Place and power:
the landed gentry of the West Solent Region in the eighteenth century

Emma R. Page, Kellogg College
D.Phil. in English Local History
Michaelmas Term, 2016

Short Abstract

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This regional study examines the character and pace of change in landed society in the eighteenth century and the impact of change on social stability. It offers new perspectives on why the landed gentry, the 'untitled aristocracy', retained their estates and their influence throughout the period. Members of this distinct social group had to make more careful, strategic choices than the wealthier peerage, and their behaviour served as a barometer of the effects of socio-economic and cultural developments on society as a whole. In spite of this, there have been few regional studies of eighteenth-century landed gentry in recent years.

The study's *in situ* holistic approach builds on the earlier historiography of landed elites but also on more recent scholarship on culture, performance, and polite behaviour. It uses archival records to study the fifty-two landed-gentry families in the New Forest and the Isle of Wight. It shows that the landed gentry of this region was open to newcomers, who added to the numbers rather than displacing established families. Furthermore, there was no evidence of elite withdrawal or of a separation into so-called 'old and local' and 'new and national' groups.

This thesis adds an important new dimension by identifying two characteristics of successful families. They were social and cultural amphibians, able not only to move

between their estates and London but also to adapt to the polite norms of behaviour of different groups. In addition, they used ‘social power’, which stemmed principally from their behaviour, to achieve their aims in spite of the greater wealth and status of the peerage. As a group, the landed gentry presented a picture of social continuity and stability in 1800, but they had achieved this through a process of gradual social accommodation. They had changed in order to preserve their place and their power.

Long Abstract

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When the Burkes issued their *Dictionary of the landed gentry* in 1847, they described it as 'the genealogical history of that Class in Society which holds the next place to the privileged Order – the untitled Country Gentleman'. These were men who enjoyed 'territorial possessions or high official rank', but who were 'uninvested with heritable honours'; they were, in F. M. L. Thompson's words, the 'untitled aristocracy'. The Burkes proclaimed that it was 'to this grade in her social system – her independent country gentlemen' that England was 'mainly indebted for her greatness abroad, and her prosperity at home'. Furthermore, it was 'in this and her free institutions' that England differed from every other country in Europe. While the Burkes were confident that the landed gentry were still thriving in the mid-nineteenth century, scholars have recognised that they faced significant challenges and Colley has even argued that in some areas 'an almost entirely new and British landed establishment' might replace the 'old and local gentry' during the eighteenth century. Were the Burkes' landed gentry 'new and national' or 'old and local'? Had the eighteenth century been a period of social continuity, or one of gradual or sudden change?

This thesis seeks to address these questions, and since the landed gentry had their roots in the countryside, a regional study was considered the most appropriate approach. Accordingly, a *pays* within Hampshire, the West Solent Region, containing

two distinct geographical areas, the New Forest and the Isle of Wight, was selected. This rural area (the 'Region') was within two day's travel of London, and was not dominated by great landowning members of the peerage. Over the course of the century, fifty-two landed-gentry families owned estates in the Region, making it ideally suited to studying this social group.

The focus on the landed gentry is deliberate. They were less wealthy than the titled aristocracy, the peerage, and therefore had to make more careful and strategic choices. Accordingly, their behaviour served as a barometer of how socio-economic and cultural developments affected society as a whole. In spite of this, there have been surprisingly few studies of eighteenth-century landed gentry in recent years, and in many instances, the group has been conflated with the peerage. This thesis seeks to address this gap in the historiography by examining the character and pace of change in this stratum of landed society during the eighteenth century.

This thesis has been conceived as a holistic study, encompassing not only the familiar topics of estates and lifestyle but also the strategies that this neglected group adopted to maintain their position in society and achieve their objectives. It builds on an older historiography of English elites, much of which was concerned with landownership and country seats, but also on more recent work on culture, performance, and polite behaviour. In this way, it combines the harder social approach of the later twentieth century with the socio-cultural approach of the twenty-first century.

This thesis aims to offer new perspectives on why, as a group, the landed gentry retained their place and their power throughout the period. A regional study is ideal for this as, in the words of the authorities on the seventeenth-century gentry, Heal and Holmes, it allows an in-depth 'study both of a social group and of the attitudes of the

individuals who composed it'. Heal and Holmes concluded that it was only possible to 'approach a broader interpretation of their social and political significance' by studying the gentry 'in their own *pays*, in the environment in which they logically exercised authority'.

This thesis has, at its heart, a study of lived lives revealed through a forensic examination of unpublished letters, diaries, accounts, estate records, and other untapped manuscript sources. The methodology adopted has used these sources to create new datasets, bringing precision and clarity to the findings of the research. However, care has also been taken to situate the work on the Region in the context of the landed gentry of the county of Hampshire as a whole and experience elsewhere in England.

This thesis presents new interpretations of why and how the landed gentry of the Region, as a group, changed over time. It argues that it was open to newcomers, who added to the numbers rather than displacing established families. Both established families and newcomers aspired to be known as the family 'of' a place, and the landed estate was, therefore, primarily a source of status rather than of profit. This meant that the family had to own a substantial, contiguous landed estate, rather than a collection of dispersed farms. The landed gentry also shared the goal of wanting to keep their estate in the family, and went to great lengths to achieve this in the face of demographic challenges.

This thesis shows that, as a group, the landed gentry remained committed to providing leadership in the Region, and there was no evidence of elite withdrawal or of a separation into 'old and local' and 'new and national' groups; instead, the landed gentry displayed a blend of patrician and patriarchal characteristics. Most striking of all, they were able to increase their control of the five borough constituencies in the Region over the course of the period, against perceived wider trends. Viewed from a distance, it

appeared that the landed gentry continued to rule unchallenged in the Region but, underneath the surface, there was considerable change not only in the composition of the group but also in their behaviour.

This thesis adds a further dimension by showing that, although it was necessary to have a substantial landed estate to qualify as landed gentry, families with the greatest wealth, the largest estates, and the grandest country seats did not necessarily have the greatest longevity or the most power and influence. Instead, those who were successful in keeping their estates in the family deployed 'social power', a term that is used to describe the ability of individuals to achieve their aims in spite of opposition from others. Furthermore, it is argued that social power was just as important as wealth for the landed gentry of the Region.

The landed gentry's social power stemmed principally from their behaviour and their relationships with others, both members of their peer group and those below and above them in the social hierarchy. Recognition of the importance of behaviour is not new; historians including Finch, Roebuck and Aley have shown that personal behaviour and 'the ability of the individual to meet challenges and crises' was the most decisive factor in determining whether individual families thrived. This study takes this argument further by exploring the patterns of behaviour and social accommodation across an entire, multi-generational social group. It demonstrates that, just as income could be saved as wealth, social power could be accumulated over time and deployed when required.

Continuing with the theme of performative behaviour, this thesis identifies another characteristic of successful landed gentry, their ability to be socially amphibious. The term 'amphibiousness' has often been used to describe the capacity to be equally at home in two different milieux, such as the country and the metropolis.

However, this thesis argues that amphibiousness was a multi-faceted, rather than a binary, concept. Successful social amphibians were able to adapt their behaviour to accommodate the changing expectations of the multiple different circles they moved in at any given point in time, regardless of location. This was more than just participating in cultural practices; the norms of polite behaviour varied from group to group and had to be understood and followed. Conversely, inflexible and inappropriate behaviour could have a detrimental effect on both a family's social power and their ability to retain their estates and their influence.

Reflecting this approach, the thesis is divided into two sections. The first section, of three chapters, situates the landed gentry in the Region and sets out the physical characteristics of the estates and their owners. The next section, of four chapters, focuses on performative aspects: how they behaved and deployed their social power in both private and public spheres, within and outside the Region.

The first chapter, *The West Solent Region*, explains why the area was particularly well suited to studying the behaviour of the landed gentry. The Region was attractive to both newcomers and the established landed gentry because of the many ways in which the role of the landed gentleman could be acted out within it. It had five parliamentary boroughs, as well as opportunities for royal patronage and office holding, but it had no resident peerage and no large, dominant landed estates. The area changed over time, becoming increasingly popular for its picturesque scenery, sea-bathing, and country sports.

Chapter Two, *Identifying the landed gentry*, sets out the methodology adopted to create the dataset of landed-gentry families and analyse the turnover in the group as a whole. The landed-gentry families in the Region were divided into those who were 'established' in 1700 and newcomers. The latter were categorised as upwardly-mobile

‘upcomers’, who were already resident in the Region in 1700 but not landed, and ‘incomers’ from outside the Region. It is argued that this classification is more meaningful in terms of social change than whether the newcomers were ‘men of business’ or not. Preliminary comparisons are made between the nature of the landed gentry in the New Forest and the Isle of Wight, and it is shown that newcomers added to the numbers rather than displacing the established landed gentry, thus qualifying the findings of Jenkins.

The third chapter, *Establishing a landed estate*, starts by using estate and household accounts to assess how much income a landed-gentry family needed to maintain an appropriate lifestyle, and the extent to which this could be obtained from an agrarian estate. Next, the motives for owning an estate are explored and it is argued that it was important to be recognised as the family ‘of’ a place. The difficulties encountered establishing a landed estate, where resources were limited, are illustrated with case studies of two incomers, one of whom started the process in 1718, the other in 1770. Some families faced financial constraints, but overcame these by supplementing agricultural income with commercial activities such as timber, salt and iron production.

The second section of the thesis moves on to consider how behaviour influenced the character and pace of social change and impacted the ability of the landed gentry both to keep their landed estates in the family and to retain their power and influence. It examines behaviour first within the family and then across three different public spheres: within the Region, across different social circles and in national politics.

The fourth chapter, *Family matters*, focuses on the behaviour of the landed gentry in the internal, family sphere and considers how relationships between the head of the family and the other members of both sexes affected the family’s longevity. Succession remained a major concern throughout the eighteenth century and the

strategies and behaviours adopted to overcome demographic problems were constrained by the consequences of primogeniture and strict settlement. A contributory factor was that the landed gentry were less wealthy than the peerage and found it harder to attract suitable wives or provide dowries for daughters and sisters. This led to later marriage and fewer potential heirs. In several families, one brother after another inherited the estate before dying without issue, and estates passed through the female line on sixteen occasions. Two case studies are used to illustrate the correlation between behaviour, social power, and survival of the family.

Chapter Five, *Maintaining landed-gentry status in the Region,* examines two aspects of landed-gentry behaviour that affected their public profile in the Region: spending money on building the country seat and spending time in public service. This chapter shows that there were no systemic differences between established families and newcomers, or between those living in the New Forest or on the Isle of Wight. The most successful landed gentry were those who conformed to the expectations of their peer group. They performed just enough public service to provide visible leadership in the Region and they lived in country seats that were appropriate and not ostentatious. It is argued that, for the landed gentry, who were less wealthy than the peerage, social power, which stemmed principally from their behaviour, was as important as wealth in ensuring that the family kept their estates in the family.

The sixth chapter, *Adaptive social amphibians,* shows that social power was important outside, as well as inside, the Region. Rather than being wholly absorbed by Wahrman's 'national culture' or being relegated to local patriarchs, successful individuals became adaptive social amphibians. They were at ease in multiple overlapping circles and developed strong, long-lasting relationships. Social power was earned by displaying the behaviours and attitudes that were valued by each group. This

required the landed gentry to modify their behaviour not only over time but also to accommodate the changing expectations and polite norms of these different groups. Two case studies reveal that amphibiousness was more than just being at home in both the country and London.

The last chapter, *Political behaviour*, deals with the behaviour of the landed gentry in another public sphere, national politics. The landed gentry increased their control of parliamentary boroughs in the Region over the course of the eighteenth century and this involved reciprocal deference structures of patronage. Reciprocal relationships, mutual trust, and respect were important not only with the groups above and below them in the social hierarchy but also within their peer group. Through appropriate behaviours and social accommodation, the landed gentry were able to retain their influence in spite of the greater wealth of the peerage and their stronger links with the metropolis and government.

As a work of social as well as local history, this thesis attempts to take a holistic, regional approach to interpreting the detailed findings concerning place and power. However, it also aims to inform the national debate by examining the process of exchange between the Region and wider society. It is argued that this social group was open to new entrants, but the 'old and local' absorbed the 'new and national'; over time, successful families became socially and culturally amphibious, at home in many different social milieux. Thus, there was no 'great divide' or sudden transformation of society, but a process of gradual social accommodation and, whilst the landed gentry as a group presented an appearance of social continuity and stability, this was not the result of inaction. They adapted their behaviour in order to preserve their place and their power.

Whilst my holistic approach brings together a variety of approaches by social and cultural historians over several generations of scholarship, there is opportunity for further work to improve our understanding of landed gentry attitudes and networks. In particular, there are aspects of landed-gentry life, such as their role in governance, which could be studied more deeply and systematically. In this way, it is hoped that this approach to place and power could be extended into the nineteenth century and to other regions.

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Introduction

When John Burke issued his first history of the *Commoners of Great Britain and Ireland* in 1835, he had no doubt that his readers could recognise the group 'enjoying territorial possessions or high official rank; but uninvested with heritable honours'.[1] He continued that:

> To this grade in her social system – her independent country gentlemen – England is mainly indebted for her greatness abroad, and her prosperity at home. In this and her free institutions, she differs from every other country in Europe.[2]

When, twelve years later, Burke and his son replaced the *Commoners* with the *Dictionary of the Landed Gentry*, they described it as 'the genealogical history of that Class in Society which holds the next place to the privileged Order – the untitled Country Gentleman'.[3] They were, in F. M. L. Thompson's view, 'the untitled aristocracy'.[4] The Burkes seemed to be confident that the landed gentry were still thriving in the mid-nineteenth century, but were they correct and, if so, why was this the case?

Modern historiography endorses the view that the landed classes remained an important sector of society throughout the eighteenth century. Indeed, Disraeli believed that 'down to the end of the 1870s … it was extremely difficult to uproot an English landed family'.[5] However, the landed establishment faced significant socio-economic and cultural change, and it is the character and pace of this change that has been the focus of much of the historiography. For example, Jenkins found that, in Glamorgan,

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[1] J. Burke, *A genealogical and heraldic history of the commoners of Great Britain and Ireland, etc.* (3 vols, London, 1835), vol. 2, title page.
[2] Burke, *Commoners*, preface.
[3] J. Burke and B. Burke, *A genealogical and heraldic dictionary of the landed gentry of Great Britain and Ireland* (2 vols, London, 1847), preface.
[4] F. M. L. Thompson, *English landed society in the nineteenth century* (London, 1963), p. 109.
[5] Cited in H. J. Habakkuk, *Marriage, debt, and the estates system: English landownership, 1650–1950* (Oxford, 1994), p. 623.

the old gentry had 'dissolved with remarkable rapidity by the mid-eighteenth century', to be replaced by a 'national', and predominantly aristocratic, ruling class.[6] His work revealed 'a story of detachment from local culture and loyalties, and the adoption of metropolitan ways'. Indeed, Colley thought it possible that 'an almost entirely new and British landed establishment' might replace the 'old and local gentry'.[7] The conundrum was whether Burkes' landed gentry were 'old and local' or 'new and national', and whether the eighteenth century was a period of social continuity or of gradual or, indeed, sudden change.

The wider debate about the balance between social continuity and change has been at the heart of scholarship on the eighteenth century, and has extended to all social groups. This thesis seeks to make a further contribution through a study of the lived lives of a relatively neglected group, the landed gentry. The focus on this stratum of society is deliberate. They owned substantial landed estates, but they were less wealthy than the titled aristocracy, henceforth referred to as the peerage, and therefore had to make more careful and strategic choices. It is argued that their more limited agency meant that their actions served as a sensitive barometer of how socio-economic and cultural developments affected society as a whole.[8] In view of their significance, there have been surprisingly few studies in recent years of the landed gentry as a discrete group, in part because it has frequently been conflated with the peerage.

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[6] P. Jenkins, *The making of a ruling class: the Glamorgan gentry, 1640–1790* (Cambridge, 1983), pp. 38, xxvi. In contrast, Howell showed that 'despite the demographic decline there was no thorough-going replacement of the old gentry families with a new and alien group' in D. W. Howell, *Patriarchs and parasites: the gentry of south-west Wales in the eighteenth century* (Cardiff, 1986), p. 234.

[7] Jenkins, *Glamorgan gentry*, p. 272; L. Colley, *Britons: forging the nation, 1707–1837*, 2nd edn (London, 2003), p. 157.

[8] The precise definition of 'landed gentry' will be considered in greater detail in Chapter Two, but a substantial landed estate would generally have exceeded 1,000 acres. The term 'peerage' has been used throughout to designate members of the House of Lords, although 'nobility' was the term widely used in the eighteenth century, before being replaced by 'aristocracy' in the nineteenth century. See for example: A. Goodrich, 'Understanding a language of 'aristocracy', 1700–1850', *The Historical Journal*, 56/2 (2013), pp. 369–98.

As the landed gentry had their roots in the countryside, it is argued that a regional approach is most appropriate, and a *pays* within Hampshire (the 'West Solent Region' or the 'Region') has been selected for the study. The Region comprised two distinct geographical areas, the New Forest and the Isle of Wight, which were joined, rather than divided, by the West Solent. What made the Region of interest to the historian was not its location, about two days from London, but the many ways in which the role of the landed gentleman could be acted out within its boundaries. It had no resident great landowning members of the peerage, yet there were five parliamentary boroughs in the Region and offices available in both the 'Crown Forest', the part of the New Forest which was governed by forest law, and the Isle of Wight, all of which provided scope for 'patronage and profit'.[9] These characteristics also made it a desirable place to own a landed estate, and fifty-two landed-gentry families owned estates in the Region over the course of the century. Furthermore, the Region's topographical, historical, social, political, and cultural characteristics made it ideally suited to studying the character and pace of social change through the experience of the landed gentry.

As a work of social as well as local history, this thesis seeks to address this lacuna in the historiography by taking a holistic, regional approach to studying this group in its entirety, throughout the eighteenth century, covering approximately three generations of each family. An advantage of a regional study is that it allows an in-depth 'study both of a social group and of the attitudes of the individuals who

[9] Where there is a possibility of confusion, the area governed by forest law is described as the 'Crown Forest' and the term 'New Forest' is used to describe both the Crown Forest and the area surrounding it. J. M. Rosenheim, *The emergence of a ruling order: English landed society, 1650–1750* (Harlow, 1998), p. 257.

composed it'.[10] As those authorities on the seventeenth-century gentry, Heal and Holmes, remarked, it was only possible to 'approach a broader interpretation of their social and political significance' by studying the gentry 'in their own *pays*, in the environment in which they logically exercised authority'.[11] Nevertheless, the Region was not isolated from the rest of England and this thesis aims to inform the national debate by examining the process of exchange between the Region and wider society.

In order to achieve this, research has covered not only more familiar angles such as the landed gentry's estates and lifestyle but also the strategies they employed to maintain their position and achieve their objectives, both in the Region and nationally. This thesis has, therefore, at its heart a study of lived lives revealed through a detailed forensic examination of unpublished letters, diaries, accounts, estate records, and other untapped manuscript sources. The methodology adopted has used these sources to create new datasets, enabling detailed quantitative analyses to be undertaken.[12] This has brought precision and clarity to the findings, but care has been taken to situate the work on the fifty-two families in the Region in the context of the landed gentry of Hampshire as a whole and experience elsewhere in England. In this way, it is hoped to offer new perspectives on why the landed gentry in the West Solent Region succeeded in keeping their estates in the family and retained their power and influence throughout the period.

This chapter starts with a review of the historiography, a crucial step in defining the scope of the study. This encompasses not only older work on English elites, much of which was concerned with landownership and country seats, but also more recent work on culture, performance, and behaviour. In this way, it combines the harder social

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[10] F. Heal and C. Holmes, *The gentry in England and Wales, 1500–1700* (Basingstoke, 1994), pp. 381–82.
[11] Heal and Holmes, *The gentry,* p. x.
[12] Over 8,600 digital photographs were taken as part of this process, representing over 10,000 pages, many of which were transcribed in full.

approach of the later twentieth century with the socio-cultural approach of the twenty-first century. It then sets out the overall structure of the thesis and summarises the scope of each chapter. It is hoped that this approach offers new interpretations on the character and pace of social change in the eighteenth century and sheds some light on why the landed gentry retained their place and their power throughout the period, notwithstanding the major social and political upheavals that occurred elsewhere in Europe.

Continuity or change?

The debate about the balance between social continuity and change has been at the heart of the historiography of the eighteenth century.[13] At one end of the spectrum was the view that the growing influence of the 'middling sort' led to the gradual transformation and modernisation of society. In this scenario, social change resulted from the convergence of behaviour, polite or otherwise, in different social groups. At the other end was the belief that the continuing dominance of the peerage and paternalistic landed society prevented significant change, and that this ensured social continuity. Somewhere between these two poles, was the hypothesis that landed society continued unchanged up to some point, often taken to be around 1780, after which there was a significant transformation of society, sometimes referred to as a 'great divide'.[14]

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[13] Scholars with different interests, such as architecture and material culture, have also contributed to our understanding of social change. For example, M. I. Wilson, *The English country house and its furnishings* (London, 1977); M. Girouard, *Life in the English country house: a social and architectural history* (London, 1978); H. A. Clemenson, *English country houses and landed estates* (London, 1982); N. McKendrick *et al.*, *The birth of a consumer society: the commercialization of eighteenth-century England* (London, 1982); J. Brewer, *The sinews of power: war, money and the English state, 1688–1783* (London 1989); *The Georgian country house: architecture, landscape and society,* ed. D. Arnold and T. Clayton (Stroud, 1998); R. Wilson and A. Mackley, *Creating paradise: the building of the English country house, 1660–1880* (London, 2000); M. Berg, *Luxury and pleasure in eighteenth-century Britain* (Oxford, 2005).
[14] J. C. D. Clark, *From restoration to reform: the British Isles, 1660–1832* (London, 2014), p. xi.

Even those who thought that there was no change in the eighteenth century could not agree when this period of stasis ended. In 1965, Stone concluded that the dominant role of the peerage and great landowners continued until the end of the nineteenth century.[15] Later, the Stones applied the term *'histoire immobile'* to the three and a half centuries prior to 1880.[16] Clark initially argued that the ruling order remained an *ancien régime*, essentially 'Anglican … aristocratic and … monarchical' until 1832, while Langford commented in 1991 on the 'success of the landed gentry in preserving their control of the counties' well into the Victorian age.[17] Most recently, O'Gorman agreed, in his review of the long eighteenth century, that Britain 'was governed by a landed elite of aristocracy and gentry, both of them robust and wealthy, neither in decline nor in serious difficulty as a social group'.[18]

Whilst most historians agreed that the landed elite remained a powerful group throughout the eighteenth century, there was less agreement about its composition and the extent to which this had been altered by social mobility. Concerns about the extent and impact of upward mobility had been voiced in the eighteenth century, when contemporaries believed, or perhaps feared, that the middling sorts aspired to join the landed gentry. In 1728, Daniel Defoe observed that 'the rising Tradesman swells into the Gentry' although he distinguished between those who bought large estates in the country and those who bought 'country houses' with no land.[19] Later in the eighteenth century, Adam Smith also suggested that merchants were 'commonly ambitious of

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[15] L. Stone, *The crisis of the aristocracy, 1558–1641* (Oxford, 1965), p. 14.
[16] L. Stone and J. C. F. Stone, *An open elite? England, 1540–1880* (Oxford, 1984), p. 422.
[17] J. C. D. Clark, *English society 1688–1832: ideology, social structure and political practice during the ancien regime* (Cambridge, 1985), pp. ix, x, 7; P. Langford, *Public life and the propertied Englishman, 1689–1798: the Ford lectures delivered in the University of Oxford 1990* (Oxford, 1991), p. 582.
[18] F. O'Gorman, *The long eighteenth century: British political and social history, 1688–1832*, 2nd edn (London, 2016), p. 113.
[19] D. Defoe, *A plan of the English commerce: being a compleat prospect of the trade of this nation, as well the home trade as the foreign, etc.* (London, 1728), p. 12.

becoming country gentleman'.[20] Following on from this, twentieth-century historians, including Habakkuk and Mingay, took the view that merchants were motivated by the social prestige attached to landownership.[21]

However, the Stones challenged these conclusions and revisited the question of social mobility. Their work was based on a study of the owners of 362 large houses in the period 1540 to 1880, in which they identified only 157 men of business who had bought their way into the landed elite, most of whom were 'merely transients', lasting a lifetime or two.[22] From this, they concluded that the extent of the 'open elite' had been exaggerated, and that it had been 'wrongly interpreted as a continuous economic process of rapid and substantial upward mobility of men of business into the landed classes'.[23] They dismissed 'the idea of upward mercantile mobility on a large scale', concluding that 'only a few … tried to enter the landed elite by the purchase of a country seat and an agricultural estate, and the permanent establishment of a county family'.[24] Furthermore, they pointed out that many merchants adopted the gentry's patterns of behaviour without feeling the need to have a landed estate.[25]

The Stones' work did not meet universal approval. The Springs were early critics, disputing the conclusions on the grounds, *inter alia*, that the Stones had treated 'men of business' differently from other newcomers.[26] The Springs pointed out that, over the whole period, taking the three counties together, approximately one-fifth of the

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[20] A. Smith, *An inquiry into the nature and causes of the wealth of nations* (3 vols, Edinburgh, 1806), vol. 3, p. 362.
[21] H. J. Habakkuk, 'English landownership, 1680–1740', *The Economic History Review*, 10 (1940), pp. 2–17; G. E. Mingay, *English landed society in the eighteenth century* (London, 1963), pp. 3, 26.
[22] Their study was based on houses larger than 5,000 square feet in Northamptonshire, Hertfordshire and Northumberland: Stone and Stone, *An open elite?*, pp. 441, 403.
[23] Stone and Stone, *An open elite?*, p. 421.
[24] Stone and Stone, *An open elite?*, pp. 421–24.
[25] Stone and Stone, *An open elite?*, pp. 421–24.
[26] E. Spring and D. Spring, 'The English landed elite, 1540–1879: a review', *Albion: A Quarterly Journal Concerned with British Studies*, 17/2 (1985), pp. 149–66.

county elite were new entrants.[27] The Stones rebutted this, arguing that it was essential to look at each period separately, and that Northamptonshire was the only one of the three counties that was likely to be representative of rural England. Their data for that county, for the period 1700–1819, showed that new entrants made up only ten per cent of the total number of houses in the sample, and of these, one-half (fifteen) had derived their personal wealth from land and one-half from other sources.[28] The Stones reiterated their view that:

> The idea that the fundamental cause of English political stability has been the perennial openness of its landed elite to penetration by large numbers of newly enriched bourgeoisie is clearly no more than a hoary myth, which should now be laid reverently to rest.[29]

The debate between the Stones and the Springs highlighted the difficulties that social historians have faced in identifying key movements in landed society, not least the problems associated with extrapolating from regional results to derive national conclusions.

Most recently, in an attempt to overcome this problem, Brown undertook a nationwide study of the 'purchase of a residence and a landed estate by "new men of wealth" in the period 1780 to 1879', an enormous endeavour which took him twenty years.[30] Publishing his findings in 2015, he identified 2,566 new men who had purchased estates of over 1,000 acres with a rental of £1,000 in Great Britain and Ireland, although he obtained precise acquisition details for just 352 estates. He argued that his research demonstrated that 'there were sufficient purchasers to sustain the contemporary belief that Britain's elite was indeed open'. This was a useful

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[27] Stone and Stone, *An open elite?*, table 6.2.
[28] Four from business, four from holding office, and eight from the law.
[29] L. Stone and J. C. F. Stone, *An open elite? England, 1540–1880*, 2nd edn (Oxford, 1986), p. 284.
[30] D. Brown, 'New men of wealth and the purchase of land in Great Britain and Ireland, 1780 to 1879', *The Agricultural History Review*, 63/2 (2015), pp. 286–310.

contribution to the debate, but the emphasis on numbers of new entrants suffered from inherent disadvantages. It could not explain why the estates were purchased, how long the newcomers stayed, or what happened to the vendors. Indeed, Brown himself acknowledged that there was 'a tendency over the whole century for the same mansions to change hands multiple times.' More problematically, it examined only purchases by 'new men of wealth' and took no account of changes of ownership resulting from marriage, inheritance or other family events within landed society itself.

The extent of upward social mobility has remained a controversial topic, but so too has the degree to which established landowners were successful in retaining their estates. Habakkuk, working between 1940 and 1991, researched English landed families in the period 1680 to 1740 and sounded a positive note. He argued that there was a 'general drift of property … in favour of the large estates and the great lord', and he later suggested that the introduction of marriage settlements in the eighteenth century was instrumental in this.[31] On the other hand, F. M. L. Thompson, writing in 1963, argued that 'when an old landed family was obliged to part with its estate it was replaced by a new gentry family rather than being swallowed up by a neighbouring great estate'.[32] In his view, many new landed families were founded 'some by marriage but most by purchase'. However, Mingay disagreed, singling out marriage and inheritance as the most prominent factors in the rise of the great landowning families of the eighteenth century.[33]

This led to a resurgence of the debate about the impact of marriage settlements. Clay demonstrated that wealthy brides' dowries were often used to create portions for

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[31] Habakkuk, 'English landownership'; H. J. Habakkuk, 'Marriage settlements in the eighteenth century', *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*, 32 (1950), pp. 15–30.
[32] Thompson, *Landed society*, p. 121.
[33] Mingay, *English landed society*, chapters 2 and 3.

the children of the marriage, rather than to acquire more land, and Beckett concurred that strict settlements had had a limited effect because, in practice, they were introduced gradually over an extended period.[34] Bonfield took issue with Habakkuk's earlier views on the role of settlements, but was in turn criticised by Spring.[35] Habakkuk reiterated that the development of new financial instruments, such as mortgages and annuities, was crucial because they enabled owners to manage their finances better and avoid forced sales.[36] Meanwhile, Stone emphasised the importance of marriage on the number and gender of surviving children, and went as far as to describe the failure of families to produce male heirs in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries as a demographic crisis.[37]

Thus, historians working in the late twentieth century have contributed a great deal to our understanding of the ownership of landed estates and the permeability of landed society to 'new money'. Above all, this historiography has demonstrated that keeping an estate in the family was far from straightforward and success depended on the family's response to challenges during the eighteenth century.

Changing behaviour in landed society

Given the intensity of the debate on these structural issues, it is no surprise that there has been increasing scrutiny of the behaviour of landed families. E. P. Thompson

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[34] C. Clay, 'Marriage, inheritance, and the rise of large estates in England, 1660–1815', *The Economic History Review,* 21/3 (1968), pp. 503–18; J. V. Beckett, 'English landownership in the later seventeenth and eighteenth centuries: the debate and the problems', *The Economic History Review,* 30/4 (1977), pp. 567–81.
[35] L. Bonfield, 'Marriage settlements and the "rise of the great estates": the demographic aspect', *The Economic History Review,* 32/4 (1979), pp. 483–93; E. Spring, 'The strict settlement: its role in family history', *The Economic History Review,* 41/3 (1988), pp. 454–60.
[36] J. Habakkuk, 'The rise and fall of English landed families, 1600–1800 Part II', *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society,* 30 (1980), pp. 199–221.
[37] L. Stone, *Family and fortune: studies in aristocratic finance in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries* (Oxford, 1973), pp. xvii, 201; L. Bonfield, 'Marriage, property & the "affective family"', *Law and History Review,* 1/2 (1983), pp. 297–312; Stone and Stone, *An open elite?,* p. 281.

was one of the first historians to consider the behaviour and attitudes of landed society. He described a polarised society, in Marxist terms, as one in which 'plebs' were kept in check by 'patricians', although he saw 'old paternalism at a point of crisis', rather than a 'confident patriarchal society'.[38] During the three decades that followed, other historians suggested that the landed gentry could be divided into two groups, one of which changed its behaviour, whilst 'aristocratic' paternalism continued to be a dominant force for much of the eighteenth century in the other. Landau described these two groups as 'patricians', who adopted more of a 'national culture', and 'patriarchs', who were 'pillars of the local community'.[39]

Rosenheim went as far as to say that the force of attraction exerted by the metropolis was so great that it resulted in the withdrawal of the landed elite from the provinces.[40] Later he suggested that 'the presence in the county of some men willing to govern allowed for the absence of those who were more inclined to rule', and that those who 'ruled' downplayed the importance of civic duty whilst increasingly valuing sociability and politeness.[41] The royal court, he argued, was becoming less important, yet the metropolis was seen not only as the political, financial, and commercial centre but also as the main social and cultural hub. In his view, the landed elite became absentee landlords, increasingly using agents and stewards, and shunning paternalism. As they travelled more widely, they saw themselves as the 'natural rulers of the world'. This encouraged them to take advantage of the opportunities for 'positions, patronage

[38] E. P. Thompson, 'Patrician society, plebeian culture', *Journal of Social History,* 7/4 (1974), pp. 382–405.
[39] N. Landau, *The justices of the peace, 1679–1760* (Berkeley; London, 1984), pp. 360, 3–4.
[40] J. M. Rosenheim, 'County governance and elite withdrawal in Norfolk, 1660–1720', in A. L. Beier *et al.* (eds), *The first modern society: essays in English history in honour of Lawrence Stone* (Cambridge, 1989), pp. 95–125; Langford, *Public life,* p. 367.
[41] Rosenheim, *Emergence of a ruling order*, pp. 129, 171–73.

and profits' in the expanded state and, as a result, the metropolis became the crucible in which a 'coherent ruling order' was forged.[42]

An important point emerging from the review of both the historiography and contemporary sources was the confusion about the composition of social groups being described. Terms such as 'aristocracy' and 'landed elite' were used to describe different mixes of the peerage and the gentry, and the distinction between the titled and untitled elite was blurred. Indeed, the Stones argued that there was no need to differentiate between the two groups. In their view, the 'psychological attitudes and cultural perceptions … that were generally accepted both by the English elite and by the classes below them' contributed to social stability.[43] They listed the untitled elite's 'absence of legal privileges, cultural cohesion with the middling sort, paternalism, familiarity with possessive individualism, commercial foreign policy [and] successful family strategy' as additional reasons for continuity.[44] On the other hand, others pointed to the relatively closed nature of the peerage. Cannon demonstrated that, of the 229 new titles created in the eighteenth century, only 23 had no previous connections with the peerage and Colley pointed out that, even as late as 1807, at least 234 Members of Parliament owed their seats in some way to 'aristocratic intervention'.[45]

Nevertheless, it is important to understand the composition of a group if valid conclusions are to be drawn on the basis of their experience. It is apparent that much of the research underpinning the argument for continuity focused on the ability of the largest landowners and the peerage to retain their estates, offices, and status. It was, in

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[42] Rosenheim, *Emergence of a ruling order*, pp. 255–57. This has also been supported by scholars such as Wahrman with his notion of a national society.
[43] Stone and Stone, *An open elite?*, p. 407.
[44] Stone and Stone, *An open elite?*, pp. 407–21.
[45] J. A. Cannon, *Aristocratic century: the peerage of eighteenth-century England* (Cambridge, 1984), p. 24; L. Colley, *Britons: forging the nation, 1707–1837* (New Haven; London, 1992), p. 155.

other words, a view from the top down. In contrast, those who argued that social and political stability was the consequence of a gradual transformation of society worked from the bottom, or rather the middle, up. Langford made two important contributions to the discussion. He drew on Sir William Blackstone's reference to a 'nation of freemen, a polite and commercial people', and argued that politeness was a logical consequence of commerce, which enabled a broader-based, commercial elite to participate in 'upper-class gentility, enlightenment, and sociability'.[46] He then postulated the growth of a 'new ruling class defined by ownership of property', pointing out that, since property qualifications were set at low levels, this was by no means a small group.[47] Langford also argued that the physical ownership of land became less important following the emergence of a derivative market, which allowed electoral votes in some constituencies to be controlled by granting annuities secured on land.[48] This widening of property ownership led Langford to conclude, *inter alia*, that politics operated on a 'consensual basis', one which recognised the priorities of a 'broadly bourgeois society'.[49]

Building on this work, there was an increasing interest in material culture, the consumer society, and behaviour.[50] Much of this work related to merchants and provided some evidence that, whilst they had similar possessions to the lesser gentry,

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[46] W. Blackstone, *Commentaries on the laws of England* (4 vols, Oxford, 1765–69), vol. 3, p. 326; P. Langford, *A polite and commercial people: England, 1727–1783* (Oxford, 1989), p. 4.
[47] Langford, *Public life*, p. 207.
[48] Langford, *Public life*, p. 272.
[49] Langford, *Public life*, p. vii.
[50] Including the following: J. Thirsk, *Economic policy and projects: the development of a consumer society in early modern England* (Oxford, 1978); McKendrick *et al.*, *Birth of consumer society*; L. Weatherill, *Consumer behaviour and material culture in Britain, 1660–1760* (London, 1988); S. Pennell, 'Consumption and consumerism in early modern England', *The Historical Journal*, 42/2 (1999), pp. 549–64; D. Ormrod, 'Cultural production and import substitution: the fine and decorative arts in London 1660–1730', in P. O'Brien (ed.), *Urban achievement in early modern Europe: golden ages in Antwerp, Amsterdam and London* (Cambridge, 2001), pp. 210-33; I. W. Archer, 'Conspicuous consumption revisited: city and court in the reign of Elizabeth I', in C. M. Barron (ed.), *London and the kingdom: essays in honour of Caroline M. Barron* (Donington,2008), pp. 38-57.

their houses were furnished differently from those of 'ungenteel tradesmen'.[51] However, Galinou concluded that merchants had their own 'middle class' taste, and that their patronage differed from that of the aristocrat. Thus, the extent to which the research on merchants could be applied to the landed gentry was debateable.[52]

Wahrman approached the matter from a different perspective and attempted to define segments of society based on broader cultural attitudes, drawing a distinction between a 'national society' and the culture of the 'provincial-local sphere'.[53] He applied this line of thought primarily to the middling sorts, suggesting that it was improvements in communication, including turnpikes, postal services, and newspapers that had made possible the birth of the consumer society. This had enabled more people to participate in a nationwide, genteel culture that had previously been restricted to a narrow elite. He believed that this led to the emergence of two groups of urban middling sorts: the gentlemen merchants or capitalists, who formed a 'distinct socio-cultural milieu, centred on London, especially during the Season', and the 'independent bourgeoisie'.[54] In contrast, through his work on 'polite landscapes' and the design of country houses, Williamson identified an opposite trend in the countryside. There, 'great landowners and local gentry began to share a single lifestyle, began to mix, to socialise in an easier, less formal, more affable way'.[55] From this divergence of opinions, it appears that there were differences in which groups of people mixed and

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[51] For example R. Grassby, 'English merchant capitalism in the late seventeenth century: the composition of business fortunes', *Past & Present,* 46/1 (1970), pp. 87–107; L. Weatherill, 'Consumer behaviour and social status in England, 1660–1750', *Continuity and Change,* 1/2 (1986), pp. 191–216; P. Earle, *The making of the English middle class: business, society and family life in London, 1660–1730* (London, 1989), p. 292; J. A. Sharpe, *Early modern England: a social history 1550–1760,* 2nd edn (London, 1997), p. 185; I. W. Archer, 'Material Londoners?', in L. C. Orlin (ed.), *Material London, ca. 1600* (Philadelphia, 2000), pp. 174–93.
[52] M. Galinou, *City merchants and the arts, 1670–1720* (Wetherby, 2004), pp. xi, introduction.
[53] D. Wahrman, 'National society, communal culture: an argument about the recent historiography of eighteenth-century Britain', *Social History,* 17/1 (1992), pp. 43–72.
[54] Wahrman, 'National society'.
[55] T. Williamson, *Polite landscapes: gardens and society in eighteenth-century England* (Stroud, 1995), p. 110.

who was accepted as belonging to polite society in different settings and at different times.

This concept of polite society was challenged by Klein, who argued that what made eighteenth-century Britain a polite society was not its division between polite and non-polite persons, but rather the wide access of a range of people to activities and competencies that contemporaries considered 'polite'.[56] This was consistent with Langford's view that those with money could mingle with landed society and the peerage and participate in 'upper-class gentility, enlightenment, and sociability'.[57] However, more recently, this consensus has been disputed by Greig, who argued that the actual practice of sociability and social interaction was 'unresolved and lacking critical examination'.[58] She concluded that the observations of a Yorkshire landowner that 'the Nobility hold themselves uncontaminated with the Commons' and that 'you seldom see a Lord and private Gentleman together' were more accurate reflections of the state of polite society in 1765.[59] Similarly, Clark, returning to the debate in 2014, declined to recognise the period as 'safely unchallenging: prosperous … polite, achieving "modernity" by consuming "luxuries" rather than by heroic revolution'.[60]

These debates make it is easy to see why there has been disagreement about why and when social change occurred. A number of scholars proposed a sudden change, some suggesting a surprisingly specific start date. Wahrman situated the emergence of the national society in the third quarter of the century, but Rosenheim proposed that the

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[56] L. E. Klein, 'Politeness and the interpretation of the British eighteenth century', *The Historical Journal*, 45/4 (2002), pp. 869–98.
[57] Blackstone, *Laws of England*, p. 326; Langford, *Polite and commercial people*, p. 4.
[58] H. Greig, ' "All together and all distinct": public sociability and social exclusivity in London's pleasure gardens, ca. 1740–1800', *Journal of British Studies*, 51/1 (2012), pp. 50–75; H. Greig, *The Beau Monde: fashionable society in Georgian London* (Oxford, 2013), p. 65.
[59] Greig, *Beau monde*, p. 64, citing Hull DDBM/32/9 letter from Godfrey Bosville, London, to John Spencer at Cannon Hall, 28 January 1765.
[60] Clark, *From restoration to reform*, p. xii.

elite, encompassing both the peerage and the gentry, had consciously modified their behaviour from about 1750. Price was less specific, merely referring to 'an economic, political and social caesura at some time in the late eighteenth century'.[61] Colley, on the other hand, viewed the 1780s as a turning point, suggesting that only after this was there concerted criticism of the landed classes leading to change.[62] Most recently, O'Gorman announced in 2016 that 'in the end' he had 'accepted the almost insurmountable logic, and its no less powerful associated tradition, that partitions the long eighteenth century at the outbreak of the French Revolution in 1789', suggesting a divide at a precise date.[63]

O'Gorman's firm conclusion was not, however, universally accepted, since, just two years earlier, Clark had dismissed the concept of sudden change. He argued, in 2014, that the old orthodoxy, namely that the long eighteenth century had special significance because 'somewhere during this era was conventionally located a Great Divide', prior to which lay the pre-modern 'world we have lost', had 'now been overset'.[64] However, he did modify his initial, unequivocal support for an *ancien régime,* by arguing that the eighteenth century was 'a story of change, not of stasis; of conflict, not of consensus; but of continuity and change largely held together … in an era of threatened instability'.[65]

Thus, while most historians regarded the last two decades of the eighteenth century as offering significant challenges to the landed gentry, there is scope for further work on the consequences of this turbulence. In this thesis, it is argued that the underlying assumption that change happened at the same time, in the same way, and at

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[61] R. Price, *British society, 1680–1880: dynamism, containment and change* (Cambridge, 1999), p. 3.
[62] Colley, *Britons,* p. 152.
[63] O'Gorman, *Long eighteenth century, 2016,* preface.
[64] Clark, *From restoration to reform,* p. xi.
[65] Clark, *English society,* pp. ix, x, 7; Clark, *From restoration to reform,* p. xiii.

the same speed in all parts of the country is inherently problematic. Instead, it is necessary to build up a picture of the impact of economic and social change at a national level by piecing together the findings of multiple systematic studies focused on place and power.

The compelling case for the regional study

This review of the historiography has revealed that much of the extensive body of scholarship has still left room for doubt about the character and pace of social change. Was there a gradual transformation and modernisation of society resulting from the emergence of a consumer culture, an unchanging retention of the status quo or a great caesura part way through the century? The Stones' study highlighted the regional nature of social change, but the ensuing debate revealed the difficulty of extrapolating limited regional results to arrive at national conclusions.[66] Accordingly, in-depth regional studies, which take into account wider social trends, are needed to contribute to the national picture.

More problematically, the research has been focused on two segments of society, the middling sorts and the landed classes. Furthermore, whilst there has been general agreement that the landed classes remained an important sector of society throughout the eighteenth century, this has resulted from conflating the landed gentry with the uppermost stratum of society, the peerage and the great landowners. Gauci reviewed the historiography and concluded that 'the middle classes have had the good fortune to attract the best scholars for many generations'.[67] In contrast, scholarship on the discrete layer below the peerage, the landed gentry, has been conspicuous by its

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[66] Stone and Stone, *An open elite?,* p. 441.
[67] P. Gauci, 'Finding the middle-ground: the middling sort in the eighteenth century', *History Compass,* 4/2 (2006), pp. 228–34; see also H. French, 'The search for the "middle sort of people" in England, 1600–1800', *The Historical Journal,* 43/1 (2000), pp. 277–93.

absence. This thesis argues that the landed gentry deserved to be recognised as a distinct group precisely because, although part of landed society, they were less wealthy than the peerage. Accordingly, their agency was more constrained and their behaviour was a more valid marker for changes in society on a broad front.

Given that it is hoped that this thesis will have more than local significance, why is a regional study proposed? Heal and Holmes expressed the view that it was only possible to 'approach a broader interpretation of their social and political significance' by studying the gentry 'in their own *pays,* in the environment in which they logically exercised authority'.[68] This approach has been adopted in the knowledge that a single regional study can bring greater precision to building up a more accurate national picture of societal change, but only if the study is situated within a wider body of work.

Regional studies of the landed classes have taken different forms. An early approach was to study the region through a small number of families, and this was particularly the case for studies of the gentry of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. For example, Finch's work covered five gentry families in Northamptonshire in the period 1540–1640. She concluded that the personality of the individual landowner was a decisive factor in determining why some families became great magnates while others remained among the squirearchy.[69] Roebuck examined the lives of four families of

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[68] Heal and Holmes, *The gentry,* p. x.

[69] M. E. Finch and H. J. Habakkuk, *The wealth of five Northamptonshire families, 1540–1640* (Northamptonshire record society, Oxford, 1956), pp. xii, 170. Other studies of the gentry undertaken before 1980 included: P. Laslett, 'The gentry of Kent in 1640', *Cambridge Historical Journal,* 9/2 (1948), pp. 148–64; J. E. Mousley, 'The fortunes of some gentry families of Elizabethan Sussex', *The Economic History Review,* 11/3 (1959), pp. 467–83; A. Simpson, *The wealth of the gentry, 1540–1660: East Anglian studies* (Cambridge, 1961); J. T. Cliffe, *The Yorkshire gentry from the Reformation to the Civil War* (London, 1969); A. Everitt, *The community of Kent and the great rebellion, 1640–60* (Leicester, 1973); J. S. Morrill, *Cheshire, 1630–1660: county government and society during the English revolution* (London, 1974); A. Fletcher, *A county community in peace and war: Sussex 1600–1660* (London, 1975); J. Broad, 'Gentry finances and the Civil War: the case of the Buckinghamshire Verneys', *The Economic History Review,* 32/2 (1979), pp. 183–200; C. Holmes, *Seventeenth-century Lincolnshire* (Lincoln, 1980). However, the emphasis of these works was on the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.

Yorkshire baronets, ostensibly covering the period 1640–1760 although most of the material and analysis related to the seventeenth century. Like Finch, Roebuck concluded that 'the prevailing impression … is of the extent to which personal behaviour influenced dynastic fortunes'.[70]

The power of the individual was also evidenced in Beckett's monograph on the Lowther family, whose estates were in Cumbria, although work on the eighteenth century was limited.[71] Although narrowly focused on just two generations of a single family of baronets between 1660 and 1760, it provided an in-depth analysis of the development of the coal industry on their estate, and showed the critical importance of the vision of the landowner. Aley's research into landownership in Nottingham looked in-depth at three landed families, and she concurred that one of the most decisive factors that determined whether estates grew or shrank was the 'ability of the individual to meet challenges and crises'.[72] Rosenheim was unusual in that he argued that his study of the Townshends of Norfolk in the period 1648–1738 enabled him to draw conclusions that were valid at a national level.[73] He examined the different approaches taken by father and son, the first and second viscounts Townshend, and argued that his limited family study showed that the 'provincial elite' was becoming a 'truly national ruling class', leading to the emergence of a 'modern aristocracy'.[74]

Other historians have adopted a more general, county-wide approach. Jaggard's unpublished research into Cornwall focused on politics in the period 1760–1910, but

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[70] P. Roebuck, *Yorkshire baronets, 1640–1760: families, estates, and fortunes* (Oxford, 1980), p. 251.
[71] J. V. Beckett, *Coal and tobacco: the Lowthers and the economic development of West Cumberland, 1660–1760* (Cambridge, 1981).
[72] S. Aley, 'The Nottinghamshire landowners and their estates, *c*.1660–*c*.1840' (Ph.D., University of Nottingham, 1985), p. 314.
[73] Although his work was informed by his unpublished work on Norfolk society: J. M. Rosenheim, 'An examination of Oligarchy: the gentry of restoration Norfolk' (Ph.D., University of Princeton, 1981).
[74] J. M. Rosenheim, *The Townshends of Raynham: nobility in transition in Restoration and early Hanoverian England* (Middletown, 1989), pp. xiii, 12.

showed that the 'political power of the aristocracy and wealthy gentry' was gradually eroded over this extended period.[75] Jenkins's much cited study of Glamorgan between 1640 and 1790 reviewed changes in the role of the gentry, but he cautioned that his findings were not necessarily representative of the national picture. Instead, he recommended that further local studies should be undertaken 'if only to see if other county communities were so thoroughly transformed'.[76] Rollison's ambitious work on Gloucestershire involved a countywide study of social change covering the period 1500 to 1800, although there was no particular emphasis on the landed classes.[77] More recently, Gallon's unpublished thesis on the Hampshire gentry covered landownership and gentry culture from 1689 to 1800. He concentrated on just two families, yet drew generalised conclusions, such as 'for the most part individual Hampshire gentry families lived their lives in much the same way as their counterparts in other counties'.[78] He also found that 'for the most part', Hampshire landowners in the eighteenth century 'lacked wealth and, therefore, national influence'.[79] He attributed this to 'a probable lack of ambition in some families, and the absence of acknowledged political leadership in the county'.[80]

The body of regional studies reveals a surprising lack of work focused on the landed gentry in the eighteenth century and confirms that there is scope for further work in this area. However, rather than adopt the family study or the county-wide review, this thesis aims to combine the best of both approaches in a holistic examination of the

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[75] E. K. G. Jaggard, 'Patrons, principles and parties: Cornwall politics 1760–1910' (Ph.D., Washington University, 1980).
[76] Jenkins, *Glamorgan gentry,* p. 283.
[77] D. Rollison, *The local origins of modern society: Gloucestershire, 1500–1800* (London, 1992). Whilst Jones's study of Wales focused on the gentry, but for an earlier period, 1536–1640: J. G. Jones, *The Welsh gentry, 1536–1640: images of status, honour and authority* (Cardiff, 1998).
[78] A. E. Gallon, 'The Hampshire gentry 1689–1800' (Ph.D., University of Reading, 2006), p. 321.
[79] Gallon, 'Hampshire Gentry', p. 35.
[80] Gallon, 'Hampshire Gentry', p. 322.

landed gentry, as a discrete group, in a single region. Furthermore, rather than merely investigating and qualifying the findings of earlier historians, this thesis aims to provide new perspectives on the character and pace of social change as revealed through the lived lives of the landed gentry of the Region.

New perspectives from the Region

Turning first to the debates on the composition and permeability of the landed elite, it will be argued that the landed gentry of the Region, as a group, was open to newcomers, who added to the numbers rather than displacing families who were already there. Furthermore, it will be shown that both established families and newcomers aspired to be known as the family 'of' a place, and the landed estate was primarily a source of status rather than of profit. This meant that the family had to own a substantial, contiguous landed estate rather than a collection of dispersed farms. The landed gentry also shared the goal of wanting to keep their landed estate in the family for future generations, and they went to great lengths to achieve this in the face of demographic challenges.

The landed gentry remained committed to providing leadership in the Region, and there was no evidence of elite withdrawal or of a separation into 'old and local' and 'new and national groups'; instead, the landed gentry displayed a blend of patrician and patriarchal characteristics. Most striking of all, the landed gentry were able to increase their control of the five borough constituencies in the Region over the course of the period, bucking perceived wider trends. Viewed from a distance, it appeared that the landed gentry continued to rule unchallenged in the Region. However, it will be argued that continuity masked considerable change not only in the composition of the landed gentry but also in their behaviour.

In addition to revisiting existing debates, this thesis aims to offer new interpretations of the character and pace of social change. First, it will be argued that, although it was necessary to have a substantial, contiguous landed estate to qualify as landed gentry, those families with the greatest wealth, the largest estates, and the grandest country seats did not necessarily have the greatest longevity or the most power and influence. Instead, those who were most successful in keeping their estates in the family deployed 'social power', a term which is used to describe the ability of individuals to achieve their aims in spite of opposition from others. This ability to influence outcomes arose principally from the way they behaved and their relationships within their peer group and with those below and above them in the social hierarchy.

Recognition of the importance of behaviour is, of course, not new; historians including Finch, Roebuck, and Aley have shown that personal behaviour and 'the ability of the individual to meet challenges and crises' was the most decisive factor in determining whether individual families thrived, and Whyman took a not dissimilar position in her study of the Verney family.[81] This study takes this argument further by exploring the patterns of behaviour across the landed gentry as a group, and it will be shown that, just as income could be saved to become financial capital or wealth, social power could be accumulated over time and deployed when required. Furthermore, it will be argued that, for this particular stratum of society, this intangible asset was as important as status and the wealth, which were represented by tangible assets such as land, buildings, and investments.

Continuing with the theme of performative behaviour, this thesis identifies another characteristic of successful landed gentry, namely their ability to be socially

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[81] Finch and Habakkuk, *Northamptonshire families*, pp. xii, 170; Roebuck, *Yorkshire baronets*, p. 251; Aley, 'Nottinghamshire landowners', p. 314; S. E. Whyman, *Sociability and power in late-Stuart England: the cultural worlds of the Verneys 1660–1720* (Oxford, 1999).

amphibious. Amphibiousness has often been used to refer to the ability to be at home in two different milieux, for example elite versus popular culture, national versus provincial spheres or landed versus commercial social groups.[82] At one level, it has been argued that 'aristocracy and gentry remained in control of British society, due to a large extent to their cultural practices', and that they 'became amphibious, equally at home in the country and in town'.[83] However, this thesis argues that amphibiousness was a multi-faceted, rather than a binary, concept. Successful social amphibians were able to adapt their behaviour to accommodate the changing expectations of the multiple different circles they moved in at any given point in time, irrespective of location. This was more than just participating in cultural practices; the rules of polite behaviour varied from group to group and had to be understood and followed.[84] Conversely, inflexible, inappropriate behaviour could have a detrimental effect on families' social power and their ability to retain their estates and their influence.

It will be argued that this process of social accommodation operated across the Region, and that the landed gentry adapted and modified their behaviour throughout the century. Thus, there was no sudden 'great divide', but a process of gradual change. The group was open to newcomers, who added to the numbers rather than displacing established families, and the 'old and local' absorbed the 'new and national'. Successful landed gentry became socially and culturally amphibious in a gradual process of adaptation, and this helped to diffuse social tensions. Furthermore, whilst the landed gentry presented an appearance of social continuity and stability, this was not the result

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[82] Wahrman, 'National society' following M. MacDonald, 'The secularization of suicide in England 1660–1800', *Past & Present,* 111 (1986), pp. 50–100; Gauci, 'Finding the middle-ground'.
[83] M. A. Henry, 'The making of elite culture', in H. T. Dickinson (ed.), *A companion to eighteenth-century Britain* (Oxford, 2002), p. 327.
[84] This draws, *inter alia*, on the work of French and Barry: H. French and J. Barry, 'Introduction', in H. French and J. Barry (eds), *Identity and agency in England, 1500–1800* (Basingstoke, 2004), p. 1.

of inaction. Thus viewed from a distance, they appeared to be 'neither in decline nor in serious difficulty as a social group' at the end of the eighteenth century.[85]

Structure of the thesis

Reflecting these aims, the thesis is divided into two sections. The first section of three chapters situates the landed gentry in the Region and sets out the physical characteristics of the estates and their owners. It explains the rationale for the selection of the Region and of the landed-gentry families in the dataset. The next section of four chapters focuses on performative aspects: how the landed gentry behaved and deployed the resulting social power, first in private, within the family, and then in the public sphere, both within and outside the Region.

The first chapter, *The West Solent Region*, describes the particular topographical, historical, socio-economic, political, and cultural features of the Region and explains what made it an appropriate choice for a holistic, local study of the character and pace of social change. It emphasises that it comprised two distinct areas, the New Forest and the Isle of Wight, each with its own features, and that these were joined, rather than separated, by the West Solent. It starts with an overview of the main topographical features of the Region: its location relative to the rest of England, its towns, and the importance of both rivers and the West Solent for communication and trade. Historical patterns of landownership are then reviewed and the relationship with the availability and affordability of land in the eighteenth century is considered. Finally, two important attributes of the Region, the governance of the Crown Forest and the Region's political opportunities, are discussed. It is argued that this rural region was

[85] O'Gorman, *Long eighteenth century, 2016,* p. 113.

worthy of study because of the many opportunities it offered for acting out the roles of the landed gentleman.

Chapter Two, *Identifying the landed gentry*, sets out the methodology for creating the dataset of landed-gentry families and calculating both family longevity and turnover in the group as a whole. The landed gentry were divided into groups: 'established' families were those who had landed estates prior to 1700, while 'newcomers' joined the landed gentry after this. The newcomers were further divided into two groups: upwardly-mobile 'upcomers', who were resident in the Region before 1700 but were not landed, and 'incomers', who arrived in the Region during the eighteenth century. It is argued that this classification is more meaningful in terms of social change than whether the newcomers were 'men of business' or not. This process results in a dataset of thirty-three landed-gentry families in the New Forest and a further nineteen on the Isle of Wight. As a result, although the Region represented only one-quarter of the area of the county, more than half the ninety-nine landed-gentry families in Hampshire had their country seats there.

The next chapter, *Establishing a landed estate*, starts by using estate and household accounts to assess how much income a landed-gentry family needed to maintain an appropriate lifestyle and the extent to which this could be obtained from an agrarian estate. The chapter then considers the motives for owning an estate and argues that it was essential to have a substantial, contiguous landed estate, rather than a collection of dispersed farms, in order to be recognised as the family 'of' a place. The difficulties encountered in the face of limited resources is illustrated with case studies of two incomers who established landed estates, one of whom made their first purchase in 1718, the other in 1770. This is then developed by exploring how the landed gentry

supplemented agricultural income by diversifying into non-agricultural activities such as timber, salt and iron production.

The second section of the thesis builds on these foundations by considering how behaviour influenced the character and pace of social change and impacted the ability of the landed gentry to keep their landed estates in the family. It examines behaviour first within the family and then in three different public spheres: in the Region, then across different social circles and, finally, in national politics.

The fourth chapter, *Family matters*, considers how behaviour within the family and, in particular, relationships between the head of the family and the other members of both sexes, affected the family's ability to maintain their power and keep their estates in the family. The chapter starts by setting out the strategies and behaviours that landed-gentry families adopted to overcome demographic problems. These challenges were compounded by financial concerns caused by primogeniture, strict settlement, and the need to provide dowries; the wealthier peerage did not share these difficulties to the same extent. The causes and consequences of failure of the male line and the impact of primogeniture are investigated, and one solution, inheritance through the female line, is examined in detail. The effect that younger sons and daughters had on family longevity is also considered, and two case studies are used to illustrate the relationship between behaviour, social power, and survival of the family.

Chapter Five, *Maintaining landed-gentry status in the Region*, builds on the previous chapter by moving from the landed gentry's internal, private relationships to their behaviour in the external, public sphere. It examines two aspects of landed-gentry behaviour that affected their public profile in the Region: spending money on building or modernising the country seat and spending time through public service. It seeks to understand whether the landed gentry evolved into two distinct groups as interaction

with London increased, one operating principally in the local-provincial sphere, the other on a national-metropolitan stage.

The sixth chapter, *Adaptive social amphibians*, shows that social power was as important as wealth outside as well as within the Region. Rather than being wholly absorbed by Wahrman's 'national culture', successful individuals became adaptive social amphibians, at ease in different social environments. Social power was earned by displaying the behaviours and attitudes which were valued by each group. This required the landed gentry to adapt their behaviour, not only over time but also to accommodate the changing expectations and norms of these different groups. Successful individuals operated in multiple overlapping circles and developed strong, long-lasting relationships. Two case studies reveal that amphibiousness was much more than just being at home in both the country and London; it was a multi-faceted rather than a binary concept.

The last chapter, *Political behaviour*, deals with the behaviour of the landed gentry in another external, public sphere: national politics. The landed gentry increased their control of boroughs in the Region over the course of the eighteenth century, and case studies covering elections between 1727 and 1779 show that behaviour and the social power stemming from it were important. Reciprocal deference structures of patronage linked the landed gentry to social groups above and below them in the social hierarchy, but reciprocal relationships involving mutual trust and respect were also important within their peer group. Through appropriate behaviours and social accommodation, the landed gentry were able to retain their influence in spite of the greater wealth of the peerage and their stronger links with the metropolis and government. Thus, in the Region, social power was just as effective as wealth.

This thesis concludes that, as a work of social as well as local history, its holistic, regional approach has informed the national debate by examining the process of exchange between the Region and wider society. It is argued that the landed gentry, as a social group, was open to new entrants, but the old and local absorbed the new and national and, gradually, they both became socially and culturally amphibious. As a consequence, there was no sudden 'great divide', but instead a process of gradual social accommodation, and whilst the landed gentry presented an appearance of social continuity and stability, this was not the result of inaction.[86] Instead, the landed gentry reflected Edmund Burke's view that change was acceptable, but that 'it should be to preserve'.[87] Thus, it will be argued that change led to continuity, a more intricate picture than that painted by some social historians.

There is no doubt that this study could be developed further. The research in the Region could be expanded to include more in-depth case studies in the late-eighteenth century and the nineteenth century. Furthermore, although the scope has been limited to a single region, it is argued that many of the features of their behaviour might be expected to occur in other areas of the country and the same methodology and approach could be used to investigate this. In this way, it is hoped that this thesis has pointed the way for further studies as well as contributing to current scholarship.

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[86] Clark, *From restoration to reform*, p. xi.
[87] E. Burke, *Reflections on the revolution in France and on the proceedings in certain societies in London relative to that event*, 2nd edn (London, 1790), p. 355.

Chapter One: The West Solent Region

In the introduction, it was argued that there was scope for a holistic, local study of the character and pace of social change from the perspective of the landed gentry, the social group between the middling sort and the peerage. The first three chapters provide the context for this study. The first explains where the local study has been based and why it was an appropriate location. The second chapter sets out who the landed gentry were and explains the criteria for their selection as well as providing some initial analysis. The third chapter describes how newcomers were able to acquire landed estates and join the landed gentry. The second section of the thesis builds on these foundations to provide new insights into the agency of change and continuity in the eighteenth century and to offer new perspectives on why the landed gentry were able to retain their estates, their power, and their influence throughout this period.

This thesis aims to fill a gap in the historiography. Whilst a number of county studies were undertaken in the second half of the twentieth century, their focus was mainly on the seventeenth century or restricted to a small number of families.[1] In his excellent county-wide study of the Glamorgan gentry, published in 1983, Jenkins recommended that further local studies should be undertaken 'if only to see if other county communities were so thoroughly transformed'.[2] In framing this research, Heal and Holmes's recommendation, namely that the landed gentry should be studied 'in their own *pays*', has been adopted but, rather than taking a whole county, as in the

[1] For example Laslett, 'The gentry of Kent'; Finch and Habakkuk, *Northamptonshire families*; Mousley, 'Gentry families of Elizabethan Sussex'; Simpson, *The wealth of the gentry*; Cliffe, *Yorkshire gentry*; Fletcher, *A county community*; Broad, 'Gentry finances and the Civil War'; Roebuck, *Yorkshire baronets*; Holmes, *Seventeenth-century Lincolnshire*; Beckett, *Coal and tobacco*; Rosenheim, *Townshends of Raynham*; Jones, *The Welsh gentry*.
[2] Jenkins, *Glamorgan gentry*, p. 283.

county community studies of the seventeenth-century gentry, a *pays* within a county has been selected.[3]

This regional approach had already been applied in different ways by Money and Jenkins. Money's study of 'provincial activity – social and cultural, informal and non-parliamentary, as well as explicitly political' was intended to illuminate the 'world beyond Westminster' in the period 1760–1800. It was centred on Birmingham, which was 'not at the hub of any previously recognisable area of its own but at the meeting point of the three counties of Warwickshire, Worcestershire and Staffordshire'. Money argued that it did not matter that this region could not 'advance any obvious single claim to significance in the affairs of the nation'; its value lay in contributing to the body of regional studies. He demonstrated that, in his region, there was no 'drastic discontinuity from the past' nor any of the marked changes experienced by other areas such as the North West.[4] In contrast, Jenkins found that the history of the Glamorgan gentry in the eighteenth century was 'overwhelmingly a story of detachment from local culture and loyalties, and the adoption of metropolitan ways'. Jenkins also differed from Money in that he identified 'two very different geographical areas, each representative of a large part of Britain' within the county, the north being typical of Wales, the south typical of south-west England.[5]

The *pays* in this thesis is also made up of two distinct areas: the Isle of Wight and the New Forest. The Isle of Wight is lozenge-shaped, approximately twenty-three miles wide and thirteen miles from north to south with a population in the late eighteenth century of about 18,000. The New Forest encompassed not only the area

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[3] Heal and Holmes, *The gentry*, p. x; Fletcher, *A county community*.
[4] J. Money, *Experience and identity: Birmingham and the West Midlands, 1760–1800* (Manchester, 1977), preface, pp. 1, 275.
[5] Jenkins, *Glamorgan gentry*, pp. 272, xix.

covered by forest law, the Crown Forest, but also the lands bordering it, including the River Avon valley, the West Solent coast, and the west side of Southampton Water. The New Forest and the Isle of Wight were joined, rather than divided, by the West Solent, since travel by sea was often easier than overland. For the purposes of this study, therefore, the two areas are treated as a single *pays*, which is referred to as the West Solent Region or the Region. This covered approximately 400 square miles, just over one quarter of the area of Hampshire (Map 1).

Map 1 : The Region within Hampshire, 1767



Source – Modern map with roads from Kitchin's survey[6]

[6] T. Kitchin, *Post chaise companion* (London, 1767); T. Kitchin, *Ogilby's survey improved: or Kitchin's new and instructive traveller's companion, for the roads of England and Wales* (1771).

This chapter provides an overview of the significant characteristics of the Region and sets out to explain why it was an appropriate choice for this study of social change from the perspective of the landed gentry. It will be argued that new landed-gentry families were attracted to the Region, particularly in the second half of the century, because estates were available, affordable but, above all, desirable. The availability of land in the Region was in part determined by historical patterns of landownership that resulted in small estates and large farms coming on to the market in the eighteenth century. This meant that establishing a landed estate, particularly in the New Forest, was a realistic goal.

It will be argued that the Region was desirable because of the abundance of opportunities it offered to act out the role of the landed gentleman in both national and local offices. The five parliamentary boroughs were increasingly controlled by the landed gentry, and there were further opportunities for office-holding and patronage within the Region. Socially, the New Forest was ideal for the popular sports of hunting and shooting, whilst the picturesque scenery and sea-bathing made the coastline more popular in the second half of the century. The combination of these characteristics meant that there were fifty-two landed-gentry families resident in the Region over the course of the century, including established families, new arrivals from different backgrounds, and families at intermediate stages of assimilation.[7] This permeable, diverse, and dynamic social group was well placed to provide new insights into the agency of change and continuity in the eighteenth century.

As the starting point for providing the context for this study, the chapter describes the topographical, historical, socio-economic, political, and cultural features

[7] Further details of the fifty-two landed-gentry families are given in Chapter Two.

of the Region. It starts with an overview of the main features of the Region: its location relative to the rest of England, its towns and the importance of its waterways for transport and communication. Following a review of historical patterns of landownership, it will be demonstrated that acquiring land was possible in the Region, particularly in the New Forest. Two attributes that marked out the Region, the governance of the Crown Forest and the Region's political opportunities, will then be discussed. Finally, it will be argued that the features of the Region make it eminently suitable for a study of the landed gentry's response to change over the eighteenth century.

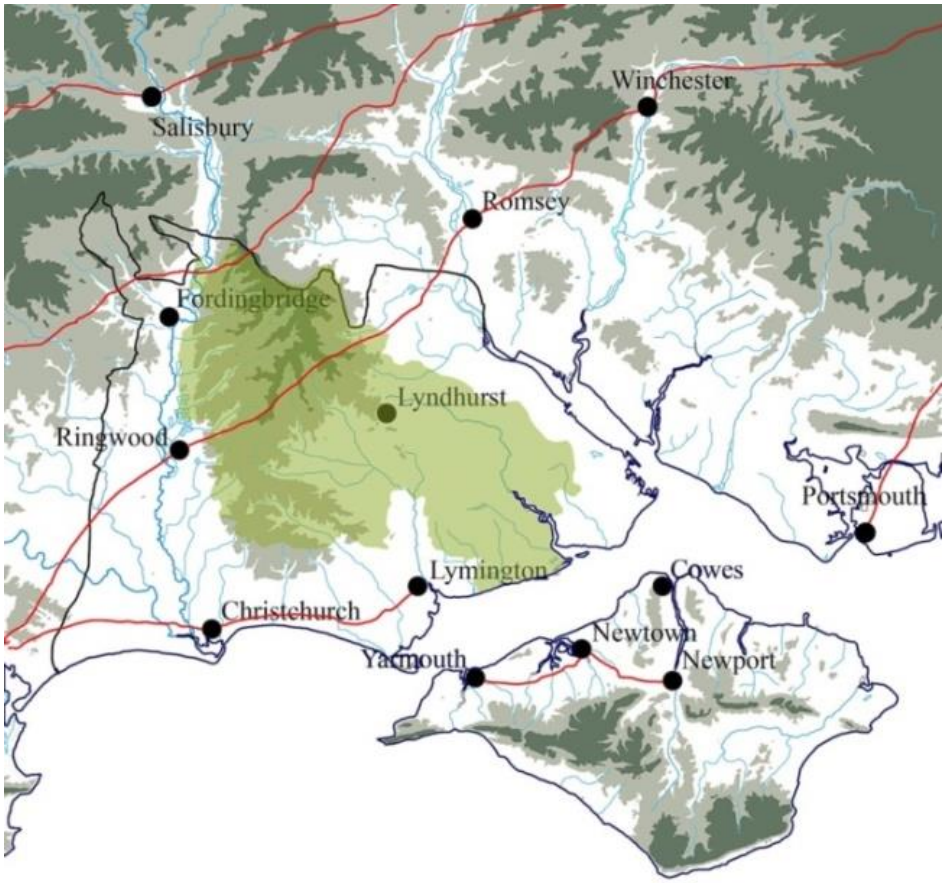
Situating the Region

The Region was about ninety miles from London at its centre, and was dominated by the West Solent and the Crown Forest, the latter being marked in green on Map 2. The West Solent was sheltered from the prevailing south-westerly winds by the island and the coastal trade linked the Region's ports with Plymouth to the west and London to the east.[8] Although there was a road on the island joining Yarmouth and Newtown to Newport and another along the mainland coast linking Lymington and Christchurch to Poole in Dorset, local people also moved around by boat. According to the first *Southampton Guide*, published in 1768, it took only two hours to sail between Southampton and the Isle of Wight.[9] Similarly, the *Hampshire Chronicle* announced that 'the distance from Lymington shore to Yarmouth is very short, and the passage

[8] L. Willis and B. Greenhill, *The coastal trade* (London, 1975).
[9] *The Southampton guide: or, an account of the antient and present state of that town: to which is added, a description of the Isle of Wight etc.* (Southampton, 1768). Guides were published at regular intervals including *The Southampton guide: or, an account of the antient & present state of that town and its environs* (Southampton, 1774) and *The Southampton guide: or, an account of the antient & present state of that town and its environs*, 4th edn (Southampton, 1787).

seldom longer than half an hour, and there are regular good vessels that are always passing'.[10]

Map 2 : Topography of the Region, 1751



Source - A new improved map of Hampshire, 1751[11]

Sir Richard Worsley stressed that the Isle of Wight was not isolated: 'the constant intercourse with persons from all parts of the kingdom, the metropolis in particular, has erased any insular peculiarities that might have existed formerly'.[12] The New Forest, on the other hand, was more of a backwater at the start of the period. The woods and heath acted as a barrier and for much of the period there were no major roads running north-south across it. In the first half of the century, a coach journey to

[10] *Hampshire Chronicle*, 7 April 1777.
[11] T. Kitchin, 'A new improved map of Hampshire' (London, 1751).
[12] R. Worsley, *The history of the Isle of Wight* (London, 1781), p. 11.

London took two days and the road network was so poor that it was quicker to travel from Lymington to Yarmouth by boat than from Lymington to Ringwood on horseback. As a result, the south coast of the mainland remained relatively isolated until the 1780s, following the development of coach routes and turnpikes.

Unlike other parts of England, the area did not have any workable mineral deposits, but the New Forest had a valuable asset in its standing timber. In contrast, the timber on the Isle of Wight had been consumed by the docks at Portsmouth and private shipyards near the island, leaving 'little more than is necessary for the consumption of the inhabitants'.[13] Shortages of mature oak timber for shipbuilding provided opportunities for private landowners to diversify into commercial timber production but the Region also had a reputation for 'the trade' of smuggling. A report on 'fraudulent landings' between 1779 and 1782 suggested that Hampshire was not perceived to be as great a problem as counties such as Dorset, Sussex and Kent.[14] However, this might be a reflection of the smugglers' success in evading detection by disappearing into the New Forest.

There could be no mistaking the Region's rural character and, with the exception of the Crown Forest, both areas in the Region were involved in sheep-corn husbandry. However, the soil in the New Forest was poor and the area has been described as land 'in which only the most hopelessly optimistic saw any possible agricultural potential'.[15] Its poor prospects meant that, in some parts of the New Forest,

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[13] Worsley, *History*, p. 4.
[14] A. L. Cross, *Eighteenth century documents relating to the royal forests, the sheriffs and smuggling: selected from the Shelburne manuscripts in the William L. Clements Library* (London, 1928), p. 241, Report of the Commissioners of Excise on smuggling, 15 February 1783.
[15] J. Chapman and S. Seeliger, *Enclosure, environment & landscape in Southern England* (Stroud, 2001), p. 67.

strip-farming survived into the eighteenth century.[16] For this reason, the estates established prior to 1700 tended to be close to rivers, outside the boundaries of the Crown Forest. On the Isle of Wight, a range of hills 'which affords fine pasture for sheep, extends from east to west, through the middle of the island' and the estates established before 1700 were in these better farming areas. In both areas, there were a few estates on the coast, but these were close to the parliamentary boroughs.

The close relationship between the twenty-five landed-gentry estates established prior to 1700 and topography is illustrated by comparing Maps 3 and 4.[17] However, the strength of this link diminished during the course of the eighteenth century as both areas in the Region became more noted for their scenery than for their farming potential. As Sir Richard Worsley remarked:

> This island … affords a great number of beautiful and picturesque prospects, not only in the pastoral, but also in the great and romantic style. Of these beauties the gentlemen of the island have availed themselves as well as in the choice of situation of their houses as in their other improvements.[18]

This was reflected in the number of books published describing the Region and recommending tours around it.[19]

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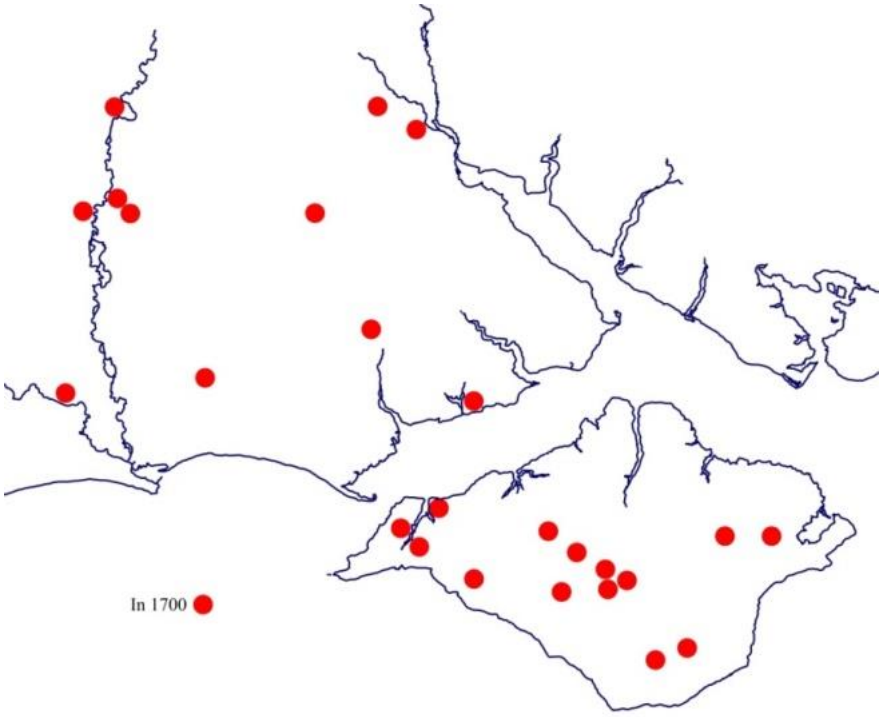
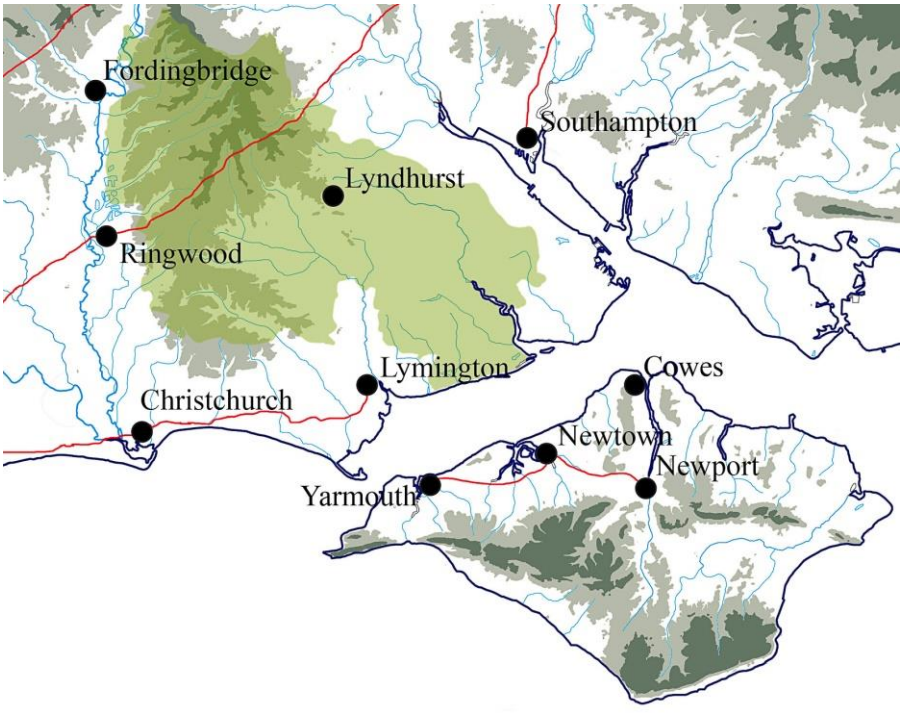
[16] Chapman and Seeliger, *Enclosure, environment & landscape,* p. 68. This will be discussed in more detail in Chapter Three.
[17] The identification of these landed-gentry estates is explained in Chapter Two.
[18] Worsley, *History*, p. 4.
[19] See for example, J. Sturch, *A view of the Isle of Wight, in four letters to a friend* (London, 1778); J. Hassell, *Tour of the Isle of Wight* (2 vols, London, 1790); J. Albin, *A new, correct, and much-improved history of the Isle of Wight, from the earliest times of authentic information, to the present period* (Newport, 1795); R. Warner, *The history of the Isle of Wight; military, ecclesiastical, civil, & natural: to which is added a view of its agriculture* (Southampton, 1795); J. Clarke, *The delineator, or, a picturesque, historical, and topographical description of the Isle of Wight*, 5th edn (Newport, 1818); W. C. F. G. Sheridan, *A topographical and historical guide to the Isle of Wight*, 2nd edn (London, 1833); W. Gilpin, *Remarks on forest scenery, and other woodland views, relative chiefly to picturesque beauty: illustrated by the scenes of New-Forest in Hampshire,* 2nd edn (2 vols, London, 1794); W. Gilpin, *Observations on the coasts of Hampshire, Sussex and Kent, relative chiefly to picturesque beauty, made in 1774* (London, 1804); E. Hutchings, *A gentleman's tour 1776* (Newport, 1993).

Map 3 : The twenty-five landed-gentry estates in the Region, 1700



Source – Dataset prepared for this thesis

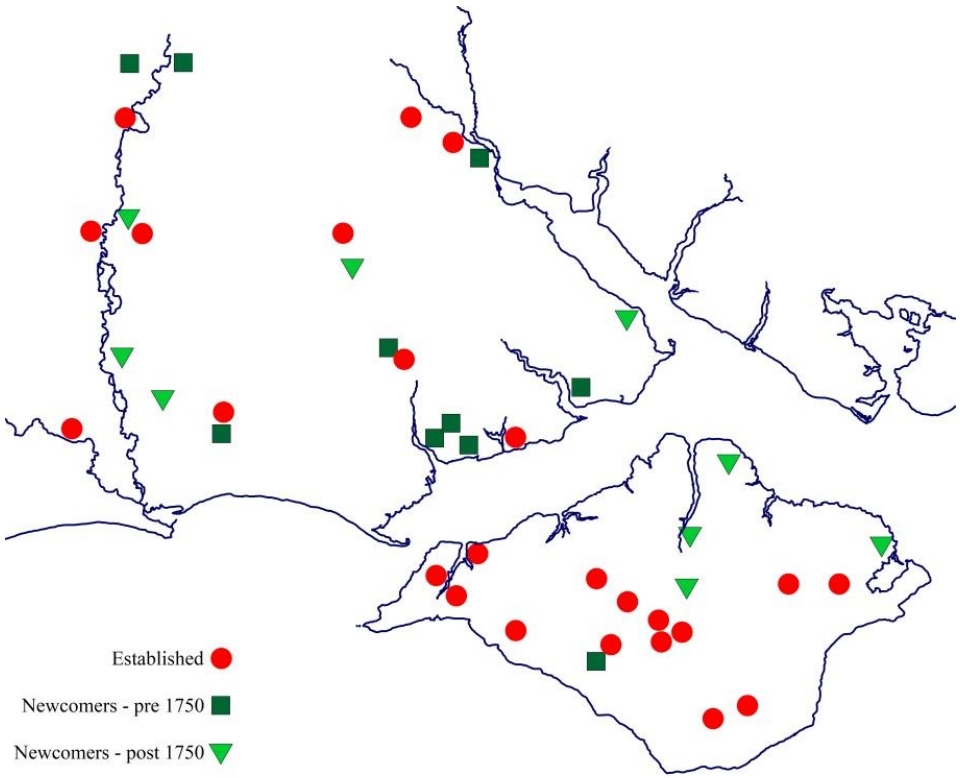
Map 4 : Topography of the Region, 1751



Source - A new improved map of Hampshire, 1751

Both areas provided a setting in which the landed gentry could form networks of useful contacts through participation in country sports. Shooting and, in the last quarter of the century, hunting became popular. Hares were introduced onto the Isle of Wight in the sixteenth century and the New Forest Hounds Hunt Club was established in 1789, although private packs of hounds were being kept by 1778.[20] Consequently, estates created during the eighteenth century were in new areas, including the coast of the mainland and the east coast of the island, both renowned for their healthy air and their panoramic views (Map 5).[21]

Map 5 : Estates of established families and newcomers, 1700–99



Source – Dataset created for this thesis

[20] Worsley, *History*, p. 96; HRO, Copy/814 (Edward Morant diaries, 1762–91), diary entry for 16 December 1778: 'Paid £100 by draft on Long & Drake Sir P J Clerke for my share of the hounds'. A similar entry occurs on 31 December 1779.
[21] Map 5 shows landed estates rather than the villas and holiday homes which appeared in the nineteenth century.

Towns

The picturesque scenery was interrupted by nine small towns, five on the mainland and four on the island (Map 4). In the north-west of the New Forest was Fordingbridge, a small, unincorporated market town. It was situated on the west bank of the River Avon, only eleven miles south of Salisbury, in Wiltshire. Seven miles south was Ringwood, a market town on the east bank of the River Avon, which was noted for brewing beer and knitting woollen gloves. Its significance was as a staging post on the road from London to Poole, but goods from Fordingbridge and Ringwood were generally shipped to the port at Christchurch down the River Avon and then on to London by sea. As well as being a port, Christchurch was an incorporated parliamentary borough. Nine miles east along the south coast was Lymington, another incorporated town, port and parliamentary borough. This was the centre of salt production, iron forging, and shipbuilding along the coast. His Majesty's Navy (the 'Navy') was the main market for these products and demand varied according to whether the nation was at war, creating uncertainty and financial stress not only for those working in these activities but also for the landed gentry investing in them. The fifth mainland town was Lyndhurst; this was the administrative centre of the Crown Forest, where the forest courts were held.

On the Isle of Wight, there were four towns: Newport, Yarmouth, Newtown and Cowes. Newport, the principal market town, and Yarmouth were both ports and parliamentary boroughs. The third parliamentary seat on the island was Newtown although, by the eighteenth century, its function as a port had been taken over by Cowes. Sir John Oglander, writing in 1624, approved 'the birth of Cowes', arguing that

it would enable him to sell his produce 'without being beholden to a Newport factor'.[22] One hundred and fifty years later, Sir Richard Worsley observed that the harbour at Cowes was 'as safe as any in the British Channel; and by far the most convenient for vessels bound to Holland and the east countries'.[23] Over time, the River Medina silted up and Newport became less accessible but Cowes continued to flourish.

The landed gentry's involvement with the towns in the Region was limited mainly to public service, commercial activities, parliamentary elections, and administration of the Crown Forest. There was little social activity. Lymington, the main commercial centre on the mainland, had an assembly in the 1770s at which 'tea and music etc.' were included in the subscription. Wine and cards had to be paid for and 'genteel card tables' were provided at a private house close to the new town hall.[24] Interest in sea-bathing increased over the second half of the century; Lymington was noted for its sea-baths, which were described as 'very comfortable in the interior, though their outward appearance is not the most inviting to a stranger'.[25] Perhaps for this reason, Lymington was never as popular as Weymouth in Dorset, which was also easier to reach from London. Carey dismissed Lymington in 1799 as:

> A *little* incorporated town, with a *little* body, and a *little* town-hall, which is made use of to *little* purpose; but should the company who go there to bathe wish to make use of it for a ball or concert, this *little* corporation, like the dog in the manger, generally makes a *great* deal of fuss about it.[26]

Nevertheless, Edward, duke of York visited Pylewell, an estate close to Lymington, in 1760 and in 1789, George III stayed at Walhampton, another local estate, having sailed

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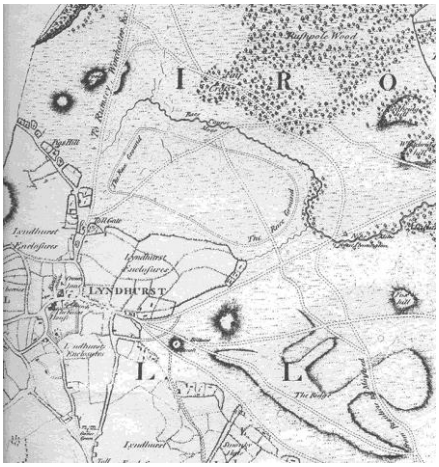
[22] J. Oglander and F. Bamford, *A royalist's notebook: the commonplace book of Sir John Oglander, Kt., of Nunwell, born 1585, died 1655* (London, 1936), p. 10.
[23] Worsley, *History*, p. 19.
[24] *Hampshire Chronicle*, 4 October 1773.
[25] D. W. Garrow, *The History of Lymington, and its immediate vicinity* (London,1825), p. 51.
[26] G. S. Carey, *The balnea or, an impartial description of all the popular watering places in England* (London, 1799), p. 104.

over from Weymouth on board a frigate.[27] The royal family were among those who attended the racecourse at Lyndhurst, which, as discussed in Chapter Six, became a venue for sociability (Map 6).[28]

Map 6 : Lyndhurst racecourse, 1789



Source – Driver's map of the New Forest, 1789

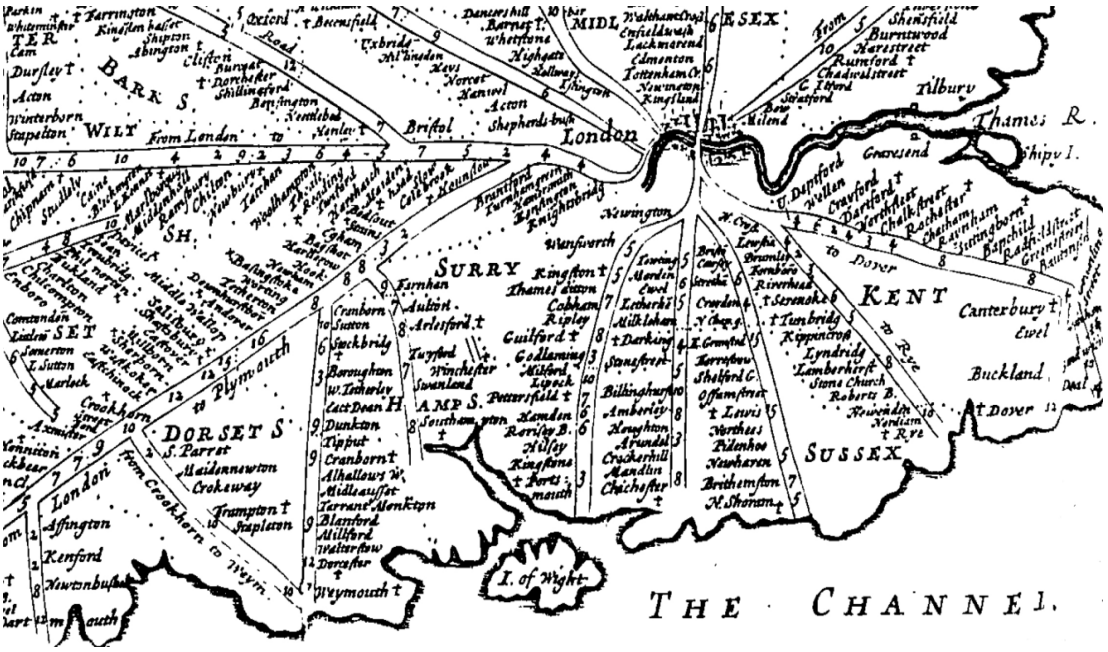
Turning to the island, Newport was the setting for the 'Society of Gentlemen', which is discussed in Chapter Six, but Sir Richard Worsley in his history of Newport makes no mention of any public social activities.[29] In the nineteenth century, Cowes became a centre for yachting and towns, such as Ryde, developed on the east of the island as seaside towns catering to the increasing number of visitors.

Southampton, the main urban centre just outside the Region, had little impact on the lives of the Region's landed gentry. An important port in the medieval period, Southampton attempted to reinvent itself as a spa town but without much success. In 1761, Edward, duke of York wrote that he found 'the balls insipid and the company without glitter, the town being inhabited … by Cripples and Invalids, West Indians &

[27] C. P. Jones, *History of Lymington* (Lymington, 1930), p. 132.
[28] W. Driver, 'A plan of His Majesty's forest called the New Forest in the county of Southampton' (1789).
[29] Worsley, *History*, pp. 147–55; S. Foster, *Transcription of the minutes of the Society of Gentlemen* (Newport, 1950).

Clergymen'.[30] There were occasional royal visits. In August 1774, 'the Duke and Duchess of Cumberland, attended by several Nobility, and persons of distinction, went down the River in a number of barges, with music, and colours flying, to view the shipping at Spithead'.[31] Four years later, the duke of Cumberland visited again but the list of peers accompanying him was shorter.[32] A more typical announcement in the paper was 'arrived here Mr St John; Mr Malcher; Mr Abraham etc. etc.', none of whom was landed gentry from the Region.[33] London was more of draw for them than Southampton.

Map 7 : The roads of England, 1699



Source – J. Ogilby, *The traveller's guide*, 1699[34]

[30] M. C. Kilburn, 'Royalty and public in Britain: 1714–1789' (D.Phil., University of Oxford, 1997), p. 115 citing letter from Edward, duke of York to Lady Mary Coke in the collection of the earl of Home.
[31] *Hampshire Chronicle*, 22 August 1774.
[32] *Hampshire Chronicle*, 20 July 1778.
[33] *Hampshire Chronicle*, 19 August 1776.
[34] J. Ogilby, *The traveller's guide: or, a most exact description of the roads of England* (London, 1699).

Roads

As already noted, the Region was relatively isolated from the rest of England at the start of the period. Ogilby's traveller's guide, published in 1699, shows the main coaching route from London to Plymouth with two separate branches leading off it (Map 7). The first branch ran from Bagshot to Southampton via Winchester and the second from Basingstoke via Stockbridge and Cranborne to Weymouth. Neither of these crossed the Region, which appears as a blank space in the guide. Kitchin's more detailed map of 1757 showed a road linking Salisbury to Southampton (Map 8).

Map 8 : Part of map of Hampshire published by Thomas Kitchin, 1751



Source – A new improved map of Hampshire, 1751[35]

This became a turnpike in 1750 but did not cross the Region.[36] Prior to 1750, most of the turnpikes radiated north and west out of London, but in the next two decades,

[35] Kitchin, 'A new improved map of Hampshire'.
[36] R. Coles, *Lymington & the New Forest: transport history* (Lymington, 1986), p. 20.

turnpikes reached the south-west of England.[37] The Region had only one coaching route, which ran from London to Poole via Winchester, Romsey, and Ringwood. A public Act of Parliament established the Romsey to Ringwood turnpike in 1758.[38] Seven years later, a private act authorised the creation of a road running north from Lymington, via Brockenhurst and Lyndhurst, to Eling, west of Southampton, to join the Southampton to Salisbury turnpike.[39] The trustees included Sir Thomas Worsley, sixth baronet, the owner of the Pylewell estate, but also tradesmen such as Joseph Wickenden, butcher.[40] In the same year, a coach service from the Angel Inn at Lymington to Holborn commenced operation, leaving Lymington on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays and returning the next day.[41]

The turnpike from Lyndhurst to Eling did not extend to Christchurch until 1841. Until then tracks across the heathland and through woods were used to get to the coaching inn at Ringwood. When one of the landed gentry, Edward Morant, travelled from Brockenhurst, in the New Forest, to London in January 1770, it cost him ten guineas and he had to spend the night at Demesay's Inn at Hartford Bridge, near Hartley Wintney.[42] This inn was a popular staging post and John Trusler noted in 1797 that 'the accommodations at Demesay's are so excellent, that the Royal Family, sensible of it, make a point always of dining or supping there, in their journey to and from Weymouth'.[43] The first time that Morant was able to complete the journey in a single day was on 1 July 1780, when he 'sett out from London; dined at Basingstoke;

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[37] Langford, *Polite and commercial people,* pp. 393–95, citing E. Pawson, *Transport and Economy* pp. 137–39.
[38] HL, PO/PU/1, 32G2n44, Public Act, 32 George II, *c.* 50, 1758.
[39] The Lymington, Lyndhurst and Rumbridge Turnpike Trust, 5 George III, *c.* 59.
[40] Coles, *Transport history,* p. 19. Joseph Wickenden was apprenticed to a butcher in Portsea in 1740 but was described as 'gentleman of Lymington' in his will dated 30 March 1795, TNA, PROB 11/1258/257.
[41] J. James, *Lymington: an illustrated history* (Wimborne Minster, 2007), p. 66.
[42] 'Morant diaries', 4 January 1770.
[43] J. Trusler, *A description of the road from London to Bath and Bristol* (London, 1797), p. 45.

slept at Brockenhurst'.[44] However, travel within the Region could still be difficult. In 1779, Edward Hooper of Hurn Court complained that after voting in the county election:

> Waiting 5 hours [in Winchester] for a chaise I got to Romsey, but could get no conveyance from thence till the next morning & when I came to Ringwood was forced to wait till I could send hither for my carriage which brought me home by moonshine.[45]

By the end of the century, matters were improving; in 1794, Driver reported in his survey of Hampshire that 'the roads are in general very good, particularly in the neighbourhood of the New Forest'.[46]

Patterns of landownership

As communications improved, the Region became more accessible and this had consequences for patterns of landownership. It will be shown in Chapter Two that the number of estates had increased from twenty-five in 1700 to forty-three by 1799. This was partly the result of the complex interaction of topography, church, and crown ownership of land and the consequences of both the dissolution of the monasteries and the Civil War. The pattern of landownership related back to medieval times. In Hampshire, by the fourteenth century, the 'estates of the bishop of Winchester were pre-eminent' followed by the principal religious houses and 'there was no comparable secular overlord'.[47] In both the New Forest (Map 9) and the Isle of Wight, monasteries were the main institutional owners and these religious institutions were suppressed in two waves. The alien religious houses were dissolved prior to 1414 and their rights

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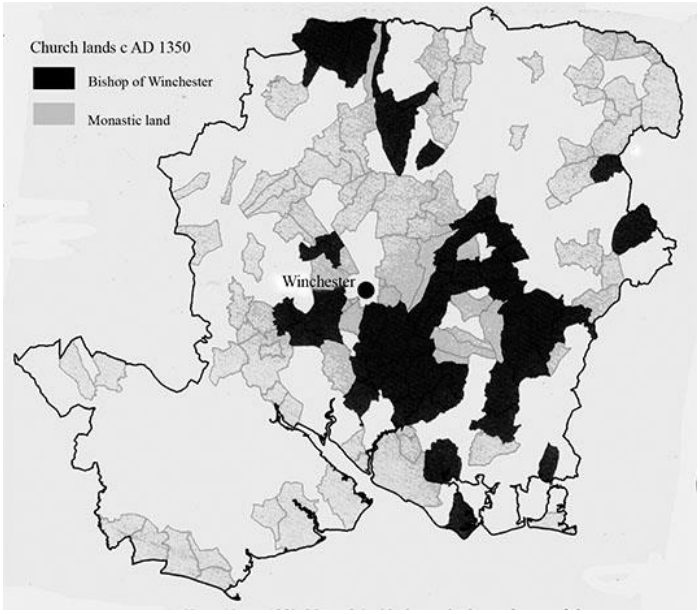
[44] 'Morant diaries', 1 July 1780.
[45] HRO, Malmesbury papers G334/16 letter Hooper to Harris, 22 December 1779.
[46] A. Driver and W. Driver, *General view of the agriculture of the county of Hants, with observations on the means of its improvement* (London, 1794), p. 9.
[47] A. Emery, *Greater medieval houses of England and Wales, 1300–1500* (3 vols, Cambridge, 1996), vol. 3, p. 265.

granted to other institutions. On the Isle of Wight, St Cross was bestowed on Winchester College and Appuldurcombe Priory on a nunnery in London, while on the mainland, Ellingham was given to Eton College.[48] In 1538, the Cistercian abbeys at Beaulieu on the mainland and Quarr on the Isle of Wight were granted to Sir Thomas Wriothesley, who shortly afterwards became earl of Southampton.[49] The Priory of Austin canons at Christchurch and that at Breamore, both in the New Forest, were granted to the prior and to the marquis of Exeter respectively.[50] Smaller religious houses ceased to exist at other dates. For example, Barton Priory on the Isle of Wight was granted to Winchester College in 1439 because of the 'insufficiency of their income'.[51]

Map 9 : Church and monastic property, c. 1350



Source – E. Roberts, *Hampshire houses*[52]

[48] *A history of Hampshire and the Isle of Wight,* ed. H. A. Doubleday and W. Page (5 vols, Victoria County History, Westminster, 1900–12), vol. 2, pp. 229, 225, 232.
[49] *VCH Hampshire,* vol. 2, pp. 58, 139.
[50] *VCH Hampshire,* vol. 2, pp. 58, 172.
[51] *VCH Hampshire,* vol. 2, p. 181.
[52] E. Roberts, *Hampshire houses, 1250–1700: their dating and development* (Winchester, 2003), p. 201. There is no corresponding map for the Isle of Wight.

The consequences of the dissolution of the religious houses were still apparent in the late nineteenth century. Winchester College still owned 7,629 acres across the whole of Hampshire and the descendants of the earl of Southampton continued to own Beaulieu in the Region, an estate of 8,922 acres in the late nineteenth century. However, both estates were smaller than those belonging to the dukes of Bolton and Wellington, who had Hampshire estates (outside the Region) of 13,808 and 15,847 acres respectively in 1872. There were no peers resident in the Region during the eighteenth century and, although other institutions such as colleges did hold land during this period, the next chapter will show that much of it comprised small parcels of land and, in some cases, individual strips of farmland. There remained, however, one major landowner in the Region: the Crown; furthermore, the existence of crown lands in the centre of the New Forest prevented peers and other great landowners from establishing large estates there.[53]

The Crown Forest (the area governed by forest law) covered an area of 92,365 acres according to Driver's survey in 1794.[54] However, by the end of the eighteenth century, not all of it belonged to the king; manors and freehold estates in private hands amounted to 24,797 acres, including 625 acres of copyholds in Lyndhurst, over 1,000 acres attached to keepers' lodges in the forest and a similar area described as encroachments on the forest.[55] It is not possible to arrive at an accurate figure of how much of this land was owned by the landed gentry. Official documents, such as claims made in June 1670 of rights to commoning in the Crown Forest, did not always specify

[53] *Return of owners of land, 1873 (England and Wales, exclusive of the metropolis)* (1875); This was summarised in J. Bateman, *Great landowners of Great Britain and Ireland*, 4th edn (London, 1883).
[54] Driver and Driver, *General view of agriculture*, p. 35.
[55] Driver and Driver, *General view of agriculture*, p. 35.

the amount of land underlying the claim.[56] For example, Richard Compton, whose property at Bisterne was in the Crown Forest only claimed in respect of his manorial rights and Sir John Webb, whose seat was in Wiltshire, claimed for a round figure of 3,000 acres.[57] Other claims appeared to be more precise; Alice Lisle claimed for 973 acres and two manors; Henry Bromfield, who was bow-bearer of the Crown Forest, claimed for 450 acres; Sir James Worsley for 104 acres, and George Stanley for a manor and 100 acres of land. The ownership of land was not always clear and Chapter Three, *Establishing a landed estate*, will discuss a dispute over forty-one acres between the Mitfords and the Crown that was not settled until 1822. However, what is apparent is that the New Forest was attractive and the landed gentry were keen to encroach on or acquire Crown lands.

Opportunities for patronage and profit

The Crown Forest was also attractive for the many opportunities it provided for patronage and profit, and the landed gentry aspired not only to hold office themselves but also to procure them for others. It was first established as a royal hunting forest in 1079 and, by the eighteenth century, a complex administrative structure had evolved. The king appointed a lord warden, who had use of the King's House in Lyndhurst. The lord warden in turn appointed, either directly or indirectly, over twenty supporting officials on behalf of the Crown. Some of these, such as the woodward, were required to carry out duties for their fees although deputy officials did the actual work. Other offices, such as the bow bearer, rangers and master keepers were attractive sinecures. The master keepers were 'generally men of fashion or fortune' and this prestigious

[56] *An abstract of all the claims on the New Forest, in the county of Southampton, entered at the Lord Chief Justice in Eyre's Court* (Salisbury, 1776). Commoning rights included pasture, pannage and turbary.
[57] As Sir John Webb's main seat was in Wiltshire, he was excluded from the landed gentry of the Region.

appointment carried with it the use of a lodge, a few of which were 'elegant mansions'.[58] Driver's survey of the New Forest, published in 1789, listed nine master keepers, including one member of the landed gentry, Edward Morant of Brockenhurst.[59]

The timber of the forest was also a source of patronage and profit. The forest had always provided oak for shipbuilding, although its poor soil meant that the quality of the timber was lower than that from other royal forests.[60] There had been shortages of timber since the sixteenth century. In a pamphlet published in 1615, James I endorsed the 'severall good projects for the increasing of Woods'. He urged that they should 'be willingly received and put in practise' with a view to restoring the decay of timber 'universally complained of' within the realm.[61] There was general agreement that 'the first regard should be paid to oak' which was 'particularly necessary for ship-building'.[62] In 1698, the New Forest Act required that land be enclosed 'to remain in possession of the Crown for ever, as a nursery for wood only'.[63] Initially 2,000 acres were to be enclosed with additions of 200 acres annually, but only 2,100 acres had been enclosed by 1700 and these had all been felled as coppice wood by 1725.[64] Matters were not helped by the 'great storm' of 26 November 1703, described by Defoe and others, during which it was said that 4,000 oaks were blown down.[65] The storm also

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[58] W. Gilpin, *Remarks on forest scenery and other woodland views (relative chiefly to picturesque beauty) illustrated by the scenes of New-Forest in Hampshire* (3 vols, London, 1791), vol. 2, p. 18.
[59] Driver, 'Driver's map 1789'.
[60] R. G. Albion, *Forests and sea power: the timber problem of the Royal Navy, 1652–1862* (Hamden, Connecticut, 1965), p. 108.
[61] A. Standish, *New directions of experience by the authour for the planting of timber and firewood* (1613).
[62] J. Wimpey, *Rural improvements or, essays on the most rational methods of improving estates* (London, 1775), p. 249.
[63] An Act for the increase and preservation of timber in the New Forest in the County of Southampton, 9 & 10 Wm III, *c.* 36 (1697).
[64] J. Greenwood, *The New Forest and the Navy: timber supplies to Portsmouth dockyard, 1660–1790* (2004), p. 43.
[65] D. Defoe, *The storm or a collection of the most remarkable casualties and disasters which happen'd in the late dreadful tempest, both by sea and land*, 2nd edn (London, 1704); J. R. Wise, *The New Forest: its history and its scenery* (London, 1867), p. 44.

destroyed many ships, with the result that demand for timber for shipbuilding increased.[66] The government tried to encourage commercial timber-growing with further legislation in 1715, but this had little effect.[67]

The supply of timber did not improve as the century progressed, and a commission appointed in 1789 revealed that attempts to encourage timber production in crown lands had failed.[68] Gilpin remarked in 1791 that 'a general rapacity' reigned in the Crown Forest. In support of this, he reported that two keepers had cut and sold young wood, committing 'waste in the forest estimated at fifty thousand pounds damage'.[69] Some blamed the shortage of timber on poor administration. By the end of the seventeenth century, keepers and other officials had taken much of the timber in lieu of salary. Albion argued that the 'inefficiency and neglect which permeated the administration of the royal forests' prevented an effective supply of naval timber.[70] Greenwood countered that Albion had failed to appreciate the rights of the commoners and the complexities of forest law.[71]

A structural problem was the *divisum imperium* in the Crown Forest, under which the foresters were responsible for hunting and the king's pleasure, whilst the surveyor-general of woods and forests was responsible for timber and the king's profit.[72] Consequently, although the lord warden and the verderers were charged with the 'preservation of the kings game' and of 'all manner of trees for covert', they were

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[66] *An exact relation of the late dreadful tempest* (London, 1704).
[67] Preservation of timber trees Act, 1 Geo. 1, *c.* 48 (1715); Preservation of timber trees, etc. (Scotland) Act, 6 Geo. 1, *c.*16 (1719); J. Thirsk, 'Agricultural policy: public debate and legislation, 1640–1750', in J. Thirsk (ed.), *Chapters from the agrarian history of England and Wales* (Cambridge, 1990), vol. 3, p. 205.
[68] *Journals of the House of Commons* (1789), vol. 44, pp. 552–639 presenting the Fifth Report of the Land Revenue Commissioners, especially pp. 561, 562, and the evidence of the under-steward in the Appendix, p. 583. The original is in the parliamentary archives HL/PO/JO/10/5/136/3.
[69] Gilpin, *Remarks on forest scenery,* pp. 32–33.
[70] Albion, *Forests and sea power,* p. 110.
[71] Greenwood, *New Forest and Navy*, introduction.
[72] E. Coke, *The fourth part of the institutes of the laws of England*, 4th edn (London, 1669), p. 299.

not entitled to sell any of the timber without the permission of the Exchequer and vice versa. Problems arose when, in 1707, the Navy Board entered into an agreement with the Treasury that the naval dockyard at Portsmouth should have 650 trees annually for forty years at a fixed price. The Treasury did not have the power to order trees to be felled as this rested with the verderers' court and with regarders who reported directly to the Crown. An application to fell timber in crown lands might go through seven stages, most of which required some form of perquisite or allowance to be paid, and the whole process could take several years.[73]

Corruption flourished, especially where the separation of roles broke down, as it did in 1746 when Charles Coleman simultaneously held the offices of deputy steward to the lord warden (then the duke of Bedford), collector of rents, deputy surveyor of woods, regarder, and acting-woodward.[74] He was thus able to authorise his own actions and in a letter dated February 1747 to the author Henry Fielding, Richard Birt of Lymington declared that there was never 'so great a vermin as C', and that he could 'open such a scene of villany of C as would astonish some people'.[75] The position had not improved significantly by 1794 when Driver remarked that 'if each officer were to do his duty, without considering his private emolument, it would tend much to the increase and preservation of the timber of this forest'.[76]

The Crown Forest was important not only for the many opportunities it provided for patronage and profit but also for the absence of a resident peer with a great estate. This, in turn, opened up the possibilities for the landed gentry to control the borough constituencies and, in some cases, to represent them in the House of Commons. Chapter

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[73] Greenwood, *New Forest and Navy,* p. 72 citing BL, Harl MS 2263 f. 7.
[74] *Ruin and reform: New Forest administration, 1739–1769,* ed. P. Roberts (New Forest record series Lyndhurst, 2006), p. xxvii.
[75] *Ruin and reform,* pp. 113–14 citing HRO, 149M89/r4/6140.
[76] Driver and Driver, *General view of agriculture,* p. 36.

Seven will show that the landed gentry increased their control of these boroughs even though they were less wealthy than the peerage and, in many cases, had weaker connections with government in the metropolis. This is even more surprising because at the end of the seventeenth century, the dominance of the Powletts, marquesses of Winchester and dukes of Bolton, was unchallenged.

The Powletts were the most influential family in Hampshire until the Brydges, marquesses of Carnarvon and dukes of Chandos, inherited the Avington estate in 1751. However, both of their seats were outside the Region. A member of the Powlett family was lord lieutenant of Hampshire in 80 of the 110 years between 1689 and 1800 and, therefore, minor office holding in the Region (outside the Crown Forest) depended heavily on their patronage in the first half of the century.[77] In addition, they influenced some borough elections and their nominee occupied at least one county seat in Parliament for much of the eighteenth century. There was a separate office of governor of the Isle of Wight, which was sometimes, but not always, granted to the lord lieutenant of Hampshire. The dukes of Bolton were governors in twenty-seven years and the governor was a peer in all but nineteen years. The government was responsible for appointments and only one member of the island landed gentry, Sir Richard Worsley, was appointed to the office.

The Brydges and the Powletts were both Whigs, and it might have been supposed that in the early eighteenth century, Hampshire was indeed 'an aristocratic oligarchy and after the defeat of the Tories, increasingly a Whig, aristocratic oligarchy'.[78] However, they competed for influence and both lost ground over the

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[77] A. M. Coleby, *Central government and the localities: Hampshire, 1649–1689* (Cambridge, 1987), p. 230.
[78] F. O'Gorman, *The long eighteenth century: British political and social history, 1688–1832* (London, 1997), p. 101 describing the period 1714–57.

course of the century to the landed gentry. This gradual transfer of power and influence happened because, although all the constituencies had fewer than 100 voters, none of them were 'venal' and firmly under the control of one family. Thus, party or government politics were less important than negotiated agreements, reciprocal obligations, and complex patronage structures. However, this brought the landed gentry into conflict not only with government and peers but also with each other. In boroughs where landed families competed with each other, the deployment of social power was more effective than wealth in obtaining control of seats.

Historians have not always agreed about the role of the landed gentry in urban constituencies where the electors included middling sorts. Triffitt argued that 'we have overestimated the importance of gentlemen and of patronage', and that the landed elite were unable to 'break the mould of urban political patterns'.[79] In his view, townsmen had the upper hand and were able to pick up patrons when they needed them and drop them later if they chose.[80] Landau, following Namier, suggested that deference, rather than unquestioning obedience, was the driving force behind urban political culture.[81] After all, 'no one bribes where he can bully'.[82] Many electors were free, in theory at least, to vote as they chose and this meant that they could transfer their allegiance from one patron to another. Landau and O'Gorman both emphasised the importance of reciprocal obligations and O'Gorman concluded that 'the stability of the Hanoverian regime rested, in the last analysis, upon the smooth and successful functioning of local

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[79] J. M. Triffitt, 'Politics and the urban community: parliamentary boroughs in the south west of England, 1710–1730' (D.Phil., University of Oxford, 1985), p. 226, long abstract.
[80] Triffitt, 'Politics and the urban community', p. 227. However, Chapter Seven will demonstrate that this was not the case in Christchurch, where the Revd Thomas Jeans's attempt to switch patrons left him without any patron at all.
[81] N. Landau, 'Eighteenth-century England: tales historians tell', *Eighteenth-Century Studies,* 22/2 (1988), pp. 208–18.
[82] L. B. Namier, *England in the age of the American revolution*, 2nd edn (London, 1961), p. 4.

deference structures'.[83] He took the view that the 'electoral system was controlled by local families and connections whose influence was exercised conditionally amidst habits of widespread political involvement'.[84] The 'patronal classes' were keen to appear to do the right thing and were 'willing at least to talk the language of service to the community'.[85]

This thesis will demonstrate that successful landed gentry had to do more than 'talk the language'; they increased their control over parliamentary boroughs during the period, but this involved significant effort.[86] In O'Gorman's words, controlling a constituency required 'formidable exertions of a paternalistic character designed to satisfy the expectations of the community'.[87] These expectations varied, but included preferment in the church and a position in the Navy. The former was particularly problematical as the landed gentry held only four advowsons in the New Forest and nine on the Isle of Wight out of the thirty-six parishes in the Region. As a result, there were not enough livings in Region to meet even the demand from the younger sons of landed-gentry families.

The demands that were most easily met related to the local 'trade' of smuggling. Appointment as a customs officer provided an individual with a salary, but a lax or corrupt officer also benefited the wider community. The electors also looked to their patron for protection from prosecution for illegal activities. For example, while entertaining at his country seat, Hurn Court, in about 1780, Edward Hooper, a commissioner of Customs, was said to have refused to look out of the window when a

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[83] Landau, 'Eighteenth-century England'; F. O'Gorman, *Voters, patrons, and parties: the unreformed electoral system of Hanoverian England, 1734–1832* (Oxford, 1989), p. 9, 6.
[84] O'Gorman, *Voters, patrons and parties*, p. 7.
[85] O'Gorman, *Voters, patrons and parties*, p. 18.
[86] This is discussed in detail in Chapter Seven.
[87] O'Gorman, *Voters, patrons and parties*, p. 9.

cavalcade of waggons 'heavily loaded with kegs' passed by. When the pursuing cavalry arrived, no one had seen anything and 'no doubt they got safely into the New Forest'.[88] The origin of this story is James, earl of Malmesbury who wrote in 1884 that 'the late Lord Shaftesbury … told me this anecdote as characteristic of the times'.[89] Even though this was written a century after the event supposedly took place, the story cannot be dismissed out of hand. Letters to his cousin in 1759 made Hooper's position clear: a position as a Customs or Excise officer was not compatible with smuggling, but appearances could be more important than substance. Having obtained an appointment for one of his supporters as riding officer in Christchurch, Hooper insisted that 'he must absolutely lay his business aside' and noted that 'the father intends to deliver the trade' over to his son.[90] Nearly twenty years later, when one of the customs officers at Christchurch was discovered to be involved in smuggling, Hooper was able to use his influence to ensure that the penalty was limited to a 'reprimand & strict injunction as to future conduct' and his suspension was 'taken off without loss of pay'.[91] Thus, reciprocal patronage relationships and deference structures remained important throughout the period although 'the structure of patronage in boroughs was both infinitely varied and constantly changing'.[92]

Conclusion

This chapter has established that the Region had features that made it well suited to a study of the character and pace of social change in the eighteenth century from the perspective of the landed gentry. Landed-gentry families were attracted to the Region

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[88] Lady Malmesbury, 'Heron Court', *The English Illustrated Magazine*, 114 (1893), pp. 378–82 citing the earl of Malmesbury's diary; R. Platt, *Smuggling in the British Isles: a history* (Stroud, 2007).
[89] Third earl of Malmesbury, *Memoirs of an ex-minister: an autobiography* (2 vols, London, 1884), vol. 1, p. 6.
[90] 'Malmesbury papers' 9M73/G651/18 letter, 31 October 1759.
[91] 'Malmesbury papers' 9M73/G333/1 letter, 2 June 1778.
[92] O'Gorman, *Voters, patrons and parties*, p. 45.

because landed estates were desirable and relatively available and affordable. The availability of land in the Region was in part related to historical patterns of landownership and the extent of crown, church, and college-owned land in the sixteenth century. The dissolution of the monasteries did not result in great landlords or resident peers owning large tracts of lands in the long term. Instead, there were numerous small estates or large farms, some of which had been formed through encroachments into the Crown Forest over the centuries. These could be purchased piecemeal from landed gentry wishing to consolidate their holdings or from independent freeholders. Small estates or large farms required a lower initial outlay and this enabled newcomers to build up an estate incrementally.

The Region was rural in character but, whilst the Isle of Wight had reasonably productive agricultural land, farmland in the New Forest was poor and strip-farming was common. [93] This encouraged the development of commercial businesses such as salt boiling and iron forging, particularly along the coast. The principal market for these products was the Navy, and demand mirrored military activity, resulting in financial uncertainty for landowners. This made the area attractive to merchants and businessmen who were willing to both take and manage risks and to invest with a view to creating an estate for future generations.

The Region was also desirable because of the abundance of opportunities to act out different landed-gentry roles in both national and local spheres. The five parliamentary constituencies each had a different political culture but, crucially, control depended on negotiated agreements, reciprocal obligations or on complex patronage structures. However, this brought the landed gentry into conflict not only with

[93] Chapman and Seeliger, *Enclosure, environment & landscape,* p. 68; S. Seeliger and J. Chapman, 'Enclosure in the southern counties, 1700–1900, computer file, UK data archive, 20 March 1996, SN: 3278.' (Colchester).

government and the non-resident peerage but also with each other. The landed gentry were attracted by the opportunities for royal patronage associated with offices in the Crown Forest, whilst the existence of smuggling may have provided additional opportunities for the landed gentry to provide patronage. Socially, the New Forest was ideal for the increasingly popular sports of hunting and shooting, whilst the picturesque scenery and sea bathing made the coastline more popular in the second half of the century.

The combination of these topographical, historical, social, political, and cultural characteristics of the Region meant that it was permeable, diverse, and dynamic and well suited to a holistic, local study of the character and pace of social change. The fifty-two resident landed-gentry families had different backgrounds, but included a mix of established families, new arrivals, and families at intermediate stages of assimilation. The next chapter identifies the landed-gentry families and analyses the composition of this social group to provide the foundations for the rest of this study.

Chapter Two: Identifying the landed gentry

The last chapter set out the characteristics of the Region that made it particularly appropriate for a holistic, local study of the character and pace of social change. The first task of this chapter is to define the term 'landed gentry' and explain how the fifty-two landed-gentry families in the Region were identified. The resulting dataset of families is used to establish how the composition of the group changed over the eighteenth century and whether 'an almost entirely new and British landed establishment' replaced the 'old and local gentry' as Colley posited.[1]

Defining the term 'landed gentry' is essential, because, as previously discussed, scholars have used it inconsistently in the historiography. This chapter develops a definition that aims to build on previous research, namely that the landed gentry were the owners, other than members of the peerage, of a substantial landed estate, generally of at least 1,000 acres, with their country seat situated in the Region. To qualify as landed gentry, the family had to be recognised as being 'of' a place in the Region, and this meant that they were baronets, knights, or esquires.

In addition, it will be argued that the dataset of landed-gentry families should include those who were in the process of joining or dropping out of the landed gentry, not just those who qualified at a single point in time. Therefore, a complex, but rigorous, methodology was required to determine which families were members of the landed gentry. The resulting dataset comprises forty-three estates in the Region, owned by fifty-two landed-gentry families, while a further forty-seven families owned estates in the rest of Hampshire. Significantly, although the Region represented only one-quarter of the area of Hampshire, more than half the ninety-nine landed-gentry families

[1] Colley, *Britons*, p. 157.

in the county had their seats there, reflecting the continuing attractiveness of the Region throughout the century.

Analysis of the dataset enables both quantitative and qualitative answers to be given to the kinds of questions that Habakkuk posed about the landed gentry: how many were new and why were some rising and some declining? On the quantitative side, it will be argued that the landed gentry was open to newcomers, who added to the numbers rather than displacing established families; the 'old and local' absorbed the 'new and national'. It will be demonstrated that there were variations even within the Region. The turnover of families was much higher in the New Forest than on the Isle of Wight, and it will be argued that this reflected the availability, desirability, and relative affordability of the estates on the mainland and the willingness of existing landowners to sell small estates or parcels of land. Qualitative answers will be obtained by dividing families into three categories: established families, upwardly mobile 'upcomers', who were resident in the Region before 1700, but not landed, and 'incomers', who arrived in the Region during the eighteenth century. It will be argued that this classification is more meaningful in terms of social change than whether the newcomers were 'men of business' or not.[2]

It will be argued that there were no systemic differences between families in the New Forest or the Isle of Wight, although there were individual variations. Nor was there a systemic difference between established families and newcomers, although it will be demonstrated that there was an increasing trend towards the end of the century to settle near the healthy seaside and increasing emphasis was placed on the picturesque setting.

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[2] This qualifies the findings of the Stones and the Springs: Stone and Stone, *An open elite?*, pp. 421–24; Spring and Spring, 'English landed elite'.

Defining the term 'landed gentry'

A critical step in this study has been defining the term 'landed gentry', but this has not always been perceived as a problem. When, in 1835, John Burke issued his first history of the *Commoners of Great Britain and Ireland*, he had no doubt that his readers could recognise the group 'enjoying territorial possessions or high official rank but uninvested with heritable honours'.[3] He continued:

> To this grade in her social system – her independent country gentlemen – England is mainly indebted for her greatness abroad, and her prosperity at home. In this and her free institutions, she differs from every other country in Europe.[4]

When, twelve years later, Burke and his son, John Bernard Burke, replaced the *Commoners* with the *Dictionary of the landed gentry*, they described it as 'the genealogical history of that Class in Society which holds the next place to the privileged Order – the untitled Country Gentleman'.[5] The Burkes emphasised that the landed gentry had no specific rights or privileges, unlike, for example, children of the French nobility. The Burkes stressed the importance of the landed gentry by adopting a different format from the heralds' visitations. They described families as 'of' a place, such as 'Mitford of Exbury', mirroring the use of 'de' by French nobility, 'von' in Germany and 'of' in many English hereditary titles.[6]

In view of the lack of a rigid social hierarchy in Britain, it is not surprising that modern historians have found it difficult to agree on the demarcations of landed society or even on the best approach to take. One problem has been the terminology used. Definitions of terms such as 'landed', 'elite', 'aristocracy', 'provincial', and 'gentry' have varied both over time and between different scholars. In 1963, Mingay argued that

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[3] Burke, *Commoners*, title page.
[4] Burke, *Commoners*, preface.
[5] Burke and Burke, *Landed gentry*, preface.
[6] For example Burke and Burke, *Landed gentry*, p. 873.

landowners fell into three broad categories: peers, the gentry, and freeholders.[7] He regarded the peerage as unique in political terms because its members sat in the House of Lords. However, he acknowledged that the boundaries were less clear-cut when it came to wealth although he suggested that a distinction could be drawn between the 'great landlords' and the 'lesser landlords' or gentry. In the same year, F. M. L. Thompson noted that the 'landed gentry' came in a 'bewildering variety of shapes and sizes', but he believed that 'contemporaries were confident that they formed a reasonably homogenous group'. They were, in his view, 'the untitled aristocracy'.[8]

The use of the term 'aristocracy' has been particularly problematic. In 1965, Stone argued that the landed elite broadly equated to the peerage since, in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, the acquisition of *de facto* elite status was generally rewarded with a title.[9] Although F. M. L. Thompson criticised the preoccupation with class structure, he proposed using the label 'landed aristocracy' to describe the most elite group of landowners.[10] By the time the Stones came to write about the nature of the landed elite in 1984, they had moved away from using the term aristocracy, conceding that there was little correlation between the award of a title and the status of the recipient.[11] They drew a distinction between the 'county gentry' and the 'parish gentry', making it clear that they were only concerned with the former, but then used the term 'county elite' rather than county gentry. [12] The Stones defined the county elite as those 'members of the aristocracy, baronetage, knightage, and squirearchy whose main territorial base took the form of at least one large country

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[7] Mingay, *English landed society,* p. 6.
[8] Thompson, *Landed society,* p. 109.
[9] Stone, *Crisis of the aristocracy,* p. 8.
[10] F. M. L. Thompson, 'The social distribution of landed property in England since the sixteenth century', *The Economic History Review,* 19/3 (1966), pp. 505–17.
[11] Stone and Stone, *An open elite?,* p. 260.
[12] Stone and Stone, *An open elite?,* pp. 6, 8.

house and a substantial landed estate'.[13] Beckett continued to favour the term 'aristocracy', in which he included baronets, although he acknowledged that 'a certain vagueness existed in regard to its lower limits'.[14] Significantly, Innes moved away from definitions based on titles and argued that, in the eighteenth century, the 'aristocracy' was usually taken to mean the power elite or the establishment.[15] Reviewing the literature, Goodrich concluded that 'a number of historians of the eighteenth century have ignored the specific political usage of 'aristocracy' and adopted it anachronistically and interchangeably with 'nobility' and other terms such as 'the great landowners' the 'landed elite' or 'the gentry'.[16]

Attempts have been made to solve the problem by using a quantitative definition. One approach was to follow Bateman and use annual income from land as the benchmark. He specified a minimum income for inclusion in his list of 'great landowners', which was based on the government's *Return of owners of land* of 1873.[17] In this he defined great landowners as those owning 'three thousand acres and upwards, worth £3,000 a year'.[18] Following objections from landowners omitted from his list, Bateman insisted that he needed to retain his original 'clear cut rule, even if it be a rule of thumb, whereby we may distinguish the sheep from the goats'.[19] The 'goats' were divided into smaller groups according to the size of their estates; 'squires' owned between 1,000 and 3,000 acres, whilst 'greater yeoman' held between 300 and 1,000

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[13] Stone and Stone, *An open elite?,* p. 8.
[14] J. V. Beckett, *The aristocracy in England 1660–1914* (Oxford, 1986), p. 2.
[15] J. Innes, 'Jonathan Clark, social history and England's "ancien régime"', *Past & Present,* 115 (1987), pp. 165–200.
[16] Goodrich, 'Language of aristocracy'.
[17] Bateman, *Great landowners*; *Return of owners of land*. These sources were, for example, used by Rothery in his study of the landed gentry: M. Rothery, 'The reproductive behavior of the English landed gentry in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries', *Journal of British Studies,* 48/3 (2009), pp. 674–94.
[18] Bateman, *Great landowners,* title page.
[19] Bateman, *Great landowners,* p. xvi.

acres.[20] Mingay estimated that 400 great landowners, mostly members of the peerage, had estates generating between £5,000 and £50,000 per annum in 1790, approximately 750 'wealthy gentry' had an income of £3,000 to £5,000, and 3,000 gentry families had an income of £1,000 to £3,000.[21] On the other hand, F. M. L. Thompson took a less rigid view, arguing that, by the end of the eighteenth century, ownership of an estate yielding at least £1,000 would have been sufficient to qualify as, in his words, 'landed aristocracy'.[22]

The Stones used the country seat, rather than landownership, to identify the elite in their impressive survey of the owners of 362 houses in Northamptonshire, Hertfordshire, and Northumberland. At a minimum, the house had to have 5,000 square feet of living space, but it also to be of 'aesthetic elegance' to be accepted as a country seat.[23] In the revised 1986 edition of their monograph, the Stones added a qualitative definition, describing the county elite as comprising three overlapping groups: the 'power elite', the 'status elite', and the 'elite of wealth'.[24] This encompassed all those who were actually, or potentially, involved in running the county, but they added a precondition that 'the indispensable criterion for defining men of landed elite status' still remained the 'ownership of a country seat of a certain minimum size'.

This thesis differs from the Stones' approach in two important ways. First, there is a difference in focus. The Stones' interest was directed at the largest and most important landowners, including peers, whereas this study examines the role of the neglected stratum of society below this. Thus, the houses in the Stones' sample were larger than many of those owned by the landed gentry of the Region. Second, there is a

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[20] Bateman, *Great landowners,* p. 501.
[21] Mingay, *English landed society,* p. 23.
[22] Thompson, 'Distribution of landed property'.
[23] Stone and Stone, *An open elite?,* pp. 41–2.
[24] Stone and Stone, *An open elite? 2nd edn.,* p. 39.

difference in methodology. The selection of estates has not been based on quantitative data, such as the floor area of the house or the acreage of the estate, on the ground that perceptions of what was 'large' or 'substantial' would have varied over the period. Nor has aesthetic elegance been taken into account, since tastes and fashions changed over the century. Indeed, if this test were to be applied in the Region, established families might cease to qualify as landed gentry unless they had modernised their country seat. In addition, the landed gentry has not been limited to members of the Stones' power elite or Rosenheim's 'ruling order', so that individuals did not have to be Members of Parliament or office-holders to qualify as landed gentry.[25] Similarly, the landed gentry has not been limited to the Stones' elite of wealth, and no filter of a minimum wealth or income has been applied.

Nevertheless, the definition of landed gentry in this thesis does draw on work by Heal, Holmes, Wilson, and Mackley. Heal and Holmes included in their 'gentry' not only knights (who 'dominated the magistracy and high office') and esquires (who were 'accorded status because of wealth and ancient descent') but the lesser 'mere' gentlemen (who had a house in the parish but no landed estate).[26] This thesis omits the parish gentry but includes the baronetcy, and overlays the Heal and Holmes definition with Wilson and Mackley's view that contemporaries could distinguish between a 'country house' and a 'house in the country'.[27] The former was 'defined by its role and purpose as family seat, "power house" and community focus'.[28] They tempered this qualitative approach by adding that a 'country house required a sufficient landed estate to pay for its upkeep' and 'must possess tenanted land indicating an intention to use the

[25] Rosenheim, *Emergence of a ruling order*.
[26] Heal and Holmes, *The gentry,* p. 15.
[27] Wilson and Mackley, *Creating paradise,* p. 8.
[28] Wilson and Mackley, *Creating paradise,* p. 9.

house as a source of influence in the local community'.[29] In this thesis, a 'sufficient' landed estate would generally have exceeded 1,000 acres at some point in the eighteenth century and the owner would have had income of at least £1,000, either from the estate itself or from other sources, as well as significant influence in the local community. However, this thesis emphasises the importance of contemporary views of what qualified as a landed estate.

Following from this, the term landed gentry is used in this thesis to describe the social stratum immediately below the peerage; they owned landed estates that carried with them significant responsibilities, both on the estate and in the wider community. However, in general, their estates were smaller and their financial resources more limited than those of the peerage, and this meant that they had to make more careful and strategic choices.

Methodology

This thesis aims to examine how the social stratum below the rank of the peerage changed over the eighteenth century and the character and pace of this change. It is argued that, in order to do this, families who were in the process of joining or dropping out of the landed gentry should be included in the study, not just those who qualified as landed gentry at a given date. This required a complex methodology, using contemporary sources wherever possible, to determine which families were landed gentry. Accordingly, in this chapter, landed estates and landed-gentry families have been identified according to how they were portrayed in a range of seventeenth- , eighteenth- , and nineteenth-century sources including maps, guidebooks, directories,

[29] Wilson and Mackley, *Creating paradise,* p. 8.

episcopal, and heralds' visitations and crown and government records.[30] These sources enabled the identification of families who were recognised by their peers as belonging to the landed gentry, analogous to the Stones' status elite. This approach has been designed to produce a dataset of landed-gentry families, which could be interrogated to reveal how this important social group reacted to changing circumstances over the course of the century.

Given the fluidities and uncertainties in defining the landed gentry, a rigorous and systematic approach has been taken to identifying the families. The first step in building the dataset was to identify all the gentlemen living in rural Hampshire during the eighteenth century. Three sources, spanning the century, were particularly useful: the episcopal visitation of 1725, Taylor's map of Hampshire published in 1759 and Milne's map of 1791.[31] The episcopal visitation required the vicar or rector to make a return of the 'noblemen, gentlemen, or persons of note of each sex' that lived in the parish.[32] The returns named the persons of note, but the comments provided additional contextual information: 'no great estates' (Sopley); 'lord of our mannour' (Exbury); 'gentlemen of estates' (Eling); 'no person of any great note' (Arreton, IoW); 'none above the degree of farmer' (Brightstone, IoW); and 'seat of the Dillingtons' (Newchurch).

The twenty-one parishes in the New Forest had, on average, two and a half persons 'of note', and the twenty parishes in the Isle of Wight had an average of one and a half persons of note. In contrast, the 186 parishes in the rest of Hampshire listed

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[30] Letters, diaries and estate records have been used extensively in later chapters.
[31] I. S. Taylor, 'Map of Hampshire, including the Isle of Wight' (1759); T. Milne, 'Hampshire or the county of Southampton, including the Isle of Wight ' (1791); *Parson and parish in eighteenth-century Hampshire: replies to bishops' visitations,* ed. W. R. Ward (Hampshire Record Series, vol. 13, Winchester, 1995).
[32] *Parson and parish,* p. 5.

only 100 persons of note, less than one per parish. These statistics suggest that the New Forest was particularly attractive to this stratum of society.

Map 10 : Brockenhurst and Newtown House, 1759

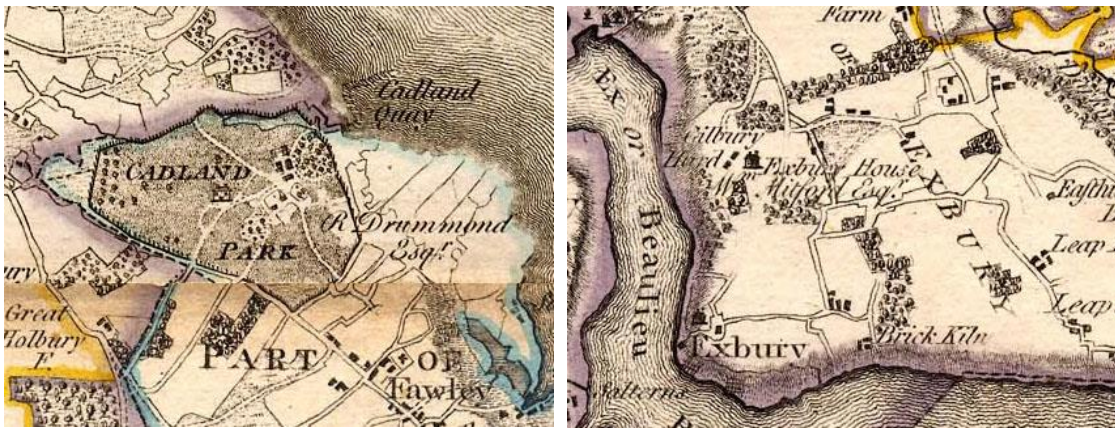


Source – Taylor's map, 1759

The next source chronologically, Taylor's map of Hampshire of 1759, marked 'farm houses etc.' and 'seats and houses' using different symbols. It included a panel of 'gentlemens names &c' and many of the 577 gentlemen were described as 'of' a place. For example, the list included entries for 'Hen. Archer, esqr. of Hale, 9', 'Geo. Baker esqr. Brockenhurst, 25', and 'John Mitford esqr. Newtown, 335', and the map marked both Brockenhurst Court and Newtown with the 'seats and houses' symbol and the appropriate map reference numbers (Map 10).

Milne's presentation was different in that it marked the name of the owner next to important houses (Map 11).

Map 11 : Cadland Park and Exbury House, 1791



Source – Milne's map, 1791

Combining these sources generated a dataset of 1,285 individuals. However, further research revealed that Taylor's list included individuals living in towns or outside Hampshire, county office-holders and other potential subscribers, some of whom had no connection at all with Hampshire. It was therefore necessary to cleanse the data to create the dataset for this thesis. All members of the peerage were removed, as well as all those described as 'Mr', 'Gent.', and 'Dr', who did not merit the descriptor 'esquire'.[33] Similarly, urban gentry, who were described as 'of Winchester' or of any of the twelve parliamentary boroughs in Hampshire, were removed as were members of the clergy, the Army and the Navy unless they were the owners of a substantial landed estate.[34]

[33] The 'peerage' includes dukes, earls, marquesses, viscounts and barons. It does not include baronets, who are not entitled to sit in the House of Lords.
[34] Professionals who owned a landed estate were often younger sons, who had inherited the estate from their brother.

Identifying landed estates

This resulted in a shorter list, but it was still necessary to establish whether the individuals owned a substantial landed estate in the Region and enjoyed, in Burke's words, territorial possessions. The various sources of data, when taken together, suggest that the majority of landed estates in the Region were between 1,000 and 5,000 acres. However, size was not the only factor. Estates belonging to individuals who had power and influence in the Region were included and regard was had to contemporary descriptions and depictions of country seats. These included *Vitruvius Britannicus*, Sturch's *View of the Isle of Wight*, Watts's *Seats of the nobility and gentry*, Worsley's *History of the Isle of Wight*, Driver's *Plan of His Majesty's forest called the New Forest*, Warner's *Companion in a tour round Lymington*, Paterson's *Description of roads* (which contained an 'index to the country seats'), and the *Hampshire repository*.[35]

These qualitative descriptions were supplemented, where possible, with quantitative data taken from financial records or surveys of estates. Since these were not available for all estates, the land tax returns for 1798 were used as a check to gauge the size of the estates selected.[36] These returns were based on rateable values rather than rental values or acreage, but were useful because the return for each tything showed the name of the proprietor, the occupier, and the sum assessed, half-yearly, for each field or

[35] J. Badeslade and J. Rocque, *Vitruvius Britannicus: volume the fourth* (1739); Sturch, *View of the Isle of Wight*; W. Watts, *The seats of the nobility and gentry in a collection of the most interesting & picturesque views* (London, 1779); Worsley, *History*; Driver, 'Driver's map 1789'; R. Warner, *A companion in a tour round Lymington* (Southampton, 1789); D. Paterson, *A new and accurate description of all the direct and principal cross roads in England and Wales*, 11th edn (London, 1796), pp. 48, 391; J. Robbins, *The annual Hampshire repository or, historical, economical, and literary miscellany* (2 vols, Winchester, 1799).

[36] TNA, IR23/77, Southampton, vol. 1 and TNA, IR23/78, Southampton, vol. 2, land tax records created by the Land tax perpetuation Act 38 Geo. III *c*. 60.

plot of land. Individual ‘sums assessed’ of ten shillings or more were aggregated for each proprietor giving a minimum estimate of the total sum assessed (Table 1).

Table 1 : Land tax assessments over £10, 1798

Area	Name of proprietor per the return	Estate	Land Tax £
IoW	Sir Richard Worsley	Appuldurcombe	398
IoW	L. T. Holmes, esq.	Thorley	234
IoW	Sir John Barrington	Swainston	195
IoW	Sir William Oglander	Nunwell	159
IoW	M. G. Bissett, esq.	Knighton	132
IoW	Revd James Worsley	Stenbury	116
IoW	Campbell & Glynn esqs	Gatcombe	105
IoW	Leighs family	North Court	94
IoW	E. Rushworth	Afton House	91
IoW	Heirs of Robert Pope Blachford	Osborne	62
IoW	Maj. J. Popham	West Court	46
IoW	Revd D. Worsley	Pidford	43
IoW	John White, esq.	Fairlee	39
IoW	Sir Nash Grose	The Priory	36
IoW	Edward Roberts, esq.	Standen	25
IoW	Mrs Heneage	Sheat	21
NF	Lord Malmesbury	Hurn Court	212
NF	Sir Charles Mill	Grove Place	195
NF	T. C. Bulkeley, esq.	Nether Burgate	136
NF	Edward B. Battson, esq.	Avon Tyrrell	114
NF	C. Lisle, esq.	Moyles Court	107
NF	Sir George I. Tapps, baronet	Hinton Admiral	103
NF	John Morant, esq.	Brockenhurst	90
NF	Sir Edward Hulse, baronet	Breamore	86
NF	Lord Mendip	Paultons	76
NF	Peter Serle, esq.	Testwood	68
NF	Robert Drummond, esq.	Cadland	66
NF	D. Hobson, esq.	Somerley	60
NF	John Compton, esq.	Minstead	37
NF	William Mills, esq.	Bisterne	37
NF	Mary May	Hale	36
NF	William Mitford, esq.	Exbury	35
NF	T. Robbins, esq.	Pylewell	31
NF	Percival Lewis, esq.	Ibsley	22
NF	H. C. Plowden, esq.	Newtown Park	20
NF	George Rose, esq.	Cuffnells	17
NF	Sir Harry B. Neale	Walhampton	12

Source – TNA, IR23/77, Southampton vol. 1 and, TNA, IR23/78, Southampton vol. 2.

The results should be treated with caution as scholars have disagreed about the validity of using land tax returns to calculate the size of an estate or the wealth of an

individual.[37] This concern was the consequence of changes made after 1692, when the tax was first payable based on actual rental values. In 1697, fixed quotas for each county were established and, although the tax was notionally payable at four shillings in the pound after 1776, the rateable value did not necessarily reflect the tenure of property and the degree of improvement.[38]

Nevertheless, it is argued that the land tax returns for 1798 do give an indication of whether the estate was substantial or not. Thus, the Appuldurcombe estate, the largest in the Region, was surveyed in 1774 and amounted to 11,578 acres.[39] The sum assessed was at least £398. At the other end of the spectrum, a survey in 1803 showed that the Pylewell estate covered 1,950 acres and T. Robbins' assessment was £31.[40] Similarly, the Exbury estate was over 2,000 acres by 1800, and Mitford was assessed at £35. This suggests that an individual assessed to at least £20 in 1798 would qualify as landed gentry at that date based on the size of their estate alone. However, as noted earlier, estates with lower tax assessments were included if the owners, such as George Rose and Sir Harry Burrard Neale, qualified as landed gentry because of their influence in the area and their other sources of income.

Whilst the 1798 land tax returns provide a useful indicator of the size of landed estates at the end of the century, they do not reflect the fact that many estates changed substantially over the century and others, such as Exbury and Walhampton, only came

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[37] D. B. Grigg, 'The land tax returns', *The Agricultural History Review,* 11/2 (1963), pp. 82–94; L. Soltow, 'The distribution of property values in England and Wales in 1798', *The Economic History Review,* 34/1 (1981), pp. 60–70; G. J. Wilson, 'The land tax problem', *The Economic History Review,* 35/3 (1982), pp. 422–26; L. Soltow, 'The land tax redemption records, 1798–1963', *The Economic History Review,* 35/3 (1982), pp. 427–33; D. E. Ginter, *Measure of wealth: the English land tax in historical analysis* (Montreal, 1992); R. W. Hoyle, 'Who owned Earls Colne in 1798 … or how to squeeze more from the land tax', *The Local Historian,* 41/4 (2011).
[38] M. Pearsall, 'The land tax 1692–1963', *Magazine of the Friends of The National Archives,* 22/3 (2011), pp. 16–17.
[39] IoWRO, JER/WA/33/36 survey of estate of Sir Richard Worsley of Appuldurcombe, I.W., *c.*1774.
[40] B. Pinnell, *Country house history around Lymington, Brockenhurst and Milford-on-Sea* (Lymington, 1987), p. 116 citing survey by Henry Bruyn.

into existence during the period. This process of change continued in the nineteenth century and the *Return of owners of land* provides an insight into the position in 1872.[41] For example, the Pylewell estate had shrunk to 1,425 acres in 1872 and the Testwood estate had been broken up into several smaller estates of about 350 acres by 1872. Similarly, Appuldurcombe did not appear in the return as it had been sold in separate lots by 1860, many of which, together with the Gatcombe estate, became part of the new Brook estate owned by the Seely family. This highlights the fundamental problem with using sources from the nineteenth century: they are silent on the character and pace of change in the eighteenth century.

Identifying landed families

In order to understand how the landed gentry, as a social group, changed over the eighteenth century, it is necessary to identify how many unique families owned each estate during the period. This was relatively straightforward where an estate was sold, but entries in the land tax returns, such as 'Leighs family' and 'heirs of Robert Pope Blachford', show that ownership of some estates was changing through inheritance (Table 1). The list also included two peers who, by definition, were not themselves landed gentry, but who had inherited the estates from members of the landed gentry at the end of the eighteenth century. Where an estate passed from father to son, the position was clear, but where a landed estate descended through the female line, should this constitute a change of 'family'?

In this thesis, 'family' has been defined to include direct and indirect blood relatives of both genders, irrespective of whether there was a change in name. Thus, Grove Place was treated as remaining 'in the family' when Sir Richard Mill, fifth

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[41] Bateman, *Great landowners*; *Return of owners of land*.

baronet, inherited it from his nephew, Thomas Knollys, in 1751. This exercise resulted in a list of forty-three estates in the Region, owned by fifty-two landed-gentry families; a further forty-seven families owned estates in the rest of Hampshire. A map showing the location of the country seats in the Region, which is included in Appendix 1, shows that the forty-three landed estates were largely situated on the rivers or in the farmland in the centre of the Isle of Wight. A similar process was undertaken for the rest of Hampshire and this is included in Appendix 2. This dataset of landed-gentry families and landed estates made it possible both to analyse in detail how and why this social group changed over the century, and to draw out differences between the New Forest, the Isle of Wight, and the rest of Hampshire.

Historical patterns of landownership

It is important, when looking at change over a particular period, to see this in the context of what happened before the start of the period. Much of the scholarship on changes in the ownership of landed estates started with an examination of developments in the hundred years after the dissolution of the monasteries in 1539. Tawney argued that, although peers and courtiers received the largest individual grants of lands at the suppression of the monasteries, the gentry received the largest aggregate share.[42] He suggested that economic and political factors tended to favour the owners of medium-sized estates at the expense of the very large landowners, and that land tended to pass from both the 'nobility' and the *nouveau riche* to the established gentry.[43] Habakkuk took the view that in this period the 'bourgeoisie' were able to purchase land from the 'great landed families who managed their estates inefficiently or who failed to adapt' to

[42] R. H. Tawney, 'The rise of the gentry, 1558–1640', *The Economic History Review*, 11/1 (1941), pp. 1–38. Based on a sample of manors, their share rose from two-thirds to four-fifths.
[43] R. H. Tawney, 'The rise of the gentry: a postscript', *The Economic History Review*, 7/1 (1954), pp. 91–97.

changing economic circumstances.[44] Based on their studies of Northamptonshire families, Finch and Habakkuk argued that, although some of the land went at an advantageous price to those with court connections, most of the land was sold in relatively small lots, at roughly market values, to local landed gentry who were keen to extend their existing landed estates.[45]

However, Habakkuk concluded that the overall result of the dissolution was to alter 'the balance of property, and possibly of power', between those who had been landowners before 1540, rather than founding entirely new landed families.[46] Clay also demonstrated that, although church lands were initially taken into crown hands, between sixty-five and eighty-five per cent had been alienated within a decade. As a result, by 1688, the percentage of cultivated land owned by church or state had fallen from over thirty per cent to less than ten per cent, with the share owned by, what Clay described as the middling gentry, rising to nearly one half.[47] This set the scene for the debate about patterns of landownership during the long eighteenth century.

Habakkuk initially argued that patterns changed in the sixty years after 1690, with a 'general drift of property … in favour of the large estates and the great lord'. This, in his view, marked 'one of the great changes in the disposition of English landed property'.[48] Forty years later, he was still 'inclined' to believe that 'the purchase of small estates by their larger neighbours was commoner than the creation of new small estates'.[49] This view was endorsed by other scholars, including Clay, who observed a

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[44] Habakkuk, 'English Landownership'.
[45] Finch and Habakkuk, *Northamptonshire families,* p. 69.
[46] H. J. Habakkuk, 'The market for monastic property, 1539–1603', *The Economic History Review,* 10/3 (1958), pp. 362–80.
[47] C. G. A. Clay, *Economic expansion and social change: England 1500–1700* (2 vols, Cambridge, 1984), vol. 1, pp. 142–46.
[48] Habakkuk, 'English Landownership'.
[49] J. Habakkuk, 'The rise and fall of English landed families, 1600–1800 Part III', *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society,* 31 (1981), pp. 195–217.

tendency to ‘concentrate property ownership into fewer hands’, and by Howell, in his work on the gentry of south-west Wales.[50] Clemenson found that such concentration was also true of Lincolnshire, where most of the purchasers were already part of the landed gentry and many became more prominent in county society because of their increased landed estate.[51]

Nevertheless, there were dissenting voices. Holderness noted that there was a ‘continuous rise and fall of gentry families’ and argued that ‘old estates … changed hands fairly freely and were not merely absorbed by the great magnates in eighteenth-century Lincolnshire’.[52] Aley found a similar pattern in her study of 100 Nottinghamshire landowners over the period 1660 to 1840. Some estates thrived whilst others shrank, but that there was no general concentration of land in the hands of the largest landlords.[53] This suggests that patterns of landownership varied not only between different parts of the country but also that changes occurred at different dates. Following from this, it will be argued that, as far as the Region was concerned, the trends identified in the historiography were not mutually exclusive but occurred simultaneously. In other words, there was a continuing process of the creation of new small estates, the concentration of some property into fewer hands and the dispersal of larger estates.

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[50] C. Clay, ‘Property settlements, financial provision for the family, and sale of land by the greater landowners, 1660–1790’, *Journal of British Studies,* 21/1 (1981), pp. 18–38; Howell, *Patriarchs and parasites,* p. 19.
[51] Clemenson, *English country houses,* pp. 9–11.
[52] B. A. Holderness, ‘The English land market in the eighteenth century: the case of Lincolnshire’, *The Economic History Review,* 27/4 (1974), pp. 557–76.
[53] Aley, ‘Nottinghamshire landowners’, p. 312.

Turnover of landed-gentry families

As noted earlier, Habakkuk posed questions about the turnover of landed families, but he approached the topic in 'general terms, ignoring regional differences, and proceeding by way of example rather than measurement'.[54] Quantitative analyses were undertaken as part of debates about the causes of the Civil War.[55] These were limited in scope but showed that, in 1642, approximately thirty-three per cent of the landed-gentry families in Leicestershire, Lincolnshire, Norfolk, Suffolk, Sussex, and Warwickshire had been established for over a century. This figure rose to seventy per cent in Lancashire, but dropped back to ten per cent in Hertfordshire, close to London, reinforcing the importance of taking a regional approach. Hampshire was not covered by this earlier research.

A preliminary quantification of the turnover of the landed-gentry families in Hampshire was obtained by identifying when families first appeared in, and disappeared from, seventeenth-century sources. The heralds' *Visitation of Hampshire*, which ended in 1634, Blome's *Britannia* of 1677, and the heralds' *Visitation of Hampshire* of 1686 provided evidence of when a family was first recorded in the Region.[56] Only twenty-six of the 180 armigerous families in the heralds' *Visitation of Hampshire* in 1634 were included in the *Visitation of Hampshire* of 1686 and, of these,

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[54] J. Habakkuk, 'The rise and fall of English landed families, 1600–1800 Part I', *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society,* 29 (1979), pp. 187–207. For example, he asked: what sort of families were rising and for what reasons? How many were old and how many were new? Which families were declining and what were the causes of their decline and extinction?
[55] Heal and Holmes, *The gentry,* p. 27.
[56] R. Mundy and W. H. Rylands, *The visitation of Hampshire, 1634* (Harleian Society, vol. 64, London, 1913); R. Blome, *Britannia* (London, 1677); H. St. George and G. D. Squibb, *The visitation of Hampshire and the Isle of Wight, 1686* (Harleian Society, new series vol. 10, London, 1991).

only seven families succeeded in passing their original country seat down the male line to 1791.[57]

This preliminary analysis appeared to support Gallon's conclusion that there was a high turnover of estates in Hampshire, with only a quarter of the 'estates/manors experiencing no change in ownership' in the period 1689–1800.[58] However, his data was 'derived principally' from the Victoria County History volumes on Hampshire, a secondary source which focused on the ownership of manors, rather than of estates.[59] The difference between the two is illustrated by the manor of Hurn, near Christchurch, which Gallon stated changed hands six times.[60] It is true that Edward Hooper did not purchase the manor until 1754, but his family had owned the Hurn Court estate since the end of the seventeenth century and it remained in the family until the twentieth century. Accordingly, it is argued that data relating to the estates themselves, rather than manorial rights, should be used to calculate turnover, and legal documentation relating to land transactions and wills should be used in preference to secondary sources.

Gallon's conclusions are also problematic in that he treated the county of Hampshire as a single location, whereas a preliminary analysis, using secondary sources, revealed that patterns of longevity varied across the county. The number of families who were new to the New Forest increased between 1725 and 1791, whilst on the Isle of Wight only one new landed-gentry family emerged for the first time after 1759, and the landed-gentry population was relatively stable (Table 2).

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[57] Mill of Grove Place, Nursling; Oglander of Nunwell; Pitt of Stratfield Saye; Tichborne of Tichborne; Wallop of Farleigh Wallop; Wither of Manydown, Wooton St Lawrence; Worsley of Appuldurcombe.
[58] Gallon, 'Hampshire Gentry', p. 56.
[59] *VCH Hampshire*.
[60] Gallon, 'Hampshire Gentry', p. 57.

Table 2 : Earliest listing of landed-gentry families, 1686–1791

Location	Number of families listed for first time in each source				
	1686	1725	1759	1791	Total
New Forest	10	6	7	10	33
Isle of Wight	12	4	2	1	19
Rest of Hampshire	16	13	14	4	47
					99

Source – Dataset created for this thesis

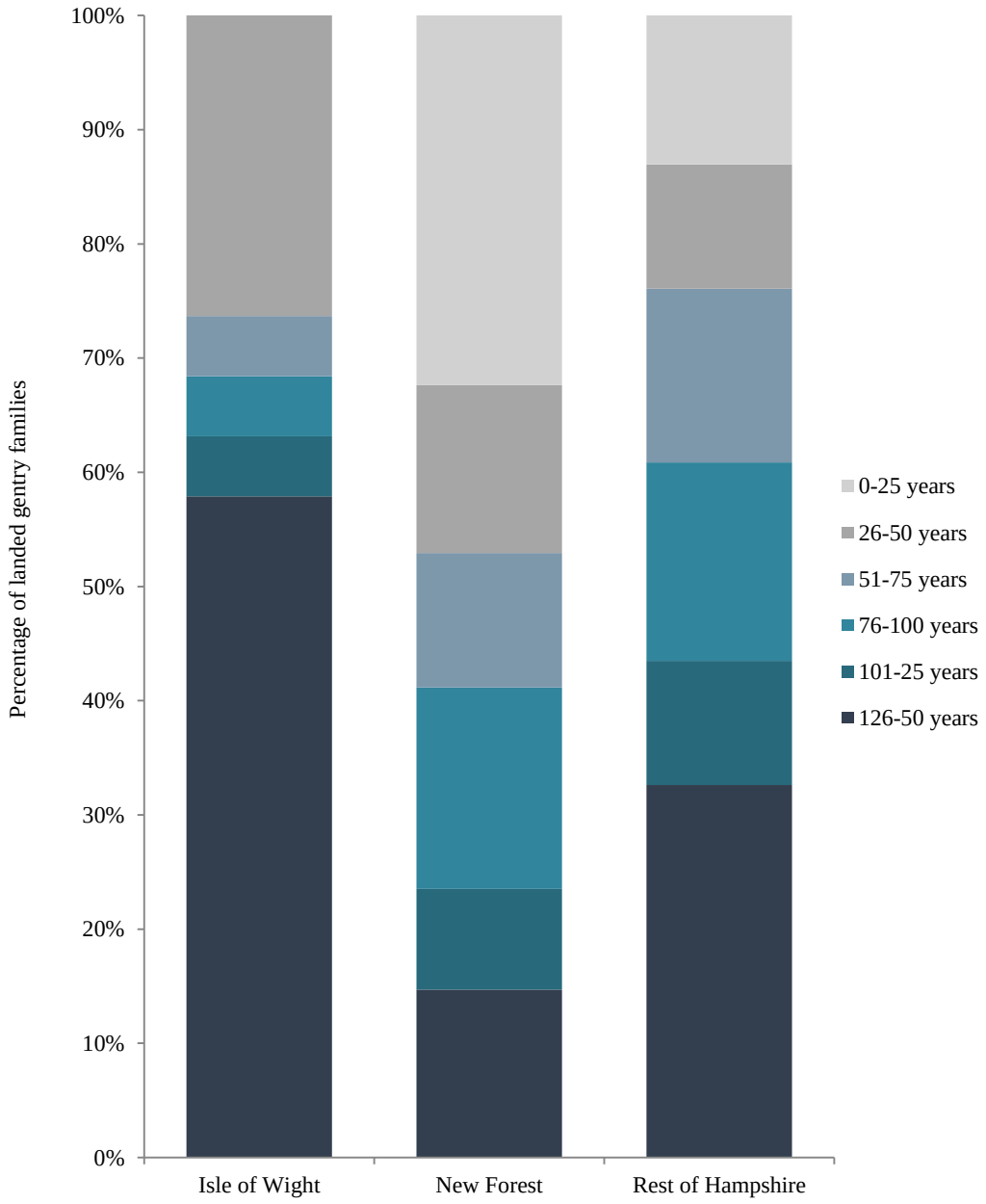
This pattern was corroborated by tracing the history of the landed-gentry families seated in the Region in 1800. Over sixty per cent of families in the Isle of Wight had been established for over a century; the corresponding figure for the New Forest was thirty per cent although sixty per cent of landed-gentry families had been established there for over fifty years.

However, in this thesis it is argued that calculating the permanence of landed-gentry families by looking backwards from a single point in time gives an incomplete, and possibly misleading, picture of how the social group changed over time. It does not provide any information about when landed-gentry families first arrived in the area, how long they stayed or where they came from. For example, Ascanius William Senior purchased Pylewell in 1780 from the Worsleys but sold it in 1787 to Thomas Robbins; thus, neither the Worsleys, nor the Seniors, were in the population of landed gentry in 1800. It follows that a more sophisticated measure of the durability of families is necessary in order to get a sense of the character and pace of change in the landed gentry as a social group.

Accordingly, this study has been based on a more rigorous analysis of the rate of turnover of landed-gentry families in the Region, which has involved investigating all movements in and out of this group during the eighteenth century. Patterns of longevity were derived by using primary sources to calculate the age of each family, which was

taken as the number of years between when the family qualified as landed gentry in the Region (or 1650, if they were established before this) and when they left (or 1800, if they were still there in the nineteenth century).

Figure 1 : Patterns of longevity of landed-gentry families, 1650–1800



Source – Dataset created for this research

In order to improve the presentation of the results, families were allocated to six bands representing multiples of twenty-five years (Figure 1). For example, the

Oglanders, who had been at Nunwell since medieval times and were still there in 1900, were allocated to the band 126–150 years, whereas, the Mills family who acquired Bisterne in 1792 were allocated to the band 0–25 years, even though they retained the estate into the twenty-first century. The same rigorous method was used for families that arrived and left within the period. Thus, the Archers, who were at Hale from 1715 to 1782, a total of sixty-seven years, were allocated to the band 51–75 years.

This exercise revealed distinct patterns in each of the three sub-regions of Hampshire. Over the whole of the period 1650–1800, thirty per cent of the landed gentry lived in the New Forest for less than twenty-five years and only fifteen per cent for over 125 years. In contrast, all the landed gentry of the Isle of Wight resided there for more than forty years and nearly sixty per cent for over 125 years. The pattern of longevity in the rest of Hampshire lay between these two extremes, with over half of landed-gentry families having been established there for less than 100 years.

In order to understand why these differences arose, a review was undertaken of the fifty-two families in the Region. For this purpose, the families were divided into 'newcomers', those who became landed gentry during the eighteenth century, and 'established' families, defined as those who had landed estates in the Region prior to 1700. The newcomers were themselves divided into two groups, 'upcomers', and 'incomers'. The upcomers were families, who had been living in the Region prior to the start of the eighteenth century, but who qualified as mere urban or parish gentry; their transition to landed-gentry status occurred during the eighteenth century. The 'incomers', on the other hand, moved to the Region during the eighteenth century, where they joined the landed gentry, and the review starts with these families.

Incomers

Incomers are the group that historians such as Jenkins have focused on and they are studied as the principal route through which social change occurred.[61] The forgoing analysis of turnover suggests that they could have had a significant effect on the character of the landed gentry in the New Forest, where nine incomers settled in the first half of the eighteenth century and eleven in the second half.[62] This compares with only one on the Isle of Wight. The incomers were a diverse group and differed in how they had acquired their wealth. Nine of the twenty-one incomers had made their money through professions or trade, seven from the West or East Indies, three were from existing gentry families, and two derived their wealth from offices. This was not the 'national', and predominantly aristocratic, ruling class, which Jenkins had found displacing the landed gentry in Glamorgan.[63]

Although all the incomers were intent on joining the landed gentry, not all were successful in establishing a permanent base in the Region. Six families moved out of the New Forest prior to 1800, having had an estate for less than twenty-five years, compared to none in the Isle of Wight and only three in the rest of Hampshire. One of the reasons for this was their failure to establish a political base and this will be discussed in detail in Chapter Seven; others were drawn back to life in the metropolis. Incomers who were motivated by the desire to build a large landed estate, and were successful in this, had greater longevity. Thus, twelve of the eighty great landowners in Hampshire listed by Bateman in 1883 were based in the Region; eight of these had

[61] Jenkins, *Glamorgan gentry*.
[62] Archer; Baker; Batson; D'Oyly; Drax; Drummond; Grose; Hinxman; Hobson; Hubert; Hulse; May; Mews/Tapps; Mills; Mitford; Morant; Pile; Robbins; Rose; Senior; Walter.
[63] Jenkins, *Glamorgan gentry,* pp. 38, xxvi.

arrived there before 1750, two in the 1770s and only two had acquired their estates in the nineteenth century.[64]

The diversity of the incomers as a group is best demonstrated by examining a sample of them in more detail, starting with an overseas merchant, William Mitford. He made his initial purchase of farmland in 1711, and went on to create the Exbury estate of 2,120 acres by the end of the century.[65] His grandson, who was colonel of the South Hants militia, built a village and church adjacent to his new mansion. Vancouver mentioned him as one of only four 'country gentlemen' in Hampshire who had made particular exertions to supply 'comfortable dwellings for the peasantry', providing each new cottage with 'a sufficiency of garden ground'.[66]

While the Mitfords took three generations to become fully assimilated into the landed gentry of the Region, Edward Morant, a third-generation creole, born in Jamaica but descended from English settlers, achieved the transition from West Indian to a friend of dukes and royalty in a single generation. He inherited the family's plantations in Jamaica at the age of fourteen, after the death of his father and two elder brothers. He was sent by his mother to study in England, matriculating at St Mary Hall, Oxford in 1747. After returning to Jamaica, he became a member of the Jamaican Assembly in 1752 and two years later, he married Eleanor, the widow of William Dawkins. She died shortly after their son, John, was born in 1755 and his mother, Mary, née Pennant, died a year later. Morant was elected a member of the Jamaican council in 1757 and might have remained in Jamaica had an opportunity not arisen for him to move to England in 1761. Although he initially mixed with fellow Jamaicans, including the Beckfords,

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[64] Bateman, *Great landowners*.
[65] HRO, misc. fiche 609–613 (Exbury estate book containing details of the properties making up the Mitford family's estate at Exbury and Lepe, 1718–1819), f. 1b.
[66] C. Vancouver, *General view of the agriculture of Hampshire, including the Isle of Wight* (London, 1810), p. 70.

Dawkins, and Pennants, he quickly formed a network of English contacts. Over a period of thirty years, he became close friends with landed gentry, members of the peerage, and finally with the royal family. This culminated in his appointment as a master keeper of the New Forest, and the magnitude of this achievement is reflected in the fact that, when Morant died in 1791, the eight other master keepers included a prince, a duke and three earls.

While country sports attracted Morant to the New Forest, politics was a driving force behind George Rose's acquisition of an estate in the Region. Born in Scotland in 1744, he became William Pitt's right-hand man in 1788, and he was deriving £3,000 as secretary of the Treasury and £1,100 as clerk of the Parliaments by 1790. This enabled him to purchase the Cuffnells estate in the New Forest, 'which he spent a large sum in ornamenting'.[67] This also enabled him to establish an interest of his own at Christchurch, having 'directed the Treasury artillery' against its electors.[68] Cobbett described him as 'the Old Purser' in his Rural Rides and complained that:

> this Forest has been crawled upon by favourites, and is now much smaller than it used to be. A time may, and will, come for inquiring how George Rose, and others, became owners of some of the very best parts of this once-public property.[69]

Rose used investment in property to secure a seat in Parliament, but not everyone was so successful.

John Walter, a planter and merchant from Barbados, came over to England after the death of his father in 1700. He initially purchased Newtown Park, near Lymington, but sold the estate to William Mitford in order to purchase property in Surrey, where he

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[67] R. Chambers and T. Thomson, *A biographical dictionary of eminent Scotsmen* (4 vols, London, 1856), vol. 4, pp. 194–96.
[68] *The House of Commons, 1754–1790,* ed. L. B. Namier and J. Brooke (3 vols, London, 1964), vol. 1, p. 376.
[69] W. Cobbett, *Rural rides* (London, 1830), pp. 597, 624.

was returned as a Tory member for the county in 1719. His will, dated 30 December 1734, was proved by his eldest son, 'Abel Walter of South Baddesley, co. S'ton, esq.' and the family remained in the Region.[70] His grandson, John Abel Walter, was also of 'South Badsley in the parish of Boldre, co S'ton, esq.' and his will, dated 19 July 1806, mentioned 'plantations in the Island of Barbadoes called Mount Wilson and Apeshill, with the negroes, and my dwelling house in Albemarle Street, St George's, Hanover Square'.[71]

Newtown Park continued to be attractive to incomers. In 1721, Mitford let Newtown Park to Henry Drax, alias Shetterden, the nephew of Henry Drax, one of the most prominent sugar plantation owners in Barbados.[72] It was advertised for sale in 1772, and Sir John Hadley D'Oyly, sixth baronet, purchased it in about 1789, shortly after his return from India.[73] However, like John Walter, he was not able to establish himself in Hampshire political circles, and was elected as a Member of Parliament for Ipswich, his father's home, between 1790 and 1796. There, in spite of allegedly spending £20,000 on electioneering, he failed to establish a permanent interest in Suffolk.[74] Financial difficulties forced him to leave Newtown Park but not the Region. D'Oyly moved to 'an elegant cottage, which he built at Milford, near Lymington … as the scene of an improved economy'.[75]

The connections between the British empire and the Region continued when Ascanius William Senior purchased Pylewell in 1780. Senior had joined the East Indian

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[70] TNA, PCC 142 Derby.
[71] TNA, PCC 263 Crickitt.
[72] 'Exbury estate book', f. 1b.
[73] *Public Advertiser*, 15 December 1772; Pinnell, *Country house history*, p. 137.
[74] *The House of Commons, 1790–1820,* ed. R. G. Thorne (5 vols, London, 1986), vol. 3, D'Oyly, Sir John Hadley, 6th bart of D'Oyly Park, Hants.
[75] R. Warner, *Literary recollections* (2 vols, London, 1830), vol. 1, p. 207.

Company in 1753, and was awarded £20,125 in 'bribes' in 1765.[76] He returned to Britain in 1767 and purchased Pierpont Lodge, Frensham, in Surrey from the duke of Kingston. However, he sold this in 1778 before buying Pylewell in 1780 for £22,000.[77] Senior also purchased the manor of South Baddesley from Henry, eighth Lord Arundell, in 1781 and lands in Boldre from Sir Harry Burrard of Walhampton in January 1783.[78] However, two years before his death in 1789, Senior sold Pylewell to Thomas Robbins of the West Indies for £32,000, who in turn sold it to the Welds in August 1802 for £45,000.[79] Why choose the New Forest and then sell? Although Senior was often referred to as an East India nabob, in 1768 he married Charlotte, the daughter of John Abel Walter who, as noted above, held lands in South Baddesley and Barbados.[80] When Senior died, his daughters were his only heirs and he chose to monetise his property in the New Forest.[81]

Other incomers had no political ambitions or West Indian connections, but were attracted to the New Forest by the picturesque scenery. Robert Drummond, a banker, spotted the 'wild spaces of marsh and heather between the New Forest and Southampton Water' from the opposite bank at Netley and purchased the manor of Cadland in 1772.[82] He commissioned Henry Holland, a customer of the bank, to design a new mansion for him and build a cottage overlooking the West Solent.[83] Gilpin described the 'beauty of the grounds', designed by another customer of the bank,

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[76] J. M. Holzman, *The nabobs in England, a study of the returned Anglo-Indian, 1760–1785* (New York, 1926).
[77] Pinnell, *Country house history*, p. 113.
[78] *VCH Hampshire*, vol. 4, parish of Boldre citing Com. Pleas Recov. R. Trin. 21 Geo. III, m.148; HRO, 52M87/29 lease and release: lands in Boldre, 22–23 January 1783.
[79] *VCH Hampshire*, vol. 4, parish of Boldre citing feet of fines Hants, Trin. 27 Geo. III.
[80] Monument in Bath Abbey 'sacred to the memory of Charlotte, widow of the late Ascanius William Senior esqr.' who died on 10 November 1811 aged 75; Boyd's marriage index, 1538–1850.
[81] 'Legacies of British slave-ownership', Ascanius William Senior.
[82] H. Bolitho and D. W. Peel, *The Drummonds of Charing Cross* (London, 1967), p. 95.
[83] Bolitho and Peel, *The Drummonds*, p. 95.

Laurence 'Capability' Brown, as pleasing to the 'picturesque eye' with views of the Isle of Wight 'seen with advantage of grand, woody fore-grounds'.[84] A guidebook from 1799 described Cadland as:

> A comfortable and elegant mansion, situated in a fine park, about five miles in circumference. The grounds were laid out by the ingenious Brown; and the views are admirable.[85]

The Drummonds continued to be seated at Cadland, with a large agricultural estate, in the twenty-first century.

The incomers were a diverse group, although there were significant continuing links with the West Indies. They had different initial motives for settling in the area, but they strived to achieve, and then retain, landed-gentry status. Incomers settled almost exclusively in the New Forest, reflecting the desirability of the area and the willingness of existing landowners to sell small estates or parcels of land. This meant that estates were available and relatively affordable. Turnover of estates was much lower on the Isle of Wight, but this changed in the nineteenth century when incomers, the Seelys of Brook, were successful in building up a large estate on the island. In the next chapter, two case studies, on the Mitfords and the Morants, will explore why and how these incomers acquired a landed estate in the New Forest.

Upcomers

Incomers faced competition for land from existing urban and parish gentry who aspired to move up the social hierarchy to the landed gentry. There were six upcomers who attained landed-gentry status during the eighteenth century, four from the Isle of Wight (three in the second half of the century) and two on the mainland (both in the

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[84] Gilpin, *Remarks on forest scenery*, p. 203.
[85] J. Bullar, *A companion in a tour round Southampton* (Southampton, 1799), pp. 101–2.

first half of the century).[86] The upcomers worked hard to achieve landed-gentry status, and it is helpful to treat incomers and upcomers as separate groups as they faced different barriers. Upcomers had the advantage that they lived in the area and had connections with landowners, making it easier for them to spot an opportunity to acquire an estate. However, they were at a disadvantage in that it was harder for them to get the necessary funds.

The challenges they faced moving up the social scale are demonstrated by examining two upcomers in more detail. The first, Robert Blachford, was descended from the cadet branch of an armigerous family in Dorset, but was described in his will in 1670 as 'gent … now of Newport in the Isle of Wight'.[87] The Blachfords acquired a farm at Osborne on the Isle of Wight through marriage into the Man family, who had made their money in the East Indies. When Robert Blachford's eldest son died in 1715, he left £646, just under two-thirds of which consisted of live and dead stock on the farm.[88] This showed that he was a yeoman farmer, rather than a member of the landed gentry.

Meanwhile, Robert's younger brother, John, had been sent to be apprenticed in London, where he built a fortune as a goldsmith, eventually becoming mayor of London in 1750.[89] In 1728, he used part of the wealth that he had earned in London to purchase land on the Isle of Wight from the landed-gentry Stephens family.[90] On his death without issue in 1758, John's great-nephew inherited the land on the Isle of Wight, married into a local landed-gentry family, and transformed the old farmhouse at

[86] Blachford, Burrard, Popham, Roberts, Serle, White.
[87] Will of Robert Blachford, 5 October 1670 from M. Wareham, *The Blachford and Waterton families of Dorset and Hampshire in the English Civil War* (2012), p. 15.
[88] IoWRO, 8M57/50 Blachford correspondence, 1715.
[89] J. J. Baddeley, *The aldermen of Cripplegate Ward from A.D. 1276 to A.D. 1900* (London, 1900), p. 8.
[90] *VCH Hampshire,* vol. 5, Carisbrooke pp. 221–235 citing Close, 2 Geo. II, pt. viii, no. 18; 2 Geo. II, pt. vii, no. 9; F. G. S. Groves, 'Osborne, Isle of Wight and the families who have held it', *Proceedings of the Hampshire Field Club,* 2 (1893), pp. 317–30.

Osborne into 'an exceeding good house'.[91] In 1812, his son married the daughter of the duke of Grafton providing further proof of the family's transformation from upcomer to landed gentry. The Blachfords illustrate the circular interchange between the gentry and trade, which Daniel Defoe observed in 1728, when he wrote that, the gentry 'frequently push their sons into Trade … and often restore the fortune of their families: thus Tradesmen become Gentlemen, by Gentlemen becoming Tradesmen'.[92] However, the Blachfords show that this involved a gradual process of assimilation and adaptation.

In contrast, the Burrards' elevation from urban gentry to landed elite was quicker, and this was facilitated by their control of a parliamentary seat. The Burrards filled the office of mayor of Lymington on twelve occasions in the seventeenth century and shared control of the borough with another family, the Buttons. The Burrards did not appear in the Herald's Visitation of 1686 although they had owned Walhampton farm, outside Lymington, since 1668.[93] The status of the family started to change after 1711, when Paul Burrard moved out of Lymington and built a new mansion at Walhampton.[94] However, this was not an instantaneous transition and the greater part of the pleasure grounds at Walhampton were not laid out and planted until 1734, shortly before Paul's death.[95]

The Burrards did not turn their backs on their urban connections, but retained strong links with the burgesses of Lymington. They used their political base in the town as well as their new landed-gentry status to acquire greater national recognition. Paul Burrard represented Lymington in Parliament, but also held the offices of deputy

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[91] Worsley, *History*, p. 230.
[92] Defoe, *English commerce*, p. 12.
[93] S. Burrard, *The annals of Walhampton* (London, 1874), p. 190.
[94] C. K. Currie, 'An archaeological and historical assessment of landscape of the Walhampton House estate, Lymington, Hampshire to *c.* AD 1750' (1998) citing HRO, 52M87/3/7 bundle of documents relating to Walhampton Farm, 1668–1768.
[95] Pinnell, *Country house history*.

lieutenant of Hampshire in 1721 and ranger of the Crown Forest in 1722.[96] His son, Harry, was gentleman usher to Frederick, Prince of Wales between 1728 and 1737, deputy lieutenant of Hampshire in 1754, and governor of Calshot Castle between 1761 and 1787 as well as being bow-bearer to the king in the Crown Forest. He was created a baronet in 1769 although, as he died without surviving issue, this family honour was short-lived.

This review of upcomers has demonstrated that families took different lengths of time to become fully assimilated into the landed gentry, but once established they all had to work hard to maintain that status. This can be seen by examining the established families, in other words, those that were accepted by their peers as landed gentry prior to 1700.

Established families

Fourteen of the nineteen landed-gentry families of the Isle of Wight and eleven of the thirty-three families in the New Forest had established themselves as landed gentry before 1700.[97] Some of them had long standing in the Region, and were established families in 1600, but others had been incomers or upcomers in the seventeenth century. Seventeenth-century incomers included the Holmes family, who originally came from Ireland. Sir Robert Holmes was appointed a rear admiral in 1666 and governor of the Isle of Wight two years later. This was followed by other offices including vice-admiral of Hampshire and of the Isle of Wight, keeper of Boldrewood

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[96] *The House of Commons, 1715–1754*, ed. R. Sedgwick (2 vols, London, 1970), vol. 1, Paul II Burrard (1678–1735).

[97] Isle of Wight: Barrington; Bowreman; Dillington/Bocland/Bisset; Holmes; Leigh/Arcedeckne; Meux Worsley; Morgan; Oglander; Stephens; Urry of Sheat; Urry/Rushworth of Afton; Worsley of Stenbury; Worsley of Appuldurcombe and Worsley of Pidford. New Forest: Bromfield; Bulkeley/Coventry; Compton/Willis; Cray; Hoby; Hooper/Harris; Knollys/Mill; Lisle; Stanley/Ellis; Tulse; Worsley of Pylewell.

Walk in the Crown Forest in 1672 and mayor of Newtown in 1680. However, his career attracted much comment and this was reflected in a jibe circulating in 1677:

> Sir Robert Holmes, first an Irish livery-boy, then a highway-man, now Bashaw of the Isle of Wight, got in boons and by rapine £100,000. The cursed beginner of the two Dutch wars.[98]

Consequently, he was initially resented by the landed gentry and the disputes between the Holmes family and other island families continued into the eighteenth century; they will be discussed further in Chapter Seven.

The Stanleys, on the other hand, were more readily accepted in the New Forest. They were wealthy merchants and burgesses of Southampton and William Stanley, a merchant in the Newfoundland trade, represented Southampton in Parliament in 1660. His son purchased a landed estate and country seat, Paultons, in 1646, and joined the landed gentry. The Stanleys sold lands at Cadland to an incomer, Robert Drummond of the banking family, in the second half of the eighteenth century but retained their main estate, Paultons.

The majority of established families, from both the Isle of Wight and the New Forest, shared a rural landed-gentry background. Sir William Oglander of Nunwell, fifth baronet, who died in 1806, claimed an uninterrupted descent in the direct male line for fourteen generations and the family has been traced back to 1350.[99] The Oglanders were firmly attached to the island and when they inherited the much grander mansion at Parnham, in Dorset, through the female line, they lived there only briefly before returning to Nunwell. When Barnabas Leigh of North Court died in 1770, this ended seven generations of unbroken direct male descent. The Barringtons of Swainston were

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[98] J. D. Davies, 'Holmes, Sir Robert (*c.*1622–1692)', in *Oxford dictionary of national biography* (online edn, 2004), www.oxforddnb.com, accessed 7 May 2014, citing R. Ollard, Man of war: Sir Robert Holmes and the Restoration Navy (1969), pp. 14–15. This was attributed to Andrew Marvell.
[99] Oglander and Bamford, *A royalist's notebook,* p. 3.

the principal landowners around Newtown, which Sir Thomas Barrington, second baronet, represented in Parliament between 1621 and 1640.

The Worsleys' large landholdings, centred on Appuldurcombe, dated from the dissolution of the monasteries. Sir James Worsley, groom of the wardrobe to Henry VIII, acquired a permanent grant of Appuldurcombe when the freeholder, the house of the Minoresses without Aldgate, was suppressed in 1539. The family went on to acquire other lands on the island on the open market during the sixteenth century.[100] The Worsley family were sufficiently wealthy to establish four significant cadet branches, three with their own landed estates at Gatcombe, Pidford, and Stenbury on the Isle of Wight and the fourth at Pylewell on the mainland.

There were other equally long-established families in the New Forest. The Bulkeleys had been seated at Burgate since the fifteenth century and remained there until the end of the nineteenth century. The Lisles were established at Moyles Court by 1594, but lost their estate temporarily after John Lisle, the regicide, fled to the continent, and his wife, Dame Alicia, was executed in 1685 for harbouring fugitives after the Monmouth rebellion. However, Moyles Court was restored to the family on the accession of William and Mary and remained in the family until 1818. The Mill family had also been in the area since the sixteenth century. They moved within the Region but eventually returned, in 1713, to their original seat, Grove Place, Nursling, which had passed in 1630 to the Knollys family. The Mill family retained a landed estate in the Region into the twenty-first century. Another family, the Comptons, were the cadet branch of the Comptons of Compton Wynyates (later marquesses of Northampton) and were seated at Bisterne and Minstead from the early seventeenth

[100] IoWRO, JER/WA Worsley of Appuldurcombe.

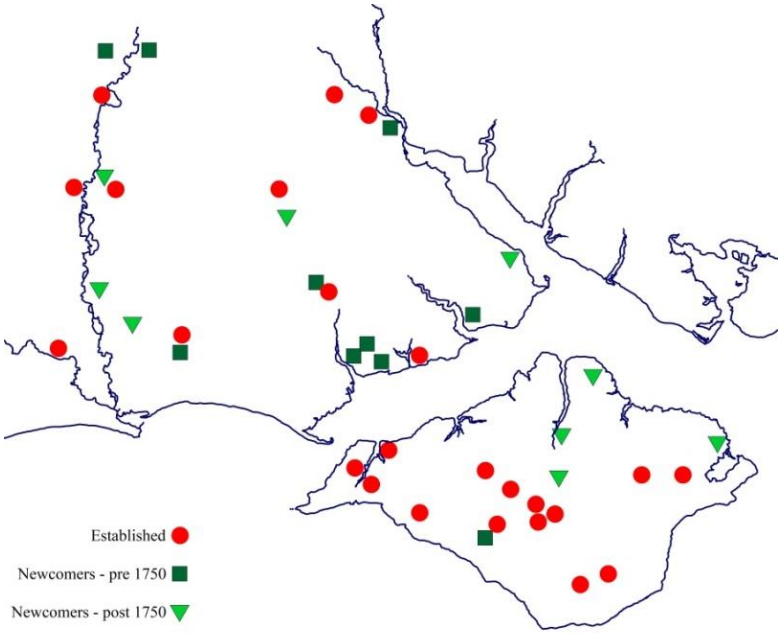
century. They remained at Minstead until it was demolished in 1950 but sold farms at Exbury to incomer William Mitford in 1718 and the Bisterne estate to the Mills (as distinct from the Mill) family in 1792. The Hoopers of Hurn Court appeared in the heralds' visitation of 1686 and remained there until the nineteenth century.

This review of the fifty-two landed-gentry families suggests that there was nothing unique about the turnover in the eighteenth century. Families joined this group in the seventeenth century and by the eighteenth century were indistinguishable from those who had joined in the sixteenth century. There was a gradual process of assimilation and adaptation although the speed at which newcomers gained acceptance varied from family to family. Furthermore, there was no systemic difference between the landed gentry of the Isle of Wight and of the New Forest. Both groups were open to newcomers, who added to the numbers rather than displacing established families. There were, however, changes in the character of the location which newcomers chose to settle in.

Changing patterns of landownership

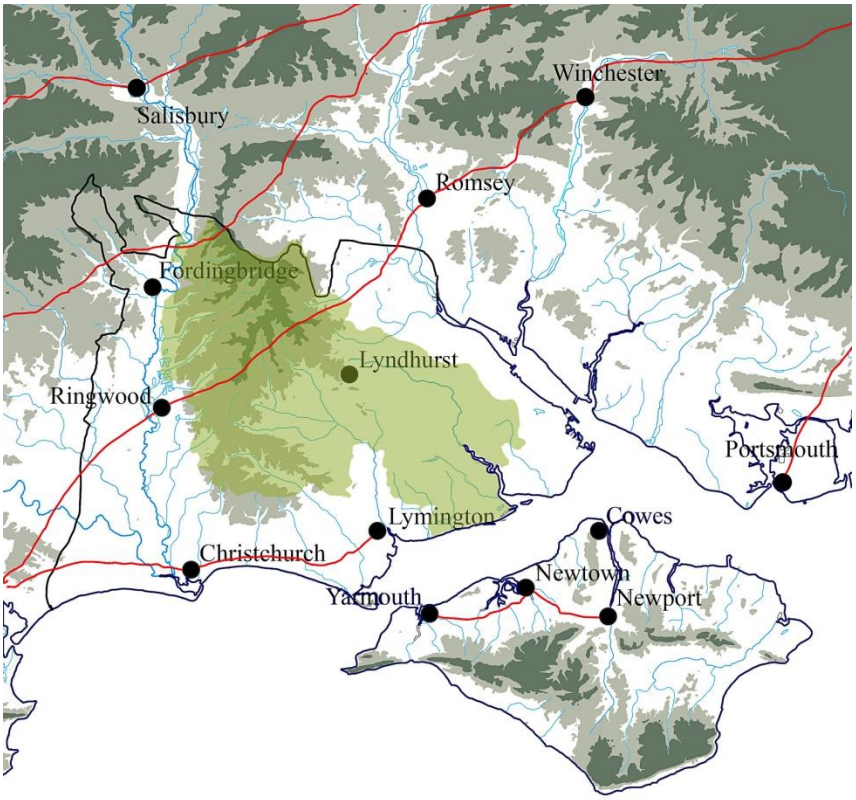
This change is most clearly illustrated by plotting the estates of the established families and newcomers (Map 12) and comparing this to the topography of the Region (Map 13). These maps show that the established families in the New Forest were situated on farmland on the river Avon (flowing south into the West Solent at Christchurch, the Lymington River, and the Test (flowing south-east into Southampton Water). There were no estates in the main areas of the Crown Forest although Chapter Three will show that there was encroachment around the edges.

Map 12 : Estates of established families and newcomers, 1700–99



Source – Dataset created for this thesis

Map 13 : Topography of the Region, 1751



Source – A new improved map of Hampshire, 1751

This pattern continued throughout the century with one exception: there was an increase in the number of coastal estates, which reflected the growing belief in the benefits of sea-air and swimming. For example, in 1750, Frederick, Prince of Wales spent some time at Pylewell, 'for the benefit of his health', at which time he was made free of the town of Lymington.[101] Appreciation of picturesque scenery also became increasingly fashionable and newcomers, such as the Drummonds, placed emphasis on views from, as well as of, their country seats.

On the Isle of Wight, the established families had their estates mainly on the better, higher farmland in the west, centre, and south of the island and they were joined there by the only newcomer in the first half of the century. In contrast, the four newcomers who established landed estates after 1750 all opted for the eastern half of the island, reflecting the increasing importance both of Cowes as a port and of Portsmouth as a naval base. Spithead, in the East Solent, which was sheltered from the prevailing south-westerly winds, became an important anchorage for the Navy and this resulted in a shift in the centre of gravity of the Isle of Wight from the west to the east side of the island. In the nineteenth century, this change accelerated and the east coast became a popular holiday destination, with the new town of Ryde at its centre. The ultimate accolade was received when Queen Victoria acquired the Blachfords' country seat, Osborne House, in 1845.

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[101] Jones, *History of Lymington*, p. 128.

There was a further change towards the end of the eighteenth century as houses were increasingly bought or rented houses as second homes. The attraction was not the land, but the setting of the house, and newspaper advertisements reflected this trend in both areas of the Region:

> To be lett unfurnished … the house and gardens are most delightfully situated near the sea, which they command from Stokes Bay to the Needles. The pleasure gardens are very romantic, at the end of which is a very pleasant wood, which is cut into walks … and is well calculated for a summer bathing retreat, having a very fine hard beach within fifty yards of the house, where people may bathe every hour in the day … and a bathing machine on the premises.[102]

> Wanted to Rent for a term of years in the neighbourhood of Southampton or between that and Christchurch, A HOUSE, fit for the reception of a small genteel family, with 150 to 200 acres of enclosed land contiguous. The house must be in a dry healthy situation, near to a good market town, and the nearer the coast, the more agreeable.[103]

However, these advertisements were for houses in the country, rather than country houses, and these new occupants did not add to the numbers of landed-gentry families.[104]

Conclusion

This chapter has shown that, as a group, the landed gentry was open to new entrants but that the 'old and local' absorbed the 'new and national'. There were, however, significant differences in the turnover of landed-gentry families within the Region. The population on the island was less permeable, with nearly sixty per cent of families having been seated there for over 125 years; in contrast, thirty per cent of the landed gentry had lived in the New Forest for less than twenty-five years. This pattern qualifies the findings of earlier studies, in which the counties with the highest turnover

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[102] *Hampshire Chronicle*, 7 April 1777.
[103] *Hampshire Chronicle*, 17 July 1786.
[104] Wilson and Mackley, *Creating paradise*, p. 8.

were closest to London. The stability on the island was largely because most of the good farmland had become part of landed estates prior to 1700. It was not until the nineteenth century that some of these farms came onto the market, enabling the incomer Seely family to create the Brook estate. In contrast, small estates, farms, or parcels of land were available in the New Forest throughout the eighteenth century and this meant that newcomers could join the landed gentry in that area.

The chapter has demonstrated the value of categorising new families not as merchants or gentry, but as upcomers and incomers. Each group faced different challenges: the upcomers lacked wealth, whilst the incomers lacked the local knowledge needed to find the right property. The preliminary review of the twenty-four established families, seven upcomers and twenty-one incomers revealed that a range of backgrounds and motives for joining the landed gentry of the Region. However, with seven incomers from the West or East Indies, it also demonstrated the impact of empire on this stratum of society. It will be argued that the West Indian network of contacts helped some incomers to find the right land to buy. However, in practice, it took determination and hard work to buy or create an estate and this will be demonstrated in the next chapter. This compares the difficulties faced by two incomers, one an overseas merchant, the other a West Indian, in establishing a landed estate.

These case studies will show that, whilst owning a substantial landed estate was the *sine qua non* of landed-gentry status, it was also essential to behave like landed gentry and not all newcomers were successful in establishing a permanent base in the Region. Six families moved out of the New Forest prior to 1800, having had an estate for less than twenty-five years, compared to none in the Isle of Wight and only three in the rest of Hampshire. A contributing factor was their failure to establish a political base and the reasons for this will be discussed in detail in Chapter Seven; others were

drawn back to life in the metropolis or moved to a different county with greater agricultural potential. Families that did last more than one generation became the established families of the next century. This constant process of assimilation and adaptation to changing circumstances resulted in apparent continuity at a group level and this, it is argued, challenges the findings of a 'great divide' and a radical change in society at some point during the period.[105]

[105] For example: Rosenheim, *Emergence of a ruling order*; Price, *British society*; Colley, *Britons*; O'Gorman, *Long eighteenth century, 2016*.

Chapter Three: Establishing a landed estate

The last chapter identified the fifty-two landed-gentry families and established how the composition of the group changed over the eighteenth century. The landed gentry was not closed to newcomers, who continued to arrive throughout the period, particularly in the New Forest. However, they added to the population rather than displacing the more established landed gentry. This was different from the pattern found in Glamorgan, where established families were replaced by a 'national', and predominantly 'aristocratic, ruling class' from the metropolis.[1] This did not mean that the landed gentry was a homogenous social group, but there was no significant distinction between established families and newcomers. Rather, there was a constant process of gradual change and assimilation in the Region, resulting in apparent continuity when the social group was viewed as a whole.

This chapter starts by assessing how much income a landed-gentry family needed to maintain an appropriate lifestyle and the extent to which this could be obtained from an agrarian estate. Wilson and Mackley argued that, in order to qualify as a landed estate, the land should be able to generate sufficient income to provide for the upkeep of the land and the country seat.[2] They did not quantify this, but other historians suggested that an income of £1,000 was needed, either from the estate itself or from other sources.[3] This is borne out by household and estate accounts from the Region, which show that the landed gentry needed between £800 and £1,000 each year to live on.[4] In theory, the landed estate should be capable of producing this, but some landed gentry had to rely on additional sources of income as estates were expensive to run.

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[1] Jenkins, *Glamorgan gentry*, pp. 38, xxvi.
[2] Wilson and Mackley, *Creating paradise*, p. 8.
[3] The historiography of landed income was reviewed in Chapter Two, see, for example, Thompson, 'Distribution of landed property'.
[4] This was particularly well-evidenced in the 1780s, but appears to have applied over most of the century.

Although he was describing the situation in the late nineteenth century, Bateman noted that gross 'landed income of £5,000 a year' was easily reduced by fixed expenses, leaving 'the magnificent sum of £1,032 to live upon' after deducting costs, charges and taxes.[5]

Nevertheless, in order to be recognised as the landed-gentry family 'of' a place, the minimum requirement was to own a substantial landed estate, and it is argued that this meant a contiguous estate with a country seat, rather than a collection of dispersed farms. In previous chapters, it has been shown that the New Forest was attractive to newcomers because land was available, affordable, and desirable and, with one exception, incomers to the Region settled in the New Forest rather than the Isle of Wight. It was concluded, however, that this did not indicate a fundamental difference between the two areas, but one of timing. There happened to be landowners disposing of property, usually to consolidate their holdings, in the New Forest in the eighteenth century, whereas this was more prevalent on the Isle of Wight in the nineteenth century, when the Seelys of Brook were able to establish a new estate.

This chapter contributes to the debate about the character and pace of social change from the perspective of the landed gentry by drilling down into the detail to examine why and how two incomers acquired a landed estate in the New Forest, one in each half of the century.[6] In 1770, incomer, Edward Morant, a third-generation Jamaican plantation owner, followed the more typical path of identifying a suitable estate, buying it outright and then adding to it over time. At the other extreme, the Mitford family took over eighty years, starting in 1711, to create a new landed estate at Exbury from farms, fields, and even strips of land in common fields. The unpublished,

[5] Bateman, *Great landowners*, pp. xxiv, xxv.
[6] 'Exbury estate book'; 'Morant diaries'; Morant archive, Edward Morant's accounts with Long & Drake, 1759–81.

untapped manuscript Exbury estate book records how William Mitford, an overseas merchant, his son, and grandson achieved this and reveals how difficult it was even for an astute, entrepreneurial businessman to achieve his goals. In spite of the different strategies and timescales, the Mitfords and Morants were both successful in achieving their goal of being recognised as 'of' their landed estate, and they had both transitioned to become established landed gentry by the end of the century.

Motives for buying a landed estate

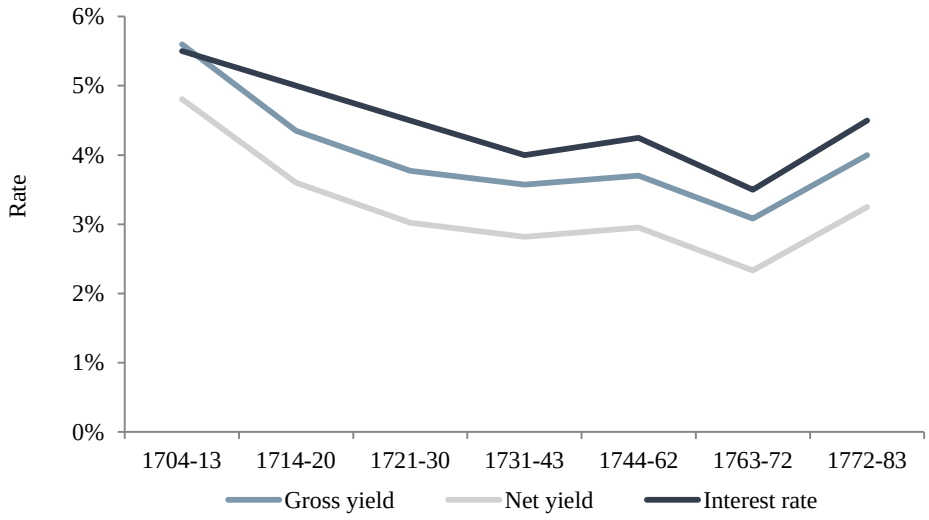
This thesis demonstrates that individuals continued to be attracted to owning landed estates throughout the century, but scholarship has been divided on why this was so. Tawney suggested merchants' motives were financial. 'These thrusting, calculating, profit-oriented, self-made men', he argued, 'were the leaders of the agricultural revolution'.[7] Mingay, on the other hand, took the view that merchants were primarily driven by the social prestige attached to landownership.[8] Beckett concurred, arguing that 'property, in particular land, was key to status and position in English society', and that 'it was crucial that the property remained firmly in the family'.[9] Jones's study of purchases by London merchants between 1680 and 1720 showed that most of them chose counties close to London although William Heathcote paid £35,100 in 1718 for the Hursley estate, near Winchester.[10] Whereas Jones's findings suggest that agriculture was not their primary motive, F. M. L. Thompson offered a more nuanced view, arguing that businessmen held 'different and changing attitudes to gentlemanly values' as indeed they did towards risk and profits.[11] Gauci also observed that, even in the later

[7] Tawney, 'Rise of the gentry'.
[8] Mingay, *English landed society*, pp. 3, 26.
[9] Beckett, *Aristocracy*, pp. 2, 3.
[10] D. W. Jones, *War and economy in the age of William III and Marlborough* (Oxford, 1988), p. 331.
[11] F. M. L. Thompson, *Gentrification and the enterprise culture: Britain, 1780–1980* (Oxford, 2001), p. 8.

eighteenth century, ‘bankruptcy was much more of a drain on the entrepreneurial class than the seduction of a leafy estate’.[12]

One method that has been used to assess whether the motive was financial or social, was to compare the return on land to that earned on financial assets. The value of land, represented by the number of years of rent purchased, initially increased during the eighteenth century, reaching a high of thirty-three years’ purchase after the Seven Years’ War in 1763.[13] As the price increased, rental yields fell and, for the whole of the period 1704–83, both gross and net yields were significantly below the return that could be earned by lending out surplus cash (Figure 2). Based on this, Beckett argued that ‘anyone choosing land rather than money as an investment was clearly doing so for non-economic reasons’.[14]

Figure 2 : Yield on land vs interest rates, 1704–83



Source – Allen, ‘*The Price of Freehold Land and the Interest Rate in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries*’

[12] P. Gauci, *Emporium of the world: the merchants of London, 1660–1800* (London, 2007), p. 106.
[13] R. C. Allen, ‘The price of freehold land and the interest rate in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries’, *The Economic History Review,* 41 (1988), pp. 33–50.
[14] J. V. Beckett, ‘The pattern of landownership in England and Wales, 1660–1880’, *The Economic History Review,* 37 (1984), pp. 1–22.

However, some investors in agricultural land believed that rental yields would increase since agricultural improvement, in the form of progressive farming techniques, new crops, different rotation patterns and capital investment, resulted in lower grain prices, but still meant greater profit for the farmer. Depending on the arrangements between landlord and tenant, this also meant higher rental yields for the landowner.[15] Prothero, in his classic account of agrarian change published in 1912, believed that 'it was the large landlords who took the lead in the agricultural revolution in the eighteenth century, and the larger farmers who were the first to adopt improvements. Both classes found that land was the most profitable investment for their capital'.[16]

Sufficient landed income?

Land might be a profitable investment but this thesis demonstrates that it was difficult to generate sufficient income from a purely agrarian landed estate to support a landed-gentry family. In order to arrive at this conclusion, it has been necessary to consider the level of income required by a landed-gentry family in the Region, and whether this amount changed over the course of the century. It was argued, in Chapter Two, that an income of about £1,000 per annum was necessary, but this was not specific to the Region, nor did it take into account inflation. The chart in Figure 2 shows a significant increase in agricultural yields towards the end of the eighteenth century and this is also reflected in both the consumer price index, available from 1750 (Figure 3) and the farm index 1680–1800 (Figure 4).[17] This would suggest that the goal of income of £1,000 per annum was valid until the 1780s.

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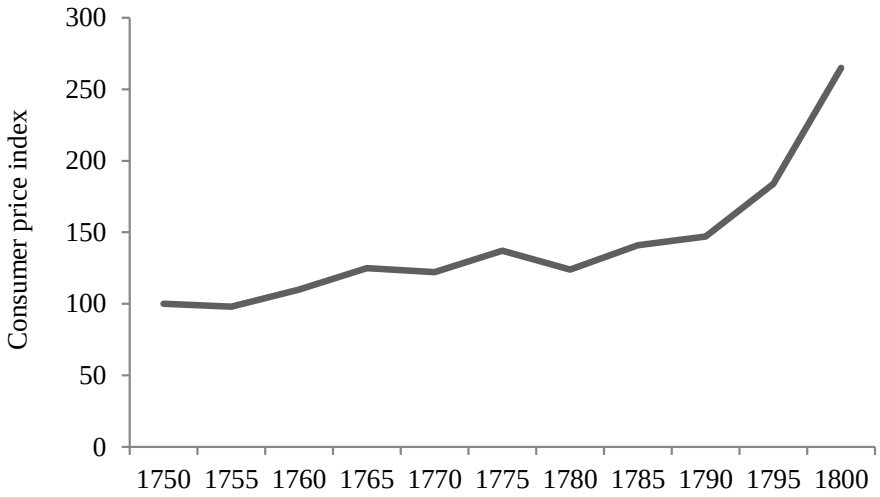
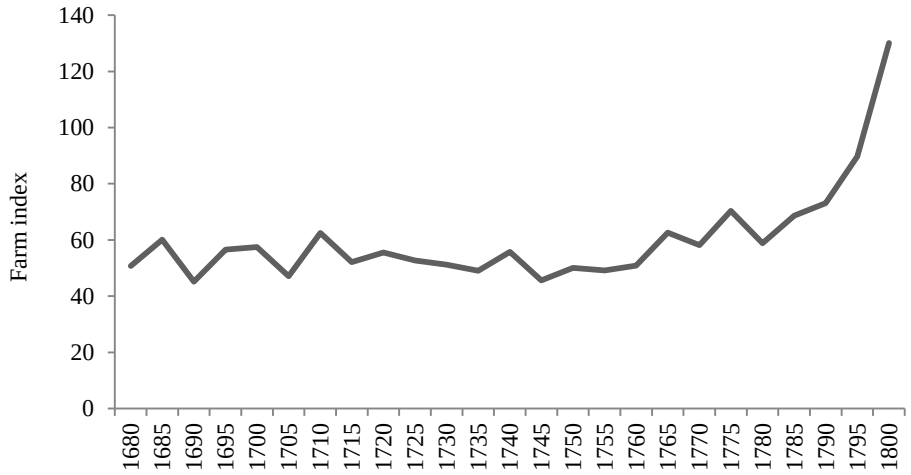
[15] P. J. Bowden, 'Agricultural prices, farm profits and rent, 1640–1750', in P. J. Bowden (ed.), *Economic change: wages, profits and rents, 1500–1750* (Cambridge, 1989), p. 252.
[16] R. E. Prothero, *English farming past and present* (London, 1912), p. 161.
[17] 'Bank of England consumer price index', www.bankofengland.co.uk/education/Pages/resources/inflationtools/calculator/index1.aspx#, accessed 5

Figure 3 : Consumer price index, 1750–1800



Source – Bank of England consumer price index

Figure 4 : Farm index, 1680–1800



Source – *The price history of English agriculture*

An estate income of £1,000 per annum might be a realistic goal for members of the peerage and the great landowners, but it was a challenge for many of the landed gentry who had smaller estates. The largest estate in the Region, Appuldurcombe, was owned by the established Worsley family and covered over 10,000 acres. In the period

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July 2016; G. Clark, *The price history of English agriculture, 1209–1914* (2003), www.faculty.econ.ucdavis.edu/faculty/gclark/papers/Agprice.pdf, accessed 5 July 2016.

1712–19, the head of the family was Sir Robert Worsley, fourth baronet, and his steward's accounts record a gross annual income of over £2,000 (Table 3).

Table 3 : Income of Appuldurcombe estate, 1712–19

.Year	Income £
1711/12	2,190
1713/14	2,534
1715/16	2,514
1716/17	2,903
1717/18	2,264
1718/19	2,685

Source – IoWRO, JER/WA/33/11 steward's account books, 1712–1719

A detailed analysis of the accounts for 1718/19 shows that sixty per cent of the gross income of £2,685 was used to meet the running costs of the estate, pay servants and also pay amounts 'becoming due monthly or weekly' of £139. The balance of £1,126 was 'returned to London or otherwise delivered for the use of Sir Robert Worsley'.[18] After Sir Robert's death in 1747, the estate was held in trust for twenty-one years and the income was diverted away from the estate. The steward's accounts during the life of the trust were only balanced at irregular intervals.[19] However, reconstructing the accounts for the year ending 31 March 1764 shows that recorded income of £272 exceeded expenses of £181, but both were much lower than at the start of the century.[20] Given that the estate had not altered in size, this appears to reflect either accounting errors or the omission of income accounted for in the names of the beneficiaries of the trust. As noted in Chapter Two, the Appuldurcombe estate was surveyed in 1774, two years after Sir Richard Worsley had come of age, at which time it amounted to 11,578 acres.[21] In 1809, some of its 'valuable and very desirable freehold farms … containing

[18] IoWRO, JER/WA/33/11 steward's account books, 1712–19.
[19] IoWRO, JER/WA/33 steward's account books.
[20] IoWRO, JER/WA/33/18 steward's account books, 1760–70.
[21] IoWRO, JER/WA/33/36 survey of estate of Sir Richard Worsley of Appuldurcombe, I.W. *c.*1774.

near 2,300 acres' were sold at auction. They were described as 'on leases, at improvable rents, amounting to upwards of two thousand pounds per annum', confirming the view that 1,000 acres of good land should yield about £1,000.[22]

The Worsleys' estate was the largest in the Region, but the Barringtons' landholdings on the Isle of Wight were also substantial. The Swainston estate was about half the size of Appuldurcombe, although the family also had property in Essex. The Swainston accounts show that income was mainly derived from rents although the accounts for 1784 record 100 sheep and thirteen other 'beasts in hand'.[23] The accounts show that income declined between 1776, when it was £1,662, and 1785, when it was £1,352, and this mirrored the declining health of Sir FitzWilliam Barrington, who was aged seventy-seven in 1785.

Table 4 : Swainston estate accounts, 1784

Description	£	£
Income		1,513
Expenses		
Land tax	130	
Poor rate	21	
Highways	5	
Church rate	3	
Interest payable	150	
Wages	59	
Other bills	392	
		760
Net surplus		753
Remittances to Sir FitzWilliam Barrington		862
Deficit		£109

Source – IoWRO, JER/BAR/3/SW107–22.

A detailed analysis of the estate accounts for 1784 shows that rates and taxes amounted to over ten per cent of the income and Sir FitzWilliam Barrington paid

[22] IoWRO, JER/WA/40/1 sales particulars, 1809.
[23] IoWRO, JER/BAR/3/SW107–22 Swainston accounts.

interest on bonds of a similar amount (Table 4). The net profit from the estate, after all expenses, was £753 but Sir FitzWilliam took remittances from the estate of £862, leaving a loss for the year of £109. When his son, John, took over the management of the estate in 1791, a schedule of rental income was drawn up.[24] This listed thirty-six different plots which, when added to quit rents of £42 and coppices valued at £50, provided a total annual yield of £1,740, on which land tax of £152 was payable. The net yield after allowing for repairs at five per cent and 'agency' fees of £50 per annum (equivalent to three per cent) was £1,451. John also recorded his own expenses in cash books (Tables 5 and 6).

Table 5 : John Barrington's cash book totals, 1783–90

Year	Expenses £
1783	414
1784	399
1785	793
1786	828
1787	704
1788	509
1789	657
1790	788

Table 6 : Details from John Barrington's cash book, 1786

Cash entries for 1786	£
Income – rent and tithes from Essex	590
From my father (part of allowance of £300)	100
Total income	£690
Subscription to club in St James's St	4
Tailor, silk stockings, gloves, waistcoat	76
Linen and washing	17
History of Egypt and a barometer	3
For cleaning a picture	8
Bay horse, stable, hay and straw	36
Wages and board	104
Expenses in travelling at Cheltenham	100
Expenses in travelling at Portsmouth	7
Journey to town	10
Bills paid in the Isle of Wight	140
Subscription to Isle of Wight bill for paving Newport	11
'Sundries' of £172 and other bills	312
Total expenses	£828

Source – IoWRO, SW Box 88

Before he inherited the Swainston estate, John Barrington received £590 from rent and tithes on the Essex properties, but this was deemed insufficient for an eldest son who had achieved his majority. Accordingly, his father promised him an allowance

[24] IoWRO, JER/BAR/3/SW 425 rental income, 1791.

of £300 to bring his annual income up to £890 although this was not always paid on time. For example, on 18 November 1775, John wrote asking for his overdue allowance, explaining that he wanted to leave the island but was forced to delay his departure 'partly on that account'.[25] Cash book entries for 1786 show that, as with the Swainston estate, John Barrington's expenses exceeded his income, but this was because £200 of his father's allowance had not been paid (Table 6). Sir FitzWilliam lived mostly in London, leaving the running of the Swainston estate to John, whose expenses reflect the cost of being a member of the island landed gentry. The amounts drawn by Sir FitzWilliam from the Swainston estate and his son's expenses both suggest that an amount of at least £800 was needed to maintain a landed-gentry lifestyle there in the 1780s.

Table 7 : R. P. Blachford's expenditure, 1785

Description	£	£
Farm account	1,608	
Interest and annuities	733	
Taxes and repairs	662	
Extraordinary	654	
		3,657
Household expenses	292	
Servants	164	
Stable	100	
Mrs Blachford	93	
Cellar	80	
Labour	49	
Building	47	
Furniture	34	
		859
		£4,516

Source – IoWRO, 8M57/59

In contrast to some other landed gentry, upcomer R. P. Blachford farmed his own land, as well as deriving rental income, and his cash accounts for the period 1777

[25] IoWRO, JER/BAR/3/9/56(b) letter, 19 November 1775.

to 1788, which are summarised in Appendix 3, combine both estate and personal expenditure. In 1785, farm expenses amounted to £1,608, equivalent to just over a third of his outgoings (Table 7).[26] However, not all his expenses were recurring in nature and his 'extraordinary expenses' in 1785 included a payment for an Act of Parliament which was used to effect an exchange of 'certain grounds' with Winchester College and those in 1778 included marriage expenses of £616 including attorney's bills.[27] He also had to pay interest and annuities in 1785 of £733 indicating that finance and charges on the estate were a significant burden. The accounts were not balanced every year, but when a balance was drawn up at the end of 1779, Blachford's total gross income for the year was £3,720 and his expenditure was £3,588, leaving a balance to be carried forward of £132.

In the New Forest, manuscript papers for 1785 show that Edward Hooper was also incurring significant expenditure, although complete accounts for the Hurn Court estate do not exist. He had a town chariot, a country chariot, each with horses, a coachman in each location, and three horses 'for the saddle'.[28] These were expensive to buy, but also gave rise to additional taxation which increased over the thirty-three year period, 1753–86.[29] The annual total of £64 in 1784 compares with £130 payable on the Swainston estate in the same year (Table 8).

[26] IoWRO, 8M57/59 cash account books of Robert P. Blachford.
[27] *Journal of the House of Lords* (London), vol. 37, p. 260 proceedings, 6 May 1785.
[28] HRO, 7M54/275 packets of bills and receipts, 1716–96.
[29] HRO, 7M54/275 packets of bills and receipts, 1716–96.

Table 8 : Half-yearly tax payments for the Hurn Court Estate, 1753–86

Description	1753	1755	1757	1760	1770	1779	1781	1784	1786
Land tax									
– Hurn Court farm	8	5	10	10	8	10	10	10	10
– tithes	3	2	5	5	4	5	5	5	5
– other	7	5	11	11	8	12	11	13	13
Servant tax									8
Carriage tax									7
Windows (68), house	2	2	2	2	3	3	5	4	8
Total for half-year	£20	£14	£28	£28	£23	£31	£31	£32	£51
Annual total	£40	£28	£56	£56	£46	£62	£62	£64	£102

Source – HRO, 7M54/275 packets of bills and receipts

The available records show that the home farm made a net surplus in 1785 of only £68 after labour costs of £301, although income would also have been received from tithes and rents. Hooper's willingness to accept the offer of appointment as a commissioner of customs, at a salary of £1,000, in return for giving up his seat in Parliament to a treasury nominee, is understandable.[30]

In spite of the differences in the amount of income generated by the different estates, the cost of maintaining an appropriate lifestyle was surprisingly similar for different landed-gentry families. As discussed earlier, John Barrington spent more than his income of £690 in 1786, while Blachford spent £766 in 1785 (excluding £93 given to Mrs Blachford) on living at Osborne, including £164 on servants, £100 on his stable, and £80 on his cellar. Between 1770 and 1776, Harry Oglander, the younger brother of Sir William Oglander of Nunwell, spent only £250 per annum while he was a fellow of New College, Oxford. However, in 1789, after he had acquired a small estate on the Isle

[30] HRO, 7M54/275 packets of bills and receipts, 1716–96.

of Wight and built a country house there, he spent £642 out of his annual income of £780.[31]

These accounts reinforce the conclusion that, in the late 1770s and 1780s, the landed gentry needed discretionary income after deducting estate costs of between £800 and £1,000 in order to maintain a suitable establishment. This is of the same order of magnitude as the average of £980 spent over eighteen years by the Durrants of Scottow, whom Wilson described as 'average Norfolk squires' albeit a 'member of county society'.[32] It is also similar to the £1,200 taken out by Sir Robert Worsley in 1718, showing that there was not a significant increase over most of the eighteenth century.

The data for inflation in Figures 3 and 4 suggest that the amount required would have increased in the 1790s. On his father's death in 1792, John gave his brother and heir apparent, FitzWilliam, an allowance of £1,000 a year to enable him to maintain 'a more expensive Establishment than his Income (which did not exceed £400 a year) would allow of'.[33] He also provided for an annuity of £800 for FitzWilliam's wife, payable after her husband's death, indicating that the increase in the amount deemed necessary in the Region early in the1790s was not substantial.

Purchasing an estate

It would appear from the analysis of estate and household accounts that a well-managed landed estate might provide an income out of which to pay living expenses of between £800 and £1,000. This does not necessarily mean, however, that land was purchased for financial reasons. Allen argued that potential purchasers also took into account the expected appreciation in capital value and the low-risk nature of land as an

[31] 'Morant diaries'; IoWRO, OG/DD Harry Oglander diaries.
[32] Wilson and Mackley, *Creating paradise,* p. 27.
[33] *Reports of cases decided in the High Court of Chancery, vol. 6,* ed. N. Simons (London, 1836), p. 544 Powys v Mansfield.

asset class. Adjusting for these factors, he demonstrated that freehold land was not trading at a price that exceeded its economic value and concluded that demand for land for social reasons was not sufficiently widespread to raise the price of land above its economic value.[34]

Whilst this logic might broadly apply at a national level, it did not reflect local variations. Clay had earlier argued that 'land prices in the eighteenth century were primarily dictated by the level of demand' and this was not uniform across the country.[35] The challenge facing those who wished to join the ranks of the landed gentry was to identify a suitable, affordable estate to purchase and this was not easy. Sir Dudley North, a younger son, who had accumulated capital of over £20,000 in the Levant, never owned a landed estate 'despite his love of the countryside and his efforts to find a suitable property'.[36]

Sir Dudley's experience at the start of the century demonstrates that having money was not enough, but it did offer an advantage over those with less finance available. When Edward Morant decided he wanted to own a landed estate, he was competing not only with fellow West Indians but also with nabobs who had made their fortune in the east. Habakkuk has suggested that West Indians bought country estates because 'their social origins were somewhat superior to that of the nabobs'. Alternatively, and more plausibly, he argued that West Indians were interested in English estates 'because they were already estate owners in the West Indies, with much of the style and appearance of a landed class'.[37] In contrast to the planters, West Indian

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[34] Allen, 'Price of freehold land'.
[35] C. Clay, 'The price of freehold land in the later seventeenth and eighteenth centuries', *The Economic History Review*, 27/2 (1974), pp. 173–89.
[36] R. Grassby, 'North, Sir Dudley (1641–1691)', in *ODNB* (online edn, 2004), accessed 9 March 2014.
[37] Habakkuk, *Marriage, debt, and the estates system,* p. 454.

merchants chose to invest close to centres with trading links to the Caribbean, such as London, Bristol, and Liverpool.

Morant made his desire for a country seat clear shortly after he arrived in England. In 1762, days before he married his second wife, also of West Indian descent, he rented Farleigh House, near Basingstoke, then the seat of fellow Member of Parliament, Charles Churchill, for £147.[38] Ten years later, when the house was again let, it was described as a 'capital mansion house' with 'about 50 acres of good meadow and pasture, which lie round the house', standing 'upon an eminence, and in a good part of the country for sporting … on the great Western Road'.[39] Renting was significantly cheaper than maintaining a country seat but did not carry the same social cachet as ownership of an estate.

Morant was at a disadvantage because he was not as rich as some others who had made their fortune in the colonies; for example, the Beckfords' estates in Jamaica were five times the size of Morant's.[40] Alderman William Beckford purchased the Fonthill estate in 1745 at a cost of £32,000, while his younger brother, Julines, purchased Steepleton in Dorset in 1745 for £12,600. Twenty years later, Morant's first cousin, Henry Dawkins, whose plantations in Jamaica were three times the size of Morant's, purchased Standlynch Park, near Salisbury, Wiltshire, for £22,000. In the Region, as previously discussed, the East India nabob, Ascanius William Senior,

[38] 'Morant diaries', 16 May 1762; House of Commons, 1754–1790, vol. 1, p. 215, Charles Churchill of Farleigh. Farleigh House was owned by the Wallops, viscounts Lymington and earls of Portsmouth, whose main seat was then Hurstbourne Priors, near Whitchurch.
[39] *Daily Advertiser*, 4 May 1772.
[40] BL, Add. MS 12,436 landholders in Jamaica in 1750.

purchased Pylewell for £22,000 although he sold it seven years later to a West Indian, Thomas Robbins, for £32,000.[41]

Morant could not afford to pay such large sums; his average annual gross income from his plantations, over the period 1759–81, was about £6,000 and there were two years in which he made a loss.[42] However, by 30 June 1769, he had sufficient funds to be in a position to consider buying his own estate. His net income from Jamaica that year was £8,783, he had a credit balance with his bankers, Long & Drake, of £2,580, and he had accumulated funds of £6,000 earning interest at four per cent.[43]

Morant had first visited the New Forest in 1762 when he had been invited to hunt there by Sir Philip Jennings Clerke, whom he had met while renting Farleigh. Morant was a keen country sportsman and rented two other seats in the Region, first Pylewell House from Sir James Worsley and then Minstead Manor from the Comptons. This enabled him to develop a network of contacts in the Region, improve his knowledge of the area, and identify suitable estates in the New Forest before they came onto the open market. For example, in March 1769, he 'went to Avon to see Sir John Webbs Estate' and spent three days inspecting different parts of the 4,000-acre estate.[44] Although it was advertised as being 'worth upwards of one thousand four hundred pounds per annum', the three manors were described as 'nearly adjoining', rather than being contiguous, and there was no country house. Having not found a private buyer, the estate was advertised for sale in between 19 April and 13 May 1771 but was not sold until 1772.[45]

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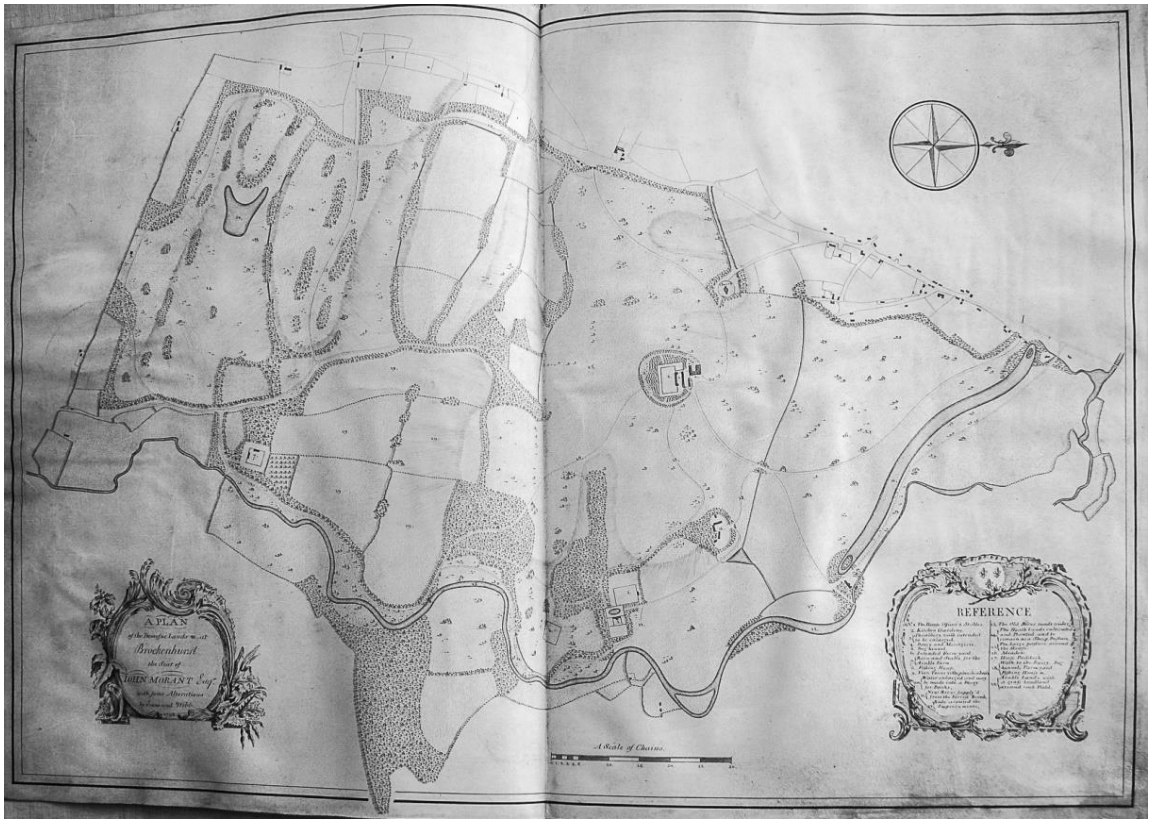
[41] P. Gauci, *William Beckford: first prime minister of the London empire* (New Haven, 2013), p. 48; Habakkuk, *Marriage, debt, and the estates system,* p. 456; Pinnell, *Country house history,* pp. 113, 114.
[42] 'Morant accounts'.
[43] 'Morant accounts'.
[44] 'Morant diaries', 10 March 1769.
[45] For example *Gazetteer and New Daily Advertiser,* 22 April 1771.

There were no other estates being advertised and Morant spent time cultivating a relationship with George Baker of Brockenhurst. He met Baker on thirteen separate occasions in 1769, spending the night at Brockenhurst and inviting him back to Minstead for dinner. Finally, they agreed a private deal for Morant to buy the small Brockenhurst estate for £6,400, completing the purchase in February 1770.[46] Morant also identified the owners of neighbouring farms whom he thought might be willing to sell. He invited William Steele to dinner on 15 June 1770 and succeeded in buying Roydon from him in January 1771 for £5,495.[47] He also made friends with Dr Bromfield and purchased Heywood from him on 20 July 1773 for £4,933. [48] Over a period of three years, Morant had managed to acquire an estate with a country seat in the heart of the New Forest at a price he could afford and, when a survey was undertaken in 1796, the Brockenhurst estate amounted to 2,098 acres, of which 1,875 acres were 'let to sundry tenants' (Figure 5).

[46] 'Morant diaries', 3 February 1770.
[47] 'Morant diaries'; 'Morant accounts'.
[48] 'Morant diaries'; 'Morant accounts'.

Figure 5 : Plan of the Brockenhurst estate, 1793



Source – Morant family archives[49]

This Brockenhurst estate was sufficiently large to enable Morant to enact the role of the landed gentleman and Morant's cash entries for 1778 show that he had income from his Jamaican estates of £6,336.[50] In the same year, he spent cash of £771 on housekeeping and sundry expenses in the country as well as £818 in London (Table 9). From this, it is apparent that the cost of maintaining an establishment in London was significant compared to the net surplus generated by a landed-gentry estate.

[49] Photograph taken by Richard Reeves.
[50] Morant's income and expenditure are discussed further in Chapter Six.

Table 9 : Edward Morant's expenditure, 1778

Description	£	%
London housekeeping	613	19
London sundry	205	6
Agriculture expenses (demesne and park)	412	13
Country housekeeping	405	12
Country sundry	366	11
House maintenance/rates etc.	234	7
Clothing and livery	217	7
Wages	194	6
Payments to son	190	6
Travel	114	4
Rent	72	3
Subscriptions and gambling	65	2
Legal fees	55	2
Furniture and art	28	1
Charity and tips	19	1
Total	£3,189	100

Source – Diaries of Edward Morant, esq.

His wealth enabled him to purchase an estate outright and this might be thought to be a typical example of social change in the Region. However, the experience of the Mitfords shows that this was not the only option; they could afford to create the 2,000-acre Exbury estate only by buying individual plots of land, a process that took the family more than eighty years.

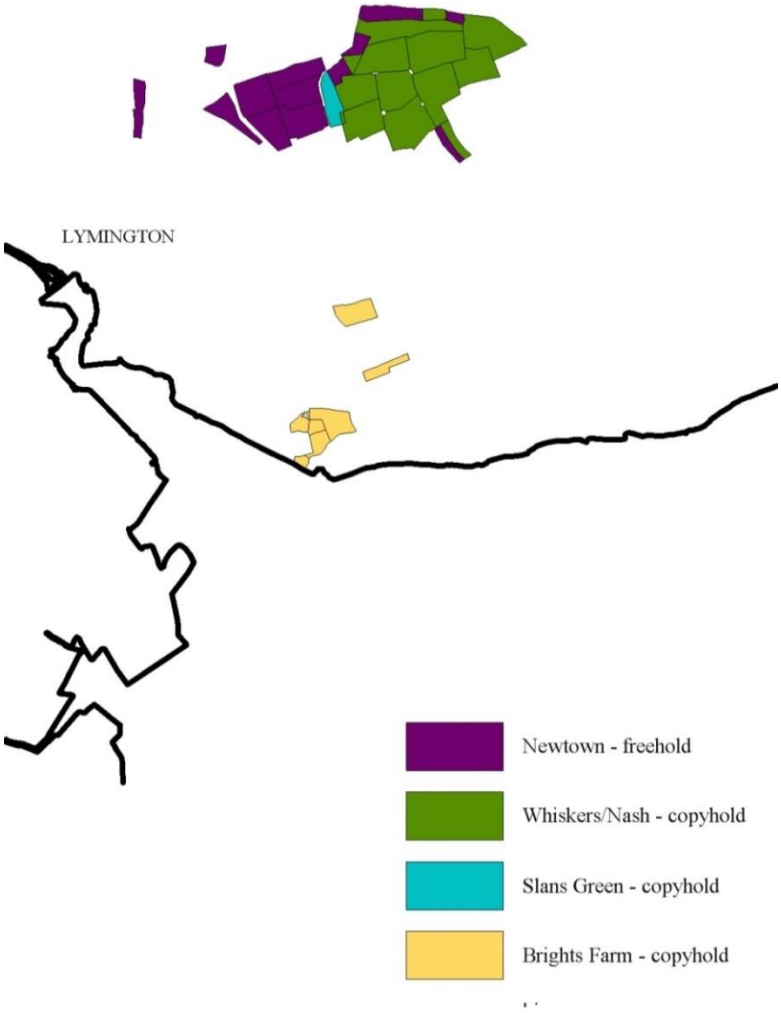
Creating an estate

Although William Mitford was willing to take a long-term approach to becoming a member of the landed gentry, in the short term he remained a businessman. As part of his marriage settlement, he made his first investment in land near Lymington in 1711, paying £3,230 for Newtown House and its home farm (Map 14).[51] He had been alerted to this opportunity by Mitford Crowe, a distant cousin, who had represented

[51] 'Exbury estate book', f. 1b.

Southampton in Parliament in 1701–02, before being appointed governor of Barbados until 1710.[52] Kinship and business networks were increasingly linking England, New England, and the West Indies in this period and the vendor of the Newtown estate was John Walters, the son of a prominent merchant in Barbados.[53]

Map 14 : Land acquired at Newtown, 1711[54]



Source – Estate Book, f. 1b

[52] J. D. Davies, 'Crowe, Mitford (*bap.* 1669, *d.* 1719)' in *ODNB* (online edn, 2004), accessed 5 April 2011.
[53] 'Barbados Census 1680', www.rootsweb.ancestry.com/~brbwgw/1680CensusR-Z.htm for the districts of Christ Church; St Peter All Saints; St James, accessed 10 March 2011; R. Grassby, *Kinship and capitalism: marriage, family, and business in the English speaking world, 1580–1740* (Cambridge, 2001), p. 294.
[54] In the absence of an estate map for the eighteenth century, the maps in this chapter have been created using the Ordnance Survey Map 1908, 2nd edn as the base document with field boundaries deduced from later estate maps, tithe maps and the descriptions and acreages given in the Estate Book.

The West Indian connection continued when, in 1721, Mitford let Newtown to Henry Drax alias Shetterden, the nephew of one of the most prominent sugar plantation owners in Barbados for a period of twenty-five years.[55]

Mitford's first purchase amounted to 291 acres, but nearly one-third of the purchase consideration was for the house, whereas the only freehold land, Newtown farm, amounted to just seventy-two acres. Furthermore, one of the leaseholds, Bright's farm, consisted of a number of scattered fields and Cliff farm, valued at £550, was actually on the south-east coast of the Isle of Wight.[56] The lord of the manor and major freeholder of the surrounding land was lord Arundel, and there was no indication that he was willing to sell to enable Mitford to create a substantial landed estate at Newtown. Mitford had, in effect, bought a 'house in the country', not a 'country house'.[57]

A more promising opportunity occurred when Hoby Compton of Minstead died unmarried in 1714, leaving instructions for outlying parts of his estate to be sold.[58] In 1718, Mitford acquired Exbury and Gatewood farms for £5,740 and, even though the two farms were not contiguous and there was no country seat, this was a sound strategic purchase (Map 15).[59] He became lord of the manor of Exbury and owned the land freehold, which had not been the case at Newtown. Furthermore, the surrounding land was owned by many individual freeholders and, over the next five years, he was able to make four further purchases of land. By the end of the century, he had created the Exbury estate, outlined in red in Map 15.

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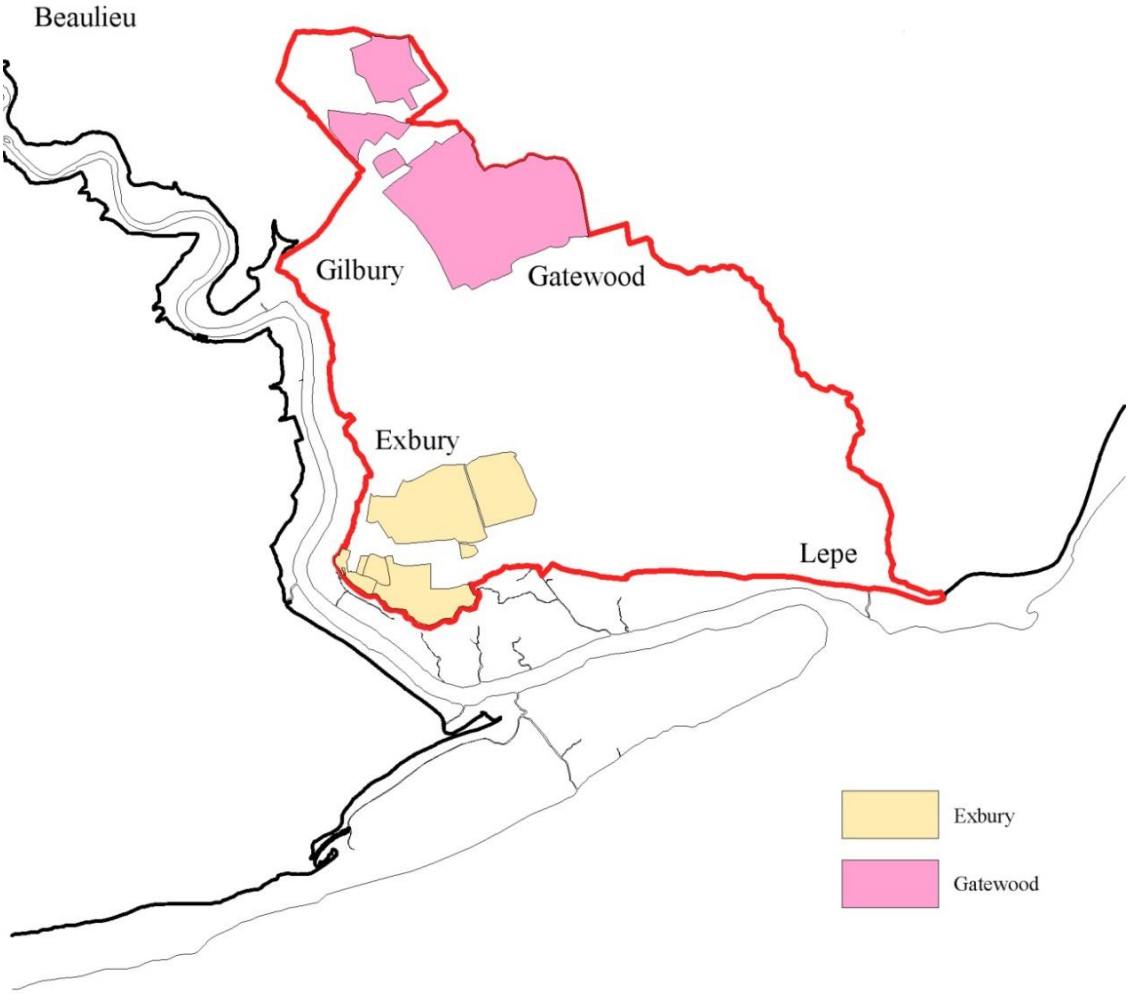
[55] 'Barbados wills and administrations' www.ancestrylibrary.com/content/viewerpf.aspx?h=35690&db=BarbadosSettlers_ga&iid=wills_ii-0106&sp=0, accessed 10 March 2011, will of Henry Drax, 30 June 1682, RB6/12, p. 358, in which he said he would give his nephews land if they changed their name to Drax; 'Exbury estate book', f. 1b.
[56] 'Exbury estate book', f. 1b.
[57] Wilson and Mackley, *Creating paradise,* p. 8.
[58] TNA, PROB 11/542 will of Hoby Compton, 22 September 1714.
[59] 'Exbury estate book', ff. 4a, 5a.

Map 15 : Fields acquired at Exbury and Gatewood, 1718



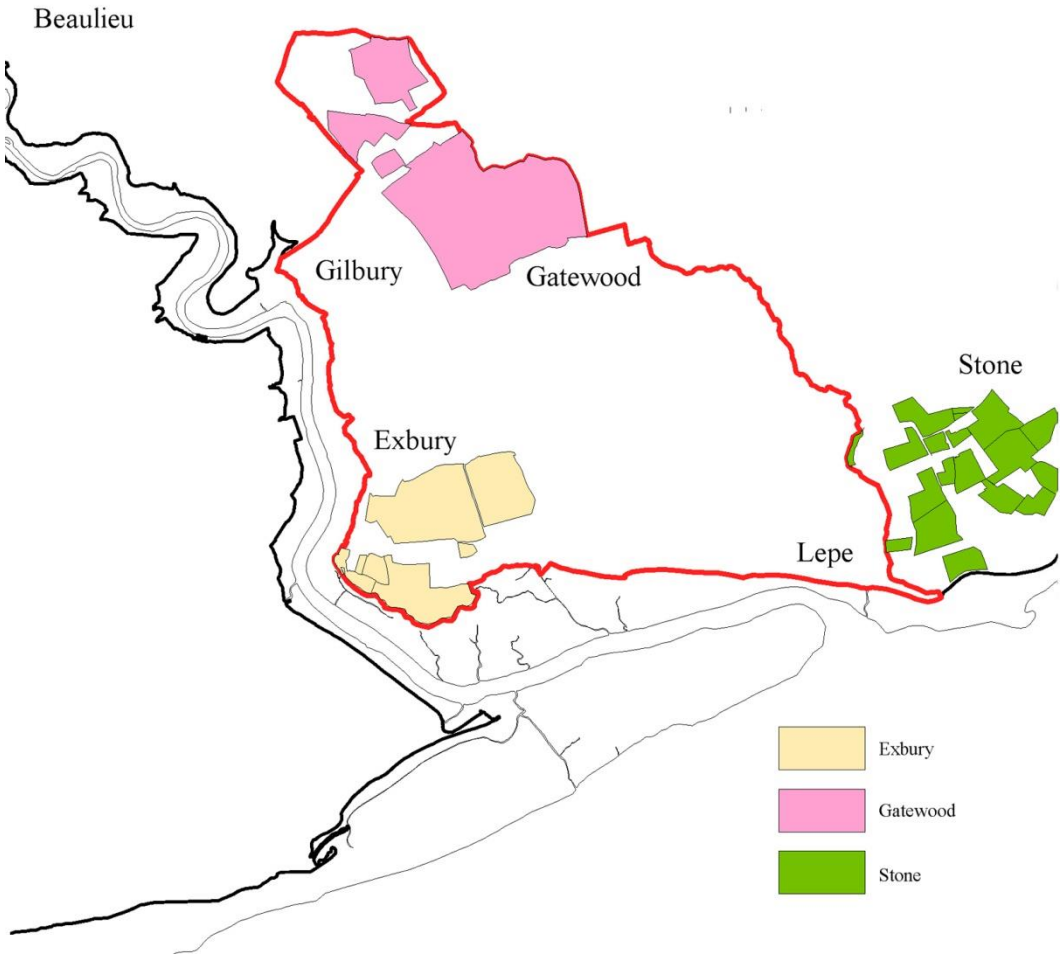
Source – Exbury estate Book, f. 4a Exbury and f. 5a Gatewood

In agreeing the purchase consideration, Mitford identified assets that he thought would increase in value. Approximately one-third of the purchase price related to coppices and standing timber, and he later exploited his woodlands commercially. In addition, he recorded that he was not being charged for intangible assets including the lord of the manor's rights to 'waifes, estrays, felons goods, heriots, reliefs, royalties, the large commons etc'.[60]

[60] 'Exbury estate book', f. 17a.

Purchase prices were based on rental incomes, rather than quoted as a price per acre, although the area of a farm was generally given. According to a survey carried out in 1655, Gatewood farm should have been 300 acres, but when it was let in 1724, it was found to be just 257 acres. Mitford concluded that the missing forty-three acres 'must be lost in the rews'.[61] If the farm was not already let out, as was the case with Stone farm, his next purchase, estimating the market rental could be problematic.

Map 16 : Fields acquired at Stone farm, 1718



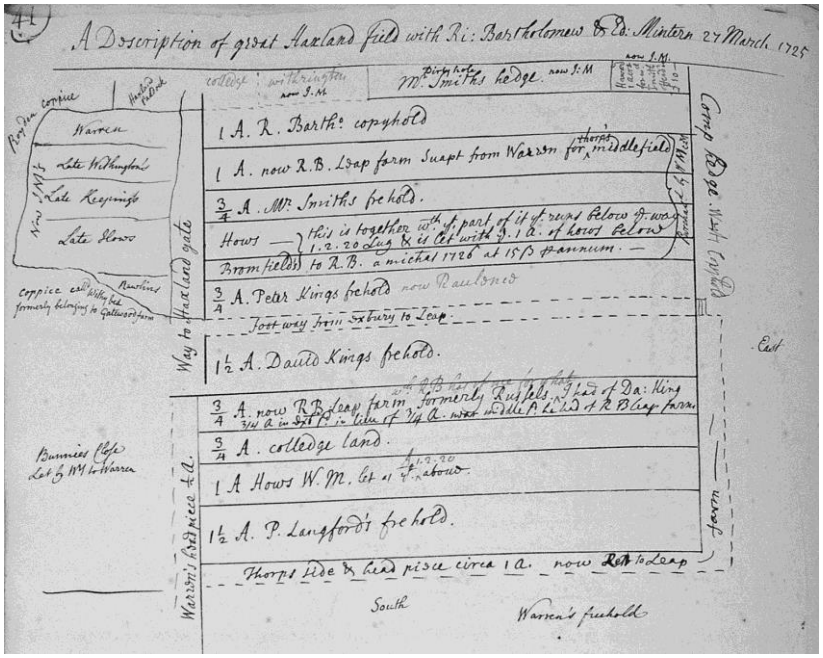
Source – Exbury estate book, f. 3a

[61] 'Exbury estate book', f. 5a, referring to hedgerows as rews.

Mitford paid £1,551 for 151 acres, equivalent to ten guineas per acre and twenty-one years' purchase, significantly more than the £6 10s he paid for Exbury farm.[62] This suggests that Edward Mintern, a malster from Beaulieu, who acted for him, may have overestimated the rental yield.[63] Mitford later sold Stone farm to the Drummonds and it did not form part of the final Exbury estate.

Although the fields in the Exbury, Gatewood and Stone farms had already been 'laid together' to form coherent blocks (Map 16), this was not true of his subsequent purchases.[64] Indeed, Exbury was one of the few places in south-west Hampshire where strip-farming survived into the eighteenth century.[65] The problems this caused are exemplified by the annotated diagram of Haxland field in the Exbury estate book (Figure 6).

Figure 6 : Plan of Haxland field, 1725

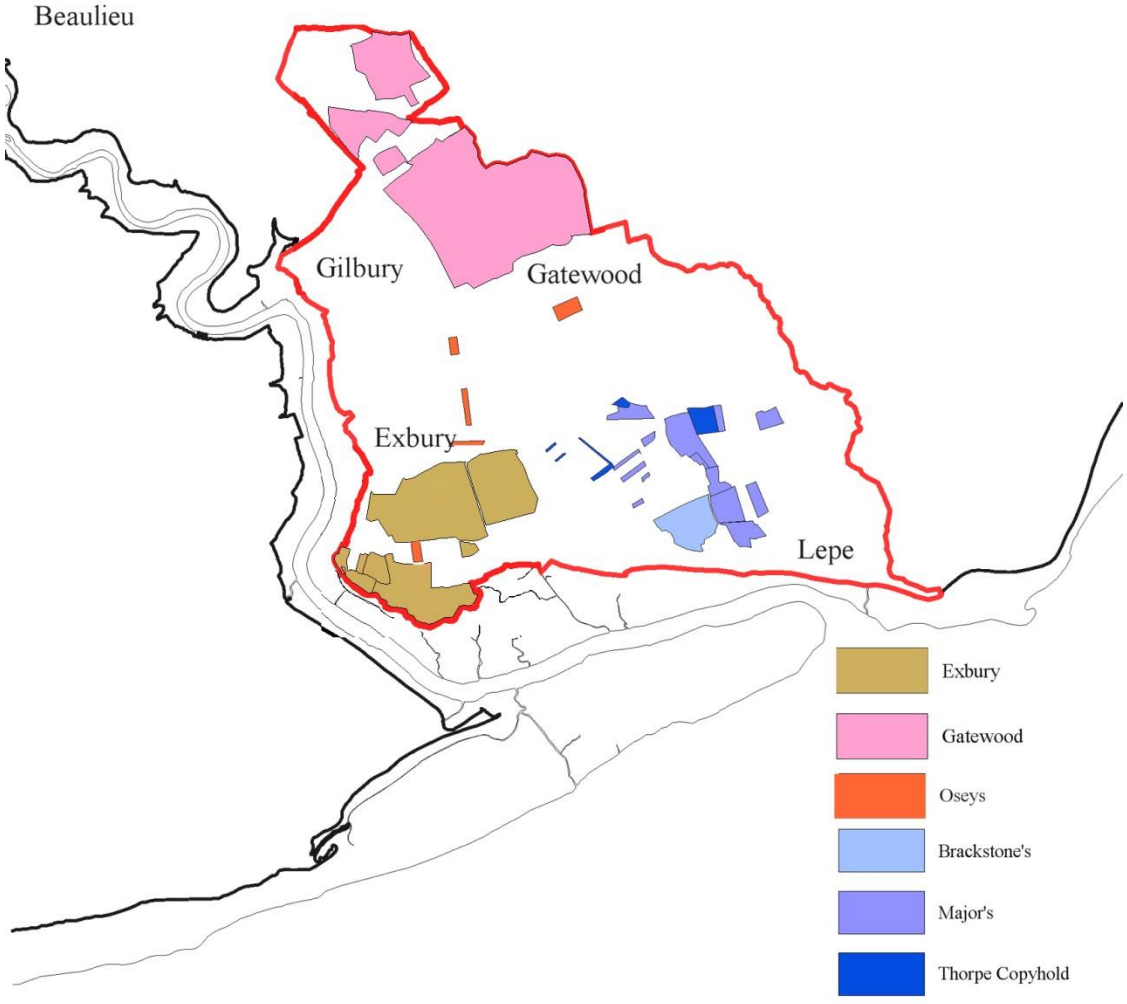


Source – Exbury estate book, f. 41a

[62] 'Exbury estate book', f. 3a.
[63] 'Exbury estate book', f. 3a; HRO, 1730B/46 will and inventory of Edward Mintern of Beaulieu, 1730.
[64] 'Exbury estate book', f. 40a.
[65] Chapman and Seeliger, *Enclosure, environment & landscape*, p. 68.

The common fields were not the only problem. Mitford recorded that in a survey of Exbury and Lepe manors in 1673, there were thirty-eight separate freeholders, ten copyholders and an unknown number of leaseholders who remained 'to be looked for'.[66] This pattern of landownership represented an opportunity for a newcomer willing to take on the challenge of locating and buying out the individual owners.

Map 17 : Principal acquisitions made by William Mitford, 1726



Source – Exbury estate Book

[66] See also, for example, research into the character of rural change in H. French and R. W. Hoyle, *The character of English rural society : Earls Colne, 1550–1750* (Manchester, 2007), especially pp. 1–50.

Mitford started, in 1719, by buying eleven acres referred to as 'Oseys' from Christopher Westbrook, a blacksmith from Beaulieu who was heir to the Osey family (Map 17).[67] Between 1720 and 1725, Mitford acquired three additional parcels of land, which subsequently became Lepe farm, and eighteen scattered pieces of land totalling forty-four acres, which formed the nucleus of Gilbury farm.[68] These purchases, involving five different vendors, included several strips of land in open fields and one vendor, Mr How, admitted that he could 'not tell which strip' he was selling.[69]

Adding to, or consolidating, holdings required finance. Shortly after he had purchased the farms from the Compton family in 1718, Mitford persuaded his father-in-law, by then aged sixty-one, to advance him the sum of £2,000 payable to him under his marriage settlement on the latter's death. This turned out to be to Mitford's advantage, as his father-in-law lived for a further seventeen years.[70] Mitford used this money to subscribe for £1,400 of shares in the South Sea Company and £1,150 in bonds.[71] Soon afterwards, he wanted to sell the shares, on the grounds that they had 'much increased in value' and that 'the continuance of the … great price [was] very uncertain'.[72] However, the trustees of the marriage settlement refused to act and Mitford took a complaint to the Court of Equity, offering to put his lands in Exbury, described as costing £7,000 and 'being upwards of the yearly value of £300', into trust in exchange for the South Sea stock.[73] Eventually his father-in-law agreed to act as sole trustee and the shares were sold. In contrast, Mitford's father declined to sell his own South Sea stock, which had been worth £1,000 per share on 4 August 1720, and by the time he

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[67] 'Exbury estate book', f. 15b.
[68] 'Exbury estate book', ff. 15a, 15b.
[69] 'Exbury estate book', f. 11a.
[70] HRO, 27M50/T2 articles of agreement concerning a change in a marriage settlement, 13 June 1718.
[71] National Debt Act, 3 Geo. I, *c.*17 (1717).
[72] TNA, C 11/33/32 Mitford v. Edwards, bill and answer,1720.
[73] TNA, C 11/33/32 Mitford v. Edwards, bill and answer,1720.

died, a month later, the stock was worth only £16.[74] As a result, Mitford's share of his father's personalty, after deducting advances amounting to £2,500 that he had received in 1720, was just £670.[75]

In March 1726, Mitford, by then a widower aged fifty-three, had invested over £9,500 to acquire approximately 855 acres, 700 of them at Exbury. Yet, he still owned just one-third of the final Exbury estate.[76] Although he was listed as 'of Exbury' on his appointment as sheriff of Hampshire in 1726, this only indicated which land he had designated to qualify for office.[77] He still owned Newtown House and the freehold farm there although he had let it to Henry Drax. He therefore started to build a small house for his own use at Gilbury in 1726, enclosing over three acres of the commons on each side of the house to create a garden.[78] However, Exbury did not yet qualify as a substantial, contiguous landed estate and the house at Gilbury was not substantial enough to be a country seat.

One of the reasons it took so long to create the Exbury estate was the existence of common fields and strip-farming.[79] Clay demonstrated that the larger tenant farmers were willing to pay more for enclosed land, while Turner *et al* concluded that 'enclosure … was undoubtedly followed by a rise in rents'.[80] Overton agreed that enclosure accelerated agrarian change and provided 'immediate opportunities to make

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[74] TNA, PROB 11/578 will of John Mitford of Stratford, Bow, co. Middx, merchant of London, 4 August 1720, proved 9 February 1721.
[75] TNA, C11/45/27 Mitford v Mitford, bill and answer incorporating an inventory taken at John's death, 1722.
[76] 'Exbury estate book', f. 17a.
[77] *London Gazette*, 26–9 November 1726.
[78] 'Exbury estate book', f. 11b.
[79] Chapman and Seeliger, *Enclosure, environment & landscape,* p. 68.
[80] Clay, *Economic expansion,* p. 81; M. E. Turner *et al., Agricultural rent in England, 1690–1914* (Cambridge, 1997), p. 255.

new profits'.[81] Just under half of all enclosures in Hampshire were piecemeal, rather than by Act of Parliament or formal written agreement, and this was the case at Exbury.[82] For example, How had already exchanged four of his strips in Exbury field for strips in other fields before he sold his plots to Mitford in 1724.[83] By 1727, with the exception of The Queen's College's strips, the Exbury open field had been 'cleaned and laid together' and a similar process was followed for the other two open fields.[84] The Estate Book also records sixty-nine separate instances of hedges and scrub being grubbed up and 'thrown to' a nearby farm.

The rationalisation process had to continue well into the second half of the eighteenth century and involved both small freeholders, such as Peter Langford, and landed gentry, including Hans Stanley.[85] The hardest problem to resolve was in relation to thirteen acres of strips in open fields claimed by The Queen's College, Oxford, formerly part of the possessions of God's House, Southampton.[86] The Comptons had never accepted that the college owned the land and had included it in their leases to tenants. Mitford noted in 1726 that the Comptons had let it for fifty-five years at fifty shillings per annum, and there was a later note in the estate book that this continued until the tenant's death in 1733.[87] The God's House records, on the other hand, showed that the twenty-one year corn-rent lease of the college estate was renewed in 1727 for a further twenty-one years at a fine of £7. The college did, however, acknowledge that the

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[81] M. Overton, *Agricultural revolution in England: the transformation of the agrarian economy, 1500–1850* (Cambridge, 1996), pp. 147–67.
[82] Seeliger and Chapman, 'Enclosure data archive'.
[83] 'Exbury estate book', f. 11a.
[84] 'Exbury estate book', f. 40a. As an example: HRO, 72M87/58 deed of exchange: (i) exchanges land called Great Hackland Parrock at Lepe with (ii)'s land called Longclose at Lepe; 29 September 1698 (i) David Withington of Fawley (ii) James Smith of Castlehold, Isle of Wight, merchant.
[85] 'Exbury estate book', ff. 71b, 108a, 109b; HRO, 91M87/5 exchange of lands in Fawley, 17 January 1755 (i) John Mitford of Newtown, Boldre (ii) Peter Langford of Exbury, yeoman.
[86] QC, 6P/21 Exbury documents.
[87] 'Exbury estate book', f. 67b.

land was ‘very troublesome to deal with because it consisted of between six and nine (accounts differ) of detached small parcels’.[88] In 1742, Mitford proposed a ‘scheme for exchange’, but the warden took the view that the land was ‘held in mortmain and unalienable’ and the college strips remained untouched for a further thirty-eight years.[89] Finally, in September 1779, the college accepted nineteen acres of enclosed land in exchange for their thirteen acres of strips in open fields.[90]

Mitford also extended the process of enclosure to common grazing land and the three major common coppices. The coppices were not always converted to arable, as Mitford was conscious of the value of timber. Thus, Denzils common coppice, which was ‘all belonging’ to him by 1740 was allowed to ‘grow up to wood’.[91] He went to great lengths to research the manor’s claims to forest rights and concluded that the manors of Exbury and Lepe were ‘within the New Forest but not of the New Forest’.[92] This meant that they were not subject to forest law and the lord of the manor had the right to enclose the commons, either by purchasing the freeholds or by agreement with copyholders.[93] The legal position was not free from doubt, however, as in 1684, the holder of thirty acres of land in Exbury had claimed to be ‘within the bounds of the forest’ with the right to graze their cattle and had agreed to pay dues to the lord warden of the New Forest.[94] There were further enclosures after 1740, with land mostly being taken for tree plantations.

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[88] *A God’s House miscellany,* ed. J. M. Kaye (Southampton Records Series, vol. 27, Southampton, 1984), p. 72 letter 45, note 127.
[89] ‘Exbury estate book’, f. 40a.
[90] QC, 6P/21 Exbury documents.
[91] ‘Exbury estate book’, f. 40b.
[92] ‘Exbury estate book’, f. 37a.
[93] ‘Exbury estate book’, f. 37a. As an example: HRO, 72M87/123 release of right of common: parcel of waste of Exbury manor 10 March 1779 (i) Robert Barnes of Langley, Fawley, blacksmith (ii) William Mitford of Exbury, lord of the manor.
[94] ‘Exbury estate book’, f. 30a.

At the time of the survey of the Exbury estate in the mid-eighteenth century, there were still three large areas of commons, two of which were marked on Taylor's map of 1759.[95] However, by 1838, the tithe map revealed that much of the common had been converted to parkland around the new mansion built by Mitford's grandson.[96] The Mitfords had finally created a substantial estate at Exbury with a country seat, but this had taken three generations.

Generating income from the estate

The earlier review of expenditure showed that a landed estate needed to be able to generate a surplus of about £800 per annum. Most landowners in the Region derived their income principally from agriculture, although, as has already been mentioned, this was a significant challenge in the Region with its poor agricultural land. It might be thought that the land could be improved and it has been argued that the eighteenth century was the age of the agricultural revolution. However, Turner concluded that the agricultural revolution was 'firmly in the period from about 1800 to 1850' and this appears to have been the case at Exbury.[97] William Mitford did not introduce any new crops or farming techniques although he did require his tenants to incorporate manure and marl into the soil. His grandson, Colonel Mitford, set about making changes when he took up residence at Exbury in 1769, but with limited success. Having heard about turnips being cultivated in other parts of the country, he planted them at Exbury, only to

[95] 'Exbury estate book', ff. 103a–11b, however, there was no map with the survey; Taylor, 'Map of Hampshire'.
[96] HRO, 21M65/F7/83/2 tithe map: plan of the parish of Exbury and Leap, 1838.
[97] M. E. Turner *et al.*, *Farm production in England, 1700–1914* (Oxford, 2001). His review covered, for example, Prothero, *English farming*; J. D. Chambers and G. E. Mingay, *The agricultural revolution, 1750–1880* (London, 1966); E. Kerridge, *The agricultural revolution* (London, 1967); J. Thirsk, *Agricultural regions and agrarian history in England, 1500–1750* (Basingstoke, 1987).

discover that they did not thrive in acid soil and the following year he reverted to barley.[98]

As newcomers to the area, the Mitfords may not have appreciated the unique challenges faced at Exbury. Most heathland areas were associated with 'sheep-corn' husbandry and Exbury had poor gravelly, acid soil.[99] The whole of the coastal area between Lymington and Southampton Water had its own, particularly dry, microclimate, resulting in a growing season that was two months shorter than the surrounding area.[100] The 'poor dry grounds as at Exbury' were sometimes at an advantage, however, and in the wet summer of 1727, corn in the 'rich vales' elsewhere in the country was spoiled, whilst Exbury corn flourished and fetched unusually high prices.[101]

The proximity of the sea presented further difficulties and Exbury suffered badly in the gales of 1721 and 1750, which only affected land on the coast. In other parts of the country, saltmarsh was used for grazing sheep as the salt protected against foot rot.[102] This should have been an advantage at Exbury, which had thirty-four acres of saltmarsh, but the sea wall constructed to protect the grazing was 'frequently beat down by storms' and the marsh 'drowned' in seawater, rendering it unsuitable for grazing.[103] Vancouver's survey of Hampshire in 1810 referred to the 'great success' of

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[98] 'Exbury estate book', preface. For a review of the introduction of turnips see M. Overton, 'The diffusion of agricultural innovations in early modern England: turnips and clover in Norfolk and Suffolk, 1580–1740', *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers,* 10/2 (1985), pp. 205–221.
[99] B. K. Roberts and S. Wrathmell, *An atlas of rural settlement in England* (London, 2000), p. 45; 'Agricultural land classification of England and Wales: revised guidelines and criteria for grading the quality of agricultural land' (Defra, 1988), Exbury was classified 'Grade 4 – Poor'; T. Williamson, *The transformation of rural England: farming and the landscape, 1700–1870* (Exeter, 2002), p. 25.
[100] S. Gregory, 'Climate', in J. W. Watson and J. B. Sissons (eds), *The British Isles: a systematic geography* (Edinburgh, 1964), pp. 53–73.
[101] 'Exbury estate book', f. 19a wheat rose to £12 & £13 per load; barley 26s to 28s per quarter; oats 16s to 18s per quarter.
[102] Thirsk, *Farming techniques,* pp. 38–39; Thirsk, *Agricultural innovations*.
[103] 'Exbury estate book', f. 23.

Elkington's drainage techniques at the Drummonds' 'much improved' Cadland estate next door. In contrast, Vancouver described the remains of a tidal pond for Stone Mill near Lepe as that 'highly improvable morass' which had 'lain so long in its present condition'.[104] In fact, Mitford had endeavoured to drain the mill pond at Stone, but to no avail.[105] His grandson noted, in 1826, that he had employed Elkington's son to 'look over the estate' but that he had 'expressed his doubt if he could do anything' without digging deep ditches.[106] Given the negative aspects of the terrain, it was hard to generate sufficient income from sheep-corn husbandry and William Mitford turned to other ways of generating income from his land.

Figure 7 : View from Exbury of shipbuilding at Montagu Town, 1770



Source – Watercolour portfolio dated 1770–1805 reproduced by kind permission of Lady Redesdale

By 1747, the rental income from the farms was exceeded by 'other' income, mainly from timber and salt production, both of which were associated with seafaring.

[104] Vancouver, *Agriculture of Hampshire*, p. 327.
[105] 'Exbury estate book', f. 3a.
[106] 'Exbury estate book', preface.

Portsmouth was an important dockyard but, between 1690 and 1820, ships were also built at thirteen locations near Exbury, including Lepe and Montagu Town (now Bucklers Hard), both on the Beaulieu River (Figure 7).[107] In 1744, Thomas Ernle reported to the Navy Board that Lepe was 'very commodious for building Ships of war of any rates', and asked that it be surveyed.[108] Moody Janverin, one of many private shipbuilders who worked for the Navy, was encouraged to build there by the Admiralty, and he created a temporary shipyard, with a wooden mould-loft, sawpits, and launch way, at a cost of £700. Shipbuilding continued at Lepe until 1765.[109]

As noted in Chapter One, the New Forest had always been an important source of oak for shipbuilding, but there were serious shortages of mature oak timber and this brought landowners into conflict with the government. In July 1718, Mitford wrote to the Commissioners of the Navy in London complaining that naval officers had cut down one of his oak trees.[110] He obtained a judgement in the verderers' court that the tree was growing on land that had never been part of the Crown Forest, but he also had to prove this to the satisfaction of the deputy surveyor of the forest, who reported to the Treasury.[111] Finally, after a process lasting a year and involving nearly thirty witnesses and officials, Mitford established that he owned the oak according to forest law and custom.

However, the matter did not rest there. The boundaries of the inclosure remained in dispute and this was 'brought to a tryal on an information of intrusion' at the Assizes

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[107] A. J. Holland, *Ships of British oak: the rise and decline of wooden shipbuilding in Hampshire* (Newton Abbot, 1971), p. 24.
[108] TNA, ADM 106/989/180 Thomas Ernle, shipwright: request that the village of Leap on the Beaulieu is surveyed as a suitable place for shipbuilding, 10 December 1744.
[109] Holland, *Ships of British oak,* pp. 118–19.
[110] 'Exbury estate book', f. 48a.
[111] 'Exbury estate book', f. 49b.

held in March 1741.[112] After a long court case, at which many witnesses were called on both sides, a verdict was again given for the Mitfords. By then the family was represented by Mitford's son, Jacky, who complained that the costs 'amounted to the value of the Fee of the land'.[113] The matter had still not been resolved by 1793, when the Treasury produced a map showing an area of over 100 acres claimed by William Mitford's grandson, Colonel Mitford.[114] Finally, in 1822, Colonel Mitford settled the matter by paying the Commissioner of His Majesty's Woods £533 for seven plots of land totalling forty-one acres.[115]

The shortage of timber in the Crown Forest meant that the Navy viewed the surrounding private estates as an attractive source of timber and Mitford took advantage of this. He had initially paid £576 for 643 standing trees and, by the spring of 1733, he had sold, or used in his own building works, timber valued at approximately £510.[116] As well as standing trees, he had acquired coppiced timber, and he tried to assess whether it would be more profitable to coppice oak every seventeen years or 'let it run to timber'. He calculated that timber would ultimately be more profitable although not in his lifetime. He took a long-term view and his son, Jacky, benefited, selling a further 400 mature oak trees for £250 in 1747.[117] As well as felling existing timber, Jacky planted replacement broadleaved trees in 1748, with the intention of creating a sustainable source of timber.

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[112] 'Exbury estate book', f. 49b.
[113] 'Exbury estate book', f. 49b.
[114] TNA, F 17/175 map of lands claimed by W. Mitford [and others] as belonging to their respective manors of Pilley and Warbourne, Holbury and Langley and Exbury and Leap, ordered to be made by the Lords of the Treasury (1793).
[115] HRO, 72M87/126 conveyance: several parcels of land part of the wast of His Majesty's New Forest, 17 April 1822.
[116] 'Exbury estate book', f. 8b.
[117] 'Exbury estate book', ff. 64b–65b.

The Mitfords took a more commercial approach than other landowners who were planting and felling native timber in the same period. In 1741, the architect and landscape gardener, Batty Langley, urged gentlemen to 'make plantations of timber now, that will not be saleable until thirty or forty years hence', arguing that this planting would add value to their estates.[118] However, Langley's projected rate of return of five per cent per annum was no better than the yield available on financial investments and the added value was expected to come from an increase in the capital value of the country seat. Consistent with this, Rackham found that that most plantations of this period were a 'gentleman's hobby' and formed part of the landscaped parks surrounding country seats.[119] Mitford's initial investment buying standing timber had yielded £1,160 over forty years, representing a better return than interest. However, his plantations were on a larger scale; his calculations of expected future returns were based on up to 200 oaks per acre compared with the 27 trees per acre of parkland envisaged by Langley.[120] Mitford also took into account that 'timber land' paid no 'land tax church or poor, nor tithe', increasing the return after tax.[121]

Mitford had been his father's factor in Sweden and had experience of the Baltic timber trade. Ormrod has found that, by 1700, as much as half the shipping tonnage entering English ports was carrying timber imports from Norway and the Baltic, a level sustained until the early 1750s.[122] The Baltic timber trade was the main source of cheap fir or deal planks, which were increasingly being used instead of oak in ordinary building work. Indeed, Mitford purchased 370 feet of fir timber for his saltpans, as well

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[118] B. Langley, *The landed gentleman's useful companion* (London, 1741).
[119] O. Rackham, *Woodlands*, new edn (London, 2010), p. 351.
[120] Langley, *Useful companion*, pp. 37–45; 'Exbury estate book', f. 64b.
[121] 'Exbury estate book', f. 26b.
[122] D. Ormrod, 'From seas to ocean: interpreting the shift from the North Sea-Baltic world to the Atlantic, 1650–1800', in A. Leonard and D. Pretel (eds), *The Caribbean and the Atlantic World economy: circuits of trade, money and knowledge, 1650–1914* (Basingstoke, 2015), pp.15–35.

as paying £42 for deal for the salt officers' houses.[123] This encouraged Mitford to risk planting trees other than native oaks. He compared 'the values of an acre of firs and oaks' and concluded that firs seemed to offer a better return.[124]

The concept of plantations of 'foreign' fir trees was not itself new. In 1662, John Evelyn presented his discourse on the propagation of timber to the Royal Society, and the resulting book, first published in 1664, included 'Of fir, pine, pinaster, pitch-tree etc.' as one of its chapters.[125] By the end of the seventeenth century, conifers were recognised as having commercial value although the practice of planting out young conifers, as opposed to sowing seeds, did not become common until the mid-eighteenth century.[126] Shortly after its inception in 1754, the Royal Society of Arts encouraged tree planting and, as late as 1780, gold medals were awarded for plantations of less than ten acres.[127] However, it was not until the twentieth century that timber plantations overtook native woods in England.[128]

Mitford approached growing timber systematically and experimented with different methods of silviculture. He first planted firs at Newtown in 1713 and in November 1719 he planted out a few small Scots pine (*Pinus sylvestris*) 'for tryal' at Exbury.[129] Between 1721 and 1723, he raised a large number of trees from seed in a 'smal spot of ground' near Exbury farm house, and he had nursery beds at four locations, each growing about 2,000 saplings, by 1730.[130] Over the period to 1753, about 20,000 trees were planted, mainly firs, spruces, and pines. He made copious notes

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[123] 'Exbury estate book', ff. 20a, 20b.
[124] 'Exbury estate book', f. 26b.
[125] J. Evelyn, *Silva, or a discourse of forest-trees and the propagation of timber in His Majesty's Dominions*, 4th edn (1706), pp. 220–53.
[126] N. D. G. James, *A history of English forestry* (Oxford, 1981), p. 165.
[127] H. T. Wood and Lord Sanderson, *A history of the Royal Society of Arts* (1913), p. 149.
[128] O. Rackham, *Trees and woodland in the British landscape: the complete history of Britain's trees, woods & hedgerows*, rev. edn (London, 2001), p. 92.
[129] 'Exbury estate book', f. 26a.
[130] 'Exbury estate book', f. 26a.

about the best location for planting and the methods to be used, noting that shelter from the wind was important as was a location 'free from molestation of deer', both of which were problems on the coast.[131] Whilst initially he had three stages of cultivation (seed beds, nursery beds and final plantation), he had changed by the mid-1730s to transplanting direct from the seedbed to the final destinations.[132] Mitford also experimented with different species and, in 1733, planted black, Newfoundland, silver and common spruce *(Picea)*, noting that the Scots pine had the advantage over the silver fir (*Abies alba*) as it grew in poorer soils, was hardier and grew more rapidly.[133]

In spite of his efforts, Mitford found that returns were not as good as he had hoped. Silver firs were susceptible to mildew, and the drought in 1741, which followed the unusually hard winter in 1740, killed many of those planted in 1720.[134] Nevertheless, it proved possible to sell the dead trees for 20 shillings each, equivalent to the price paid for beech wood.[135] Subsequently Jacky Mitford used the fact that his uncle, William Edwards, had been treasurer of the New River Company in London, to sell Scots pine to the company for water pipes in 1758.[136]

Timber plantations generated an uncertain financial return, which was not realised for several decades, and Mitford needed funds to reinvest in the estate in the short term. There were two commercial activities associated with the area, iron founding and salt boiling, both close to Lymington. There had been ironworks at Sowley since medieval times, and they were only two miles east of Newtown House. However, the freehold was owned by the dukes of Montagu, whose seat was at

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[131] 'Exbury estate book', f. 26b.
[132] 'Exbury estate book', f. 26b.
[133] 'Exbury estate book', f. 26b.
[134] E. L. Jones, *Seasons and prices: the role of the weather in English agricultural history* (London, 1964), p. 138; J. M. Stratton *et al.*, *Agricultural records, A.D. 220–1977*, 2nd edn (London, 1978), p. 74.
[135] 'Exbury estate book', f. 64b.
[136] 'Exbury estate book', f. 64b.

Boughton in Northamptonshire. In the first half of the eighteenth century, the ironworks were supported by John, second duke of Montagu, who hoped to use the iron for ship-building at Montagu Town. In 1717, just before Mitford bought Exbury farm from the Comptons, Sowley farm and ironworks were leased to an ironfounder from the Forest of Dean, which was emerging as an important ironfounding area.[137]

Operating an iron foundry was a risky business and the lease changed hands frequently. For example, in 1755, one of the partners in the Sowley ironworks went bankrupt and Abel Walter of Baddesley, who already owned the wharf at Pitts Deep used by the ironworks, bought his share for £1,200.[138] War with France was imminent and Walter secured a contract to supply guns to the Navy. However, the war also resulted in a shortage of skilled labour and Walter's gunfounder, known as 'Drunken Bets', was said to have cost Walter '£600–700 in government guns' because they were refused proof.[139] In 1758, expensive repairs and improvements, including a new furnace, were required and later that year Walter wrote to the Board of Ordnance asking to be released from his contract. After Walter died in 1767, the duke advertised for a new tenant for the ironworks by advertising in the *Salisbury and Winchester Journal.*[140] The ironworks came with a 'genteel house' and 180 acres of arable farmland and these proved more attractive than the ironworks itself after this date.[141]

The other local industry was salt-boiling and there had been salterns near Lymington since 1147.[142] At the turn of the eighteenth century, Celia Fiennes described how, for four or five months a year, salt water was drawn at high tide 'into trenches and

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[137] A. Bartlett, *The ironworks at Sowley in the manor of Beaulieu c.1600–1820* (1974), p. 12.
[138] Abel's father had sold Newtown to Mitford in 1711 but the family retained land at South Baddesley.
[139] J. Greenwood, *The ironworks at Sowley* (2005), p. 57.
[140] *Salisbury and Winchester Journal*, 25 September 1769.
[141] Sowley was too small to qualify as a landed estate.
[142] *VCH Hampshire*, vol. 4, pp. 639–49.

so into severall ponds', from which it was piped to a salt house 'full of large square iron and copper panns', under which a coal-fired furnace kept the brine boiling.[143] When the salt crystallised round the edges of the pans, it was shovelled into baskets and this process continued throughout the summer from Monday morning until Saturday evening, when the fire was extinguished for a day.[144]

This was a better choice for Mitford; it used freehold land on the coast, which had already proved unsuitable for sheep grazing, and he had his own timber for construction. In September 1722, he built salt works with four pans covering over eleven acres along the Beaulieu River at Exbury. He used his own oak timber, but had to buy in fir timber and other materials, bringing the total cost to £518.[145] The Lymington saltmakers had complained about delays caused by the salt officer being in Southampton, so Mitford spent £250 building houses so that he could have two salt officers on site.[146] He extended the salt works to a fifth iron pan in 1730, bringing his total investment by 1733 up to £625.

There was increasing competition, both from abroad and from the salt mines near Liverpool, but the salterns at Lymington and Exbury were well placed to supply the Navy and merchant fleets, both of which needed salt to preserve stores. Drawing on his experience as a merchant, Mitford entered into a partnership with Lymington saltmakers and benefited from the Burrards' political connections and their ability to obtain government contracts.[147] He calculated that in 1729 he had made a gross profit of 'upwards of £100', representing a return of over fifteen per cent. This would have been

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[143] Fiennes, C., *The illustrated journeys of Celia Fiennes c.1685–c.1712* ed. C. Morris (London, 1982), pp. 69, 70.
[144] James, *Lymington: an illustrated history*, p. 69.
[145] 'Exbury estate book', f. 20a.
[146] A. T. Lloyd, *The salterns of the Lymington area* (1996), p. 5.
[147] E. Hughes, *Studies in administration and finance, 1558–1825 with special reference to the history of salt taxation in England* (Philadelphia, 1980), pp. 410–11.

significantly more than he was getting from timber sales or rental yields although his later notes suggest that his net profit was actually nearer £40.[148]

The Mitfords were not the only landed gentry to invest in salt works. Sir FitzWilliam Barrington's accounts for 1784 include £259 relating to 'boyling salt' and the salterns in the Newtown estuary covered about one-third of the foreshore. They had been established before the seventeenth century and continued into the nineteenth century, after which many were converted into oyster beds.[149] Barrington's was using coal as his fuel, at a cost of £96 per annum, and his running costs were higher than Mitford's, who was taking advantage of his own timber.

Mitford's substantial investment in salterns in a new location was risky and the net profit was small compared to the ultimate goal of disposable income of at least £800 per annum. However, it demonstrates both his long-term view and his appetite for business risk. He also demonstrated an entrepreneur's willingness to experiment with new forms of timber, and he was able to draw on his knowledge of the Baltic timber trade, which led him to believe that there was a growing market for deal. He was willing to forgo immediate profit on coppicing in the expectation that his heirs would benefit from an increased return from the sale of mature trees. His dispute with the government was not merely about the cost of one oak tree but about the boundaries and legal rights attaching to his estate. These principles were worth fighting for and his overriding goal, shared by other landed gentry, was to be able to pass a landed estate onto future generations of the family.

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[148] 'Exbury estate book', f. 22a.
[149] IoWRO, SW1710, Barrington accounts; *VCH Hampshire,* vol. 5, pp. 265–268; C. K. Currie, 'An archaeological and historical survey of the Newtown Estate' (2000).

Conclusion

In this chapter, it has been shown that the landed estate was a source of status rather than profit and this meant that the family had to own a substantial, contiguous landed estate rather than a collection of dispersed farms. In order to be recognised as landed gentry, the family had to be known as 'of' a place. Jacky Mitford recognised this and in 1760 described himself as 'of Newtown' rather than 'of Exbury' in his will. Families such as the Mitfords were willing to take a long-term view since, as Norfolk landowner Thomas de Grey put it, the slow rate of progress in building an estate would soon be 'overshadowed by the pride of being owner of the whole parish'.[150]

For both Morant and Mitford, wealth was a necessary, but not sufficient, criterion for establishing a landed estate. Both showed determination in achieving their goal and both spent time building build good relationships with their neighbours and potential vendors. Owning a landed estate was, however, only the start of the story. The landed gentry needed to keep the estate in the family and to behave in an appropriate way. Behaviour was an important element in both Mitford's and Morant's success; whilst Morant was assimilated quickly into the landed gentry, William Mitford behaved as a businessman throughout his life.

The second section of this thesis develops the theme of the importance of behaviour and social power and explores how they affected the ability of the landed gentry to keep their landed estate in the family and pass it down to future generations. The next chapter starts this process by focusing on the behaviour of the landed gentry in the internal, family sphere.

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[150] J. Gregory, 'Mapping improvement: reshaping rural landscapes in the eighteenth century', *Landscapes*, 6/1 (2005), pp. 62–82.

Chapter Four: Family matters

The three chapters in the first section of this thesis situated the landed gentry and their estates in the Region. It was demonstrated that landed-gentry families recognised that it was essential to be known as the family 'of' a place and this meant owning a substantial, contiguous landed estate, rather than a collection of dispersed farms. The estate needed to be large enough, typically over 1,000 acres, to generate sufficient income both to maintain the country seat and to keep the head of the family in an appropriate lifestyle. These estates gave the landed gentry significant responsibilities, but they had more limited resources than the peerage. This social group was not closed to new entrants, and there was a process of gradual change in its composition through absorption, assimilation, and adaptation to changing circumstances throughout the century. Although this resulted in a picture of apparent continuity when viewed at a distance, the first section showed that this masked considerable change not only in the composition of the landed gentry but also in how they behaved.

The second section of the thesis builds on these foundations by focusing on performative aspects of the landed gentry and examining how their behaviour influenced the character and pace of social change. It will be demonstrated that landed-gentry families with the greatest wealth, the largest estates, and the grandest country seats did not necessarily have the greatest longevity. Instead, in this thesis it will be argued that, for this particular stratum of society, social power was as important as wealth and status.

The landed gentry earned social power through their behaviour and relationships with others, both within their peer group and with those below and above them in the social hierarchy. In this thesis, social power is the term which is used to describe the

ability of individuals to achieve their aims in spite of opposition from others.[1] It will also be demonstrated that social power could be accumulated over time and deployed when needed. Conversely, it will be shown that inflexible, inappropriate behaviour could destroy social power, and as with trust, once lost, this took time to rebuild. Social power was, therefore, an intangible asset, in contradistinction to wealth, which was represented by tangible assets such as land, buildings, and investments.[2]

Continuing with the theme of performative behaviour, this section of the thesis identifies another characteristic of successful landed gentry, namely their ability to be socially amphibious. Amphibiousness has often been used to refer to the ability to be at home within two different milieux, for example elite and popular culture, national and provincial spheres or landed and commercial social groups. However, this thesis argues that amphibiousness was a multi-faceted, rather than a binary, concept. Successful social amphibians were able to adapt their behaviour to accommodate the changing expectations of the different circles they moved in at any given point in time, irrespective of location. The rules of polite behaviour varied from group to group and had to be understood and followed; inflexible, inappropriate behaviour could have a detrimental effect on a family's ability to retain its estates and its influence.

The second section is, therefore, all about the behaviour of individuals and this builds on the work of other scholars. Historians who have studied particular families,

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[1] This thesis follows the sociologist, Weber, who defined power in *Economy and Society* as 'the probability that one actor within a social relationship will be in a position to carry out his own will despite resistance'. As sociologists, such as Waters, have commented, Weber understood power to be the result of intentional human action. M. Weber *et al.*, *Economy and society: an outline of interpretive sociology* (3 vols, New York, 1968), vol. 1, p. 53; M. Waters, *Modern sociological theory* (London, 1994), p. 222.

[2] Social power can be accumulated over time and can be compared to 'social capital', a term is used by the OECD to describe 'the links, shared values and understandings in society that enable individuals and groups to trust each other and so work together': B. Keeley, *Human capital: how what you know shapes your life* (OECD Insights, Paris, 2007) p. 102, http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/9789264029095-en. However, social power has more of a competitive edge than social capital as used by the OECD.

including Finch, Roebuck, and Aley, have shown that personal behaviour, and in particular 'the ability of the individual to meet challenges and crises', was the most decisive factor in determining whether individual families thrived, and Whyman took a not dissimilar position in her study of the Verney family.[3] Others have taken a wider perspective and looked at how behaviour changed over time. The Stones argued that there was a 'shift in the balance of interests from the collective to the personal, from the long-term economic ambitions of the family to the self-gratification of the individual' in the eighteenth century.[4]

The pace and character of change was, however, questioned by French and Rothery. Their work on the 'landed elite and male gender identities over the *longue durée*' concluded that the pace of change was slower in the eighteenth than in the nineteenth century and slower among the landed elite than among the suburban middle class, the bourgeoisie. In their view, the core values of 'industry, reflection, self-command, and moral awareness' remained paramount because they were 'connected to the deeper concepts of honour, virtue, authority, truth-telling, Christian morality, and understandings of power that remained embedded' in the landed elite. At a level above this, masculine identity could be reconfigured to accommodate social, political, economic, and cultural changes.[5]

Jackson joined the debate, arguing that 'surprisingly little has been written exclusively about elite masculinity'. She explored Lord Herbert's 'engagement with contemporary ideals of elite masculinity … within a conceptual framework of four successive but overlapping life-stages: the assimilation of normative codes of

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[3] Finch and Habakkuk, *Northamptonshire families,* pp. xii, 170; Roebuck, *Yorkshire baronets,* p. 251; Aley, 'Nottinghamshire landowners', p. 314; Whyman, *Sociability and power*.
[4] Stone and Stone, *An open elite?,* p. 282.
[5] H. French and M. Rothery, *Man's estate: landed gentry masculinities, c.1660–c.1900* (Oxford, 2012), introduction and p. 235.

masculinity; the demonstration of masculine attributes; the exercise of masculine authority and the acquisition and preservation of masculine reputation'.[6] Although her subject was a peer from the seventeenth century, her analysis echoed the four stages examined by French and Rothery: school; university and apprenticeships; the Grand Tour and other travels; and marriage, fatherhood and reproduction of male identities. Jackson concluded that, in his autobiography, Herbert had presented a version of self-identity crafted for his descendants 'based upon the model of elite masculinity that had guided his behaviour and shaped his character since childhood'. She argued that 'for the higher ranks of society, even before the civil war, masculinity was already becoming a social rather than a sexual identity'.[7]

This thesis extends previous work on personal behaviour by taking a regional, group-wide perspective of the landed gentry's patterns of behaviour and social accommodation. This chapter focuses on the behaviour of the landed gentry in the family sphere while the following chapters focus on performance in the public arena. It is argued that the landed gentry shared the overriding aim of wanting to keep their landed estate in the family, and they went to great lengths to achieve this. They faced demographic challenges throughout the eighteenth century, since the failure to have a surviving son and heir had serious consequences at a time when primogeniture and strict settlement were common. This was particularly problematical for the landed gentry who were less wealthy than the peerage. Accordingly, they found it harder to attract suitable wives or provide dowries for daughters and sisters and this led to later marriage and fewer potential heirs.

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[6] C. Jackson, 'Memory and the construction and experience of elite masculinity in the seventeenth-century autobiography of Lord Herbert of Cherbury', *Gender & History*, 25/1 (2013), pp. 107–31.
[7] Jackson, 'Elite masculinity'.

The behaviour of the head of the family in the face of such problems affected their ability to keep their patrimony in an area in undivided ownership. One method of safeguarding the succession was to pass estates through the female line, and it will be shown that this occurred in nearly one in four Isle of Wight estates and one in ten New Forest estates. Following on from this analysis, it is argued that the landed-gentry families who deployed social power as well as wealth were most successful in keeping their estates in the family and maintaining the link between place and power.

This chapter starts by setting out the demographic challenges faced by many landed-gentry families, since this was one of the contexts in which differences in behaviour became most apparent. The region is particularly suitable for examining this as the Isle of Wight and the New Forest had different demographic profiles. As discussed in Chapter Two, fourteen of the nineteen landed-gentry families on the Isle of Wight had established landed estates there before 1700 and one family, the Oglanders, claimed uninterrupted descent in the male line for fourteen generations. In contrast, twenty-two of the thirty-three landed-gentry families in the New Forest were newcomers. The causes and consequences of failure of the male line and the financial consequences of the operation of primogeniture are investigated, following which, the response of families is considered; one solution, inheritance through the female line, is examined in detail. Younger sons and daughters played significant roles in the longevity of families; some benefited from financial settlements to the detriment of the family's patrimony, but in other circumstances younger children contributed to the family's social and financial capital.

The chapter then addresses one of the key questions in the thesis by examining the relative importance of social power and wealth in determining whether a family remained a member of the landed gentry. Case studies of the Worsley and Hooper

families are used to assess how the behaviour of individual family members affected a family's longevity. It will be shown that the relatively wealthy Worsleys dissipated their social power and, by the mid-nineteenth century, their estate had been broken up and sold. In contrast, the less wealthy Hoopers nurtured their social power and retained their estates until the 1930s.[8]

Strategies for overcoming demographic challenges

Succession remained a major concern throughout the eighteenth century and demographic challenges made it hard to keep patrimony in undivided ownership. The landed gentry all hoped that their estates would be kept in the family forever; family mattered to them.[9] The landed gentry's ideal was to leave the estate to a son who had been brought up to the role, but this was not always possible. Clay argued that, prior to 1700, only a minority of landed families lasted more than four generations before becoming extinct in the male line, although the Stones considered that the 'failure of the elite to reproduce themselves' was restricted to the 'the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries'. Rothery, on the other hand, identified a change in the reproductive behaviour of the English landed gentry and a fall in the number of children after about 1850. The work of Clay, the Stones, and Rothery was focused, however, on the larger estates and the great landowners.[10]

This chapter seeks to establish whether their conclusions were also relevant to the landed gentry, who had smaller estates. It is demonstrated that failure of the male line was a recurring issue for families in the Region, and the number and gender of

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[8] HRO, 7M54 Malmesbury estates.
[9] Beckett, *Aristocracy*, p. 3.
[10] Clay, 'Marriage and inheritance'; Stone and Stone, *An open elite?*, p. 281; M. Rothery, 'The reproductive behavior of the English landed gentry in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries', *Journal of British Studies*, 48/3 (2009), pp. 674–94.

children continued to have a significant impact on dynastic continuity throughout the eighteenth century. As a consequence, the behaviour of, and the strategies adopted by, the heads of landed-gentry families were significant factors in determining whether they were successful in keeping the estate in the family. A prime example of this, the separation of the Appuldurcombe estate from the male heir for a period of twenty-five years, is discussed further below.

There were many reasons why families failed to produce a legitimate male heir. Male impotence or infertility could be the issue and venereal disease could lead to infertility. Contemporary literature and art suggests that 'whoring by sexually active males was … a dominant cultural trope'; furthermore, although it was still desirable for women to be chaste, 'sexual freedom was natural for men'.[11] However, a more straightforward reason for the lack of male heirs was the failure to marry. Stone showed that, between 1675 and 1800, approximately one in five peers' sons never married.[12] Younger sons went into the church, the military, or the Navy, all of which made marriage less likely. Some went into trade or the professions, but until they had earned their own fortune, they too were less able to attract a bride.

More prosaically, there were also instances of the eldest son marrying too late to have a large family and Stone attributed this in part to the 'single-minded search for wealthy rather than fruitful brides'.[13] Sir John Oglander had observed this trend in the seventeenth century, and was forthright in his advice to his children: 'If thou wouldest have good and handsome children, have as much care of thy wife as of thy mares. Breed not from crooked, deformed stock. Although thou hast thousands with her, yet

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[11] T. Burnard and R. Follet, 'Caribbean slavery, British anti-slavery and the cultural politics of venereal disease', *The Historical Journal,* 55/2 (2012), pp. 427–51; F. Dabhoiwala, 'Lust and liberty', *Past & Present,* 207 (2010), pp. 89–179.
[12] L. Stone, *The family, sex and marriage in England, 1500–1800* (New York, 1977), p. 47.
[13] Stone, *Family and fortune,* p. 201.

wilt thou in the end be a loser'.[14] His great-great-great-grandson, Sir William Oglander, fifth baronet, followed this advice when he married Sukey Serle in 1765. She was the daughter of Peter Serle, esq., a verderer of the New Forest, and this match produced eleven children. However, being fruitful was not always an adequate defence against failure of the male line. Sir William's grandmother, Elizabeth Strode, was the youngest of thirteen children and had nine brothers. In spite of this, her descendants inherited Parnham, a large landed estate in Dorset, through her when the Strode male line eventually failed in 1764.

It was not only fathers who were concerned about the suitability of a spouse for their children. Schutte has argued that there was 'no question that endogamy was something that aristocratic families, especially aristocratic mothers, desired for their daughters'.[15] Schutte concluded that the for over 400 years, up to the First World War, there was remarkable continuity in the aims of the peerage to marry their daughters to a member of the peerage, thus 'marrying in'.[16] However, her study excluded the landed gentry.

A different form of endogamy was evidenced by Everitt who found that 'over two-thirds of the gentry married among their neighbours' in Kent, in other words within their class.[17] A review of the dataset of landed-gentry families shows that many established families in the Region married members of other landed-gentry families, particularly in the Isle of Wight.[18] However, the Worsleys of Appuldurcombe attempted to 'marry up' with, we will see, disastrous consequences. Newcomers did not marry

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[14] Oglander and Bamford, *A royalist's notebook,* pp. 249–50.
[15] K. Schutte, 'Marrying by numbers: marriage patterns of aristocratic British women, 1485–2000' (Ph.D., University of Kansas, 2011), p. 60.
[16] K. Schutte, *Women, rank, and marriage in the British aristocracy, 1485–2000: an open elite?* (Basingstoke; New York, 2014), p. 161.
[17] Everitt, *Community of Kent*, p. 42.
[18] For example, the Barringtons, Holmes, Meux-Worsley, Oglanders, Worsley of Pidford.

within the Region but still tended to marry within their shared background, exemplified by the endogamy within the Jamaican 'cousinhood of interrelated families'.[19] Indeed, the West Indian connections and shared experience are a recurring theme throughout this study.

Demographic challenges were compounded by financial problems. Primogeniture, which was designed to concentrate wealth in the eldest son and prevent estates from being dispersed, became popular in the seventeenth century.[20] Slater took the view that under primogeniture the eldest son invariably benefited, while the position of younger sons and daughters was insecure.[21] However, leaving the entire estate to the eldest male heir did not always improve the family's finances. Settlements made at the time of the eldest son's marriage meant that he was, in effect, a life tenant with remainder to unborn children.

An additional problem for the eldest son was the trend towards making unrealistically generous provision for younger sons and daughters. This was accompanied by an increasing willingness for siblings to take action in court to enforce their parent's intentions if the heir refused to honour them. As a result, the male heir could suffer the greatest financial burden and this was particularly the case with the landed gentry who were less wealthy than the peerage.[22] For example, Harry Oglander was left £1,500 through a settlement established in his father's will and, in 1770, he

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[19] T. Burnard, *Planters, merchants, and slaves: plantation societies in British America, 1650–1820* (2015), p. 95.
[20] See for example M. Slater, 'The weightiest business: marriage in an upper-gentry family in seventeenth-century England', *Past & Present,* 72 (1976), pp. 25–54; Stone, *Family, sex and marriage*. The debate about the importance of entail has involved *inter alia* Habakkuk, *Marriage, debt, and the estates system*; Clay, 'Marriage and inheritance'; Clay, 'Property settlements'.
[21] Slater, 'The weightiest business'; M. Slater, *Family life in the seventeenth century: the Verneys of Claydon House* (London, 1984), pp. 26–34.
[22] V. M. Larminie, *Wealth, kinship and culture: the seventeenth-century Newdigates of Arbury and their world* (Woodbridge, 1995), p. 50.

received £121 per annum from his elder brother in lieu of this.[23] This income was derived from property acquired as part of the Parnham inheritance and Sir William Oglander was able to sell this in 1771 to 'pay off his younger brothers and sisters' fortunes' without affecting their main Nunwell estate.[24] In other cases, the eldest son had to rely on mortgages and loans, although recognition by the courts of the debtors' equity of redemption prevented a creditor automatically acquiring full ownership of an estate when a debtor defaulted. As a result, 'debt was more like a chronic disease which took a long time to eclipse a family'.[25]

Settlements and financial burdens could also adversely affect marriage prospects and reduce the number of legitimate children. This was particularly true for the landed gentry, who were less wealthy than the peerage and found it harder to attract suitable wives or provide dowries for daughters and sisters. With dowries equating to several year's net income, the head of a family could not always afford marriages for all his children; strategic choices had to be made. For example, Winifred Barrington, aged twenty-four, married upcomer R. P. Blachford, aged thirty-six, in 1778. She benefited from a marriage settlement that included £2,000 New South Sea Annuities from her father as well as bequests from her late uncle, Sir John Barrington, seventh baronet, who had died in 1776. Of this amount, £1,666 was paid direct to Blachford, who used it to build his country seat at Osborne, while the residue was retained in trust.[26]

The Barringtons gave priority to Winifred's marriage but the other members of the family suffered, and the eldest son and heir, John Barrington, later ninth baronet,

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[23] IoWRO, OG/Z/81 probate copy of will of Sir John Oglander of Nunwell, Bart of 9 June 1766 granted 30 June 1767.
[24] IoWRO, OG/Z/84 suit in Chancery re sale of Godmanton, Dorset.
[25] H. J. Habakkuk, 'Landowners and the Civil War', *The Economic History Review,* 18/1 (1965), pp. 130–51.
[26] IoWRO, JER/SEL/50/54 indented agreement [by way of settlement], 17 April 1778.

never married. Their father finally relinquished control over the family's finances in 1791, when he was eighty-three. John assumed 'sums on bond' due to 'persons in the Isle of Wight with interest at £4 per cent', and was instructed that he be 'at liberty to pay them off now or not as he thinks fit'.[27] John's younger sister, Anne, was married within a week of his taking control, but she was over thirty, her husband was over fifty and they had only one child. The absence of a dowry when she was younger had denied her the chance to have a large family.

The adverse impact of settlements could be exacerbated where legal documents were poorly worded or failed to take account of prior claims and encumbrances on the estate, and the choices made could have repercussions over generations.[28] For example, when Sir FitzWilliam Barrington, eighth baronet, died in 1792, his will referred to that of his older brother, Sir John Barrington, seventh baronet, dated 3 April 1770. In this, Sir John had put the Swainston estates in trust for 500 years 'to raise the sum of eight thousand pounds for [his brother's] proper use and benefit'. In an attempt to stop the financial drain on the landed estate, Sir FitzWilliam declared that this sum should 'not at any time be raised upon the said Estates' except to meet claims against the property itself.[29] This provided some relief to Sir FitzWilliam's eldest son and heir, John, but the problem extended into the next generation.

On John's death in 1818, the title and life interest in the Swainston estate passed to his younger brother, FitzWilliam, tenth baronet, who died in 1832 leaving six daughters but no sons. It had been generally understood that Sir John's intention had been to put his eldest niece, who had married Sir Richard Simeon, 'in the situation of an

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[27] IoWRO, JER/BAR/3/SW424 schedule of Sir Fitzwilliam Barrington's indebtedness, 1791.
[28] Larminie, *Wealth, kinship and culture*, p. 10.
[29] IoWRO, JER/BAR/3/SW423 copy of will of Sir Fitzwilliam Barrington, 1792.

eldest son'.[30] Furthermore, he intended to give his five younger nieces £10,000 each, charged on the estate. A problem arose because John created a settlement on the marriage of his second niece that was in conflict with the terms of his will and this led to a case in Chancery in 1836, four years after the tenth baronet's death. The court held that the sum of £10,000 mentioned in the marriage settlement was in addition to the £10,000 specified in the will, rather than in satisfaction of it.[31] This created an additional burden for the Swainston estates, but the Simeon family were sufficiently wealthy to absorb this additional cost. They remained at Swainston throughout the nineteenth century and Bateman listed them as the owners of an estate of nearly 9,000 acres in 1882.[32] This made them the second largest landowner on the Isle of Wight after the Worsleys and, in this instance, wealth did make a significant contribution to ensuring that the landed estate remained in undivided ownership.

The Barringtons had male heirs up until 1832, but in many families, the male line failed in the eighteenth century. The head of the family's response to this threat to the succession determined whether they were successful in keeping their patrimony and social power in the family. Thomas Holmes left the Westover estate by will, naming seven male relations, each in tail male, failing which it should revert to 'any other son of Robert Worsley of Pidford', his youngest sister's husband.[33] Holmes was pre-deceased by his only son and his four younger brothers and his estate initially passed in 1764 to Leonard Troughear, the son of his eldest sister, who took the name Holmes.

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[30] *Cases in chancery vol.6*, p. 528 Powys v Mansfield.
[31] *Cases in chancery vol.6*.
[32] Bateman, *Great landowners*.
[33] IoWRO, JER/HBY/208/1 copy of will of Thomas Holmes.

Leonard married but had only daughters, although his fertility was not the problem as he left unentailed property to two illegitimate sons.[34] The entailed estate eventually passed in 1804 to the Revd Henry Worsley, the third son of Robert Worsley of Pidford. He had been selected as the 'any other son' as his elder brother was described in his father's will as a 'lunatic'.[35] The advantage of having the inheritance preordained by will was that Leonard was able to plan ahead to remedy the situation. Nineteen years before he died, he arranged for his eldest daughter to marry Henry, the eventual heir, and Leonard's response ensured that the Westover estate remained in the family through his direct female line.

Where the male line failed, inheritance through the female line was the preferred strategy in nearly one-fifth of all the landed-gentry families. It occurred on a single occasion in nine families, twice in succession in two families and affected three successive deaths in one family in the Region. Inheritance through the female line occurred throughout the eighteenth century, and there was no evidence of a change in attitude over time (Table 10).

[34] IoWRO, JER/HBY/117/3 will with probate of Rt. Hon. Leonard, Lord Holmes, Baron Holmes of Killmallock, 12 September 1804.
[35] IoWRO, JER/HBY/117/5 will with probate of Robert Worsley of Pidford, esq., 9 September 1805.

Table 10 : Landed estates inherited through the female line, 1699–1804

Original family	Final family	Date via female line
Holmes of Thorley	Rushworth of Thorley	1699, 1764, 1804
Dennys of West Court	Popham of West Court	1717, 1735
Dillington of Knighton	Bisset of Knighton	1721, 1764
Mews of Hinton Admiral	Jarvis Clarke of Hinton Admiral	1726
Compton of Bisterne	Willis (alias Compton) of Bisterne	1742
Knollys of Nursling	Mill of Nursling	1751
Bulkeley of Burgate	Coventry of Burgate	1764
Hoby of Somerley	Mill (alias Hoby) of Somerley	1766
Leigh of North Court	Arcedeckne of North Court	1772
Strode of Parnham, Dorset	Oglander of Nunwell	1776
Urry of Sheat	Heneage of Sheat	1776
Worsley of Gatcombe	Campbell of Gatcombe	1782

Source – Dataset of families

Landed estates on the island passed through the female line in seven of the nineteen families (thirty-six per cent) whereas in the New Forest, only five of the thirty-three families were affected (fifteen per cent). The willingness to pass land through the female line on the Isle of Wight in part reflected the endogamous marriages within the group, but also the fact that many of the families had been established on the island for generations; the heads of such established families were reluctant to be the one responsible for the loss of the estate.

Female succession could be through the mother, sister, or daughter, and it was often linked to a change of surname in order to preserve the explicit link between place and the original family. For this reason, a second son was often chosen to inherit through the female line, allowing the eldest son to continue the paternal family name. For example, on Henry Compton's death without issue in 1724, he left his landed estate to his wife Eleanor, whose brother, James Willis, was the family's steward. On her death in 1742, the estate passed to Henry Willis, her brother's second son, on condition

that he changed his name to Compton.[36] This was important as the Comptons were landed gentry and had long been associated with Bisterne and Minstead, whilst James Willis was of lower social status. This resulted in a significant shift in the relative status of Henry and the eldest Willis son, John. Henry Willis alias Compton achieved a hypogamous marriage into a local landed-gentry family, the Mills, and assumed a landed-gentry lifestyle, while John Willis remained socially inferior and never married.

Henry was fortunate that he inherited the landed estate while he was still in his twenties, enabling him to marry while still in his prime. In contrast, Sir Peter Mews died without issue in 1726, at the age of fifty-three, leaving Hinton Admiral to his widow, Lydia née Jarvis, who held it until her death in 1751. Her heir presumptive was her nephew, Jarvis Clerke, but he died unmarried in her lifetime and the estate was inherited by his nephew, Joseph Clerke, who took the name Jarvis. He barred the entail and, dying without issue in 1778, left Hinton Admiral to his second cousin, Sir George Ivison Tapps, first baronet.[37] The link between Hinton Admiral and the Mews and Jarvis family names had been broken.

Where there were several female co-heiresses, it became even more problematic to keep the landed estate intact. It had seemed inevitable that Thomas Holmes's estates on the Isle of Wight would have to be divided between his seven sisters and co-heiresses on his death. However, he addressed the problem in 1760 and persuaded them to relinquish their rights to Isle of Wight estates in return for property outside the island. As noted earlier, this left him free to dispose of his entire Westover estate by will to a male relative who was not a direct descendant. A similar division of properties between the island and elsewhere occurred in the Barrington family. When Sir Charles

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[36] *VCH Hampshire*, vol. 4, pp. 635–38.
[37] *VCH Hampshire*, vol. 5, pp. 83–101.

Barrington, fifth baronet, died without issue in 1715, his Essex properties remained under the control of his sister's husband, whereas the other properties on the Isle of Wight passed to his first cousin, 'John Barrington the elder of Hitchin'.[38] This resulted in the latter's son being raised to landed-gentry status as Sir John Barrington of Swainston.

In both these cases, the objective was to keep property in an area in undivided ownership, supporting the idea that the landed gentry were aware that their status was predicated on the ownership of a substantial, contiguous landed estate. Owning a collection of farms in different parts of the country might generate the same income, but it did not allow them to describe themselves as, for example, the Barringtons of Swainston.

Younger sons might benefit from generous settlements and inheritance through the female line, but in some circumstances, younger sons were responsible for the advancement or survival of the family. A good example of this was the Blachfords, who rose from being yeoman farmers to marriage into the peerage over the course of 100 years. Although the Blachfords were a cadet branch of an armigerous family, on the death of Robert Blachford in 1715, just under two-thirds of his estate, valued at £646, consisted of livestock and dead stock at Osborne Farm.[39] The eldest son, also Robert, tried to make money in 1726 through the slave trade, but with no success.

Robert tried to manage the operation remotely from the Isle of Wight and, having no experience of the business, relied heavily on Griffin, the captain of his ship, and on his uncle, John, who acted as his agent in London. This was not a successful strategy and, as Griffin's letter from 'Searalion' in March 1725/6 pointed out, 'Affrican

[38] TNA, PROB 11/560/305 will of Sir John Barrington of Hitchin, Hertfordshire, 7 November 1717.
[39] IoWRO, 8M57/50 inventory of Robert Blachford.

Voiages are not made so soon as talked on'.[40] Acquiring slaves was not the problem and in the same letter, Griffin reported that he had 'pickt up between 90 and 100 good Slaves at Gambia and here'.[41] Reaching Carlisle Bay in the West Indies in November, Griffin reported that there had been 'great Mortality aboard amongst both Blacks and Whites for I have buried both Mates early in the Voyage and to my Greater Grief 58 slaves'.[42] Two weeks later, Griffin had reached Port Royal, Jamaica with 148 slaves, four of whom died after their arrival.[43]

Selling the slaves and buying goods to bring home was more problematical and in February, Griffin wrote that sugars were 'skarce … and the market for the Black Jacks very badd.' They had sent a sloop with some of the unsold 'refuse' slaves to Hispaniola and had made a thirty per cent profit, which would help 'a Broaken voyage a Little'.[44] By March 1727, Griffin was able to report that he had sold all 132 slaves and was making good progress loading goods for the return journey.[45] He was still in Jamaica on 29 April having loaded 100 hogsheads including casks of indigo, '5 tuns of Loggwod and 120 Baggs of Ginger.' He hoped Blachford would 'find neither ease nor Industery has been wanting' even though 'our voyage proves so badd'.[46] Blachford's failure contrasts with William Mitford's exploitation of timber and salt boiling. Mitford succeeded because of his experience of the timber trade and because he was able to take direct control of commercial activities which were situated on his own land. Blachford's failure to make money through the slave trade also contrasts with the

[40] IoWRO, 8M57/6 letter Griffin to Blachford, 27 March 1726.
[41] IoWRO, 8M57/6 letter Griffin to Blachford, 27 March 1726.
[42] IoWRO, 8M57/7 letter Griffin to Blachford, 7 November 1726.
[43] IoWRO, 8M57/8 letter Griffin to Blachford, 13 December 1726.
[44] IoWRO, 8M57/9 letter Griffin to Blachford, 7 February 1727.
[45] IoWRO, 8M57/10 letter Griffin to Blachford, 8 March 1727.
[46] IoWRO, 8M57/11 letter Griffin to Blachford, 29 April 1727.

wealth brought into the Region by incomers, such as the Morants, who were slave and plantation owners rather than traders.

The Blachfords' future was redeemed, however, by Robert's uncle, John Blachford, a younger son, who had been sent to London in 1700 to be apprenticed to a goldsmith. John Blachford had his own mark from 1724, became an alderman in 1743, prime warden of the Goldsmiths' Company in 1744, served as sheriff in 1745, and was mayor of London in 1750.[47] He was one of the many wealthy patrons who supported the foundation of the Foundling Hospital, becoming a governor in February 1740. He also served as a governor of Saint Bartholomew's Hospital and was elected president of the hospital on 8 February 1754.[48] Blachford retained an attachment to the island. In 1728, he purchased Bowcombe from William Stephens, a member of the landed gentry on the Isle of Wight, and Thomas Hudson painted him there in 1746.[49] However, he spent his later years at Northaw Place, Hertfordshire, where Langford noted his 'munificence' in the 'dearth of 1757'.[50] By the time John died in 1759, his nephew, Robert, had already died unmarried at the age of thirty, and John left substantial sums to charity and his leasehold property in Silver Street, London and £500 in trust for his niece, Anne. However, he left Bowcombe to his great-nephew, R. P. Blachford, aged seventeen, in tail male.[51]

Although a younger son, John Blachford had built his fortune and reputation in the metropolis over a period of nearly sixty years. Fortunately for R. P. Blachford,

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[47] A. G. Grimwade, *London goldsmiths, 1697–1837: their marks and lives* (London, 1976), p. 108 entry 17 March 1700; Wareham, *Blachford and Waterton families*; Baddeley, *The aldermen of Cripplegate Ward,* p. 8.
[48] *The London Magazine*, February 1754.
[49] *Benn's Club of Aldermen* (1746), accessed via Bridgeman Education DRB128843.
[50] Langford, *Public life,* p. 388 citing W. S. Lewis and P. M. Williams, *Private charity in England, 1747–1757* (New Haven, 1938) pp. 20–21.
[51] *VCH Hampshire*, vol. 5, pp. 221–35, Carisbrooke; *Hants Field Club Proceedings*, vol. 2, p. 326; IoWRO, JER/SEL/50/52 will of John Blachford 28 November 1751, proved 12 November 1759.

John's behaviour did not represent the shift from 'the long-term economic ambitions of the family to the self-gratification of the individual' identified by the Stones.[52] Instead, the strategic choices he made increased the patrimony and longevity of the Blachford family in the Region.

As noted earlier, it is argued in this thesis that social power, which is an individual's ability to achieve his aims in spite of opposition from others, was as important as wealth in ensuring that a landed estate remained in the family. Furthermore, social power stemmed primarily from behaviour, rather than from physical assets such as land, and could vary over time. This will be demonstrated by comparing the experience of the Worsley and Hooper families over the course of the eighteenth century. It will be shown that the relatively wealthy Worsleys dissipated their social power and by the mid-nineteenth century, their estate had been broken up and sold. In contrast, the less wealthy Hoopers nurtured their social power and retained their estates into the twentieth century.

Dissipating social power

The Worsley family faced demographic problems throughout the eighteenth century, and successive heads of the family failed to respond positively to the situation. When Sir Robert Worsley, fourth baronet, died in 1747, the male heir to the Appuldurcombe estate was his first cousin, James Worsley of Pylewell. However, the two had never been close and Sir Robert attempted to divert funds to his only daughter's family. He left his unentailed Chilton Candover estate of less than 1,500 acres to trustees for his grandson in tail male, with remainder to his granddaughter,

[52] Stone and Stone, *An open elite?*, p. 282.

Louisa, in tail male, subject to an instruction to the trustees to raise £5,000 for her.[53] More problematically, he left his main estate, Appuldurcombe, to trustees for a period of twenty-one years with instructions to maintain the house and pay annuities, including £200 per annum to his widow and £300 per annum to his widowed daughter-in-law. It was not until the expiry of this twenty-one year term that the island estates were to revert to his male heir in tail male.[54]

This action might have might have been understandable had his daughter had a suitable heir, but her only surviving son, Robert Carteret, was of 'weak intellect'.[55] The extent of the problem was revealed by Horace Walpole who wrote, in 1744, that Robert had:

> Gone mad: about a fortnight ago he was at the Duke of Bedford's, and as much in his few senses as ever. At five o'clock in the morning he waked the duke and duchess all bloody, and with the lappet of his coat held up full of ears: he had been in the stable and cropped all the horses! He is shut up.[56]

However, Walpole was mistaken; rather than being shut up, Robert Carteret represented Yarmouth in Parliament from December 1744 until July 1747.[57] However, he never recovered and died in 1776, without issue. Although James Worsley inherited the baronetcy in 1747, he never moved to Appuldurcombe from Pylewell.

Earlier, it was noted that continuity of estate ownership could be put at risk where the failure to take account of prior claims and encumbrances on the estate

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[53] IoWRO, JER/WA/26/1 will of Sir Robert Worsley of Appuldurcomb (sic) 4 June 1746; see also P.C.C. Will 219 Potter.
[54] IoWRO, JER/WA/26/1 will of Sir Robert Worsley of Appuldurcomb (sic) 4 June 1746.
[55] *The House of Commons, 1715–1754,* ed. R. Sedgwick (London, 1970), vol. 2, Carteret, Robert, Lord Carteret (1721–76); *House of Commons, 1715–54,* vol. 1, Yarmouth; G. E. Cokayne, *The complete peerage of England, Scotland, Ireland, Great Britain, and the United Kingdom, extant, extinct, or dormant,* new edn (14 vols, Gloucester, 1982), vol. 6, p. 91; F. Barlow, *The complete English peerage* (London, 1772), p. 474.
[56] *The letters of Horace Walpole, earl of Orford,* ed. H. Walpole and P. Cunningham (London, 1857), p. 321 letter to Sir Horace Mann, 16 August 1744.
[57] *The House of Commons, 1715–1754,* vol. 2, Carteret, Robert, Lord Carteret (1721–76); *House of Commons, 1715–54,* vol. 1, Yarmouth.

resulted in the heir becoming involved in 'potentially ruinous disputes'.[58] Thirty years after Sir Robert's death, the court of Chancery sat to determine whether the trustees were liable to pay all of his debts. On 28 March 1783, the Lord Chancellor found with 'great reluctance' that it was necessary 'to charge the trust-term of twenty-one years, with the payment of the debts' including 'incumbrances' and mortgages.[59] This meant that for over twenty-five years, the estate was not able to use its income to protect the estate and, significantly, Appuldurcombe House was not used as the family's country seat. This led to an erosion of social power as well as wealth.

After Sir Robert's death, James succeeded as fifth baronet and two years later the engagement was announced of his son, Thomas, to lady Betty Boyle, the daughter of John, fifth earl of Cork and Orrery. Betty was said to be worth £10,000 but, in reality, the Orrerys were in straitened financial circumstances and the Orrerys were willing to make an exogamous marriage because Thomas was the heir apparent to the Appuldurcombe estate. In February 1750, Orrery received a letter congratulating him on Lady Betty's forthcoming marriage to 'a young gentleman extremely well esteemed by all his acquaintances and very likely therefore to prove a good Husband'.[60]

However, the couple were ill-matched temperamentally. They had met during the Season in Dublin and James hoped that they would be 'pleased with retiring from the Beau Monde, of which they have had enough by this time to satisfy reasonable people'. He added that Thomas now had 'an Estate which will require his attention'

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[58] Larminie, *Wealth, kinship and culture*, p. 50.
[59] *Reports of cases argued and determined in the High Court of Chancery, from 1778 to 1794*, 4th edn (4 vols, London, 1819), vol. 1, pp. 239–59.
[60] *The Orrery papers*, ed. Lady Orrery (2 vols, London, 1903), vol. 2, p. 68 letter to Orrery from Dr King, London 6 February 1749/50.

although, until 1772, this was Pylewell rather than Appuldurcombe.[61] Betty, on the other hand, had grown up in cultured households in Dublin and London, and was far from happy to retire to a country estate. Indeed, after her husband's death, she established her own presence in London. A son, Richard, was born a year after the marriage but two months later Orrery wrote to the Countess of Sandwich asking that Lady Betty should be allowed to 'throw herself' at her feet. He pleaded that 'the sunshine of your Ladyship's friendship will be as cheerful and advantageous to her mind as the sunshine of Montpellier can be to her health of body'.[62] Thomas and Betty had only one other child, a daughter, after an interval of seven years and this made the failure of the male line more likely.

Thomas succeeded his father as sixth baronet in 1756. He was colonel of the South Hampshire militia where his friend, Edward Gibbon, was one of one of the battalion's seven captains and eventually 'became Sir Thomas's prime minister and in fact commanded the Battalion'.[63] Gibbon described Sir Thomas as 'an easy good-humoured man fond of the table and of his bed', whose 'example encouraged the daily practise of hard and even excessive drinking'.[64] In August 1762, Sir Thomas spent time at a spa, which, Gibbon recorded had 'done him a great deal of good'. However, back with the battalion, he reverted to his old ways 'assuring us, every fresh bottle, how infinitely sober he was grown'. The following day, Gibbon noted that he had 'felt the

[61] *Orrery papers*, vol. 2, pp. 69–70 extract from letter from Sir James Worsley, fifth bart, Pilewell, March 18th, 1749/50 to Orrery.
[62] *Orrery papers,* vol. 2, p. 93 letter to the Countess of Sandwich, Leicester Fields, 18 May 1751.
[63] D. M. Low, *Edward Gibbon, 1737–1794* (London, 1937), pp. 109–11.
[64] E. Gibbon, *Memoirs of my life,* ed. G. A. Bonnard (London, 1966), p. 116.

usual consequences of Sir Thomas's company, and lost a morning, because I had lost the day before'.[65]

In 1765, Sir Thomas moved his family to Naples, letting Pylewell House to Edward Morant. Sir Thomas had always hoped to establish himself as the leading member of the island landed gentry and he continued the work started by his father on a history of the Isle of Wight.[66] He was back in England by the winter of 1767, when he and Gibbon were both staying with Jemmy Worsley, Sir Thomas's fourth cousin, at Stenbury on the Isle of Wight. Gibbon complained about island society, recording that he had 'passed four or five days at Stenbury with only Sir Thomas, his son, and Jemmy's sister, rather quietly indeed than agreeably'.[67] Gibbon continued: 'it is the monthly club of the island, & I fear will be a drunken day. Upon the whole this is to me a very unpleasant scene'.[68] Sir Thomas died aged forty in 1768, having never lived at Appuldurcombe nor achieved the recognition he desired.

His only son was seventeen when he succeeded to the baronetcy as Sir Richard Worsley, seventh baronet. When not in Italy, Sir Richard had been educated at Winchester College and had matriculated at Corpus Christi, Oxford in 1768. However, after only a year, his mother, his godfather Sir William Oglander and Jemmy Worsley, who were his guardians, arranged for him to go on a grand tour through France and Italy with Gibbon's friend, Deyverdun.[69] On his return in March 1772, Sir Richard seemed to have distanced himself from his father's alcoholism. Gibbon noted that 'he

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[65] E. Gibbon, *Miscellaneous works of Edward Gibbon, esquire: with memoirs of his life and writings, composed by himself, illustrated by John, Lord Sheffield,* ed. J. B. Holroyd (London, 1837), p. 64, journal entries for 28 and 29 August 1762.
[66] IoWRO, JER/WA/39/5 letter from Richard Clarke to Sir Thomas Worsley reporting on progress with the history of the Isle of Wight, 30 March 1765.
[67] E. Gibbon, *Private letters of Edward Gibbon, 1753–1794,* ed. R. E. Prothero (2 vols, London, 1896), vol. 1, p. 78 letter to his father from Newport, IoW, 1 December 1767.
[68] *Gibbon private letters,* vol. 1, letter to his father from Newport, IoW, 1 December 1767.
[69] LincRO 1–WORSLEY/39).

speaks in short sentences, quotes Montaigne, seldom smiles, never laughs, drinks only water, professes to command his passions, and intends to marry in five months'.[70]

When the trust term ended in 1772, Sir Richard moved into Appuldurcombe House with his mother and sister and set about re-establishing the family's position in island society. Two years after moving into Appuldurcombe, he was returned as member for the borough of Newport in 1774. He started to refurbish the house, a project that lasted until 1778, and he employed Lancelot 'Capability' Brown to landscape the gardens. He also sought to establish his role as the arbiter of good taste by completing the work his grandfather and father had been compiling on the *History of the Isle of Wight*. This was well received, and he was elected a fellow of both the Society of Antiquaries and the Royal Society in 1778.[71]

In June 1775, Gibbon wrote that Sir Richard was 'going to marry the youngest Miss Fleming: love and £80,000'.[72] On paper, this was a sensible match for Sir Richard. Seymour Fleming was the great niece of Edward Seymour, eighth duke of Somerset but the money came from her stepfather, Edwin, Baron Harewood of Harewood House, heir to the powerful Lascelles family of Barbados. The marriage took place that September and their only son and heir was born less than a year later. However, it soon transpired that Sir Richard had ignored Sir John Oglander's advice to take as much care in his choice of wife as in his selection of horses; she had a substantial dowry, but also needs that Sir Richard could not meet.

Up to this point, Sir Richard had been behaving as the epitome of the cultured, polite landed gentleman. He had been building social power and seemed to be poised to

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[70] *Gibbon private letters*, vol. 1, p. 153 letter to his stepmother from Pall Mall, 21 March 1772.
[71] IoWRO, JER/WA/39/5 bundle of letters; N. Aston, 'Worsley, Sir Richard, seventh baronet (1751–1805)', in *ODNB* (online edn, 2004), accessed 4 November 2013.
[72] *Gibbon private letters*, vol. 1, p. 261, Gibbon's letter to J. B. Holroyd (later Lord Sheffield) London, 17 June 1775.

take his place, both as a model of 'elite masculinity', and as the leader of society on the Isle of Wight.[73] Indeed, by 1777, he should have been imbued with the core values of 'industry, reflection, self-command, and moral awareness' which French and Rothery argued were espoused by the landed elite as being necessary for those in positions of authority.[74] As a member of the landed gentry, he was expected to know his place near the top of a hierarchical society and to have stable relationships with others. However, it soon became apparent that Sir Richard was more inclined to be competitive, self-centred, and individualistic and concerned primarily with the material trappings of status. This was the antithesis of elite masculine behaviour.[75]

This was particularly evident in his relationship with his wife. Seymour became part of the Devonshire House set in London, and was said to have been one of the role models for Lady Teazle in Sheridan's 'School for Scandal'.[76] Five years after their marriage, Sir Richard encouraged his wife to start an affair with their neighbour on the island, George Bisset. This developed into a *ménage à trois* when they lived together openly in a house while the South Hampshire militia, of which Sir Richard was colonel, was stationed near Maidstone in Kent. When Seymour had a daughter by Bisset in August 1781, outward appearances were maintained and the child was acknowledged by Sir Richard as his daughter. However, the positon changed when Seymour and Bisset eloped on 19 November 1781.[77]

Sir Richard was the wronged party and this need not have adversely affected his social power. However, he behaved badly, refusing, for example, to allow Seymour to

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[73] Jackson, 'Elite masculinity'.
[74] French and Rothery, *Man's estate,* p. 235.
[75] V. Mamadouh, 'Grid-group cultural theory: an introduction', *GeoJournal*, 47/3 (1999), pp. 395–409.
[76] R. B. B. Sheridan, *The school for scandal, a comedy* (Dublin, 1780); H. Rubenhold, *Lady Worsley's whim: an eighteenth-century tale of sex, scandal and divorce* (London, 2008), p. 34.
[77] Rubenhold, *Lady Worsley's whim,* p.62.

collect the clothes she had left behind. The scandal was soon the talk of London and Gibbon noted that Sir Richard had 'opened the trenches in Doctors Commons, and cryed down his wife's credit with tradesmen, etc.'.[78] This led Seymour to ask for a divorce and Sir Richard countered, in February 1782, by bringing an action against Bisset for criminal conversation, claiming damages of £20,000.

Salacious details of the whole affair came out in the press. Seymour published a pamphlet in 1782, describing herself as 'the Wife whom Fortune made you wed'. She claimed that Sir Richard left her 'unsatisfy'd', and it was rumoured that she had taken twenty-seven lovers with Sir Richard's consent, three of whom appeared in court in her defence.[79] She conceded that she had a 'lustful mind' but argued that she had 'strictly follow'd Nature's liberal plan'.[80]

> In former times, it was a crime to rove,
> And Wives to Husbands could confine their love:
> But now, when husbands can't perform their dues,
> Frail Nature's wants they surely should excuse.[81]

Sir Richard replied in print, initially asking Seymour to 'attend, and let thy suppliant husband move Compassion's tear, if not connubial love'.[82] However, he quickly moved on to the nub of his complaint revealing that it was 'the Grub-Street Syrens', who strained 'their hackney'd throats with W ---y's name', that upset him:

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[78] *Private letters of Edward Gibbon, 1753–1794,* ed. R. E. Prothero (2 vols, London, 1896), vol. 2, p. 4 letter Gibbon to Lord Sheffield, 1781.
[79] Aston, N. 'Worsley, Sir Richard, seventh baronet (1751–1805)', in *ODNB* (online edn, 2004), accessed 4 November 2013.
[80] S. D. Worsley, *An epistle from L–y W–y to S–r R–d W–y, Bart,* 3rd edn (London, 1782), pp. 2, 5, 6,14.
[81] Worsley, *An epistle,* p. 14.
[82] S. R. Worsley, *The answer of S–R R–D W–Y, bart to the epistle of L–Y W–Y* (London, 1782), p. 2.

> Say, could'st thou not clandestinely commit,
> A world of wickedness, and me permit,
> the destined horns, unknowing and unknown,
> Like many husbands, to have tamely borne?[83]

The jury found for Sir Richard, but they awarded him derisory damages of just one shilling because he had been 'privy to, consenting; and encouraging' his wife's 'debauchery'.[84]

Sir Richard's social power would not have been damaged if he had been unfaithful. However, by actively encouraging his wife's sexual exploits, he had failed to conform to the behaviour expected of the head of a landed-gentry family. He returned to Appuldurcombe, but never re-established his influence and leading role in island society. He remained a member of the Club on the island but, for example, was sconced or fined several bottles of port for non-attendance at the monthly meeting in October 1782.[85] He did not attempt to rebuild his social power in the Region and, as Chapter Seven will show, his behaviour towards the other landed gentry in the political arena further eroded his position. Thus, while it was usual for disgraced wives to leave England, by April 1783, Sir Richard himself felt compelled to travel abroad.

Even overseas, he did not escape censure. Horace Mann came across him in the summer of 1784 'totally attached to a very common Italian woman … a strange taste … for a man of any degree of delicacy'.[86] Sir Richard travelled not only through Europe but also to Constantinople, Cairo, Asia Minor, and Russia. According to Jeremy Bentham, who came across him, 'Sir R — had little to recommend him. He was …

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[83] Worsley, *The answer*, pp. 5, 6.
[84] R. Worsley, *The trial, with the whole of the evidence, between the Right Hon. Sir Richard Worsley, bart. plaintiff, and George Maurice Bisset, esq; defendant, for criminal conversation with the plaintiff's wife on Thursday the 21st of February, 1782*, 7th edn (London, 1782), p. 23.
[85] S. Foster, *Transcription of the minutes of the Society of Gentlemen* (Newport, 1950). The society was commonly referred to as 'the Club'.
[86] J. Black, *The British abroad: the grand tour in the eighteenth century* (London, 1999), p. 199 citing Mann Walpole correspondence vol. 4, p. 284.

haughty, selfish and mean'.[87] After returning to England in 1788, Sir Richard entered into articles of separation with his wife, and he resumed his parliamentary seat at Newtown in 1790.[88] He held the seat until June 1793, when he made way for George Canning and was made British envoy to the Venetian republic.[89]

Sir Richard had inherited considerable wealth, but he dissipated this in an attempt to establish a reputation as a connoisseur of fine art and antiquities. Others might be addicted to drinking or gambling; Sir Richard spent all his money, including the £600 annuity from the crown for his services in Venice, on *objets d'art,* adding to the collection of statues, reliefs and gems, which he had started on his grand tour. He displayed his collection at Appuldurcombe and prepared an illustrated catalogue, the *Museum Worsleyanum*, the first part of which was issued in 1798. He gave numbered copies to a number of influential people and offered other copies for sale at a cost before binding of £2,887 4*s*.[90]

A second edition was published in 1824, but the work did not restore Sir Richard's social power. He spent most of his last years living with his mistress, Mrs Sarah Smith, not at Appuldurcombe, but at his villa, Sea Cottage, on the south of the island. He was re-elected at Newtown in 1796 in his absence, but eventually left Parliament in 1801, offering his seat to George Rose.[91] Sir Richard died in August 1805, at the age of fifty-four, leaving an estate encumbered with debts.

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[87] Bentham, J., *The works of Jeremy Bentham,* vol. 10, Edinburgh, 1843 p. 153 via *The Making Of The Modern World,* accessed 30 December 2015.
[88] IoWRO, JER/WA/35/24 deed of separation, 14 June 1788.
[89] *House of Commons, 1754–1790,* vol. 3, Worsley, Sir Richard, 7th Bt (1751–1805), of Appuldercombe, I.o.W.
[90] R. Worsley, *Museum Worsleyanum or a collection of antique basso-relievos, bustos, statues and gems, with views of places in the Levant* (2 vols, London, 1794); *ODNB* (online edn, 2004), Sir Richard Worsley: recipients included including Sir Joseph Banks, Charles James Fox, William Pitt, lord Nelson and Frederick, duke of York.
[91] *The diaries and correspondence of the Right Hon. George Rose, containing original letters of the most distinguished statesmen of his day,* ed. L. F. Vernon-Harcourt (2 vols, London, 1860), vol. 1, p. 296.

The next generation might have been able to redeem the family's reputation and status had not his only son, Robert, 'a very handsome and promising youth' of eighteen, died in April 1795 on military service.[92] Once again, reliance on a single male heir had proved inadequate. The baronetcy passed to a fourth cousin, Henry Worsley-Holmes, and Sir Richard left Appuldurcombe to his sister's daughter, who married the earl of Yarborough in 1806.[93] As the Yarboroughs already had a much larger estate, Brocklesby Park, in Lincolnshire, Appuldurcombe was sold in several lots between 1809 and 1855.[94] The Worsleys had once been among the wealthiest and most respected families on the Isle of Wight, but by the end of the century, both their social power and their wealth had been dissipated.

Accumulating and preserving social power

The Worsley case study demonstrates how social power could be destroyed. In contrast, the different experience of the Hoopers of Hurn Court, whose estate was approximately one-tenth the size of Appuldurcombe, shows that social power could be accumulated and used to good effect. Edward Hooper was born in 1702 and, although he never married, he had warm and stable relationships with his extended family and friends. He understood the importance of social power and used it to control the parliamentary seat at Christchurch throughout his life, a topic that will be discussed more fully in Chapter Seven. When he died in 1795, at the age of ninety-three, he passed his enhanced estate onto the son of his cousin, James Harris, with whom he had always had a close relationship; this helped Harris's son become a member of the peerage as earl of Malmesbury in 1800.

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[92] *Letters from the year 1774 to the year 1796, of John Wilkes [...] addressed to his daughter,* ed. W. Rough (4 vols, London, 1804), vol. 3, p. 263: letter to his sister Polly, Isle of Wight, 19 December 1789.
[93] *ODNB* (online edn, 2004), Sir Richard Worsley.
[94] IoWRO, JER/WA/40/1 sale particulars for 2,300 acres, 5 October 1809.

Hooper was the eldest of three children of Edward Hooper, senior and Lady Dorothy Ashley-Cooper, the daughter of Anthony, third earl of Shaftesbury. This meant that, like Sir Richard Worsley, he was related to the peerage through his mother. When Hooper was young, his paternal grandfather lived at the principal family seat at Hurn Court, near Christchurch, while his parents lived in a five-bay house in Boveridge, less than four miles away from the Ashley-Cooper's estate at Wimborne St Giles in Dorset. The family had inherited Boveridge from a distant cousin, Sir Edward Hooper, in 1671, but the estate had been encumbered with a requirement to pay £3,000 to Sir Edward's sister.[95] Boveridge and Hurn Court were less than twenty miles apart, and after the death of his grandfather in about 1715, Hooper's parents remained at Boveridge.

Having been called to the Bar in 1724, Hooper moved to Hurn Court in order to build up the family's interest at Christchurch. Hooper's sister, Dorothy, lived first with her parents and later with Hooper. His younger brother, Thomas, went into the Army but died in 1743 of 'the bloody flux' while serving on the continent. This 'unexpected shock' caused both his parents 'great affliction'.[96] Hooper described his mother's 'indisposition' in August 1744 as 'so bad' that he could not 'stir from her as her spirits [were] very low'.[97] She died in May 1749 and his father survived her by less than a year. Hooper, now aged forty-eight, recorded the regret which he could not 'but very sensibly feel on the departure of so worthy a friend and so excellent a parent'.[98]

Hooper was close to his parents but he also had strong personal and political connections with his cousins on his mother's side. Hooper's aunt, Lady Elizabeth

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[95] 'Cranborne', in Royal Commission on Historical Monuments, *An inventory of the historical monuments in Dorset, vol. 5, East* (London, 1975), pp. 4–16, www.british-history.ac.uk/rchme/dorset, accessed 25 November 2015; 'Malmesbury papers' 9M73/G284/13 draft will of Edward Hooper of Boveridge, knight 16 July 1666.
[96] 'Malmesbury papers' 9M73/G327/11 letter Hooper to Harris, 19 September 1743.
[97] 'Malmesbury papers' 9M73/G327/14 letter Hooper to Harris, 11 August 1744.
[98] 'Malmesbury papers' 9M73/G327/36 letter Hooper to Harris, 2 April 1750.

Ashley-Cooper, had married James Harris, senior, and Hooper had an easy relationship with his uncle, writing chatty letters in the 1720s, full of gossip about life in London and the operas and diversions he had attended.[99] Hooper had three Harris first cousins, but was closest to James, who was seven years younger than he was. Hooper first mentioned Harris when he was applauded for playing 'several very difficult pieces which he had never before seen' at a concert.[100] Harris was then just eighteen and up at Oxford.

Harris revealed his intellectual rigour and disinterest in financial gain in his choice of wife. Hooper wrote to Harris in 1745 to congratulate him on his forthcoming marriage and had no hesitation in endorsing his decision:

> Whoever knew you must have believed that in the great affair of a partner for life your choice would be directed by the most rational & truly prudent considerations and whoever knows the lady you have chosen must I'm sure be abundantly convinced that that opinion was perfectly just. You have the fairest prospect of human happiness before you & with a warm heart I wish it you in its full extent.[101]

Sir John Oglander, who warned not to breed 'from crooked, deformed stock', would have approved of Harris's choice of an intelligent wife who shared his interests rather than the Worsleys' choice of a woman with a substantial dowry but also needs that he could not meet.

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[99] 'Malmesbury papers' 9M73/G15/22–34 letters Hooper to Harris senr, 1727.
[100] 'Malmesbury papers' 9M73/G15/32 letter Hooper to Harris senr, 24 October 1721.
[101] 'Malmesbury papers' G327/19 letter Hooper to Harris, 13 July 1745.

Harris carried his attitude to women through to his daughters. His son noted that:

> It deserves to be mentioned to his honour, that he thought it no interruption of his greater occupations, himself to instruct his daughters, by exercising them daily both in reading and composition, and writing essays for their improvement, during many of their younger years. No man was a better judge of what belonged to female education, and the elegant accomplishments of the sex, or more disposed to set a high value on them.[102]

Harris's wife, Elizabeth, was fortunate to find a husband who appreciated her abilities but his daughter, Louisa, was not so lucky. In October 1777, Hooper wrote to Harris on the news that she had called off her forthcoming marriage:

> It must be matter of consolation however to reflect that the breaking off a desirable match, however irksome it may be, can not equal the vexation arising continually from a match made & proving unhappy: such I believe must every marriage be where affection is not only wanting, but insuperable dislike has taken place.[103]

Although Hooper never married, he respected the role that women could play. He entrusted arrangements for the annual feasting of his supporters in Christchurch to his sister and ensured that wives of the townsmen were included in the celebrations. He noted the 'pleasing reception Mrs Harris & you met with from both sexes on your late visit to our good friends at Christchurch'.[104] After Harris became one of the Members of Parliament for Christchurch, the Harrises regularly spent New Year at Hurn Court and Elizabeth Harris described how 'we ladies danc'd sung play'd cards and acted farces & not one of us the least in liquor'.[105]

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[102] Earl of Malmesbury, *The works of James Harris, esq. with an account of his life and character* (Oxford, 1841).
[103] 'Malmesbury papers' 9M73/G332/16 letter Hooper to Harris, 20 October 1777.
[104] 'Malmesbury papers' 9M73/G653/2 letter Hooper to Harris, 26 January 1761.
[105] 'Malmesbury papers' 9M73/G1253/1 letters to Harris junior from his mother, 1766.

Hooper made Harris's only son, James Harris junior, his heir and in many ways treated him as the son he had never had. He was assiduous in attending family celebrations such as the dinner for his twenty-first birthday in April 1767.[106] Two years later, Elizabeth Harris explained to her son that she had had to insist that Hooper went to the theatre rather join their dinner as his 'great politeness would have given up his places to have done honor to your day'.[107] Hooper was more than willing to use his limited funds to help Harris meet the expenses his son was incurring when he was a diplomat in Spain:

> The £700 you may command whenever you please. It luckily happens (a circumstance extraordinary for me) that on making up my little cash book since my return at Child's, I find I have now a balance in their hands of near £1000.[108] … I am truly glad I could so seasonably accommodate you.[109]

Hooper sponsored James Harris junior's election as a Member of Parliament for Christchurch while he was serving abroad and left him the Hurn Court estate in 1795. On his death in November 1820, Harris, by then earl of Malmesbury of Hurn Court, left personalty of £25,000.[110] Hooper did not have the Worsley family's wealth, but he compensated for this by behaving in a way that was moral, controlled, and determined. In this way, he accumulated social power and this not only kept his estate in the family but also, as we will see, helped him control the parliamentary borough of Christchurch for over fifty years.

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[106] *Music and theatre in Handel's world: the family papers of James Harris, 1732–1780,* ed. D. Burrows and R. Dunhill (Oxford, 2002), p. 484.
[107] 'Malmesbury papers' 9M73/G1256/16 letters to Harris junior from his mother, 1769.
[108] 'Malmesbury papers' 9M73/G655/10/1 letter Hooper to Harris, 31 October 1770.
[109] 'Malmesbury papers' 9M73/G655/11 letter Hooper to Harris, November 1770.
[110] H. M. Scott, 'Harris, James, first earl of Malmesbury (1746–1820)', in *ODNB* (online edn, 2004), accessed 6 October 2015.

Conclusion

This chapter has shown that succession remained a major concern throughout the eighteenth century and demographic challenges made it hard to keep patrimony in an area in undivided ownership. The landed gentry's ideal was to leave the estate to an eldest son who had been brought up to the role and the failure to produce a male heir had serious consequences at a time when primogeniture and strict settlement were common. A contributory factor was that the landed gentry were less wealthy than the peerage and found it harder to attract suitable wives or provide dowries for daughters and sisters. This led to later marriage and fewer potential heirs. In several families, one brother after another inherited the estate before dying without issue. As a consequence, nearly one in four Isle of Wight estates and one in ten New Forest estates passed through the female line during the period. In some cases, this was accompanied by a change in name, as it was important to continue to be known, for example, as the Comptons of Minstead.

The behaviour of the head of the family played an important role in determining whether the family retained its estate and its power. It has been shown that social power could be accumulated over time and deployed when required, just as wealth could be spent. However, inappropriate behaviour could also lead to a reduction in social power and, once lost, it took time to rebuild. The wealthy Sir Richard Worsley's attitude to his wife and to the other landed gentry on the Isle of Wight destroyed the social power, which the senior branch of his family had accumulated in the first half of the eighteenth century. Soon after his death, the Worsley name and the Appuldurcombe estate were separated and Appuldurcombe had been broken up and sold by the mid-nineteenth century. The Worsleys had lost both place and power. In contrast, Edward Hooper accumulated social power through his strong, stable relationships with both his

extended family and his friends. He treated women with respect and adopted high moral standards, expecting others to do the same. Although lacking the Worsleys' financial resources, Hooper succeeded in passing an improved estate onto his cousin, who appeared as the earl of Malmesbury in Bateman's *Great Landowners*.[111]

These case studies support the argument that, for this stratum in the social hierarchy, social power, linked to behaviour, was as important as wealth in determining whether the family could maintain its position and its estate. This was the case throughout the century and, significantly, social power remained an important attribute even in the last twenty-five years, a period of significant turbulence. It is also argued that the importance of social power was not restricted to the family setting and the following chapters consider the interaction between behaviour and social power in the public sphere, within the Region, outside the Region, and in national politics.

[111] Bateman, *Great landowners*.

Chapter Five: Maintaining landed-gentry status in the Region

The second chapter in Section Two continues the review of the role of behaviour and social power, but takes the discussion into more public spheres. It considers how the landed gentry maintained their landed-gentry status and whether this changed over time. In particular, it examines whether spending money or spending time in the Region was perceived to be more effective in creating social power and ensuring the family's longevity. It also investigates whether there were differences in public behaviour between newcomers and established families or between the Isle of Wight and the New Forest.

The first part of the chapter takes building or modernising a country seat as an exemplar of spending money. To qualify as landed gentry, a family needed a house of sufficient standing to be a country seat. However, what was considered appropriate? Some historians have argued that the house created a visible, external profile for the family, and that this was a critical factor in establishing their status. For example, Rosenheim endorsed the Stones' view that such houses should serve as a 'power centre, a showplace for the display of authority'.[1] Although much of the earlier historiography focused on the largest landowners, Hague has recently researched the role of smaller houses in Gloucestershire in the period 1680–1770.[2] He argued that gentlemen built and owned 'small classical houses', which 'served as primary sites of social change and transformation of the elite', but that such houses were increasingly built near commercial centres rather than being houses in the country. This was consistent with the Stones' findings that from the early eighteenth century, some owners prioritised the house over land, building a house as a 'temporary showcase to display their opulence

[1] Stone and Stone, *An open elite?*, p. 299; Rosenheim, *Emergence of a ruling order*, p. 91.
[2] S. G. Hague, 'A modern-built house ... fit for a gentleman' (D.Phil., University of Oxford, 2011).

… which carried with it none of the traditional obligations or privileges' of the landed gentry.[3] Wilson and Mackley examined 'the building activities of the whole gamut, from the fabulously rich and grand to the small country squire whose estate and income barely sustained his standing at a county level'.[4] They concluded that a 'country house symbolised many things: wealth, political clout, taste, genealogical respectability'.[5] In the words of Stobart and Rothery, 'the country house itself might be seen as the ultimate positional good'.[6]

This chapter examines whether these attitudes prevailed in the Region. Historically, the extensive ownership of land by the church meant that Hampshire was not as 'rich in great houses of the late-sixteenth and seventeenth centuries' as some other counties.[7] Did this mean that the landed gentry would be 'eager to spend large sums on their houses', as Wilson and Mackley had predicted?[8] Furthermore, were newcomers to landownership particularly concerned with outward appearances, and was 'building an impressive country seat' high on any newcomer's agenda'?[9] If so, did they tend 'to build ostentatiously, sometimes provoking the envious censure of the old gentry class'?[10] This thesis will consider whether these trends applied in the Region and the impact such behaviour had on longevity.

The second part of the chapter takes public service, particularly sitting as a justice of the peace, as illustrative of spending time in the Region. Appointment to the commission of the peace was considered desirable, but in Langford's view, active

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[3] Stone and Stone, *An open elite?,* pp. 287, 289, which related to Hertfordshire.
[4] Wilson and Mackley, *Creating paradise,* p. xvii.
[5] Wilson and Mackley, *Creating paradise,* p. 240.
[6] J. Stobart and M. Rothery, 'Fashion, heritance and family', *Cultural and Social History,* 11/3 (2014), pp. 385–406.
[7] Roberts, *Hampshire houses,* p. 208. See also the discussions in Chapter One.
[8] Wilson and Mackley, *Creating paradise,* p. 240.
[9] Stone and Stone, *An open elite?,* pp. 41–2; Wilson and Mackley, *Creating paradise,* p. 46.
[10] Wilson and Mackley, *Creating paradise,* p. 40.

service as a magistrate was regarded as onerous.[11] Building on Landau's work, this chapter considers whether the landed gentry avoided attendance or whether they regarded public service as their duty and as adding to their social power. It highlights the active part played by the landed gentry in the magistracy and explains the important role of junior members of landed-gentry families. It then examines the landed gentry's role as sheriffs and deputy lieutenants, and their involvement on grand juries and in militias. It considers whether there was any difference in attitude between established families and newcomers, and whether this attitude changed over time. It also looks for any evidence of the division, envisaged by Landau, of the landed gentry into two distinct groups, 'patriarchs', who were 'pillars of the local community', and 'patricians', who adopted more of a 'national culture', and argues that no such obvious division existed.[12]

The country seat as showplace

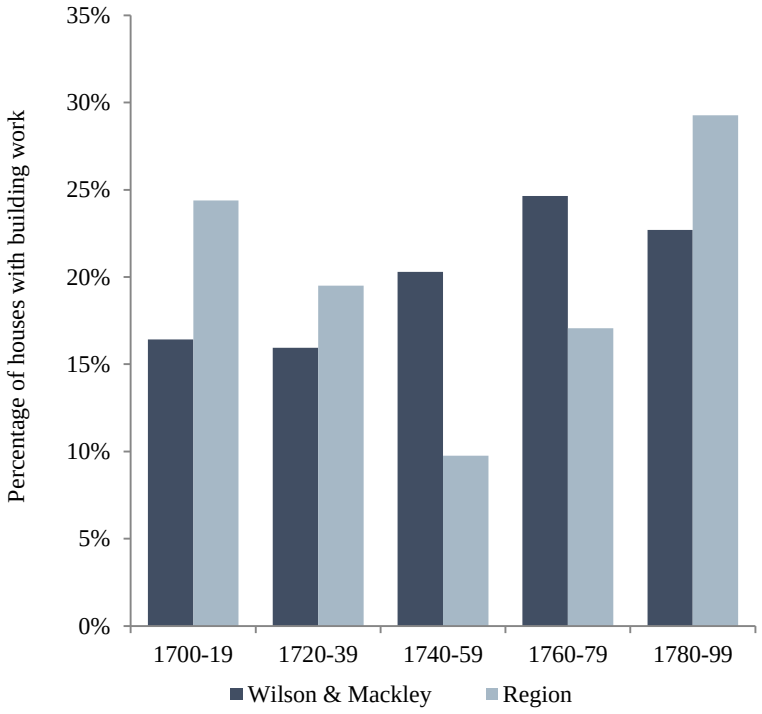
The detailed history of forty of the forty-three country seats has been established.[13] These houses have been divided into four categories according to the extent of the work undertaken on them in the eighteenth century: unmodernised, modernised, rebuilt, and new build. Modernised houses retained the original building but new facades, storeys, or wings were added. Where a house was rebuilt, very little of the original country seat was retained. New builds were houses which were on a new site or which replaced a house that did not qualify as a country seat. Some buildings were untouched throughout the eighteenth century, whilst others were altered more than once during the period, resulting in forty-one building events. Taking into account all of

[11] Langford, *Public life*, p. 396.
[12] Landau, *Justices*, pp. 360, 3–4.
[13] Nine of the forty-three country seats in the Region had been demolished by the end of the twentieth century.

these building events, it is possible to establish how building activity changed over time and how this compared with other locations.

Wilson and Mackley have analysed the pattern of building activity for 353 country seats covering six counties.[14] Their sample was restricted to houses where the family owned over 3,000 acres, and it is likely that the associated country houses were larger than many in the Region.[15] Nevertheless, a comparison of their findings to building work in the Region is instructive, and allocating building events to periods of twenty years reveals different patterns of activity (Figure 8).

Figure 8 : Chronology of building country houses, 1700–99



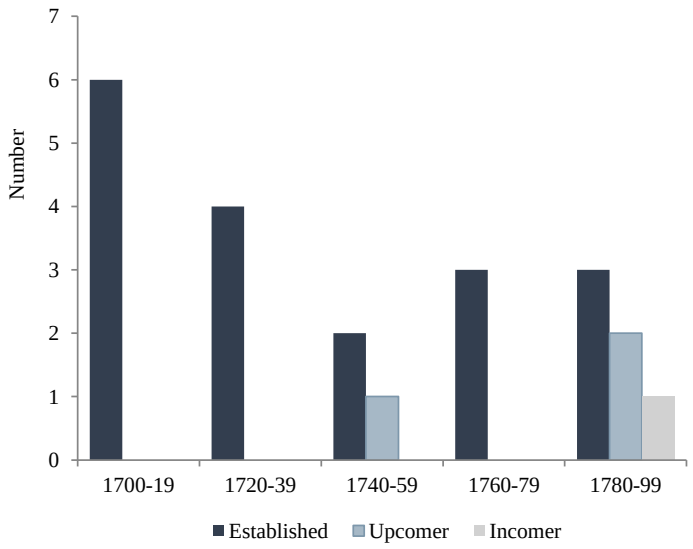
Source — *Creating Paradise* and dataset created for this thesis[16]

In the Region, building activity peaked in the two periods 1700–19 and 1780–99, whereas, in Wilson and Mackley's sample, activity peaked in the period 1760–79.

[14] Cheshire, Gloucestershire, Norfolk, Northamptonshire, Suffolk, and the West Riding of Yorkshire.
[15] Wilson and Mackley, *Creating paradise,* p. 204.
[16] Wilson and Mackley, *Creating paradise,* p. 204.

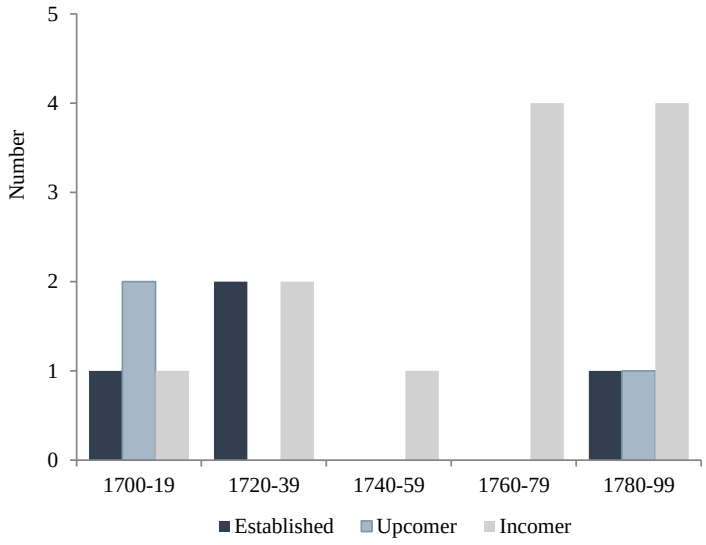
This might be explained by regional variations, the importance of which has been established by Clemenson, the Stones, and Lubbock, and it is therefore important to identify differences between the Isle of Wight and the New Forest (Figures 9 and 10).[17]

Figure 9 : Building events by type of Isle of Wight landed gentry, 1700–99



Source - Dataset created for this thesis

Figure 10 : Building events by type of New Forest landed gentry, 1700–99



Source – Dataset created for this thesis

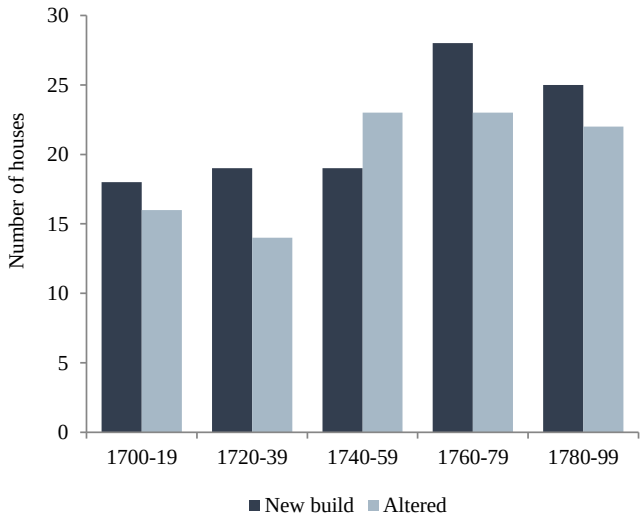
[17] Clemenson, *English country houses*; Stone and Stone, *An open elite?*; J. Lubbock, *The tyranny of taste: the politics of architecture and design in Britain 1550–1960* (New Haven; London, 1995).

Taking the type of landed gentry first, most building on the Isle of Wight was undertaken by established families, whereas in the New Forest incomers and upcomers were most active. These differences in patterns of building suggest that county-wide studies may hide significant variations within the county.

In the case of the Region, the pattern is largely explained by the mix of landed-gentry families. On the Isle of Wight, there were fourteen established, four upcomer, and a single incomer family. In the New Forest, there were eight established families, three upcomers, and thirteen incomers. There was also a difference in chronology. Building work on the Isle of Wight peaked in the period 1700–19, while in the New Forest it peaked in the period 1760–99. This suggests that early in the period, the landed gentry were under some social pressure to build but this lessened over the century. After about 1760, building work was mostly undertaken by newcomers who needed to have an appropriate country seat.

The second variable is the nature of the building work undertaken. Wilson and Mackley divided their building events into ‘new build’ houses and those which had been ‘altered’ (Figure 11).

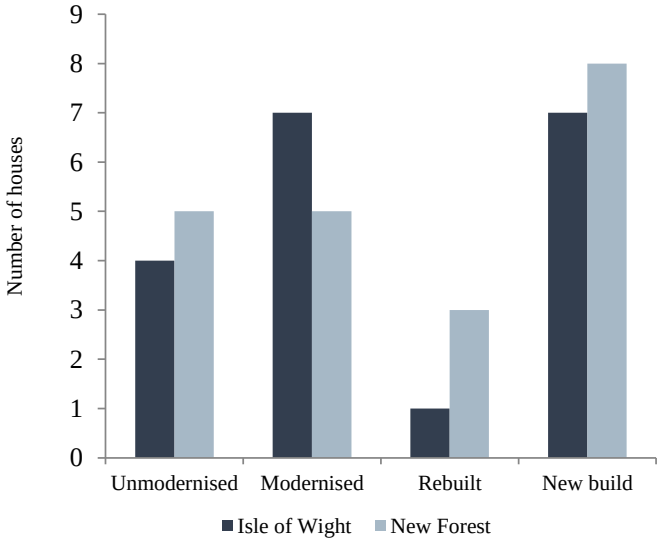
Figure 11 : Houses by date and category of building work, 1700–99



Source – Wilson and Mackley, *Creating Paradise*[18]

They found that the chronology of both categories of building work was broadly similar. For this thesis, the building events were divided into the four categories outlined earlier: unmodernised, modernised, rebuilt, and new build, and the results compared for the Isle of Wight and the New Forest (Figure 12).

Figure 12 : Houses by location and category of building work, 1700–99

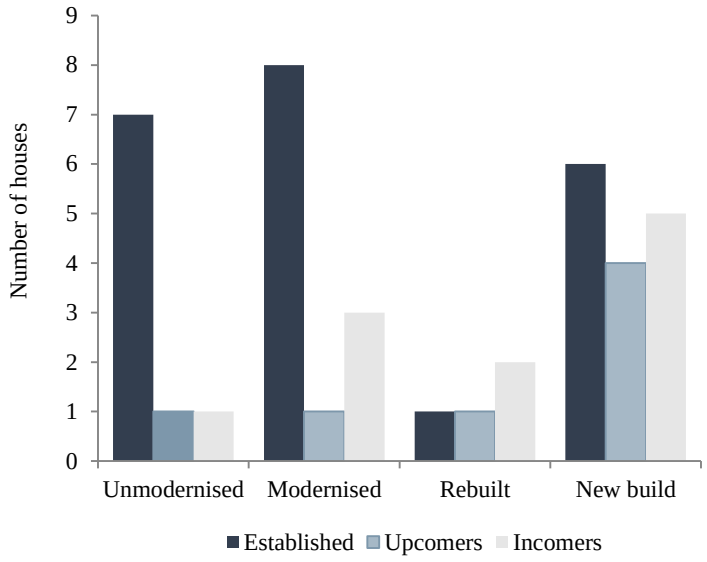


Source – Dataset created for this thesis

[18] Wilson and Mackley, *Creating paradise,* pp. 205, 221.

There were no significant differences between the two locations, but when the data was analysed by type of landed gentry, differences emerged (Figure 13).

Figure 13 : Houses by type of landed gentry and building work, 1700–99

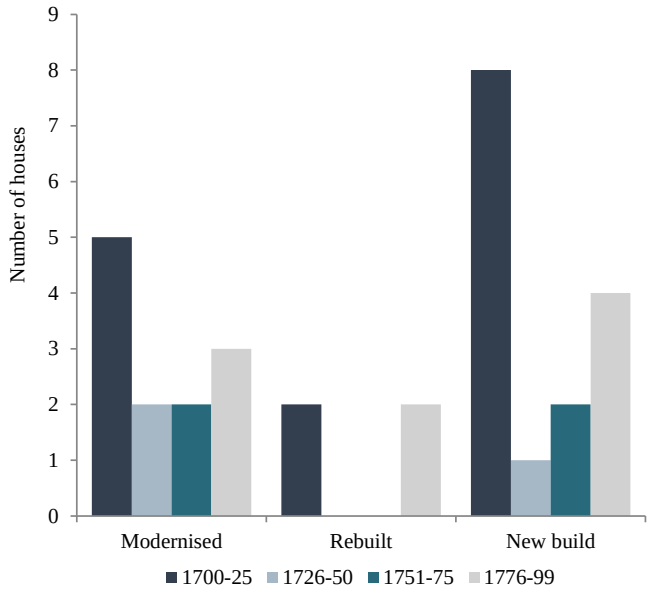


Source – Dataset created for this thesis

Taking the Region as a whole, established gentry were more likely to leave an existing house unmodernised or to modernise it without rebuilding it although six landed-gentry families (out of twenty-two) built a new house. Incomers and upcomers were more likely to build a new house than modernise an existing house.

An analysis of building work in the Region by category of work and date shows that activity was greatest in the first quarter of the century, when fifteen houses were affected, followed by the fourth quarter, in which nine houses had some form of building work done. In comparison, work on only seven houses took place in the fifty-year period 1726–75 (Figure 14).

Figure 14 : Houses by date and category of building work, 1700–99



Source – Dataset created for this thesis[19]

Wilson and Mackley's initial conclusion was that newcomers to landownership were particularly concerned with outward appearances and 'tended to build ostentatiously, sometimes provoking the envious censure of the old gentry class'.[20] For this reason, 'building an impressive country seat was high on any newcomer's agenda'.[21] In terms of the chronology of building work, they suggested that, at a national level, there was a renewal of confidence and political power after the Glorious Revolution and this, coupled with 'the excitement of new architectural styles emanating from metropolitan leadership', influenced decisions to build.[22] However, having analysed the data for six counties they expressed a more nuanced view that 'the vagaries of inheritance and succession, the timing and financial consequences of marriage, the condition of the

[19] The analysis is by quarter, rather than twenty-year periods, due to the relatively small number of houses.
[20] Wilson and Mackley, *Creating paradise,* p. 40.
[21] Stone and Stone, *An open elite?,* pp. 41–2; Wilson and Mackley, *Creating paradise,* p. 46.
[22] Wilson and Mackley, *Creating paradise,* p. 232.

landed estate, and personal inclinations, combine in a complex equation to determine whether or not a new house was built'.[23]

Williamson took a different approach and drew attention to the relationship between sociability and the design of both houses and their surrounding grounds. He argued that the 'new, easier patterns of relationships' between the great landowners and the landed gentry influenced the design of country houses. Rooms were arranged not as 'self-contained apartments' but on a circuit, so that they 'could be thrown open for entertaining'.[24] The extent of building work therefore depended not only on the finance available, and the state of repair of an existing house, but on the owner's penchant for sociability and hospitality.

The timing and extent of building work in the Region was influenced by the fact that the landed gentry were less wealthy than the peerage or great landowners. This had two significant consequences. First, whilst it was essential to have a country seat in order to be recognised as a member of the landed gentry, the analysis of building work over the period suggests that a large or ostentatious mansion did not confer status or longevity. Second, newcomers gave priority to increasing the size of the landed estate over improving their country seat and, increasingly over the course of the eighteenth century, parkland was seen to be as important as the house itself.[25] In the words of de la Rochefoucauld, 'all that one wants for a country house is a pleasant site', describing English parks as 'all vast' and all consisting of turf.[26] In the countryside, land was important and this was evident from contemporary engravings of country seats (Appendix 4). An insight into the 'vagaries' that determined the timing and extent of

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[23] Wilson and Mackley, *Creating paradise,* p. 232.
[24] Williamson, *Polite landscapes,* p. 110.
[25] This is shown by the illustrations of the houses in Appendix 4.
[26] F. La Rochefoucauld *et al., A Frenchman in England, 1784: being the mélanges sur l'Angleterre of François de la Rochefoucauld* (Cambridge, 1933), pp. 44, 45.

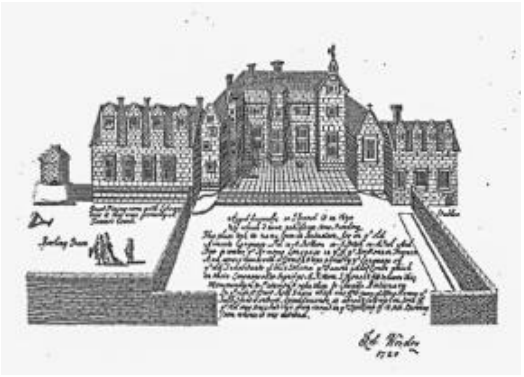
building work is best obtained through the following history of a sample of country seats.

Established families

On the Isle of Wight, the fourteen established families undertook, between them, building work on eighteen occasions. Thus, far from watching enviously while newcomers built ostentatious country seats, the established landed gentry were active improvers.[27] In the New Forest, on the other hand, the eight established families were less active than on the Isle of Wight, with only four building events.

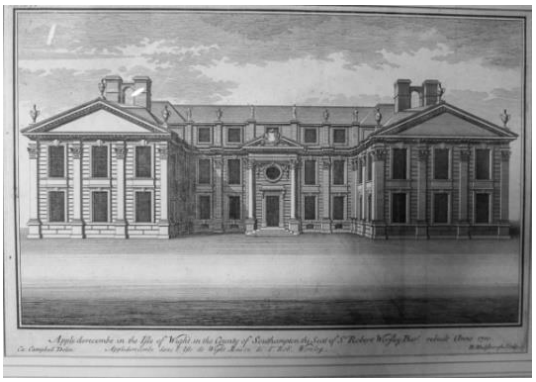
Sir Robert Worsley, fourth baronet, was an ambitious and active builder. He inherited Appuldurcombe from his father in 1675 while still a minor and used part of the income from the estate to rebuild the original, large Tudor house there (Figures 15 and 16).

Figure 15 : Appuldurcombe, 1690



Source – *History of the Isle of Wight*[28]

Figure 16 : Appuldurcombe, 1720



Source – *Vitruvius Britannicus*[29]

[27] Wilson and Mackley, *Creating paradise*, p. 40.
[28] Worsley, *History*, p. 180.
[29] C. Campbell, *Vitruvius Britannicus, or the British architect* (3 vols, London, 1715–25), vol. 3, p. 63.

Work started in 1701 and shortly afterwards his wife, Frances, wrote to her father, Viscount Weymouth, that 'the chapel goes up apace. I wish he would let them go on as fast with the rest of the building, that we might see an end of it'.[30] Sir Robert had spent £3,533 by 1713, including £1,990 on masonry, £571 on stone, £219 on plumbing, £125 on interior fittings, and £17 on the roof.[31] However, Frances disliked the island and preferred life in London and in 1711, Sir Robert wrote:

> I must leave to the next age, both the finishing of this [house], and the paying of my own debts & that of the nation, for I see no prospect of its being done in my time. I have been at the labouring oar, ever since I came of age, & must continue so to my grave, & the plenty I remember in King Charles the 2d's time during my minority makes the present prospect appear more melancholy.[32]

In spite of his pessimism, the house was deemed to be worthy of inclusion in *Vitruvius Britannicus*.[33]

Sixty years later, the house was remodelled and extended by Wyatt for Sir Richard Worsley, seventh baronet, with a 'decidedly odd' entrance and a Tuscan colonnade.[34] Pevsner's assessment of the architectural style was that Appuldurcombe was 'a house designed … by a minor provincial architect whose one great chance this was'.[35] From Sir Richard's point of view, it advertised that he had been on a grand tour of Europe and showcased, not his membership of the landed gentry, which was beyond question, but his standing as a man of enlightenment and culture. Nevertheless, the illustration of the house which Sir Richard chose to include in his own *History of the*

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[30] L. Boynton, *Appuldurcombe House, Isle of Wight*, 2nd edn (London, 1986), p. 10 citing Thynne MS at Longleat House, vol. 18, f. 61.
[31] Boynton, *Appuldurcombe House*, p. 28.
[32] Boynton, *Appuldurcombe House*, p. 27.
[33] T. P. Connor, 'The making of "Vitruvius Britannicus"', *Architectural History*, 20 (1977), pp. 14–81.
[34] N. Pevsner and D. W. Lloyd, *Hampshire and the Isle of Wight* (Harmondsworth, 1967), p. 730.
[35] Pevsner and Lloyd, *Hampshire*, p. 730.

Isle of Wight emphasised the park setting rather than the Tuscan colonnade and the house was renamed Appuldurcombe Park (Figure 17).

Figure 17 : Appuldurcombe Park, 1780



Source – *History of the Isle of Wight*[36]

The improvements made by Sir Richard to the house were not able to save his reputation after his wife left him. As discussed in Chapter Four, this blow to his social power ultimately led to the break-up of the estate after his death.

In the New Forest, James Worsley of Pylewell took a more modest and more typical approach to improvements. He modernised his country seat at Pylewell by extending the existing five-bay double-pile construction to create a seven-bay house (Figures 18 and 19).[37] The print published in 1740 emphasised the setting of the house, but Pylewell was not renamed Pylewell Park.

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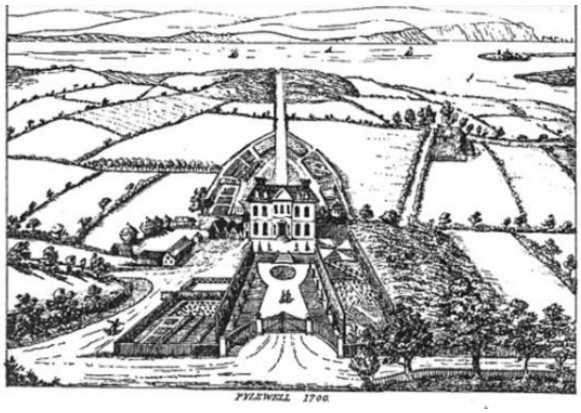
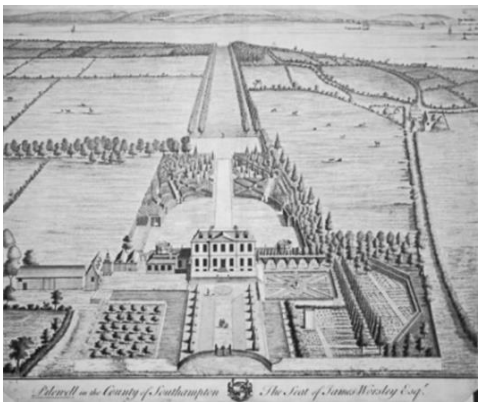
[36] Worsley, *History*, p. 218 drawing by A. Devis.
[37] *The architecture of Sir Roger Pratt*, ed. R. T. Gunther (Oxford, 1928), p. 24; 'Historic England: listed buildings', www.historicengland.org.uk, accessed 6 August 2016, list entry number 1351015; Badeslade and Rocque, *Vitruvius Britannicus*, pp. 102–3; BL, BLL01004911613 'A view of Pilewell the Seat of J.

Figure 18 : Pylewell, 1700



Source – *Vitruvius Britannicus*[38]

Figure 19 : Pylewell, 1740



Source – View of Pilewell[39]

Another established family in the New Forest, the Hoopers, made no improvements to their Elizabethan house during the eighteenth century. Hurn Court was a substantial building, with sixty-eight windows, and Edward Hooper made do with repairing the fabric of the building, rather than modernising it.[40] Hooper never married and following his appointment as a commissioner of Customs in 1748, he spent most of his time in London, visiting Hurn Court to deal with political matters and for a few weeks' vacation in the summer. He was not wealthy and, as he did little entertaining there, he did not feel the need to modernise the interior. In August 1775, he wrote to his cousin complaining:

> When I may have done of my workmen in patching & repairing my old habitation seems what I see to be very uncertain. Dust, dirt & noise will be my lot I dare say during my whole vacation.[41]

Worsley' in about 1740. This print was donated to the British Library by George IV having been collected by George III.

[38] Badeslade and Rocque, *Vitruvius Britannicus*, pp. 102–3.

[39] BL, BLL01004911613 'A view of Pilewell the Seat of J. Worsley'.

[40] HRO, 7M54/275 packets of bills and receipts, 1716–96.

[41] HRO, 9M73/G660/11 letter Hooper to Harris, August 1775.

Hooper had no children but his cousin and eventual heir, James Harris, second earl of Malmesbury, added a wing and another story to the house in the nineteenth century (Figure 20).

Figure 20 : Hurn (Heron) Court, 1830



Source – *Views of the principal seats*[42]

Upcomers

The established landed gentry all started the eighteenth century with a country seat, but R. P. Blachford, an upcomer, had only a modest farm house at Osborne. Although this was approached by a tree-lined drive, it was a small three-bay, two-storey building surrounded by fields rather than parkland. As he moved up to the landed gentry, he decided to build a completely new mansion surrounded by a park and with views over the Solent (Figures 21 and 22).

[42] R. A. Grove, *Views of the principal seats and marine and landscape scenery in the neighbourhood of Lymington* (1832), lithograph by J. M. Gilbert engraved by L. Haghe.

Figure 21 : Osborne farm, 1734



Source – Survey of Osborn Farm, 1734

Figure 22 : Osborne House, c. 1830



Source – *Vectis Scenery*[43]

The total cost was in excess of £4,200 and expenditure reached a peak in 1779, when he spent £1,308.[44] This was the year after he had married Winifred, the daughter of Sir FitzWilliam Barrington, eighth baronet, and became entitled to a payment of £1,666 under the marriage settlement.[45] In 1781, Sir Robert Worsley, seventh baronet, noted that Blachford had 'built an exceeding good house at Osborne, which commands a fine view of the road at Spithead and the opposite coast'.[46] The new house had the desired effect of providing visible evidence of Blachford's membership of the landed gentry and, in 1812, his son married the daughter of the duke of Grafton.

Blachford's expenditure of £4,200 on the new house was only £700 more than Sir Robert Worsley had spent in 1713 on Appuldurcombe. However, Osborne was significantly smaller than Appuldurcombe and this reflects the inflation in building costs over the century. Wilson and Mackley argued that costs increased substantially

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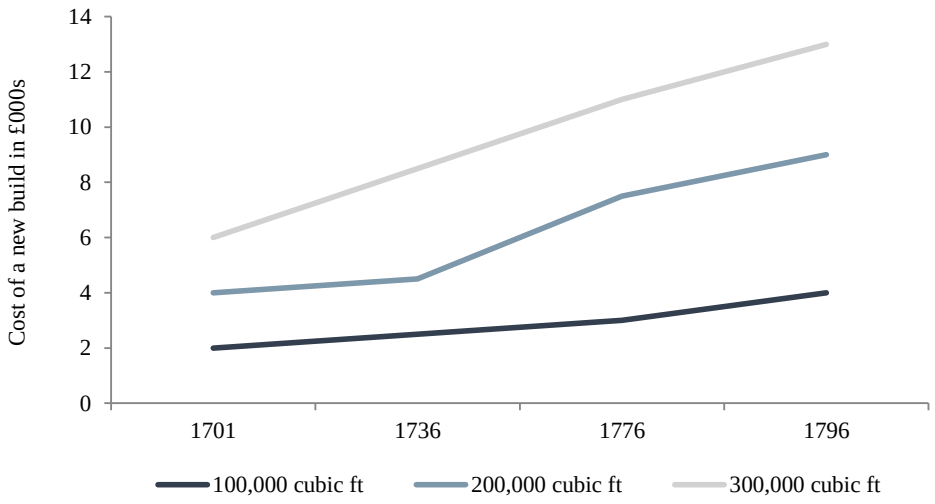
[43] G. Brannon, *Vectis scenery* (Wotton, 1831).
[44] IoWRO, 8M57/59 a and b cash account books of Robert P. Blachford, summarised in Chapter 3, Appendix 3.
[45] IoWRO, JER/SEL/50/54 indented agreement [by way of settlement], 17 April 1778. This capital sum was essential given that building costs were typically many times the annual income from estates.
[46] Worsley, *History*, p. 230. The 'road' referred to is the Solent.

over this period and more steeply for larger houses.[47] However, their conclusions should be treated with caution. The contemporary architect, Thomas Rawlins, refused to give cost estimates for his various designs 'as have been practis'd by some Authors', arguing that 'the Prices of Materials, Carriage, Wages and other Charges, vary so very considerably in different Parts of the Nation as well as the different Methods of Building'.[48] Wilson and Mackley's graph was derived by extrapolating calculations based on just five houses in the period ranging from 80,000 to 600,000 cubic feet and did not take into account regional variations or factors such as the savings made from using timber and, in some cases, bricks or stone from the estate itself (Figure 23).

Figure 23 : Variation of total building cost by house size and date, 1701–96



Source – Wilson and Mackley, *Creating paradise*[49]

Wilson and Mackley also showed that, in the limited period 1770–1800, the cost of building a new house was about four times the cost of altering an existing house.[50] The differential depended on the extent of the alterations, but the potential savings informed

[47] Wilson and Mackley, *Creating paradise,* p. 291, figure 5.
[48] T. Rawlins, *Familiar architecture consisting of original designs for houses* (London, 1768), p. v. He may have been referring to early editions of Halfpenny's guides: W. Halfpenny, *The modern builder's assistant: or, a concise epitome of the whole system of architecture* (London, 1757).
[49] Wilson and Mackley, *Creating paradise,* p. 291, figure 5.
[50] Wilson and Mackley, *Creating paradise,* p. 294.

the choices made by landed-gentry families, such as the Mitfords, who had limited resources.

Incomers

This is well illustrated by William Mitford, who as discussed in Chapter Three, preferred to use his money to enlarge his new estate at Exbury, rather than build a country seat there. He already owned Newtown House and, although he was described as 'of Exbury' when he was appointed sheriff in 1727, this merely located his qualifying land. Mitford purchased the 118-acre Gilbury farm in 1723 and, in 1726, he spent £520 building a modest house there for his own use, enclosing three and a half acres of the commons on each side of the house to create a garden.[51] The house was modified by his son, Jacky, in the 1740s, but it was still a house in the country, rather than a country house.[52] Recognising this, Jacky described himself as 'John Mitford of Newtown, Hampshire, 1744' both in the bookplate in the Exbury estate book and in his will.[53] When Jacky died in 1761, he was buried not All Saints church, Fawley, the parish in which Gilbury was situated, but in St John the Baptist in Boldre, where his father had purchased a pew when he had acquired Newtown in 1711.[54]

When Jacky's son, Colonel Mitford, inherited the estate, he continued to invest in land rather than build a new country seat. He initially took up his residence 'in the small house built by [his] grandfather and since reduced to garden walls', and it was not until 1790 that he 'rebuilt his paternal mansion', now known as Exbury House.[55] This was situated a mile north of the original settlement at Exbury and was, in effect, a

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[51] 'Exbury estate book', f. 11b; HRO, TOP118/2/25, black and white postcard of Gilbury.
[52] Taylor, 'Map of Hampshire'.
[53] 'Exbury estate book', bookplate, f. 12a; TNA, PROB 11/866 will of John Mitford esq. of Newtown, 6 June 1761.
[54] Parish records of St John the Baptist, 23 May 1761.
[55] 'Exbury estate book', foreword; *The Gentleman's Magazine*, 10 February 1827, obituary of William Mitford, esq.; Milne, 'Map of Hampshire'.

completely new country seat. Although built in the prevailing fashionable style, the Colonel was not satisfied with the house alone, and he created an entirely new village next to it, using yellow bricks from his own brickyard to build 'comfortable dwellings for the peasantry', providing each new cottage with 'a sufficiency of garden ground'.[56] In the 1820s, he used the bricks of the old chapel to build a new church close to these cottages and this was consecrated in 1827. Even when he inherited considerable property in Yorkshire from his mother's family, the Colonel continued 'to his death, to make Exbury in Hampshire his country residence'.[57] The Colonel derived social power as much from his paternalistic behaviour to his estate workers as from his mansion.

The Mitfords' limited resources make it easier to discern their priorities. Where the landed gentry had access to sufficient funds, they could spend money on both land and the house. As discussed in Chapter Three, Edward Morant spent a total of £16,828 buying land at Brockenhurst between February 1770 and July 1773, but he was wealthy enough to be able to modernise the existing house at Brockenhurst at the same time. Morant had always been interested in making excursions to 'see' houses, a fashionable occupation at the time.[58] His visits to his cousin, Henry Dawkins's seat, Standlynch Park, showed him what could be achieved through modernisation. Dawkins had transformed the original 'villa' by commissioning John Wood the Younger to add a pair of substantial pavilions and engaging Nicholas Revett to add a new portico, library, and

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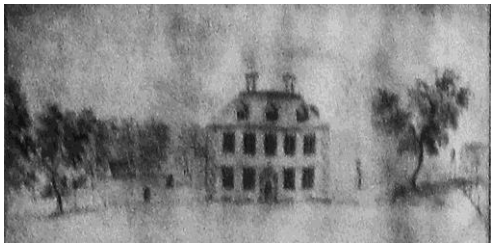
[56] Vancouver, *Agriculture of Hampshire,* p. 70.
[57] *The Gentleman's Magazine*, 10 February 1827.
[58] A. Tinniswood and National Trust (Great Britain), *A history of country house visiting: five centuries of tourism and taste* (Oxford, 1989); A. Tinniswood, *The polite tourist: a history of country house visiting* (London, 1998); S. Lamb, *Bringing travel home to England: tourism, gender, and imaginative literature in the eighteenth century* (Newark, 2009); 'Morant diaries'.

internal plasterwork. Dawkins had then commissioned Giovanni Battista Cipriani to paint the Music Room in which he depicted the Arts, Venus, and Shakespeare.[59]

Between 1770 and 1773, Morant spent about £5,400 modernising the original country seat at Brockenhurst, a house of five-bay, double-pile construction (Figure 24).

Figure 24 : Brockenhurst, 1770



Source – Detail from estate map in Morant archives photographed by the author

The result was a three-storey, nine-bay house with colonnade (Figure 25). Morant was closely involved with both the exterior and interior design and building work. He recorded details in his diary such as '43 windows', 'the height of the dado in Mrs M's room not to exceed 2ft 8in', 'doors without hinges to hang on a pivot' and 'the brake in the chimney in Eating Room 14 inches'.[60] In 1770, he recorded payment for the first instalment of 7,000 bricks and, in September 1771, he noted that stuccoing was to begin on 1 May 1772, adding, over-optimistically, that it would 'take three months doing the whole.'

[59] Historic England listed buildings register www.historicengland.org.uk/Trafalgar, accessed 6 August 2016.
[60] 'Morant diaries', 23 May 1770; 23 August 1771; 23 and 27 September 1771.

Figure 25 : Brockenhurst Park, 1777



Source – HRO, TOP50/2/2[61]

The work took three years and the overall cost was closer to the cost of a new house than the cost of alterations for a modest country house. The design was not determined solely by the funds available, since the finished building looked similar to the lodge owned by his close friend, Sir Philip Jennings. The setting was, however, important to Morant, and he planned a substantial park to surround the house (Figure 26). The modernised country seat was wholly appropriate for the social group he had already moved into and Mrs Powys Lybbe described it in 1792 as 'a very fine house'.[62] When it was advertised to be let after the death of Morant's elder son, John, in March 1794, it was listed as a 'mansion house' with 'extensive offices, stabling and gardens' and surrounded by a park of 'upwards of three hundred acres'.[63]

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[61] HRO, TOP50/2/2 engraving of Brockenhurst House, the seat of Edward Morant esq., member for Lymington, 1 November 1777, drawn and engraved by M. A. Rooker.
[62] Mrs Lybbe Powys, *Passages from the diaries of Mrs. Philip Lybbe Powys of Hardwick house, Oxon : A.D. 1756–1808*, ed. E. J. Climenson (London, 1899).
[63] *True Briton*, 23 May 1795.

Figure 26 : Design of Brockenhurst park, prepared in 1770



Source – Morant family archives

Newcomers did not necessarily aspire to an ostentatious house but Sir John Hadley D'Oyly, sixth baronet, was one incomer who did. He purchased Newtown Park in about 1789, shortly after his return from India and used building work on the existing country seat to show off his wealth. To emphasise the point, he renamed it D'Oyly Park (Figure 27).[64]

Figure 27 : Newtown Park, 1830



Source – Grove[65]

[64] *Public Advertiser*, 15 December 1772; Pinnell, *Country house history*, p. 137.
[65] Grove, *Views of principal seats*, Newtown Park (view of the house from the park), from a painting by B. Ferrey; see also HRO, 27M74/Z4.

The Revd Richard Warner noted that:

> The mansion, though a modern, handsome and considerable structure, did not exactly suit the large establishment and hospitable views of the generous purchaser: and additions and alterations were speedily determined on, and completed.[66]

However, this display of wealth did not help D'Oyly gain acceptance in Hampshire political circles. He was elected as a Member of Parliament for Ipswich, his father's home, between 1790 and 1796 but, in spite of allegedly spending £20,000 on electioneering, he failed to establish a permanent interest in Suffolk.[67] This led to financial difficulties and, in about 1800, D'Oyly was forced to move to 'an elegant cottage, which he built at Milford, near Lymington … as the scene of an improved economy'.[68]

D'Oyly's behaviour contrasted with that of Robert Drummond, the banker, who was attracted to the New Forest by the picturesque scenery. Rather than build in ostentatious style, his country seat, Cadland House, built in 1775, had, according to Gilpin, 'the air and dignity of an ancient mansion'.[69] Robert was the sixth son of William Drummond, fourth viscount Strathallan, and came from an old, Jacobite, Scottish family; his aim was to portray the Drummonds as trustworthy, 'old-money' landed gentry, notwithstanding that they had made their money in the city. The bank's profits rose to over £80,000 in 1782 and this encouraged the Drummond partners to indulge in spending their country estates.[70] The chief clerk of the bank urged restraint, suggesting that it was unwise to 'live at a greater expense than £5,000 a year' which

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[66] Warner, *Literary recollections vol. 1,* p. 204.
[67] *The House of Commons, 1790–1820,* ed. R. G. Thorne (5 vols, London, 1986), vol. 3, D'Oyly, Sir John Hadley, 6th bart of D'Oyly Park, Hants.
[68] Warner, *Literary recollection,* vol. 1, p. 207.
[69] Gilpin, *Remarks on forest scenery,* p. 202.
[70] RBS, *Drummonds: a history* (London, 2012), p. 7.

'should enable a Man to live in a very handsome stile'. However, by 1804, Robert Drummond had spent almost £75,000 on the estate as a whole, significantly more than any of the other landed gentry in the Region had spent. Consequently, his son Andrew Berkeley Drummond inherited an estate encumbered with debts amounting to £86,000.[71]

This review of building activity has demonstrated that, whilst it was essential to have a country seat in order to be recognised as a member of the landed gentry, spending money on a large or ostentatious mansion did not confer either status or longevity. The differing choices made by the landed gentry depended on their personal objectives, but the extent and timing of building work was often linked to the succession of a new head of the family. Although fifteen completely new houses were built, nine country seats remained unaltered for over 100 years and there were significant changes over time in the pattern of building activity. In the first two decades of the century, the established landed gentry on the Isle of Wight were the most active builders whereas in the last two decades, it was incomers in the New Forest. Incomers did not always build an ostentatious country seat and priority was given to enlarging their landed estate. At one end of the spectrum, the Mitfords waited seventy years before building Exbury House. Towards the end of the century, the park surrounding the country seat became increasingly important. Incomer Edward Morant, who modernised an existing house in a park setting to conform to the norms of his social circle, prospered. In contrast, Sir John D'Oyly found that creating an ostentatious house and renaming it D'Oyly Park did not increase his social power or further his political

[71] 'RBS heritage hub', http://heritagearchives.rbs.com, accessed 27 July 2016. Robert Drummond; *Drummonds: a history*, p. 7.

career in the Region. The architect, Roger North, would not have been surprised as in his view 'fools build houses, and wise men live in them'.[72]

Public service in the Region

The first part of the chapter considered the effectiveness of spending money on the country seat in an attempt to increase both a family's standing in the Region and their social power. The second part of the chapter examines whether spending time in public service in the Region was equally effective, starting with the landed gentry's role as justices of the peace. Langford noted that, to be appointed 'was a point of pride for the great families, and of ambition for aspiring gentry. To *act* in it was merely onerous'.[73] It might be expected, therefore, that the landed gentry would seek appointment but be unwilling to act.

Some historians have argued that the landed gentry could, indeed, be divided into two groups: those who had primarily a local focus and those whose centre of gravity had shifted towards the metropolis. The first group acted as justices whereas the second were appointed, but never served. Landau described these two groups as 'patriarchs', who were 'pillars of the local community', and 'patricians', who adopted more of a 'national culture'.[74] Rosenheim expressed this slightly differently, arguing that 'the presence in the county of some men willing to govern allowed for the absence of those who were more inclined to rule'.[75] This was accompanied, he argued, by a trend from about 1750 away from civic duty to valuing sociability and politeness.[76] The royal court was becoming less important but the metropolis was seen not only as the

[72] R. North *et al.*, *Of building: Roger North's writings on architecture* (Oxford, 1981), p. 8.
[73] Langford, *Public life*, p. 396 with his italics.
[74] Landau, *Justices*, pp. 360, 3–4.
[75] Rosenheim, *Emergence of a ruling order*, p. 129.
[76] Rosenheim, *Emergence of a ruling order*, pp. 171–3.

political, financial, and commercial centre but also as a social and cultural hub. Rosenheim's model envisaged the local landed gentry doing their duty, while the national 'aristocracy' had a metropolitan focus and greater power and influence.

A possible consequence of such a division might be that men from a wider social background replaced the landed gentry in public service in rural areas. Landau tested this by researching the appointment and work of justices in the period 1679 to 1760, focusing particularly on the political background of the appointees and the role of the lord lieutenant. She argued, not only that service on the bench was a 'minority occupation among appointed justices' but also that the landed gentry were increasingly replaced by those with new property interests, who had not served before.[77] Others, including Langford, drew attention to the increasing substitution of clergy for the landed gentry.[78] He argued that lay justices were reluctant to sit on the bench with clerics, and that this was the reason why, for example, the third duke of Bolton promised in 1752 'to recommend none of the Clergy, but those who are dignified'.[79] Bolton's successor as lord lieutenant of Hampshire, the duke of Chandos, had no such qualms. In 1764, a further twenty-seven nominees were members of the clergy and eighteen more were added in 1769.[80]

Eastwood argued in 1994 that, with the honourable exception of Langford, the historiography of local government had promoted an account of English state-formation 'which effectively presupposes a necessary primacy of centre over locality'.[81] He insisted that local institutions took the lead in many of the measures designed to

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[77] Landau, *Justices*, p. 121.
[78] Langford, *Public life*, p. 414.
[79] Langford, *Public life*, p. 414 citing BL, Add. MS 35604 f. 40 Bolton to Hardwicke, 1 October 1752.
[80] Langford, *Public life*, p. 416 citing TNA, C 234.14.
[81] D. Eastwood, *Governing rural England: tradition and transformation in local government, 1780–1840* (Oxford, 1994).

improve the quality of rural life and that foreign visitors recognised this. He quoted the duc de la Rochefoucauld who, in 1784, found the administration of justice in provincial England deserving of 'the highest commendation' and justices of the peace to be men of 'the highest reputation'.[82] Eastwood also demonstrated that effective government of the county gradually transferred from the sheriff and the lord lieutenant to the elected chairman of the quarter sessions.

Given this, it was in the landed gentry's interest to maintain some control over the proceedings of the quarter sessions. Furthermore, the quarter sessions at Winchester dealt with matters that had a direct bearing on the landed gentry's estates, in addition to the routine work of administering justice and managing poor relief. For example, rates were set to levy funds to repair highways and bridges, gamekeepers were appointed, and inquisitions were held with respect to proposed enclosures of land.[83] The court set prices at which crops could be sold and goods transported, including shipping across the Solent.[84] Of particular interest to the Mitfords and Barringtons, the court dealt with the loss of salt cargoes at sea and determined whether the duty already paid could be applied against future shipments.[85] The island landed gentry were responsible for organising their own provisions for poor relief and workhouses, and petty sessions were held in Newport although most matters were dealt with at Winchester. Whilst self-interest was an important factor, this thesis argues that families also felt that they would gain social power from being an active justice not only at the quarter sessions but also by exercising visible leadership in their community.

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[82] D. Eastwood, 'Local government and local society', in H. T. Dickinson (ed.), *A companion to eighteenth-century Britain* (Oxford, 2002); La Rochefoucauld *et al., Frenchman in England,* pp. 117, 130.
[83] For example HRO, Q1/10 f. 219, Michaelmas 1724.
[84] Such as HRO, Q1/12 f. 65, Easter 1734; Q1/20 f. 40, Midsummer 1784; Q1/24 Midsummer 1797 (held unusually at Newport).
[85] Including HRO, Q1/9 f. 195 Easter 1719; Q1/18 f. 225, Michaelmas 1775.

In order to understand the landed gentry's behaviour and the choices they made in this context, a dataset, covering the whole of the eighteenth century, was created of the justices sitting in all 400 quarter sessions, comprising 4,600 attendances, and covering the whole of Hampshire. Order books, which recorded the names of justices sitting on the bench, rather than appointments to the commission, were used as the source document in order to assess how the landed gentry actually behaved.[86] The justices were initially divided into two groups: the heads of landed-gentry families (that is baronets, knights, and esquires who owned a landed estate) and others. The initial review of the order books suggested that the landed-gentry were indeed withdrawing from public duty as magistrates. In the first half of the eighteenth century, the two groups were equally represented on the bench: fifty-one per cent of attendances at quarter sessions were by heads of landed-gentry families and forty-nine per cent by others, including all clergy and lawyers. By the second half of the century, the non-landed gentry made up fifty-eight per cent of the attendances (Table 11).

Table 11 : Magistrates' attendances for the whole of Hampshire, 1700–99

	1700–49		1750–99		1700–99	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
Landed gentry (head)	1,135	51	1,026	42	2,161	47
Non-landed gentry	1,081	49	1,398	58	2,479	53
Total	2,216	100	2,424	100	4,640	100

Source – Dataset derived from order books

More detailed research into the background of individual magistrates revealed that this conclusion was erroneous. Many younger sons went into the church but, as the landed gentry owned only four advowsons in the New Forest and nine in the Isle of

[86] HRO, Q1/8–25 order books, 1699–1801.

Wight (approximately one-third of the total), many were unable to find a living in the Region.[87] Some remained in the area and became active magistrates. Consequently, in 263 instances, the clerk in Holy Orders who was sitting on the bench was a younger son or brother of the head of a landed-gentry family; they were, in the duke of Bolton's words, 'dignified'.[88] Similarly, some lawyers were members of landed-gentry families.

Table 12 : Analysis of attendances for the whole of Hampshire, 1700–99

	1700–49		1750–99		1700–99	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
Landed gentry – head	1,135	51	1,026	38	2,161	46
– family member	84	4	255	11	339	8
All landed gentry	1,219	55	1,281	49	2,500	54
Non-landed gentry	997	45	1,143	51	2,140	46
Total	2,216	100	2,424	100	4,640	100

Source – Dataset derived from order books

When these clerks and lawyers were taken out of the 'non-landed gentry' total and added to the landed gentry, the position changed (Table 12). Approximately half of the total attendances continued to be by members of landed-gentry families throughout the century.

Whilst the percentage of landed-gentry and non-landed gentry attendances remained stable, the numbers of attendances actually increased slightly in the second half of the century for the county as a whole. Breaking this down by location showed that the number of landed-gentry attendances fell significantly for the New Forest, but rose for both the Isle of Wight and the rest of Hampshire (Table 13).

[87] *Parson and parish*.
[88] Langford, *Public life*, p. 414 citing BL, Add. MS 35604 f. 40, Bolton to Hardwicke, 1 October 1752.

Table 13 : Attendances by landed-gentry by location, 1700–99

	1700–49	1750–99	1700–99
Isle of Wight	78	106	184
New Forest	159	85	244
Rest of Hampshire	982	1,090	2,072
Total	1,219	1,281	2,500

Source - Dataset derived from order books

Given that it has already been shown that newcomers added to the number of landed-gentry families, this might suggest that newcomers were less willing than established families to do their duty as justices. However, an analysis of numbers of individual justices (as distinct from the number of sessions attended) showed that the number of active landed-gentry magistrates actually increased in the second half of the century in all areas (Table 14).

Table 14 : Number of active landed-gentry magistrates by location, 1700–99

	1700–49	1750–99	Total
Isle of Wight	12	12	24
New Forest	15	18	33
Rest of Hampshire	63	85	148
Total	90	115	205

Source – Dataset derived from order books

This might be a reflection of changes in the number of appointments to the bench, since Landau has shown that appointments to the bench in Hampshire and its neighbouring counties increased significantly over the eighteenth century (Table 15).

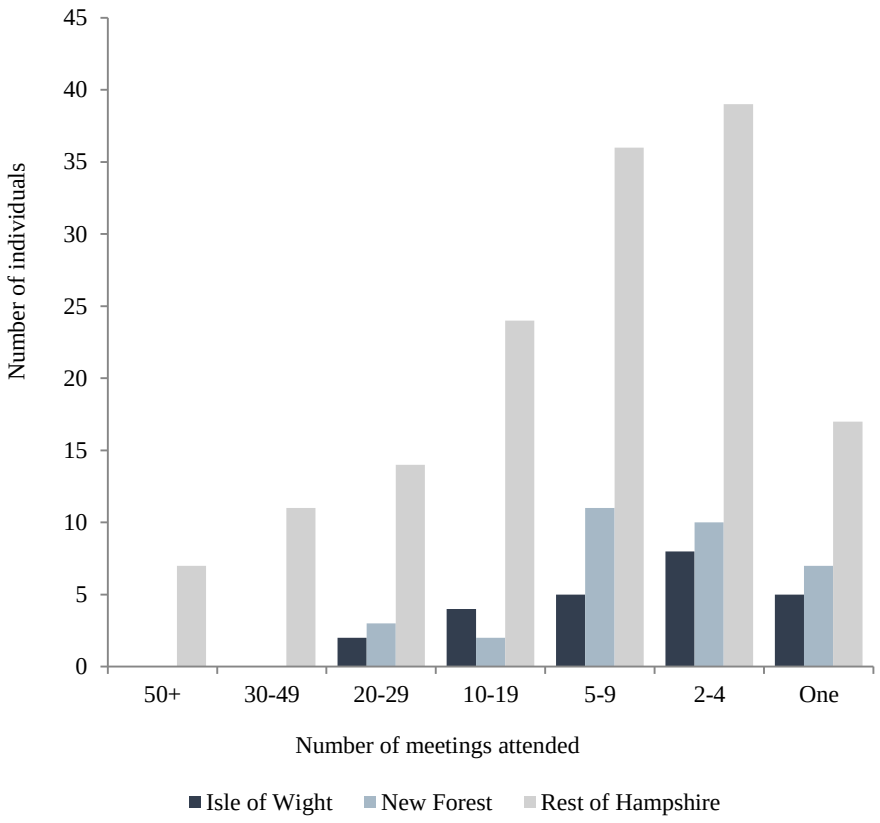
Table 15 : Number of justices appointed, 1680–1797

	1680	1702	1705	1714	1722	1761	1795	1797
Hampshire	63	97		152		229		
Dorset	42	72	68		82	109	187	
Wiltshire	74	98				212		191

Source – N. Landau, *Justices*[89]

In order to see whether this was the explanation and identify patterns in attendance, the number of meetings that each individual member of a landed-gentry family attended over the whole of the century was calculated by location (Figure 28).

Figure 28 : Meetings attended by individual magistrates, 1700–99



Source – Dataset created for this research

[89] Landau, *Justices*, p. 369, Appendix A.

Magistrates were appointed on a county-wide basis and the pattern of attendance was broadly similar for justices from all areas in Hampshire. Seventy-four per cent of Isle of Wight justices, eighty-two per cent of New Forest justices and sixty-two per cent of those from the rest of Hampshire served on fewer than ten occasions. This suggests that the landed gentry did not shirk their duties but, as a group, did no more than was expected of them.

The analysis of the order books showed that the landed gentry continued to be active in public service as justices of the peace throughout the eighteenth century. However, attendance varied both over time and between the New Forest and the Isle of Wight, and there were, for example, nine years in the eighteenth century in which there was no active member of the landed gentry from the Region on the bench. Further analysis of the data for the New Forest showed that eight individuals sat on nine or more occasions and all served before 1740. With the exception of Thomas Archer and Joseph Hinxman, they were all from established families (Table 16).

Table 16 : New Forest landed gentry who sat more than eight times, 1700–99

Name	Category	Sat as JP	Number of sessions	Sheriff
Thomas Hoby, esq. d.1707	Established	1700–07	9	
Sir Thomas Hoby, third baronet d.1730	Established	1716–28	9	1715
Thomas Archer, esq. d.1743	Incomer	1712–40	9	
Edward Lisle, esq. d.1722	Established	1706–14	11	1702
Henry Knollys, esq. d.1747	Established	1713–30	15	1716
James Worsley, esq. d.1756	Established	1700–31	20	
Joseph Hinxman, esq. d.1729	Incomer	1716–29	22	1718
Sir Dewey Bulkeley, knight d.1735	Established	1702–30	27	1704

Source – Dataset created for this research

In some instances, subsequent absence from the order books marked a withdrawal from the Region. Edward Lisle's son never sat on the bench as a debtor claimed all his estates and he fled to France in 1739. In other families, attendance

dropped off when the head of the family lived a long time. For example, Edward Hooper's grandfather died in 1715 and Hooper's father sat as a magistrate on three occasions between 1719 and 1725. There was then an interval of twenty-five years before he died in 1750, aged seventy-five. By this time, Hooper had already been appointed a commissioner of customs and he never sat as a justice. In other cases, service as a magistrate missed a generation. James Worsley sat as a justice until 1731 but did not die until 1756, when he was eighty-five, and his son, Sir Thomas Worsley, sixth baronet, never sat as a magistrate. Edward Morant agreed to serve in 1790, but he died before he could fulfil this obligation.[90]

Compared to the New Forest, the Isle of Wight had a more stable landed-gentry population, with fewer newcomers. Therefore, one might expect to see a more uniform pattern of public duty even though, as Figure 28 showed, the overall pattern was similar to that for the New Forest. There were six landed gentry who attended on more than thirteen occasions, and these were evenly spread over the century (Table 17).

Table 17 : Isle of Wight landed gentry who sat more than thirteen times, 1700–99

Name	Category	Dates	Number of sessions
John Leigh, esq. of Northcourt	Established	1700–42	17
William Stephens, esq. of Bowcombe	Established	1701–27	14
John Popham, esq. of West Court	Upcomers	1709–15	24
Robert Pope Blachford, esq. of Osborne	Upcomers	1771–88	21
Henry Roberts, esq. of Standen	Upcomers	1774–91	18
Edward Rushworth, esq. of Afton	Established	1782–99	15

Source – Dataset created for this research

The influence of the Worsleys was marked. There were nine years with no representation from the Region on the bench and these fell in the period (1747–72) in

[90] 'Morant diaries', 6 November 1790.

which Appuldurcombe was in trust and the Worsleys' nexus to their landed estate was weakened.[91] When Sir Richard Worsley, seventh baronet, inherited Appuldurcombe in 1772, he made efforts to re-establish the family's leading role among the landed gentry. It is striking that the Easter sessions in 1772 and 1774 were attended by four and six island landed gentry respectively, possibly reflecting his influence at that date. Blachford and Roberts, both upcomers, and Rushworth, who married into an established family, continued to be regular attenders.

As in the New Forest, family circumstances played an important role in landed-gentry attendance. John Leigh of Northcourt was sheriff of Hampshire in 1698 and 1700–02 and, like his father and grandfather, was a Member of Parliament, representing Newtown from 1702 to 1705.[92] His role as a justice was spread over forty-two years in the first half of the century and only ceased just before his death. In contrast, his eldest son, Barnabas Eveleigh Leigh, sat on only six occasions between 1737 and 1742. John Leigh's grandson, Barnabas Leigh, died in 1770 at the age of twenty-two 'of a consumption, a family complaint', and this susceptibility may have been the reason for his father's relatively low attendance and the break with family tradition.[93]

Unlike the Leighs, Edward Rushworth only settled on the island after he had become a member of an established family by marrying one of the two legitimate daughters and co-heirs of the Revd Leonard Troughear in 1780. From this date, he represented either Yarmouth or Newport in Parliament on his father-in-law's interest, sat on a grand jury in March 1793 and regularly sat as a justice of the peace.[94] As in the

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[91] There were no active magistrates from the Region in 1705, 1744, 1751, 1754, 1756, 1762, 1763, 1769 and 1770.
[92] *The House of Commons, 1690–1715*, ed. D. Hayton, E. Cruickshanks *et al*. (5 vols, Cambridge, 2002), vol. 2, p. 239, Newtown.
[93] IoWRO, OG/DD (diaries and papers of Revd Henry Oglander, 1768–94), 24 June 1770.
[94] *Hampshire Chronicle*, 25 March 1793.

New Forest, some magistrates stopped serving because they had to flee the area. William Stephens of Bowcombe was ruined by extravagance, sold his estate, and absconded to the north of Scotland in 1728.[95] His estate eventually descended to R. P. Blachford, who was a member of a grand jury in August 1773 and sat on the bench from the age of twenty-nine to just before his death in 1790.[96]

As noted earlier, Langford attributed the general decrease in the number of regular attenders to an increase in the number of clergy sitting on the bench.[97] The duke of Bolton remarked in 1752 that lay justices were 'resolved not to attend whilst any Parsons are in the Commission' and, in his view, this was 'the reason they are so slack in doing their Duty'.[98] However, a detailed review of the order books showed that there was little correlation between clerical attendance and landed-gentry absence. For example, in 1743 and 1772, years in which there were no active New Forest justices, there were only five instances of a parson sitting on the bench. Family circumstances appeared to be more important.

In addition to attendance at quarter sessions, the landed gentry also enacted business outside the quarter sessions. For example, in September 1787, Sir William Oglander, Sir Nash Grose, and R. P. Blachford were made responsible for the introduction of licencing of public houses. They were described as 'some of the most respectable' gentlemen, 'whom the present and succeeding generations will ever esteem for their laudable endeavours to preserve the morals of youth, by supressing as much as

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[95] *House of Commons, 1715–1754*, vol. 2, p. 445, William Stephens.
[96] *Hampshire Chronicle*, 2 August 1773.
[97] Langford, *Public life*, p. 414.
[98] Langford, *Public life*, p. 414 citing BL, Add. MS 35604 f. 40, Bolton to Hardwicke, 1 October 1752.

possible the prophanation of the Lord's day'.[99] Five years later, the leading island landed-gentry families were still seeking to preserve social leadership:

> We the undersigned Magistrates for the county of Southampton, acting in and for the division of the Isle of Wight, … survey with comfort and pride the well-regulated and exemplary demeanour of all orders within this Island, we deem ourselves to be involved in the hazards, was well as the welfare of the whole community, and bound even by regard to our own interests to unite efforts for its preservation.[100]

This was followed by a call for the 'Gentlemen, Clergy, Freeholders, and Inhabitants, of the Island' to a meeting in Newport to discuss how to 'maintain our Laws, Liberties and Properties, and to co-operate in the general protection against all attempts to destroy those inestimable rights and privileges'.[101] It was signed on 15 December 1792 by Richard Worsley, William Oglander, Leonard T Holmes, Edward Rushworth, and Henry Worsley.

This detailed examination of the order books has shown that the landed gentry as a group did not avoid active service as justices of the peace, even if this was an onerous duty. Attendance by clerics did not appear to have an adverse effect on the attendance by the landed gentry and the Region as a whole was represented on the county bench in ninety-one years in the century. In some cases, prominent members of the landed gentry, such as the Worsleys, may have encouraged other landed gentry to attend. Another significant change in the pattern of service over time was the increasing involvement of junior members of the family sitting on the bench and this helped the family protect their landed interests. However, the heads of the families remained committed to exercising leadership in the community and the articles in the *Hampshire*

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[99] *Hampshire Chronicle*, 10 September 1787.
[100] *Hampshire Chronicle*, 24 December 1792.
[101] *Hampshire Chronicle*, 24 December 1792.

Chronicle suggest that they believed that this public behaviour added to their social power and their influence in the community.[102]

Public service could be undertaken through roles other than as justices of the peace. In addition to the five individuals listed in Table 16, Edward Hooper senior, Sir Richard Mill, William Mitford and John Burrard all served as sheriffs prior to 1738 and eight others served later in the period. For example, Abel Walter of Baddesley was sheriff in 1745 and his son, John, was deputy lieutenant in 1788 as well as sitting as a magistrate in 1790 and 1796.[103] The office of sheriff was not sought after and, during the disputed county election in 1779, Jervoise Clarke Jervoise was accused of refusing appointment and of shirking his duty.[104] However, his friends pointed out that he was exempt as a sitting Member of Parliament. Clarke Jervoise was also accused of accepting the 'place of Gentleman of the Privy Chamber in order to avoid serving on juries', but his friends countered that he had been on the grand jury in March 1776 when 'the bill was found against Churchill for Sodomy, and for which crime that detestable monster was found guilty and executed'.[105]

A number of landed gentry served as deputy lieutenants and the lists are included in Appendix 6. The annual values declared in the roll of qualification do not give any indication of the actual value of the estates as they list only the minimum value of land required. Thus, for example, Colonel Mitford declared freehold estates valued at £200 in 1771 but declared manors in Exbury, Fawley, Boldre in Hants, and Brading, Isle of Wight valued at £600 per annum when elected a lieutenant colonel of the

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[102] *Hampshire Chronicle*, 10 September 1787; 24 December 1792.
[103] HRO, Q21/6/1 roll of qualifications of deputy lieutenants and officers of the militia, 1769–1829; HRO, Q1/21 f. 237 order book 1787–90; HRO, Q1/24 f. 67 order book 1795–8 for justices of the peace.
[104] The various spellings of Jervoise Clarke Jervoise have been retained in directly quoted sources.
[105] *A collection of all the hand-bills, squibs, songs, essays, &c. published during the late contested election for the county of Hants,* ed. J. Wilkes (Winchester, 1780), pp. 40, 38; *Hampshire Chronicle*, 11 March 1776.

southern regiment of the militia. This compares with the 'freehold lands in Godshill, Isle of Wight' valued at £1,000 per annum declared by Sir Richard Worsley as qualification for being colonel of the battalion in 1780. The lists do, however, demonstrate that, as a group, the landed gentry continued to be willing to undertake public service throughout the eighteenth century.

Given the obvious burdens involved, it should be no surprise that landed-gentry families behaved differently from each other, and that some newcomers were slow to show their commitment to public service. Sir Edward Hulse, physician to George II, purchased the Breamore estate in 1738 and became a baronet a year later. However, his social power came from the royal court, and he resided in London where he died in 1759.[106] His son, Sir Edward Hulse, second baronet, used Breamore as his country house and was sheriff in 1765. However, although he qualified as a justice in 1770, he never sat on the bench.[107] By the third generation, the Hulses were behaving like established landed gentry and Edward Hulse was appointed as a deputy lieutenant in 1786 on the ground that he was 'heir apparent to manors and lands at Breamore'. He also sat as a justice in 1798 and 1799 and served as sheriff in 1802. However, it did not take all newcomers so long to get involved in public service; Thomas Robbins, who acquired Pylewell in 1787, was sheriff in 1792, sat on a grand jury in March 1793, and was an active justice of the peace in 1798. The New Forest landed gentry as a group did not use their social power to avoid acting and remained committed to public service in the Region although this did not always take the form of sitting as a justice of the peace. The island families also showed their willingness to undertake public service in the Region through offices other than as magistrates and a number served as deputy

[106] TNA, PROB 11/845/444 will of Sir Edward Hulse of London, 24 April 1759.
[107] HRO, Q27/3/69 justice's certificate of qualification: Sir Edward Hulse, baronet, 1770.

lieutenants of the county (Appendix 6). Sir William Oglander served on a grand jury in August 1773, and was sheriff in 1782.[108] Other sheriffs included Thomas Morgan in 1733 and Edward Worsley of Gatcombe in 1743.[109]

In the second half of the century, the landed gentry were able to develop their public profile and demonstrate their leadership in the Region through one of two militia companies based there. The 'New Militia' was introduced by an act of Parliament in 1757 and played a key role during the Seven Years War and the American and French revolutions. As McCormack concluded, 'the gentlemen who volunteered to take up commissions undoubtedly had a variety of reasons for doing so' including a 'sense of social or familial obligation (like Edward Gibbon) or a desire for social climbing'. It ranked, in McCormack's view, 'alongside service in parliament, on the justices' bench, or in the county administration as one of the key obligations of property and rank'.[110]

In the period for which records are available, 1769–1800, eight members of the landed gentry from the forty-three landed estates in the Region qualified as officers of the Hampshire militias, three from the New Forest and five from the Isle of Wight.[111] Sir Thomas Worsley, sixth baronet, was appointed colonel of the south battalion of the Hampshire militia, which was commissioned in June 1759. However, this was only after 'a prolix and passionate contest' which, in the words of his friend, Edward Gibbon, 'delivered us from the tyranny of the Lord Lieutenant, the Duke of Bolton'.[112] Sir Thomas had sufficient social power to win this battle and to pass the colonelcy on to

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[108] *Hampshire Chronicle*, 2 August 1773; *Hampshire Chronicle*, 18 February 1782.
[109] *London Gazette*, 3 January 1743.
[110] M. McCormack, *Embodying the militia in Georgian England* (Oxford, 2015), pp. 1, 193.
[111] HRO, Q21/6/1 roll of qualifications.
[112] *Miscellaneous works*, p. 61; G. H. L. Verney, *Records of the infantry militia battalions of the county of Southampton from A.D. 1757 to 1894* (London, 1894), p. 143.

his son, Sir Richard. Other landed gentry had to build social power by working their way through the ranks.

Colonel Mitford joined the south battalion, first as a captain under Sir Thomas Worsley and then as lieutenant-colonel under Sir Richard Worsley, in 1779. After the latter's death in 1805, Mitford was finally appointed colonel of the battalion. He cared deeply about the militia although, in this and several other aspects, he opposed change. His obituary noted that 'he gained great credit by his exertions in upholding the Militia system … [and] always arrayed himself against any innovation of those principles on which the Militia was originally founded'.[113] Peter Serle of Testwood and Charles Mill, the heir apparent to Grove Place, enrolled as captains in the south battalion 1786 and 1791 respectively. By 1781, an independent company of militia of the Isle of Wight had also been formed, reflecting the perceived increased threat of invasion. This was captained by Edward Meux Worsley, with Barnabas Leigh as his lieutenant and John Popham as one of the captains.[114]

In some cases, family loyalty trumped commitment to the Region. Thus, Edward Hooper joined the Dorsetshire militia, which had been formed by his cousin, the earl of Shaftesbury, on 20 October 1757, rather than one of the Hampshire militias.[115] Hooper wrote that Shaftesbury showed 'great merit on the occasion' and would 'derive great credit & applause from it'.[116] Hooper would have been excused for not joining any militia, as he was fifty-seven years old when he first enrolled as a captain in 1761;

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[113] *The Gentleman's Magazine*, 10 February 1827, obituary of William Mitford, esq.
[114] Verney, *Southampton battalions*; *Morning Herald and Daily Advertiser*, 4 August 1781; HRO, Q21/6/1 roll of qualifications. However, as Chapter Seven will show, Hooper remained committed to providing leadership in the Region as a Member of Parliament.
[115] HRO, Q25/2/44/8 sacrament certificate for Edward Hooper, esq. captain in the Dorsetshire regiment, 1761.
[116] 'Malmesbury papers' 9M73/G327/39 letter Hooper to Harris, 20 October 1757.

furthermore, he remained on the muster lists until 1769.[117] During this time, he took an active part, writing to his cousin, James Harris, describing the drilling, reviews, and the balls given by the officers of the militia although he admitted that:

> My dancing days being over I've been two hours on the parade & am now writing at ½ past five. We get out very early that we may learn some new things adapted to the Corps without prying & critical eyes upon us.[118]

Leading a militia company conferred prestige but the appointment also reflected the individual's existing social power. This was also true of appointments to offices such as master keeper of the New Forest, which were in the gift of the lord warden.

The office of verderer of the New Forest was different in that the five verderers were elected.[119] The desirability of the role as a means of enhancing public profile and social power is reflected in the advertisement placed by John Compton in the *Hampshire Chronicle* when he was running for election in 1798:

> I am encouraged by many respectable Friends to offer my Services upon this occasion, and to entreat the favour of your Votes and Interest to succeed [Sir Richard Worsley]; permit me to assure you, Gentlemen, that if I shall be so fortunate as to become the object of your choice, you shall ever find me most strictly attentive to the various duties of the office, and truly grateful for the honour which you shall confer upon me.[120]

Sir Thomas Worsley was elected a verderer in 1765 and Edward Morant was a verderer in 1781.[121] Morant was also appointed a master keeper of the South Bailiwick of the New Forest in 1782 and his success was due to his relationship with the dukes of Bolton and Gloucester, a topic that will be discussed in greater depth in the next chapter.

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[117] DRO, L/A/1 proceedings of Dorset militia meetings, 1761–89.
[118] 'Malmesbury papers' 9M73/G652/6 letter Hooper to Harris, 1760.
[119] It would have been helpful to be able to do more work on the verderers, but the records from this period were destroyed in a fire.
[120] *Hampshire Chronicle*, 11 August 1798.
[121] HRO, 149M89/R4/6145 original bundle of documents relating to the New Forest including an account book, 1697–1771.

The landed gentry continued to serve as justices of the peace, deputy lieutenants, sheriffs, officers in the militia or verderers throughout the period and the offices held are tabulated in Appendix 7. Over eighty-five per cent of island families and seventy-six per cent of families from the New Forest held at least one post and several families fulfilled three or four roles. On the island, the two families that did not act, the Urrys of Sheat and the Worsleys of Pidford, had cousins who were active. In the New Forest, the eight families who held no public posts were all incomers who did not settle permanently in the Region. However, other incomers, such as D'Oyly and Mills, did take on public roles soon after their arrival in the Region, so there was no generalised difference in behaviour between established families and newcomers. Taken as a group, the landed gentry remained committed to providing leadership in the Region, and there was no evidence of elite withdrawal.

Conclusion

This chapter has considered the role of social power in the Region beyond the private family sphere through an examination of two aspects of landed-gentry behaviour affecting their public profile: modernising the country seat and public service in the Region. It has sought to establish how the landed gentry's behaviour changed over time, as a group, and whether there were any differences between established families and newcomers or between those in the New Forest and on the Isle of Wight.

The review of housebuilding has shown that the Region did not follow the trends found for Stones' great landowners.[122] Even though they had fewer resources than the peerage, it was still essential to have a country seat in order to be recognised as a member of the landed gentry. Nevertheless, newcomers did not invariably build a new

[122] Stone and Stone, *An open elite?* For an interesting comparison with a study which straddles the landed gentry and mere gentlemen see Hague, 'A Modern-built house'.

ostentatious house and, rather than being passively ‘envious’, some of the established landed gentry were active in improving their own country seats.

On the Isle of Wight, there was a peak in building activity in the period 1700–19, reflecting the desire of established families to update their old houses. In contrast, the peak of building activity fell in the period 1760–99 in the New Forest as newcomers established themselves on estates that did not already have an adequate country seat. Nevertheless, in both parts of the Region the extent of building work depended not only on the finance available and the state of repair of an existing house, but on the owner’s penchant for sociability and hospitality. Where resources were limited, priority was given to creating a substantial landed estate.

In the second half of the eighteenth century, the setting of the country house became increasingly important but there were no systemic differences in the nature and appearance of the country seats between the two locations (Appendix 4). Significantly, spending money on a large, ostentatious mansion did not ensure that the family were successful in keeping their estates in the family. The intangible asset, social power, was as important as the physical assets, bricks and mortar, and social power was linked to behaviour rather than to outward appearances.

The second section of the chapter considered the impact of spending time rather than money in the Region. It demonstrated that the landed gentry as a group remained committed to providing leadership in the Region and continued to sit as active justices of the peace. In practice, attendance by clerics at the quarter sessions did not appear to have an adverse effect on the attendance by the landed gentry, but the involvement of junior members of the family increased in the second half of the century. Serving as magistrates not only helped the family to protect its landed interests but also helped it to maintain its social power. The landed gentry also sought election as verderers of the

New Forest and appointment to offices in the New Forest, prestigious offices that reflected a man's existing social power. The active participation of over eighty per cent of the landed gentry in public affairs in the Region suggests that they believed that it was the appropriate behaviour, which added to their social power and enhanced their influence in their communities.

This chapter has shown that there was no reduction in the visibility of the landed gentry in the Region or in their commitment to it over the eighteenth century. In particular, there was no evidence of the division, envisaged by Landau, of the landed gentry into two distinct groups, 'patriarchs', who were 'pillars of the local community', and 'patricians', who adopted more of a 'national culture'.[123] It is argued that spending time in the Region was as effective as spending money on the country seat in ensuring that they were able to keep their estate in the family. Furthermore, there were no systemic differences in behaviour between established families and newcomers, or between those living in the New Forest or on the Isle of Wight.

The most successful landed gentry were those who conformed to the expectations of their peer group. They performed just enough public service to provide visible leadership in the Region and protect the interests of the landed gentry as a group and they lived in country seats that were appropriate and not ostentatious. For the landed gentry, who were less wealthy than the peerage, social power, which stemmed primarily from behaviour, was as important as houses in ensuring that the family were successful in keeping their estates in the family.

The next chapter considers whether spending time away from the Region had an adverse effect on a family's success. It will be argued that it was not the amount of time

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[123] Landau, *Justices*, pp. 360, 3–4.

spent outside the Region that mattered, but how individuals spent this time. Successful individuals moved between overlapping social circles and performed equally well in different environments. It will be argued that they became adaptive social amphibians.

Chapter Six: Adaptive social amphibians

The last chapter examined the behaviour of the landed gentry in the Region and found no evidence for the separation, envisaged by Landau, of the landed gentry into two distinct groups, 'patriarchs', who were 'pillars of the local community', and 'patricians', who adopted more of a 'national culture'.[1] However, much of the evidence related to the narrow perspective of the landed gentry's role in local government. This chapter takes a more holistic, socio-cultural approach and views the landed gentry's behaviour from the metropolis rather than the Region. Moving on from Landau's work in the 1980s, it draws on Wahrman's research in the 1990s. He attempted to define segments of society based on broader cultural attitudes, drawing a distinction between a 'national society' and the culture of the 'provincial-local sphere'.[2] He concluded that this national society did not emerge until the third quarter of the eighteenth century. Consequently, this chapter drills down into the details of performance and behaviour to establish whether there was a sudden acceleration in the character and pace of change in the last half of the eighteenth century.

This chapter argues that, although the landed gentry engaged with national, polite society, this was done in a measured way, without neglecting the Region. Successful landed gentry operated in multiple, overlapping groups and behaved as adaptive social amphibians. Furthermore, amphibiousness demanded more than just being at home in both the metropolitan-national and provincial-local spheres. Instead, amphibiousness was a multi-faceted concept. Successful landed gentry had to adapt to the norms of the many social circles they moved in.

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[1] Landau, *Justices,* pp. 360, 3–4.
[2] D. Wahrman, 'National society, communal culture: an argument about the recent historiography of eighteenth-century Britain', *Social History,* 17/1 (1992), pp. 43–72.

Historians of the eighteenth century have usually interpreted such sociability through the lens of politeness and, as Langford expressed it, 'politeness is a key word for historians of eighteenth-century Britain'.[3] However, it was widely used in contemporary literature in the late seventeenth century, where it emerged out of earlier concepts of courtesy and civility.[4] Advice on appropriate behaviour was often laid down in letters, pamphlets or books on codes of conduct and the popularity of these in the seventeenth century continued into the eighteenth century. For example, Lord Chesterfield was clear how he wanted his son to behave outside the private family sphere:

> Let us imitate the real perfections of the good company into which we may get; copy their politeness, their carriage, their address, and the easy and well-bred turn of their conversation; but we should remember that, let them shine ever so bright, their vices, if they have any, are so many blemishes.[5]

Whereas Chesterfield used the term 'good company', historians have more often referred to 'polite society', but they have interpreted 'politeness' in different ways. Langford said that it encompassed 'upper-class gentility, enlightenment, and sociability', and that it was 'primarily about the social control of the individual'.[6] Whyman was more focused on place and suggested that London had a 'polite, but competitive culture'.[7] She drew out the important distinction between the 'country hospitality', which had prevailed in the seventeenth century, and the new 'urban modes

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[3] P. Langford, 'The uses of eighteenth-century politeness', *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society,* 12 (2002), pp. 311–331.
[4] See, for example, A. Bryson, *From courtesy to civility: changing codes of conduct in early modern England* (Oxford, 1998), p. 4; Bryson's work was reviewed by Warren, who concluded that up to 1699, the country estate was the 'chief basis of elite identity' and 'the fashionable life of the capital might be compared to the addition of a novel form of architectural ornament to an old but imposing fabric': I. Warren, 'The English landed elite and the social environment of London *c.*1580–1700: the cradle of an aristocratic culture?', *The English Historical Review*, 126/518 (2011), pp. 44–74.
[5] L. Chesterfield, *Lord Chesterfield's advice to his son* (London, 1793), p. 18.
[6] Langford, *Polite and commercial people,* pp. 4,5. He returned to the subject in 2002: Langford, 'The uses of eighteenth-century politeness'.
[7] Whyman, *Sociability and power,* p. 4.

of sociability'.[8] For newcomers to London, the challenge was to identify correctly the shared norms of public behaviour and this necessitated an appreciation of society's values.[9]

Studies of 'polite society' have often been linked to a consideration of sociability, culture, and gender.[10] However, the emphasis of recent scholarship has been on the peerage and greater landowners, and has not necessarily described the experience of the landed gentry adequately. For example, Henry described the 'landed orders' as the 'quintessential leisure class'. She argued that the 'landed elite spent the overwhelming majority of their adult lives engaged in a dizzying array of continuous sociability', with the result that they 'forged intimate ties amongst themselves and created a powerful sense of group identity.' She concluded that the 'aristocracy and gentry remained in control of British society, due to a large extent to their cultural practices', and that they 'became amphibious, equally at home in the country and in town'.[11]

Klein, who developed his thinking on politeness through his study of the third earl of Shaftesbury (Edward Hooper's uncle), offered a broader societal model of politeness. He argued that it was 'helpful to think of polite society not as a certain segment of society but rather as the entirety of contemporary society insofar as it was influenced by politeness'. This meant that individuals 'could simply seek to act politely (for the moment), to own something polite or to have a polite experience'. Thus, while

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[8] Whyman, *Sociability and power,* p. 87. In contrast, Wilson suggested that an important factor in being accepted in the county was to live 'by the unwritten rules of the old landed gentry … so long as they were hospitable' and showed 'the good manners of polite society': R. Wilson, 'The landed elite', in H. T. Dickinson (ed.), *A companion to eighteenth-century Britain* (Oxford, 2002).
[9] Whyman, *Sociability and power,* p. 89; J. Holmes, *Women, men and politeness* (London, 1995), p. 22.
[10] For example, P. Carter, *Men and the emergence of polite society: Britain 1660–1800* (Harlow, 2001); P. Carter, 'Polite 'persons' character, biography and the gentleman', *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society,* 12 (2002), pp. 333–54; K. Glover, *Elite women and polite society in eighteenth-century Scotland* (Woodbridge, 2011); French and Rothery, *Man's estate.*
[11] Henry, *Elite culture,* pp. 320, 327.

the landed gentry of the Region were regarded as members of a polite society, others could also 'be polite'.[12] However, Greig sounded a warning note in her study of the *Beau Monde*. She argued that the actual practice of sociability and social interaction was 'unresolved and lacking critical examination', and that there was less mixing of the peerage and gentleman than sometimes proposed.[13] In contrast, as discussed in the previous chapter, Williamson argued that 'new, easier patterns of relationships' between the great landowners and the landed gentry were reflected in the design of country houses.[14] This might point to an inherent difference between a metropolitan-based 'national society' and the culture of the 'provincial-local sphere' as Wahrman had proposed.[15]

In order to bring greater clarity to these important processes, this chapter considers not only how regional and national society interacted but also how the landed gentry developed relationships over time and used their presence at polite occasions as part of a wider strategy. It draws on the work of French and Barry, who examined the extent to which an individual's identity was determined by his sense of belonging to a particular set. They also considered how important this sense of identity was in determining individual and group behaviour.[16] French and Barry used theories of social psychology to advantage, in particular, the work of Tajfel and Hogg, who argued that the way in which individuals related to each other was largely determined by the group

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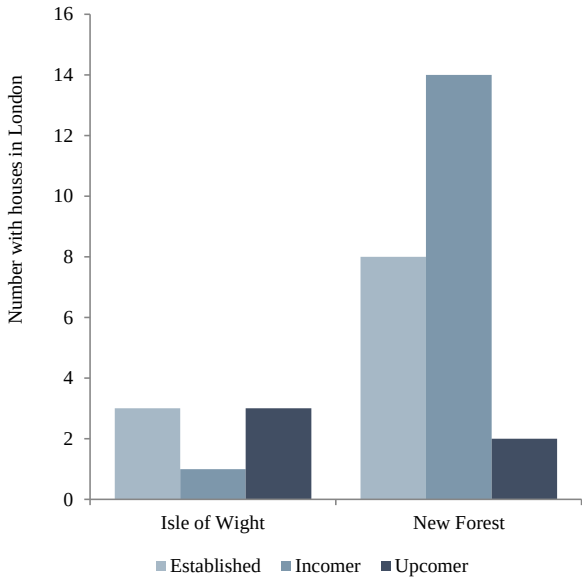
[12] L. E. Klein, *Shaftesbury and the culture of politeness: moral discourse and cultural politics in early eighteenth-century England* (Cambridge, 1994); Klein, 'Politeness'; L. E. Klein, 'Sociability, politeness, and aristocratic self-formation in the life and career of the second earl of Shelburne', *The Historical Journal*, 55/03 (2012), pp. 653–77.
[13] Greig, 'Public sociability'; Greig, *Beau monde,* p. 65.
[14] Williamson, *Polite landscapes,* p. 110.
[15] Wahrman, 'National society'.
[16] French and Barry, *Introduction,* p. 1.

to which they felt that they belonged.[17] Following this, it will be argued that successful landed gentry moved in and out of multiple, overlapping circles or sets, and had to adapt their behaviour in order to behave in the appropriate way for each group.

This socially amphibious behaviour was much more complex than just being at home in both London and the Region, although these were important places for the landed gentry. Their main locus was their country seat and the last chapter demonstrated the importance they placed on maintaining their influence in the Region. Nevertheless, over sixty per cent of landed-gentry families took a house in London at some point in the eighteenth century, and some patterns emerged.[18] Families in the New Forest were more likely to have a house in London than those on the Isle of Wight and, overall, incomers were the group most likely to have a base in London (Figure 29).

Figure 29 : Landed-gentry families with houses in London by location, 1700–99



Source – Land tax records, rate books, and poll books

[17] J. Israel and H. Tajfel, *The context of social psychology: a critical assessment* (London, 1972), p. 292; M. A. Hogg and D. Abrams, *Social identifications: a social psychology of intergroup relations and group processes* (London, 1988), p. 2.

[18] Land tax records LMA/4263 and MR/PLT at the London Metropolitan Archives accessed through www.ancestry.com; rate books and poll books accessed through T. Hitchcock *et al.*, 'London lives 1690–1800', www.londonlives.org, accessed 1 September 2016.

Individual circumstances were an important factor behind these trends. Incomers with a professional background could have strong links with the metropolis and tended to favour specific locations. For example, the physician, Edward Hulse, had a house in Harley Street, while the judge, Sir Nash Grose, had a house in Red Lion Square. However, both established landed gentry and newcomers who had commitments in London might also be expected to spend a considerable time there, and they often had houses in the area of St James's. Edward Hooper, who was a commissioner of Customs, spent nearly all the year in London and lived close to what is now Park Lane. His first house was in Norfolk Street but in June 1767, he moved to Hertford Street, which was closer to St James's Street.[19] Members of Parliament were expected to spend several months a year in London and, for example, both Hans Stanley and George Rose had London houses near St George's, Hanover Square. The metropolis thus appears to have played a significant role in the broader social circles of the Region's landed gentry.

This chapter analyses in detail the time spent in the metropolis, the Region, and elsewhere in England by Edward Morant and Harry Oglander. These men were selected because they had different backgrounds and lifestyles. Morant was an incomer living in the New Forest, Oglander a younger son of an established family from the Isle of Wight; Morant had a house in London, whereas Oglander spent little time there; Morant was wealthy; Oglander was not. Both case studies use unpublished manuscript sources, which have been transcribed and used to create datasets, facilitating detailed analysis. This has enabled movement between both locations and groups to be tracked, and changes in behaviour to be identified with precision.

[19] Norfolk Street has since been renamed Dunraven Street.

Both cases studies cover a period of the eighteenth century during which it has been suggested that significant social change occurred, and the detailed analysis enables this hypothesis to be tested. In the case of Morant, data is taken from his extant diaries and his account books. The diaries cover eighteen of the thirty-two years that he spent in England between 1762 and 1791 and record both his appointments and his cash transactions.[20] The account books, which record his transactions with his banker and broker, Long & Drake, cover eighteen consecutive years from 1759 to 1781.[21] For Oglander, the source is his diaries covering the period between 1768 (when he was twenty-five) and 1794 (when he was fifty-one), containing over 4,000 entries.[22]

These case studies demonstrate that these men shared similar behaviours even though they moved in very different social circles. Both Morant and Oglander were, it will be argued, adaptive social amphibians and their success was the result of the calculated, strategic decisions they took during their lives. The Morant case study also demonstrates how it was possible to advance through all the tiers of the social hierarchy in a relatively short space of time. This involved moving into, and adapting to, different social circles, but these operated in both the country and the metropolis.[23]

Edward Morant

As discussed in Chapter Two, Edward Morant was a third-generation creole, born in Jamaica but of British ancestry. His sugar plantations in Vere were only the fifteenth largest in Jamaica and at 8,159 acres significantly smaller than those of the Beckfords, Gales, and Dawkins, all of whom owned more than 20,000 acres.[24]

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[20] 'Morant diaries'.
[21] Morant family archives.
[22] 'Oglander diaries'.
[23] This could be thought of as adopting different identities.
[24] BL, Add. MS 12,436 landholders in Jamaica in 1750.

However, he was well connected to some of the more influential Jamaican families including those who had already settled in England. Henry Dawkins and Richard Pennant, later Baron Penrhyn, were his first cousins and William Gale and William Dandy Nedham were his brothers-in-law.

In 1757, Morant was just twenty-seven and, as a member of the Jamaican council, seemingly firmly rooted in the West Indies. However, in December that year, his first cousin, James Dawkins, died during a trip back to Jamaica. Dawkins had represented Hindon in Parliament on Alderman William Beckford's interest and Morant was approached to take his seat.[25] Morant was elected unopposed in 1761, reimbursing Beckford for expenses of £350, and, after a brief trip back to Jamaica, returned to England to take up permanent residence.[26]

When Morant first settled in England, he moved in West Indian circles and added to the number of Jamaican-born absentee plantation owners already living there.[27] Ragatz suggested that 'a wave of unprecedented prosperity, beginning in about 1750, filled the proprietors' coffers' and this enabled them to 'retire beyond the Atlantic and there live lives of ease'.[28] Higman argued that 'the home country was an irresistible magnet, with chances for investment, gentrification and aristocratic status', and that 'the residual planters were seen as failures, late developers or misfits'.[29] By 1775, 'one-third

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[25] *House of Commons, 1715–1754*, vol. 1, p. 347, Hindon.
[26] *Lloyd's Evening Post and British Chronicle*, 18–29 May 1761; 'Morant accounts', 19 June 1761.
[27] For commentary on creole culture see E. Long, *The history of Jamaica: or, general survey of the antient and modern state of that island* (3 vols, London, 1774), vol. 2, p. 261; K. Wilson, *The island race: Englishness, empire, and gender in the eighteenth century* (London; New York, 2003).
[28] L. J. Ragatz, *Absentee landlordism in the British Caribbean, 1750–1833: a paper read at the Indianapolis meeting of the American Historical Association, December 28, 1928* (London, 1929), p. 1.
[29] B. W. Higman, *Plantation Jamaica, 1750–1850: capital and control in a colonial economy* (Kingston, 2005), p. 5.

of the sugar estates of Jamaica were owned by absentees and those estates produced forty per cent of the island's sugar and rum'.[30]

Although white, West Indians were not English and their speech, diet, dress and behaviour were peculiar to the Caribbean.[31] The contemporary historian, Bryan Edwards, described creoles as 'white natives' but compared them favourably to Europeans:

> Generosity to each other, and a high degree of compassion and kindness towards their inferiors and dependents, distinguish the Creoles in a very honourable manner … they scorn every species of concealment. They have a frankness of disposition beyond any people on earth. Their confidence is unlimited and entire. Superior to falsehood themselves, they suspect it not in others.[32]

However, many West Indians, particularly merchants, were regarded in England with disdain. Edwards recorded a 'propensity observable in most of the West Indians to indulge extravagant ideas of their riches'.[33]

This attribute gained most traction in England, and West Indians had a reputation for combining great wealth with a lack of appreciation of the norms of polite society. A letter to a newspaper in 1774 described the misfortune of living 'in the neighbourhood of a wild, extravagant West Indian' and the 'pernicious effects produced upon the manners of all who live within the baneful influence of this sort of character'.[34] The theatre regularly lampooned Jamaicans and in Richard Cumberland's *The West Indian*, Mr Belcour admits that 'I am an idle, dissipated, unthinking fellow,

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[30] Higman, *Plantation Jamaica*, p. 18.
[31] A. J. O'Shaughnessy, *An empire divided: the American Revolution and the British Caribbean* (Philadelphia, 2000), p. 4.
[32] B. Edwards, *The history, civil and commercial, of the British colonies in the West Indies*, 2nd edn (2 vols, London, 1794), vol. 2, p. 13.
[33] Edwards, *History of the West Indies*, p. 15.
[34] *General Evening Post*, 28–30 June 1774 letter from 'An Oeconomist'.

not worth your notice: in short I am a West Indian'.[35] The main character of Samuel Foote's farce *The Patron* was Sir Peter Pepperpot, named after the native Jamaican stew. He was a 'West Indian of an overgrown fortune' who had 'always admired Miss Juliet … sweet as a sugar cane, straight as a bamboo and her teeth as white as a negro's'.[36]

The reputation of West Indians was also damaged by increasing public protest against slavery in the last decades of the century and, in November 1770, the *Public Advertiser* referred to death having 'scourged the Negro-whipping Beckford'.[37] Modern historians' views of West Indians have not been noticeably kinder and much of the historiography has focused on the role of slavery. Higman argued that 'it was slavery that made the planters rich', even richer than the East India nabobs, although in practice much of plantation owners' wealth came from compensation awarded to them in the nineteenth century.[38]

Jamaicans were conscious of this disapproval, and a newcomer to England aspiring to join the landed gentry might have been expected to distance himself from the West Indian community.[39] However, Morant was willing to be identified with and to support the West Indian planters' community in both Parliament and the business community. The Seven Years' War, which ended with the signing of the Treaty of Paris on 10 February 1763, was a difficult period for the sugar trade. Planters purchased insurance, but this was expensive as the examples in Table 18 taken from Morant's accounts show:

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[35] R. Cumberland, *The West Indian: a comedy in five acts* (London, 1771), act III, scene III.
[36] S. Foote, *The patron, a comedy* (London, 1764), p. 13.
[37] *Public Advertiser*, 23 November 1770 letter 'To Junius' signed 'Mark Anthony'.
[38] Higman, *Plantation Jamaica*, p. 5; 'Legacies of British slave-ownership'.
[39] C. Petley, ' "Home" and "this country": Britishness and Creole identity in the letters of a transatlantic slaveholder', *Atlantic Studies,* 6/1 (2009), pp. 43–61.

Table 18 : Premiums paid to secure insurance for cargo, 1759–62[40]

Date	Sum insured	Ship	Premium
12 July 1759	£400	Berry	£40
4 September 1759	£600	Veteran	£41
8 May 1760	£1,200	London	£132
29 October 1760	£800	Berry	£130
19 May 1762	£800	Hope	£214

Source – Edward Morant's accounts with Long & Drake, 1759–81

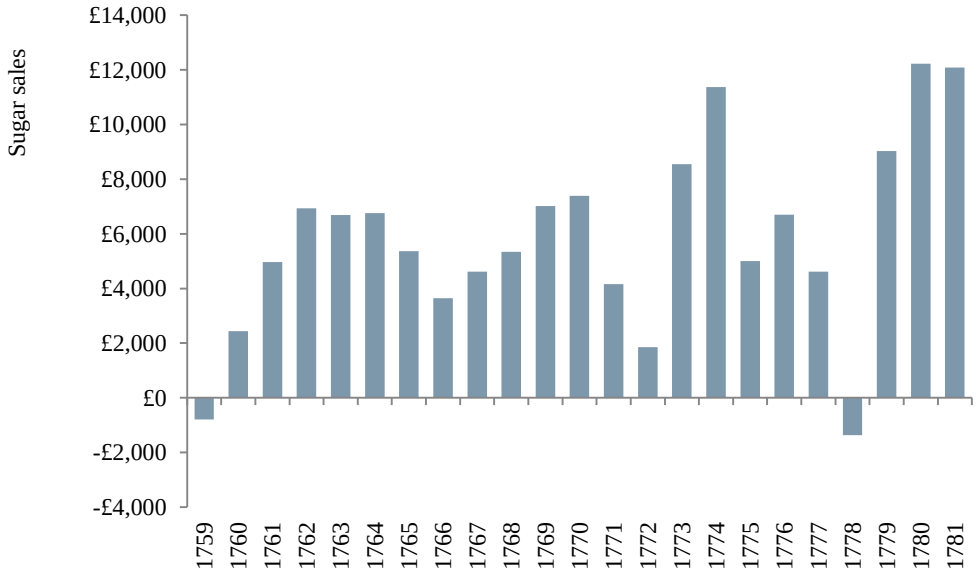
Planters also protected their interests by forming a West Indian lobby and Beckford was a leading figure in the 'Planters' Club' formed in the 1730s.[41] In addition, a 'Committee of West India merchants' was formed to lobby on commercial issues such as sugar duties and freight rates. A newspaper advertisement on 29 July 1772 invited the 'Planters, merchants and owners of ships in the Jamaica Trade' to meet at the London Tavern, in Bishopsgate Street, 'at one o'clock precisely, to take into consideration the freight of sugar'.[42] Morant attended these general meetings, which were held on the second Tuesday of the month, on a regular basis. However, he was not on the committee, nor was he a signatory to a letter dated 1 January 1775 signed by twenty-three planters residing in London requesting the Society of West India Merchants to join with the Planters to decide on 'the Steps necessary to be taken by us jointly on the present important crisis' in America.[43] Nevertheless, Morant remained a member of this circle throughout his life, attending meetings on average eight times a year until 1791.

Morant's income came mainly from three sources, all of which were recorded in his account with the firm of Long & Drake: sales of his own sugar, profits from ship

[40] 'Morant accounts'.
[41] L. M. Penson, 'The London West India interest in the eighteenth century', *The English Historical Review,* 36 (1921), pp. 373–92.
[42] *Morning Chronicle and London Advertiser*, Issue 993.
[43] D. Hall, *A brief history of the West India committee* (Barbados, 1971), p. 3.

ownership, and profits from outbound trade on behalf of his extended family. Long & Drake took a commission for arranging the warehousing, insurance and sale of sugar and rum and for purchasing merchandise to ship out to Jamaica.[44] Morant's accounts reflect O'Shaughnessy's observation that the profitability of plantations increased in the 1780s.[45] However, income from sugar fluctuated even during the period of peace between 1763 and 1775 and there were two years in which losses were incurred (Figure 30). For example, Morant suffered a loss of over £700 when one customer went bankrupt.[46]

Figure 30 : Morant's income from sales of sugar, 1759–81



Source – Edward Morant's accounts with Long & Drake, 1759–81

This uncertainty meant that he frequently recorded the weather in Jamaica in his diary and noted when letters were sent to, or received from, Jamaica. He monitored the sailing of his ships closely and travelled to London for a meeting with Long & Drake whenever one arrived, recording the amounts of sugar sold, and the prices achieved.

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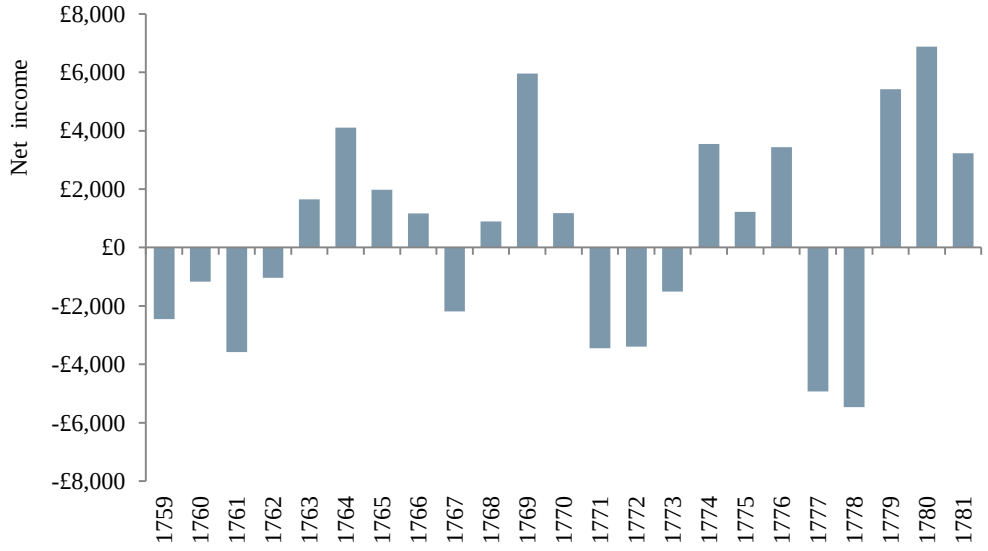
[44] K. G. Davies, 'The origins of the commission system in the West India trade', *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*, 2 (1952), pp. 89–107.
[45] O'Shaughnessy, *Empire divided*.
[46] 'Morant accounts', 12 January 1769.

Dealing on credit with sugar traders other than kin was inherently risky and Morant's account books reveal many transactions with Dawkins, Gale, and Nedham, members of his extended family. Planters also diversified into providing finance, such as unsecured current accounts or loans secured by mortgages or bonds, and work by Pares and more recently by Smith has demonstrated the importance of this. In many cases, the finance was provided by the wealthiest plantation owners to those with the smallest landholdings, although work by Gauci has shown that even Alderman Beckford took out a mortgage of £20,000 to finance the construction of his mansion at Fonthill.[47]

Morant's accounts with Long & Drake reflect how he used the income from his plantations and show that, in ten of the twenty-three years, he spent more than he earned (Figure 31).

Figure 31 : Net income per Long & Drake accounts, 1759–81

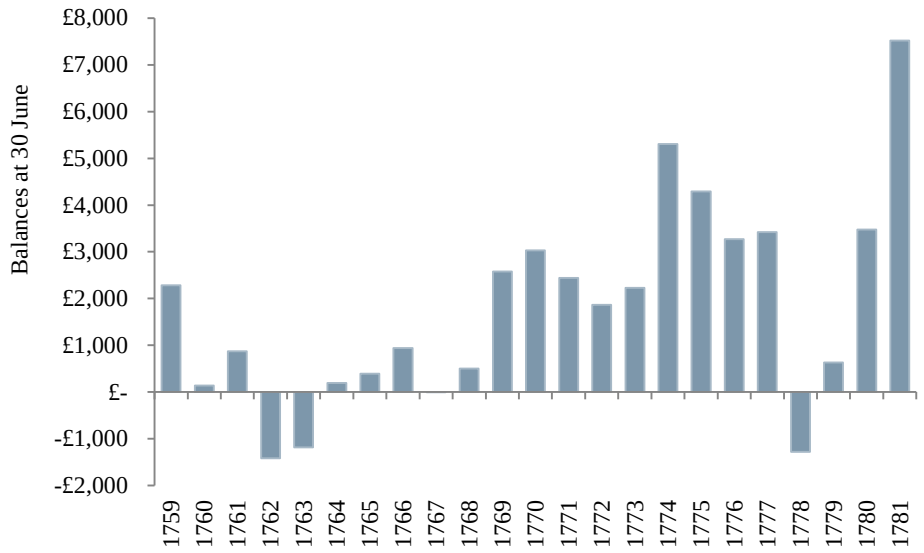


Source – Edward Morant's accounts with Long & Drake, 1759–81

[47] R. Pares, *Merchants and planters* (Cambridge, 1960); S. D. Smith, *Slavery, family, and gentry capitalism in the British Atlantic: the world of the Lascelles,1648–1834* (Cambridge, 2006); P. Gauci, *William Beckford: first prime minister of the London empire* (New Haven, 2013), p.58.

Gauci has shown that 'West Indians were certainly aware of the heavy expenditure that [establishing themselves in the mother country] would involve'.[48] The losses in the period 1759–62 coincide with his arrival in England, and later losses reflect major capital investments in property in England. His financial prudence is shown by his balances with Long & Drake as at 30 June every year (Figure 32). There was a period of financial uncertainty up to 1769, but after this the only year in which there was an overall deficit was 1778; this coincided with the building a new house on Park Lane, which he moved into on 17 March 1778.

Figure 32 : Balances with Long & Drake at 30 June 1759–81



Source – Edward Morant's accounts with Long & Drake, 1759–81

Polite performance in London

Morant kept his West Indian identity throughout his life and his diaries record dining on the West Indian delicacy of turtle on fifty-four occasions. Nevertheless, on moving to live in England, he sought to adopt the 'shared norms of public behaviour'

[48] P. Gauci, 'Learning the ropes of sand: the West India lobby, 1714–60', in P. Gauci (ed.), *Regulating the British economy, 1660–1850* (Farnham, 2011), p. 111, citing Samuel Martin of Antigua who, in 1751, thought that £20,000 was insufficient, BL, Add. MS 41346 f.32.

that identified him as one of the 'members of polite society'.[49] He and James Boswell shared a similar approach; both frequented coffee houses and attended the theatre, operas, and concerts, and on his arrival in England, in November 1759, Morant paid four guineas for a subscription to a concert. [50] In the first three months of 1762, the first year for which a diary has survived, he went to six operas, six plays, and two balls. He also attended court on the Queen's birthday, although later in his life he would abandon the royal court for the duke of Gloucester's circle. Both Morant and Boswell attended Lady Northumberland's routs, which Boswell described as 'magnificent. Three large rooms and the gallery (a prodigious one) were full of the best company, between three and four hundred of them'.[51] The *St James's Chronicle* reported that, on a similar occasion, 'there was so much Company that the Coaches reached from York Buildings, quite down to the Admiralty' and the roads 'were so crowded that Foot Passengers could hardly pass'.[52]

Boswell managed his limited resources by moving to cheaper lodgings and spending more money on outward appearances, including a new suit and a sword.[53] Morant wanted not only to be perceived as polite but also to portray himself as a man of culture and substance and this was expensive. Visiting friends and family was an important part of polite behaviour and what Whyman referred to as the 'tyranny of the London visit' had strict rules.[54] Visits should be made in a carriage, which 'because it made a statement about power, status, and wealth … became a badge of membership in society'.[55] In Whyman's view, 'the coach helped an unknown person to enter London

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[49] Whyman, *Sociability and power,* p. 87.
[50] *Boswell's London journal, 1762–1763,* ed. F. A. Pottle (London, 1950).
[51] *Boswell's journal, 1762–1763,* p. 70.
[52] *St. James's Chronicle or the British Evening Post*, 21–23 January 1762.
[53] *Boswell's journal, 1762–1763*, pp. 50, 60, 65.
[54] Whyman, *Sociability and power,* p. 95.
[55] Whyman, *Sociability and power,* p. 100.

society' and one of the first actions Morant took in 1760 was to pay a coach maker £256 13s.[56]

In the same year, Morant took a house in London and shortly afterwards 'sent £40 to China to buy china' as well as spending £60 15s on 'candlesticks bought at Lord Tyrconnels sale'.[57] He also paid approximately £50 to commission Sir Joshua Reynolds to paint a full length portrait of him and his son in an appropriately polite, classical setting (Figure 33).[58]

Figure 33 : Edward Morant and his son, by Sir Joshua Reynolds, 1759



Source – Private collection

[56] Whyman, *Sociability and power*, p. 101; 'Morant accounts', January 1760.
[57] 'Morant accounts', 8 January 1761; 'Morant diaries', 5 April 1762.
[58] Morant private collection.

At the start of 1762, Morant had met Mary Goddard, whose father, James Goddard, and maternal grandfather, John Gregory, both owned plantations of about 1,000 acres in Jamaica.[59] In January 1762, Morant made a further payment of £115 10s to a coach maker and in February 1762, he entered into discussions with John Gregory accompanied by his cousins, the Pennants.[60] Within a week, negotiations had been concluded and Morant had 'agreed to make the settlements'.[61] Morant married Mary on 22 April 1762 and a month later, he bought two coach horses for £65, hired postilions at ten guineas a year and a coachman at £14, and drew out cash of £100 to give to 'Mrs M'.[62] Like Boswell, Morant spent money on items that were in public view whilst keeping a tight control over expenditure on matters that were out of sight. Therefore, his cash account for that June records minutiae such as '1 bushel of salt 5s 4d … and 50 eggs 16s'.[63]

Joining the landed gentry

Just before his marriage, Morant rented a house at Farleigh, near Basingstoke, Hampshire and, while staying there, participated in some landed-gentry activities. He attended races at Winchester, a ball at Salisbury and made a day trip to Southampton.[64] Significantly, he also met Colonel Philip Jennings, later Sir Philip Jennings Clerke. Jennings' family seat was in Shropshire, but in 1760 he took a thirty-one year lease direct from the Crown of a 'hunting box' in the Crown Forest and, in October 1763, Jennings invited Morant to hunt with him in the New Forest.

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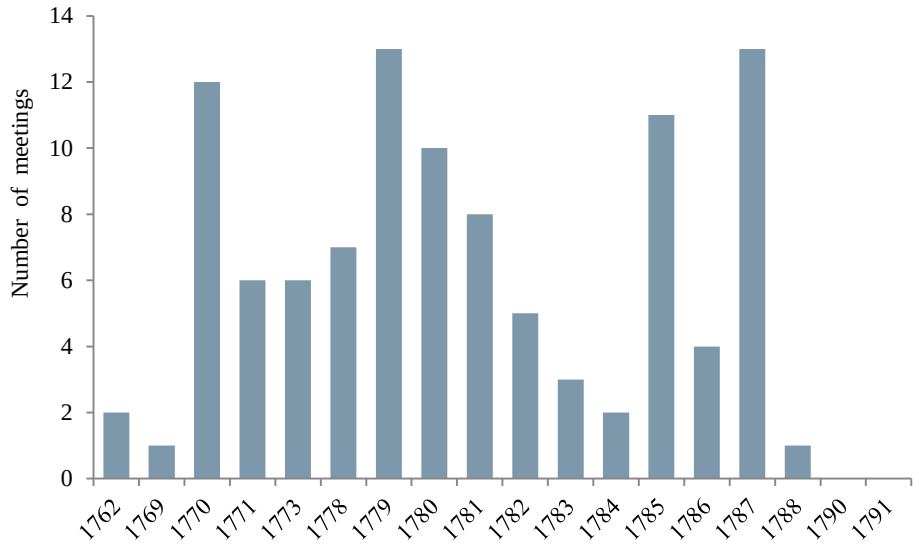
[59] James Goddard had 3,156 acres and John Gregory 1,075 acres, compared to Morant's 8,159 acres.
[60] 'Morant accounts', January 1760.
[61] 'Morant diaries', 13 February 1762.
[62] 'Morant diaries'; 'Morant accounts'.
[63] 'Morant diaries', June 1762.
[64] 'Morant diaries', June 1762; *Daily Advertiser*, 4 May 1772.

The two men had more than a love of hunting in common; Jennings' wife, Anne, was the daughter of Richard Thompson, who had purchased a 1,000-acre plantation in Jamaica in 1717. This shared background and experience of life in the West Indies was a recurring theme among the landed gentry in the New Forest. Jennings and Morant became close friends and by December 1778, Morant was paying £100 for his share of the cost of a pack of hounds.[65] This strong friendship continued until Jennings's death in January 1788 and this is reflected in the number of meetings recorded in Morant's diaries (Figure 34). For example, Jennings spent Christmas at Brockenhurst in 1786 and, as noted in the last chapter, the remodelled Brockenhurst Park looked remarkably similar to Jennings's 'hunting box'. Morant's relationship with Jennings underpinned his *entrée* into the landed gentry.

Figure 34 : Morant's meetings with Sir Philip Jennings Clerke, 1762–88



Source – Dataset created from diaries of Edward Morant, esq., 1762–91

After leaving Farleigh, Morant rented Southwick, near Fareham, from Alexander Thistlethwayte. This move strengthened Morant's links with the New Forest

[65] 'Morant diaries', 16 December 1778 and 31 December 1779.

as Thistlethwayte's brother had married a sister of Peter Bathurst of Clarendon Park. Bathurst was master keeper of the Linwood bailiwick of the New Forest in 1765 and invited Morant to hunt with him on seven occasions in 1769.[66] After Southwick, all the houses Morant rented were in the New Forest, starting with Pylewell Park, which he rented from Sir Thomas Worsley in 1765. On 6 June 1767, the *London Evening Post* noted that 'yesterday morning, Edward Morant, Member for Hindon, set out from his house in Lower Grosvenor Street, for his country seat at Pylewell in Hants'.[67] Later that year the *Derby Mercury* reported that:

> His Royal Highness the Duke of York went from the ship [the Admiral Holbourne off Portsmouth] in a twelve-oared barge, and landed at Gosport in order to proceed to Pilewell, in the New Forest, the seat of _____ Morant, esq.[68]

However, on Sir Thomas Worsley's death in 1768, Morant had to move again, and he took Minstead Manor from the Comptons. It is evident that he was already behaving like a member of the landed gentry and, for this reason, it was argued in Chapter Three that his purchase of the Brockenhurst estate in 1770 was primarily to reflect this existing status.

The landed gentry divided their time between their estates and London, and an analysis of all his diaries reveals that, until the last year of his life, he spent approximately half the days of the year in London and half in the country (Figure 35).

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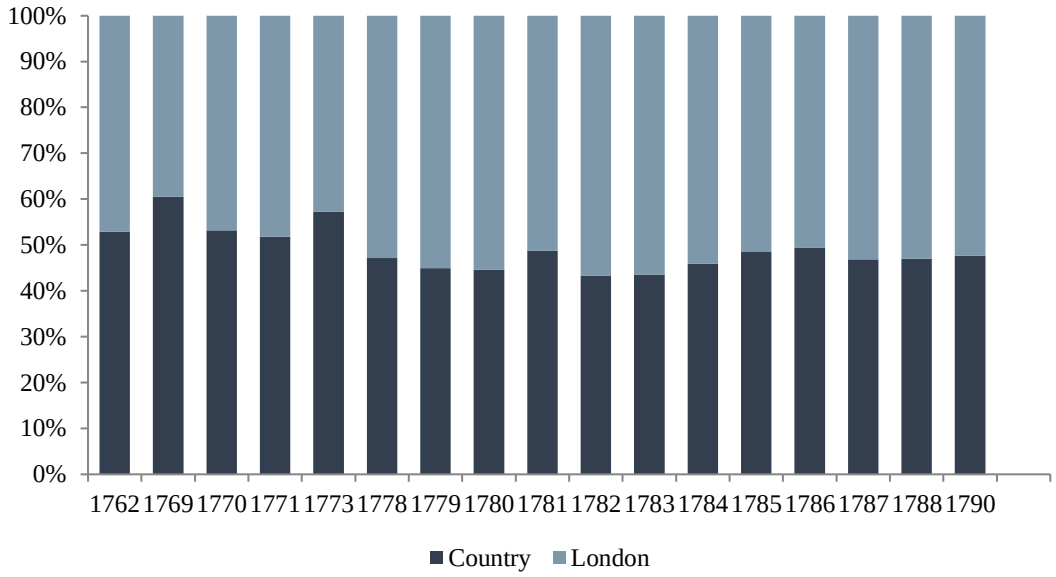
[66] HRO, 149M89/R4/6145 Samber MS: present state of the New Forest 1765; 'Morant diaries'.
[67] *London Evening Post*, 4–6 June 1767.
[68] *Derby Mercury*, 11 October 1765.

Figure 35 : Split of time in whole year, London vs the country, 1762–90[69]

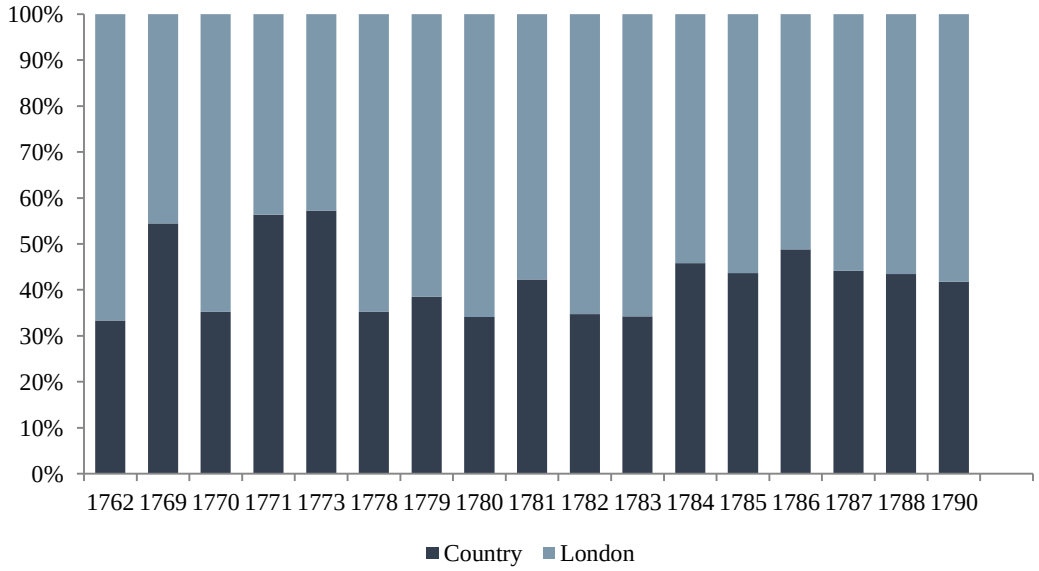


Source – Dataset created from diaries of Edward Morant, esq. 1762–91

The *London adviser and guide* of 1786 described two seasons, summer and winter. In the winter season, the theatres in Drury Lane and Covent Garden were 'open for dramatic pieces, every evening, from the end of September to near the end of June', a period of nearly nine months or about 230 days.[70] Rosenheim argued that 'the rhythm of London life profoundly shaped elite behaviour and consciousness' and by the mid-eighteenth century, landed society was in town at 'certain times of year … rarely before mid-autumn or after late spring, sometimes coming as late as November and departing as early as March'.[71] Taking the 'Season' to be from 1 October until 30 April, landed society might be expected to be in the metropolis for 214 days. However, Morant's diaries reveal that he spent a significant proportion of this time in the country, rather than in London (Figure 36).

[69] The analysis of time is ended at 31 December 1790 as Morant died in 1791.
[70] J. Trusler, *The London adviser and guide* (London, 1786), p. 161.
[71] Rosenheim, *Emergence of a ruling order*, p. 222.

Figure 36 : Split of time during 'the Season', London vs the country, 1762–90



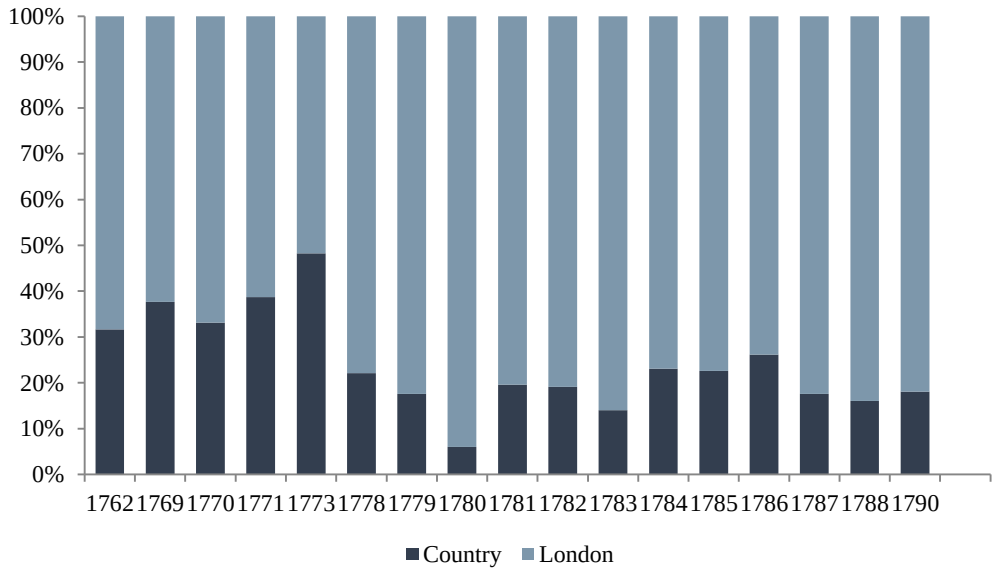
Source – Dataset created from diaries of Edward Morant, esq. 1762–91

Henry argued that 'elite social activities were ordered by both time and place; the social calendar and the location of the social world moved in unison', and that this movement was tied to the parliamentary calendar.[72] Morant was a Member of Parliament for much of the period, but checking whether this influenced the time he spent in the metropolis was complex as parliamentary sessions varied in length. Between 1775 and 1782, the start dates varied from 26 October to 5 December and the closing session from 26 May to 18 July, with a break in January.[73] For example, in 1781, the House of Commons sat for 202 days in two blocks: 23 January to 18 July and 26 November to 20 December. Morant's diary shows that he spent only 187 days in London in 1781 and on 48 days, his location did not match the parliamentary timetable. Morant's presence in London was more closely correlated with parliamentary terms

[72] Henry, *Elite culture*, p. 320.
[73] *Cobbett's Parliamentary history of England from the earliest period to the year 1803,* ed. W. Cobbett (22 vols, London, 1814).

than with the Season but, overall, he was spending more time in the country than the historiography would anticipate (Figure 37).

Figure 37 : Split of time when Parliament sitting, London vs the country, 1762–90



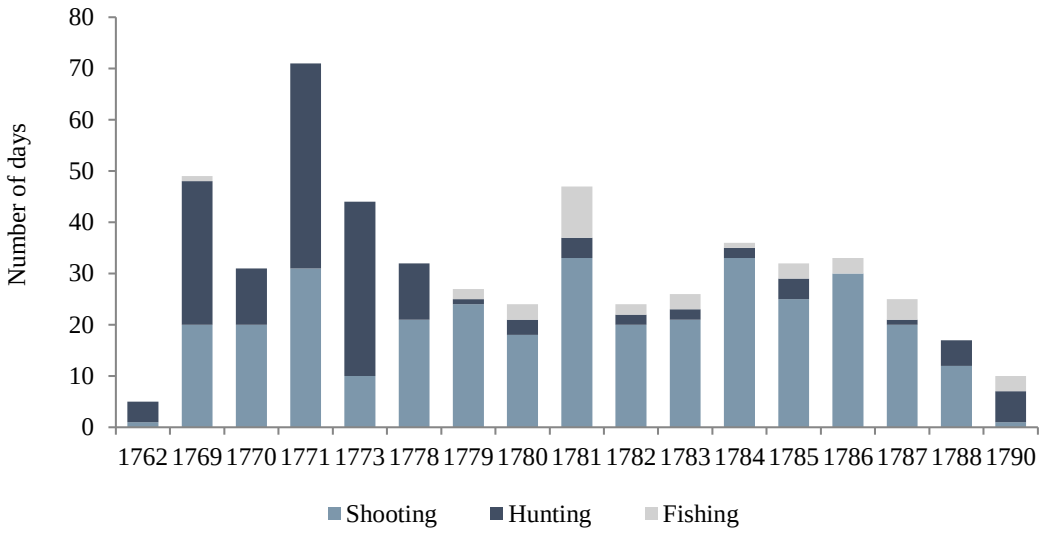
Source – Dataset created from diaries of Edward Morant, esq. 1762–91

This suggests that the landed gentry did not all move 'in unison' as a group of landed elite, but changed location according to their personal preferences and, in the case of Morant, the changing demands of business and of his estate. For example, he regularly travelled from London to Brockenhurst in April to collect and agree rents and settle taxes and tithes for the forthcoming year. Similarly, he travelled from the country to London for a few days whenever news arrived from Jamaica or a ship docked.

Morant's cultural life was, however, firmly centred on London, and he only occasionally visited Hampshire towns for social events. For example, on 1 September 1773, he went to a play in Southampton and spent the night there, a week later he went the Lyndhurst races and stayed overnight after a dance and, on 10 October 1785, he went to a play at Lymington. However, on average, he only visited Southampton and Lymington on seven occasions and Lyndhurst on four occasions each year between

1769 and 1790. Instead, his country life revolved around country sports; in early years, he spent most time hunting, but this was gradually replaced by shooting and fishing as he got older (Figure 38).

Figure 38 : Time spent hunting, shooting, or fishing, 1762–90

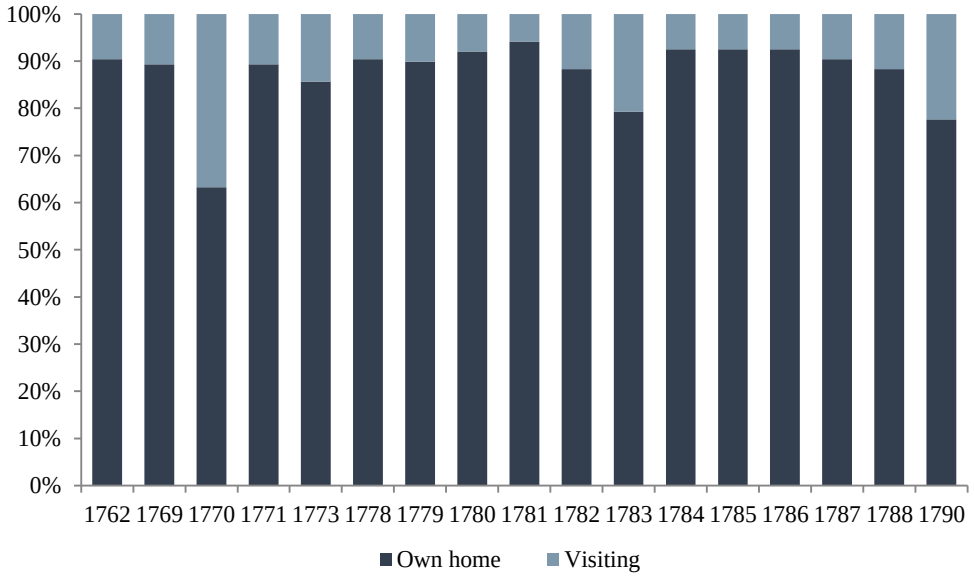


Source – Dataset created from diaries of Edward Morant, esq. 1762–91

Henry argued that 'eighteenth-century landed men and women were peripatetic creatures who travelled on an established circuit, from country house to country house, from countryside to London, from spa to spa, from race meetings to assemblies'.[74] This conjures up a picture of the landed gentry following each other from place to place. However, over the period 1762 to 1790, Morant spent eighty-seven per cent of his time at home, either in London or in the Region, rather than visiting or travelling, and this was true of both summer (Figure 39) and winter (Figure 40).

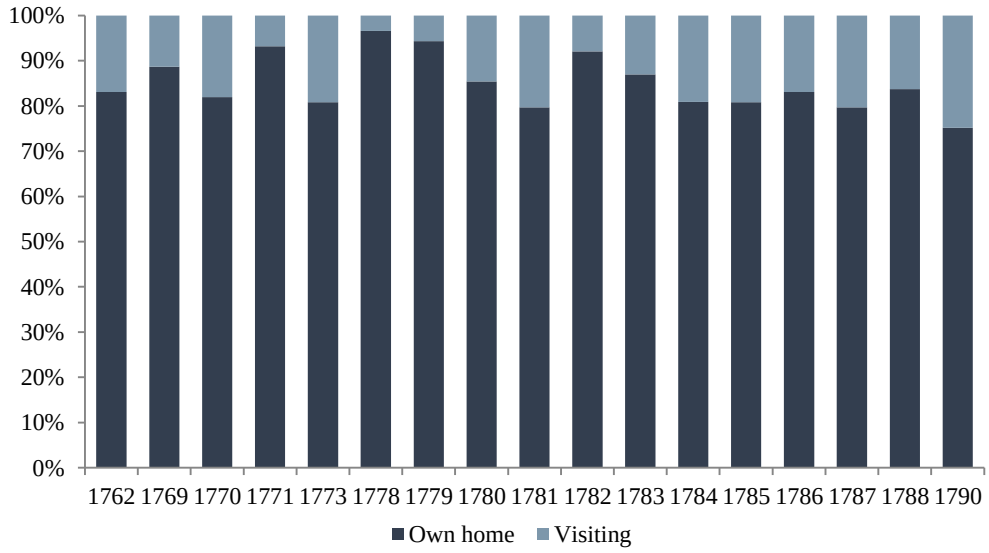
[74] Henry, *Elite culture*, p. 320.

Figure 39 : Split of time, 25 March to 28 September 1762–90



Source – Dataset created from diaries of Edward Morant, esq. 1762–91

Figure 40 : Split of time, 29 September to 24 March 1762–90



Source – Dataset created from diaries of Edward Morant, esq. 1762–91

Time spent away from home was spent strategically, building new networks of friends and contacts. In this way, he gradually moved into more elite social circles.

Moving closer to the peerage

Morant's relationship with Jennings and Bathurst had facilitated his transition from his West Indian and metropolitan circles into the landed gentry, but Jennings also introduced Morant into more exclusive social circles. Jennings's friend, Lord Harry Powlett, succeeded his brother as sixth duke of Bolton in July 1765 and, on 1 June 1769, Morant, by then living at Minstead Manor, was invited to a masquerade at Hackwood, Bolton's seat near Basingstoke. The original intention of this 'elegant entertainment', the press reported, was to have had 'a grand illumination and supper in the woods', but 'the badness of the weather' prevented this. Instead, it was held in six rooms in the house attended by '300 persons, all of the first rank, and all richly and elegantly dressed'. The party continued until 'six the next morning … though the ladies seemed to complain that the Faro bank engrossed the attention of the gentleman after supper'.[75]

Under Bolton's influence, gambling became a much greater feature of Morant's life. In March 1761, Morant had paid two guineas to become a member of Saunders in St James's Street; he renewed this membership a year later although there was no mention of gambling in Morant's diary for that year. The venues he visited changed from coffee houses to gambling clubs over time although this partly reflected changing fashions. For example, by 1769, St James's Coffee House had been renamed Stapleton's, and was hosting gambling.[76] Boodles, whose original subscribers in 1762 had mainly been Members of Parliament, gradually became his favourite club. In spite of the rule that 'no body can lose or win above Nine Guineas at a Rubber of Whist

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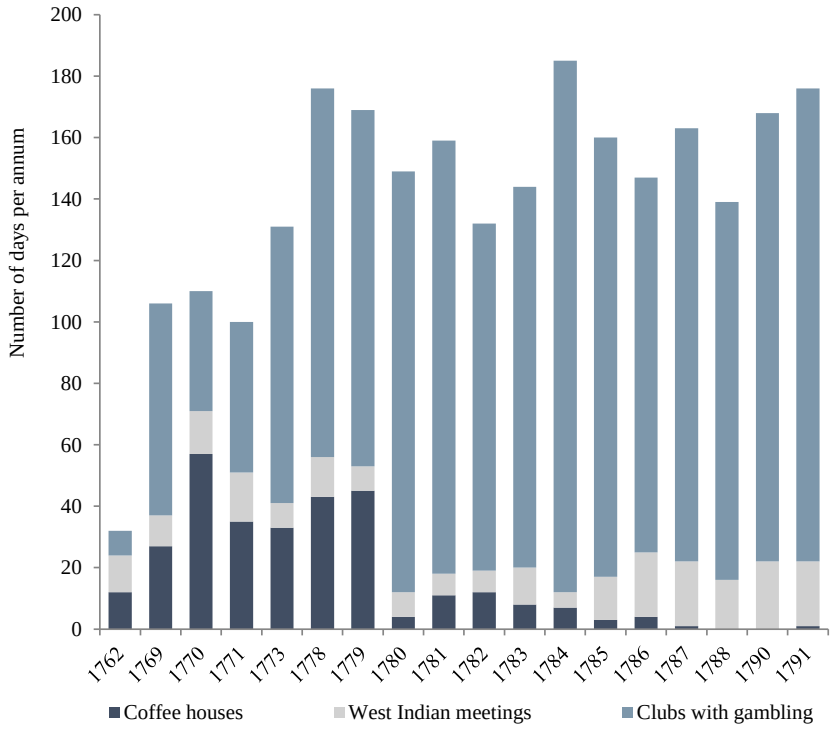
[75] *Derby Mercury*, 16 June 1769.
[76] 'Stapleton's', St. James's Street, west side, past buildings', in Survey of London: vols 29 and 30: St James Westminster, Part 1 (1960), pp. 459–471 www.british-history.ac.uk/report.aspx?compid=40622, accessed 24 December 2011.

either with those who play, or with Bystanders', Morant lost more money at Boodles than in other clubs. By 1782, Boodles had incorporated 'Mr Kenney's house' in St James's Street and had over 280 members. [77] In 1783, Morant visited it on eighty-four occasions and this reflected his move into more elite social circles. In spite of this, the London Tavern, where the West Indian 'Planters Club' met, remained a constant feature of his life (Figure 41).

Figure 41 : Time spent by Morant at different types of club, 1762–91



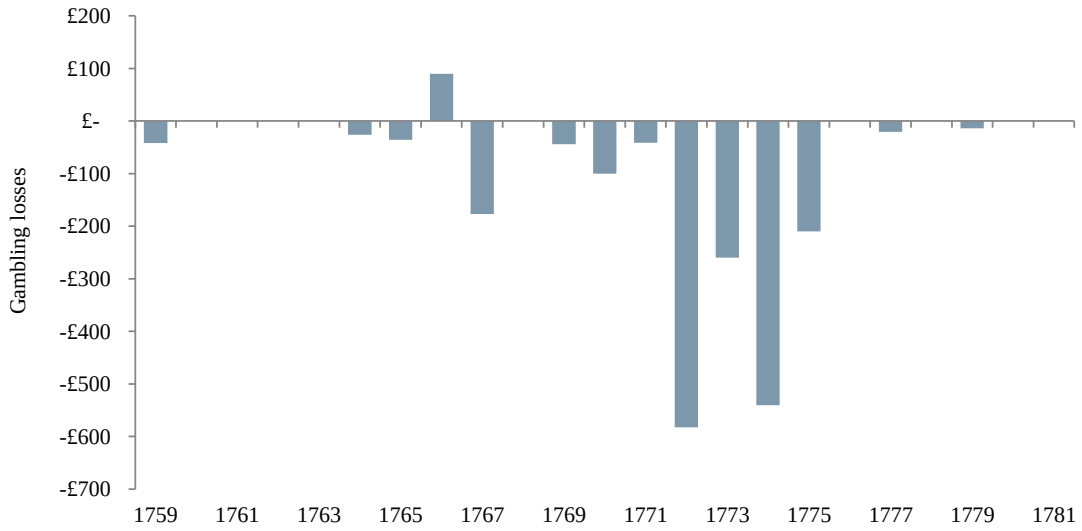
Source – Dataset created from diaries of Edward Morant, esq. 1762–91

Morant was not a reckless gambler, and he recorded many of his gambling transactions, such as his loss of fifty-six guineas on 27 May 1770, carefully in his diaries.[78] Members of clubs were required to put money on a 'card', which Morant usually did by means of a draft on Long & Drake. This credit could then be used to

[77] R. Fulford, *Boodle's 1762–1962: a short history* (London, 1962), p. 9.
[78] L. G. Mitchell, 'Fox, Charles James (1749–1806)', in *ODNB* (online edn, 2004), accessed 29 November 2015.

meet gambling losses or other expenses incurred at the club. If any credit balance remained when the members left London for their country seats, this could be withdrawn as a cash amount, which would not appear in the Long & Drake accounts. For example, on 10 July 1785, Morant 'took the money from Boodles, Brookes etc.' although the amounts are not specified. His accounts with Long & Drake may, therefore, exaggerate the losses he incurred. Nevertheless, they reveal a pattern of drawings which suggests that gambling losses increased significantly when he started to move in Bolton's set (Figure 42).

Figure 42 : Gambling losses paid through Long & Drake, 1759–81



Source – Edward Morant's accounts with Long & Drake, 1759–81

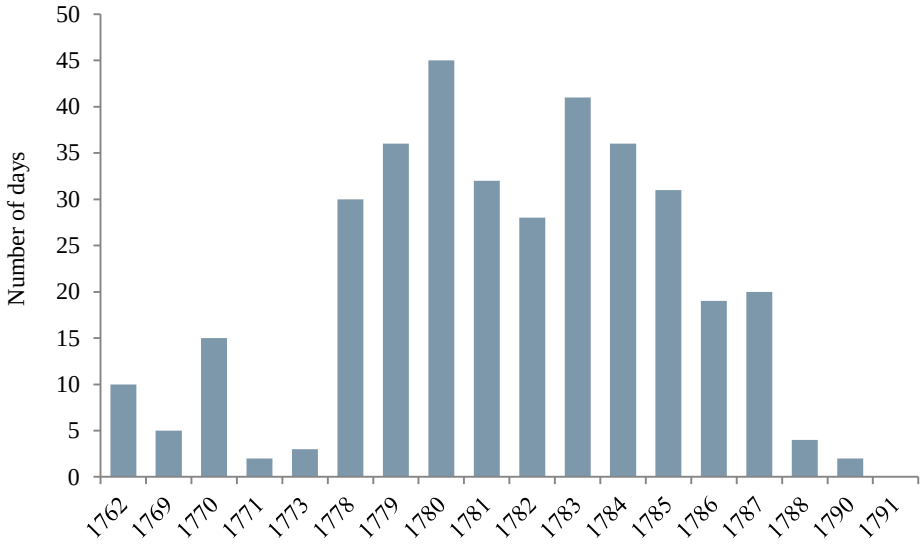
Heavy gambling on cards took place in the metropolis but betting on horses was a country pastime. This frequently involved a sweepstake in which each owner subscribed an amount to enter the race, the total pot going to the winner. At Bolton's instigation, Morant moved from being a mere spectator to a participant. For example, on 8 June 1778, he forfeited twenty-five guineas for subscribing for a race but failing to

produce a horse, and he entered and lost a separate sweepstake of fifty guineas.[79] In both cases, Bolton's horse won. Losing money gambling was, it appears, a price worth paying for the additional social power that accrued from being a close friend of the duke of Bolton.

Political circles

Morant used his role as a Member of Parliament to create new relationships and increase his social power. He had initially moved to England from Jamaica at Alderman Beckford's suggestion to support the West Indian interest in Parliament. Morant sat in the House of Commons from 1761 until 1787, with the exception of six years between 1768 and 1774. He attended regularly, on an average of thirty-four days a year between 1778 and 1785 (Figure 43).

Figure 43 : Time spent by Morant at the House of Commons, 1762–91



Source – Dataset created from diaries of Edward Morant, esq. 1762–91

He often remained there late into the night and continued to be interested in parliamentary affairs even when he was not a sitting member, particularly when the

[79] *Hampshire Chronicle*, 8 June 1778.

business related to the colonies and could affect his Jamaican properties. For example, the only entry in his diary for 9 January 1770 was 'House of Commons all day & night'. Overall, Parliament took up to one fifth of his evenings in the metropolis although, according to Namier, there was no record of his having spoken in the House.[80]

Although Morant lost his first parliamentary seat in 1768, he started to mix with Bolton's political friends after attending the ball at Hackwood. In the autumn of 1769, Morant 'dined & slept' at South Stoneham, the seat of Hans Sloane, member for Newport and dined with Lord Palmerston, member for Southampton, at Broadlands. He invited Bolton and Hans Stanley, member for Southampton, to dine with him at Minstead and visited Stanley both at Paultons and at Steephill House on the Isle of Wight, for 'hare hunting'. In June 1770, he and a number of the Bolton faction took a trip to France and this was reported in the newspapers:

> Lord Viscount Palmerston, Hans Stanley, Mr Sloane, and some other gentlemen lately set off in a pleasure boat from Southampton for Morlaix, and other parts of France; but the French, suspecting their designs were more than mere pleasure, refused their coming ashore or their vessel going up their harbours.[81]

Morant, one of the 'other gentlemen', was able to make a 'bad landing from the boat', and he and many others in the party dined at Abbeville. He took lodgings in Paris and as well as going to plays, the opera, and the Vauxhall pleasure gardens, he visited a number of *châteaux* including Versailles, where he watched the Dauphiness dine.[82] He also saw a 'glass manufactory' and inspected *Sèvres* china. Morant described this trip,

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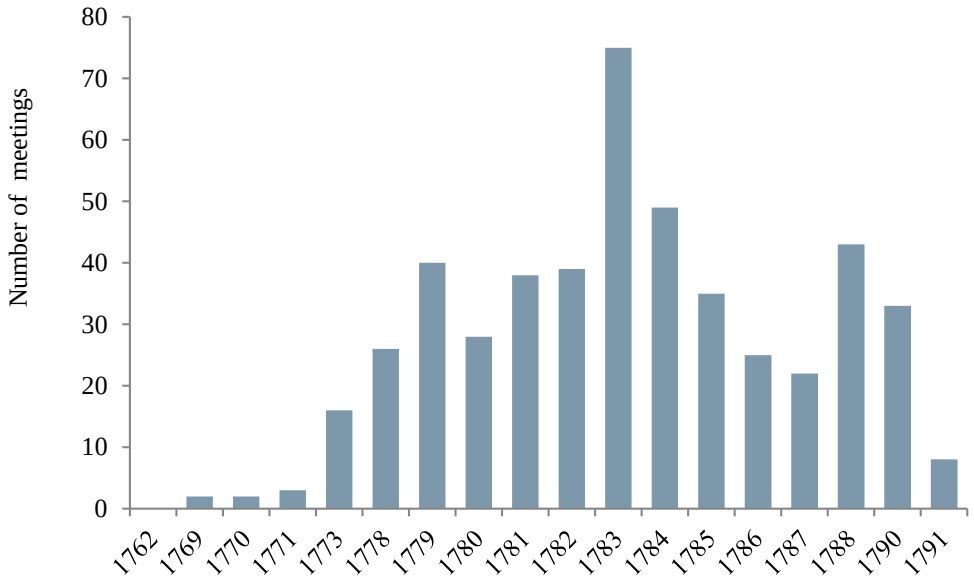
[80] 'Morant diaries', 1770; *House of Commons, 1754–1790*, vol. 3, p. 161, Edward Morant.
[81] *Middlesex Journal or Chronicle of Liberty*, 30 June 1770.
[82] J. Conlin, 'Vauxhall on the boulevard: pleasure gardens in London and Paris, 1764–1784', *Urban History*, 35/1 (2008), pp. 24–47.

which lasted twenty-three days and cost £300 as 'mere pleasure'.[83] However, Morant 'dined at Mr Walpoles' on 11 July 1770, immediately on his return.[84]

Figure 44 : Morant's meetings each year with the duke of Bolton, 1762–91



Source – Dataset created from diaries of Edward Morant, esq. 1762–91

Although Morant was mixing with Bolton's political allies, there are few specific mentions of Bolton in Morant's diaries prior to 1773 (Figure 44). Their relationship appears to have changed to one of personal friendship after this date, and there was a growing friendship between their wives, both of whom were in their thirties. Mary Morant gave birth to a son, her only child, on 29 November 1772 and Katherine Bolton had two daughters who were four and six years older. There was also a West Indian connection as Katherine's grandfather, Robert Lowther, had been governor of Barbados. Once established, the friendship between the couples continued for the whole of Morant's life. Mary and her son often visited Hackwood without her husband and, as a family, the Morants frequently stayed with the Boltons over Christmas or New Year.

[83] 'Morant diaries', 1770.
[84] 'Morant diaries', 1770.

Bolton was instrumental in Morant regaining a seat in Parliament in 1774. The Powlett family had historically come to an arrangement with the Burrards of Walhampton that each family should be able to nominate one of the two Members of Parliament for Lymington. However, when Bolton proposed Morant, Sir Harry Burrard objected. As described in more detail in the next chapter, Bolton secured Morant's election, but this was at the cost of giving up any future control over Lymington. Bolton's stand over Lymington was linked, however, to his long-standing friendship with Jennings rather than his relatively new friendship with Morant. Namier notes that Lord North, writing to the king on the eve of the election on 10 October 1774, said that Bolton had declared himself 'a friend to Government', and was going to bring in three members 'who will be favourable to us', one of whom was Morant.[85] North went on to request that, in return for this support, Jennings be made a baronet. Although Jennings was created a baronet on 26 October 1774, the trio's support for the government had all but vanished by 1777 and, having achieved his objective, Bolton tried to renege on his agreement with Burrard. In contrast, Morant, who had also signed an undertaking not to stand for election beyond one term, 'acted up to his engagement in a most honourable manner'.[86]

At the next general election, Bolton used his influence in the county to get Morant a seat at Yarmouth. On 1 December 1779, Morant left London and stayed the night at Hackwood; the next day he went to 'the nomination of Mr Jervoise Clark Jervoise & dined at Winchester'. As will be discussed in Chapter Seven, Clarke Jervoise had 'vacated his seat at Yarmouth to stand for Hampshire where he was

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[85] *House of Commons, 1754–1790*, vol. 2, Philip Jennings (1722–88), of Duddleston Hall, Salop, and Lyndhurst, Hants.
[86] Burrard, *Annals,* p. 93, reproducing a letter to Sir H. Burrard signed by Edward Morant, 7 October 1774.

opposed by the whole weight of ministerial power, yet was returned by a large majority'.[87] This left the seat at Yarmouth, which Clarke Jervoise controlled under an agreement with the Holmes family, vacant and available for sale to Morant. On 3 November, Morant:

> Called at Duke of Boltons. Received of Mr Long £3,000 which was immediately paid Mr Jervoise Clerke Jervoise for an engagement of honor. No one present at the receipt. Sir Robert Lawley dined with Mr Jervoise Clarke & was in the other room.[88]

The next day Morant 'told Mr Dawkins & Gale that the transaction of honor was settled the day before with Jervoise Clarke Jervoise'. On 10 April 1781, Morant dined with Clarke Jervoise at his house in Hanover Square and paid over £25 for election expenses, noting that 'no receipt taken but the bill torn in pieces as a thing never to be mentioned again'.[89]

By purchasing a seat, Morant might be thought to be conforming to the stereotype that 'merchants, nabobs and those who have gathered riches from the East and West Indies stand the best chance of governing this country'.[90] Indeed, Lord Chesterton was said to have been informed in 1768 that the price of a seat was 'three thousand pounds at least; but many at four thousand, and two or three … at five thousand'.[91] However, Morant was not an outsider; he was buying an unoccupied seat from one of Bolton's friends. Bolton's political faction coalesced around the Hampshire

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[87] *House of Commons, 1754–1790*, vol. 2, p. 216 Jervoise Clarke (afterwards Clarke Jervoise) of Idsworth Park, Hants.
[88] 'Morant diaries', 1780.
[89] 'Morant diaries', 1781.
[90] R. B. Sheridan, *Sugar and slavery: an economic history of the British West Indies, 1623–1775* (Barbados, 1974), p. 66; S. Osborn and E. F. D. McDonnell, *Political and social letters of a lady of the eighteenth century* (London, 1890), p. 178.
[91] R. S. Dunn, *Sugar and slaves: the rise of the planter class in the English West Indies, 1624–1713* (London, 1973), p. 66 citing letter written by the earl of Chesterfield to his son, 19 September 1767.

Club, which was 'established for the support of publick liberty'.[92] It met for the first time on 1 August 1776 at the George Inn, Winchester with Harry, duke of Bolton as president and Clarke Jervoise and Philip Dehany as stewards.[93] At the meeting on 4 November 1779, Clarke Jervoise was president and Morant was a steward, and by 18 July 1785, Morant was president.[94] Thus, Morant was not a client of Bolton's, but a trusted friend, and he was using social power rather than mere wealth to achieve his objectives.

Mixing with royalty

When Morant became friends with Bolton, he also moved into a new set, that of the duke of Gloucester. This new relationship coincided with Gloucester's fall from favour with George III following the revelation that he had secretly married Maria Walpole in 1766. The marriage was confirmed as legitimate on 23 May 1773, six days before the duchess gave birth to a daughter.[95] Morant first mentions Gloucester in the summer of 1773 and the meetings took place in and around the New Forest, where Gloucester had been appointed lord warden two years earlier.[96] They met first on Sunday, 29 August 1773, 'at Lyndhurst [race] meeting' where Morant 'watched with the Duke of Gloucester'. The following Thursday, Morant 'dined with the Duke of Gloucester on board [his] yacht' and on Saturday 4 September, Morant and Gloucester both dined at the Boltons'. Maria's daughter was only six months younger than the Morants' son was and on 14 September 1773, Morant recorded that both the 'Duke & Duchess of Gloucester dined with us'. On 20 October, they dined with Gloucester at the

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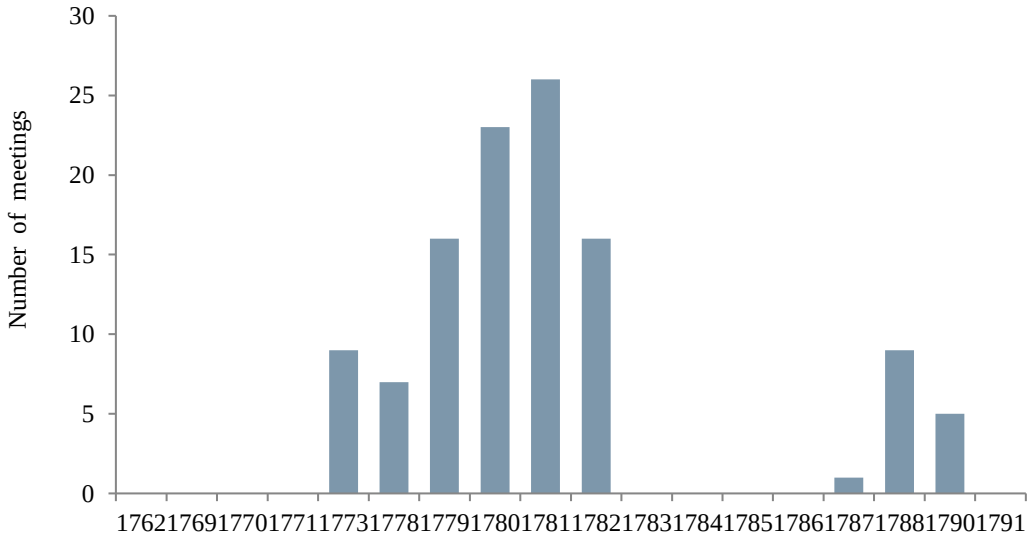
[92] HRO, 113M87 Hampshire Club minute book, 1775–93.
[93] *Hampshire Chronicle*, 29 July 1776.
[94] *Hampshire Chronicle*, 25 October 1779; *Hampshire Chronicle*, 18 July 1785.
[95] M. C., Kilburn, 'William Henry, Prince, first duke of Gloucester and Edinburgh (1743–1805)', in *ODNB* (online edn, 2004), accessed 29 November 2015.
[96] *London Gazette*, 26 January 1771.

King's House in Lyndhurst, a perquisite of Gloucester's position as lord warden of the New Forest and two days later they were 'at home with Duke of Gloucester & co'.[97]

Figure 45 : Morant's meetings each year with the Gloucesters, 1762–91



Source – Dataset created from diaries of Edward Morant, esq. 1762–91

The meetings in the autumn of 1773 were the start of an ongoing relationship with the Gloucesters that was to last till 1790 (Figure 45). According to Brooke, Gloucester 'gathered around him a knot of politicians who were in opposition to North's ministry and in June 1774 voted in the House of Lords against the Quebec Bill'.[98] However, it is argued that this was not the reason behind his friendship with Morant, particularly as Morant and Jennings were sponsored by Bolton in October 1774 on the basis that they would support Lord North and the government. Instead, common interests lay at the heart of the relationship. For example, Gloucester shared Bolton's love of racing and in September 1774, the *Hampshire Chronicle* announced that 'a great

[97] 'Morant diaries', 1773.
[98] J. Brooke, *King George III* (London, 1972), p. 278.

Sweepstakes is to be run over Lyndhurst course … between his Royal Highness the Duke of Gloucester, the Duke of Bolton, and Colonel Jennings'.[99]

In the summer of 1775, the Gloucesters left for the continent and the Morants accompanied them. There are no extant Morant diaries for 1774–77 but the family's archives contain receipts in Italian and the account books for the period 1775–77 show that they were on the continent and were drawing money from Sir John Lambert, a banker based in Paris. At this stage there seems to have been a good relationship between Mrs Morant and the duchess. However, Brooke described the duchess as 'proud, overbearing, avaricious, and shrewish; and though she behaved with more decorum than her sister-in-law she led her husband an unhappy life'.[100] It was also claimed that 'as early as October 1772 the Princess of Brunswick told the King that their brother no longer loved his wife and regretted their marriage'.[101] This is curious as the duke's lack of love for Maria did not prevent the birth of a son in Rome in January 1776.[102] The Gloucesters returned from Italy in 1777 and a recurrence of an attack of the duke's illness led to reconciliation with the king. A financial settlement in April 1778 meant that Gloucester could afford to live in England as a member of the royal family, although Maria was never received at court.

The improvement in Gloucester's circumstances might have led to him dropping his acquaintance with Morant, but this was not the case. As Figure 45 shows, the frequency of their meetings, both in London and the New Forest, increased until 1782. After 30 June 1782, the year in which Gloucester appointed Morant master keeper of South Bailiwick, no meetings were recorded until 28 November 1787. A possible

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[99] *Hampshire Chronicle*, 12 September 1774.
[100] Brooke, *King George III*, p. 279.
[101] Brooke, *King George III*, p. 279 citing RA 52058–9, 11 October 1772.
[102] Kilburn, M. C., 'William Henry, Prince, first duke of Gloucester and Edinburgh (1743–1805)', in *ODNB* (online edn, 2004), accessed 29 November 2015.

explanation is the duke of Gloucester's affair with his wife's lady-in-waiting, Lady Almeria Carpenter. The birth of a daughter in January 1782 may have put their friendship under strain, but another factor is that the Gloucesters spent much of the period between 1784 and 1787 on the continent, living in Geneva and Italy. In June 1787, Gloucester wrote to the king describing the duchess's 'very unfortunate turn of mind and temper' and claiming that he was 'indeed severely punished for my juvenile indiscretion by the very ungrateful return I receive at home'.[103]

Morant resumed meetings with the duke after he returned from the continent in 1787, but they were less frequent than before, and there was no specific mention of the duchess. Mrs Morant wrote to the Revd William Gilpin in 1788 complaining about the duchess's behaviour:

> A great lady … has exposed herself, almost as much as she did abroad, by her ill humour and incivility to those people she thinks her husband has an esteem for. She is violently fond of every new acquaintance. At times I feel a degree of compassion for her, as I really think her behaviour (in great measure) is occasioned by a degree of insanity.[104]

The Morants remained on good terms with the duke and in another letter to Gilpin dated 22 June 1789, Mrs Morant reported a conversation she had had in person with Gloucester about the king's plans to visit Lyndhurst.[105] A year later, on 24 March 1790, Morant 'went to the Duke of Gloucester about the commission' for his son and this was granted.

Morant did not conform to the stereotype of a 'wild, extravagant West Indian' who produced a 'pernicious effect' on 'the manners of all who live within [his] baneful

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[103] Brooke, *King George III*, p. 281 citing a letter sent from Coppet, near Geneva, 22 June 1787, RA 54382–3.
[104] Bodleian, MS. Eng. misc. d. (correspondence of Gilpin 1741–1853), f. 80, 11 February 1788.
[105] 'Gilpin correspondence' f. 88, 22 June 1789.

influence'.[106] Even when the profits from the sugar trade increased in the period of peace between 1763 and 1775, he did not adopt an ostentatious lifestyle. He retained his links with his kin and fellow Jamaicans, but he adapted to his new life in England. He developed social power through his long-term friendships, first with Jennings, and through him, with Bolton, and then the duke of Gloucester.

He was socially amphibious and this meant more than simply being 'equally at home in the country and in town'.[107] Perhaps, more importantly, he behaved as a gentleman. His willingness to be restrained in his gambling, whilst conforming to norms of elite behaviour, showed that he was reflective and possessed self-control. His attention to detail, shown not only in his accounts but also in the design of Brockenhurst Park, reflected his industrious nature and his honourable behaviour after the Lymington election won the approbation and respect of Burrard. By adapting his behaviour to conform to the polite norms of the different circles he moved in, he was transformed from creole to master keeper of the New Forest in just thirty years.

Harry Oglander

Harry Oglander, the younger brother of Sir William Oglander of Nunwell, came from a very different background from Morant and had much less money. Nevertheless, he too was an adaptive social amphibian. Whyman has argued that 'younger sons were important agents of change' and the previous chapters have demonstrated not only the impact they had on the family's finances but also how they enhanced the family's social power by, for example, representing the family as justices of the peace.[108] She added that 'younger sons often found ways to achieve personal goals' and this thesis argues

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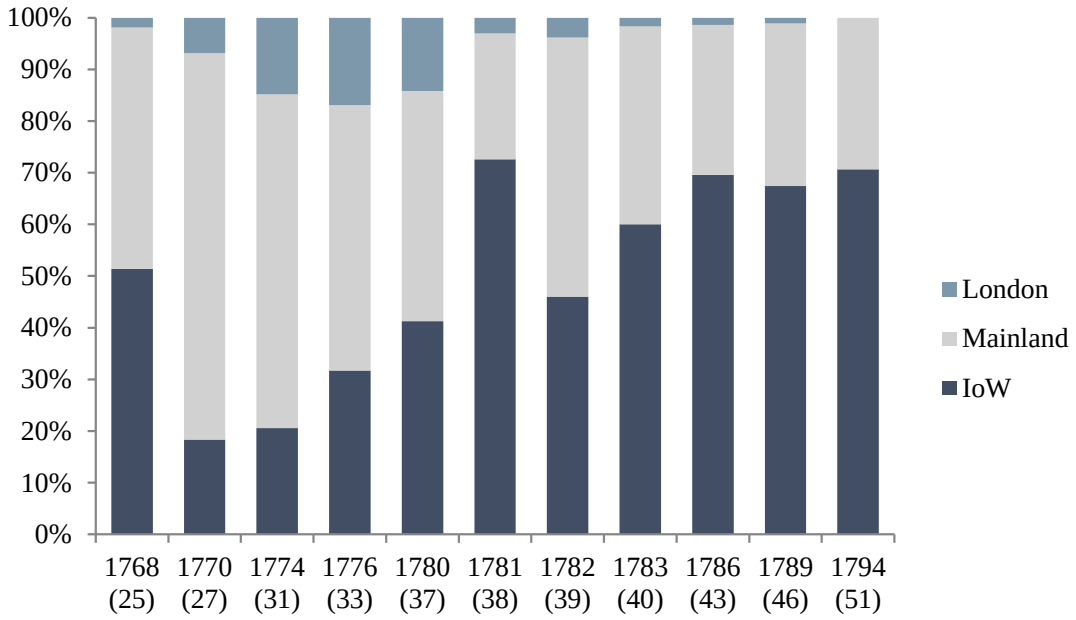
[106] *General Evening Post*, 28–30 June 1774 letter from 'An Oeconomist'.
[107] Henry, *Elite culture, p.327*.
[108] Whyman, *Sociability and power*, p. 179.

that social power was at the heart of this.[109] Harry's goal was to become a fellow of Winchester College and this chapter shows how he successfully negotiated membership of various social milieux by being adaptive, thus building his social power and achieving his aims.

As noted earlier, the methodology adopted for this case study has involved analysing all 4,000 entries in the surviving diaries.[110] This reveals that, until he was in his late thirties, Harry spent at least half the year, not close to home on the Isle of Wight, but on the mainland (Figure 46).

Figure 46 : Split of time between the Isle of Wight and the mainland, 1768–94



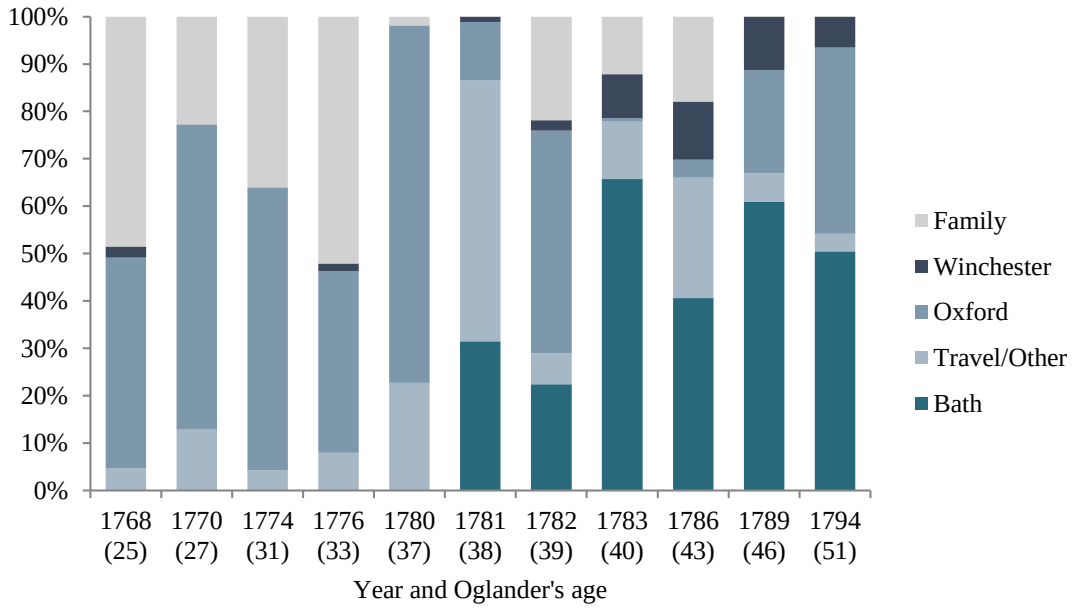
Source – Dataset created from Harry Oglander's diaries, 1768–94

Between 1768 and 1789, he moved on average twenty-one times a year and travelled for an average of twenty days a year. He went to London to stay with his sister, Susannah Glynn, in Red Lion Square, close to where her husband, Sergeant

[109] Whyman, *Sociability and power*, p. 178.
[110] 'Oglander diaries'.

Glynn, practised as a lawyer. However, if time spent in London is excluded, his increasingly peripatetic lifestyle comes across even more clearly (Figure 47).

Figure 47 : Split of time on the mainland excluding London, 1768–94



Source – Dataset created from Harry Oglander's diaries, 1768–94

As a third son, Harry was destined for the church so he went up to New College, Oxford in July 1761, aged eighteen, having been at school at Winchester College.[111] There his fellow students included his brother, Jack or Oglander Senr, and the diarist James Woodforde. Woodforde's diary gives a flavour of life as a scholar in the junior common room:

> 2 June 1763 – Several of our Fellows went at four o'clock in the Morning for Stow, and all drunk; some in a Phaeton (Oglander Senr & Cooke), some in a Buggy (Peckham & Gother junr), and some on Horse-back (Fanshawe, Oglander junr, Russell, Berkely Senr & Reynel).[112]

[111] *Alumni Oxonienses: the members of the University of Oxford, 1715–1886* ed. J. Foster (4 vols, Oxford, 1887), vol. 3, p. 1037.
[112] *Woodforde at Oxford, 1759–1776,* ed. W. N. Hargreaves-Mawdsley (Oxford, 1969), p. 132.

> 9 July 1763 – Went up in our Hall (being a graduate) this morning, and saw Oglander junr admitted a Fellow from being a scholar. Oglander junr treated the BCR this evening with wine and punch.[113]

Fellows of New College were involved in the election of fellows and wardens at both the college and its parent foundation, Winchester College, and the key to success was to build relationships and social power. When it came to the election of the warden of Winchester in December 1763, Woodforde supported Mr Sale, who appears to have lacked influence:

> 10 December 1763 – Oglander junr who promised to vote for Mr Sale in this scrutiny, voted for Mr Lee … Poor Mr Sale has been used excessively ill by Mr Hayward's people in this election.[114]

The Oglanders were among 'Mr Hayward's people' and when Hayward, the warden of New College, died in August 1768, Jack Oglander was elected as his successor. Woodforde 'did not go to the Election, as did not many more having no chance for our Friend Sale'.[115]

Jack's election as warden marked a new phase in Harry's life, and he started to move in different social circles not only at New College, where he had taken his BA in 1767, but also on the Isle of Wight. The Oglanders played an important role in the social and cultural life of the island and in January 1760, they had been among the founding members of the 'Society of Gentlemen', known as 'the Club', on the island.[116] The members were unmarried young men and in March 1762, it was resolved that 'a ball … be given annually … with a general invitation to all the ladies of the island by

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[113] *Woodforde at Oxford,* p. 140; the BCR is the bachelors' common room.
[114] *Woodforde at Oxford,* pp. 155–6.
[115] *Woodforde at Oxford,* p. 183.
[116] Foster, *Society of Gentlemen minutes*. Founding members were William Oglander, John Oglander, James Worsley, the Revd Francis Worsley, James Jolliffe, the Revd William Gother and Thomas Gother.

the members of this club'.[117] The ball was originally held on the anniversary of the formation of the club, but in 1768 it was resolved that, 'as many inconveniences attend the present time of the club ball, that for the future the club ball shall be annually celebrated on the first Thursday in October instead of the tenth of January'.[118]

The Club became the centre of sociability on the island. In October 1768, Harry noted that that there 'was present a very numerous & polite company' at the ball.[119] By 1770, membership had grown to include most of the landed gentry, Harry was comptroller, and 'Miss Worsley of Pidford was Lady Patroness' of the ball.[120] The Club continued to attract new members until well into the nineteenth century, showing that it was perceived to be fulfilling a useful function in bringing together the 'polite company' of both sexes.

In addition to the ball, the gentlemen of the Club met monthly at the Sun Inn in Newport and these meetings had strict rules. In December 1767, Mr Sealy was expelled from the Club 'under very violent suspicion of revealing the Secrets of the Club'.[121] Attendance at the meetings was obligatory, and it was a breach of club rules for a member to miss a club day in order to dine out or invite 'insular company'.[122] For example, James Worsley was sconced 'six bottles of claret instead of the ordinary Fine of three bottles of Port' for 'having prefer'd the Diversion of Shooting to the Company of this Society'.[123] On the other hand, absence from the island was considered an

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[117] Foster, *Society of Gentlemen minutes*.
[118] Foster, *Society of Gentlemen minutes*.
[119] 'Oglander diaries'.
[120] Foster, *Society of Gentlemen minutes*. Members included Sir Edward Worsley, Robert P Blachford, John White, the Revd William Kingsman, the Revd William Sealy, Sir Thomas Worsley, Henry Oglander, the Revd Roberts, Edward Dowley, Thomas Urry, Barnabas Leigh, Thomas Fitzmaurice, and Sir Richard Worsley.
[121] Foster, *Society of Gentlemen minutes*, p. 16, 29 December 1767.
[122] Foster, *Society of Gentlemen minutes*, p. 3, rules.
[123] Foster, *Society of Gentlemen minutes*, p. 36, 22 October 1776.

acceptable excuse, recognising that many of the landed gentry had duties on the mainland.

While his roots remained firmly in the island, Harry spent an increasingly amphibious life. He had spent half his time on the island in 1768, but by 1770, this had fallen to less than one-fifth, and he was becoming increasingly involved in New College affairs (Figure 47). In May that year, he accompanied his brother, the warden, on the annual progress around the New College properties. This took twenty-seven days and they covered 470 miles from Oxford through Buckinghamshire, Hertfordshire, Essex, Norfolk, Suffolk, and Cambridgeshire to London. Harry noted 'the remarkable seat of Lord Maynard in Essex with its two excellent original portraits of Mr & Mrs Jacques by Vandyke'. He admired Houghton Hall with its 'four very handsome fronts', but thought that it was 'in a situation which was low and indifferent'. He preferred the Revd Mr Parrott's house in Saham, 'an exceedingly good handsome convenient house with good stables'.[124] Harry drew on this experience when he finally built his own country seat in 1783; it was convenient rather than grand, but its setting was excellent with views across the Solent.

Harry took his MA in November 1772 and, in December 1773, he was appointed one of the three bursars at New College. Woodforde was sub-warden and on several occasions, they went for walks together up Shotover Hill. In December 1774, both Harry and the warden supported Woodforde's candidature for appointment as rector of Weston Longville and as dean of divinity.[125] In November 1775, Harry and Woodforde disputed for their bachelor of divinity degree, taking it in turns to be

[124] 'Oglander diaries'.
[125] *Woodforde at Oxford,* pp. 265, 267.

respondent and opponent.[126] However, they were disturbed at night by the 'young gentleman' in the Junior Common Room who had been 'hallowing etc. in the courts' and pulling down the chimney piece in their room.[127] This was not unusual. In June, a riot had taken place and doors broken down, which Woodforde blamed on too much arrac punch.

A year later, Harry's brother, the warden of New College, the only fellow allowed to marry, did so, and moved out of college to Elsfield, a village just outside Oxford. In the same year, Harry was awarded his degree of bachelor of divinity at the age of thirty-two. He had been based at New College, first as a scholar and then as a fellow for fifteen years and this had been the social sphere around which his life had revolved. For many younger sons, this phase of his life would have been followed by appointment to a living, but many of the advowsons on the Isle of Wight were held by the church or institutions. In 1753, Francis Worsley was appointed rector of Chale, where the advowson was held by the Worsleys of Appuldurcombe, but Nunwell was in the parish of Brading, where the patron was Trinity College, Cambridge.[128]

Instead, Harry's ambition was to become one of the fifteen fellows of Winchester College, and, especially as a younger son, he recognised that he needed to develop social power to achieve this. In January 1774, when one of the fellows who supported him died, Harry noted that he had 'lost a sincere & firm friend & probably a fellowship of Winton College'.[129] However, he continued to build relationships and in December 1782, on a further death, he was elected fellow of Winchester, receiving a stipend of nearly £300 per annum. Thereafter, he spent less time at Oxford and more at

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[126] *Woodforde at Oxford*, p. 304.
[127] *Woodforde at Oxford*, p. 309.
[128] *Parson and parish*.
[129] 'Oglander diaries'.

Winchester (Figure 47). He had achieved his ambition by building support among the fellows at New College and Winchester and earning social power through his behaviour.

As noted in Chapter Four, Harry had been left £1,500 through a settlement established in his father's will. In 1780, his eldest brother used this to buy him a small estate at Nettlestone, near the family seat at Nunwell, and on 17 October 1780, 'the first stone of the foundation of my house at Nettlestone was laid'.[130] He took a close interest in the building work, recording the work done and the costs in his diary and in order to supervise the building work, he 'entered upon the curacy & served the churches of Brading & Yaverland' between 25 March and 12 October 1781. Building continued for over eighteen months, and it was not until 22 May 1783 that Harry was able to write that he had gone 'to Fairy Hill in the evening & slept there for the first time'.[131] He had become a landed gentleman. In October 1785, he was appointed vicar of Portsmouth, but seldom spent a night there, returning across the Solent to Fairy Hill after taking the Sunday service.[132]

Having his own country house did not mean that Harry saw less of his family. In February 1781, his sister, Susannah Glynn, moved to St Catherine Place, Bath where she lived until her death in 1816. Between 1782 and 1794, Harry spent on average two months a year in Bath, typically in the first three months of the year. Harry also recorded regular meetings with his nephews and nieces, including 'little Harry Glynn', who started his naval career as a midshipman on the seventy-four-gun HMS Bellona in August 1780, at the age of twelve. A year later, Harry dined on board HMS Bellona

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[130] 'Oglander diaries'.
[131] 'Oglander diaries'.
[132] Clergy of the Church of England database www.theclergydatabase.org.uk, accessed 15 August 2014; 'Oglander diaries'.

when she was lying at Spithead 'under sailing orders for America', noting that 'the little Admiral left us in excellent spirits.' By the end of his time in the Navy, 'the little Admiral' had been appointed admiral of the white.[133]

Harry maintained strong and stable relationships not only with his family but also with his 'sincere & firm friends'.[134] Many of these shared an island background with him including Ned (Edward Meux) Worsley, whose coming of age party he attended in 1769, and Andrew Gother of Thorley, who was at New College with him. His diary entry for 24 June 1770 reads:

> My friend Bar[naba]s Leigh of Northcourt esq. died at Bristol of a consumption, a family complaint. Multis ille bonis flebilis occidit, nulli flebilior quam mihi. [He died lamented by many good men, but by none more than by me. Horace].[135]

He met his childhood friends off, as well as on, the island. He used Bath as a base to go country-house visiting with his long-standing friends from the Isle of Wight. For example, on 30 April 1783, a party, including Miss Barrington, Mr J. Worsley, Miss Jolliffe, Mr H. Worsley and Mrs Edward Worsley, went by phaeton to Lord Clifford's at King's Weston and then on to Tintern Abbey.[136] On 23 December 1806, a few years before his death, Harry asked to retire from the Club and the minutes recorded that his request was complied with, 'but not without much regret from parting with so old and pleas't a brother of this meeting'.[137]

Harry achieved his objectives by using social power rather than money and by being an adaptive social amphibian. He moved smoothly through a number of different associations and groupings over his lifetime, from scholar at New College to a member

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[133] 'Oglander diaries'; *Nautical Magazine and Naval Chronicle* (London), p. 335.
[134] 'Oglander diaries'.
[135] 'Oglander diaries'.
[136] 'Oglander diaries'.
[137] Foster, *Society of Gentlemen minutes*.

of the landed gentry of the Isle of Wight in his own right, and adapted his behaviour to fit in with each group. He had permanently sacrificed the opportunity of marriage by becoming a fellow of Winchester, but he made his Glynn nephews his principal heirs, thus adding to the wider family's patrimony.[138] Like Morant, he nurtured strong, long-lasting relationships and his exemplary, adaptive behaviour as a social amphibian enhanced the social power of the Oglanders and contributed to his family's continuity on the Isle of Wight.

Conclusion

This chapter has brought greater precision to the analysis of how and where the landed gentry spent their time. It has shown that successful individuals adapted their behaviour in order to achieve their objectives and behaved as social amphibians. Wahrman argued that the metropolitan-based 'national society' was distinct from the culture of the 'provincial-local sphere'.[139] However, this chapter has shown that the landed gentry operated in multiple, overlapping groups and amphibiousness demanded more than being at home in both London and the Region. Instead, the landed gentry had to adapt to the norms of each different social circle they moved into and both Morant and Oglander were recognised as polite in these different circles. Thus, towards the end of his life, Morant was equally at home dining on turtle with West Indians as he was hunting and racing with the royal family and, while it cost more to socialise with dukes, social power was as important as wealth in establishing membership of new groups. Both Morant and Oglander took a long-term view and did not abandon their old friends when they joined more socially advantageous groups. Instead, their ability to identify

[138] TNA, PROB 11/1555/332 Will of Reverend Henry Oglander, Clerk and Fellow of St. Mary's College of Fairy Hill, 26 April 1814.
[139] Wahrman, 'National society'. For other examples of amphibious behaviour see also MacDonald, 'Secularization of suicide'; Henry, *Elite culture*; Gauci, 'Finding the middle-ground'.

the shared values of each group, and the appropriate polite behaviour associated with it, together with the strength of their long-standing relationships, enabled them to enhance their social power, and ensured their place in the landed gentry of the Region.

The next chapter builds on this by examining the role of the landed gentry in the national political arena in detail. Political culture reflects the values of these men and is of particular interest because they were able to increase their control of the parliamentary constituencies in the Region throughout the eighteenth century, notwithstanding that they lacked the wealth and status of the two dukes who had estates in Hampshire. This required the landed gentry to manage relationships with groups below and above them in the social hierarchy, and it will be argued that, for the landed gentry, social power was as important as wealth and station in life in achieving their objectives.

Chapter Seven: Political behaviour

The last chapter offered new perspectives on why the landed gentry retained their power and influence in the Region and succeeded in keeping their estates in the family throughout the period, notwithstanding the social upheavals elsewhere. It showed that, for this discrete social group, social power was as important as wealth in the longer term and successful individuals were adaptive social amphibians. Significantly, amphibiousness was more than just being equally at home in the country and the metropolis; it involved being able to adapt to behaving in way that was appropriate for each social circle. However, the focus of the last chapter was primarily on relationships within the landed gentry or between them and the peerage. This chapter extends this scope to relationships with both the middling sorts and government and this is achieved by considering the behaviour of the landed gentry in national politics.

The approach taken in this chapter is socio-political rather than a study of political partisanship, the latter having already been adequately covered by the series of the history of Parliament.[1] O'Gorman stressed the broader social nature of politics and expressed the view that the 'electoral system was controlled by local families and connections whose influence was exercised conditionally amidst habits of widespread political involvement'.[2] Furthermore, the 'patronal classes' were keen to appear to do the right thing and were 'willing at least to talk the language of service to the community'.[3] The Region is a good place to test these views as none of the borough seats were venal boroughs, controlled by a single landowner by virtue of his landed

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[1] *The House of Commons, 1690–1715,* ed. D. Hayton *et al.* (5 vols, Cambridge, 2001); *The House of Commons, 1715–1754,* ed. R. B. Sedgwick (2 vols, London, 1970); *House of Commons, 1754–1790*; *House of Commons, 1790–1820*; *The House of Commons, 1820–1832,* ed. D. R. Fisher (7 vols, Cambridge, 2009).
[2] O'Gorman, *Voters, patrons and parties,* p. 7.
[3] O'Gorman, *Voters, patrons and parties*, p. 18.

interest. Furthermore, the landed gentry faced competition from both peers and government.

At the start of the eighteenth century, the Powlett family, marquesses of Winchester and later dukes of Bolton dominated county politics.[4] Their power waned over the century, particularly after 1760 when they were challenged first by the Brydges family, marquesses of Carnarvon and dukes of Chandos, and second by the growth of government influence in the dockyards around Portsmouth, through military establishments on the Isle of Wight, and through tenants in the Crown Forest. Between 1700 and 1734, seven members of the Powlett family represented boroughs in the Region and five Powletts represented Hampshire in Parliament. However, between 1735 and 1754, the numbers fell to five and three respectively and, after 1754, there were no Powletts in the House of Commons, although they remained patrons of some seats.[5]

This chapter seeks to explain why the peerage's influence faded, and starts by analysing the involvement of the landed gentry resident in the Region as patrons and representatives of parliamentary constituencies. The peerage's control over the seats in the Region weakened, but so too did the government's; in contrast, the landed gentry were able to increase their control within their Region. The reasons for this are explored by examining the landed gentry's relationships with three groups: the peerage, the middling sorts, and other landed gentry. Case studies have been chosen which most clearly illustrate the landed gentry's socio-political agency. The battle for control between the landed gentry and the peerage is revealed through borough elections at Lymington and Christchurch. The Christchurch case study is then extended to show

[4] Coleby, *Central government*, p. 230.
[5] *House of Commons, 1690–1715*; *House of Commons, 1715–1754*; *House of Commons, 1754–1790*; *House of Commons, 1790–1820*. There were no Brydges in the House of Commons after 1768.

how Hooper succeeded in managing the middling sorts, the burgesses of Christchurch, through reciprocal deference structures. The third section deals with disputes within the landed gentry for control of constituencies. Whilst the success of the landed gentry was remarkable, this chapter shows that the behaviour of the landed gentry had a decisive effect on individual contests, and that the exercise or dissipation of social power was important.

Patterns of involvement

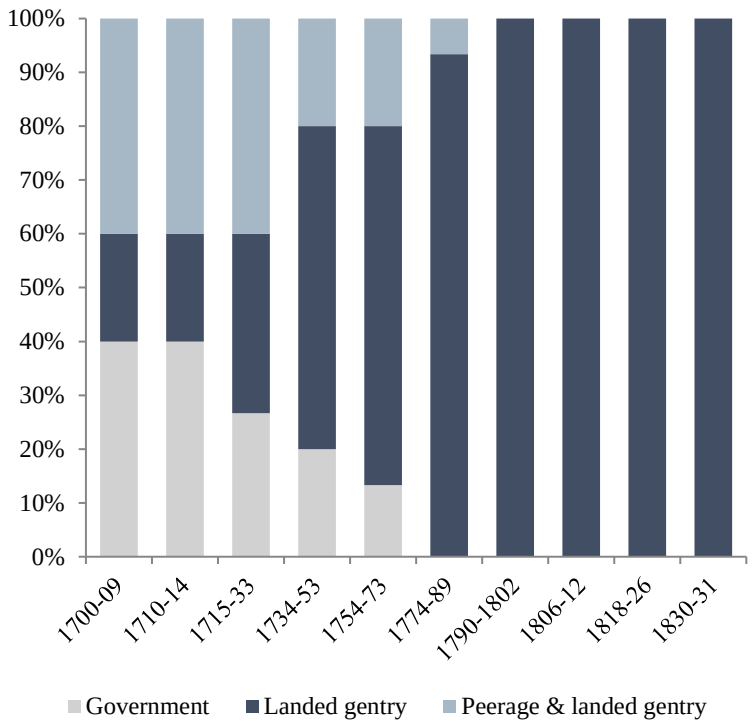
General elections were held on thirty occasions during the period 1700 to 1831, giving rise to 150 potential contests across the five boroughs in the Region. In practice, only eleven of these (seven per cent) went to a poll, giving the impression that control was seldom disputed in the Region. However, this thesis argues that there were battles for control, but that these were resolved prior to the election. Between them, the five boroughs in the Region elected 290 Members of Parliament, of whom 125 (43 per cent) were landed gentry whose main seat was in the Region. These comprised thirty-five individual members of the landed-gentry drawn from nineteen (thirty-seven per cent) of the fifty-two families in the Region. While some landed gentry never sat as Members of Parliament, only one individual represented the county and two others held seats outside the county while resident in the Region.[6]

The election of representatives for constituencies was determined by who controlled the seats. As a starting point, control of the five borough constituencies at each election was taken from the series of the history of Parliament, and plotted to show

[6] Edward Lisle d.1753 (Hampshire county in 1734), Henry Knollys d.1747 (St Ives 1722–34 on the Powlett interest) and William Mitford d.1827 (various seats 1785–1818 on the interest of his cousins, the dukes of Northumberland).

the change over time (Figure 48).[7] This showed that the landed gentry increased their control over the constituencies throughout the eighteenth century, initially acting jointly with the peerage. However, over time, the influence of both the peerage and the government declined.

Figure 48 : Percentage of seats controlled by different groups, 1700–1831



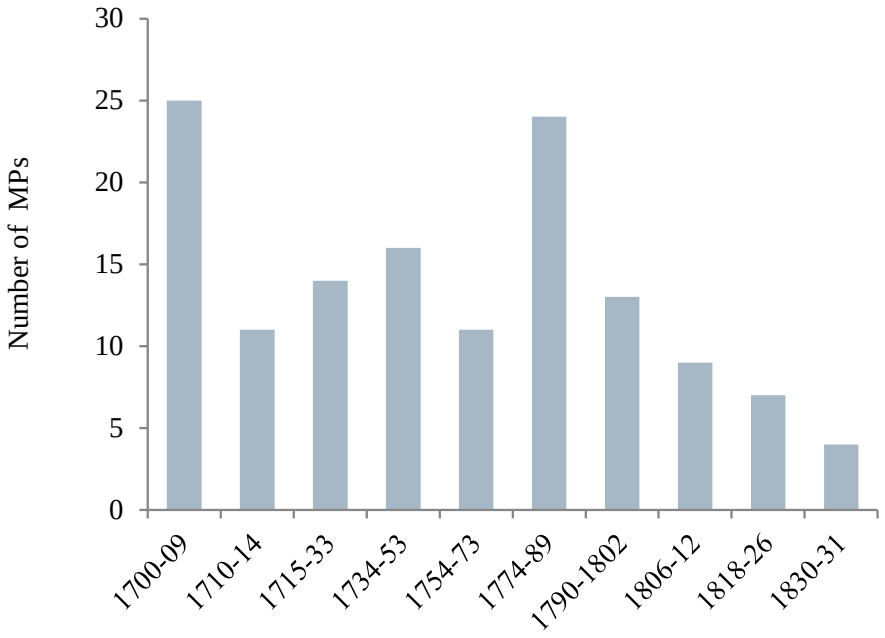
Source – *The House of Commons*[8]

A similar exercise, plotting the numbers of resident members of the landed gentry of the Region who represented seats there over time, revealed that, with the exception of a dip in the period 1754–73, the number of landed-gentry Members of Parliament increased over the eighteenth century but declined in the nineteenth century (Figure 49). These graphs show that, during the period in which the landed gentry

[7] *House of Commons, 1690–1715*; *House of Commons, 1715–1754*; *House of Commons, 1754–1790*; *House of Commons, 1790–1820*; *House of Commons, 1820–1832*.
[8] Control of the constituencies has followed *House of Commons, 1690–1715*; *House of Commons, 1715–1754*; *House of Commons, 1754–1790*; *House of Commons, 1790–1820*; *House of Commons, 1820–1832*.The periods chosen all have three elections, except for 1830–31 in which there were only two elections.

assumed almost total control over the elections, there were most landed-gentry members. Furthermore, the dip in the period 1754–73 coincided with the time in which Appuldurcombe was in trust and there was no resident Worsley of Appuldurcombe.

Figure 49 : Landed gentry representing seats in the Region, 1700–1831



Source – *The House of Commons*[9]

From 1790 onwards, the number of landed-gentry Members of Parliament declined as some seats were sold, usually to a nominee of the government who was resident outside the Region.[10] However, these oversimplified observations do not explain why these patterns emerged; in order to do this it is necessary to understand how seats were controlled in detail and why the landed gentry of the Region were so successful. As noted earlier, case studies have been selected which examine the landed gentry's relationships with three groups: the peerage, the middling sorts, and other landed gentry.

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[9] *House of Commons, 1690–1715*; *House of Commons, 1715–1754*; *House of Commons, 1754–1790*; *House of Commons, 1790–1820*; *House of Commons, 1820–1832*.
[10] In 1790, the Holmes family sold both seats at Newport for £4,200 each.

Relationships with the peerage

Relationships with the peerage are a logical starting point as the dukes of Bolton's influence was greatest at the start of the eighteenth century. The first case study concerns the attempts by the dukes of Bolton to use their wealth and status to control Lymington at the expense of the landed gentry. Lymington was a 'freeman borough', but one in which the patron controlled the appointment of freemen.[11] The dukes had a long-standing, but frequently difficult, relationship with the upcomer Burrards, with whom they had for many years shared control of the constituency. In 1722, a disagreement arose when the duke attempted to impose his choice of candidate on one of the seats. Paul Burrard made the point that theirs was a reciprocal, not a client, relationship:

> Do you think it possible that you (coming for a few days, once in a year) could singly support the interest, when there are so many adversaries round us, who deal with the trading people?[12]

The duke withdrew and Burrard was elected to represent Lymington.

A similar dispute occurred fifty years later when Harry, sixth duke of Bolton tried to place Edward Morant in one of the seats at the election on 10 October 1774. When, on 2 October 1774, the duke disclosed that Morant was his nominee, Harry Burrard objected, arguing that 'it had always been a special stipulation between them that the duke should not bring in any gentleman of the neighbourhood of Lymington'.[13] After much discussion, it was agreed that Morant's nomination would stand, but that a formal agreement should be drawn up to regulate their future relationship.

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[11] O'Gorman, *Voters, patrons and parties*, p. 38; there were about 40 freemen in the period 1715–54: *House of Commons, 1754–1790*, vol. 1, Lymington.
[12] Burrard, *Annals*, pp. 30–31, reproducing a letter from Paul Burrard to Lord Wm Powlett, 27 June 1722.
[13] Burrard, *Annals*, p. 90.

Under this, it was agreed that the duke would:

> Relinquish from henceforth all his interest in the Corporation of Lymington to the said Sir H. Burrard, and never interfere in person, or by his friends or agents, directly or indirectly, in the choice of any future Mayor, or Burgess, or Member to serve in Parliament.[14]

The duke's willingness to relinquish all his power in such a unilateral way raised suspicions as Burrard made clear:

> I thought this offer so advantageous for me that I was shy of closing with it at once, doubting whether he might not alter his mind on recollection … Two days afterwards we met again. He then repeated the same proposal [and agreed to] sign that paper with all his heart.[15]

In spite of these written assurances, Burrard did not trust the duke and arranged for thirty-nine of his relations and friends to be elected as burgesses at the same time as the two Members of Parliament. One of them wrote from London to thank Burrard for appointing him a burgess 'in order to strengthen and support your family interest' and assured him that, 'when called upon, you will find me both inclined and disposed to serve you'.[16]

This new group of burgesses would have put Burrard's control of both seats beyond doubt, and it should have been of no consequence to the duke, since he had already signed away all rights. However, on 5 July 1775, the duke used his wealth and status to challenge the validity of the burgess elections in the King's Bench, arguing that insufficient notice had been given of their nomination. As this was a valid objection, Burrard arranged for the burgesses to be re-nominated and elected legally and, as an additional precaution, he changed the rules so that there could be no more

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[14] Burrard, *Annals,* p. 86, reproducing an agreement signed Bolton and H. Burrard, 7 October 1774.
[15] Burrard, *Annals,* pp. 100–4, reproducing a letter from Sir H. Burrard to Sir Paulet St John, 23 May 1775.
[16] Burrard, *Annals,* p. 94, reproducing a letter to Sir H. Burrard signed by George Lempriere, 27 October 1774.

than fifty freemen at any one time and no more freemen could be elected until there were fewer than twenty burgesses.[17] Burrard had used his family's social power, developed over several generations, to lock in his family's control of the borough. Bolton had greater wealth and status as well as friends in the metropolis, but this was not sufficient to achieve his aims in the Region.

The second case study involves the dukes of Bolton's attempts to retain control of Christchurch, which O'Gorman classified as a self-electing 'corporation borough'.[18] By the period 1754–90, Christchurch was described as 'in effect a corporation borough … controlled by Edward Hooper', but this chapter shows that this description greatly oversimplified the situation.[19] Hooper had to take difficult, strategic decisions in order to win control of Christchurch from the dukes of Bolton, and he had to work hard over nearly six decades to maintain it in the face of opposition from government, peers, and the middling sorts.

Hooper's first attempt to win one of the two seats at Christchurch ended in failure. In 1727, he contested the election at Christchurch and initially received nine of the fifteen votes cast by the burgesses. However, the returning officer, a friend of Bolton's, disallowed four of these votes on the grounds that they 'appeared not to be good votes' and the duke's candidates were duly elected.[20] Hooper contemplated petitioning the House of Commons to overturn the decision, but eventually gave up the idea, concluding that even 'where the merits are so flatly against the sitting member the

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[17] *House of Commons, 1754–1790*, vol. 1, p. 294, Lymington citing Lymington borough archives.
[18] O'Gorman, *Voters, patrons and parties*, pp. 38–39, in which he argued that contested elections were rare in this type of constituency because, once a local landowner had obtained control, he could retain it.
[19] *House of Commons, 1754–1790*, vol. 1, p. 294, Christchurch.
[20] R. Holoway, *The case of Mr. Richard Holoway, one of the burgesses inhabiting the town of Christchurch, in the county of Southampton* (London,1727), p. 19.

usual game now is to get the hearing postponed'.[21] He realised that he was unlikely to be successful because he found it hard to 'come at people' and was 'under very great disadvantage for want of a more extensive acquaintance in the world, a thing extremely required in matters of this nature'.[22] In other words, he lacked the social power he needed both within and without the Region.

An additional disincentive was that the duke and his supporters were willing to resort to violence to secure their interests. They had successfully bribed Richard Holoway, one of the burgesses, not to vote for Hooper by offering to pay him £30 per annum for life.[23] When he threatened to change allegiance a month later at the election of the mayor, they abducted him and attempted, unsuccessfully, to disrupt the proceedings. Holoway published a pamphlet giving his version of events and describing how:

> His Grace of Bolton, … Lord William Powlett, with [their candidates] entered the Town attended by all the Keepers of the New Forest in their Green Liveries, each Keeper bringing with him four men on horseback, armed with clubs; the whole corps consisting of about six score and twelve persons.[24]

Hooper concluded that it was not in his family's long-term interests to turn Christchurch into 'a mercenary court borough'.[25] If, on the other hand, he let the duke believe he had won, it would 'leave room for … any of our family to get in there when they think proper'.[26]

This strategy, relying on the exercise of social power rather than wealth and status, worked. Hooper was elected a burgess of the town in 1732, and his father was

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[21] 'Malmesbury papers' 9M73G15/33 letter Hooper to James Harris senr, 18 November 1727.
[22] 'Malmesbury papers' 9M73G15/34 letter Hooper to James Harris senr, 21 December 1727.
[23] Holoway, *The case,* p. 5.
[24] Holoway, *The case,* pp. 20–21.
[25] 'Malmesbury papers' 9M73/G15/33 letter to James Harris senr, 18 November 1727.
[26] 'Malmesbury papers' 9M73/G15/33 letter to James Harris senr, 18 November 1727.

elected mayor a year later. By the next election, in 1734, the number of burgesses, and hence the number of electors, had increased from fourteen to fifty-five, the majority being friends of the Hoopers. When the duke's half-brother, Lord Nassau Powlett, stood for election, he received only twenty votes against Hooper's thirty-nine. For Hooper, however, this was only the start of his battle to control Christchurch.

Relationships with the middling sorts

The first case studies have shown that a short-term advantage could be gained by packing the electorate with supporters. However, where peers behaved in an autocratic manner, their control of borough constituencies in the Region was short-lived. Where the landed gentry were allowed to manage the electorate without interference, the arrangement could work to their mutual advantage, but it was difficult to maintain control of a constituency over time. The extent of the effort required to maintain control over a borough is illustrated by Hooper's experience in Christchurch, where he fought, successfully, to retain the support of the electorate for over fifty years. Unlike Burrard, he was not able to lock in control of the borough by arranging for burgesses to be appointed who were not resident in the Region. At Christchurch, the electorate was composed of burgesses, but the in-burgesses who lived in the borough were more important.[27] Non-resident or out-burgesses were entitled to vote in parliamentary elections, but not to elect the mayor or new burgesses. Therefore, the role of the mayor and the in-burgesses was critical to the control of the corporation and Hooper had to deploy 'formidable exertions of a paternalistic character designed to satisfy the expectations of the community'.[28]

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[27] The number of burgesses had risen from about fifty in 1734 to about seventy by 1754.
[28] O'Gorman, *Voters, patrons and parties,* p. 9; 'Malmesbury papers'.

Hooper represented the borough himself for fourteen years from 1734, but in December 1748, he vacated his seat for the Treasury's nominee, Sir Thomas Robinson, in return for appointment to the Board of Commissioners of Customs. The salary of £1,000 per annum was welcome, but an important motive was the increased power of patronage it put at Hooper's disposal. Robinson had the potential to secure favours for the burgesses through the Treasury, and Hooper's personal scope for patronage in the Customs was particularly useful for a coastal borough with a reputation for smuggling. There is no hard evidence that Hooper was directly involved in smuggling although there were rumours that he ignored the trade. Certainly, the Board believed that most customs officers were either corrupt or ineffective. In 1752, Sir William Musgrave, himself a commissioner, complained that many of the riding officers were related to smugglers or even acted as their agents or collectors.[29] In 1772, Hooper confessed that he had 'become mere lumber beyond the limits of the Custom House', but this was arguably exactly where many of the burgesses in Christchurch needed their patron to have influence.[30] Later that year, he acknowledged that sending dragoons to protect excise officers, who were being 'intimidated by the violence & outrage of the smugglers', would 'not be agreeable to the wishes of some of our Christchurch friends'.[31]

Hooper felt confident enough of his support in Christchurch by 1759 to propose his first cousin, James Harris, as a replacement for the duke of Bolton's candidate in the second seat. He started by having a 'conversation … with the Duke of Newcastle', but Hooper recognised that the government in the metropolis was not the most significant

[29] Cross, *Shelburne manuscripts,* document XXXV, 7 August 1752, p. 255.
[30] 'Malmesbury papers' 9M73/G657/8 letter Hooper to Harris, 10 April 1772.
[31] 'Malmesbury papers' 9M73/G657/9 letter Hooper to Harris, 2 June 1772.

factor.[32] It was the burgesses who mattered. Accordingly, he instructed Harris how to behave when he first went to meet them in Christchurch:

> Go to church with my sister
> Accept invitation from deputy mayor
> Be at dinner by 6pm – leave by 9pm
> Invite them to a dinner and dance
> Also entertain the wives and daughters
> Send ale to the other inns for the other inhabitants
> Pay 'gratifications' according to the attached list.

In spite of the appearance of micro-managing this event, Hooper was at pains to stress that these were only 'hints' because, as he explained, 'a Commissioner of the Customs is under the restraint of severe penalties' relating to his 'conduct upon election of members to Parliament'.[33] Hooper avoided being accused of interference by being scrupulous when it came to his actions in public, and for this reason, he was not present when Harris was nominated as a candidate. Instead, he relied on his sister, Dorothy, to communicate with the mayor and deputy-mayor and she attended all the festivities. He planned well in advance so that the dinner to celebrate Harris's nomination took place nearly two years before the general election. As a further safeguard, it followed the form of the traditional entertainment in the borough, the 'pricking feast', which was held annually on the eve of the election of the mayor.

Hooper had to contend with more than the middling sorts. The fifth duke of Bolton started a rear-guard action to protect his family's interests and started by 'talking very big to the Duke of Newcastle'.[34] Hooper heard reports that 'the Duke of Bolton plumes himself with hopes of great support & talks in a lofty tone of forcing his

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[32] 'Malmesbury papers' 9M73/G651/8 letter Hooper to Harris, 10 March 1759; 9M73/G651/9 letter Hooper to Harris, 5 April 1759.
[33] 'Malmesbury papers' 9M73/G659/17 letter Hooper to Harris, 1774.
[34] 'Malmesbury papers' 9M73/G651/14 letter Hooper to Harris, 21 July 1759.

kinsman Mordaunt upon us'; he vows that he would succeed 'cost what it will'.[35] Hooper remained convinced that real power lay not with the duke of Newcastle in the centre but with individual burgesses in the periphery. He recognised that he needed to be able to rely on 'the smooth and successful functioning of local deference structures'.[36] He did not believe that the burgesses' support was for sale, but he never underestimated the effort required to keep their support. Hooper himself described the 'jealousy & restless humour of corporators fond of power within their narrow limits' which had given him 'a vast deal of perplexity & put my patience to many a trial in long course of years'.[37] When he wrote this in 1760, he still had another twenty-eight years of managing the burgesses ahead of him.

Hooper's and Bolton's different approaches were illustrated by their treatment of one of the burgesses, Lieutenant St Alban Roy. Whilst Hooper tried to ensure his continued support through patronage, the duke resorted to what Hooper regarded as 'foul play'. Bolton asked the first lord of the Admiralty to switch Roy to a ship 'destined for such a voyage as will prevent his being at home till after the election'.[38] This tactic failed but, just before the election was called, Hooper 'suggested' that Harris procure leave of absence from their ships for his 'friends' who were serving in the Navy. They included Parson Stevens, who was chaplain on HMS Bellona, Lieutenant Roy on HMS Buckingham and Mr Forde, who was with the Hampshire Militia.[39] Bolton's candidate withdrew in December 1760 and the election had, in effect, been fought and won months before the polling date. Shortly afterwards, Harris visited

[35] 'Malmesbury papers' 9M73/G651/14 letter Hooper to Harris, 21 July 1759.
[36] O'Gorman, *Voters, patrons and parties,* p. 6.
[37] 'Malmesbury papers' 9M73/G652/3 letter Hooper to Harris, 4 June 1760.
[38] 'Malmesbury papers' 9M73/G652/6 letter Hooper to Harris, 22 July 1760.
[39] 'Malmesbury papers' 9M73/G653/5 letter Hooper to Harris, 11 March 1761.

Christchurch to host a 'dinner & ball' at a total cost of £37 6s 6d.[40] Hooper reported that the 'pleasing reception' Harris and his wife had received would ensure that Harris would 'in the most honourable manner be chosen to represent that honest borough', as indeed he was on 31 March 1761.[41] Hooper's description of Christchurch as an 'honest borough' reflects his view that he had managed the election in an 'honourable manner'. In spite of his more limited agency, social power, based on patronage and respect for local culture and tradition, had prevailed over what Hooper himself described as 'great men's' wealth.

A similar pattern was repeated for the 1768 election. The fifth duke of Bolton committed suicide in July 1765, and was succeeded by his brother, Harry, who followed the same strategy, relying on a combination of a last-minute show of wealth and status and the support of the government in the metropolis to influence the electorate. In October 1767, the duke visited Christchurch 'with other company', offering to give a dinner to the Corporation and inviting them to his hunting lodge in the Crown Forest.[42] The dinner took place in January 1768 but, to Hooper's relief, was not well attended. The duke then attempted to enlist the support of the first lord of the Treasury, the duke of Grafton, who merely wrote to Hooper asking what his 'intentions' were with regard to Christchurch.[43] Reliance on the centre had not worked for the fifth duke and it did not work for Harry Bolton; Hooper's candidates, James Harris and Thomas Robinson, were both re-elected on 19 March 1768.

By 1770, the Boltons' power was waning and Hooper judged that this was the right moment to attempt to get Harris's son returned for the second seat in Christchurch.

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[40] 'Malmesbury papers' 9M73/G653/1 letter Hooper to Harris, 18 January 1761; 9M73/G653/3 letter from Mrs Hooper to James Harris, 2 February 1761.
[41] 'Malmesbury papers' 9M73/G653/2 letter Hooper to Harris, 26 January 1761.
[42] 'Malmesbury papers' 9M73/G654/17 letter Hooper to Harris, 17 October 1767.
[43] 'Malmesbury papers' 9M73/G654/18a letter Hooper to Harris, 21 October 1767.

His first step was to call on Lord North in Downing Street. North said that he had no objection to James Harris junior, apart from the fact that he was a diplomat based in Russia. Quite reasonably, North would have preferred a candidate who was able to be in Parliament to support him. Nevertheless, North acquiesced and it undoubtedly helped that North and Harris had been personal friends for some time. For example, in 1764, Mrs Harris wrote in a letter to her son that 'Lord North took an impromptu dinner with us yesterday, and afterwards he and your father went into the gallery at the Opera'.[44] Harris Junior was elected in November, but it is doubtful that he ever took his seat.[45]

In view of his absence, James Harris suggested temporarily replacing him in 1774 with Thomas Villiers, Lord Hyde, the son of his old friend, Thomas, first earl of Clarendon. This was achieved without incident, but in 1779, Hyde decided to vacate his seat in order to stand in a by-election for Cambridge University. Clarendon initially tried to persuade Hooper to support Hyde's younger brother as a permanent replacement for Harris junior (by now Sir James Harris), hinting that a refusal might be prejudicial to Sir James's future career. Hooper wrote that he 'had not read Lord C's last cajoling letter half thro' before a burst of laughter obliged me to desist, which was renewed at the close of it'.[46] Clarendon persisted in an increasingly threatening manner, which led Hooper to describe him as behaving 'most unkindly' and 'ungratefully'.[47] This was not the behaviour expected of a gentleman. Hooper and Harris did not take Clarendon's threats seriously, taking the view that Clarendon would not be able 'to force it by his expedient of letters from Robinson to such of your constituents as he may

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[44] Malmesbury, *A series of letters of the first earl of Malmesbury his family and friends from 1745 to 1820* (2 vols, London, 1870), vol. 1, pp. 118–9.
[45] *House of Commons, 1754–1790*, vol. 2, p. 589, James Harris (1746–1820), of Salisbury, Wilts.
[46] 'Malmesbury papers' 9M73/G662/9 letter Hooper to Harris, 6 June 1779.
[47] 'Malmesbury papers' 9M73/G662/10 letter Hooper to Harris, 7 June 1779.

consider as under Treasury control'.[48] Meanwhile, Lord North had concluded that he did 'not like to put the King to the expense of £3,000 to bring in so uncertain a supporter as Lord Hyde', and Hyde came last in the Cambridge poll.[49] North immediately wrote to both Harris and Hooper saying that he would 'be much obliged' if they would support Hyde's re-election at Christchurch on 15 June 1779, which they did.

Hooper had been correct that the burgesses could not be bought or threatened, but he had stipulated that Hyde should only be allowed back if he were suitably 'attentive to Christchurch'.[50] It quickly became clear that Hyde did not intend to fulfil his part of the bargain. Even on the election day, Hyde only 'rose half up & said faintly, gentlemen I thank you,' and 'was neither seen nor heard by the great part of the corporation'.[51] Hooper was 'shocked at it & indeed amazed when it happened'.[52] He had a genuine concern for the wellbeing of the townsmen and felt betrayed when this was not shared by his nominee. Hooper decided that at the next general election, which took place in September 1780, he would make sure that Sir James Harris replaced Hyde and represented Christchurch with his father.

Hooper came close to failing in this plan because of the collapse of a long-term reciprocal patronage relationship. The Jeans family were burgesses of Christchurch and had been long-standing friends of Hooper. Harris had sponsored Thomas Jeans junior, whom Hooper nicknamed 'the Cardinal', first as a foundation scholar at Winchester College in 1763 and then as a fellow of New College, Oxford.[53] The Cardinal and his father had initially been grateful, writing that 'no person could be more zealously

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[48] 'Malmesbury papers' 9M73/G662/10 letter Hooper to Harris, 7 June 1779.
[49] *House of Commons, 1754–1790*, vol. 1, p. 219, Cambridge University.
[50] 'Malmesbury papers' 9M73/G537/3 letter Lord North to Harris, 12 June 1779.
[51] 'Malmesbury papers' 9M73/G662/13 letter Hooper to Harris, 19 June 1779.
[52] 'Malmesbury papers' 9M73/G662/13 letter Hooper to Harris, 19 June 1779.
[53] 'Malmesbury papers' 9M73/G653/19 letter Hooper to Harris, 28 May 1763.

attached to you (and of course your interests)'.[54] However, by 1777, the Cardinal was becoming increasingly impatient that Hooper and Harris had not managed to find him a financially desirable living, and he turned to a new patron, Nathaniel Parker Forth, a client of Lord North's, behind Hooper's back. It was not until June 1780 that Hooper and Harris realised there was a problem. The Cardinal announced, while staying with the Harrises, that he and his immediate family 'could not think of chusing' both Harris and his son as members for Christchurch. He proposed that Forth should have the second seat at Christchurch rather than Sir James Harris. 'At length', Harris wrote to Hooper, 'the cat is out of the bag'.[55] Given that the Cardinal had been Harris's *protégé* and owed his education and advancement to him, both Harris and Hooper were outraged at this betrayal.

Hooper and Harris both regarded loyalty and reciprocity in friendship as paramount, but Forth and the Cardinal failed to appreciate this. They tried to bribe Hooper, first accosting him in the street in London and then writing, promising to 'ensure [his] glory & [his] friends' advantages'.[56] To this Hooper claimed that 'he had nothing … to do with the choice of Representative' beyond his own vote.[57] Forth then resorted to threats, saying that he could prove that 'Mr Hooper had interfered many times in the election', and that 'he had proof of corruption against Joshua Stevens Jeans … for taking a bribe of brandy.' The latter was the Cardinal's cousin but was consistently loyal to Hooper, in part because Hooper had saved him from dismissal for involvement in smuggling. Worse still, Forth added that he had copies of all Harris's

[54] 'Malmesbury papers' 9M73/G499/15 *et seq.* letters from Revd Thomas Jeans.
[55] 'Malmesbury papers' 9M73/G663/3 copy of letter, 20 June 1780.
[56] 'Malmesbury papers' 9M73/G663/29 copy of letter from Nathaniel Parker Forth to Hooper, 29 August 1780.
[57] 'Malmesbury papers' 9M73/G663/30 copy of reply Hooper to Forth, 29 August 1780.

private correspondence with Lord North, indicating that North had betrayed Harris and supported Forth's raid on Christchurch.

When the election was declared, the outcome was still in the balance. Hooper initially calculated that fourteen of the twenty-two in-burgesses would stay loyal to him, compared to eight Jeans family members. Later that month, 'old Mr Joshua Jeans' called on Hooper's sister, to apologise for 'his son's conduct & rude behaviour' and when the votes were counted, the Cardinal had persuaded only four burgesses to support him and Forth.[58] The burgesses had discounted Forth's promises of future favours and rewarded Hooper's sustained patronage, delivered over many years. Hooper broke off all connections with the Cardinal, declaring that 'an open enemy is less evil than a false & pretended friend'.[59] He also described North's conduct as 'very unkind & unjust, as well as impolite'.[60] North had failed to meet the standard of behaviour that Hooper expected and Hooper urged Harris to 'demand … (for I ought not after all that has passed to call them requests)' certain posts for Christchurch, including that of riding officer.[61] These posts were immediately forthcoming, showing that North had not lost all sense of reciprocal obligation.

Hooper had always recognised that he would only be able to maintain the family's interest in Christchurch if he were able to meet the electorate's expectations in terms of patronage. He had always been relentless in reminding his members to be 'attentive' to Christchurch and this involved more than just meeting the needs of the current burgesses. Reflecting the importance and complexity of this, Harris developed his own system for controlling the process, recording everything in his 'Book of

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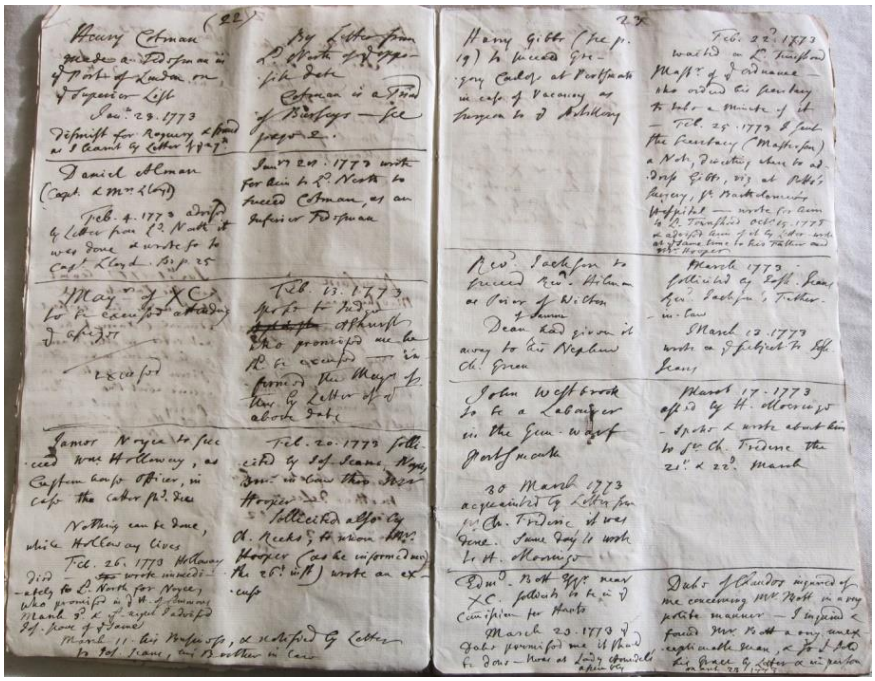
[58] 'Malmesbury papers' 9M73/G663/7 letter Dorothy Hooper to Harris, 24 June 1780.
[59] 'Malmesbury papers' 9M73/G663/35 letter Hooper to Harris, 25 September 1780.
[60] 'Malmesbury papers' 9M73/G663/35 letter Hooper to Harris, 25 September 1780.
[61] 'Malmesbury papers' 9M73/G663/42 letter Hooper to Harris, 13 November 1780.

Requests' (Figure 50).[62] This unique record demonstrates how much effort had to be made in order to satisfy the electorate. The book contained details of 185 requests made over the period 1770–1780 to forty-nine different patrons, the most frequent ones being Lord Sandwich, lord of the Admiralty (over thirty entries in the book) and the prime minister, Lord North (over twenty requests).

Figure 50 : Book of Requests ff. 22–23, 1770–80



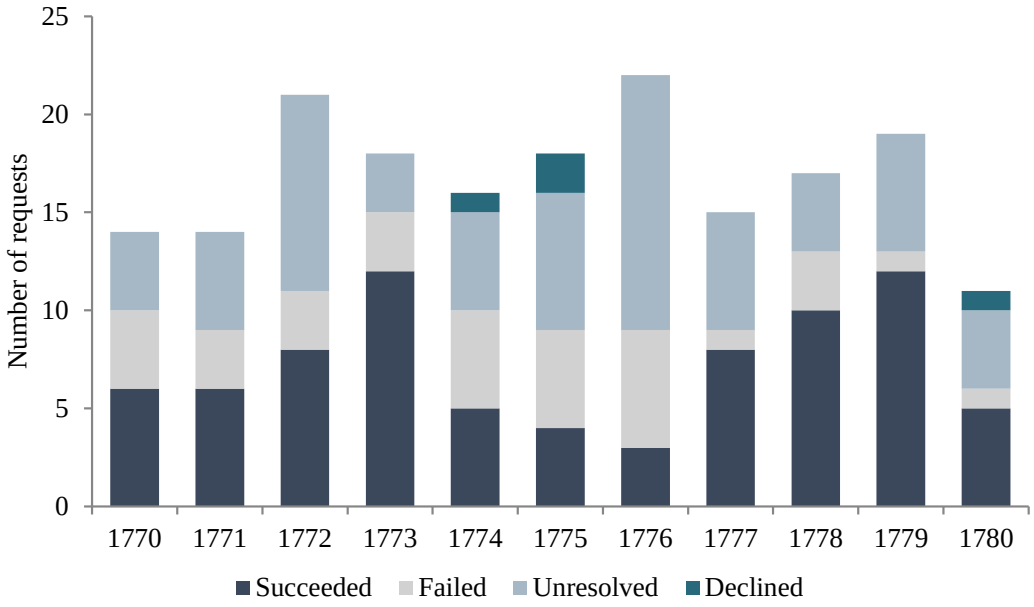
Source – HRO, 9M73/G702, 1770–80

Some requests were made on behalf of the applicant, but others were made on behalf of family members or friends, many of whom could be described as the middling sort. Hooper and Harris responded to all but five of the requests they received. For example, they initially tried to help someone who was being prosecuted for smuggling, before concluding that he was 'a rogue & told me a few days since many lies about this business'.[63] Smuggling might be acceptable but lying was not. They were also quick to

[62] 'Malmesbury papers' 9M73/G702 Book of Requests, 1770–80.
[63] 'Malmesbury papers' 9M73/G702 requested by the in-burgesses on behalf of George Stewart of Canford, 1772.

ask ‘to be excused’ from helping someone who had been discharged for ‘an accusation of an infamous nature’.[64] More often than not, they were able to fulfil the request, but a number of requests remained unresolved (Figure 51). Their success in meeting expectations did not vary significantly over time, but it did vary according to the nature of the request.

Figure 51 : Outcome of requests, 1770–80



Source – Book of Requests HRO, 9M73/G702

Over half of requests relating to customs and excise were met, reflecting Hooper’s position as a commissioner of Customs. Over four in ten requests relating to the Navy or merchant navy were fulfilled but requests for preferment in the church proved harder, with only one-third succeeding (Table 19).

[64] ‘Malmesbury papers’ 9M73/G702 requested by the mayor on behalf of Slade, 1774.

Table 19 : Outcomes of requests, 1770–80

	Number of requests				
Category	All	Succeeded	Failed	Unresolved	Declined
Navy or merchant navy	60	25	16	17	2
Church	37	13	10	13	1
Customs & Excise	27	14	4	9	
Medical	11	3	1	7	
Other offices or positions	10	7		3	
Education	6	2	1	3	
Other	34	15	2	15	2
Total	185	79	34	67	5

Source – Book of Requests HRO, 9M73/G702

Appendix 5 sets out the details of a representative sample of requests and shows the variability of the demands that Hooper and Harris had to deal with. Some of these were easy to satisfy. Lady Shaftesbury was able to find a scarf to give to one of the burgesses' wives; Harris was able to obtain a readership at the British Museum for another applicant and the duke of Montagu, the absentee owner of Beaulieu, agreed to send one of the burgesses to the madhouse. Local political matters were generally resolved successfully. The duke of Chandos agreed to appoint Edmund Batt, esq. to the commission for Hampshire and the mayor of Christchurch was exempted from attending the assizes. Requests on behalf of applicants' sons were generally easier to meet than requests for older individuals. Thomas Jeans' son was granted an exhibition at Winchester College and several teenagers were accepted as midshipmen in the Navy. Junior positions in the customs and naval dockyards were generally found and promotion was easier than direct entry at a higher level. However, one individual was rejected for a position as a labourer because 'he should be under 32 & is in fact above 60 years old'.[65]

[65] 'Malmesbury papers' 9M73/G702 Book of Requests, 1770–80.

The hardest requests to meet were in relation to senior appointments in the church and the Navy. A request to succeed the incumbent as Prior of Wilton was rejected, as the dean had already promised the position to his nephew, and a request to be appointed master of a ship was turned down on the ground that it was peace time. Timing was critical as positions were often promised in advance of becoming vacant. It was not unusual for Harris to write five follow-up letters over a period of several years for a single request, noting developments (or the absence of any news) meticulously in his book. For example, Dr Gibbs waited for over eight years to succeed Mr Carloss as surgeon to the artillery at Portsmouth. Carloss was always said to be on the point of 'dropping', but even if not actually performing the role, he continued to live and prevent the position being awarded to anyone else.

The importance of patronage to the control of Christchurch was usually understood without being mentioned. However, in his letter to Secretary Robinson of the Treasury in February 1780, before the problem with the Cardinal, Harris was unusually explicit about its importance:

> The time is approaching when I would wish to see none of my friends disgusted or disappointed. 'Tis of the last importance to keep them all in good humour, both on my own account & on the account of those with whom I have always so cordially & so uniformly acted.[66]

An outstanding request was met within days of this letter, indicating that the relationship between the centre and the periphery was still one of reciprocation; Hooper and Harris were not mere clients of Robinson or North. It was not until George Rose purchased Cuffnells in 1784, and started to build up an interest, that Hooper's influence waned. Rose was first elected in 1790, sitting with Hooper's nominee, Hans Sloane.

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[66] 'Malmesbury papers' 9M73/G702 Book of Requests, f. 73 copy of letter with his underlining.

Hooper died in 1792, aged ninety, and although Sir James Harris, by then Lord Malmesbury, inherited Hurn Court, he was not able to rekindle the family's interest.

Hooper had been able to control Christchurch borough on behalf of his extended family, not through financial means or by relying on direct government support, but by constantly creating and deploying social power. This was rooted in reciprocal deference structures and nurtured by constant attentiveness to the wishes of the inhabitants and respecting local culture. Patronage was important, but it was always based on reciprocity. He consistently maintained that he was behaving honourably, and that he 'did not pretend in any manner to control or preclude' his friends.[67] Although he adapted his behaviour and his tactics, his strategy remained unchanged.

Whilst Landau divided the provincial elite into two groups: the 'patriarchs', who were pillars of the local community, and the 'patricians', who adopted more of a national culture, Hooper, like other members of the landed gentry, combined both roles.[68] He kept up his 'formidable exertions of a paternalistic character designed to satisfy the expectations of the community' for over fifty years.[69] It is all the more remarkable that he did this while, as commissioner of Customs, he had to spend almost all his time in London. Indeed, his local agency was sustained by a dynamic relationship with the metropolis. In this case study, the periphery was not just a bystander to developments in the centre; it was able to influence the outcome. As discussed in Chapter Six, it was not the amount of time spent outside the Region that mattered, but how the landed gentry behaved, irrespective of where they were, and this point is well illustrated by the next case study on Newtown.

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[67] 'Malmesbury papers' 9M73/G651/4, letter Hooper to Harris, 28 November 1758.
[68] Landau, *Justices,* pp. 360, 3–4. This was also discussed in Chapter 5.
[69] O'Gorman, *Voters, patrons and parties,* p. 9.

Relationships with other landed gentry

The landed gentry shared many characteristics and outlooks, but this did not prevent them competing with each other for control of the constituencies in the Region such as Newtown, on the Isle of Wight. Newtown was a 'proprietorial borough', where 'the vote was treated as a form of property and the voting process as a transaction in property relationships'.[70] The burgage plots were held by a number of landed-gentry families and control of the seat depended on alliances between the families owning the plots. The Barringtons owned the landed estate, Swainston, close to Newtown but this did not give them an automatic controlling interest in the parliamentary seat.

Prior to 1666, the Worsleys and the Barringtons had together controlled Newtown but, by the early eighteenth century, the Barringtons had lost their interest. When the sixth baronet died in 1717, he left two infant sons, who were represented in chancery proceedings in 1718 by the third duke of Bolton. When Sir John Barrington, seventh baronet, came of age in 1727, the duke offered to help him regain control of Newtown in return for nominating one of its members.[71] When the election was called on 23 August 1727, Sir John and thirteen other burgage holders presented themselves with their title deeds and demanded to be allowed to vote. The mayor and returning officer, Robert Blachford, refused permission on the ground that they had not been elected as burgesses. He therefore returned James Worsley of Pylewell (the nominee of Sir Robert Worsley of Appuldurcombe) and Thomas Holmes as members. The duke had used a similar tactic to defeat Hooper at Christchurch, but now he and Sir John were on the losing side. However, unlike Hooper, the duke had connections in the metropolis and this encouraged him to help Sir John petition to overturn the vote.

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[70] O'Gorman, *Voters, patrons and parties,* p. 32.
[71] TNA, C11/901/12 Barrington v Shales, 1718.

James Worsley faced the disadvantage that he lived at Pylewell, rather than on the island, and, as Chapter Four showed, he had little support from the head of the family, his cousin, Sir Robert Worsley. Instead, James Worsley had to rely on the agent, Blachford, to implement the family's strategy on the island. Worsley considered that the strength of their cause was the 'Old Town Book', and he instructed Blachford to 'carry over good stock lock from Newport and to lock up the closet where our Town chest is and to see the window well fastened'.[72] Meanwhile, Worsley lobbied the government in London, reporting to Blachford that 'I was whispered by a near friend of Sir Rob Walpoles that my seat was as secure in the House as his and that Sir Robert had no better opinion of the Pauletts than I have'.[73] He also reported his interpretation of the gossip in the House of Commons:

> Lord William [Powlett] swore that the Duke of Bolton is a fool which made a good joke about the House and as the family have been calling one another Fools and Drivelers (as we have been told on other occasions of late) we begin to think they are people of good insight into town and manners and show themselves to have a good judgement.[74]

In spite of this sense of optimism, the petition was not actually heard until a year later and, in the intervening period, Sir John Barrington's agent, Mr Williams of Newport, visited Newtown and inspected the borough records in the old town book as far back as 1636. He also obtained a legal opinion that, even though the word 'elected' was often used, the only qualification required to become a burgess was the production of valid title to freehold land in the borough. Williams reported in March 1728 that 'success seems to appear in its brightest colours'.[75] This was confirmed by Parliament

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[72] IoWRO, 8M57/161/9, letter from James Worsley to Robert Blachford, 30 January 1728. The old town book was important because it set out the rules for burgess admissions.
[73] IoWRO, 8M57/161/6, letter from James Worsley, London, to Robert Blachford, 1 April 1728.
[74] IoWRO, 8M57/161/4, letter from James Worsley, London, to Robert Blachford, 6 April 1728.
[75] IoWRO, JER/BAR/3/9/189 letter from Mr Williams to Sir John Barrington in London, 2 March 1728.

on 22 April 1729, which settled that the right to vote lay with the mayor and burgesses who owned borough lands and no actual election was necessary.[76] The duke had succeeded in securing the election of his nominees but once more, the peer's victory was short-lived. The duke went into opposition prior to the 1734 election and, without his support, Barrington did not stand against Holmes and Worsley, who were elected unopposed in that April.

From May 1741, the Holmes and Barrington families jointly controlled Newtown through an unwritten agreement, to the detriment of the Worsleys.[77] In September 1768, Sir Richard Worsley inherited Appuldurcombe and attempted to restore his family's influence on the island. Rather than focusing on enhancing his social power, he started by spending £3,200 on purchasing Newtown burgage properties.[78] He also went behind the back of Sir John Barrington and negotiated a new agreement to control Newtown with the Holmes family. His intermediary in this was Ned Worsley, a fourth cousin, who was married to the daughter of the head of the Holmes family, the Revd Leonard Troughear Holmes. Sir Richard and Holmes invited Sir John Barrington to be a party to the agreement on the basis that he would have his one-half share in nominations reduced to one-third. In Sir John's view, breaking a long-standing, albeit undocumented, agreement between the families was a serious breach of gentlemanly behaviour:

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[76] *House of Commons, 1715–1754*, vol. 1, Newtown.
[77] IoWRO, JER/BAR/3/9/56(g) notes on agreements for mutual right of MPs.
[78] IoWRO, JER/BAR/3/9/92 letter book containing copies of twenty-seven letters written between 15 December 1767 and 23 February 1768 by James Coulthard, a burgage holder and agent to the mayor Revd Leonard Troughear Holmes; IoWRO, JER/BAR/3/10/171 & 173 and JER/BAR/3/4/20. This was as much as Morant paid for his seat at Yarmouth.

> Having had no misunderstanding or dispute with Mr Holmes upon any political or other ground, and having given him no provocation of any kind, [he] was entirely without suspicion of being thus clandestinely and dishonourably betrayed by him.[79]

After some discussion, Holmes agreed to support Sir John, who was elected unopposed in 1774, but not any other members of the Barrington family.

In November 1775, Ned Worsley brought the three families together at the Green Dragon Inn in Newport and tried to broker a settlement. Sir John Barrington's nephew attended and reported that 'the secret schemes of Sir Richard – who has been at the bottom of the impediment on our side' had been revealed. He added: 'Would you believe it too, that Mr Holmes had the impudence to give my uncle the lie to his face, and to deny, before all the company, that he ever had an agreement with him in all his life'.[80] Sir John therefore proposed that he would immediately relinquish his seat by taking the Chiltern Hundred in return for the parties agreeing to new tripartite agreement giving the Barringtons the right to nominate the next candidate.[81] His nephew concluded that the new agreement was the best outcome that could have been achieved, but he now had 'a greater contempt than ever, if possible, of Mr Holmes and no better opinion than before of Sir Richard'.[82]

This ungentlemanly behaviour did not succeed in the long term because the parties no longer trusted each other; indeed, two further changes to the alliances followed. In 1776, Sir Richard quarrelled with Holmes (who was still supported by Ned Worsley), declaring that it was 'utterly impossible … ever again to have any concerns

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[79] IoWRO, JER/BAR/3/9/56(g) notes on agreements for mutual right of MPs.
[80] IoWRO, JER/BAR/3/9/56(b).
[81] JER/BAR/3/9/56(a) under which, subject to certain caveats, 'the family of the said Sir John Barrington shall at their option either nominate and appoint a person to succeed to the next vacancy which may happen of a member for the said borough of Newtown before the next General Election'. The parties to this agreement were Sir John Barrington, seventh baronet, John Barrington, his nephew, Sir Richard Worsley, Leonard Troughear Holmes (Mr Holmes) and Edward Meux Worsley, 18 November 1775.
[82] IoWRO, JER/BAR/3/9/56(b).

with Mr Holmes'.[83] Both parties tried to enter into separate bilateral agreements with the Barringtons, who decided to remain neutral and not support either side. Then 'a serious quarrel broke out between Mr Holmes & his son in law', Ned Worsley, with the result that Ned allied himself to Sir Richard.[84] It is possible that Ned had discovered that his father-in-law was proposing to leave unentailed property to his two illegitimate sons, to the disadvantage of Ned's wife. Ned was elected unopposed with John Barrington, later ninth baronet, at the next election in September 1780.

Sir Richard had achieved his goal in the short term but there was nothing to prevent the situation at Newtown from changing again. He therefore persuaded Ned Worsley to negotiate a formal arrangement with the Barringtons. In accepting the terms proposed, Sir Richard assured the Barringtons that:

> I flatter myself that you will be convinced of the sincerity with which I act by so readily and willingly forming the intentions, which I most truly hope may be the means of creating a lasting friendship between our families, an object I have very much at heart, and shall be happy in every opportunity of giving you proof of it.[85]

Sir Richard had finally recognised the importance of appropriate behaviour. The agreement was concluded in London on 17 February 1781, less than six months before his wife gave birth to an illegitimate daughter and nine months before she eloped with his close friend, George Bisset. 'Lasting friendships' did not always last.

Shortly after Sir Richard had been accused by the Barringtons of involvement in secret schemes at Newtown, he decided to stand for election as knight of the shire for Hampshire. To succeed, he needed not only the support of the landed gentry of the whole of Hampshire but of approximately 5,000 independent owners of freehold

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[83] IoWRO, JER/BAR/3/9/56(c) letter to Sir Richard from an advisor.
[84] IoWRO, JER/BAR/3/9/56(g).
[85] IoWRO, JER/BAR/3/9/56(d); IoWRO, JER/BAR/3/9/56(e).

property. However, this election brought different factions of the landed interest into direct competition with each other and the way in which Sir Richard behaved influenced the outcome once again.

Sir Richard should have been in a strong position. He was supported by the lord lieutenant of the county, James, third duke of Chandos and the government not only provided funds of about £2,500 but also promised the support of those connected with the Crown Forest and the naval dockyard at Portsmouth. Furthermore, Sir Richard committed £6,000 of his own money to winning the contest, and he was well known in Hampshire, particularly in the Region.[86] In contrast, his opponent, Jervoise Clarke Jervoise esq., was a relative newcomer to the county, having inherited his Hampshire properties through his maternal grandfather in 1771. Clarke Jervoise had the support of Chandos' rival, Harry, duke of Bolton, but more significantly, he had already taken steps to form alliances with landed gentry from the Region. For example, he had supported Sir William Oglander and Sir Thomas Worsley in their attempt to overthrow the Holmes interest in the Isle of Wight boroughs in 1768, and he subsequently concluded an agreement with the Holmes family, which resulted in his election to represent Yarmouth in 1774.[87]

Sir Richard was also less successful than Jervoise in making his case to the smaller freeholders. A report of the nomination meeting at Winchester on 4 December 1779 asserted that the 'gentlemen of first rank' were in favour of Sir Richard.[88] The fact that the majority by a show of hands did not support him was dismissed as the result of 'near two hundred common fellows in carters frocks, postillions jackets and labourers

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[86] *House of Commons, 1754–1790*, Sir Richard Worsley, citing Chandos to North, 12 December 1779, Abergavenny MS.
[87] *House of Commons, 1754–1790,* vol. 2, p. 216, Jervoise Clarke (afterwards Clarke Jervoise) (?1733–1808), of Idsworth Park, Hants.
[88] *Collection of hand-bills,* p. 39.

dresses, who were hired by the patriots for the purpose of huzzaing and hissing'.[89] The Clarke Jervoise faction responded with a list of the supporters to show that they were not 'common fellows' although, with the exception of Bolton, Joseph Portal, Sir Philip Jennings Clerke and Edward Morant, the list was made up of lesser gentry and freeholders.

The lack of support for Sir Richard largely stemmed from his previous behaviour, which had alienated the independently minded freeholders who regarded him as serving his own interests rather than those of the electorate. One handbill accused him of being a 'placeman, obliged to implicit compliance with all directions, or to part with the very large emoluments of his place'.[90] Although he had resigned his office as comptroller of Board of Green Cloth, 'a place not worth less than £1,500', before the election, the commentators were not convinced; in their view, 'he might as well tell you the leopard would change his spots'.[91] Another handbill reminded the voters that he had 'deprived us of a camp last summer, and substituted the terrible burden of quartering soldiers in the city and suburbs'.[92] They pointed out that, instead of 'discharging the duty he owed his country, as a man of principle ought to have done … [he] forgot his duty to you, and took care of himself'.[93]

The financial resources and status of the government and the lord lieutenant were unable to redeem the situation for Sir Richard. The first lord of the Admiralty's attempts to force the dockyard workers to vote for him backfired; they declared that they were not afraid of losing their work and would 'not be treated as slaves'.[94]

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[89] *Collection of hand-bills,* p. 39.
[90] *Collection of hand-bills,* p. 25, letter from CATO, 10 December 1779.
[91] *Collection of hand-bills,* p. 31, undated.
[92] *Collection of hand-bills,* p. 26, 2 December 1779.
[93] *Collection of hand-bills,* p. 31.
[94] *Collection of hand-bills,* p. 42; *Collection of hand-bills,* p. 43.

Chandos' attempts to persuade the Barrack-Master-General to organise support for Sir Richard was referred to the committee of privileges in the House of Lords as he had not been as careful as Hooper in managing matters.[95] When the poll closed, Sir Richard had been defeated by over 600 votes.[96] He won the two divisions in the Region, but by a small margin, as well as the Portsdown Hundred, which included the naval dockyard at Portsmouth. With the exception of Edward Morant, who supported the Bolton faction, the landed gentry of the New Forest, including Edward Hooper, voted for Sir Richard, but this was not enough (Table 20).

Table 20 : Summary of poll books for Hampshire, 1779

Division	Votes cast for Bolton/ Jervoise	Chandos/ Sir Richard
Alton	313	120
Andover	315	187
Basingstoke	335	139
Fawley	87	81
Kingsclere	240	39
Portsdown	287	193
	1577	759
Isle of Wight	**102**	**137**
New Forest	**246**	**251**
Portsdown Hundred	**180**	**337**
Total number of votes	2,105	1,484

Source – *Collection of hand-bills*

Casting a vote required a considerable effort in the depths of winter. Hooper had had to wait five hours for a chaise in Winchester on the way home from the polling station in Alresford, and was forced to spend a night in Ringwood, arriving at Hurn Court the following day 'by moonshine'. In his letter to James Harris, he observed that he had never seen 'such a scene of confusion & expense' and observed that Harris had

[95] *The Parliamentary Register or history of the proceedings and debates of the House of Commons (and House of Lords)* (1779), vol. 15, pp. 173–4.
[96] *Collection of hand-bills*. The hand-bills covered the period 22 November to 24 December 1779.

done ‘wisely in not exposing [himself] to the fatigue of attending this election’. Hooper reported that the only freeholder who had travelled from Christchurch borough to vote had caught a bad cold, but he added that ‘many of the old & infirm freeholders on this coast’ would have supported Sir Richard if they could.[97] However, this probably reflected loyalty to Sir Richard’s father and grandfather from when they were seated at Pylewell.

Support on the Isle of Wight was less solid, and the poll books were damaged by the ‘uncommonly tempestuous and wet’ weather so that it was ‘almost impossible to take out every name precisely right’.[98] Supporters included Leonard Troughear Holmes esq. of Calborne, James Worsley esq. of Godshill, Edward Meux Worsley esq. of Gatcomb, and Robert Pope Blachford esq. of Whippenham but, perhaps not surprisingly after Sir Richard’s behaviour at Newtown, did not include the Barringtons.[99] On 21 December 1779, after eight days of polling at Alresford and Winchester, Sir Richard requested that the poll be moved to Newport to allow the freeholders resident on the Isle of Wight to vote closer to home, but he had to concede defeat before this could be accomplished.

Sir Richard miscalculated if he thought that he could use his influence in the Region as a springboard to step up to election as knight of the shire. Not only was his regional power-base on shaky foundations, but the behaviour of the candidates was of more importance in a situation where every freeholder had one vote and outnumbered the ‘gentlemen of first rank’. The electorate had long memories and a display of largesse immediately before the election did not obliterate the memory of having to pay

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[97] ‘Malmesbury papers’ 9M73/G334/16 letter Hooper to Harris, 22 December 1779.
[98] *A true copy of the poll book for the county of Southampton* (London, 1780).
[99] *Poll book Southampton*.

for quartering soldiers. Actual behaviour was more important than threats or promises and wealth could be trumped by social power.

Conclusion

This chapter has shown that landed gentry were successful in increasing their control of the boroughs in the Region throughout the eighteenth century even though they were less wealthy than the peerage and, in many cases, had weaker connections with the government in the metropolis. One reason for this was that schemes, threats, and bribery were effective only in the short term whereas appropriate behaviour and social accommodation had long-term benefits. As they were resident in the area, the landed gentry were better placed to build long-term reciprocal relationships not only with their peer group but also with groups above and below them in the social hierarchy. Hooper's Book of Requests shows that satisfying the expectations of the community was not necessarily expensive; it was a case of procuring the appropriate favour, such as a scarf or readership of the British Library. The landed gentry were less wealthy than the peerage but deploying social power often led to a better outcome than spending money. Sir Richard Worsley's ungentlemanly behaviour and his duplicitous treatment of other landed-gentry families damaged his reputation and destroyed his social power, and he found, to his cost, that his wealth was not able to compensate for his inappropriate behaviour. In the longer term, whereas Hooper deployed his social power and was able to keep Hurn Court in the family, Appuldurcombe was broken up in the first half of the nineteenth century.

Conclusion

The genealogist, John Burke, was confident that the landed gentry were thriving in 1847 when he described them as that 'class in Society which holds the next place to the privileged Order – the untitled Country Gentleman'. Furthermore, he proclaimed, it was to this group, which enjoyed 'territorial possessions or high official rank' that England was 'mainly indebted for her greatness abroad, and her prosperity at home'; it was in this respect and in her free institutions that England differed 'from every other country in Europe'. Burke could have been describing the Region at the end of the 1780s, where the landed gentry as a group presented a picture of stability and continuity in contrast to the 'sustained period of uncertainty, disorder, and conflict' in France at that time.[1] Nevertheless, some families faced significant challenges.

By 1789, Sir Richard Worsley, seventh baronet, had just returned to England to enter into articles of separation with his wife.[2] He had felt compelled to leave the country in spite of winning an action for criminal conversation against his wife's lover. His crime, in the eyes of society, was to have encouraged his wife's sexual exploits and, although he was only thirty-seven, he never re-established his leading role in society. His neighbour on the Isle of Wight, Sir FitzWilliam Barrington, eighth baronet, was eighty-one in 1789 and suffering from palsy. The Barrington family's finances were also suffering, but from poorly drafted entails and settlements. Neither his sons nor his younger daughter had married, laying down problems for the succession after his death. Nevertheless, in spite of these challenges, the Worsleys and Barringtons continued to control the Newtown parliamentary borough well into the nineteenth century.

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[1] Burke, *Commoners*, title page, preface; Burke and Burke, *Landed gentry*, preface; W. Doyle, 'Why it happened', *The French Revolution* (Oxford, 2001), pp.174–93.
[2] IoWRO, JER/WA/35/24 deed of separation, 14 June 1788.

Other families were more successful. Harry Oglander, a third son, had achieved his ambition by 1789. He had been elected a fellow of Winchester College seven years earlier, at the age of thirty-nine, and had built a country house on his own small estate on the Isle of Wight. Although he was vicar of Portsmouth, he sailed back home across the Solent at the end of Sunday service.[3] In the New Forest, Edward Hooper's nominees still occupied both parliamentary seats in Christchurch in 1789, and it was not until a year later that George Rose managed to wrest control of one seat from him. On Hooper's death in 1795, aged ninety-three, he bequeathed an improved landed estate to his cousin, the newly ennobled Lord Malmesbury.

These established families were not alone in surviving by adapting to the changing socio-economic and cultural environment. By 1789, upcomer R. P. Blachford had rebuilt his old farm house to create a mansion, Osborne House, showcasing his new landed-gentry status and, on the strength of this, his son married the daughter of the duke of Grafton in 1812. The grandson of incomer William Mitford had been able to retire to his estate in the New Forest at the age of twenty-three. He had published the *History of Greece* and had fulfilled 'his official duties as a country magistrate and Verderer of the New Forest' by 1789.[4] In that year, he was a Member of Parliament as well as serving as lieutenant-colonel of the south battalion of the Hampshire militia.[5] In the same year, Edward Morant, another incomer, was still in regular contact with the duke of Gloucester, who had appointed him master keeper of the South Bailiwick of the New Forest six years earlier. This was the culmination of Morant's loyal friendship

[3] Clergy of the Church of England database, accessed 15 August 2014.
[4] W. Mitford, *The history of Greece* (London, 1784). William Mitford was born in 1744 and died in 1827, aged eighty-three.
[5] W. Mitford, *The history of Greece by William Mitford, esq. with his final additions and corrections*, ed. W. King, rev. edn (London, 1838), pp. xi, xiii.

with members of increasingly elite circles, which he had cultivated during his thirty years in England.

The historiography has continued to debate the responses of the landed classes to challenges in the eighteenth century. For example, Jenkins, writing in 1983, discovered that in Glamorgan the old gentry had 'dissolved with remarkable rapidity by the mid-eighteenth century', to be replaced by a 'national', and predominantly aristocratic, ruling class.[6] His work revealed 'a story of detachment from local culture and loyalties, and the adoption of metropolitan ways', a finding that was consistent with the views of scholars such as Price who believed that there was 'an economic, political and social caesura at some time in the late eighteenth century'.[7] After this 'great divide', at least part of the landed gentry succumbed to the centripetal force of the metropolis and, in Wahrman's words, adopted a national culture.[8] A slightly different interpretation was offered by historians who argued that there was a gradual emergence of a national, consumer society involving 'propertied' and 'polite' people below the landed elite.[9] However, others took the view that, outside cities and industrialised areas, little changed; 'aristocratic' paternalism continued to be a dominant force well into the nineteenth century.[10] This thesis has argued that there was a process of gradual change and accommodation, but that this was aimed at preserving the estates, roles, influence, and lifestyle of the landed gentry: their place and their power.

The principal aim of this thesis has been to interrogate and explain the apparent social stability in the Region through the perspective of the landed gentry and to

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[6] Jenkins, *Glamorgan gentry*, pp. 38, xxvi.
[7] Jenkins, *Glamorgan gentry*, p. 272; Landau, *Justices*; Rosenheim, *Emergence of a ruling order*; Price, *British society*; O'Gorman, *Long eighteenth century, 2016*.
[8] Wahrman, 'National society'.
[9] Langford, *Polite and commercial people*; D. Wahrman, *The making of the modern self: identity and culture in eighteenth-century England* (New Haven; London, 2004).
[10] Thompson, 'Patrician society, plebeian culture'; Stone and Stone, *An open elite?*; Clark, *English society*.

evaluate the character and pace of social change. In this way, it is hoped that it has contributed to our understanding of why, notwithstanding socio-economic and cultural developments, England managed to avoid the major social upheavals that took place elsewhere in Europe. It has been conceived as a holistic study of the landed gentry, encompassing not only their estates and their lifestyle but also the strategies they adopted to maintain their position and achieve their objectives. In this way, it has combined the harder social approach of the later twentieth century with the socio-cultural approach of the twenty-first century.

As the landed gentry had their roots in the countryside, a regional study was deemed the most appropriate approach. A *pays* within Hampshire that contained two distinct geographical areas, the New Forest and the Isle of Wight, was selected. Apart from its situation and topographical features, this rural Region was of interest to the historian because of the many opportunities it offered for acting out the roles of the landed gentleman. There were five parliamentary boroughs and offices available in both the Crown Forest and the Isle of Wight, all of which provided scope for 'patronage and profit'.[11] These characteristics made it a desirable place to own a landed estate and historical patterns of landownership meant that land was relatively available and affordable. As a result, over the course of the century, fifty-two landed-gentry families owned estates in the Region.

This social group was chosen deliberately because their financial resources were more limited than those of the peerage. This meant that they were less able to insulate themselves from changing socio-economic circumstances, and their finely calibrated decisions were more illustrative of changes in society on a broad front. Yet there have

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[11] Rosenheim, *Emergence of a ruling order*, p. 257.

been surprisingly few studies of the landed gentry as a discrete group, and they have frequently been conflated with the peerage. This thesis has sought to address this gap by studying the landed gentry over a period, covering approximately three generations, for which there have been few regional studies.

The thesis has aimed to contribute to the national picture by building up an understanding of lives revealed through unpublished and untapped primary sources. The methodology involved creating new datasets from archival manuscript sources such as letters, diaries, account books, and estate records, enabling detailed analyses to be undertaken. This has brought precision and clarity to my findings, but care has been taken to situate the work on the fifty-two families in the Region in the context of the landed gentry of Hampshire as a whole and, through the work of other historians, with other areas of the country. This *in situ* holistic approach has built on existing scholarship not only on an older historiography of English elites, much of which was concerned with landed estates and country seats, but also on more recent work on culture, performance, and behaviour. It has offered new perspectives on the character and pace of social change in the eighteenth century and, in particular, on why the landed gentry retained their power and influence and succeeded in keeping their estates in the family.

Turning first to the debates on the composition and permeability of the landed elite, it has been shown that the landed gentry was not closed to newcomers. Furthermore, their arrival led to an increase in the number of landed-gentry families. Landed estates were not taken over by the peerage as happened in Glamorgan, and the landowners were a representative mix of established families, new arrivals, and families

at intermediate stages of assimilation into the landed gentry.[12] In the 1780s, landed-gentry in the Region needed about £800 per annum to live on, and it was difficult for them to generate this level of net income from an agrarian landed estate. Some landed gentry had income from offices or investments outside the Region, but others turned to commercial activities such as timber plantations or salterns to supplement their rental income. Nevertheless, both established families and newcomers aspired to be known as the family 'of' a place, and the landed estate was, therefore, primarily a source of status rather than of profit. This meant that the family had to own a substantial, contiguous landed estate rather than a collection of dispersed farms. Even though land in the Region was relatively available and affordable, particularly in the New Forest, it was not easy to acquire a landed estate. The difficulties encountered establishing landed estates with limited resources were illustrated with case studies of two incomers. William Mitford made his first purchase in 1718, but took nearly a century to create a new estate, whereas Edward Morant purchased his outright in 1770.

It has also been demonstrated that the landed gentry shared the overriding aim of wanting to keep their landed estate in the family for future generations. They went to great lengths to achieve this although succession remained a major concern throughout the eighteenth century, and demographic challenges made it hard to keep their patrimony in an area in undivided ownership. The failure to have a surviving son and heir had serious consequences at a time when primogeniture and strict settlement were common. A contributory factor was that the landed gentry were less wealthy than the peerage, and found it harder to attract suitable wives or provide dowries for daughters and sisters, which in turn led to later marriage and fewer potential heirs. As a

[12] Jenkins, *Glamorgan gentry*.

consequence, nearly one in four Isle of Wight estates and one in ten New Forest estates passed through the female line during the period.

In the face of these challenges, it is surprising that the landed gentry appeared to continue to thrive beyond the end of the eighteenth century. However, this apparent continuity masked considerable change not only in the composition of the landed gentry but also in how they behaved. Accordingly, in addition to revisiting existing debates, this thesis has aimed to offer new insights into the character and pace of social change. First, it has been shown that, within this social group, families with the greatest wealth, the largest estates, and the grandest country seats did not necessarily have the greatest longevity or the most power and influence. Instead, the landed gentry who were most successful in keeping their estates in the family created, developed, and deployed social power.[13] This ability to influence outcomes arose not from an individual's status or wealth, but from the way they behaved and their relationships with their peer group and with those below and above them in the social hierarchy.

Recognition of the importance of behaviour is not new; historians including Finch, Roebuck, and Aley have shown that personal behaviour and 'the ability of the individual to meet challenges and crises' was the most decisive factor in determining whether individual families thrived, and Whyman took a not dissimilar position in her study of the Verney family.[14] However, these historians concentrated their work on a limited number of families. This study has taken the argument to a new level by exploring the patterns of behaviour and social accommodation which led to social power being accumulated or lost across the landed gentry of the Region as a group.

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[13] As previously discussed, social power is the term which has been used to describe the ability of individuals to achieve their aims in spite of opposition from others. It can be accumulated over time and deployed when required in a way that is analogous to spending money.
[14] Finch and Habakkuk, *Northamptonshire families*, pp. xii, 170; Roebuck, *Yorkshire baronets*, p. 251; Aley, 'Nottinghamshire landowners', p. 314; Whyman, *Sociability and power*.

Having examined the role of behaviour and social power in the family, this thesis moved on to consider two aspects of behaviour which affected the landed gentry's public profile in the Region: spending money on their country seat or spending time in the Region through public service. The review of patterns of housebuilding revealed that the Region did not follow the trends found for the 'gentlemen' of Gloucestershire or the Stones' great landowners.[15] Whilst it was essential to have a country seat in order to be recognised as a member of the landed gentry, newcomers did not invariably build a new ostentatious house, and the established landed gentry were not passively 'envious' but active in improving their own country seats. The landed gentry of the Isle of Wight were predominantly established families, who appear to have felt social pressure to update their houses at the start of the eighteenth century, resulting in a peak in building activity in the period 1700–19. In contrast, the New Forest had a majority of newcomers who acquired land without an appropriate country seat, and this resulted in a peak of building activity in the period 1760–99.

Nevertheless, there was not a marked difference between the aspirations, behaviour, and attitudes of established landed gentry and newcomers, and there were no systemic difference in the nature and appearance of the country seats between the two locations. In both areas, the park and setting of the house became increasingly important over time, but spending money on a large, ostentatious mansion did not confer status or longevity.

Turning to public service, it was found that the landed gentry as a group remained committed to providing leadership in the Region, and continued to sit as active justices of the peace. In practice, attendance by clerics at the quarter sessions did

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[15] Hague, 'A Modern-built house'; Stone and Stone, *An open elite?*.

not appear to have an adverse effect on the attendance by the landed gentry, but the involvement of junior members of the family increased in the second half of the century. Serving as magistrates not only helped the family to protect and enhance its rights as a landowner but also helped it to maintain its social power.[16] The active participation of over eighty per cent of the landed gentry in public affairs in the Region suggests that they believed that it was the appropriate behaviour; one that added to their social power and enhanced their influence in their communities.

Significantly, there was no evidence of elite withdrawal or of a separation into 'old and local' and 'new and national groups'; instead, the landed gentry displayed a blend of patrician and patriarchal characteristics. Nor was there any systemic difference between established families and newcomers, or between those living in the New Forest or on the Isle of Wight. The most successful landed gentry were those who conformed to the expectations of their peer group. They performed just enough public service to provide visible leadership in the Region and protect the interests of the landed gentry as a group and they lived in country seats that were appropriate, not ostentatious.

Continuing with the theme of performative behaviour, this thesis has identified another characteristic of successful landed gentry: their ability to be socially amphibious. Wahrman argued that men capable of participating in both metropolitan-based 'national society' and the culture of the 'provincial-local sphere' were cultural amphibians.[17] However, in this thesis it has been argued that amphibiousness was much more than being at home in two different cultural spheres. Successful social amphibians were able to adapt their behaviour to accommodate the changing expectations of multiple different circles they moved in at any given point in time, irrespective of

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[16] For example though enclosure of common land and appointment of gamekeepers.
[17] Wahrman, 'National society', following MacDonald, 'Secularization of suicide'.

location. The detailed analysis of the diaries of an incomer and a member of an established family, both covering several decades, showed that successful individuals did not abandon earlier associations and behaviours when making strategic moves into new circles. Thus, Morant was equally at home dining on turtle with West Indians as he was hunting and racing with the members of the royal family. Whilst it cost more to mix with the peerage, social power was as important as wealth in the longer term, and Morant increased his social power by displaying behaviours and attitudes that were valued by the landed gentry, peerage, and royalty. The ownership of a landed estate was an essential requirement for membership of the landed gentry, but this thesis has shown that social adaptivity and appropriate behaviour were key to assimilation into the landed gentry.

The importance of social power was illustrated even more clearly by examining the landed gentry's behaviour in the national political arena. The landed gentry were able to increase their control of the five borough constituencies in the Region over the course of the period, against perceived wider trends. Not only was a family's social power enhanced by controlling a seat, social power was as important as wealth in achieving control of the constituencies in the first place. The landed gentry had less money to spend, but deploying social power often led to a better outcome than spending money. This, in turn, depended on how they behaved; successful landed gentry behaved appropriately and morally and expected others to do so too.

Hooper constantly added to his social power at Christchurch through 'the smooth and successful functioning of local deference structures'.[18] Although he lived in London for much of the year, his role in the Custom House was seen as protective of

[18] O'Gorman, *Voters, patrons and parties,* p. 6.

the interests of his burgesses and of the wider interests of Christchurch. He adapted his approach over time, but his core principles and objectives never changed; he took a long-term view and worked consistently to satisfy the expectations of his community. As a result, his social power survived intact until just before his death at the age of ninety-three, at which point he bequeathed an enhanced estate to his *protégé* and cousin.

In contrast, Sir Richard Worsley's ungentlemanly behaviour and duplicitous treatment of other landed-gentry families damaged his reputation and destroyed his social power. Even when seeking a seat in the Hampshire election, he was accused of failing to discharge 'the duty he owed his country, as a man of principle ought to have done' and of taking care of himself.[19] He found to his cost that his wealth was not able to compensate for his past behaviour and lack of social power. This ultimately affected his ability to keep his landed estate in the family. Whilst the Hoopers kept Hurn Court in the family, Appuldurcombe was broken up in the first half of the nineteenth century. Sir Richard Worsley had lost both place and power.

This thesis has argued that, for all the social turbulence beneath the surface, there was social continuity and stability in the Region, and that this resulted from a process of gradual social accommodation rather than any great divide. The group was open to newcomers, who added to the numbers rather than displacing established families. The old and local absorbed the new and national, and gradually they both became socially and culturally amphibious, able to move between different circles. For the landed gentry, social power was as important as wealth, and they were able to use social power to maintain their position in the Region, in spite of the greater status and

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[19] *Collection of hand-bills,* p. 31.

wealth brought to bear by the peerage and government. In contrast, inappropriate behaviour could lead to a reduction in social power, which, once lost, took time to rebuild.

Thus gradual change led to continuity, resulting in a more complex picture than that painted by some social historians who have concluded that change happened suddenly (or in some cases, not at all) simultaneously across England and Wales.[20] Edmund Burke, in writing about the benefits of the English constitution, said that he 'would not exclude alteration' but that when 'changed, it should be to preserve'.[21] The landed gentry's behaviour echoed this sentiment; they changed in order to preserve their place and their power. Thus, viewed at from a distance at the end of the eighteenth century, they appeared to be 'neither in decline nor in serious difficulty as a social group'.[22]

The situation in the Region in 1800 seemed remarkably similar to that in 1700. Yet, there was a widely held view that, by 1920, there had been profound change: 'country houses had been pulled down or sold off, and the political control … [had] virtually disappeared'.[23] The question remained whether the timing and pace of change was the same in different parts of the country and in different strata of the landed classes. Accordingly, it would be useful to expand the scope of this study within the Region in the eighteenth century and extend it into the nineteenth century. In the later period, there were a number of developments which affected the Region, including parliamentary reform, the arrival of a resident peer in Beaulieu after 1855, and the

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[20] This historiography is discussed in full in the introduction but O'Gorman was a recent example: O'Gorman, *Long eighteenth century, 2016*.
[21] Burke, *Reflections*, p. 355.
[22] O'Gorman, *Long eighteenth century, 2016,* p. 113.
[23] Beckett, *Aristocracy*, p. 1.

publication of the New Forest Act in 1877.[24] These changes might have been expected to reduce the attractiveness of the Region, yet twelve of the forty-three estates at the end of the eighteenth century appeared in Bateman's *Great Landowners*.[25] It would be fruitful to cover these estates and families in greater depth, and there are collections in the Hampshire Record Office which could be used for this purpose.[26]

The scope of the study could also be extended laterally within the eighteenth century to other regions in England with different characteristics. The Region was distinctive for not only the absence of large landowners, and the resulting opportunities for 'patronage and profit', but also its topographical features.[27] For example, the Region was dominated by the Crown Forest and the sea, had poor agricultural land, lacked mineral resources, industries, and large urban centres, and was at least one day's travel away from London. Nevertheless, the landed gentry in other regions might still cultivate and deploy social power to maintain their position and keep their estates in the family. The same research methodology and approach could be used to establish whether this was so in parts of the country that had a dominant peer or landowner. Similarly, the Region was open to newcomers, who did not displace the established landed gentry, but was this true of agricultural regions with larger established estates?

Consideration could be given to extending the research to cover a region within a county such as Cheshire, which had more industrial opportunities, an agricultural county such as Norfolk, and a county such as Surrey that was closer to London. Preliminary analysis shows that these three counties had different mixes of the landed

[24] This Act of Parliament reconstituted the verderers as representatives of the commoners rather than of the Crown.
[25] Bateman, *Great landowners*. Only one of the great landowners, the earl of Malmesbury, had become a peer. Some other estates below 3,000 acres also remained intact.
[26] HRO, 12M60 Compton of Minstead, late 17th century–late 19th century; HRO, 52M87 Burrard of Walhampton, Boldre, 1485–1870; HRO, 27M74/F Burrard family papers; HRO, 23M58 Barker Mill of Mottisfont, Nursling, 13th century – 20th century; HRO, 51M76/A The Barker-Mill Estates.
[27] Rosenheim, *Emergence of a ruling order*, p. 257.

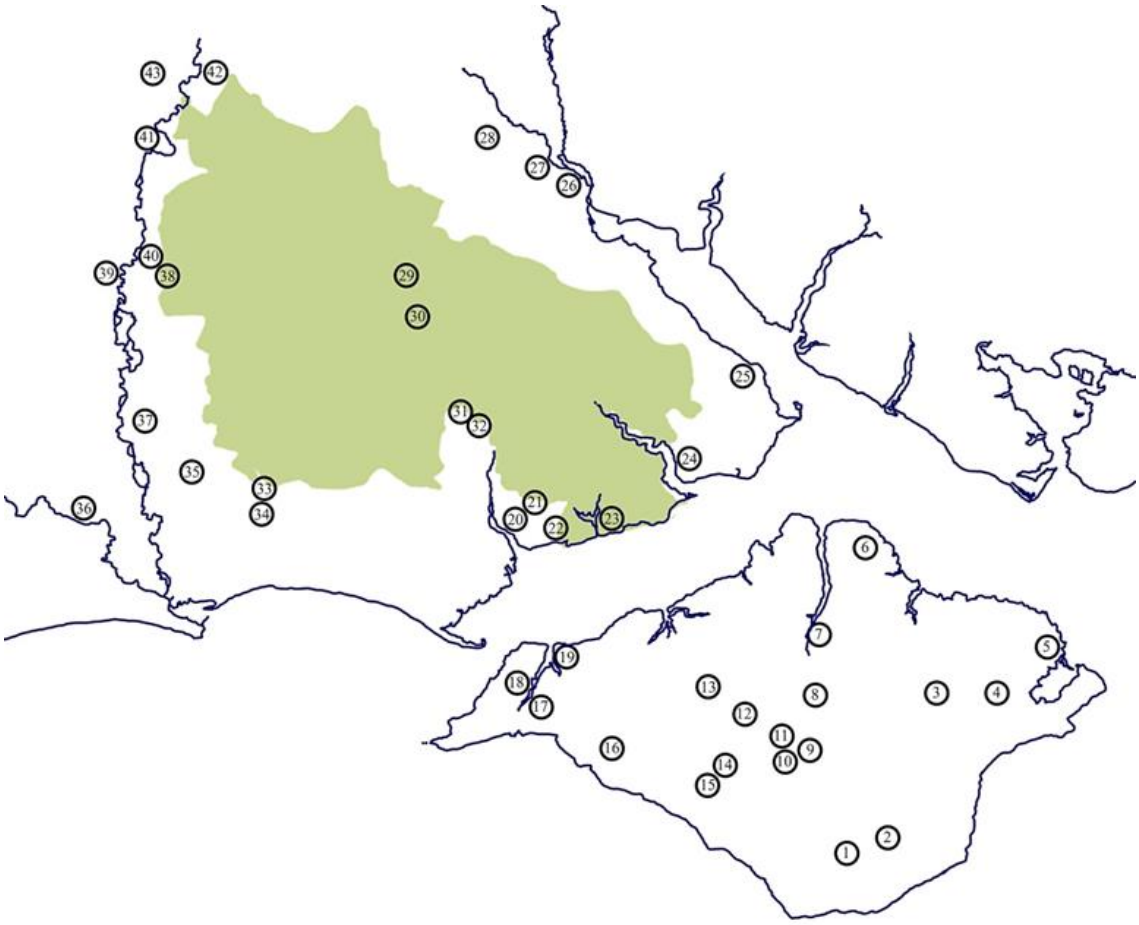
classes but, as in the rest of Hampshire, peers' estates were significantly larger than those of the landed gentry.[28] The potential for a dominant peerage in these counties might give rise to different patterns of patronage and clientage and limit the effectiveness of social power, but this would need to be tested.

It is hoped that this study has offered new perspectives on the character and pace of social change in the eighteenth century. In particular, it has sought to provide new insights into why the landed gentry retained their influence and succeeded in keeping their estates in the family throughout the period, continuing the link between place and power.

[28] In both Cheshire and Norfolk there were three peers with estates over 15,000 acres.

Appendices

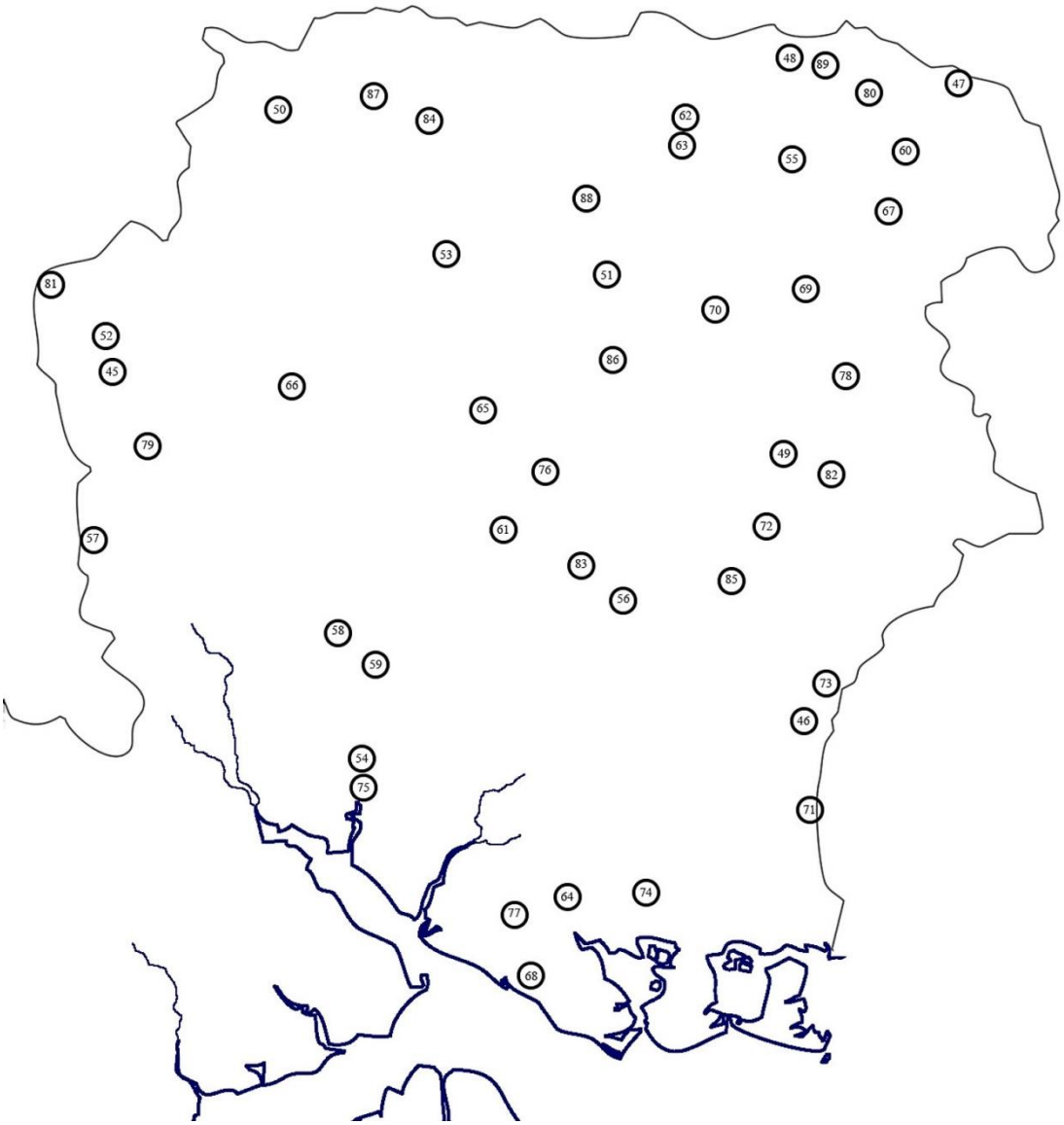
Appendix 1: Seats of landed-gentry families in the Region



Key to map of country estates in the Region

Map	Family	Estate	Map	Family	Estate
1	Worsley	Stenbury	24	Mitford	Exbury
2	Worsley	Appuldurcombe	25	Drummond	Cadland
3	Dillington /Bocland /Bisset	Knighton	26	Serle	Testwood
4	Oglander	Nunwell	27	Knollys/Mill	Grove Place
5	Grose	The Priory	28	Stanley/Ellis/ D'Oyly	Paultons
6	Blachford	Osborne	29	Compton/Willis	Minstead
7	White	Fairlee	30	Rose	Cuffnells
8	Roberts	Standen	31	Baker	Brockenhurst
9	Worsley	Pidford	31	Morant	Brockenhurst
10	Urry	Sheat	32	Bromfield	Roydon, Boldre
11	Meux Worsley	Gatcombe	33	Hinxman	North Hinton
12	Stephens	Bowcombe	34	Tulse	Hinton Admiral
13	Barrington	Swainston	34	Mews/Tapps	Hinton Admiral
14	Leigh /Arcedeckne	North Court	35	Batson	Avon Tyrell
15	Popham	West Court	36	Hooper	Hurn Court
16	Bowreman	Brook	37	Mills	Bisterne
17	Urry/Rushworth	Afton	38	Lisle	Moyles Court
18	Morgan	Freshwater	39	Hobson	Somerley
19	Holmes	Thorley	39	Hoby	Somerley
20	Burrard	Walhampton	39	Pile	Somerley
21	Drax	Newtown Park	40	Cray	Ibsley
21	D'Oyly	Newtown Park	41	Bulkeley/Coventry	Burgate
22	Walter	Baddesley	42	Archer	Hale
23	Worsley	Pylewell	42	May	Hale
23	Senior	Pylewell	43	Hubert	Breamore
23	Robbins	Pylewell	43	Hulse	Breamore

Appendix 2: Seats of the landed gentry in the rest of Hampshire



Key to map of country estates in the rest of Hampshire

Map	Family	Estate	Map	Family	Estate
44	Earle	Gratley	67	Missing	Stubbington
45	Gibbon	Buriton	68	Graham	South Warnborough
46	Wyndham	Yateley	69	Jervoise /Clarke-Jervoise	Herriard
47	Pitt	Stratfield Saye	70	Paulet	Rotherfield Park
48	Knight	Chawton	71	Thistlethwayte	Southwick Park
49	Lucy	Faccombe	72	Sloane	South Stoneham
50	Dehaney	Kempshott	73	Drummond	The Grange
50	Morley	Kempshott	74	Delmé	Place House
50	Pincke	Kempshott	75	Draper	Froyle
52	Portal	Freefolk	75	Miller	Froyle
52	Dawkins	Laverstoke	76	Gatehouse	Wallop House
53	Fleming/Willis Fleming	North Stoneham	77	Cope	Bramshill Park
54	Tylney	Tylney Hall	78	Smith /Smythe /Assheton Smith	South Tidworth
55	Venables	Bramdean	79	Stuart /Stewart	Hartley Mauditt
56	Whitehead	Norman Court	80	Tichborne	Tichborne Park
57	Heathcote	Hursley	81	Kingsmill	Kingsclere
58	Dummer	Cranbury Park	82	Love/Beckford	Basing Park
59	Calthorpe - Gough /Reynolds	Elvetham	83	Hall	Purefoys
60	Brydges	Avington	84	Herbert /Porchester	Highclere Castle
61	Brocas	Beaurepaire	85	Wither	Many Down
62	Chute	The Vyne	86	Lefevre	Heckfield Place
63	Gardiner	Roche Court	87	Mill	Mottisfont Abbey
64	Bristow	Micheldever			
65	Iremonger	Wherwell Priory			
66	St John /St John-Mildmay	Dogmersfield			

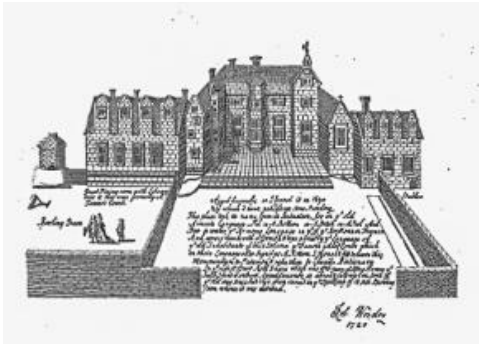
Appendix 3: Analysis of accounts kept by R. P. Blachford

	1777	1778	1779	1780	1781	1782
Building	854	294	1,308	797	441	508
Furniture	336	229	55	55	200	114
Labour	135	51	30	40	56	59
Servants	137	157	172	148	152	196
Household	349	208	192	283	327	393
Cellar		54	74	70	98	55
Stable		63	91	74	181	112
Farm a/c		928	143	83	364	267
Taxes & Repairs		384	315	316	428	567
Interest & annuities		521	102	314	246	383
Mrs B		104	89	58	58	72
Other		67				
Extraordinary	471	783	262	267	296	272
Total	2,282	3,843	2,833	2,505	2,847	2,998

	1783	1784	1785	1786	1787	1788
Building	16	3	47	22	89	8
Furniture	53	21	34	1	6	5
Labour	43	44	49	44	56	54
Servants	133	143	164	148	178	144
Household	318	299	292	296	222	331
Cellar	73	30	80	113	128	93
Stable	97	70	100	45	60	96
Farm a/c	1,100	1,078	1,608	1,350	1,070	989
Taxes & Repairs	482	339	662	521	733	742
Interest & annuities	270	522	733	523	387	586
Mrs B	46	53	93	97	154	78
Other				553	93	2,476
Extraordinary	224	235	654	331	376	366
Total	2,855	2,837	4,516	4,044	3,552	5,968

Source: IoWRO, 8M57/59 a and b

Appendix 4: Country seats

Map	History	Built /rebuilt	Illustration
1	**Worsley of Stenbury**[1] Stenbury was a sixteenth century manor house. The west wing was added in the early eighteenth century by Sir Robert Worsley of Appuldurcombe who is said to have lived here while Appuldurcombe was being rebuilt.	1580 1705	
2	**Worsley of Appuldurcombe**[2] This rough drawing of the Tudor house was published by Sir Robert Worsley in 1720, well after its demolition.	1680 1705 1770 1820	
	A new mansion was built between 1701 and 1711 by Sir Robert Worsley as shown in *Vitruvius Britannicus*.		

[1] 'Historic England', list entry number: 1209248; C. W. R. Winter and M. Rainey, *The manor houses of the Isle of Wight* (Stanbridge, 1985), p. 142.
[2] 'Historic England', list entry number: 1219725; Pevsner and Lloyd, *Hampshire*, p. 729; D. W. Lloyd and N. Pevsner, *The Isle of Wight* (Buildings of England, New Haven; London, 2006), p. 65; Campbell, *Vitruvius*, p. 63; Worsley, *History*, p. 180; Brannon, *Vectis scenery*; Worsley, *History*, p. 218.

It was added to by Sir Richard Worsley in the 1770s. This drawing by A. Devis engraved by W. Watts was published by W. Watts, Chelsea in 1780.



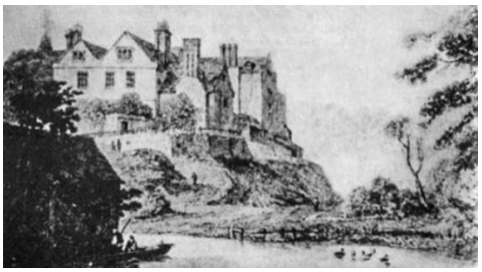
Further building by the Earl of Yarborough took place in the 1820s. This illustration is taken from *Vectis Scenery*, 1831.



3 Dillington/Bocland/Bisset of Knighton[3]

1600

This Elizabethan manor house was demolished in 1821. This artist's impression of Knighton is drawn from a description in the contemporary account of a gentleman's tour in 1776.



This engraving by Richard Godfrey was published in 1781.

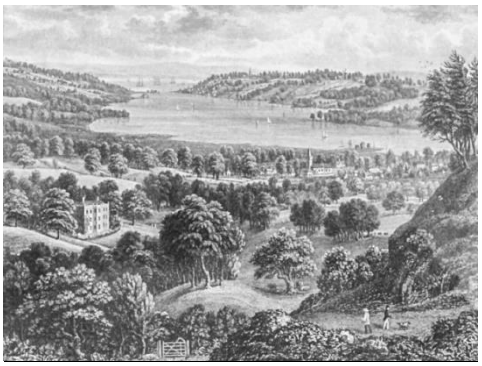


[3] Winter and Rainey, *Manor houses*, p. 92; Worsley, *History*, p. 206; Hutchings, *Gentleman's tour*.

4 Oglander of Nunwell[4]

Nunwell was rebuilt by Sir John Oglander from 1607. Additions were made to the house by the fourth and fifth baronets in 1735 and 1768, the works at the latter date comprising a new east front designed to open onto parkland that was newly created the same year.

1610
1716
1735
1768



In 1806 Sir William Oglander, sixth baronet, succeeded his father and in 1807 employed the architect John Nash (1752–1835) to survey and repair the buildings and to design a new house at Nunwell. The plan survives although it was never built. This image is from *Vectis Scenery* published in 1831.



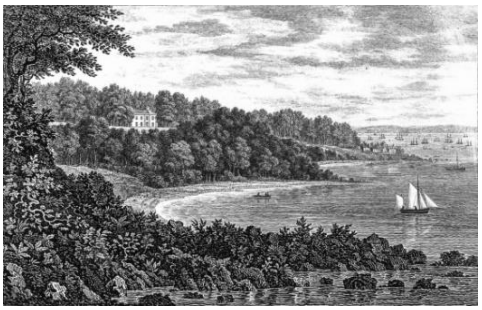
This photograph from 1936 shows that behind the eighteenth century façade (out of sight), most of the house remained and was of an earlier date.



5 Grose of The Priory[5]

The Priory was built in about 1790. This image is from *Vectis Scenery* in 1831.

1790



[4] 'Historic England', list entry number: 1219725; Brannon, *Vectis scenery*; Oglander and Bamford, *A royalist's notebook,* p. xxxii; Worsley, *History,* p. 198.
[5] Pevsner and Lloyd, *Hampshire*, p. 749; Brannon, *Vectis scenery*.

6 **Blachford of Osborne**[6]

Osborne House was built in 1780 by R. P. Blachford.

1780
1845



This image is from *Vectis Scenery*, published in 1831.



Brannon's engraving of 1835 emphasised the scenic views (IoWRO).



This illustration shows the original Osborne House surrounded by new additions probably about 1849 after it was purchased by Queen Victoria in 1845.



[6] Blachford accounts; Brannon, *Vectis scenery*.

7 **White of Fairlee**[7]

Fairlee was built in about 1780 by John White. The house was demolished in 1962.

1780



This image of Fairlee House was published in 1824.



8 **Roberts of Standen**[8]

Standen House was built in about 1750 for the Roberts family.

1750



9 **Worsley of Pidford**[9]

Pidford was built in about 1795, but with the Elizabethan building remaining behind it.

1650
1795



[7] Engraved illustration, drawn, engraved and published by George Brannon in 1824.
[8] 'Historic England', list entry number: 1209182; J. Jones, *Castles to cottages: the story of Isle of Wight houses* (Wimborne Minster, 2000), p. 29.
[9] Winter and Rainey, *Manor houses,* p. 193.

10 **Urry of Sheat**[10]

Sheat was built in about 1610 and partially re-roofed in the late eighteenth century.

1610



11 **Meux Worsley of Gatcombe**[11]

Gatcombe was built by Sir Edward Worsley of Gatcombe in 1751 on the site of an Elizabethan house, remnants of which remain. Further alterations were made in 1794 and in the nineteenth century.

1751
1794
1850



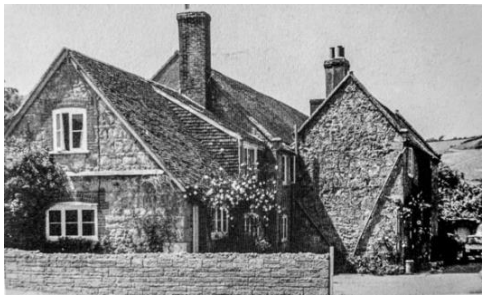
This illustration shows Gatcombe House in 1823.



12 **Stephens of Bowcombe**[12]

Bowcombe was built in the seventeenth century and was not altered in the eighteenth century.

1600



[10] Winter and Rainey, *Manor houses*, p. 137.
[11] 'Historic England', list entry number: 1209216; Winter and Rainey, *Manor houses*, p. 57; Pevsner and Lloyd, *Hampshire*, p. 746; Brannon, *Vectis scenery*.
[12] 'Historic England', list entry number: 1229421; Winter and Rainey, *Manor houses*, p. 183.

13 **Barrington of Swainston**[13]

The house consists of two parts. The original manor house is medieval to which is attached a house built in about 1750 and altered in about 1790.

1180
1270
1750
1790



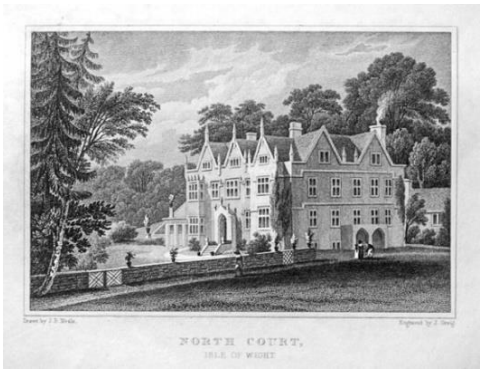
This image is from Worsley's History of the Isle of Wight published in 1781.



14 **Leigh/Arcedeckne of North Court**[14]

Building started in 1615. The house was modernised in about 1700 and then extended in about 1730–40 when the fenestration was completely changed to sash windows. This illustration is from a print dated 1831.

1615
1700
1730



This image is from *Vectis Scenery*, also published in 1831.



[13] 'Historic England', list entry number: 1209329; Pevsner and Lloyd, *Hampshire*, p. 736; Worsley, *History*, p. 254.
[14] 'Historic England', list entry number: 1001666; Pevsner and Lloyd, *Hampshire*, p. 770; Winter and Rainey, *Manor houses*, p. 111; Brannon, *Vectis scenery*.

15 **Popham of West Court**[15]

West Court was mainly built in 1579, with Jacobean extensions and minor modifications in the eighteenth century.

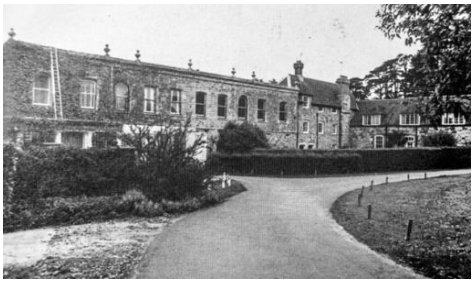
1579



16 **Bowreman of Brook**[16]

The house was built 1720 on the site of a Tudor building. In 1664, it had fourteen hearths.

1450
1720
1890



17 **Urry/Rushworth of Afton**

Afton House was built in about 1725, with early nineteenth and twentieth century alterations.[17]

1725
1825



18 **Morgan of Freshwater**

Freshwater House was built in about 1715.[18]

1715



[15] 'Historic England', list entry Number: 1291026; Winter and Rainey, *Manor houses*, p. 159; *VCH Hampshire*, vol. 5, p. 278.
[16] Winter and Rainey, *Manor houses*, p. 184.
[17] 'Historic England', list entry number: 1219355 ; Winter and Rainey, *Manor houses*, p. 178.
[18] Winter and Rainey, *Manor houses*, p. 189.

19 **Holmes of Thorley and Westover**[19]

Thorley Manor was built by Henry Holmes in 1712. It is described by Pevsner as a 'perfect William and Mary house, stone, two storeys, five bays, hipped roof'.

1712



Westover was the second seat of the Holmes family and was built in about 1760, but the surviving features are early nineteenth century with further alterations in the mid nineteenth century. This image is from *Vectis Scenery* published in 1831.

1760
1825

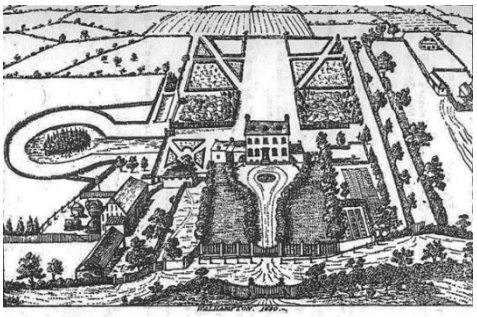


New Forest

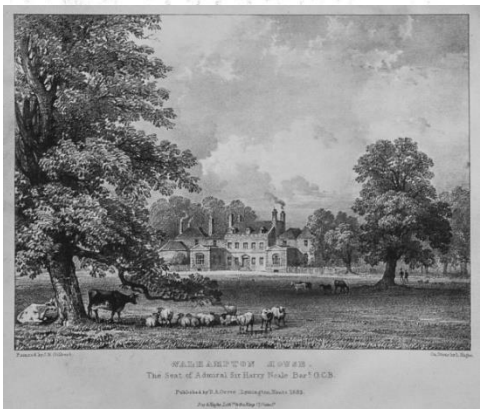
20 **Burrard of Walhampton**[20]

This image shows Walhampton in 1680. It was modernised in about 1711 and again after 1830.

1680
1711
1832
1884
1911



This image is of Walhampton in 1832.



[19] Thorley: Winter and Rainey, *Manor houses,* p. 152; Pevsner and Lloyd, *Hampshire,* p. 772; 'Historic England', list entry number: 1209424; Jones, *Castles to cottages,* p. 25. Westover: 'Historic England', list entry number: 1292706; Pevsner and Lloyd, *Hampshire,* p. 736; Brannon, *Vectis scenery*.
[20] 'Historic England', list entry number: 1157615; Grove, *Views of principal seats,* lithograph engraved by L. Haghe from a painting by J.M. Gilbert. See also HRO, 27M74/Z4.

21 **Walter/Mitford/Drax/D'Oyly of Newtown Park**[21]

This medium-sized eighteenth-century country house with front range was remodelled in about 1790. It was restored and altered further in 1960. This image shows the house in about 1830.

1700
1790
1960



22 **Walter of Baddesley Manor**[22]

This house was originally medieval but was rebuilt entirely in about 1780.

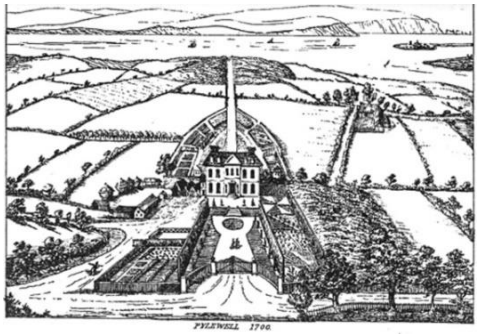
1500
1780

Not available.

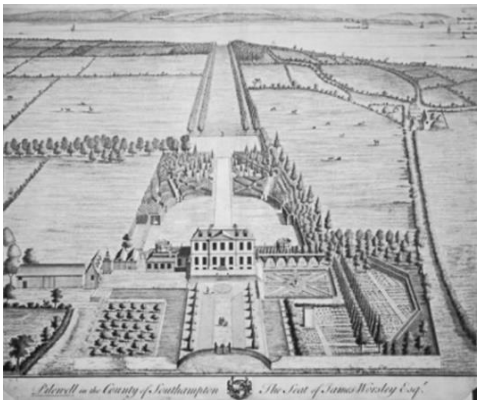
23 **Worsley/Senior/Robbins of Pylewell**[23]

This image shows Pylewell in about 1700.

1677
1739
1820



The house was modernised by James Worsley in 1739. This image shows Pylewell in about 1740.



[21] 'Historic England', list entry number: 1301405; Grove, *Views of principal seat,* Newtown Park (view of the house from the park), from a painting by B. Ferrey.
[22] Pevsner and Lloyd, *Hampshire,* p. 356.
[23] 'Historic England', list entry number: 1351015; Badeslade and Rocque, *Vitruvius Britannicus,* pp. 102–3; BL, BLL01004911613 'A view of Pilewell the seat of J. Worsley' in about 1740. This print was donated to the British Library by George IV having been collected by George III; Grove, *Views of principal seats*. Pilewell, the seat of Joseph Weld esq. from a painting by J. M. Gilbert.

23 Pylewell was purchased in 1780 by Ascanius William Senior for £22,000 and then sold in 1787 to Thomas Robbins for £32,000. The house was further modernised in about 1820. This image shows Pylewell in 1832.



24 **Mitford of Exbury**[24]

This photograph is of Exbury House in the twenty-first century.

1790
1870
1927



25 **Drummond of Cadland**[25]

This print is of Cadland Park in 1779. The house was demolished in 1953.

1775
1803



26 **Serle of Testwood**[26]

This image is of Great Testwood Park in 1927; it was demolished in the 1930s.

1710



[24] 'Historic England', list entry number: 1094360; Watts, *Seats of the nobility*, plate 24.
[25] 'Historic England', list entry number: 1000280; www.lostheritage.org.uk.
[26] 'Hampshire Gardens Trust', www.hgt.org.uk, accessed 6 August 2016; photograph taken 24 August 1927 by Henry Bedford Lemere, Bedford Lemere and Company, Historic England reference BL29154/001.

27 **Knollys/Mill of Grove Place**[27]

Grove Place was a typical early Elizabethan house. The fenestration was changed in the late eighteenth century and there was restoration work and minor alterations in 1895.

1550
1780
1895



28 **Stanley/Ellis/D'Oyly of Paultons**[28]

1720

Paultons was built in the eighteenth century and enhanced over the years. This image shows it before it was demolished in 1963 following a fire.



29 **Compton/Willis of Minstead**[29]

1719
1802

Minstead was built in 1719 and enlarged in 1802. It is no longer standing.



This image shows the house before it was demolished in 1949.



[27] 'Historic England', list entry number: 1339157; Pevsner and Lloyd, *Hampshire*, p. 361.
[28] 'Lost heritage: England's lost country houses', www.lostheritage.org.uk, accessed 6 August 2016.
[29] 'Lost heritage website'.

30 **Rose of Cuffnells**[30]

The original house was built before 1759 on land leased from the Crown. The estate was enfranchised when the Crown no longer needed the land for hunting and sold in 1784 to George Rose who enlarged the house. This print shows the house in 1805. The house has since been demolished.

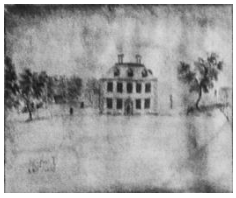
1759
1785



31 **Baker/Morant of Brockenhurst**[31]

The original house was enlarged in 1773.

1680
1773



This image shows the house in 1771. It was demolished in 1960.



32 **Bromfield of Roydon**[32]

Roydon was a late-seventeenth century house. It was restored in the twentieth century.

1680



33 **Hinxman of North Hinton**

Not available

[30] 'Hampshire Gardens Trust'; *The beauties of England and Wales or, delineations, topographical, historical, and descriptive, of each county,* vol. 6 (1805).
[31] 'Historic England', list entry number (for the park): 1000499; HRO, TOP 50/2/2 Brockenhurst Park, 1777; 'Lost heritage website'.
[32] 'Lost heritage website'.

34 **Tulse/Mews/Tapps of Hinton Admiral**[33]

The house was built for Sir Peter Mews in 1720 with a middle block of seven bays and two two-storeyed service wings at right angles.

1720
1777



It was damaged by fire in 1777 and repaired. It was enlarged in 1905.



35 **Batson of Avon Tyrell**[34]

The current house dates from 1891.

1891 Not available.

36 **Hooper/Harris of Hurn Court**[35]

Hurn or Heron Court is a large Elizabethan house of two storeys and irregular plan occupying the site of a medieval grange of Christchurch Priory. It was altered first in 1806 and then in about 1840, when a third storey was added. This image shows Hurn Court in about 1830.

1580
1806
1840



This image is of Hurn Court in twenty-first century.

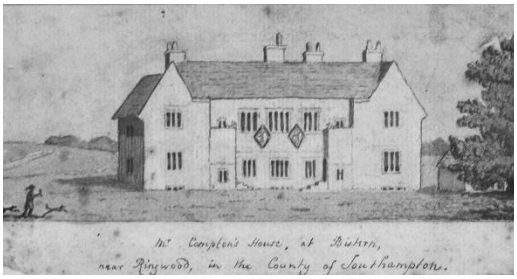


[33] 'Historic England', list entry number: 1095030; Pevsner and Lloyd, *Hampshire*, p. 293.
[34] Pevsner and Lloyd, *Hampshire*, p. 87.
[35] 'Historic England', list entry number: 1324679; Pevsner and Lloyd, *Hampshire*, p. 299; Grove, *Views of principal seats*. Lithograph by J. M. Gilbert engraved by L. Haghe.

37 **Mills of Bisterne**[36]

An Elizabethan manor house (possibly late fifteenth century, early sixteenth century, late sixteenth century) which was remodelled in the mid to late seventeenth century. This image is of the house in 1787.

1520
1840



It was not altered in the eighteenth century but remodelled in about 1840 and restored in the mid-twentieth century. This image is of Bisterne Manor in the twentieth century.



38 **Lisle of Moyles Court**[37]

Moyles Court is a mid-sixteenth century Elizabethan brick house with two storeys, five-bay centre with two-bay projecting wings, and hipped roof. It was altered in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. The first image is a painting of Moyles Court done in about 1813, 'in the lifetime of the late Charles Lisle'.

This image shows Moyles Court in twenty-first century.

1550
1850





[36] 'Historic England', list entry number: 1094981; Pevsner and Lloyd, *Hampshire,* p. 110.
[37] 'Historic England', list entry number: 1095007; Pevsner and Lloyd, *Hampshire,* p. 210; Gentleman's Magazine and Historical Chronicle, 1838, vol. 26, p. 17.

39 **Hoby/Pyle/Hobson of Somerley**[38]

Sir Thomas Hoby owned Somerley until his death in 1730. It was then the seat of Sir Seymour Pile, baronet, whose widow sold it to Daniel Hobson, esq. The house was completely rebuilt for Hobson in 1792–95 as a yellow-brick with five bays, three rooms wide and two rooms deep on a slightly different site. It was purchased in 1828 by the second earl of Normanton who added to it.

1653
1792
1850



40 **Cray of Ibsley**[39]

A brick house of about 1700–10 with five bays, two storeys and hipped roof. Ibsley House was demolished when Ibsley manor was sold to the Comptons after 1810.

1710 Not available.

41 **Bulkeley/Coventry of Burgate**[40]

Burgate was built in the eighteenth century and altered in the early nineteenth century.

1720
1820



42 **Archer of Hale**[41]

Hale was built by T. Archer when he acquired the estate in 1715 and remodelled by H. Holland jnr. in 1770. It was altered in the early and late nineteenth century.

1630
1715
1770
1830



[38] 'Historic England', list entry number: 1350879; Pevsner and Lloyd, *Hampshire*, p. 508; *VCH Hampshire*, vol. 4, p. 604; *The Gentleman's Magazine*, vol. 97, 1805.
[39] Pevsner and Lloyd, *Hampshire*, p. 305.
[40] 'Historic England', list entry number: 1094874.
[41] 'Historic England', list entry number: 1301070; Pevsner and Lloyd, *Hampshire*, p. 262.

43 **Hubert/Hulse of Breamore**[42]

Breamore is a large late Elizabethan brick house with eighteenth-century stables of nine bays with a three-bay impediment. It was restored following a fire in 1856.

1583
1856



[42] Pevsner and Lloyd, *Hampshire*, p. 143; 'Historic England', list entry Number: 1094935.

Appendix 5: Extracts from the Book of Requests

Year	Applicant	Position	For	Patron	Result
1770	Mr James Moore	Shipwright in Portsmouth Docks	Son	Admiral	Obtained.
1770	Joshua Stevens Jeans	Master of a ship	Bindloss	Admiralty - Lord Sandwich	No success because Peace time.
1770	Mr W Dale	Purser on a ship larger than a 20 gun ship of war	Browne	Admiralty - Lord Sandwich	Promised. Made purser to the Yarmouth of 64 guns in 1773.
1770	Mr Thomas Stevens	Lieutenant on a ship	Son	Admiralty - Lord Sandwich	No success because Peace time.
1770	Mr Newsam	Midshipman	Son	Commodore Byron	Obtained.
1770	Mr Thomas Mews	Master of a ship of war	Bayly	Comptroller of the Navy	Obtained.
1771	Dr Gibbs	Purser on better ship	Brother	Admiralty - Lord Sandwich	Obtained.
1771	Mrs Stevens	Wants a scarf	Self	Lady Shaftesbury	Obtained.
1771	Mr Thomas Jeans	Exhibition at Winchester College	Son		Obtained.
1771	Mr Thomas Jeans	Apprentice to the King's Brewhouse, Portsmouth	Scard		Obtained.
1772	Mr Newsam	Midshipman	Son	Admiral	Admiral Parry to take him as a midshipman to the Leeward Islands for three years.
1772	Captain Lloyd	Promotion in the Navy	Self	Admiralty - Lord Sandwich	Obtained in 1775.
1772	Mr Thomas Jeans	To be sent to a madhouse	Noyes	Duke of Montagu	Obtained.
1772	Mr Wm Holloway	Custom House officer in Christchurch	Self	Lord North	Obtained.
1772	Thomas Jeans	Deputy Woodward	Self	Lord North	Eventually obtained for Thomas Jeans senior in June 1780 by Nathaniel Forth.

Year	Applicant	Position	For	Patron	Result
1772	Dr Gibbs	Succeed Gregory Carloss as Surgeon to the Artillery at Portsmouth	Self	Master of the Ordnance	Still seeking this in 1779.
1772	Mayor	Stipend for the schoolmaster	Self	Mr Hooper	Obtained.
1772	Mayor	Promotion of the bill re Hawkers and Pedlars	Self	Self - House of Commons	Bill delayed.
1773	Edmund Batt, esq.	Commission for Hampshire	Self	Duke of Chandos	Obtained.
1773	Captain Lloyd	Succeed Harry Cotman as tidesman in Port of London on the inferior list	Alman	Lord North	Obtained - Tide surveyor on the superior list.
1773	Thomas Mews, jun.	Watchman's place in the salt works	Welsh	Mr Churchill	Agreed when there is a vacancy.
1773	Mr John Kent	To read in the museum		Self - British Museum	Obtained.
1773	Mr H Mooringe	Labourer in the gun wharf Portsmouth	West-brook	Sir Charles Frederic	Obtained.
1773	Joshua Stevens Jeans	To succeed as Prior of Wilton.	Son-in-law		Failed - the Dean had given it to his nephew.
1773	Mr Mooringe	To go to sea in the merchant service	Stokes		Obtained.
1773	Mayor	To be exempt from attending the assizes	Self		Obtained.
1774	Dr Stevens	Prebend of [Windsor] or a living from Lord Guildford	Self	Lord Guildford	Failed.
1774	Mr Bursey	Master Joiner or foreman at Portsmouth	Pilgrim	Lord Sandwich	Wrote five letters. Finally appointed.
1774	Revd Thomas Jeans	A living with his [New College] fellowship	Self	The Chancellor	Wrote three times and visited the Chancellor. In July 1774 a living of about £80 was offered.

Year	Applicant	Position	For	Patron	Result
1774	Dr Ogle	Supernumerary tidesman	Wellock		Obtained by Mr Hooper.
1774	The mayor, Mr Cook & Joseph Jeans	Reinstatement of Slade who had been discharged for 'an accusation of an infamous nature.'	Slade		Asked to be excused.
1775	Lt St Alban Roy	To be employed	Self	Admiralty - Lord Sandwich	Offered a lieutenancy of the Mass at Sheerness.
1775	Mr T Mews, Jun	First clerk of the Ropemakers at Portsmouth vice Eddows who is about to resign	Rafael	Comptroller of the Navy; then Lord Sandwich via Mr Hyde	Refused.
1775	Thomas Jeans	To be a Regarder	Self	Duke of Chandos and others	Received favourable letters from all. Elected March 1778.
1775	Lt Ford	A commission here or in America	Self	Lord Barrington	Commission received.
1775	Charles Reeks	King's waiter	Self	Lord North	Letter from Lord North July 10, 1775 that he had ordered it to be done.
1775	Charles Reeks	King's waiter	Self	Lord North	Letter from Lord North July 10, 1775 that he had ordered it to be done.
1776	Thomas Mews, sen & jun	Promotion from carpenter 3rd rate to 2nd rate	Parnel & Rusell	Admiralty - Lord Sandwich	Parnell promoted April 1776.
1776	Mrs Chapman	To go to Winchester School	Grand-son	Dr W	To write when 'I learn more particulars'.
1776	Mr H Mooringe	A watchman in the Salt works at Nantwich to be made supernumerary officer	Stokes	Lord North	Initially Lord North wrote that he would be promoted to Salt Officer. A month later North wrote that the position was already engaged & given to another.
1777	Mayor and burgesses	To be appointed Master and Commander	Lt Roy	Admiralty - Lord Sandwich	Refused on several occasions. April 1778 appointed Master and Commander of an armed sloop.

Year	Applicant	Position	For	Patron	Result
1777	Revd Thomas Jeans	To change his promised living for another tenable with a fellowship [of New College]	Self	Lord Chancellor	Saw my Lord Chancellor who was pleased to assent & minute it in his book.
1777	Mr Mooringe	A supernumerary Salt Officer at Nantwich	Stokes	Treasury Secretary Robinson	Refused in 1776. Applied again in 1777 (with Lord Hyde). Promised by Secretary Robinson in November 1777. Done March 1779.
1777	John Mews	To be a head boatman at Cowes vice Bullock deceased	Self	Treasury Secretary Robinson	Given away to another.
1778	Skeats Jun	Organist of Ely	Self	bishop of Ely	Done.
1778	Mr Talman	A living	Self	bishop of London	September 1779 Talman was confirmed in the Essex living.
1778	Revd Jackson	Vicar of Christchurch	Self	dean of Winchester and bishop of Oxford.	Good hope of achieving this.
1778	Publicans of Christ-church	Re the dragoons to be sent to Christchurch	Self	Lord Barrington	He agreed to ‘take care of what I had written’.
1779	Captain St Alban Roy	To go with Sir George Rodney	Self	Admiralty - Lord Sandwich	October 1779 - answer very favourable.
1780	J Corfe	To be organist of Salisbury Cathedral	Self	bishop of Sarum	The bishop favourable.
1780	John Bursey	Coast Waiter in the Port of London	Self	Lord North	Promised in May 1780 on a vacancy.

Appendix 6: Landed gentry who served as deputy lieutenants, 1770–99

Year	Qualification
New Forest[1]	
1770	Sir Edward Hulse of Breamore House, baronet, deputy lieutenant; qualification: manors and estates of Breamore Bulbane, Breamore Courtney, South Charford, Godshill, Eastmill, and Folds (£400).
1771	William Mitford of Gilbury, Exbury, deputy lieutenant and captain of the south battalion of militia; qualification: freehold estates in Hants (£200).[2]
1786	Edward Hulse, deputy lieutenant; qualification: heir apparent to manors and lands at Breamore.
1787	William Mitford, deputy lieutenant; qualification: lands in parishes of Exbury and Fawley (£200pa).[3]
1788	John Walter, esq., deputy lieutenant; qualification: estates in the parish of Milton and Boldre (£200pa).
1790	Charles Mill, esq., deputy lieutenant; qualification: heir apparent of the Reverend Sir Charles Mill, baronet, who has estates (£400pa), 1790.
1794	Sir George Ivison Tapps, baronet, deputy lieutenant; qualification: of Hinton Admiral and in the parish of Christchurch (£200pa).
1797	John Compton, esq., deputy lieutenant; qualification: lands in the parish of Minstead (£200pa).
1798	George Henry Rose, esq., deputy lieutenant; qualification: eldest son of George Rose who has lands in the parishes of Lyndhurst and Christchurch (£400pa).
1798	George Rose, esq., deputy lieutenant; qualification: estate in the parishes of Christchurch and Lyndhurst (£400pa).
Isle of Wight[4]	
1786	Henry Roberts, deputy lieutenant; qualification: Lands at Arreton, Carisbrooke and Gatcombe, Isle of Wight (£200pa), 1786.
1786	Thomas Worsley, deputy lieutenant and captain of the south battalion; qualification: lands at Whippingham, Isle of Wight (£200pa), 1786.
1786	John Popham, deputy lieutenant and captain in the militia; qualification: heir apparent to estate at Shorwell; lands at Bonchurch and Brading (£400pa), 1786.
1786	Leonard Troughear Holmes, esq., deputy lieutenant; qualification: manor of Thorley, Isle of Wight (£600pa), 1786.
1790	Edward Rushworth, esq., deputy lieutenant; qualification: lands in the parishes of Yarmouth and Freshwater (£200pa), 1790.
1797	Alexander Campbell, esq., deputy lieutenant; qualification: lands in the parish of Gatcombe in the Isle of Wight, 1797.

[1] HRO, Q21/6/1 roll of qualifications, 1769–1829.
[2] HRO, Q21/6/1 roll of qualifications, membrane 3.
[3] HRO, Q21/6/1 roll of qualifications, membrane 6.
[4] HRO, Q21/6/1 roll of qualifications of deputy lieutenants and officers of the militia, 1769–1829.

Appendix 7: Summary of offices held

Family	Estate	Location	Type	Offices held
Barrington / Simeon	Swainston	Isle of Wight	Established	JP
Blachford	Osborne	Isle of Wight	Upcomer	JP
Bowreman	Brook	Isle of Wight	Established	JP
Dillington/ Bocland/ Bisset	Knighton	Isle of Wight	Established	JP
Grose	The Priory	Isle of Wight	Incomer	Judge
Holmes	Thorley	Isle of Wight	Established	JP, DL
Leigh/ Arcedeckne	Northcourt	Isle of Wight	Established	JP, Sh, M
Meux Worsley/ Campbell	Gatcombe	Isle of Wight	Established	JP, DL, Sh, M
Morgan	Freshwater	Isle of Wight	Established	JP, Sh
Oglander	Nunwell	Isle of Wight	Established	JP, Sh
Popham	West Court	Isle of Wight	Upcomer	JP, DL, M
Roberts	Standen	Isle of Wight	Upcomer	JP, DL
Stephens	Bowcombe	Isle of Wight	Established	JP
Urry/ Brown	Sheat	Isle of Wight	Established	-
Urry/ Rushworth	Afton House	Isle of Wight	Established	JP, DL
White	Fairlee	Isle of Wight	Upcomer	JP
Worsley	Appuldurcombe	Isle of Wight	Established	JP, DL, M, V
Worsley	Pidford	Isle of Wight	Established	-
Worsley	Stenbury	Isle of Wight	Established	JP
Archer	Hale	New Forest	Incomer	JP
Baker	Brockenhurst	New Forest	Incomer	-
Batson	Avon Tyrell	New Forest	Incomer	-
Bromfield	Roydon	New Forest	Established	JP
Bulkeley/ Coventry	Burgate	New Forest	Established	JP, Sh
Burrard	Walhampton	New Forest	Upcomer	JP, Sh
Compton/ Willis	Minstead	New Forest	Established	JP, DL, Sh, V
Cray/ Lewis	Ibsley	New Forest	Established	Sh
D'Oyly	Newtown	New Forest	Incomer	JP
Drax	Newtown	New Forest	Incomer	-
Drummond	Cadland	New Forest	Incomer	-

Key to offices held: JP - Justice of the peace; DL – deputy lieutenant; Sh – sheriff; M – officer in the militia and V – verderer.

Family	Estate	Location	Type	Offices held
Hinxman	North Hinton	New Forest	Established	JP, Sh
Hobson	Somerley	New Forest	Incomer	-
Hoby	Somerley	New Forest	Established	JP, Sh
Hooper	Hurn Court	New Forest	Established	JP, Sh, M
Hubert	Breamore	New Forest	Incomer	-
Hulse	Breamore	New Forest	Incomer	JP, DL, Sh
Knollys/ Mill	Grove Place	New Forest	Established	JP, DL, Sh, M
Lisle	Moyles Court	New Forest	Established	JP, Sh
May	Hale	New Forest	Incomer	-
Mews/ Tapps	Hinton Admiral	New Forest	Incomer	JP, DL, Sh
Mills	Bisterne	New Forest	Incomer	JP
Mitford	Exbury	New Forest	Incomer	DL, Sh, M
Morant	Brockenhurst	New Forest	Incomer	V
Pile	Somerley	New Forest	Incomer	JP
Robbins	Pylewell	New Forest	Incomer	JP, Sh
Rose	Cuffnells	New Forest	Incomer	DL
Senior	Pylewell	New Forest	Established	Sh
Serle	Testwood	New Forest	Upcomer	JP, M, V
Stanley/ Ellis	Paultons	New Forest	Established	JP
Tulse	Hinton Admiral	New Forest	Incomer	-
Walter	Baddesley	New Forest	Upcomer	JP, DL, Sh
Worsley	Pylewell	New Forest	Incomer	JP, Sh, M

Source – Dataset created for this thesis

Key to offices held: JP - Justice of the peace; DL – deputy lieutenant; Sh – sheriff; M – officer in the militia and V - verderer.

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