in small communities. By exploring
the Dorset and Somerset archive it is possible to analyse the ways in which the estate
sought to mitigate and lower the amount of tax paid by its tenants through the
manipulation of rents. The tenants would approach Castleman for help when they
believed they had been unfairly taxed thus emphasising his pivotal role in the
landowner/tenant relationship. Much more research is required into this tax to evaluate
its impact on local communities and the voter loyalty and numbers.

The Labouring Poor

While the tenants were a principal and focal part of the rural community they were not its only members. The prism created by William Castleman can be used to appraise all the multi-faceted aspects of agrarian society. The criticism has been made that the tenant farmer’s continue to remain an almost undetected force in the historiography of agricultural history but to a certain extent the labouring poor are even more invisible. The work of poor law historians has tended to concentrate on the ways in which relief was organised and the information contained in estate records overlooked. This study takes a different approach to that taken by many other researchers into the rural community and does not use the traditional poor law records of vestry or workhouse. Rather than scrutinising one aspect or group of agrarian society a multi-thematic approach has been taken in order to examine how all the components of the rural community were interconnected. The labourers were dependent on both the tenants and the agent for regular employment and when this failed for relief. By conducting an investigation into the agricultural labourer through five broadly defined themes incorporating: wages, the economy of makeshifts, employment other than agriculture, forms of protest before 1830 and the Swing riots this inter-connectedness is emphasised.

Firstly, wages and the disparity between the north and south of England has been the subject of much discussion and Dorset in particular was renowned for its extremely low rates of pay. Although the estate does not mention the wages of the agricultural labourer Castleman was well aware of the problems created when unemployment amongst this group rose. In 1821 he issued a memorandum whereby he threatened to remove the allowances on rent against any tenant dismissing labourers who neglected to carry out essential maintenance clearing ditches, trenches and watercourses.\(^\text{10}\) When unemployment rose a greater burden was placed on the poor rate. However this was also paid by inhabitants who did not employ anybody beyond family members. Farmers were the largest employers and during economic downturns taking the above action ensured that the costs of supporting the poor were spread throughout the whole community. By 1826 the state of the poor in Stalbridge was severe enough to reach The Times newspapers. A letter to the editor of the same newspaper in 1829

\(^{10}\) D/ANG/B5/32 Letter from William Castleman on Bourne 14 November 1823.
revealed the situation had not improved but instead had continued to deteriorate. Industry was discouraged probably because Castleman stated ‘I am no friend to the establishment of Manufactories in the Agricultural districts’.11

Secondly, when poverty became extreme the estate would step in and make emergency payments. The Marquis was well known for his benevolence but ultimately his aim was to make the estate profitable and so the payments were often small and for specific items. This estate adds to the existing knowledge relating to the poor within the rural community through the exploration of the landowners’ contributions which have been neglected in previous research. The sheer volume of poor law records has necessitated historians concentrating their research into the themes and threads which provide the most detailed information. In order to fully appreciate the level of poor relief provided by the large landowner further micro-studies of similar complexity to the one carried out on this estate must be undertaken. Only then will it be possible to ascertain how local landowners dealt with rising levels of poverty. The contributions made by the Marquis were in addition to the more recognised methods including the roundsman system, Speenhamland type relief and traditional out-relief. While Malthusian theory dominated social thinking in the first half of the nineteenth century when faced with the problems at a local level, the clergy in particular felt a sense of responsibility to their parishioners and sought extra remuneration from their landlords. Allotments it is alleged were an important part of the survival of labouring families. However they were tried on the estate but it appeared that the labourers due to lack of experience mismanaged the land. In 1830 when the Reverend Mason proposed a similar type of scheme which Castleman was not pre-disposed to consider the idea. In the light of the coathing attack and the pressure placed on the farming community by poor weather, poor prices and the loss of hay and grass neither were the tenants. There is little doubt that the Marquis contributed to the makeshift economy but it is impossible without more research to determine whether he was unique. Evidence from the archive suggests that the payments made through the estate played an important part in the survival of the rural labouring poor and as such merits further research.

Thirdly the paucity of employment in this area of Dorset and Somerset outside of agriculture has been highlighted by this thesis. There has in recent years been an on-

going debate into the contribution of women to the family income and the information gathered from this archival source adds to the information that has already been collected. During the industrial revolution Joyce Burnette argued the gap between male and female wages was enormous. She suggested that it could vary from one to two thirds depending on the work and the location.\textsuperscript{12} Other economic historians have agreed instead that women’s wages were determined not by market forces but by custom. Berg on the other hand suggested that women in some southern agricultural areas who were employed in growth industries were paid rates at least equal to or higher than male agricultural wages as illustrated here.\textsuperscript{13} Berg’s stated that the data on women’s wage rates must be built up through detailed investigation into local records and archives. The main problem perceived by Berg was the ‘volatility’ of wage rates in these industries and this explains why men may not have found it profitable to move from their more traditional roles in agriculture.\textsuperscript{14} On the Marquis of Anglesey’s estate when not employed by agriculture women frequently worked within the gloving industry, but this in line with Berg’s theories was extremely prone to recession caused by external economic factors. In 1829 \textit{The Morning Journal} reported the distress which had permeated all aspects of the manufacturing districts across the whole of England. The glove trade in the south was the casualty of cheap imports from the continent and it was impossible to sell the stock of completed items. However by 1832 the women employed were earning 9/- per week considerably more than their male counterparts employed as agricultural labourers. In fact Castleman cited this fact as one reason why the estate had decided not to continue to support the thirty or forty labourers who remained unemployed. Until more studies have been conducted the full impact of women’s earnings will not be fully understood.

Fourthly the problems which the labouring poor faced culminated in the Swing riots of 1830. Despite the narrative of Hobsbawn and Rudé and recent research by Jones and Griffin historians have failed to reach a general consensus as to the causes of this episode. Instead the factors which led to the outbreak remain diverse and it is argued that many local elements affected the severity and nature of the riots. From the Hammonds onwards it has been proposed that the threshing machine played a

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substantial part in winter under- and un-employment and is often cited as one of the prime causes of Swing. Threshing machines were introduced into the estate probably before Castleman took up his agency and he stated in 1830 that un-employment had been no higher in this particular year than at any other time. Other correspondence suggested that the riots were part of the ‘revolutionary or reforming mania’ which was sweeping the country. At Handley it appeared that the riots were a sign of the local discontent at the disfranchisement of Cranbourne Chase and might suggest why the riots here were more severe than at Stalbridge. Castleman’s character is illustrated when he stamped his personality on the attempt in this town by the magistrates to recruit special constables. It may well have been this display of authority that stopped the outbreak at Stalbridge as argued by Jones but it might simply have been that there was less appetite for destruction. Jones acknowledged that the threshing machine in Stalbridge Park remained intact while at Handley all the agricultural machinery was destroyed. It seems that the impact of these riots was more serious than any historian has ever suggested. Castleman believed implicitly that if the riots were not ‘put down’ and quelled quickly then it was likely the rioters would incite full blown revolution. The estate’s reaction to Swing continued to reflect the local nature of the riots with local solutions being sought to local problems. Griffin argued that by the mid-1830s it was possible to claim that wages were higher than in 1830.15 However this seems a somewhat simplistic and general statement. Almost before Swing ended a local magistrate had come to the conclusion that the rate of wages set would not work and each parish needed to set its own in line with local circumstances. In 1832 the Marquis of Anglesey’s tenants asked the estate to continue to subsidise around thirty to forty labourers but the estate refused as the women were now earning significant sums in the glove factory. The Castleman archives provide new information from a previously unexplored archive. It emphasises why close textual analysis of local archives is important in the ongoing research into these riots. A complete understanding of these riots is still elusive.

Finally the estate had a number of small industries outside farming. The stone quarries owned by the estate were problematic and very prone to fraud. Despite trying to find different solutions to the problems they presented it was not until 1836 on the

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appointment of Elias Duffet as manager that it appeared a workable solution had been found. However perhaps the most important commodity possessed by the estate was timber. The underwood could be gathered annually and sold at auction thus adding to estate revenue, but the main function of the timber that was allowed to mature was for estate repairs and building works. The loss of timber through theft was a continual problem for the estate. Griffin argued that tree maiming was a form of rural protest but the incidents which occurred under Castleman’s agency do not seem to be an outright protest as in the case of Swing. Instead the local population attempted to stamp their own sense of ownership upon an asset which for them meant warmth and fuel for cooking. The survival of the agricultural labourer was intertwined with the financial stability of the tenant and he depended on the empathy of the agent for help during economic recessions. This thesis contends and maintains that it is impossible to separate the two. Previous studies including those relating to Swing have discussed all the sections of the rural community separately but Castleman’s prism uniquely allows the interaction of these groupings to be analysed simultaneously. It reveals a complex, multi-faceted organisation which was constantly evolving.

The Political Landscape

The theme of the relationship between landowner and tenant continues to run through the political landscape of Milborne Port. The Great Reform Act of 1832 has and continues to dominate the political discourse of the nineteenth century. The History of Parliament had already written the history of Milborne Port and this research instead firstly aimed to define the role of the election agent. Secondly it set out to expand our understanding of deference communities and to further the debate started by Moore and extended by O’Gorman. The Marquis of Anglesey’s Dorset and Somerset estate had all the elements necessary for a deferent society but it was never entirely subjugated. Thirdly it intended to examine the management of a small nomination borough and the problems that this initiated. Finally an investigation and survey was undertaken into the election process of the early nineteenth century and how it worked in practice. A survey of the four key advances which have arisen as a result of this study will now be explored.

Firstly, Smith alleged that it was impossible to definitively characterise the role of the election agent before the Corrupt Practices Act of 1883 although the business
conducted by these men had been well understood for many years.\textsuperscript{16} This is a contradiction in terms and it is clear that Castleman acted and worked within clearly defined guidelines. He understood: the responsibilities of managing the borough, how to maintain tenant loyalty, the etiquette of canvassing, how to persuade the electorate to turn out at the polls, who to turn to for information relating to the opposition, the best way to fete the electorate and the mechanics needed to keep the political machine ready to use as soon as parliament was dissolved. More importantly potential candidates understood who in the borough would ensure success at election time. All of these attributes would be recognisable in the modern electoral agent and hardly relates to Smith’s undefined and mysterious character. It is concluded here that a good election agent had a unique understanding of their constituency or borough; they understood the problems and tensions which existed within it and sought to minimalize their impact, they understood the voters and the best methods of obtaining and above all could advise candidates how to secure votes. As the canvas frequently acted instead of a poll it had an importance that is no longer evident in modern politics. It should not be assumed that either the canvas or nineteenth century politics were in any way a haphazard affair; financially there was much to lose if the agent read the situation wrong. After the election was concluded they drew up the accounts, presented the vouchers and paid the disbursements. Castleman’s correspondence is a rich source of information and details the minutiae of the management of a small nomination borough in practice. Using the data thus gathered to create a historical perspective the election agent is presented with a clearly delineated perception of the necessities of obtaining electoral process and the means by which to obtain victory. As a large percentage of election agents acted as land agents it is suggested that further research using these records would provide a profile of the essential characteristics and dynamics of the nineteenth century political agent. Once established this would create a totally new prism through which to explore the English political landscape before the Great Reform Act.

Secondly, deference communities relied on two basic factors. The first was an innate belief that those in authority had the right to rule. The second was based on an understanding that everyone within the community whether rich or poor had their own specific duties. It was an implicit concept particularly within the rural community that

paternalism worked in much the same way as the relationship between a father and child. Roberts argued that paternalistic class deference in reality meant a commitment to ruling with a firm hand, leading where necessary and supervising when appropriate. Despite the risks which were inherent in voting against the Marquis this thesis tenders that deference was not in fact all-encompassing even though it might appear so at first sight. The possibility of non-compliance was unequivocally demonstrated by the tenants’ expectations of being feted and canvassed. The research carried out on Milborne Port suggests that tenants had strong political views which are in direct contrast to Thompson’s theory of a general lack of interest. This was demonstrated by the number of petitions which were sent to parliament. This reflects O’ Gorman and Daunton’s acknowledgment that the electorate were themselves aware of their political power and were willing to use it to shape national issues. The voters at Milborne Port generally fitted into the general consensus of a deferent community but tenant loyalty was always suspect as demonstrated by the anti-Catholic emancipation petition which went against the Marquis’s preferred course of action. The attempts made by the estate to fete and treat the tenants are proof of the under-lying anxiety that the tenants might chose to vote en bloc against the chosen candidate. While the Marquis continued to ensure his agent put the welfare of the tenants at the centre of estate policy they remained loyal, however the uncertainty generated by the understanding that the second vote might be used where chosen was enough for the Marquis never to put this allegiance to the test. One way in which a community’s political awareness and independence was illustrated was through petitioning.

Petitions in the eighteenth and nineteenth century exhibited the changing nature and expansion of the political sphere. The early petitions frequently took the form of an appeal against an election result. They almost invariably contained allegations of bribery or electoral misconduct. Another common complaint revolved around the legality of the returning officers and whether they had the right to accept or reject voters. As the nineteenth century progressed petitions changed in nature and it is proposed that this reflected a growing political awareness. Although the larger boroughs and constituencies might send large numbers of petitions to parliament Milborne Port proved that size was not an issue. The petitions issued reflected the concerns and worries not just of the electorate but of the community as a whole. The aim of these petitions varied enormously and included campaigns against the importation of cheap
foreign gloves, attempts by Protestant dissenters for the repeal of the Test Act and others against slavery and Catholic emancipation. Historians have suggested that the variety of petitions issued illustrated the growing awareness of all communities towards politics. Although the above petitions may all have had local elements but they were ultimately national issues. Ultimately it appears that the voters were deferent through choice rather than force, the idea of deference freely given has not been previously researched. Therefore the rural community were far more independent than has been previously supposed and this merits further research.

Finally managing a political borough no matter how small was a delicate balancing act of supervising the various socio-economic and political tensions which existed in any community. In order to understand these issues in Milborne Port Castleman set up a committee to meet once a fortnight to discuss any matters which arose. What happened instead was the petty jealousies which existed in the borough jeopardised its objectivity and it had to be stopped. Local politics as illustrated by the above committee was more about handling people than administration because voters were generally a ‘fickle and demanding lot’ who were well aware that their vote had a price and understood that it could buy favours. One of the biggest problems for the land agent when trying to predict election results was caused by the second vote. Ultimately this provided voters with a high degree of independence. During the early 1820s when Lord Darlington threatened the Marquis of Anglesey’s patronage Castleman had to change management strategies. He realised that all the alternative industries in Milborne Port were owned by the opposition and quickly established a glove making factory and a sail makers to provide work for the local inhabitants. This would help to keep the poor rate low and political loyalty intact. Another tactic employed by both sides of the political divide was to treat and entertain the voters within private houses and to this end the estate paid around £200 to organise alcohol for the cellar. As well as watching and observing the voters Castleman had informants who provided him with information on the tactics of the opposition and for which they were paid. One of the biggest problems for the land agent when trying to predict election results was caused by the second vote. This research adds depth and perspective to the problems experienced by the election agents in trying to control even a small population of voters before the Great Reform Act of 1832. Although the evidence would appear to suggest this borough should have been the perfect deference community there is always the perception
particularly during the battle between Lord Darlington and the Marquis for patronage that the balance could tip in either direction. If the estate had been entirely convinced of the loyalty of its tenants it would not have expended large sums in entertaining the electorate in a private house or canvassed them when an election was called. The existing secondary literature has either concentrated on the Reform Act or the history of individual constituencies but this thesis has sought to move the research beyond the more traditional ideas into a micro-study which will form the basis of a new methodology of exploring nineteenth century politics.

**Estate, Land Agent and Schools**

In order to fully explore the historical perspective and prism created by the Castleman archive and the ways it can be used to examine the rural community it was necessary to move outside of agriculture and the landlord/tenant relationship. By examining the landowner and agent’s role in the development of education in the first half of the nineteenth century it is possible to survey how those in authority exerted a form of social control. Intriguingly even though schools frequently appear in Castleman’s correspondence and the estate vouchers neither landowner or agent founded any form of educational establishment. The main thrust of the existing secondary literature has concentrated on the struggle between the Anglican Church and the Non-conformists to control education. During the period under study the Anglican Church and state were virtually one entity; both were concerned that if education was controlled by any other body they might be threatened with change or worse. This thesis has advanced the secondary literature through four key factors which include: social control, estate farmers’ contributions to local schools, an understanding of mixed denominational establishments and vocational foundations.

Firstly although the contemporary nineteenth century agricultural writer Robert Brown had argued the case for educated farm workers, education was viewed by the Marquis of Anglesey, his agent-in-chief and the local clergy as a means of controlling the population. The parish of Hanley was considered morally weak and was at times rebellious, it was hoped that by subscribing to the local Sunday school the behaviour of the people might be moderated. It has been alleged that by the mid-nineteenth century the majority of the Anglican clergy had managed to become intertwined with the rural community in a way that other denominations had not. However Smith suggested that
all denominations exhibited the same motivations where education was concerned and this formed part of their sense of pastoral responsibility and this obligation was instrumental in the formation of Sunday schools. Although a substantial part of this provision was to provide a basic religious education there was an underlying incentive to teach children ‘an instant, constant and cheerful obedience’. 17

Secondly the Dorset District Society was instituted as part of the National Society in 1812 and although it sought to put a school in every parish in the country it still looked for financial support from outside factors. For example at Kington in 1844 the different landowners within the parish were asked to assist in the founding and building of the National School. The Marquis of Anglesey promised £15 and an annual subscription once it was finished. In this instance it was not until 1854 that it looked as though the plan might come to fruition but although matters had changed the local clergy were still looking for financial support. At Stalbridge the Marquis again made annual payments to aid with the running costs.

Historians in the past have argued that farmers were opposed to and mistrustful of any form of education. It was generally assumed that they were against day schools of any kind and would not contribute to their day to day expenses. However this thesis argues that from the evidence presented in Castleman’s correspondence this was not the case. When looking to establish a school at Hanley, Castleman had written, that he did not think he would have any problems in persuading the tenants to contribute which, is the opposite of the general assumptions. Another example of farming support for education was found in the vouchers which related to the subscriptions paid to Harriet Mead/Habershams school at Stalbridge. All the payments were made for the support of one girl on charity for the express purpose of reading and other matters. Hardly a community opposed to any form of education. The estate itself made a separate contribution which ended when the National school took over. Research undertaken on this estate has suggested that landowners and farmers were both more willing to subscribe to education but considerably more research is needed through micro-studies or local archives to establish the extent to which this occurred. It appears that landowners and agents were prepared to invest in education in much higher quantities than previous studies have proposed.

Thirdly the two schools at Bradford Abbas created what appears to be a completely unique form of school. Records suggest that both establishments were relatively small and this is probably why they agreed to amalgamate in the beginning but ultimately they formed a school that was most unusual. The situation here was the antithesis of the entire religious debate surrounding education. Two different religious establishments of very different denominations shared one building and one teacher. Attempts were made to unite the school when it was rebuilt in 1837 but this did not happen for at least ten years, at which point the issue was raised that the Anglican part of the trust had a clause which stated that the boys should be brought up in the doctrines and principles of the Church of England. However this was not seen as a problem by the non-conformist element. Rather than further research on the religious debate to control education it should instead explore areas where co-operation existed.

Finally vocational schools such as the one founded by Bourne were common but this archive actually explains how they might have worked in practice. This project was supported by both the estate and the vestry. The Marquis’s contribution to the scheme included Stalbridge House as accommodation and the park land in which Bourne and the boys could grow flax. The vestry on the other hand donated the cash although they inserted a clause which would have ensured that as the scheme became profitable the money invested would be gradually repaid. The estate inserted its own covenant whereby should labour once again be in short supply on the estate then the boys could be employed but at a set agreed price. It appeared the scheme had two purposes, firstly it ensured the boys were employed at a time when they were most likely to be bothersome and secondly it would have provided them with a skill in later life. Bridport was one of the main centres of rope making in England and this used flax as its main raw material and therefore establishing a manufactory in growing and processing this crop was a logical step. However it appeared Bourne abused the system and moved in boys from outside the parish who then became liable for settlement which meant the estate asked for the house, park and land back. This ended somewhat acrimoniously with Bourne launching a letter and newspaper campaign against Castleman.

Education had two purposes during this period, firstly it set out to ensure children understood the tenets of blind obedience to authority and secondly to subjugate the population. When Castleman attempted to stop a subscription to the Sunday school at Handley the request was refused. The agent-in-chief suggested that anything which
helped to quell the rebellious nature of the population was worth the expense unless it was found that the establishment was trying to indoctrinate the children. The Marquis of Anglesey and the estate were very much part of the foundation and historiography of educational history. Above all else it demonstrates the extent of Castleman’s role within the rural community. This chapter on education has illuminated the pivotal position of the land agent in all aspects of rural life; he was not solely concerned with the organisation and management of agriculture. Castleman used his understanding of the rural community to advise and assist the Marquis with which schools to support and to target the more rebellious areas of the estate.

**Rental Accounts and Estate Vouchers**

This final chapter was intended to add a quantitative element to this thesis. The diurnal correspondence of the Castleman family is large at some 3000 plus letters but this is small when compared to the 10,000 or more vouchers and bi-annual rental accounts. One of the problems which this research faced was how to sample this large body of data in order to provide new information which would add to our understanding of the rural community. With the rental accounts it was decided to examine every five years at Lady day and the vouchers were chosen to illustrate the general themes within this thesis. Although record keeping was by no means a new phenomenon at the beginning of the nineteenth century there was a huge expansion in the number of records that were collated and stored. Castleman like many others kept charge and discharge rental accounts but any other accounts which recorded the day to day expenditure have not survived or were never constructed. The rental accounts for the Marquis of Anglesey’s Dorset and Somerset estate provide an unbroken record of around forty years and are deserving of far more attention than given here. Research into the rental accounts and vouchers has explored and examined a completely neglected source of information. It has identified four key points all of which need further study but the indications are that new and exciting quantitative details will come to light which will further enormously our understanding of the rural community.

Firstly, this thesis set out to illustrate the importance of investigating the types of account that were rejected by Turner, Beckett and Afton. Castleman highlighted the problems in collating this form of account because not all the tenants paid their rents on audit day. At Milborne Port some paid monthly while others paid once their stock was
sold at a particular time of the year. The result of these delays might provide a false level of arrears within the account. If the rental accounts had been explored separately to the rest of the archive available this point would have been lost and an inaccurate conclusion reached. In their attempt to create a rent index the exact number of estates or farms examined is not clear and it is therefore impossible to ascertain the accuracy of their overall summation. Further investigation into the type of rental accounts rejected by Turner, Beckett and Afton is essential if a true rental index is to be reached.

Turner, Beckett and Afton have written the most comprehensive book to date on agricultural rental in England but even they did not suggest that it was perfect or complete. Accounts especially charge and discharge accounts are time consuming to extract information from and these were instantly rejected by the above historians. An examination of the accounts of this estate provided details of rent assessed and the amounts collected on rent day and the level to which arrears accrued or decreased. These figures add an economic angle and depth which is absent from much of the previous research undertaken. In his daily correspondence Castleman discussed and debated the financial and economic problems of both the tenants and agriculture in the wake of the Napoleonic Wars. By combining the two sets of records it is possible to gain an in depth view of why arrears accrued and to explore the local trends against those happening regionally and nationally. The research conducted for this thesis has highlighted the problems agents faced when compiling accounts and this inherently affected the accuracy of the final product. Turner, Beckett and Afton’s work forms a solid basis against which other studies can be compared but its exactitude needs to be tested. Therefore more studies are urgently needed which use both combination of accounts and correspondence and this would allow the formation of a new and more precise data base.

Secondly, the same principles and problems apply to their attempt to create an overview of rental value per acre. In principle this was a useful exercise but in practice it only included twenty nine farms and although these were distributed across twenty two English counties it was a minute sample. Turner, Beckett and Afton concluded that in 1842 the rent per acre was 25.9s. When the same exercise was conducted using the valuation from the estate in 1846 the results were surprisingly varied even in this reasonably small geographical area. This demonstrated the dangers of accepting an average which was arrived at by only using a small number of estates and farm. Much
more research needs to be carried out across the whole of England to ascertain rental
trends and land values rather than simply relying on one study no matter how
emblematic it might appear. Perhaps one of the most important aspects included within
the rental accounts was the lists of tenants. For the first time it was possible to view the
_tenants in terms of families and inter-community relationships. This allows the
researcher to follow names throughout the archive, ascertain where they farmed and in
which parish and displayed changing tenant numbers. These rose rapidly in 1825 and
1835 but without significant increases in rent suggesting that extra but smaller tenants
were included for specific reasons. By using the lists of tenants both here and elsewhere
it would be possible to explore demographic movements in rural areas in a way that has
_not previously been possible.

Thirdly, practically no research has been carried out on the estate voucher and
yet this estate alone contains more than 10,000. King has argued that the information
recorded and collected in relation to the administration of poor relief provided officials
with crucial statistical information.\(^\text{18}\) Once the data was collected and collated it could
be used to assess where money had been spent and could aid future policy planning.
The Marquis of Anglesey’s Dorset and Somerset estate emblematically illustrated this
explosion of numerical information which took place during the early part of the
nineteenth century. Although the vouchers encompassed all aspects of estate
management it has only been possible to use a small number here to demonstrate how
they can add detail to our understanding of the rural community. While the day to day
correspondence of Castleman created one unique historical perspective of estate life it is
the vouchers that provide the quantitative data. They provide a detail to the
landowner/tenant relationship that is missing from most of the secondary literature. This
data it is hoped will form the base from which further studies can be undertaken and
from which a true comparison of how much landowners actually contributed to the rural
community.

\(^{18}\) S. King, “In These You Must Trust”: Numerical Information, Accounting Practices, and the Poor Law,
c. 1790 to 1840’, in T. Crook and G. O’Hara, (eds.), Statistics and the Public Sphere: Numbers and the
Finally, the makeshift economy has attracted considerable interest from poor law historians including Steven King and Alannah Tomkins. The estate vouchers add an extra dimension to our knowledge of this economy and provide details of the type of specific items which the estate were willing to contribute to or buy. Alternatively the Marquis contributed cash sums to local clergy or trustees who then organised either its distribution or the purchase of coal, food or clothing. Administrators of poor relief were not above asking for their annual contributions and when it seemed as if the Marquis had been less than generous would request larger subscriptions.

The vouchers demonstrated the types of network that Castleman tried to cultivate and maintain. He personally lived in Wimborne some twenty three miles from Stalbridge where he worked for a firm of land agents and managed the Bankes estate at Blandford. It was impossible for him to be in all places at once. Therefore he bought and paid for information where and when he thought it necessary or appropriate. The knowledge he acquired allowed him to observe both Milborne Port and the opposition party from a distance. He was able to follow what happened to goods and livestock moved off farms illegally when distraints had been levelled or to gather information on timber stealing and the Swing rioters. Finally the social side of the estate was revealed through the bills and receipts for bread, wine, cheese and music. The tenants expected to be entertained and feted and this part of the archive shows just how much alcohol was actually purchased.

**Looking Out**

The aim of this thesis was to explore the socio-economic and political history of the rural community on the Marquis of Anglesey’s Dorset and Somerset estate through the surviving records of its agents William, Henry and Edward Castleman. A meticulous close contextual study the archive has revealed that the role of the land agent was far more diverse and pivotal to the successful management of rural society than has previously been supposed. Historians have continued to argue that the farmer’s remain under-represented in agricultural history and as will be seen this study suggests that the land agent’s records compensate and start to fill this gap. Many land agent archives have been overlooked because they remain uncatalogued and time consuming to

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investigate. When examined in detail they contain a wide variety of information which explore the dynamics and characteristics of the rural community. In looking outwards beyond the confines of this thesis there are three main observations.

Firstly this thesis has sought to examine the rural community during the first half of the nineteenth century by surveying the way it was worked managed and organised. However it was and is a difficult concept to define. At its simplest it is merely a distribution of houses, workshops and streets; but it is the people within it, which give it shape and substance. Jennings suggested in 1968 that it was impossible for one writer to do justice to the wealth of material available and using the old methodology that would be true.²⁰ Previous studies have appraised single aspects of its structure, commerce or characteristics using diverse examples from some of the better known great estates. However this micro-study has taken research in new directions and included all the elements which constituted the rural community under the umbrella of one study. This has created a system by which a meticulous case study might be undertaken and the information gained filtered thematically rather than chronologically. The result of the methodology used has revealed that previous historical studies have failed to generate a sense of the intricacy and inter-dependent nature of society in the early nineteenth century. By isolating the different prisms and corpuses of data hidden in local archives and private collections it would be possible to construct a model which would allow the historiography of the rural community to be established. By tracing the demise of this section of society it might be possible to isolate the individualistic characteristics responsible for its decline and which might have had implications for the survival of modern agrarian society

Secondly one of the main and over-arching tenets of the research conducted has been the different ways in which the estate sought to exert social control. Social control has been defined as the capacity of a social group to regulate itself.²¹ However within the early nineteenth century the rural community was structured, planned and standardised through the landowner or his agent and this has implications for the ways in which we perceive authority during this period. With the tenants there was always the underlying suspicion that political loyalty and deference were finely balanced concepts. The political landscape and ultimately the relationship between landowner

and tenant relied on an implicit agreement that those in the authority had the right to be
rule. While the balance of social and political power was rarely challenged elections
still provided a check on the local elite. Although landowners might evict those who
voted for the opposition they relied on the majority of their tenants voting for the
chosen candidate. In return the electorate expected to be entertained and canvassed and
those who gained their electoral status through leasing farms and properties envisaged
repairs and improvements to be up-to-date.

The labouring poor created a different challenge as they would not lose their
political status if evicted. Instead the estate used education to try and improve the moral
behaviour of the more rebellious elements of the rural community. The local clergy
were in collusion with the estate and the establishment of educational facilities were
part of their pastoral responsibilities. It might be argued that social control was
maintained by teaching the children to be prepared for a life of unquestioning obedience
combined with the morals of orderliness and punctuality. Castleman sought to prevent
additional problems by using the full force of the law to prosecute where it thought
appropriate and to maintain where possible the employment for the agricultural
labourer. However little research has been conducted into how social control was
maintained in other localities and regions. Therefore this thesis opens up a new debate
on how social control was maintained within the greater community outside the
confines of a geographically defined estate before any established police force.

Finally historians including Hoyle in his recent publication have all considered
the farmer to be an almost invisible character within history.22 By using the meticulous
and comprehensive records of Castleman and other agents of his stature it is possible to
correct this oversight. These under-used and under-utilised archives contain details
which relate to the minutiae of agrarian history. They challenge our previous
conceptions of the agricultural revolution, tenurial patterns, rental indices, land values
and landowner/tenant relationships. Previous studies have often relied on small and
incomplete geographical samples to estimate how rent arrears accrued, the extent and
impact of economic recessions and the rate of improvements and repairs. Kerridge,
Chambers, Mingay and Overton have all debated the timing of an agricultural
revolution. One of the problems in establishing whether such an event took place has

been the lack of available information. However by expanding our studies of this section of the rural community through the historical prism created by the land agent it would be possible to establish local and regional rates of change, the introduction of mechanisation, drainage and new crops. More importantly studies of this nature would greatly expand the existing historiography and our understanding of the form and function of all those who lived and worked within the rural community.
Appendix 1

The Type of Leases granted 1821-22

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>STALBRIDGE FARM LEASES</th>
<th>Length</th>
<th>Rent/Fine</th>
<th>£</th>
<th>s</th>
<th>d</th>
<th>Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Robert Burge</td>
<td>12 years determinable</td>
<td>Rent</td>
<td>94</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>11th Oct 1822</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>George Duffet</td>
<td>Do</td>
<td>Rent</td>
<td>172</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>11 Oct 1822</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thomas How</td>
<td>12 years determinable at the end of 4 or 8 years</td>
<td>Rent</td>
<td>220</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>11 Oct 1822</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>George Moore</td>
<td>Do</td>
<td>Rent</td>
<td>300</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>11 Oct 1822</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MILBORNE PORT LEASES</th>
<th>Counterpart of Lease for 99 years of premises in Milborne Port</th>
<th>Rent</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>28th Oct 1822</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The Capital Bailiffs to the Marquis of Anglesey Lives The Earl of U ... 25 Lord William ... 19 Lord A ... 17 Nos 138 &amp;111 No 191 - 345 Do as above</td>
<td>Fine</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>LIFEHOLD LEASES</th>
<th>MANOR OF BRADFORD ABBAS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mr Jacob Snook Lease of Premiss Fine for lives 3 adding 2 lessee ...26</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ann Perry ...57 Lords Rent 3 4 I B Snook ... 4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MANOR OF STALBRIDGE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Jacob Parsons Lease of Cottage &amp; Farm Fine for Lives 3 viz. 3 Lives 36 0 0 14th Jan 1822 Lessee ... 22 Lords Rent 2 6 Jacob Persons ... 50 John Tuffer ... 24</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| J B Knight Lease of Premises Fine 38 0 0 23 Dec 1822 Life 1 Lord's Rent 1 6 |

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23 This appendix details a number of the leases which the Marquis of Anglesey granted in 1821-22 and demonstrates the wide variety of types issued.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Rent</th>
<th>Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Chas Knight</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jacob Dike</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lives 3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thomas Dike</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>William Dike</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fred Dike</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elias Duffet Senior</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lives 3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E Duffet son of Lessee</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E Duffet Grand children of</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alan Duffet the Lessee</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Milborne Port Boro Leases</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thomas Pitman</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leases</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>George Phillips</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Term 10 years</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>George Parsons</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N Newport</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>George Meacher</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sam Moors</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Edw Moors</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tho Legg</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Robert Ham</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H Hodges</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tho Edgerton</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thomas Downton</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lease of Premises in Mr P for 10 years from date determinable by either party on giving one days notice</td>
<td>Rent</td>
<td>2 10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rich Ceaydon</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>William Talbot</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thomas Toop</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>William Lymes</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Robert Sanderson</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>J Speer</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Morris Raymond</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chas Rawlings</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>William Reeves</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John Rogers</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix 2

Preston’s School, Admissions Register 1800-1825

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of Pupil</th>
<th>Parents</th>
<th>Admitted</th>
<th>Left</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Wm Milborne</td>
<td>John/Betty</td>
<td>26.3.1800</td>
<td>4.7.1800</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mattw. Parker</td>
<td>Robt/Martha</td>
<td>26.3.1800</td>
<td>15.4.1805</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>George King</td>
<td>Robt/Martha</td>
<td>26.3.1800</td>
<td>2.5.1803</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John Hodges</td>
<td>John/Mary</td>
<td>26.3.1800</td>
<td>22.3.1802</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hannah Garrett</td>
<td>Robt/Mary</td>
<td>26.3.1800</td>
<td>died May 1903</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elizth Stone</td>
<td>Chas/Rebeckah</td>
<td>26.3.1800</td>
<td>Christmas 1804</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elizth Ridout</td>
<td>Wm/Jane</td>
<td>26.3.1800</td>
<td>22.9.1980</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>James Adams</td>
<td>Rich/Mary</td>
<td>26.3.1800</td>
<td>19.1.1801 St Michael</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John Daniel Stephens</td>
<td>/Hannah</td>
<td>22.9.1801</td>
<td>1806</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jno Long</td>
<td>/Katherine</td>
<td>16.2.1801</td>
<td>23.4.1804</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Laza/Jills (Lazarus?)</td>
<td>/Betty</td>
<td>29.3.1802</td>
<td>24.11.1805</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>George Garrett</td>
<td>Geo/Mary</td>
<td>9.5.1803</td>
<td>Christmas 1804 St Michael</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John Masters</td>
<td>Thos/Mary</td>
<td>12.5.1803</td>
<td>1807</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>George Read</td>
<td>Thos/Rose</td>
<td>23.4.1804</td>
<td>17.3.1807</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Solomon Garrett</td>
<td>Henry/Betty</td>
<td>4.7.1804</td>
<td>10.6.1807</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mercy Dunham</td>
<td>James/Susannah</td>
<td>7.1.1805</td>
<td>18.1.1808</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mary Bishop</td>
<td>Luke/</td>
<td>0.0.1805</td>
<td>18.1.1808 Midsummer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Benj Bishop</td>
<td>Thos/</td>
<td>15.4.1805</td>
<td>1811</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wm Garrett</td>
<td>Hen/Betty</td>
<td>2.12.1805</td>
<td>Midsummer 1809</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John King</td>
<td>Robt/Charlotte</td>
<td>4.11.1806</td>
<td>1810</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rich. Fudge</td>
<td>James/Mary</td>
<td>19.3.1807</td>
<td>Lady day 1809 Midsummer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chas. Garrett</td>
<td>Henry/Betty</td>
<td>10.6.1807</td>
<td>1809</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wm Peach</td>
<td>Robt/Ann</td>
<td>28.9.1807</td>
<td>January 1810 Midsummer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Matthew Helyar</td>
<td>Wm/Lucy</td>
<td>5½</td>
<td>June 1812</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thos Dodge</td>
<td>/Mary</td>
<td>16.1.1809 age</td>
<td>1812</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wm Dunham (crossed out)</td>
<td></td>
<td>12.9.1809</td>
<td>This boy never came to school</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Robt Sherring</td>
<td>Mrs Sherring</td>
<td></td>
<td>24.5.1813 Midsummer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>David Garrett</td>
<td>Isaac/Mary</td>
<td>12.8.1809</td>
<td>1812</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

24 This admission’s register from the Dorset Online Parish Clerk illustrates the pupils admitted to Preston’s School and the length of time they attended.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>First Name</th>
<th>Spouse/Prefix</th>
<th>Birth Date</th>
<th>Baptism Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Wm Edgar</td>
<td>Joel/Ann</td>
<td>9.7.1810</td>
<td>March 1814</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John Smith</td>
<td>Phillip</td>
<td>Jan 1810</td>
<td>1812</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>James Read</td>
<td>Thos/Rose</td>
<td>16.9.1811</td>
<td>10.10.1816</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wm Parsons</td>
<td>Geo/Betty</td>
<td>17.12.1812</td>
<td>Christmas 1816</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John Pavitt</td>
<td>John/</td>
<td>13.1.1813</td>
<td>1.11.1820</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thos Garrett</td>
<td>/Mary</td>
<td>18.1.1813</td>
<td>Christmas 1817</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John Abbott</td>
<td>John/Ann</td>
<td>24.5.1813</td>
<td>20.1.1818</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Matthw Beer</td>
<td>Adam/Sarah</td>
<td>1.3.1814</td>
<td>31.5.1819</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mark Smith</td>
<td>Philip/Ann</td>
<td>11.6.1815</td>
<td>1.11.1820</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John Ridout</td>
<td>Thos/Jane</td>
<td>6.7.1818</td>
<td>18.11.1820</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Joseph? Ridout</td>
<td>not given</td>
<td>6.7.1818</td>
<td>29.2.1820</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Windham Woolmington</td>
<td>Joseph?/Betty</td>
<td>4.12.1817</td>
<td>30.4.1822</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>James Garrett</td>
<td>Rich/Sarah</td>
<td>October 1816?</td>
<td>29.8.1819</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John Notley</td>
<td>Chas/Betty</td>
<td>2.9.1818</td>
<td>1.7.1821</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Benj White</td>
<td>Jno Martha</td>
<td>1.6.1819</td>
<td>1.9.1821</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Geo Newman</td>
<td>Geo/Mary</td>
<td>1.11.1820</td>
<td>1.7.1821</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>James Chant</td>
<td>Geo/Betty</td>
<td>18.10.1819</td>
<td>April 1824</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Geo Bishop</td>
<td>/Ruth</td>
<td>12.1.1821</td>
<td>January 1824</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Geo Read</td>
<td>Geo/Sarah</td>
<td>2.3.1820</td>
<td>October 1825</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John Cridland</td>
<td>Wm/Mary</td>
<td>1.5.1822</td>
<td>28.3.1823</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Edmd Read</td>
<td>Amos/</td>
<td>20.9.1819</td>
<td>7.6.1823</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Luke Loscomb</td>
<td>Philip/Sarah</td>
<td>16.9.1821</td>
<td>1.3.1822</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mark Loscomb</td>
<td>Philip/Sarah</td>
<td>4.3.1822</td>
<td>April 1824</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Andr Read</td>
<td>Geo/Sarah</td>
<td>3.12.1821</td>
<td>not given</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Geo Helyar</td>
<td>Wm/Lucy</td>
<td>16.7.1821</td>
<td>October 1824</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mark Newman</td>
<td>/Mary</td>
<td>15.4.1822</td>
<td>18.11.1823</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mark King</td>
<td>Peter/Ann</td>
<td>28.3.1823</td>
<td>28.5.1823</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John Garrett</td>
<td>Isaac/Mary</td>
<td>28.5.1823</td>
<td>not given</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Edw Jills</td>
<td>Sam/Susan</td>
<td>7.6.1823</td>
<td>not given</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fredk Masters</td>
<td>Wm/</td>
<td>18.11.1823</td>
<td>not given</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Geo Ring</td>
<td>Joseph?/</td>
<td>October 1824</td>
<td>not given</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>James? Chainey</td>
<td>not given</td>
<td>January 1824</td>
<td>not given</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Esau Notely</td>
<td>Charles/</td>
<td>1825</td>
<td>not given</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jonas Ridout</td>
<td>Thos/12.5.</td>
<td>1825</td>
<td>not given</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Dorset The Online Parish Clerk.²⁵

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