KINSHIP AND EXCHANGE RELATIONS WITHIN AN ESTATE ECONOMY: DITCHLEY, 1680-1750

(VOLUME 1)

By

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Thesis submitted to the University of Oxford
for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy

Trinity Term 1999

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ABSTRACT

This thesis presents original evidence on changes occurring within the exchange economy of a north-west Oxfordshire rural community during the first half of the eighteenth century. It has been suggested that capitalism began to evolve in rural areas of England during this period due to the transformation of agriculture and growth of consumerism. Thus one would expect to find evidence of a growing commercialisation of the agrarian population characterised by increased reliance upon the market and a diminution of customary exchange and self-provisioning.

Drawing evidence from the Ditchley estate accounts, the balance of monetary and non-monetary exchange, the nature of transactions, and the role of kinship connections in mediating them, are described and analysed. It is argued that whilst the accounts do reveal significant levels of monetization and widespread use of market exchange especially after 1725, an extensive, largely non-monetized internal estate market in goods operated in parallel. These two systems appear to have been as much complementary as in competition, reflecting the high levels of integration within the local agrarian economy of the stonebrash region.

Moreover, analysis of kinship networks suggests that many seemingly monetary transactions had a social component. Market exchange at Ditchley was essentially as dependent on social relations as reciprocal exchange within the neighbourhood area. The customary economy of kinsman and neighbour continued to flourish and to complement the expanding market economy in early eighteenth-century England, because both had a moral component. For the villagers at Ditchley there was no clear dichotomy between the two.

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like first of all to thank my supervisor Dr John Langton for his guidance and encouragement. His knowledge of the subject literature, assistance in formulating ideas and proof-reading of the final draft has been invaluable.

I additionally received much assistance from the staff of Oxfordshire Archives, where I spent over a year searching through the records of the Ditchley estate, and from the librarians in the Bodleian and History Faculty Library. I would also like to thank the Ditchley Foundation for allowing me to visit the estate and take photographs in the grounds.

This research was funded by a Studentship from the Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC) for which I am most grateful.
I am also grateful for financial support from Jesus College, particularly for the writing up grant that allowed me to complete my work. Additionally I am indebted to the generosity of the Jesus College Old Members Association, whose Old Members' Scholarship I held for three years, and to Prof. Colin Clarke and the other geography tutors at Jesus for their support over the years.

Assistance and encouragement from individuals in the School of Geography has also been invaluable. In particular I would like to thank my fellow historical geography graduates Robert Mayhew and Edward Newbold for their many useful suggestions, and Martin Barfoot for his help with photographic work. I also wish to thank Pete Hayward for help with cartography, Linda Atkinson, Sue Bird and the other librarians for dealing with my numerous and varied queries, Andrew Burke and Mark Jackson for help with computing problems, and my fellow research students for making coffee breaks such an enlightening experience.

I would also like to thank my friends for their encouragement and for many enjoyable nights out in Oxford, and, in particular, Jacqueline without whom this thesis would probably have been completed much sooner.

Finally, I must express my sincerest thanks to my family for their support and tolerance over the past few years.

(1) INTRODUCTION

1.1 The transition from feudalism to capitalism

This thesis will examine the process of monetization in eighteenth-century rural society and its impact on the character of exchange in the local community. It deals, in the most general terms, with a facet of the transition from feudalism to capitalism, which has been a pivotal focus of debate over the years. Studies of the penetration of market forces into society have traditionally been concerned both with the mechanism of transition and its chronology, and I will deal with each of these aspects.

a) *The nature of capitalism*

The concept of capitalism emerged during the mid-nineteenth century from recognition that qualitative changes had taken place in the character of the whole social system, not merely certain aspects of social activity, during the previous hundred years. It has come to be associated with a system of private economic acquisition, although the extent to which the determinants of this system are "a matter of the mentality and voluntaristically preferred forms of actions of individuals, or are ... located as structural imperatives operating at the level of systems of relationships", has remained the subject of debate.[1] This explains why the emergence of capitalism can be seen as synonymous with the origins of individualism by Macfarlane, whilst others such as Brenner have sought to identify legal and political structures which create the conditions necessary for capitalist social relations to operate.[2] The first model, adopted by classical and neo-classical economists, sees capitalism as a system of exchange mediated by the market through the

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[1] Holton (1985), 11-14.

[2] Macfarlane (1978); Brenner (1976).

price mechanism.[3] Under the alternative structuralist perspective relations of production are central to understanding the development of capitalism. Emphasis is placed on the commodification of labour and the relationships between capital, land, labour and commodity consumption, rather than on the exchange relations between factors of production *per se*.[4] Both approaches have been used extensively to examine the changes taking place in England during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, but in this study my emphasis will be primarily on the market and relations of exchange.

Under capitalism money became "the mediator and regulator of all economic relations between individuals: ....the abstract and universal measure of social wealth and the concrete means of expression of social power".[5] Most studies of the transition from feudalism to capitalism thus assign a central role to the monetization of exchange, whether the focus of analysis is on the commodification of goods, land, labour or capital.[6] Indeed, the transition debate has traditionally equated monetization with commodification, arguing that the move from feudalism to capitalism required peasant producers to become responsive to market forces. Traded goods had to be conceived in terms of exchange rather than use value, which could only be achieved through commodification.[7] Commodity status was conferred by the assignment of a monetary value, since this represented the alienation of the good from its social context. The use of money brought anonymity to economic exchange and allowed it to be extricated from social interaction.[8]

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[3] Smith (1776); Marshall (1890).

[4] Goodman & Redclift (1981); Dobb (1947).

[5] Harvey (1985), 4.

[6] Studies emphasising the significance of relations of exchange include Harvey (1973); Hodges (1988); Polanyi (1945, 1957); Sweezy (1950) and Wallerstein (1974).

[7] Dodgshon (1987), 235.

[8] Hart (1986), 643; Langton (1996), 207.

However, this thesis argues that commodification does not rest on monetization alone. The nature of the relationship between transactors could itself confer or deny commodity status.

b) *The nature of peasant society*

In order to examine the transition from feudalism to capitalism it is necessary to address questions relating to the nature of feudal society, and the peasantry in particular. The concept of a peasant is, however, a problematic one.[9] Even in the medieval period there were significant differences between rural society in England and continental Europe. By the thirteenth century England consisted primarily of nuclear family households in contrast to the extended families found on the continent. Manorial control was also weaker and markets more highly developed.[10] "England back to the thirteenth century was not based on either 'community' or 'communities'. It appears to have been an open, mobile, market-oriented and highly centralised nation, different not only in degree but in kind from the peasantries of Eastern Europe and Asia".[11] This may well have been so, but it does not necessarily debar such a society from being described as "peasant", since it ignores the communal cultural setting within which these ostensibly market activities frequently took place.[12] The identification of a peasantry thus depends primarily on its definition.

In essence, a peasant society consists of "a system of small-scale producers, with a simple technology and equipment, often relying primarily for their subsistence on what they themselves produce. The primary means of livelihood of the peasant is cultivation of the soil".[13] Production, consumption and ownership are all determined at the level of the

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[9] The two opposing positions are set out in Macfarlane (1978); Popkin (1979) and Scott (1976).
[10] MacFarlane (1978), 131-164.
[11] MacFarlane (1978), 163.
[12] Hilton (1983); Polanyi (1945, 1957).
[13] Dalton (1972), 386.

household or wider kinship group; the individual does not play a prominent role.[14] Common ownership and communal effort are essential features of the peasant way of life and preclude commodification within the spheres of land, labour or goods. Equity is ensured by reciprocal gift exchange, which helps to reinforce social bonds by placing obligations on family members to support each other.[15] "The household is as such charged with production, with the deployment and use of labour-power, with the determination of the economic objective. Its own inner relations, as between husband and wife, parent and child, are the principal relations of production in society".[16] Within such a society there is a structural tendency to inhibit the production of a surplus because it is organised primarily to satisfy subsistence needs. Once household requirements have been met, and resources allocated for tribute and ceremonial purposes, work will cease.[17] "It is the absence of the threat of individual starvation which makes primitive society, in a sense, more human than market economy, and at the same time less economic".[18] The transition from such a peasant society to the modern capitalist world involves the loss of the element of social insurance associated with peasant community relations, and a violation of "the moral economy of the subsistence ethic".[19] The operation of a moral economy, primarily geared towards subsistence; the existence of accepted customary norms, which mediate actions of the community, and common ownership of certain resources, are features which must be in place if an area is to be considered to have peasant characteristics.

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[14] Shanin (1971), 14-5.
[15] Dahlman (1980), 69-86.
[16] Sahlins (1988), 76-77.
[17] Wolf (1966), 4-10.
[18] Polanyi (1945), 163-164.
[19] Scott (1976), 4-7.

1.2 Mechanisms and chronology of transition

Most are agreed that at some time in the past England was a feudal, peasant-based society, which subsequently evolved into a modern capitalist economy, but there has been increased debate about the timing and extent of this evolution. The traditional chronology of transition, supported by Marxian and classical economists alike, places the origin of capitalism in the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries, when merchant capital began to penetrate into the English economy, leading to the development of embryonic commodity markets and appearance of wage labour. It is thus generally agreed that the commodification of exchange relations was a precondition of capitalist development, although theorists have drawn very different moral conclusions from this assumption.

a) The Smithian perspective

Adam Smith argued that man's natural desire to better his conditions, and consequent propensity to exchange, was the primary agent of capitalist development.[20] Commodification was thus morally acceptable, since things had to be commodified in order that they might be exchanged in the marketplace. The market was conceived as a mechanism through which an infinite number of commodity and service transactions could be co-ordinated by means of prices. This system was seen as self-regulating and benevolent, allocating scarce resources efficiently to the benefit of the individual and the wider economy.[21] Market exchange encouraged, "the division of labour, the geographical specialisation of production and, in its competitive form, stimulated the drive towards a rational and efficient spatial organisation of the economy as well as the adoption of new techniques".[22]

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[20] Smith (1776), 25.
[21] Butlin (1982), 11-12.
[22] Harvey (1973), 5.

Classical and neo-classical conceptions of transition have often been associated with individualism. The market was able to operate only where producers could enter into an exchange unfettered by societal restrictions and corporate controls.[23] This was only possible where there were free markets in land, labour and capital as well as goods; conditions which most historians are agreed did not exist in England until the early-modern period. The most significant institutional prerequisite identified was the establishment of secure private property rights, since this gave the owners of commodities complete freedom to alienate them.[24] Others have focused on population growth, urbanisation and the development of rural industry as important mechanisms which could be associated with the expansion of markets for agricultural produce.[25] Market society was seen as emerging once the level of free exchange was sufficient to initiate widespread division of labour and specialisation of production.[26] The emergence of capitalism has thus often been linked with the expansion of international trade in commodities during the Tudor period.

However, some historians have argued that market exchange was extensive, and land and labour were treated as commodities, at a much earlier date. Certainly there was a considerable circulation of money by the thirteenth century, exemplified by the commutation of labour services, money taxation and overseas trade in wool and metals.[27] Additionally, from around 1350 there was an active market in land, now plentiful after the ravages of plague; population mobility was far higher than one would expect within a supposedly kinship-based society, and land ownership was largely individual rather than being vested in the family as a unit.[28] As a result village communities were already

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[23] Marshall (1890); Spencer (1874-5).

[24] Holton (1985), 51-4; North & Thomas (1973), 19-24.

[25] Corfield (1982); Levine (1977); Mendels (1972); Wrigley (1985).

[26] Smith (1776), 13-36.

[27] Britnell (1993); Spufford (1988).

[28] The evidence for an extensive land market and wage labour in medieval England in now plentiful, although the inference that this reflected individualism and the presence of a market economy remains controversial. See Britnell (1993); Harvey (1984); Poos (1991); Smith (1984); Wrightson & Levine (1979).

significantly stratified, rather than consisting of a homogeneous peasantry.[29] The grain market was also well developed during the medieval period, with many peasant households as well as large estates producing a surplus for sale to landless labourers and the swelling urban population.[30] Macfarlane cites this as evidence of earlier individualism, arguing that England never developed a kinship-dominated rural society of interrelated extended families, but instead always had a tradition of nuclear households stretching back as far as the records will let us examine, and perhaps beyond.[31] For him, "England was as 'capitalist' in 1250 as it was in 1550 or 1750. That is to say, there was already a developed market and mobility of labour; land was treated as a commodity and full private ownership was established".[32]

b) *The Marxian perspective*

For Marx commodification was morally reprehensible, since it resulted in the subjugation of workers to the interests of capital. He argued that the changes taking place in early modern society amounted to a transition from one "mode of production" to another, with production for use being superseded by production for exchange.[33] A "mode of production" can be seen as "a specific and historically identifiable system of relations of production, consisting of the forces of production (natural resources, technology, labour skills, equipment) and the relations of production (the relationship engaged in, independently of individual choice, in the organisation of production)."[34] The forces of production, land, labour power and capital could only be converted into commodities once the social relations of production, in this case class relations had been

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29 Smith (1984), 161-171.
30 Britnell (1993); Campbell *et al* (1993); Dyer (1992).
31 MacFarlane (1978), 131-164.
32 MacFarlane (1978), 195-196.
33 Marx (1959). Monetary exchange reduced the use value of commodities to a fetishist exchange value.
34 Butlin (1982), 15.

reworked. This depended upon changes to the institutional structure within which the forces and relations of production were organised.[35]

Debate has thus traditionally focused on institutional changes, and their impact on agrarian production, since Marx suggested that transition took place first within the farming sector. It is argued that at the turn of the seventeenth century England alone possessed the conditions necessary for the primitive accumulation of capital. The influx of wealth from trade and plunder provided merchants with the capital necessary for investment; the state played a facilitating and legitimising role, and crucially, the prevailing socio-economic and political structures allowed a reorganisation of the social relations of production.[36] The peasantry was expelled from the land with the emergence of full private property rights, leaving the means of production in the hands of the land owning elite. They then rented consolidated and enclosed holdings to capitalist tenant farmers, who had to sell their output to pay rents, whilst the mass of the peasantry became a proletarian class of wage labourers whose only property was their labour power, which they must sell in order to obtain their means of subsistence.[37] Marx saw the separation of the producer from the means of production as the essential feature of this process, because "the means of production and subsistence, whilst they remain the property of the immediate producer, are not capital. They become capital only under circumstances in which they serve at the same time as means of exploitation and subjection of the labourer".[38]

Dobb took a somewhat different perspective, seeing trade and mercantile capital as an integral part of feudal life, serving to satisfy luxury consumption demands of the elite,

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[35] These institutional structures included not only the system of landholding and tenures, but also the regulation of industries, marketing and population movement. Overton (1996), 133-92.

[36] This argument is summarised in Brenner (1985), 294-299.

[37] The model of primitive accumulation influenced many historians at the turn of the twentieth century. See Hammonds (1912); Tawney (1912); Thorold Rogers (1884); Toynbee (1884).

[38] Marx (1867), 767.

rather than acting as an agent of change.[39] He proposed a more endogenous model of transition based on perceived internal contradictions within the feudal mode of production, arguing that the increasing demands of the ruling class for revenue, and the relative inefficiency of the production system led to over-exploitation of the peasantry.[40] The ensuing class conflict resulted in the development of a complex rural social structure made up of peasants and smallholders. This intermediate stage of social development, which he identified as "petty commodity production", acted as a precondition for capitalist development, creating the conditions necessary for it to prosper.[41]

Those stressing the indigenous origins of capitalism often draw upon demography to explain the breakdown of feudal property rights and emergence of a free peasantry.[42] According to this model the disintegration of feudalism was a consequence of the ravages of plague, which led to a scarcity of labour in late medieval England.[43] This enabled the peasantry to exert pressure for a greater security of tenure as a price for remaining in the parish.[44] Others have focused on the fragmentation of feudal authority which allowed the development of a "free" urban civilisation alongside the absolutist state.[45] The removal of the clergy from their position as a stabilising power is also regarded as significant, as this effectively left the gentry free to appropriate peasant land.[46] These theories all emphasise the importance of class relations in the transition process. Put simply capitalism came about first in England because the gentry chose to dispossess the peasantry, and the prevailing structure of social relations enabled them to do this.[47]

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39 Holton (1985), 79-80.

40 Dobb (1947), 45-50.

41 Holton (1985), 86.

42 Postan (1950, 1966); Le Roy Ladurie (1966).

43 North & Thomas (1973).

44 Brenner (1985), 270-272.

45 Anderson (1974b), 420-25.

46 Lachmann (1987), 29-33.

47 Although anti-enclosure measures were common before the Commonwealth period, the English state was far more closely associated with landlord interests than in the rest of Europe, and from the late sixteenth century generally supported gentry policies of enclosure and tenure change rather than seeking to protect the peasantry. Brenner (1976), 30-75.

Debate about the sequence of enclosure lay at the heart of early discussion about the chronology of transition, with initially much emphasis placed on the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries when enclosure by Act of Parliament came into force.[48] The assignment of such a pivotal role to enclosure has, however, been widely questioned in recent years on the basis of empirical research suggesting that the disappearance of common field farming was a more gradual and piecemeal process.[49] A long term policy of acquisition was set in place by the owners of many large estates replacing customary tenants with commercial leaseholders at the close of the seventeenth century, often many decades prior to enclosure, since this allowed them to increase rental income.[50] "The number of peasants fell in the seventeenth century as land was enclosed, but the rate of decline accelerated in the eighteenth century as peasants also disappeared from the open fields".[51] It is also now recognised that many of the agricultural improvements traditionally associated with enclosure, such as convertible husbandry and the introduction of legumes, were also taking place in the open fields in response to market pressures to increase productivity.[52] Enclosure moves from being the dominant trigger for the reordering of rural society, to serving the subsidiary role of transforming the physical pattern of landholding to reflect the new structure of capitalist social relations within agriculture. Indeed, Thompson has argued that "by the late eighteenth century, the communal forms of the unenclosed village were only a formal husk, whose kernel had been eaten by money from within"[53]

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[48] Marx (1867), 877-895. The pivotal role of enclosure in the polarisation of classes has been emphasised by Marxists and non-Marxists alike: Hammond & Hammond (1911), 43-96; Chambers & Mingay (1966), 85-104.

[49] Butlin (1979); Wordie (1983); Yelling (1977).

[50] Allen (1992), 95-101.

[51] Allen (1992), 85.

[52] Havinden (1961b).

[53] Thompson (1991), 178.

c) *The regional perspective*

Whereas the models described above examine transition in purely temporal terms, others have tackled the issue from a spatial perspective, arguing that market and peasant societies could co-exist, and that there was often a symbiotic relationship between them. Advocates of this approach have often focused on the role of towns, developing models, which draw on element of both classical and Marxian traditions.[54] Pirenne noted the distinctiveness of Western European towns during the medieval period as centres of mercantile activity free from feudal strictures that tied peasants to the land.[55] It has been argued that the long distance trade of this mercantile economy was responsible for the creation of price-fixing markets in goods, and eventually "the fictitious commodities: land, labour and money", in a process which proceeded steadily over the course of the early-modern period.[56] Local exchange between farmers and artisans, in contrast, was "invariably characterised by careful regulation to maintain supplies at customary prices".[57] Since towns were places of exchange they facilitated the division of labour regarded as necessary for the development of capitalism. Urban-based mercantile capital supplied the investment necessary for the development of domestic industry, creating a large class of artisans dependent upon the merchants for supplies of raw materials and the marketing of their product.[58]

Under this model capitalist modes of production were seen as emerging first in an urban setting and then penetrating rural peasant society.[59] Towns thus acted as exogenous agents of change: they provided a market for foodstuffs, encouraging the sale of surplus produce, and were a source of manufactured commodities which undermined peasant

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[54] Abrams (1978); Harvey (1973); Merrington (1976); Wrigley (1978).
[55] Pirenne (1936).
[56] Polanyi (1957), 68.
[57] Langton & Hoppe (1983), 11.
[58] Polanyi (1957), 41.
[59] Kautsky (1976), 3-5.

self-sufficiency.[60] "Thus, the growth of capitalism in the towns is by itself sufficient to transform completely the peasantry's way of life, even before capital has itself entered agricultural production".[61] Capitalist traits tended to emerge within the farming population wherever there was a large market for grain, providing opportunities for the profitable sale of surpluses.[62] Within England urbanisation from the beginning of the seventeenth century provided just such a market stimulus, as the proportion of the population living in towns more than doubled in the century after 1600.[63] Meeting the food requirements of this growing urban sector required improvements in agricultural productivity, something that Kautsky argued could only take place within a capitalist farming structure.[64] Falling grain prices in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries further hastened the progress towards agrarian capitalism, encouraging farmers to increase production, and acting to promote engrossment of land and agricultural innovation. Farming regions thus emerged during the eighteenth century which specialised primarily in grain production, and had rigidly stratified social structures of landlord, tenant and landless wage labourer.[65]

At the same time many other regions, unfavourable for arable cultivation, maintained their pre-capitalist farming systems, but diversified into rural industries. Bi-employments based upon imported raw materials and merchant capital were attracted to these predominantly pastoral areas because they had expanding populations, weak manorial controls, no strong framework of co-operative agriculture, and generally small, sub-divided holdings which were alone incapable of meeting subsistence needs.[66] Here specialised rural manufacturing districts emerged, based on cottage industry and putting-

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60 Langton & Hoppe (1983), 16-17.
61 Kautsky (1976), 5.
62 Heywood (1981); Gaunt (1977).
63 Wrigley (1985), 41-51. See also Wrigley (1967).
64 Kautsky (1976), 7-13.
65 Langton & Hoppe (1983), 22-4.
66 Hey (1967); Thirsk (1961).

out systems, serving national and international markets. Theories of proto-industrialisation have been developed to explain this pattern of rural industry, identifying it as a major factor in the changing use of land, labour and capital, which made transition from feudalism to capitalism possible.[67] Such prosperous dual economies could ultimately be transformed into communities dependent upon wage labour, since constraints on population growth were loosened under proto-industrial regimes. As a result the proportion of income derived from sources other than domestic industry shrank, leading inexorably to proletarianisation.[68]

Both the development of agrarian capitalism and proto-industry can thus be seen as components of the single process of regional specialisation in production associated with the need to increase efficiency in the light of increasing market demand for foodstuffs and manufactured goods.[69] Indeed, many now regard industrial and agrarian development as fundamentally a regional phenomenon.[70] The interrelationship between the two systems also reflected the complementarity of market and moral economies. Households in areas of rural industry relied for part of their subsistence on the survival of peasant agriculture and access to common resources, whereas arable farmers and their wage labour force depended primarily on the market, and the moral economy of poor relief.

2.3 Alternative conceptions of transition

a) *Fictitious commodities and the social dimensions of exchange*

Both Marxian and neo-classical conceptions of transition are open to the criticism of ahistoricism since they largely fail to include any notions of culture or custom. Classical and neo-classical theories assume individuals to have been economically rational, seeking

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67 Kriedte *et al.* (1981); Levine (1977); Medick (1976); Mendels (1972). For a sceptical viewpoint see Coleman (1983).

68 Langton & Hoppe (1983); Mendels (1972); Merrington (1976).

69 Jones (1974), 110-11. Proponents of proto-industrialisation, however, often focus on the link between population growth, landholding size and changes in the deployment of labour power.

70 Gregory (1982); Hudson (1981, 1989, 1992); Langton (1979, 1984); Pollard (1991).

to maximise wealth through making informed choices about the deployment of scarce resources. This denies the existence of any motives beyond commercial self-interest for exchange behaviour, and ignores such notions as morality and custom.[71] Marxian theory has also often been accused of economic determinism, giving insufficient emphasis to superstructural phenomena such as state institutions and customary norms of behaviour, or seeking to interpret them as dependent upon the underlying mode of production.[72]

Polanyi argues that these shortcomings sprang from a failure to recognise that capitalist society was organised on the basis of "commodity fictions". Land, labour and money were obviously not commodities because they were not produced specifically for sale, but must be treated as such in order for capitalist production to occur.[73] Land, for instance, had an ultimately fixed supply, and hence the response to rising demand and prices differed from that for ordinary material goods. Thus capitalist development was essentially a textual façade. What it created was a *market culture* not a self-regulating *market economy*: the conceptualisation of society in capitalist terms was being confused with economic reality.[74] Deregulation of overt restrictions on trade did not produce a competitive self-regulating market because true markets for land, labour and capital never appeared, due to the continued retention of social elements to these transactions. Asymmetries of exchange ensured that transactions were embedded in power relationships, indicating that monetary exchange was, in fact, far from being neutral, as Adam Smith first pointed out.[75] Such asymmetries preclude the development of free markets in the factors of production: the economic and socio-political spheres can not, even in principle, be completely separated.

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71 Polanyi (1957), 245-50.

72 Anderson (1974a) has attempted a less economistic Marxian approach to the transition debate, introducing the concept of the "social formation".

73 Polanyi (1945), 73-82.

74 Reddy (1984), 11-18.

75 Reddy (1987), 64-86.

It can also be argued that both Marxian and neo-classical theories make certain assumptions about the nature of exchange, market institutions and peasant society that may not be justified. "Economists" have a tendency to equate all exchange with market exchange, when many other varieties of transaction existed which were not mediated by self-regulating markets.[76] For instance, transfers of land and labour amongst peasant households might seem indicative of peasant land and labour markets, and participation in the marketplace for the sale of surpluses be seen as a precursor to the full commodification of goods. In reality, however, "differentiation was cyclical rather than cumulative or permanent", being a consequence of changes in the composition of peasant households throughout the life cycle.[77] To overcome this fallacy of an inherently "economic" man Polanyi, and later authors such as Lachmann, have suggested a more holistic view of England's economic transition and the employment of a "substantive" rather than a "formal" conception of economics.[78]

Whereas formalists argue for the universal validity of classical economic theory, and hence apply the language and principles of supply and demand to their study of pre-industrial economies, substantivists recognise the importance of social convention. People couldn't make logical choices about consumption based solely on economic rationality because their wants were social and spiritual as well as material, and actions were in any case constrained by social convention.[79] Market exchange was thus only one of a number of potential means of economic organisation, something that might be concealed when using the philosophy of market economics as a framework for analysis. All exchange is described by formalists in the language of the self-regulating market, with social practices and structures portrayed as external forces acting as a restraint on the

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[76] Polanyi (1957), 243-245.
[77] Hoppe & Langton (1994), 7; Smith (1984).
[78] Polanyi (1957); Lachmann (1987).
[79] Polanyi (1957), 248-250.

emergent ideal situation, instead of the reality of tribal and peasant economics being recognised.

The use of a substantivist approach suggests that the survival of facets of the moral economy into the early nineteenth century is just as noteworthy a feature of the English socio-economic transition as early evidence of commercialisation. Cressy has shown how empirical studies, such as those of Macfarlane on the diary of Ralph Josselin and Wrightson's study of the parish of Terling, tend to undervalue social relationships and hence overplay the degree of individualism in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.[80] Both concluded that kinship ties were shallow, narrow and restricted. However, taking qualitative information from these sources Cressy uncovered links between kinsmen which although not numerous were certainly potent.[81] This suggests that the day-to-day operation of a moral economy may lie hidden beneath commercially orientated texts and statistical indices.

Kinship ties beyond the realm of the nuclear family, once thought to have disappeared deep in the medieval past, are now being discovered in areas as far apart as sixteenth-century Norfolk,[82] eighteenth-century Oxford,[83] and nineteenth-century Surrey.[84] Local community studies have produced a picture of rural society far different from the individualistic, market-orientated yeomanry depicted by Macfarlane. Mitson found, in south-east Nottinghamshire, neighbourhood areas, comprising several adjacent parishes, delimited by dynastic families resident in the vicinity for several generations. Relatively dense kinship networks existed within these families, and frequent inter-marriage between them produced a web of inter-connections which bound the neighbourhood

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80 MacFarlane (1970); Wrightson & Levine (1979).
81 Cressy (1986), 44-50.
82 Hassell-Smith (1989), 367-394.
83 Prior (1982).
84 Lord (1993).

together as a coherent socio-economic unit.[85] Such a social structure is quite contrary to the isolated households necessary for capitalist relations of production and exchange.

Recent research has revealed what can only be described as a residual peasantry continuing to inhabit the majority of lowland parishes right up to the point of enclosure. So long as access to common and customary use-rights survived, a significant population of smallholders, cottagers and landless commoners could be supported without the need for regular recourse to waged work.[86] Early nineteenth-century writers on agricultural improvement clearly recognised this and were concerned about its retarding impact on the successful operation of capitalist agriculture: "the farmers in this county are often at a loss for labourers: the inclosure of the wastes would increase the number of hands for labour, by removing the means of subsisting in idleness."[87] This "idleness" reflected the survival of a peasant mentality amongst small commoners, who sought only to satisfy subsistence needs rather than maximise income.[88] Customary rights attached to particular cottages, or in some cases merely residence in a parish, gave access to common grazing on fallow and wastes for a number of cattle or sheep, depending on the conditions of the stint, together with the right to fuel, underwood, rushes, nuts, berries, fish, wild birds and their eggs, and other useful natural products.[89] Thus cottagers could meet most of their needs from their own ingenuity in the use of common resources without recourse to the market. Moreover, regulation of the commons reinforced the sense of community amongst the local population, who were tied into a network of mutuality. "Members of the community were engaged in the same argument.....in which alternative strategies, misunderstandings, conflicting goals and values were threshed out".[90]

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[85] Mitson (1993), 24-72.

[86] Neeson (1993), 58-80.

[87] Clark (1808) ref. in Neeson (1993), 28.

[88] This would tend to produce a backward-sloping labour supply curve, whereby, beyond a certain point, rising wages lead to a decline in the labour time offered. de Vries (1993), 111-12.

[89] Neeson (1993), 160-170.

[90] Sabean (1984), 29.

The survival of a peasantry in early nineteenth-century industrial England was more than merely an occasional anomaly. Until enclosure formalised capitalist social relations in the countryside, most parishes retained a significant population of commoners, utilising customary rights which had gained the force of law over the centuries.[91] Landowners' attempts to engross such rights or encroach upon the waste met with fierce community resistance, supported by manorial courts. Piecemeal enclosure did not eliminate common rights, but merely emphasised the separation of demesne and common field farming, which had existed in parallel throughout the medieval period, although many landowners had ceased to actively farm the land themselves soon after the demise of villeinage.[92] The gentry established capitalist tenants on their own land, but the remaining small plots continued to be operated within a customary framework. For instance, Chippenham in Cambridgeshire, where Spufford declared the peasantry to have disappeared by 1712 because nearly all land was held in large leasehold farms, still had over 45 cottages with common rights in the 1770s.[93] Certainly as far as Neeson was concerned the conflict between moral economy and self-interested individualism was still taking place, at the local community level, several centuries after Marx talks of the emergence of capitalism.[94] Reed concurred, suggesting that Marxists require a new framework to examine the "agrarian question", because a large group within the rural population did not fit into the basic tripartite social structure of landlord, capitalist tenant and labourer. Following the lead of Mills he described this group as a "peasantry" since they displayed many of the attributes commonly associated with peasant societies.[95]

Empirical studies have thus highlighted the shortcomings of established theory, prompting attempts to construct a more holistic conception of capitalist development,

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91 This view is outlined by the Hammonds (1911), and restated by Snell (1985). For the opposing position that cottagers had few common rights see Chambers & Mingay (1966).

92 Neeson (1993), 82-109.

93 Spufford (1974), 58-92.

94 Neeson (1993), 75-77.

95 Reed (1990a), 4-6.

which incorporates social relations into the transition debate. Most approaches have addressed issues of either moral economy or consumption, reflecting the alternative Marxian and Smithian perspectives.

b) *Moral economy*

The concept of moral economy emerged from attempts to examine changes taking place in pre-industrial society through the evolution of popular culture. It reflected widely held beliefs that provision should be based on the needs of the consumer rather than the requirements of the profit-orientated free market,[96] and that certain resources such as game and woodland should be common property rather than being owned privately.[97] As such the moral economy was "a holistic notion, a value system hostile to a free-market model, widely shared across classes and across the country" rather than "merely a tactical device utilised by the crowd only in certain circumstances and setting."[98] There were essentially two elements to the model: the moral economy of regulation and the moral economy of consensus. The former was grounded in paternalistic notions about the entitlement of the poor, but appears to have increasingly lacked legitimacy, except during period of distress.[99] The latter reflected a wider co-operative ethos which formed the background for most exchange during the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries. Most people were not "primarily concerned with self-interest in the Smithian sense, and did not interpret their behaviour in such terms."[100] The moral economy provided them with a bulwark against the expansion of the free market.

Identification of such a distinctive "plebeian culture" holding values inimical to commercial capitalism opens up a new avenue for examination of the transition debate.

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96 Thompson (1971), 131-36.
97 Thompson (1968), 64-5. See also Hay (1975); Thompson (1975a).
98 Randall *et al* (1996), 18. The latter view is argued by Bohstedt (1983) and Stevenson (1985).
99 Muldrew (1993a); Stevenson (1985); Thompson (1971).
100 Muldrew (1993a), 169.

From this perspective the moral economy appears as a defence mechanism against the rising tide of capitalism which pervaded all aspects of the relationship between patrician and plebeian society.[101] Popular disturbance could be deployed as a means of resistance wherever the poor were experiencing exploitation, whether that was in the market, on the land or in the workplace.[102] Thus Neeson characterised enclosure as a "conflict between moral economy and self-interested agrarian capitalism".[103] It formed part of a process of economic rationalisation affecting all sectors of the economy, which threatened to undermine customary practices, independence and the accepted position of the commoner within pre-industrial society.[104] As such the concept of moral economy brings together discussions surrounding relations of production and exchange within the framework of conflict between patrician society and plebeian culture.

Hitherto much of the moral economy debate has focused on food riots and disturbances.[105] It is suggested that, far from being a mindless mob, the actions of the English crowd were organised and ritualistic, reflecting deep-rooted beliefs and patterns of behaviour. These beliefs were used by the crowd to legitimise popular actions against those seen as breaking customary norms of behaviour.[106] Using these ideas Thompson moved the debate about the prevalence of food riots away from purely economic explanations, based on trade cycles and grain price fluctuations, to incorporate a cultural dimension.[107] Crowd actions were seen as reflecting a popular resistance in support of a moral economy of provision, based on the belief that the poor had a right to subsistence.[108]

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101 Snell (1985), 99-100; Thompson (1974), 398-99.
102 Charlesworth & Randall (1987), 205-9; Rule (1981), 211-13; Thompson (1978), 152-55.
103 Neeson (1993), 43.
104 Charlesworth & Randall (1987), 206.
105 Bohstedt (1983); Charlesworth & Randall (1987); Stevenson (1985); Thompson (1971, 1991); Walter & Wrightson (1976); Williams (1984).
106 Thompson (1971), 94-115.
107 For the economic reductionist view of food riots see Rostow (1948), 122-25.
108 Thompson (1971, 1991).

The concept of a coherent moral economy has been challenged by those who suggest that rioting should be seen merely as "a gesture of displeasure at exploitation and malpractice ... within the context of particular communities".[109] It is argued that food rioters were informed by "the imperative of the market" and were not hostile to the market system, as they were, in fact, dependent upon market exchange themselves.[110] Here the actions of the crowd are seen as being directed against market manipulation and distortion rather than against the Smithian notion of a free market in grain itself. Thompson has argued that much of this criticism derives from caricaturing "moral economy", suggesting that the material presented by Williams and others in fact supports the notion that the crowd were following sophisticated patterns of collective behaviour.[111] Certainly rioters were not opposed to the market system *per se*, but participation did not indicate complete approval. They were prepared to use the market so long as it provided them with adequate supplies of food at what they considered to be reasonable prices, but felt compelled to invoke their underlying belief in the moral economy when market imperatives worked against their interests during periods of dearth.[112]

It is possible to develop this notion of participation in, but detachment from, the market through a wider study of the social relations between transactors, using the concept of moral economy as a means of structuring the analysis.[113] The aim will be to examine not only the influence of regulatory ideals on the freedom of marketing, but also the social context within which most exchange was embedded. This should make it possible to determine the extent to which households relied on the market, and when, if at all, they became dependent on it.

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109 Stevenson (1985), 238. See also Bohstedt (1983); Charlesworth (1983); Rollinson (1981).

110 Bohstedt (1992), 268; Williams (1984), 70-3.

111 Thompson (1991), 266-68.

112 Charlesworth & Randall (1987), 201.

113 A broader conception of moral economy is set out in Snell (1985), 99-100.

c) *Consumption theories*

The role of demand is emphasised in recent theories which describe the transition from feudalism to capitalism in terms of a rise in consumerism.[114] Such theories break with the perceived economic wisdom that "supply creates its own demand", something which can be traced back to the classical economist Say. He argued that production not only increased the supply of goods, but also created a demand for them due to the payments made to the factors of production: land, labour and capital.[115] "These productive factors must be compensated – by rent, wages and profits, respectively – and these payments are received by the owners and sellers of the productive factors".[116] A proportion of this money could be expended on consumption, with the remainder being invested in further production.

Early attempts to champion an alternative conception of demand-led development tended to focus upon the role of colonialism and overseas markets as external forces driving forward the transition to capitalism.[117] More recently attention has switched to the home market, with changes in demand being linked to the restructuring of agrarian production.[118] Under this thesis the development of agrarian capitalism increased farm productivity, providing cheaper food for the towns, whilst maintaining farmers incomes. As a result both the rural and urban bourgeoisie had more disposable income available to purchase manufactured goods. These models, however, fail to identify an autonomous role for demand, which is seen as a function of changes taking place in the relations of production.

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114 The emergence of a consumer society has been attributed to various different periods: sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries – Thirsk (1978); Restoration Period – de Vries (1993); Earle (1989); Shammas (1990); Weatherill (1988); and the early eighteenth century – Campbell (1987); McKendrick *et al.* (1982); Williams (1987).

115 Blaug (1978), 153.

116 de Vries (1993), 86.

117 Hobsbawm (1954); Wallerstein (1974).

118 Allen (1988b, 1992); John (1967, 1968); Jones (1965); O'Brien (1985).

One of the first to suggest autonomy of this sort was McKendrick, with his notion of the birth of a consumer society. He argued that changes in attitudes towards consumption had occurred during the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries, aided by new techniques in product promotion.[119] This image of an increasingly consumer-oriented society is supported by evidence from standing buildings, paintings, literary and documentary sources, all of which indicate a growing richness and variety of material culture.[120] In particular, much use has been made in recent years of probate inventories, which list, amongst other things, the household goods of individual at the time of their decease.[121] Such evidence of a sustained growth in consumer demand is compelling, despite the contradictory trend in real wage, suggesting that purchasing power remained relatively static during the period.[122] Indeed, it seems that a combination of falling prices for manufactures and the substitution of less permanent for more durable goods effectively concealed much of the increased accumulation of consumer goods.[123]

De Vries has explained these changes in terms of an "industrious revolution", involving redeployment of productive resources within the household from production for use to production for exchange, and from leisure to work. This decision to redeploy labour time, he suggests, was determined partially by the household's growing preference for market-supplied as opposed to home-produced goods, which itself was associated with the increasing variety of cheap manufactures available.[124] Thus the industrious revolution model suggests that agrarian households were induced to reduce the

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[119] McKendrick (1982), 9-33.

[120] Barley (1990); Brown (1986); Thornton (1978) and Williams (1987) look at the changing use of space within the home, whilst Schama (1993) examines images of consumption in Dutch still-life paintings.

[121] Carr & Walsh (1988); de Vries (1975); Earle (1989); Main & Main (1988); Shammas (1990, 1993); Spufford (1984); Walsh (1993); Weatherill (1988).

[122] Braudel & Spooner (1967); Phelps Brown & Hopkins (1981); de Vries (1993), 89-98.

[123] de Vries (1993), 102-7; Shammas (1990), 111-12. Static sources such as inventories recorded a greater variety of consumer goods over the course of the 1650-1750 period, but the value of such items remained relatively static or indeed fell. This can be explained in terms of a faster circulation of cheaper, less durable goods, concealing an actual expansion of consumer purchase.

[124] de Vries (1993), 107-14.

production of "Z-goods" (domestically-produced, non-agricultural goods) and switch labour resources into producing foodstuffs for the market, so as to be able to purchase manufactured (M goods) to replace the abandoned Z goods.[125] This changing production behaviour depended on not only changing tastes, favouring market-supplied over home-produced goods, but also rising prices for agricultural commodities relative to manufactured goods. An increasing desire for market-produced goods also explained the tendency for proletarian households to substitute work for leisure time, so linking the model to the debates surrounding intensification of production, rural industry and regional specialisation.[126] De Vries' thesis is thus fundamentally grounded in an analysis of relations of exchange, bringing together McKendrick's notion of an evolving consumer society with elements of Smithian theory relating to the role of urbanisation and proto-industrialisation, and seeking to place demand at the centre of the transition process.

d) *Towards a new theory of the pre-industrial economy*

The current transition debate can thus effectively be distilled down to two contrary conceptions of the early-modern agrarian economy. Both envisage a partial incorporation of the peasantry according to the criteria laid down by Brenner, although they disagree about the extent to which this had been achieved.[127] On the one hand, the industrious revolution model suggests that the rural population responded actively to the opportunities available in the developing economy in order to satisfy new desires for consumption goods.[128] The moral economy model, in contrast, has as its basic premise the notion that elements of a peasant mentality survived in eighteenth-century rural England. Rather than seeking actively to engage in the marketplace, households

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[125] For a more detailed description of the "Z-goods" model see Hymer & Resnick (1969).

[126] Unlike Mendels, Medick and Levine, de Vries sees the development of proto-industrialisation as a response to growing demands for consumption goods rather than a survival strategy employed by land-poor peasant households in the face of rapid population growth and subdivision of holdings.

[127] Brenner (1976).

[128] de Vries (1993), 107-21.

attempted to preserve the traditional communal regime of limited market involvement. As such their interaction with the market was a passive response to an external threat imposed upon their traditional way of life.[129]

This thesis attempts to move beyond these seemingly contradictory arguments in order to show that the two conceptions of pre-industrial society can in fact be complementary rather than in competition. Historians have traditionally followed a Weberian analysis, seeking clear-cut boundaries and transition from one ideal-type to another. Yet this notion of progression is, in reality, neither pre-determined nor empirically possible, but the construct of classical Smithian and Marxian thought. Through employing such constructs researchers have sought either to downgrade the importance of the moral economy during the medieval period,[130] or proclaim the maintenance of a peasant society until parliamentary enclosure, or even the late nineteenth century in the case of Reed.[131] Taking the dichotomy between the two modes of production as being self-evident, they have single-mindedly pursued their search for a particular set of structures and relations, be it a commercialised peasantry in the medieval period or a moral economy in the capitalist era, and as a consequence have found what they were looking for.

In reality many households could have been engaged in both customary and market economies, moving between the two on the basis of rational decisions about the deployment of family resources. The decision making process would then have involved a complex interplay of individual motivations and notions of collective responsibility. The household's interests and those of the wider community would be sometimes coincident and sometimes contradictory. This image of pre-industrial rural society suggests not transition caused by conflict between two necessarily antagonistic systems, but the possibility of coexistence between what might often have been complementary

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[129] Neeson (1993); Thompson (1971, 1991); Williams (1984).
[130] MacFarlane (1978); Spufford (1974).
[131] Neeson (1993), 1-10; Reed (1990a), 9-13.

modes of behaviour. In such a situation one can envisage the moral economy borrowing elements from the market when this was beneficial without initially undermining its own viability, and the market economy articulating itself with aspects of moral economy that were advantageous to it.

Indeed, it could be argued that early capitalism was dependent on the survival of a pre-capitalist sector. With the introduction of a more flexible labour regime, work was increasingly casual or seasonal in character, placing a greater burden on household production and the exploitation of common resources.[132] Much of the labour required by capitalist agriculture and manufacturing must therefore have been reproduced and sustained within households which did not behave in a capitalist manner. Capitalism was only able to operate effectively by incorporating the self-exploiting peasant.[133]

1.4 Customary and market-orientated methods of exchange

As a microcosm of the overall transition debate, disagreements over the nature of exchange and degree of market penetration can provide a useful insight into the processes taking place within the wider economic arena. A review of the various categories of exchange, moving beyond the generalised labels of 'market' and 'non-market', will thus provide a useful starting point for a detailed examination of the character and development of a market economy.

a) *Reciprocity*

Reciprocity has been utilised to circulate goods since the earliest stages of human development. Described extensively in anthropology and development literatures,[134] it can be defined as a two way material transfer of gifts, closely associated with the

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[132] de Vries & van der Woude (1997), 636-47.
[133] Kautsky (1976), 33-4.
[134] Malinowski (1922); Mauss (1967); Polanyi (1945), 54-57; Sahlins (1988), 185-230.

construction or reaffirmation of social relations: the giving of a prestige object provides the donor with a certain degree of power since it places an obligation on the receiver to reciprocate.[135] It has been described by Offer as an "economy of regard", since the exchange of gifts provides two benefits: "the gains from trade, and the satisfactions of regard". Regard involves the granting of attention, a scarce resource without which an individual would face ostracism and rejection.[136] Due to its association with the social cohesion of the community, reciprocity is usually tightly regulated by convention and custom. Nevertheless its character can vary widely depending on the immediacy and equivalence of the return, and the degree of expectation of return that the donor has. In effect the various types of reciprocity form a continuum between pure altruism and overt trade, differentiated by the social distance of the participants and the level of integration between then.[137]

Generalised reciprocity, involving donation of a gift with the hope but not expectation of a return, is most commonly practised amongst close kinship groups, friends and neighbours. Such practices as informal hospitality, lending tools and equipment and organising feasts come under this category. The maintenance of social relations is clearly the primary aim of such exchange rather than monetary gain: often the goods or favours involved are simply deemed to be of comparable worth, so that their value is very much at the discretion of the participants in the transaction.[138] Although most often associated with studies of tribal societies, this form of reciprocity existed in eighteenth-century rural England at all levels of the social spectrum. The gentry of Oxfordshire, in common with their counterparts throughout the kingdom, had a highly developed social network, reinforced by kinship links and frequent intermarriage.[139] The frequent instances of goods

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135 Mauss (1967).
136 Offer (1997), 452.
137 Offer (1997), 451-57; Sahlins (1988), 192-193.
138 Sahlins (1988),
139 Bush (1984); Heal & Holmes (1994); Macfarlane (1970).

exchanged with and hospitality offered to neighbouring gentry families were clearly reciprocal relations, instituted for the social purpose of cementing group solidarity. Reciprocity was epitomised by the case of game. Hunting of game animals (deer, hares and wild fowl) was restricted to those with a freehold income of over £100 per year, making it a privilege of the elite. Moreover, game was specifically excluded from the marketplace, so that it became more a symbolic form of social capital than a commodity, used by the gentry as a means of patronage.[140]

Reciprocity also occurred amongst tenant farmers and labourers on a more localised scale.[141] Networks of non-monetary neighbourhood exchange were able to operate because of the complex web of interconnections between people in an area. Family ties provided the security which allowed the giving of a gift without immediate reciprocation being expected. For instance, book accounts run by yeoman farmers in nineteenth-century Massachusetts were often only finally settled by the executors after an individual's death. Interim payments were made at the convenience of those involved, fitting in with the rhythm of the farming year.[142] Thus, when Benjamin Munson hired a cow from another farmer in 1827, he agreed to pay "eighty five lb. of good new milch cheese or cash to purchase the same quantity as he may choose".[143] Turning to an English example, the account books of the Lancashire yeoman Richard Latham show that he operated with his brother John in ploughing, sowing seed and harvesting: a reciprocal arrangement which was entirely non-monetary.[144] Such reciprocal exchange, based on trust, could only be established when the transactors knew each other well, since a date for payment was rarely specified. The goods or services concerned were viewed in terms of their use-value

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140 Hay (1975), 245-253.

141 For examples of reciprocity operating within rural communities in England see Lord (1989); Mitson (1993); Reed (1990b). American studies are more extensive - Clark (1982, 1990); Henretta (1978); Kulikoff (1989, 1993); Merrill (1977) and Vickers (1990).

142 Clark (1982), 76-79.

143 Clark (1982), 75.

144 Weatherill ed. (1990), 3-127.

rather than some intrinsic exchange value independent of the transactors, although this value might be expressed in cash terms. Relationships of this sort continued in the English countryside well into the nineteenth century, and as late as the 1870s Rose was able to comment that, "a large part of the trade within the village was carried on by a system called gnawing it out - a method something like the primitive trade by barter in days before coins came into general use..".[145]

Such neighbourhood reciprocal exchange was limited to neighbours, friends and kin, but formed an integral part of the socio-economic complex within the rural community. Each transaction not only influenced the relationship between the transactors, but also involved other members of the community who witnessed the deal and might be drawn into informal mediation between the parties.[146] Reciprocity required a high degree of trust which depended upon establishing norms of behaviour to which members of the community conformed. These 'hard' motivations had to be able to counteract the 'soft' motivations of the individual, their needs and aspirations, if conflict and dislocation within the group was to be avoided, since social and economic relations within peasant and primitive societies were so comprehensively intertwined.[147] Through ensuring that the satisfaction of individual needs did not run counter to the socio-economic interests of the family or wider kinship group mediation could, indeed, be considered "the most crucial social lubricant of social reproduction".[148] Neighbourhood exchange thus involved not only a set of transactions between individuals which defined their status *vis-à-vis* each other, it was a conduit through which the community exerted its authority over the individual, acting to prescribe the actions of its constituent members for the greater good of all.[149]

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145 Rose (1942), 54. These practices are examined by Reed (1990b), 85-92.
146 Siddle (1995), 19.
147 Medick & Sabean eds. (1984), 13-14.
148 Siddle (1995), 14.
149 Sahlins (1988).

b) *Balanced reciprocity*

Slightly more rational in a narrowly economic sense is balanced reciprocity, involving exchange of goods customarily considered to be of equivalent value with an immediate reciprocation.[150] Even money transactions can fall within this category when they are negotiated on an individual basis within a spatially restricted area, preventing the emergence of price-fixing markets. Price-fixing is only possible where 'network markets' exist: "that is, marketing systems with complex, overlapping and spatially widespread exchanges, arbitrated by specialist middlemen who freely shift goods around to where they fetch the highest prices".[151] Within peasant markets the absence of competition means that the principles of supply and demand cannot operate and prices tend to be fixed by custom.[152]

However, the very fact that immediate reciprocation is required and the goods must have equivalent value suggests a lower level of trust between the trade partners. As a result this type of exchange displays some of the features which Simmel argues distinguish pure monetary exchange from other forms. Rather than being tied in with social relationships, each transaction is a temporary linkage, as if between strangers, which is broken once the deal has been completed.[153] The use of money in some transactions encourages a diminution of ties between the parties, since it acts as an abstract medium of exchange of widely recognised value.[154] Deals often take place between distant kin or even complete strangers, so that the maintenance of social relations hinges on the perceived fairness of the transaction. For this reason the relative value of different commodities must be generally accepted and this was usually achieved through the fixing of prices by officials exercising political control over the neighbourhood.

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150 Sahlins (1988),

151 Hoppe & Langton (1994), 17.

152 Goods exchanged through balanced reciprocity were often assigned a monetary value due to the requirement for immediate reciprocation, although this was not a prerequisite.

153 Simmel (1920) trans. Bottomore & Frisby (1978), 477.

154 Sahlins (1988),

Polanyi describes this form of transaction as "decisional exchange", since the rate of exchange was fixed by external actors rather than the market mechanism.[155]

Thus a dividing line between balanced reciprocity and regulated market exchange can not be clearly defined. Each has both a market and customary component, lying at the mid-point of the continuum from pure reciprocity to free market transaction. Craftsmen regularly employed by the same family, or tenants exchanging goods for cash payment within the bounds of an estate at customary prices, can be seen as falling broadly within these categories. The latter can more clearly be defined as representing balanced reciprocity, because a network of social linkages must underlie the transaction, although the fact that immediate reciprocation, sometimes in money, is required indicates a lack of the trust found in full reciprocal arrangements.

c) *Redistribution*

Redistribution is a process closely associated and often intertwined with reciprocity. It existed within tribal society from the moment when kinship ties became focused on a figure of central authority, the chieftain. Again the basic flow is one of gifts, but these are directed by the people towards the chief as a form of tribute. He then redistributes the goods as patronage, so as to tie the people to him with bonds of obligation and respect, whilst retaining a surplus in order to increase his personal wealth and prestige.[156] Feudal society was organised very much along redistributive lines both at a national and local level.[157] This reflected the fragmentation of authority and complex social relations of dependence, obligation and power used to cement social cohesion. Typically the social structure of feudal states was highly stratified from the monarch through magnates and smaller landlords down to the lowly peasant. Each level in the hierarchy owed tribute and

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155 Polanyi (1957), 260-62.
156 Sahlins (1988).
157 Lachmann (1987), 20-21.

certain dues to the next level up and in return could expect a paternal attitude from its immediate overlord.[158] Hence the peasant owed payments in cash and kind, and had to perform certain labour services on the lord's demesne. In return he could expect protection from outside interference, the arbitration of justice, secure tenure and the occasional festival or feast. At the other end of the scale, the monarch received taxes collected as tribute from the landlords and magnates, and in return showered the larger landowners with largesse, in order to tie them to royal court and ensure their loyalty.[159]

This pooling of resources for redistribution was conducted not only at a state and community level, but also within the household (where, of course, it continues to this day).[160] Gentry and aristocratic households, being far larger than the norm for the period, illustrate redistributive practices most clearly.[161] Grain, livestock and other farm products were gathered together from various sources: from the home farm; from tenant farmers, who often supplied the landlord with provisions to set against their rents; and from other landholders in the form of tithes, the rights to which landowners had often purchased after the Reformation. These supplies could subsequently be used to maintain the lord's household or be distributed as payment to labourers or tradesmen. Food dealings, in particular, were liable to organisation within a redistributive structure, because of the Christian tradition of perceiving a social element to these transactions.[162] Indeed, exchanges involving foodstuffs had been a statement of social relations since the emergence of primitive society.[163] Within the clan-based societies of the Scottish Highlands and Ireland this attitude towards food survived until the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries. The standing of a chief depended upon the amount of tribute he

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158 Bloch (1965); Hilton ed. (1978); Holton (1985), 18-28.

159 Lachmann (1987), 84-96.

160 The role of the household as the unit of production, consumption and redistribution is highlighted by Chaytor (1980); Houlbrooke (1984); Laslett & Wall (1972).

161 Slater (1984).

162 Claeys (1987), 2-12.

163 Sahlins (1988), 215-219.

could command from the lower ranking members of his lineage. The gifts received, mostly food items, were used to sustain the chief's retinue and provide food reserves for redistribution from a central storehouse in times of stress.[164]

Such redistributive norms of behaviour were contributory to the survival of a hierarchical demand structure within many gentry households well into the eighteenth century. The landowner would use produce gathered from the estate to supply food and fuel to his servants and contracted labourers, and income derived from it to make bulk purchases of clothes, exotic groceries and utensils for them.[165] The landlord could make savings from such bulk purchases, but it represented a distortion of the market, since individual consumer choice was absent, and thus the demand side of the equation was regulated by a third party rather than being expressed directly by those making use of the goods.[166] Disentanglement of these complex exchange hierarchies is essential if the true character of transactions is to be established.

d) *Market exchange*

Individual acts of exchange can only be characterised as market exchange if they occur within the institutional framework of the market. Yet this category encompasses a range of different types of exchange with various degrees of regulation. What all markets have in common is a supply and demand crowd; equivalency, so that there is a fixed rate of exchange at any given moment; and competition between buyers and sellers.[167] Goods in

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[164] Dodgshon (1987), 102-103.

[165] Examples of payments in kind to servants and workmen can be found in Bird (1971); Blencowe (1850); Fussell (1936); Glennie (forthcoming); Harland (1857); Kussmaul (1981); Lodge (1927); Penney (1920); Shammas (1990), 210-16; and Woodward (1984). The large number of slaves and indentured labourers in America meant that a more substantial proportion of the population lacked consumer sovereignty there. Kulikoff (1986); Salinger (1987); Smith (1947).

[166] Shammas (1990), 203-220.

[167] Polanyi (1957), 266-69.

the marketplace must also be assigned monetary values, and money used as the primary medium of exchange.[168]

Within regulated markets the economy was "not yet a separate category of discourse" but still a sphere administered through social and political values.[169] Dalton describes these as peasant markets, seen as being positioned along the evolutionary scale somewhere between redistributive "tribal" exchange and the free market.[170] They were partially commercialised but non-competitive, with transactions being administered by the elite.[171] Free markets, on the other hand, were characterised by an absence of institutional regulation. Prices were determined by the interplay of supply and demand, and it was these prices which regulated the exchange relationship between buyers and sellers.[172] Social relations were thus embedded in the economic system, rather than the economic system being embedded in social relations.[173]

The conceptualisation of market exchange is perhaps best approached by defining the conditions within which it was able to develop. Theories of market evolution can broadly be placed into two categories: those that point to spontaneous market development acting to recast institutional structures, and those that argue for the state as the agent of change, fostering values and institutions favourable to the market.[174] Thus for Smith market development was a natural consequence of man's propensity to truck and barter, creating a liberating force which corroded the restraining influences of custom and arbitrary government. Population growth and unequal resource distribution encouraged a division of labour in order to increase production efficiency, and this in turn generated a need to markets and exchange. This was a vision of immanent market emergence, with no

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168 Hodges (1988), 97-9.
169 Tribe (1978), 48.
170 Dalton (1973), 241-42.
171 Smith (1976a), 309-315.
172 Hodges (1988), 62-3.
173 This is the opposite of what Polanyi suggests. Polanyi (1945), 53.
174 Dodgshon (1990), 260-61.

structural changes to society being required before market exchange could prosper.[175] From a Marxian perspective, however, a free market in goods could only operate effectively where there were capitalist social relations of production. Producers must be separated from the means of production, and society be organised along class lines.[176] From an agrarian perspective, as we saw earlier, this has most often been associated with the emergence of a three-part social structure of landlord, capitalist tenant farmer and landless wage labourer.[177]

Polanyi argued that market institutions could not develop until the emergence of states. Prior to this exchange had a social dimension that went far beyond its economic meaning, whereas subsequently transactions came to refer "not so much to the status of men as to the importance of goods".[178] He envisaged a four-stage history of exchange, beginning with reciprocity, then redistribution followed by exchange through regulated markets, and finally free market exchange. So again they were alternatives. This is the central point here, given that the argument is essentially circular, suggesting that each of these exchange systems could be correlated with a particular phase of social organisation, but also itself embodied the institutional structures around which that society had developed.[179] Thus redistribution operated in the context of hierarchical societies centred on a chieftain, whilst regulated markets emerged from the matrix of dependent relations between lord and vassal within feudal society. Self-regulating markets, on the other hand, "with their allocative power over the factors of production (land, labour and commodities) signalled the emergence of societies that were structured and integrated through the market function, with the interaction of supply and demand determining both the way in which the various factors were used and their interrelation."[180]

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175 Holton (1985), 34-7.
176 Walton & Gamble (1972), 171-94.
177 Brenner (1985), 214-15.
178 Polanyi (1977), 58.
179 Polanyi (1945), 53-5.
180 Dodgshon (1987), 21.

There does appear, from the above discussion, to be a close association between the different forms of market exchange and particular types of societal structure, although the causative linkage between the two remains a matter of debate. So too does the attachment of a pre-determined trajectory to the sequence of stages which Polanyi outlined. Others have argued that the emergence of markets did not simply and inevitably lead to the development of capitalism. Historically societies in which some form of regulated market exchange operated could be subject to spectacular reversals of fortune, suggesting that progress was in no way pre-ordained.[181] Some of these issues will now be addressed by an examination of the evolution of market exchange in theory and practice.

i. Conceptualisations of market exchange

A theologically-based doctrine on commerce formed the ruling paradigm throughout the medieval and much of the early-modern period. Christian thinking drew on the ideas of Aristotle, particularly his theory of exchange and notion of money, set out in his *Politics* and *Nicomachean Ethics*.[182] Aristotle argued that trade "was made at the expense of other men", and therefore should be regulated in order to ensure the needs of all were satisfied.[183] Thomas Aquinas refined this argument, setting in place the foundations for the concept of a just price and fair exchange, which were to endure until the eighteenth century. Profit was permissible only if the goods being sold had been improved by the labour of the seller, although it was recognised that the "risk, prudence, trouble and diligence" of the merchant ought also to be rewarded.[184] These ideas of what was proper and what immoral in the conduct of trade are echoed by later writers such as Defoe. In his *Complete English Tradesman* (1726), he distinguishes between "plain, honest trade" and "stock-jobbing", the engrossment of goods by large wholesalers and merchants, who

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[181] Holton (1985), 39.
[182] Aristotle, trans. Robinson (1962); Aristotle, trans. Ostwald (1962).
[183] Aristotle, trans. Robinson (1962), 25-28.
[184] Duns Scotus ref. in Claeys (1987), 2-4.

would "buy cheap and sell dear".[185] Such conceptions of trade were coupled with a belief in the right of the poor to subsistence, which prompted a commitment to charity and the generally held view that, although market prices were legitimate, food should always be sold at "fair" prices, especially during times of shortage.

This outlook informed those drawing up Statute Law during the Tudor period, primarily because attitudes inimical to profit maximising had long formed the basis of common law and custom. Put simply, the state sought to use its political power to direct and control the benefits of trade as informed by prevailing social and political values.[186] Thus the Elizabethan Poor Law (1601) established relief for the needy at the parochial level; the Statute of Apprentices and Artificers (1563) controlled wages in certain trades, and Assizes on Bread and Ale and market regulations maintained price limits and prevented forestalling, engrossing, regrating and other speculative means of avoiding the sale of grain at customary prices. All these measures were designed to impose restraints upon the operation of a free market in commodities, seeking to uphold theologically-based notions of a moral economy, the "commonweal". The elite thus championed a paternalist model which accorded closely with many of the customary beliefs of the poor.[187]

During the seventeenth century, secularisation of the debate about the origin and function of ownership of goods paved the way for a breakdown in the consensus surrounding restraint of the market and fair exchange. The moral superiority of common ownership of resources was challenged by Pufendorf in *De Jure Naturae Et Gentium* (1672), which asserted that private property was an antidote to the conflict within communal society brought about by population growth and the scarcity of resources.[188] John Locke developed these ideas, suggesting that it was right for a person to hold in

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[185] Defoe (1841), 178-179, 193-194.
[186] Dodgshon (1990), 261-63; Hirschman (1977), 41-2, 82-3.
[187] Thompson (1971), 82-84.
[188] Pufendorf (1672, trans. 1934), 532-551, 687-690. Reference from Claeys (1987), 10-11.

private ownership anything that he had transformed from its natural state by human effort. An article which a person has fashioned "he hath mixed his labour with, and joined to it something that is his own, and thereby makes it his property". The value of a good belonged to the person who had expended labour producing it, but part of this value could be extracted by landowners and merchants, due to their position in the social structure *vis-à-vis* the labourer.[189]

The idea of extracting surplus value, and the notion that trade could increase the overall wealth of the country, formed the basis of Adam Smith's *Wealth of Nations*.[190] He argued that the hidden hand of the market would ensure that the natural operation of supply and demand maximised the benefits to all parties and acted in the interests of the common good. The market would be able to regulate itself, because the price mechanism would encourage rationing of supplies throughout the year. Small farmers would be forced to sell their grain directly after the harvest, whereas their larger counterparts could afford to hold a proportion back in the hope of higher prices. In the absence of regulation, corn, and other products for that matter, would flow from areas of surplus to those where there was scarcity, and hence an inflated price. Society must be subordinated to the market mechanism and no effort taken to ameliorate famine and distress, since the free market would deal with them in due course.[191]

Smithian theory sought to legitimise private ownership and the free market at a time when these forces were becoming increasingly ascendant in the English economy. This new mood of *laissez faire* coincided with the development of an increasingly politically integrated national space, the foundations for which had been laid in the Tudor period. Indeed, it is suggested that the growing national consciousness contributed to the significant ideological changes involved in the emergence of the Protestant "morality of

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189 Laslett ed. (1970), 303-320.
190 Smith (1776), 31-6.
191 Smith (1776), 642-62.

the market-place". The commercial values of London merchants spread across the country with their trading interests, helping to establish the "national economic space" within which free market exchange could thrive.[192] Authors increasingly placed limitations upon the circumstances in which they thought that restraint of commerce was justified. By the 1800s free traders held the theoretical high ground, and within an environment which was increasingly hostile to their interests, the poor were frequently forced to take direct action in support of their customary rights.[193]

ii. The regulated marketplace

Regulation has been a central feature of the market economy throughout most of its history due to the potential societal dangers of unfettered exchange. Purely economic trade undermined the symmetry of reciprocal exchange systems, and hence early states sought to control its operation by restricting merchants to specific "gateway communities" and limiting the type of goods which could be traded.[194] States also attempted to regulate prices, since allowing the scarcity value of commodities to determine their exchange rate would have encouraged a new concentration of wealth outside their authority. Trade was thus made a servant of the state by ensuring that markets were neither free nor price-fixing, and merchants were licensed and taxed thereby creating a new source of revenue for the ruling elite.[195]

Whilst regulation was beneficial to the poor, in that it guaranteed affordable food supplies, its primary aim was to bolster the position of the urban elite. Tolls were chargeable on any goods entering the town, with a hierarchy of privileges reducing the burden for freemen and townsmen. Other regulations outlawed forestalling and other forms of illicit trade, ensuring that all goods were bought and sold in the open market.

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[192] Hill (1968), 26-8.
[193] Thompson (1971), 98-108.
[194] Hodges (1988), 42-52.
[195] Dodgshon (1987), 193-95.

Rules against ingrossing prevented dealers from forming cartels or buying up large quantities of produce for resale. There were also regulations governing weights and measures and the quality of goods sold in the marketplace.[196] Most significantly, however, there were also controls over prices, particularly for agricultural produce, which were often based on notions of a "just price".[197] Such measures were necessary because medieval markets tended to be localised and insular due to the unavailability of cheap transport, and thus deficits in one region could not easily be offset by supplies from another.[198]

Many of these market regulations were, as Polanyi argued, set into statute law during the sixteenth century, reflecting the establishment of a centralised nation-state.[199] In regulating the open market, the government's principal concern was to safeguard the interests of the consumer at a time when there were frequent periods of dearth, often prompting civil unrest.[200] A paternalist model of administration emerged, which drew on earlier practice and was informed by customary values of fairness and equity. Driven by a belief that the poor had a right to subsistence, Tudor law-makers set in place a system of Statutes which placed severe restrictions on the long-distance movement of grain during periods of scarcity.[201] The Elizabethan *Book of Orders* effectively "empowered magistrates (with the aid of local juries) to survey the corn stocks in barns and granaries; to order quantities to be sent to market; and to enforce with severity every part of the marketing, licensing and forestalling legislation".[202]

By the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries, the prevalence of sample-selling and the decay of many open markets show the extent to which this overall structure of

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196 Dodgshon (1987), 217-18.
197 de Roover (1958), 421-37.
198 Dodgshon (1987), 218-221; Gras (1915), 42-58.
199 These regulations were set out in the 'Book of Orders', summarised by Gras (1915), 237-40.
200 Everitt (1967); Gras (1915).
201 Everitt (1967), 577-86.
202 Thompson (1971), 108-109.

regulation had been eroded. However, some areas of exchange were considered so sensitive that an element of regulation was maintained after it had been abandoned elsewhere. For instance, staple products such as bread, for which demand was highly inelastic, continued to be subject to price restriction into the eighteenth century.[203] When grain prices were high the poor simply cut meat out of their diet and spent a larger percentage of their total income on such basic foodstuffs.[204] As a result grain was particularly sensitive to any deficiency in supply. Traders were in a good position to take advantage of their command over this necessity by holding back stocks and keeping the market price artificially raised. In order to counter this bread and ale were, in theory, produced at a fixed price, set by the local magistrates until 1814, although such measures had by then often lapsed due to laxity of enforcement.[205] The bakers were an obvious target in the event of rising grain prices forcing up the cost of bread, because they were in daily contact with the consumer, and so some form of regulation, which tied them into the paternalist model, was essential, even if it only diverted food rioters to those higher up in the food distribution chain: the millers, corn factors and capitalist tenant farmers. As Thompson noted, "the Assize of Bread clearly and publicly limited their [the bakers'] lawful profits (thereby also tending to leave the baking trade in the hands of numerous small traders with little capital), and thus protecting them, to some degree, from popular wrath".[206]

The poor continued to believe that customary fair pricing was legitimate, although overt regulation of the marketplace was no longer a daily occurrence in the early eighteenth century, and their preparedness to take action in defence of this moral

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[203] Thwaites (1986),176-77.

[204] In such circumstances, however, the poor may also have switched consumption from wheat to cheaper alternatives such as barley, rye, oats or potatoes, introducing some elasticity into demand. Dyer (1989a), 134; de Vries (1993), 97-98; Woodward (1995), 219.

[205] The Oxford assize of bread was set by two university officials, the clerks of the market, from the time of the St. Scholastica's day massacre in 1355 until 1836. Assize books are available for the years 1692-1700 and 1733-1836. Thwaites (1986), 172.

[206] Thompson (1971), 106.

economy, ensured *de facto* survival of many restrictions.[207] The actions of the eighteenth-century food rioters in "setting a price" reflected their conception of a just price, which can be traced back to medieval Christian doctrine.[208] During the course of a riot, the movement of the crowd from the marketplace to the mills closely followed the *Book of Orders*. Grain was not stolen, but merely seized and sold at what were considered fair prices, with the money returned to farmers and traders. It appears that there was "a deeply-felt conviction that prices ought, in times of dearth, to be regulated, and that the profiteer put himself outside of society".[209] The rioters believed that they were defending traditional rights and customs against the alien influence of the market, which seemed only to benefit the greedy farmer and middleman, and did not reflect the needs of the poor. In these circumstances magistrates were often prepared to prosecute minor offenders for forestalling in order to head off unrest by giving the poor an impression that "the authorities were attending to their interests".[210] Even if, in reality, there were only limited restrictions on market exchange, it was important that these were visible enough to pacify the crowd.

iii. Competitive markets and the emergence of middlemen

Middlemen became a necessary feature of the market system as soon as town populations grew beyond a certain size and hinterlands became extended so that it was no longer practical for farmers to supply their produce directly. Once demand reached this level, trade in certain bulk commodities tended to forsake the open market in favour of more direct channels which offered lower costs and greater rewards.[211] Throughout the medieval period private marketing of this nature flourished alongside the open market,

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[207] Thompson (1971), 76-115.
[208] de Roover (1958), 418-28.
[209] Thompson (1971), 111-112.
[210] Thompson (1971), 96.
[211] Campbell *et al.* (1993), 2-4.

and many traders operated in both spheres.[212] The volume of long-distance trade was, however, limited due to the inadequacy of the transport network and customary restrictions on the interregional movement of grain during periods of scarcity. England had at least fifteen functionally autonomous grain markets at the time, and prices in each region fluctuated independently in accordance with local deficits and surpluses.[213]

In 1500 the essential feature of this regional system of supply remained in place,[214] but over the following centuries the marketing of agricultural produce was transformed by a gradual integration of regional market systems into a national, and later international, network of exchange centred on London. The significant food requirements of the capital had already created a regional hinterland by the sixteenth century which extended as far as the upper Thames valley, Kent and East Anglia.[215] Indeed recent research suggests that London's grain provisioning zone was almost as extensive in 1300.[216] Corn factors drew their supplies from towns as far afield as Henley, Faversham, Ware and Rochester, all of which had river or estuarine locations, emphasising the importance of water transport to the trade.[217] Between 1500 and 1638 the capital's annual coastwise import of grain expanded from 17,380 quarters to 95,714 quarters, reflecting a threefold increase for wheat, nine-fold for oats and sixteen-fold for malt.[218] Livestock were also driven to the capital in increasing numbers from the marshlands of East Anglia and Kent where they had been fattened.[219] Such large-scale trade required a significant level of organisation, ensuring that most was conducted by a growing band of factors and drovers who travelled the provinces in search of supplies. Moreover, this reliance upon dealers was not a new phenomenon in the seventeenth century. Middlemen may have been more obvious in the

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212 Polanyi (1945), 66-73.
213 Gras (1915).
214 Everitt (1967), 490-502.
215 Chartres (1986); Fisher (1935), 53-4.
216 Britnell (1993); Campbell *et al* (1993); Dyer (1992).
217 Campbell *et al* (1993), 46-56.
218 Fisher (1935), 47-9.
219 Baker (1976); Coleman (1951); Woodward (1977).

London market during the Tudor period than they were in 1300, but Campbell argues that this development "probably reflected the increased scale of the city's demand for grain rather than any radical innovation in the organisation of trade."[220]

Despite the importance of the London market, the bulk of unregulated trade during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries was associated with provincial consumption. Interregional flows of agricultural produce increased significantly with the population growth of the late sixteenth century, expansion of non-agrarian employment and growing regional specialisation of agriculture.[221] This longer distance trade was largely the preserve of fairs and private transactions in inns and farmhouses. Business at fairs was theoretically regulated in the same way as that of markets, but in reality many were held outside town jurisdiction and much traffic slipped through unrecorded. Fairs dealt primarily in livestock, particularly horses, cattle and sheep, but were also involved in the distribution of wool, cloth, cheese, leather and other manufactured goods. However, the most rapidly expanding sector of trade was private dealing between individuals, with the principal traffic being in corn, sheep and wool.[222] Factors and merchants used complex networks of personal connections in order to acquire produce direct from farmers and then transfer it to distant markets. In effect the trade relied upon kinship and friendship linkages in the absence of commercial credit facilities.[223]

The growth of private bargaining during the Tudor and Stuart period brought about a gradual breakdown of the protective barriers of the customary marketing system. Open markets were unable to cope adequately with the expansion of trade caused by the regional specialisation of agrarian production, and in particular with the increasing scale of individual transactions. This brought into focus the conflict between market and moral economy, exemplified by the competing aspirations of market town and wholesale dealer.

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[220] Campbell *et al.* (1993), 110.
[221] Thirsk (1967), 2-15.
[222] Everitt (1967), 543-46.
[223] Everitt (1967), 556-59.

The actions of middlemen were often seen as contrary to the interests of the poor, a particular concern in the late sixteenth century when population pressure on the nation's resources increased. It is against this background that government attempts to control marketing through the Book of Orders and other similar legislation should be viewed.

Middlemen came to dominate the grain, livestock and mineral trades between 1660 and 1760,[224] and did so in "an atmosphere of growing economic and legislative freedom."[225] Their activities were curtailed only during periods of shortage when government regulations were reactivated, often under pressure from crowds of discontented consumers.[226] Thwaites attests that by the early eighteenth century the reaction of magistrates in Oxfordshire to periods of dearth was almost automatic, indicating familiarity with an approach which had evolved over several centuries. During times of plenty, however, interference with their trade was minimal.[227] From the 1600s factors were routinely flouting market tolls and regulations, testing the resolve of the authorities to uphold a paternalist model, which increasingly appeared to lack legitimacy in the face of changes to the agrarian social structure.[228] The new breed of commercial tenant farmers, who had emerged as a result of gentry rental policy from the 1600s, were committed to the market in a way that the yeoman landholder was not. For them land and labour were merely commodities combined together to produce agricultural products in such a way as to maximise monetary returns.[229] Profits were all-important if commercial tenants were to be able to pay high rents, and if selling standing crops in the field or trading by sample in the market offered a favourable deal, they were likely to take up the option.[230]

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[224] Westerfield (1915). Local studies are provided by Baker (1970, 1976); Coleman (1951); Hey (1980); Thwaites (1985, 1991).
[225] Chartres (1985), 469.
[226] Chartres (1977), 60-64; Gras (1915), 229; Walter & Wrightson (1976).
[227] Thwaites (1985), 123.
[228] Everitt (1967), 579-81.
[229] Hoppe & Langton (1994), 2-3.
[230] Wordie (1974), 599.

Indeed the timing of food riots indicates the extent to which the actions of middlemen and dealers had become an accepted feature of eighteenth-century society. It was only during periods of food shortage, when market prices became inflated, that direct action was taken by the crowd.[231] What we see during the eighteenth century is a developing free market in grain, emerging from the ruins of "the disintegrating Tudor policy of provision", the excesses of which were restrained by the threat of riot and acknowledgement of the damage it could do, in the short term, to capitalist farmers and middlemen.[232] The moral economy continued to survive in eighteenth-century rural society but primarily to curb the worst consequences of the market.

1.5 Evidence of market and moral economy

This analysis uses a number of methods in order to identify elements of moral and market economy, and to determine their extent and the way in which they were related. On a most basic level the nature of prices can indicate whether goods were being traded in a regulated or competitive market arena. Motivations underlying the actions of participants can often be determined by examining the character of exchange. Additionally, the relationship between those engaged in a transaction may highlight the social *milieu* within which exchange was framed. In all cases, however, the documents must be placed within their socio-political and economic context. They provide only a partial record of the exchange experience, but one from which some notion of the values and objectives of the transactors may be ascertained.

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231 Thompson (1975b), 278-280.

232 Thompson (1971), 89, 119-121.

a) *Prices*

Within self-regulating markets there is theoretically a systematic relationship between prices and the supply of goods, so that a change in one produces a change in the other as long as demand remains constant. It is fluctuation in prices which keeps supply and demand in equilibrium. "Prices measure only the current, fleeting balance points between conflicting subjective preferences".[233] Thus prices should reflect the cost of producing a good, the quantity supplied, and the level of demand for it in the marketplace. Under free market conditions one might expect prices for certain goods, such as grain, to follow a recognisable trend over the year, associated primarily with the timing of the harvest. In fact, the pattern of prices was a little more complex, because, although supplies were greatest immediately after the harvest, demand also peaked at this time as harvest wages and income from the sale of crops filled the pockets of agricultural workers. Prices for cereals were actually most likely to peak in November-January, because consumer purchasing power declined at a faster rate than the supply of grain, so that the demand for cereals was much reduced by late spring when stocks were low.[234] The maintenance of grain stocks later into the year can partly be explained by the withholding of supplies by capitalist farmers and middlemen waiting for a better price, just as Adam Smith suggested they would.

We cannot, however, read too much into a correlation between recorded prices and calculated national price indices given the diverse characteristics of England's farming regions, and the lack of a truly national network of foodstuff distribution.[235] The market range of each type of produce depended to a large extent upon the relationship between

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[233] Reddy (1987), 100.

[234] Bowden (1985), 36-37. Consumers would appear to have anticipated shortages and rising prices in the period before the harvest, and consequently purchased extra supplies earlier in the year.

[235] For price indices see Beveridge (1939); Bowden (1985); Rogers (1866-1902); Stratton & Houghton Brown (1978); Thirsk ed. (1967). Most indices were compiled using prices drawn from a relatively small scattering of markets from throughout the country which may not have reflected the pattern of price fluctuation in the study area.

price and transport costs. Thus wheat and wool could be transported considerably further than oats, which tended to be marketed locally.[236] The vagaries of nature could also have a significant and usually localised impact upon the size of the harvest, affecting prices in a particular district. Indeed prices could vary quite considerably "from one estate or institution to the next" due to local differences in demand and supply conditions.[237] Thus there are no guarantees that even indices derived from regional sources will accurately reflect actual prices at a particular location.

Additional difficulties are caused by the fact that it is impossible, when examining prices for a specific commodity, to determine whether one is comparing like with like. Crops could vary considerably in quality depending on the soils in which they had been grown, farming techniques, weather conditions and length of storage, whilst livestock differed to an even greater extent in terms of size, age and condition.[238] Moreover the prices used to compile statistical indices are often monthly, or at best weekly averages, whereas Thwaites has shown how there could be considerable day-to-day variability in price levels.[239] Nevertheless, it is possible to infer free market exchange from sharply fluctuating prices, especially if these are in line with recognised regional price trajectories.

One would assume that market regulation would be more easily identifiable in terms of fixed prices maintained for a considerable duration which accorded with some customary perception of fairness. Certainly most town communities in the medieval period held to the notion of a "just price". What they meant by this, is, however, a matter of considerable debate. Some regard it as an attempt to establish equivalence, so that labour was valued in terms of the subsistence needs of the producer.[240] Empirical analysis, on

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[236] Everitt (1967), 609-16.
[237] Bowden (1985), 21.
[238] Bowden (1985), 21-22.
[239] Thwaites (1980), 398-466.
[240] Dodgshon (1987), 218.

the other hand, suggests that regulated prices tended to reflect prevailing market prices.[241] From this perspective regulation seems primarily to have been a means of moderating price changes and countering speculation.[242] Consequently the salient feature of customary pricing is likely to be the relatively low level of fluctuation, particularly during periods of harvest failure when marketing controls tended to be more rigorously enforced, rather than long-term price stability. Such minor deviations from the free market trend are difficult to identify, although Thwaites has attempted to do so by matching the chronological pattern of regulation enforcement against the price for corn in the Oxford market.[243]

The above discussion suggests that attention should be focused, in particular, on periods of dearth when market prices rose rapidly and may have diverged noticeably from their customary counterparts. However, it is difficult to ascertain whether a transaction was influenced by regulation or not, and hence there can be no definitive index of free market prices against which to measure actual prices. During periods of dearth fear of unrest or continued attachment to elements of the moral economy would ensure that many farmers and factors moderated their behaviour and did not seek to secure the maximum possible return.[244] The price trajectory in the marketplace was thus itself a compromise between theoretical free market prices and the customary expectations of the consumer. Nevertheless a careful analysis of price data should make it possible to establish whether regulations were being adhered to during periods of dearth.

Certainly a minimum requirement for the identification of market exchange is that prices should be fixed in the marketplace at any moment in time. Where similar goods are sold for equivalent prices it is likely that the market has played a role, albeit perhaps a regulated one. On the other hand, if similar transactions are conducted with different

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[241] de Roover (1958), 421.
[242] Thrupp (1948), 92-7.
[243] Thwaites (1980), 398-466.
[244] Thompson (1971), 120-26.

people at different prices it must be assumed that social relations are mediating the exchange on an individual level and market forces are not operating. For this reason, despite the drawbacks, the analysis of price data does give an indication of the general character of exchange, and therefore I will make use of it.

b) *Monetization of the exchange process*

Another aspect of exchange which can be examined using eighteenth-century sources is the extent of monetization. Although the Saxon silver coinage of AD900 was divisible (different units existed whose values were multiples of each other); had the legal backing of the state to guarantee the uniformity of a particular coin's value, and was widely available to the population, it remained limited in its use.[245] Money circulated widely within the medieval economy but was viewed primarily as a convenient form in which to store wealth, to be utilised primarily for specific purposes such as the payment of taxes and for dowries. Barter and reciprocal exchange played a far more important role in the day-to-day transactions of the average yeoman farmer, and common rights gave some degree of independence from the cash economy, which wage labourers and tenant farmers in enclosed parishes lacked.[246] When peasants did use money for exchange purposes prices were often conventional and either fixed or wildly oscillating with little regard to supply and demand.[247] The use of cash transactions for the purchase of basic provisions, such as food, fuel and agricultural products, can therefore only be considered indicative of a monetized capitalist economy where money is being used as a medium of exchange within a price-fixing market system.

What this implies is the commodification of goods. Articles previously acquired through customary use-rights or local social networks now have to be purchased in the

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[245] Hodges & Cherry (1983), 131-184.

[246] Clark (1990); Henretta (1978) and Reed (1990b) examine reciprocal exchange, the former two in an American context. Neeson (1993), 38-41, 158-172 looks at common rights.

[247] Hoppe & Langton (1994), 8.

marketplace. Two contrasting explanation have been put forward to explain this phenomenon. One focuses on changes to the relations of production.[248] From this perspective it is argued that cottagers, denied access to common resources, became dependent on wage labour, and farmers, under the tougher regime of short-term commercial leases, were forced to "professionalise" by specialising in cash crops, rather than operating a mixed farming system which was better able to supply the household's complete subsistence needs.[249] Having switched to a predominantly monetary income, the rural population was also forced to enter the market as a customer. The alternative view concentrates on relations of exchange, suggesting that the transformation of production was prompted by the development of a mass market for cheap manufactured goods. In order to purchase these goods households had to secure a cash income, something that was achieved by devoting a larger proportion of labour resources to production for the market.[250]

Whichever perspective one takes the consequence of the specialisation of production was the same. Goods which had previously possessed only a use value as far as the villager was concerned had now to be conceived as commodities, priced according to their wider exchange value. For instance, the poor increasingly used country shops as their dependence on wage labour increased. Such shops, run by members of the local community, were best suited to the labourers' needs as they were within easy reach of the consumers; would sell in the small portions that the average labourer could afford, and offered credit, since there were social bonds between those involved in the transaction.[251] By 1759 there was 1 shop to every 42 people, far more than today, due largely to this

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[248] These arguments are summarised in Brenner (1976, 1985); Holton (1985).

[249] Hoppe & Langton (1994), 2-4.

[250] de Vries (1993), 107-12.

[251] Mui & Mui (1989), 148-59; Shammas (1990), 238-60; Spufford (1984), 107-46; Willan (1976), 89-101. Similar observation for North America are made by Farmer (1988); Perkins (1991); Thorp (1991).

explosion in small rural shopkeepers, prompted by the re-alignment of demand from the rural population.[252]

The difference between the use of money for specific purposes, such as the payment of taxes, in earlier centuries, and its employment as the favoured medium of exchange in most transactions is that, in the latter case, the goods and money itself have been commodified.[253] The extent to which cash is utilised in transactions and the manner of its usage are good indicators of the balance between moral and market economy in an area. Like the commodification of goods, the commodification of money itself and the existence of a free capital market is an essential facet of the self-regulating market economy, because it is through the use of money that commercial exchange is almost invariably facilitated. According to Polanyi the existence of "all-purpose" money is necessary for the market to be considered as fully commodified, and this is associated with the coinage having a range of different uses. It must be a means of payment, so that cash can be used to discharge obligations such as tax or bride price, and a store of value, in that the coins have an inherent symbolic value which is retained as long as they are held by an individual. Additionally money must be a measure of value, able to equate amounts of different types of goods so that balanced exchange is possible and accounts can be drawn up to balance budgets. In other words a numerical price tag must be placed upon objects, to reflect their value. Finally money acts as an indirect medium of exchange for quantifiable objects, and under a market economy this use comes to subordinate all others.[254] Cash, as a medium of exchange, has maximum purchasing power because it is accepted in monetized societies in return for any other good. Money, within a particular economy, must be standardised in order to achieve this general acceptance as a measure

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[252] Mui & Mui (1989), 44.
[253] Marx (1867), 227-44.
[254] Polanyi (1957), 264-266.

and store of value and medium of transaction, and hence it is usually produced through the centralised institutions of government-controlled mints or central banks.[255]

In effect money becomes just another good, standardised and with symbolic rather than actual use value, which can be bought and sold in the market. At the local level each village had its moneylender able to loan cash to smallholders wishing to acquire land or unable to meet rent or tax demands due to a bad harvest. Literary accounts and debtors lists from inventories clearly attest to this, indicating that the lenders were often widows or more substantial farmers with spare capital to employ.[256] However, the vast majority of credit was "extended as a normative part of the tens of thousands of daily market sales and services".[257] Indeed, McKendrick suggests that the whole eighteenth-century retailing network was held together by credit employed on a grand scale.[258] The customer was given credit by the small shopkeeper, who was similarly indulged by the large retailer/wholesaler, and he was usually indebted to the dealers who supplied him. Within commercial circles credit was often underpinned by mortgages, bonds, and bills of exchange, loans secured on a third party which specified a date of repayment, either by the lender or those vouching for him. Since these bills did not have to be paid off immediately a discount market developed in them, centred on London.[259] This would appear to suggest that credit itself had become commodified by the early eighteenth century, but in reality most loans remained remarkably informal.[260] In the marketplace credit was usually extended orally in front of witnesses, emphasising the fact that most credit relationships continued to be based on reciprocal obligation not commercial imperative.

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[255] Hodges (1988), 107-20.
[256] Jones (1989); Kerridge (1988).
[257] Muldrew (1998), 95. See also Holderness (1975); Muldrew (1993a).
[258] Brewer (1982), 206-210.
[259] Brewer (1982), 203-209.
[260] Muldrew (1993a), 169-171.

The reality in early modern England was that barter, informal credit, money and written instruments of credit "all existed in tandem, and played specific roles in increasingly complex systems of exchange".[261] Here again we see evidence of co-existence between moral and market economy. Documents reveal the commodification of some goods, whilst in others cases transactions remained embedded in social relations. Sometimes money was used in an "all-purpose" manner, yet on other occasions it acted merely as a measure of value since no cash actually changed hands. Money had primacy not because it was the predominant means of exchange, but because its value was used as a measure in the pricing of most things. Analysis of account books can help to address such issues, by revealing the balance of monetary and non-monetary transactions, and hence indicating the differing ways in which money was perceived.

c) *Absence of social relations between transactors*

Documentary sources can also reveal the relationship between transactors, something that it is essential to know if one is to identify the type of exchange economy operating. Under a free market system each transaction consists of a temporary linkage which is terminated once the transaction is completed.[262] If an individual deals with the same trade partner on more than one occasion, this will be because he has offered the best price, not because of any social relations which have become established. Theoretically there will be a complete alienation of producer from consumer; exchange will be impersonal and devoid of any social component.[263]

In reality, there may be an absence of close ties, but it is impossible completely to eliminate non-economic motivations from exchange. A farmer might maintain links with a particular mealman or corn dealer not just because he has offered the best price, but also

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[261] Muldrew (1998), 98.
[262] Simmel (1920) trans. Bottomore & Frisby (1978), 477.
[263] Marx (1867), 198-209.

because previous dealings have indicated this particular middleman to be honest and reliable in his payment.[264] In other words, a relationship of trust had built up between the two, and this was viewed as more important than the opportunity of achieving a higher price elsewhere. The security provided by familiarity continued to be influential within the capitalist economy, emphasising that the risk involved in playing the market was perceived as far outweighing the potential gains in a period when knowledge of market conditions was much poorer than it is today. It is in this light that we should view villagers' regular patronage of the same local shops or stalls in the marketplace. For instance the Muis' note that the petty shopkeeper, William Wood (1720-90) of Didsbury, provided local residents with "most of their daily needs", and had at least thirty credit customers whose monthly purchases ranged from 5s to £1 10s in value.[265] Wood's account book shows that many of these customers had made regular purchases on credit throughout 1785-9, the period for which documentary evidence has survived. Most were humble village folk: servants, small craftsmen and farm labourers who relied on the fact that Wood was prepared to sell in small quantities, sufficient to last for only a few days, and to allow a debit balance to accrue so long as regular lump sum payments were made at the customers' convenience. The majority of transactions were, however, conducted at market prices and payment was usually in cash form.[266]

There is, nonetheless, a certain threshold above which the strength of social ties becomes such that the transaction can no longer be considered as market exchange. This ill-defined boundary marks the zone of transition between those transactions considered to be market orientated and those recognised as lying within the moral economy. Once the threshold is crossed, one moves through to trade that is increasingly determined by pre-existing social relations, with the root purpose of maintaining those social

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[264] In the absence of readily available commercial credit facilities trust was a crucial factor in the early modern marketplace. Muldrew (1993a, 1998).

[265] Mui & Mui (1989), 47.

[266] Mui & Mui (1989), 211-216.

relations.[267] These are the transactions described previously as neighbourhood exchange.[268] The web of social interconnections forms the framework within which exchange linkages can become established, and these linkages often form complex chains, unlike simple one-to-one monetary transactions, reflecting the innate complexity of social relations. For instance, Clark found that the use of promissory notes allowed individuals to pay off their creditors via a third party. "A man owed something by one neighbour but who in his turn owed a third man, could send his debtor to work for his creditor on his own account, and thereby bring both of his book debts closer to balance".[269]

Careful analysis of original source material can indicate whether the transactions recorded are likely to be market-based or governed by social relations. In order to do this it is necessary to reconstruct the basic web of interconnections which existed within the local community as a result of kinship or friendship ties. One way of doing this is through analysis of wills, inventories, legal papers and other sources which document social relations.[270] Direct evidence of exchange from lists of debts and credits appended to wills and inventories is rare during the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries, but where present it reveals a parallel web of economic interconnections within the neighbourhood.[271] Furthermore, as the "last act of social recognition" wills often reveal much about the effective kinship links of the deceased at the time of his or her death in the form of token bequests made to relatives beyond the immediate nuclear family. At Whickham, where ties are described as being "genealogically narrow and shallow", 70-80% of all testators in the three sub-periods 1600-49, 1650-99 and 1700-60 recognised kinfolk outside their nuclear household.[272] Such analysis must, however, take account of

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[267] Sahlins (1988), 185-230.
[268] See section 1.4a.
[269] Clark (1982), 71.
[270] Earle (1989); Holderness (1975, 1976); Muldrew (1993a, 1998).
[271] Levine & Wrightson (1991), 286-287.
[272] Levine & Wrightson (1991), 330.

the life-cycle stage and family status of the testator, because unmarried and widowed men and women were more likely to recognise a wider range of kin than married men, who were constrained by the obligation to support their wife and family first and foremost. Indeed wills were primarily a means of transmitting property, and in order to ensure the continuation of the line this had to stay within the immediate family. They were never intended to represent a roll-call of kin relations and therefore it is hardly surprising that letters and diaries allude to far wider kinship ties.[273] Having said this, wills are a comprehensive source material and can be used to provide a picture of the strength and complexity of kinship links.

Another way to study kinship networks is based around family reconstitution, which facilitates the tracing of both consanguine and affinal linkages.[274] Absolute and relative kinship densities can then be calculated, as Wrightson and Levine have done for both Terling and Whickham. Each householder's network of family ties is recreated and then the average number of such linkages per family (absolute kinship density), and the number of actual connections as a proportion of the total number of possible kinship links (relative kinship density), calculated. The kinship densities produced (0.21 for industrial Whickham in 1666 and 0.59 for the more agrarian Terling five years later) suggest a fairly shallow and restricted network of ties, but they themselves acknowledge that these figures are almost certainly an underestimate due to the problem that many household heads had not been married or baptised in the parish.[275] Unlike Wrightson and Levine, I shall be dealing with an area which retained open field agriculture into the eighteenth century, and additionally will examine kinship ties across several adjacent parishes. Consequently, I will be able to see if the pattern of interconnectedness could be much more substantial.

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[273] Cressy (1986), 50-62.
[274] Lord (1989, 1993); Mitson (1993); Phythian-Adams (1991).
[275] Levine & Wrightson (1991), 332-334.

Kinship networks provide a template against which to compare actual patterns of exchange. A high level of correspondence would suggest the possibility that the transactions involved were, to some extent, determined by social relations. This would be indicative of the survival of aspects of the moral economy. Conversely, a lower level of correlation would suggest that the force of the market, not community ties, was responsible for the orientation of linkages.

d) *A culture of consumption*

Debate about the nature of consumption relates changing conceptions of property and exchange to the actual transformation of social behaviour and material culture. Intellectually, consumption like commerce was a contested idea in the late seventeenth century. Critics of material abundance took the moral high ground, seeking to stigmatise novelty as a corrupting influence and potential cause of civil unrest.[276] However, the contrast between this Puritan morality and the visible evidence of conspicuous consumption drew the attention of Enlightenment thinkers. Mandeville, in *The Fable of the Bees*, argued that far from being an evil or extravagance, damaging to the country's balance of payments, domestic consumption could actually be used to boost manufacturing and increase the nation's wealth. He suggested that private vice could in fact bring public benefit in terms of national prosperity, a notion eagerly accepted by merchants and traders.[277] The philosophers of the Enlightenment, such as Smith, Ricardo and Hume, drew on these ideas to propose a new conception of society which placed commerce and the individual acquisition of material possessions at its centre.[278]

The motivations and impulses underlying this consumer ethos have been the subject of considerable interest over recent years, although much of the debate remains couched in

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[276] Sekora (1977).
[277] Mandeville (1714).
[278] Appleby (1993), 167-72.

rather simplistic notions of "emulation", "fashion" and "demand".[279] The suggestion is that growth in consumption was driven by increasing levels of stratification within eighteenth-century society, which made social mobility possible, with the ensuing competition for status being conducted largely within the arena of material possessions. A shift in the terms of trade in favour of manufactured goods during the period is seen as encouraging this process, since it increased the purchasing power of townspeople, whilst productivity improvements in agriculture cushioned the depressing effect of falling prices on the incomes of larger farmers.[280]

Campbell argues that emulation alone will not suffice to explain this "trickle-down" phenomenon whereby aristocratic patterns of consumption were adopted by successively lower levels in the social hierarchy. He maintains that many of the more mundane goods would have been desired for their own sake, rather than for any prestige attached to them, reflecting increasingly hedonistic attitudes amongst the middle classes.[281] Consumption of soft furnishing and new groceries, such as tea, coffee, chocolate and sugar, is seen as especially indicative of such pleasure-seeking conduct.[282] The low cost and utility of many novel items may also have been an important consideration. Real incomes for the majority of people did not improve significantly during the hundred years after the Civil War, but evidence from inventories shows that by substituting cheaper, less permanent goods for more expensive, durable ones, most were able to increase their accumulation of material possessions without raising the proportion of household income spent on consumption.[283] In contrast, Weatherill, drawing on Goffman's distinction of public and private space, suggests that display was a central motivation for the increasing

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[279] Borsay (1989); Eversley (1967); Gilboy (1967); Jones (1973); Plumb (1982). For recent perspectives on consumer motivations see Campbell (1987, 1993); McCracken (1988); Miller (1987, 1995).
[280] Jones (1965), 1-18; Allen (1988), 117-146; de Vries (1993), 87.
[281] Campbell (1987, 1993).
[282] Shammas (1990), 77-86.
[283] de Vries (1993), 98-106; Shammas (1993), 199-201.

accumulation of consumption goods.[284] Gender differences in the symbolic meaning of objects, and their potential impact on consumption strategies has also attracted recent attention.[285] In general the conclusion to be drawn from these studies is that "goods usually had multiple meanings, frequently combining utilitarian, ornamental and private associations, and these meanings connected to notions of identity and social ideology."[286]

Given this multiplicity of meaning, Glennie argues that there was not one but many cultures of consumption, and that these emerged amongst the various strata of society prior to the appearance of mass markets for consumer goods. Thus both the labouring classes and bourgeoisie had developed distinctive consumption discourses by the late seventeenth century, which influenced their contrasting consuming behaviour and material culture.[287] Clothing, for example, had particular meaning for the poor, being central to their self-identity, rather than simply reflecting a desire to emulate the latest middle-class fashions.[288] This suggests that the poor already had a consumption ethos during the early-modern period despite the limited evidence of their participation in the exchange economy. Their minimal material possessions were an indication of the inability to pay for goods not a disinclination to purchase.[289] If one follows this line of argument, analysis should focus on the means by which households obtained the money income necessary to purchase the goods which they desired.

The impact of a culture or cultures of consumption on English society depends, to some extent, upon the social depth of consumer goods markets. Some see the early-modern period as an era of consumption-led commercial expansion affecting all levels of society, and aided by the general level of prosperity and rising real wages which the

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[284] Weatherill (1988), 137-65.
[285] Vickery (1993); Weatherill (1986).
[286] Glennie (1995), 179.
[287] Glennie (1995), 177-8. See also Johnson (1988); Thrift & Glennie (1993) and Williams (1987).
[288] Lemire (1988, 1991).
[289] Glennie (1995), 178. See also Tierstein (1993).

consumer boom itself had largely generated.[290] They envisage a mass market for basic goods such as clothing, accessories, hosiery, chapbooks, toys and trinkets from the seventeenth century, which drew even humble cottagers and wage labourers into market society.[291] Macro-economic indicators appear to support this view, showing persistent growth in many consumer goods industries from the late sixteenth century.[292] Trade statistics also reveal that certain new groceries, notably tobacco and sugar, had become staple commodities for a significant proportion of the population before 1700.[293]

Others are more cautious, however, arguing that a mass market in manufactured goods did not extend beyond the middling sort until the early eighteenth century.[294] Glennie agrees with this proposition that labourers were "coming adrift at the bottom of the consumption hierarchy", having fewer novel durable goods than even the poorest craftsmen or husbandmen, although he suggests that this could be a consequence of their higher spending on "non-durable consumption" such as tobacco, alcohol and gambling.[295] Yet purchase in the marketplace was not the only means by which consumer goods could be acquired. Attention has been drawn to the second-hand trades,[296] and to the provision of goods as gifts or payment in kind,[297] as other means whereby the poor could satisfy their consuming urges. Moreover, there has also been much interest recently in the apparent market avoidance strategies of many small farming households.[298] The extent of self-provisioning and barter identified in a number of studies suggests that there may have been a greater degree of overlap between systems of neighbourhood exchange and

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[290] McKendrick (1982), 2-46.
[291] Spufford (1984); Thirsk (1978).
[292] Berg (1994), 98-100.
[293] Goodman (1994); Shammas (1990), 77-86; (1993), 178-85.
[294] Weatherill (1988), 191-94.
[295] Glennie (1995), 173.
[296] Lemire (1988, 1991); Styles (1994).
[297] Thompson (1939) notes how 'last year's fashions' could be seen in every village through gifts of clothes to maids from gentry women. See also Glennie (forthcoming).
[298] Clark (1982, 1990); Howkins (1994); Lord (1989); Neeson (1993); Reed (1990b).

capitalist commodity markets than was previously acknowledged.[299] Again, work on consumption shows the potential complementarity of market and non-market systems that must form a central element of my analysis.

1.6 Summary: the research problem

In this chapter I have outlined the debate surrounding the transition from feudalism to capitalism and, in particular, one aspect of this transition, the monetization of the exchange economy. The focus has been primarily upon the agricultural sector since the transformation of social relations of production took place here first.[300] A review of the literature reveals considerable disagreement about the extent to which capitalism had penetrated local agrarian economies by the early eighteenth century, although recent empirical research seems to suggest that in England this process was much more gradual than was once thought.[301] It is now widely recognised that elements of the moral economy survived well into the nineteenth century in many areas amongst certain sectors of the population despite the rapid pace of industrial and agricultural change. Indeed, recent research argues that social relations continued to be influential within the eighteenth-century marketplace.[302]

In the course of this study, change over time in the character of commodity transactions will be used to determine the relationship between moral and market economies, and thus allow an assessment of the extent of capitalist penetration into the agrarian economy during the period 1680-1750.

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[299] Kulikoff (1989, 1993); Vickers (1990).
[300] Brenner (1985); Dobb (1947); Marx (1976).
[301] Neeson (1993); Reed (1990a).
[302] Muldrew (1993a, 1998); Parry & Bloch (1989).

1.7 Proposal: a research strategy

Estate accounts have been used as the main source material since they provide the most comprehensive record of transactions within a specific locality. Through a thorough examination of these accounts, together with the use of parish registers, wills, inventories and various other estate documents, a three-part analysis has been conducted. As an initial stage the account entries have been assessed on a simple level to determine the balance between monetary and non-monetary linkages. Secondly the characteristics of the exchange relationships documented in the accounts have been determined, and this information then related to processes taking place at the national level: particularly important was the disentanglement of any hierarchical feature within the exchange process from the overall tiered structure of the accounts.

These two stages of the analysis provide an insight into the workings of the estate economy, but it remains difficult to draw conclusions about the extent of market involvement because of source material limitations. Some of these problems have been overcome by using social network analysis to determine whether the recorded pattern of transactions followed pre-existing kinship and friendship links, or was a reflection of market forces. Whereas the accounts are purely administrative documents, providing a record of exchange, kinship networks show the pattern of social relations between transactors and the extent to which such linkages impacted upon the nature of the transactions in which they were engaged.

Used together these three techniques provide an integrated approach to analysis of the estate economy, recognising that to understand the pattern of transactions revealed in the accounts it is necessary to examine not only the overt characteristics of exchange but also its social context and the administrative framework within which it took place. Given the long drawn-out character of the transition process, and its apparent spatial unevenness, an analysis of the underlying economy and society of north-west Oxfordshire, the area from which data was gathered, is required at this point.

(2) THE ENVIRONMENT AND SOCIO-ECONOMIC CONTEXT OF THE DITCHLEY ESTATE

2.1 Introduction

Oxfordshire spans the two major scarplands of lowland England, the limestone hills of the Cotswolds in the north and Chiltern chalk in the south, between which lie the Oxford Clay Vale, Corralian Ridge and Gault Clay Vale, creating a landscape "ribbed by three lines of hills with their intervening vales".[1] This contrasting solid and superficial geology has given rise to varying soils and hence farming systems across the county, something that Plot recognised when writing his *Natural History of Oxfordshire* in 1677.[2] The eight soil types that he identified were later simplified by Young into four broad groupings, the Redland, Stonebrash, Chiltern and Clay types, and it is these that have most commonly been used to designate agrarian regions within Oxfordshire.[3] The first of these regions, also described as the marlstone uplands, lies around Banbury and has fertile but rather heavy red soils reflecting the iron-rich limestones of the Middle Lias belt. Immediately to the south is the oolitic limestone of the North Oxfordshire Heights and Cotswold escarpment, stretching westward into Gloucestershire. Beyond this is a broad zone characterised as the Oxfordshire Clay Vale, although its soils range from heavy clays to glacial gravels and the limestone soils overlying the Corallian Ridge. Finally the southernmost portion of the county consists of the free-draining chalk hills of the Chilterns (Fig. 2.1).[4]

This study covers a block of forty parishes in the north west of the county, lying predominantly within the second of these zones, the limestone uplands. The region was

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[1] Emery (1974), 25.
[2] Plot (1677).
[3] Havinden (1961a), 13-5; Emery (1974), 26-8; Thirsk (1984), 317-34.
[4] Emery (1974), 25-32.

described by Young as the "Stonebrash District" due to the nature of its soils, which are relatively thin, light and friable, and hence most suited to a system of sheep-corn husbandry.[5] These soils were often relatively infertile, and this explains the survival of significant tracts of woodland within the limestone upland belt, especially in areas where the stonebrash was overlain by plateau gravels or clays.[6] Within its Doomsday boundaries the Royal Forest of Wychwood extended over much of the southern half of the study area and beyond, covering most of the land lying between the rivers Glyme, Windrush and Thames and the Gloucestershire border. From the early medieval period this area was subject to forest law although the land was not necessarily wooded. Woodland had steadily been cleared through assarting, so that by 1300 only the core area between Burford and Charlbury, where the soils were at their most infertile, remained under continuous forest cover (Fig. 2.2).[7] However, substantial tracts of woodland also survived around Ditchley, Woodstock Park, and north of Witney. The process of clearance produced a distinctive settlement pattern of scattered hamlets within large irregularly shaped parishes in this part of the stonebrash district,[8] which contrasted sharply with the nucleated villages found elsewhere within the region.[9]

2.2 The agrarian landscape of north-west Oxfordshire

The stonebrash district was overwhelmingly a peasant farming area in 1500 with the only large holdings being sheep walks operated on former demesne land by commercial graziers. Traditionally cultivation was organised within a two-field system, one field being planted with corn and the other left fallow in any given year.[10] Peasant farmers held scattered strips in each field and also had the right to graze livestock on the waste, the

[5] Young (1809), 5-7.
[6] Emery (1974), 85.
[7] Steed (1962); Freeman (1997), 138-9.
[8] For example Spelsbury, Enstone, Charlbury and Shipton-under-Wychwood.
[9] Bletchingdon, Kirtlington, Rousham, Steeple Aston.
[10] Gray (1915), 29-30; Roden (1973), 345-50.

fallow field and the stubble after the harvest. The folding of the large common flock in the fields helped to maximise the efficiency of manuring and maintain soil fertility.[11] Such a system was inefficient in its use of land since half the arable acreage was fallow each year, but the stonebrash soil was not sufficiently fertile to allow extended periods of cropping.

Over the Tudor period the region was subject to extensive enclosure, particularly associated with conversion to pasture prompted by the rising price of wool.[12] Some of these enclosures involved depopulation, as was the case at Little Rollright where 36 people were evicted in 1517.[13] Elsewhere, however, closes were established in outlying parts of the townships where assart land had been taken directly into severalty.[14] In most cases any population decline was brought about gradually by engrossment of the land into larger holdings geared to handling pastoral farming rather than grain cultivation. Townships that had only recently emerged following woodland clearance, and where population levels had always been low, were particularly susceptible to pastoral conversion, as were those containing extensive demesne lands.[15] Once landlords had recognised the commercial advantage to be gained from switching to sheep farming, demesnes were often rented out as large pastoral farms to graziers. For instance, Asterleigh near Kiddington was deprived of parish rank in 1466, because the loss of tenants as the land was converted to pasture meant that tithes and rents could no longer support a vicar.[16] Other townships, particularly those on the edge of Wychwood, had their demesnes converted to parkland during the Tudor and Stuart period. For example, Henry Danvers, the Ranger of Wychwood, was responsible for the walling of Cornbury Park, and subsequently in 1642 he saw it disafforested and put outside the Royal Forest.

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[11] Havinden (1961a), 56-8; Roden (1973).
[12] Emery (1974), 106-10.
[13] Havinden (1961a), 44-5.
[14] This type of piecemeal enclosure was common in forest areas. Roden (1973), 351.
[15] Gray (1915), 120-21.
[16] Allison et al (1965), 8; Emery (1974), 102.

Bruern, Blenheim, Ditchley and Wilcote were all similarly enclosed prior to 1634, so that 8.4% of the county area lay within parkland by the Civil War.[17]

15% of townships within the limestone uplands had been entirely enclosed before 1640, yet most of the remainder retained their open fields until the middle of the eighteenth century: indeed, 64% were still unenclosed in 1730.[18] It seems that the moderate amount of early enclosure, and access to extensive common grazing in Wychwood Forest and surrounding woodland helped to buttress the open field system against change by providing access to plentiful feed for livestock. Farmers in open field townships could rent closes in neighbouring areas in order to support larger numbers of sheep and cattle than would have been possible from their open field holdings alone.[19] As a result of this they could manure their fields more heavily and increase grain yields too. "Real progress was made not so much on the common fields or in the ancient enclosures as in the interaction between the two."[20] For instance, the inventories of John Coats and John Pridie of Charlbury indicate that they had flocks of 176 and 158 sheep respectively in the early 1620s despite the limited amount of grazing land in the township, and also produced significant quantities of corn. Additionally intercommoning was widespread in the forest edge townships and these rights were jealously guarded against the encroachment of the enclosers. In 1617 the inhabitants of Wootton, Hordley, Old Woodstock, Bladon, Stonesfield and Hanborough complained that Sir Henry Lee's enclosure of woodland at Ditchley for deer had deprived them of land over which they had previously held common rights.[21] Such plentiful access to pasture partially explains the late survival of the two-field system on the stonebrash long after it was replaced elsewhere in Oxfordshire by more complex field arrangements.[22]

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[17] Gray (1915), 121.
[18] Havinden (1961a), 174.
[19] Gray (1915), 122-37; Emery (1974), 110.
[20] Goodacre (1994), 146.
[21] Havinden (1961a), 19.
[22] Gray (1915), 124-37.

Despite landlords' attempts to consolidate holdings most farms in the stonebrash district remained small: the median farm size between 1580 and 1640 was around 15 acres, and 31% of holdings had a sown area in any given year of under 2.5 acres.[23] Hence it is not surprising to find that mixed subsistence husbandry predominated with barley the main grain crop. This was the cereal most favoured by husbandmen and smallholders because of its high yields on relatively poor land and multiple uses. Barley could be malted to make ale, fed to livestock or used as an inferior bread corn, whereas wheat was usually produced as a cash crop by wealthier yeoman farmers.[24] Most farmers also kept only small numbers of livestock since common land was often stinted except in the vicinity of Wychwood Forest. Between 1580 and 1640 the median sheep flock size in the stonebrash district was 14 and 67% of farmers there had 5 or fewer cattle.[25] Most smallholders had a few sheep and cattle as their manure was essential for the maintenance of soil fertility but animal products were generally consumed within the household. More substantial yeoman farmers were growing in prominence, however, and made up over 25% of landholders by 1640. They had holdings of between 100-200 acres, often including pasture closes, which could support larger flocks.[26] Mutton and wool were yeomen farmers' most valuable products, whilst cereals were usually only marketed locally since the absence of river transport denied them access to the London grain market.[27]

Over the course of the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries enclosure proceeded steadily, often in a piecemeal fashion, or by private agreement between the parties where a whole township was involved. Enclosure by agreement was almost always preceded by engrossment of the land into a few large farms so that the agreement

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[23] Havinden (1961a), 49.
[24] Goodacre (1994), 83.
[25] Havinden (1961a), 61. Within my inventory study area the median flock size (1580-1619) was 19, rising to 28.5 between 1620-59. The median number of cattle rose during this period from 2 to 3.
[26] Havinden (1961a), 51-2.
[27] Taylor (1988), 112; Willan (1976), 18-19.

was drawn up between a small number of commercial farmers rather than a mass of smallholders.[28] For instance, Radford was enclosed by an agreement between the five tenants in the early eighteenth century, whilst Gageingwell's agreements of 1712 involved three freeholders, one leaseholder and two copyholders.[29] Gradually husbandmen were being displaced by yeomen throughout Midland arable England, both where enclosure had taken place and within open field townships, in a process which had begun in the sixteenth century but gathered pace after the Civil War. The median farm size in the limestone uplands doubled to 27 acres between 1640 and 1730, although this was still less than one yardland and effectively a subsistence holding. Nevertheless an increasing proportion of the land was held in large commercial farms, and by 1730 over 60% of inventoried landholders were yeomen.[30]

These changes in landholding structure were accompanied by the increasingly widespread adoption of innovations within the open fields of north-west Oxfordshire, aimed at improving the supply of fodder.[31] Hitching, that is the sowing of legumes on part of the fallow field, had been a common practice since the mid-seventeenth century, but from the 1670s this had often evolved into an actual redivision of the two fields into four or more portions often termed "quarters".[32] Leguminous clovers, such as sainfoin, and pasture leys could be incorporated into the new more complex rotations that frequently emerged. In some cases specific agreements were drawn up through which part of the arable area was temporarily withdrawn from cultivation, fenced off and planted with ryegrass and clovers, which were harvested for hay before the land was thrown open to the common herd. Such convertible husbandry helped to double the productivity of

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[28] Butlin (1979), 67-8; Gray (1915), 116-18; Havinden (1961a), 178-9; Emery (1974), 110; Taylor (1988), 23-5.

[29] Radford enclosure agreement, DIL/III/n/2; Gageingwell enclosure map (1713), Bod. MS C17:49(III)

[30] Havinden (1961a), 187.

[31] Traditionally agricultural innovation has been associated with enclosure eg. Chambers & Mingay (1966), but there is a growing body of evidence suggesting that significant increases in productivity could be achieved within the open fields. See Allen (1992); Havinden (1961b); Kerridge (1967); Neeson (1993); Yelling (1977).

[32] Gray (1915), 125-37.

grassland, with the cultivation of sainfoin being particularly important, as its deep roots were especially suited to the thin, dry soils of limestone country. It produced more nutritious fodder than indigenous grasses and helped fix nitrogen in the soil, thereby increasing fertility.[33] The extra fodder enabled livestock numbers to be increased significantly: the median flock size had risen to 77 by 1690-1730.[34] Consequently the fields could be more heavily manured and this allowed the acreage of wheat to be doubled 1660-1730 and the area left fallow substantially reduced. The new rotation of crops that emerged varied from place to place but basically followed a four-course system. In the first year the land was left fallow, and this was followed by courses of wheat, beans/peas and barley/oats.[35] Thus wheat and beans increased their acreage at the expense of barley suggesting that a larger percentage of crops were being produced for the market, and at the same time sales of livestock were growing rapidly as stocking densities increased. Through a combination of engrossment, consolidation of holdings and agricultural improvement, the yeoman farmer was able to compete with farmers renting enclosed holdings, taking advantage of the greater flexibility afforded by the open fields to maintain his standard of living despite stagnant prices for agricultural products.

Thus the agrarian landscape of north-west Oxfordshire during the 1680-1750 study period was one of significant contrasts and undergoing rapid evolution. Enclosed pasture farms lay side-by-side with fully functioning open fields and sizeable tracts of woodland. Some townships high on the Cotswolds had been virtually depopulated, whilst others near the forest edge, where there was more waste land available for squatters, had expanding populations. Shipton-under-Wychwood, for example, contained only 353 men over the age of 18 at the taking of the Protestation Oath in 1642, but Bishop Secker found 370 houses there in 1738. Enclosure remained an on-going process, usually achieved by agreement after decades of farm amalgamation had accomplished much of the task, but

[33] Havinden (1961b), 75.
[34] Havinden (1961a), 210.
[35] Gray (1915), 126-32.

the open-fields that survived continued to be viable due the adoption of new crops, employment of innovatory rotational practices and leasing of closes.

2.3 Trends in agriculture within the study parishes

Agrarian change within the study area has been examined using information from 600 inventories drawn from a group of parishes in the immediate vicinity of the Ditchley estate. These consisted of Spelsbury and Enstone, plus the neighbouring parishes of Chadlington, Charlbury, Kiddington, Glympton and Stonesfield, located to the south and east.[36] The trends identified largely conform with those found by Havinden over the stonebrash district as a whole, although the study area does appear to have been one of considerable contrasts, straddling the boundary between forest and open land. Sheep-corn husbandry was clearly the predominant form of agriculture in all the parishes and townships, except those within the historical forest bounds such as Chilson, Fawler and Finstock, where cattle made up a larger proportion of the median value of inventoried agricultural stocks. Elsewhere sheep constituted around 30% of agrarian investment, and were clearly the most important element of the farming system (Table 2.1). Flocks increased from a median size of 19 in the late sixteenth century to 59 in the decades after the Restoration, whereas the number of cattle, horses and pigs found in the inventories remained relatively stable (Table 2.2). Moreover, this increase in the size of flocks was matched by a fivefold rise in the inventoried value of sheep over the 1580-1740 period. The median value of cattle, in contrast, did not make any major advances until the early eighteenth century when it almost quadrupled (Table 2.3, Fig. 2.3).

Cereal production appears to have benefited from the high grain prices in the period prior to the Civil War, but suffered severely during the latter part of the seventeenth century, when the median value of crops almost halved. Post-1700 the figures for crops,

[36] All extant inventories from these seven parishes, ranging in date from 1580 to 1780, were included in the analysis.

like those for sheep and cattle, rose sharply, although the proportion of inventoried households growing cereals fell from 62% to 50% (Table 2.4). These overall figures, however, conceal significant changes over time in the balance of crops, reflecting changing farming practices, such as the introduction of new rotations. Value figures for the various types of cereal are suspect due to the small number of useable inventories, but it does appear that the cultivation of wheat was extended during the early eighteenth century at the expense of barley. Whereas in the 1660-99 period the mean inventoried value of wheat was only a third that of barley, after 1700 it was almost double. This accords well with the pattern seen over north-west Oxfordshire as a whole during the long eighteenth century. Fodder supplies too, appear to have been increasing over the course of the period, with the median value doubling by the early eighteenth century. The appearance of beans, vetches and sainfoin, all of which were leguminous crops associated with new rotation patterns, coincided with this increase in fodder production, indicating that there was an increase in the quality as well as the quantity of animal feed stocks (Table 2.4). This may help to explain the parallel growth in the size of flocks and herds, since a greater abundance of nutritious fodder would have enabled larger numbers of animals to be maintained over the winter months.

Inventory evidence from the study parishes reveals that these changes in the nature of agrarian production took place against a background of farm engrossment and piecemeal enclosure, as described above. Whilst the size of flocks might have been rising, the percentage of households keeping sheep declined from 55% in 1580-1620 to only 26% by the early 1700s. The number of households with cattle similarly fell from 71% to 47%, and the proportion growing cereals also declined by a quarter (Table 2.4). Moreover, there was a tendency for median and mean value figures to converge over time, suggesting that flocks and herds of above-average size were becoming more commonplace. What this evidence shows is that a declining proportion of inventoried households within this part of the study area were engaged in agricultural production, but

those that were tended to operate on a larger scale.[37] In other words a larger proportion of households fell within the yeoman category at the close of the study period, whereas in the early 1600s most farmers had been husbandmen, operating on a small scale, alongside a few gentleman graziers with very large holdings. This conclusion is supported by the evidence of median inventoried wealth levels, which appear to have climbed steadily from the late seventeenth century, suggesting that land and agrarian income were being concentrated into fewer hands. The upward trend in wealth was particularly pronounced in agricultural parishes such as Spelsbury and Enstone, and its onset appears to coincide with the period of intensified engrossment and enclosure by agreement outlined earlier (Fig. 2.4).

It would seem, therefore, that the area around Ditchley was relatively typical of north-west Oxfordshire as a whole, although there were certain peculiarities associated with its proximity to Wychwood Forest. Households in forest edge townships such as Finstock and Fawler tended to devote smaller acreages to corn due to the infertility of the soil and to have more cattle since forage was more plentiful.[38] Such townships also had more diverse economies, with a number of craftsmen and labourers appearing amongst the sample of inventoried households.[39] As a result their median wealth levels were significantly lower than those of more agrarian parishes, particularly after the late seventeenth century, when rural industries began to expand in this part of Oxfordshire.[40] For example, the median wealth figures for Fawler/Finstock actually declined from £27 between 1660-99 to only £20 after 1700. Nevertheless, as a whole the inventory study area did broadly match the basic agrarian characteristics of the stonebrash district

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[37] The falling proportion of agrarian households reflected the engrossment of land into fewer, larger farms, and the growth of rural industries in the townships fringing the forest, which gathered pace after 1700. Textiles and leather working appear to have been particularly prominent.

[38] The grazing rights of the townships around Wychwood Forest are set out in Freeman (1997), 141.

[39] The diverse economies of forest districts are described in Hudson (1989), Neeson (1993), Skipp (1970), Watkins (1993) and Zell (1994).

[40] Glove-making, slate quarrying, and weaving were particularly important in the townships around Ditchley. Arkell (1947), 128-42; Beckinsale (1937), 357-60; Leyland & Troughton (1974), 7-12; Schulz (1938), 142; Sibbit (1968); V.C.H. vol. 10 (1972), 144.

described by Havinden, and its internal distinctions were much smaller than those between the four farming regions of Oxfordshire.[41]

2.4 The agrarian regimes of Spelsbury and Enstone

The two parishes that form the central focus of the study, Spelsbury and Enstone, had contrasting experiences. Both are large and irregular in shape, lie close to the post-medieval boundary of Wychwood Forest, and contain a number of constituent townships (Fig. 2.5). The pattern of settlement in each is similar to that found in neighbouring Charlbury and Shipton-under-Wychwood, suggesting that the parishes were newly settled during the period of twelfth and thirteenth-century population expansion, when there was significant assarting of woodland and colonisation of waste in the area. Most of the townships (Dean, Taston, Fulwell, Ditchley and Spelsbury in Spelsbury parish, and Gageingwell, Cleveley, Ditchley, Broadstone, Lidstone, Radford, Neat Enstone and Church Enstone in Enstone parish) seem to have been manors in their own right in the early medieval period. Jordan noted that Enstone "as it now exists, is an agglomeration of various places that formerly were independent manors, parishes, or chapelries, until they became appendages to the original manor of Enstone, and to the principal church and parish at Enstone."[42] Manorial control continued to be divided into the Tudor period and beyond. Dean in Spelsbury and Chalford in Enstone together formed a separate manor, owned by Oriel College, Oxford (Figs. 2.6, 2.9). The will and inventory of Joseph Walker, who died in 1780, indicate that he held the manorial rights and also had a substantial estate in Dean, leased for three lives: the college appears to have leased out the land in this way throughout the study period.[43] Similarly Lidstone's 360 acres were wholly owned by Brasenose College, whilst Broadstone consisted entirely of demesne land and had been enclosed as a single private estate by the late seventeenth century.

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[41] Havinden (1961a).
[42] Jordan (1857), 3-4.
[43] O.A. MS wills Oxon., 74/4/27.

Ditchley too was a separate manor in 1583 when Sir Henry Lee, the Ranger of Woodstock Park, purchased it from Thomas Gybbons. It remained part of Wychwood Forest until Lee was given permission in 1605 to "impale and hold in severalty certain woods and woodgrounds of his own, called Charlbury, Spillesbury, Taston, Fulwell and Ditchley woods in the County of Oxford and thereof to make a park for the feeding of deer and other beasts of game so as it be not within any of his Majesty's Forest".[44] The park thus created formed the nucleus of the Ditchley estate whose accounts are the main source used in this study. As well as the manor house and gardens, Lee's purchase included "400 acres of (arable) land, 40 acres of meadow, 200 acres of pasture, 250 acres of wood, and 300 acres of furze and heath", costing in all £400 (Fig. 2.11).[45] Most of this land was of poor quality, which explains the continued presence of large tracts of woodland and waste. A friend, Mr. Chamberlain, sent to reconnoitre the estate by Sir Henry, commented that there was "neither good arable nor pasture to be hoped for in a long time. The sheep commons (were) of little value, the woods much damaged."[46]

Apart from Ditchley itself, only Lidstone, Broadstone and Chalford were enclosed at an early date.[47] In each case the land was converted to pasture for sheep during the late fifteenth century when wool prices were at their highest and populations in more marginal, recently settled townships were still struggling to recover from the effects of plague mortality. In the case of Chalford these changes took place in 1471 when the manor passed to Oriel College. The former open fields were then rented out as one large pasture farm, this being held in 1695 by Giles Diston of Chadlington who paid rent of £140 10s.[48] The less fertile lands of northern Enstone were thus subject to the type of depopulating enclosure decried by many contemporary commentators in the

[44] Corbett (1931), 137.
[45] Corbett (1931), 136.
[46] Quoted in Corbett (1931), 114.
[47] Jordan (1857), 21-8.
[48] Lobel (1935), 6-7, 70.

sixteenth century.[49] Both Over Chalford and Broadstone are the sites of deserted villages surrounded by the remains of open field systems attesting to the former tillage of the land there.[50] Ditchley, too, lost population after its conversion to a deer park and large leasehold farm, although its origins as a hunting lodge within the royal forest meant that the area of arable land in the manor had always been relatively small.[51] By 1665, however, only the 34 hearths of the manor house were counted by the Hearth Tax enumerators.[52]

The remaining townships retained their open fields at least until the beginning of the eighteenth century: Gageingwell and Radford were both enclosed by agreement before 1730, Cleveley followed suit in the 1750s, and Dean was subject to one of the earlier Parliamentary Acts in 1779. Spelsbury and Enstone, however, still had open fields in 1800, the latter until 1843.[53] From the late seventeenth century, however, the old two-field system in many of these townships was replaced by a more complex arrangement of four or more fields.[54] In Enstone these fields were described as quarters on the 1843 enclosure map, although in Neat Enstone's case there appear to have been eleven of them.[55] Land at Spelsbury, Taston and Fulwell, on the other hand, was arranged into furlongs, suggesting that these were the units of rotation here (Figs. 2.5-2.11). Redivision of the fields required the co-operation of all landholders, although it did not necessarily involve major expenditure on the construction of walls or hedges. Furlongs were customarily marked out with "meerstones", which could easily be moved during

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[49] The Tudor debate on depopulating enclosure pitted agricultural writers and graziers against many clergymen and radical pamphleteers such as Thomas More. Beresford (1954); Taylor (1988), 11-13; Yelling (1977), 217-22.

[50] Allison et al (1965), 33-4.

[51] The arable assart land belonging to Ditchley Farm may not have been fully enclosed since it continued to be measured in yardlands into the eighteenth century and contemporary documents indicate that neighbouring townships had grazing rights in the fields.

[52] Weinstock ed. (1940), 172.

[53] Oxfordshire County Council (1963).

[54] Redivision of fields has often been seen as a precursor to enclosure since it was usually motivated by a desire by the larger farmers to manage the land more effectively.

[55] Gray (1915), 128.

the reorganisation process under the supervision of the manor court.[56] In 1745 the inhabitants of Taston, Spelsbury and Fulwell agreed at their Courts Baron that, wherever it was necessary to erect meerstones in their fields, this should be arranged by the jury, and that anyone removing the stones or ploughing beyond them should be fined 10s as a deterrent.[57]

The townships in Spelsbury and Enstone chose to redivide their fields in order to facilitate the adoption of more complex courses of rotation that could not be readily accommodated within the old two-field structure.[58] At Dean and Cleveley, where a two-field system survived until enclosure, one field had to be left fallow each year. This land could be partially hitched with clover or ley grasses such as ryegrass, but remained unavailable for cultivation. At Dean the other field was sown half with wheat before Christmas, and the other half with oats and barley in the spring.[59] Grass leys, legumes and clovers, such as sainfoin, could be more easily incorporated into the rotation if the two fields were subdivided, so that whole areas could be laid down to a particular crop rather than having to fit in with a two-year cycle. Thus when the inhabitants of Spelsbury decided to introduce sainfoin in 1708 they took the opportunity to reorganise their arable rotation. A new four-field system was introduced, one field being set-aside for sainfoin, whilst two were to bear corn and one to lie fallow.[60]

The introduction of convertible husbandry and sowing of leguminous grasses have been described as the most significant innovations to affect the agrarian regimes of open field townships on the limestone uplands during the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries, and there is plentiful evidence that such practices had been adopted within Spelsbury parish.[61] The 1803 enclosure map marks out a particular area

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[56] Corbett (1931), 70.
[57] O.A. Manor Court Rolls (hereafter Court Rolls), DIL II/w/141.
[58] Young (1794), 111-30; Gray (1915), 125-30.
[59] Lobel (1935), 13-4.
[60] O.A., DIL II/n/2b.
[61] Butlin (1982), 53-4; Havinden (1961b), 75-7.

north of Taston as "old sainfoin", suggesting that a block of land had been temporarily withdrawn from the common fields for the cultivation of this particularly nutritious fodder crop (Fig. 2.10). These suspicions are confirmed by a document dated 4th January 1700 through which the twenty-two tenants of Taston agreed to temporarily "enclose" five furlongs of their fields and sow it with sainfoin. Common grazing rights over the land were preserved but their extent and duration were limited to ensure that the crop was not damaged. Three fieldsmen were appointed to supervise these regulations and collect fines for non-compliance: for instance, ploughing up of sainfoin incurred a hefty fine of £10 a furrow.[62] Similar agreements were drawn up for Spelsbury (1708) and Fulwell (1715), although in the latter case the land had been enclosed for sainfoin before but had later reverted back into the ordinary common-field rotation.[63]

The new rotations emerging in the early eighteenth century could involve anything from four to eight courses, the latter being the most common. An illustration of such a rotation is provided by a document detailing the sequence of crops grown in the various fields of Ditchley Farm between 1768 and 1775 (Fig. 2.12).[64] The crop rotation in the Winchcomb Sarts was wheat followed by peas, fallow, fallow, black oats, barley and laid sainfoin, and then two years of sainfoin. Another field, Pintle Hill, on the other hand, began in 1768 with two years as ley pasture sown with grass seed before being sown with oats, then turnips, wheat and barley. In 1773 part of the field was used for oats, the rest laid down to pasture, and in the following year it was seeded with grass again before being used as sheep common in 1775.[65] All the farm's fields followed a slightly different rotation, but in general it seems that, after a couple of cereal crops, the

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[62] O.A., DIL II/n/1.
[63] Havinden (1961b), 77. Information drawn from O.A., DIL II/t/2.
[64] The crop rotation used by the tenant farmer here may have differed considerably from that used by the neighbouring common field farmers since it is not clear whether the land within the holding described as "commonable" was enclosed or lay in the open fields.
[65] O.A., DIL I/c/17ii.

land was either planted with legumes, laid down as ley pasture or left fallow in order to recover its fertility. Moreover, the use of leguminous grasses on Ditchley Farm was certainly not a new phenomenon in the 1760s. A tithe valuation document of 1741, listing all the fields and their acreages, notes that Great Boxwood Piece, Horse Pool Hills, Devil Pool Hill, Common Sarts and Fenny Chapell were at the time under sainfoin.[66]

Considerable co-ordination of farming practices and regulation of individual behaviour at the township level was necessary to operate crop rotations effectively within the open fields at a time when most farmers still held strips scattered throughout the various furlongs.[67] This was achieved through the manorial courts in Enstone and Spelsbury, which continued to meet until the late eighteenth century. Examination of the Court Rolls for Spelsbury, which survive from 1510, provide an insight into the sorts of regulations which had always been deemed necessary to curb individual self-interest for the benefit of the community as a whole. Those who strayed from the established norms of behaviour were fined in order to deter others, with size of the punishment reflecting the extent to which their actions threatened the smooth running of the communal farming system. Thus minor transgressors such as Thomas Wise, who, in 1517, "cut off the head of a tree called the Crabtree in his tenancy" incurred only a 4d fine. In 1559, on the other hand, a group of tenants who allowed their pigs to break out from the woodland and damage good pasture in the Seartes fields were amerced the considerable sum of 5 shillings.[68]

Surviving court rolls show that by the early eighteenth century the adoption of more complex courses of rotation was placing the system of customary controls under considerable stress. The Courts were compelled periodically to issue instructions governing farming practices in the area under their jurisdiction in order to counteract

[66] O.A., DIL 1/c/17i.
[67] Orwin & Orwin (1935), 124-27.
[68] Jordan (1857), 309-16; Corbett (1931), 68-83.

such pressures. Thus the 1736 court for Spelsbury ordered that "no person shall put any mare and colt upon a single horse common, and no man to put a cowe and calfe on a single cow common after the calfe is five weeks old".[69] Clearly there had been abuse of the stint operating on the township's common with many tenants trying to sneak on extra young animals. Additionally, the presentments at the 1745 court noted that John Rook had removed meerstones lying between his own and his neighbours' land and ploughed beyond where they had previously stood.[70]

Many of the presentments at the courts now related to the plundering of common resources by individuals, often for commercial gain. For instance, in 1731 John Margetts was presented at Enstone Court "for erecting a pigsty and gathering wood upon the common facing towards Neat Enstone", being amerced 2s 6d as a consequence. At the same court Thomas Attwood was threatened with a much larger fine of 20s if he did not remove two quarries he had dug on the waste, whilst at Spelsbury in 1740 Joseph Castle was charged with "making an encroachment on the common by taking the same in by a stake hedge from without his ditch".[71] Rights of common in the area were important as there remained a considerable area of woodland and waste, and the courts clearly fought hard to keep control over the usage of this land. Ditchley Farm, for example, appears to have been enclosed by the eighteenth century, although some of its lands must have retained common rights, since an account of 1727 purports to list " all lands belonging to Ditchley Farm in the parishes of Enstone and Spelsbury as they are in severall or common in the present year" (Fig. 2.13).[72] There is clear evidence that neighbouring townships had significant intercommoning rights in the Ditchley fields, illustrated by a letter concerning the impact enclosure of these

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[69] Court Rolls, DIL II/w/140.
[70] Court Rolls, DIL II/w/141. Similar presentments from Laxton Court rolls are described by Orwin & Orwin (1938), 127-57.
[71] Court Rolls, DIL II/w/140-42.
[72] O.A., DIL I/c/11. It was possible for enclosed land to retain common rights, just as open field land could be held in severalty. Baker (1969), 136-40; Butlin (1982), 42-3; Kerridge (1967), 16-19.

townships might have on the size of flocks sent onto the common land. In this letter the steward wrote to the Earl, his employer, explaining that:

"Your Lordships estate at Ditchley containes neare 2000 acres of arable land which is called assart land and one half of the land lyeth common every yeare and the other half is sowed corne and as the corne is taken off the land at harvist all the comoners put in their sheep on that land also, and one part of this land lyeth in Spelsbury parish and the other part lyeth in Enstone parish and that there are 8 villages that the persons there have common on all the comonable land belonging to Ditchley and that now all the lands belonging to these villages lyeth in open fields and none of them intierly inclosed. Where those persons were used to keepe their flock sheepe as well on their owne fields as upon Ditchley, and those fields having but little severall belonging to their estates so that they could raise but small flocks of sheepe to be kept in the winter and look what stocks of sheepe they keepe in the winter they did bring in the summer to comon on the asart lands and no more, which I have heard said is the custome, and now if they inclose their fields they will be able to keepe bigger stocks of sheep in the winter and so by consequence to bring bigger stocks of sheep in the summer upon the assart lands. The names of the townes that have comon on the assart lands and that may inclose the comon fields are Kidington, Wootton, Old Woodstock, Comb, Stonesfield, Fawler, Charlbury and Cleveley and some have assart lands and some not and some have inclosed some."[73]

This document shows that common rights in Ditchley's fields were a vital part of the agrarian system for a ring of surrounding townships. Tenants there relied on access to summer grazing for their sheep at Ditchley whilst their own fields were planted with crops. Farming operations in this group of townships was integrated to the extent that the steward could foresee that a significant reorganisation of farming practices in any of them would have an adverse affect upon the estate and its common resources.[74] The fact

[73] O.A., DIL I/c/17v.

[74] Fewer households in these townships had sheep, and flocks tended to be smaller than in Enstone or Spelsbury. For instance only 15% of Charlbury and 20% of Stonesfield inventories listed sheep compared with an overall figure of 38%. However, flock sizes held by residents of these townships tended to increase over the course of the study period.

that Ditchley Farm, despite being leased commercially, continued to be partially held "in common", illustrates the point that customary and commercial agriculture effectively co-existed in many places. Whilst common rights remained the two systems were meshed together by a complex web of inter-connections.[75]

Townships linked to Ditchley lay mainly to the south and east, and most shared the same origins, being originally assart land cleared from within Wychwood Forest. The other parts of Spelsbury and Enstone had less extensive areas of common land upon which to draw. Other than the balklands, fallow field and stubble after the harvest there were only a few closes and a small area of waste, something which must have given extra impetus to their plans to redivide their fields in order to reduce fallow and increase fodder production.[76] The yeomen of Enstone and Spelsbury would, however, have been able to rent pasture land in neighbouring early enclosed parishes such as Heythrop and Kiddington to supplement their grazing resources. For instance, in 1733 John Margetts, a Neat Enstone carpenter, rented an 8 acre close in Kiddington from the trustees of the Enstone beef estate, a charity established in the bequest of Benjamin Marten to provide the poor of the parish with meat.[77]

In addition to the differential access to common grazing in Spelsbury and Enstone there was also a contrasting landholding structure in the two parishes which endured over the study period despite considerable engrossment and tenurial transformation. A manorial survey of 1626 reveals Spelsbury to be primarily a parish of husbandmen: 78% of the land was in the hands of 32 tenants with holdings of 20-80 acres.[78] There were only three yeoman farmers in the parish with larger holdings and the median farm

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[75] Such co-existence was most common in areas of gradual piecemeal enclosure. This occurred mainly in peripheral pastoral districts and woodland areas. Yelling (1977), 6-10; Taylor (1988), 8-10; Neeson (1993), 72-109; Overton (1996), 147-48.

[76] Balklands were the narrow ridges left when ploughing strips within the common fields.

[77] Jordan (1857), 284-85.

[78] O.A. Manorial Survey 1626 (hereafter Survey), DIL II/a/4a$_2$. Spelsbury in this case refers to Spelsbury manor only, thus excluding the townships of Dean and Ditchley, which were manors in their own right.

size was around 40 acres.[79] As in most manorial surveys the holdings were measured in yardlands, and clearly, within the three townships concerned (Spelsbury, Taston and Fulwell), the majority of tenants held under two yardlands.[80] This amount of land would have provided an adequate subsistence, but only periodic surpluses for sale in the marketplace, something reflected in the narrow range of household goods found in the inventories of Spelsbury husbandmen from this period. Such a pattern of landholding was typical of the limestone uplands during the early seventeenth century, with most farms being less than 80 acres in size. Within the study area Combe, Stonesfield and Kingham amongst others had similar landholding structures, although the first two had a large number of tenants with very small holdings of fewer than 20 acres.[81] This distinction is clearly illustrated by the measure of median inventoried wealth: in Stonesfield this stood at only £14 during the 1580-1619 period, whereas in Spelsbury the corresponding figure was £28.

As we have already noted, there were also some parishes on the stonebrash with one or two very large holdings that took up a significant percentage of the overall acreage. In most cases this was demesne land which was still being farmed as a single unit or had been split into a few large pasture farms. Examples of this include Shipton-under-Wychwood, Chastleton, Heythrop and Sarsden. Such parishes were susceptible to early enclosure because of the concentration of land into only a few hands, and most were, indeed, enclosed before 1660.[82] Enstone, however, falls into a separate category of parishes where most of the land was divided into medium sized farms of between 100-200 acres, alongside a significant number of smallholders. A survey of 1634 shows 17 yeomen holding 87% of the land, whilst the 9 husbandmen farmed only 12%. None of the farms was exceptionally large but the median size was 100-120 acres, almost three

[79] Havinden (1961a), 49.
[80] Yardlands were a customary measure of land amounting to a quarter of a hide and could vary between parishes. In Spelsbury one yardland was approximately 38 acres.
[81] This was probably a consequence of the intercommoning rights both parishes had at Ditchely.
[82] Gray (1915), 119-22; Havinden (1961a), ; Emery (1974), 110.

times greater than in neighbouring Spelsbury.[83] Yeoman farmers such as these would have produced a regular saleable surplus from their land.

As in most of the Thames valley, copyhold for lives was the most common form of customary tenure in both parishes.[84] On payment of an entry fine the copyhold was granted for a number of lives, usually the farmer, his wife, son and grandson, in exchange for payment of a nominal yearly rent. Most copies were, however, surrendered before the commencement of the last life, and the family readmitted with a new copy covering three lives as this ensured continuity of landholding. The 1626 survey indicates that 91% of the land within the manor of Spelsbury was copyhold, the remainder being leased by commercial tenants. Enstone, on the other hand, had only 50% of its land under customary tenure, with a further 37% being commercial leasehold and the remaining 13% freehold.[85] This contrasting patterns of tenure suggests the presence of several substantial freeholders in Enstone, as opposed to the domination of Spelsbury by a single landowner, something that is supported by documentary evidence and the visible remains of mansions and gardens. Enstone's parish registers document the life histories of several minor gentry families, such as the Eyans, Marshalls, Tilliards, Cannings and Martens, who lived on estates there. The Eyans' ancestral home was a mansion standing in the vicarage grounds, east of the church in Church Enstone, whilst the Cannings resided in Neat Enstone.[86] Spelsbury (exclusive of Dean township) had no resident gentry after Sir Henry Lee's purchase of Ditchley and Spelsbury manors, and therefore management of tenures was more uniform, being based primarily on the renewal of copies and preservation of the existing tenurial structure.[87]

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[83] Havinden (1961a), 49. Evidence is taken from Survey 1634, DIL III/b/1.

[84] Alternative systems of customary tenure operating during the period included copyhold of inheritance and beneficial leases. Hereditary copyhold, the usual form in the eastern counties and Midlands, imposed restrictions on the landlord's ability to raise entry fines since the tenant had the right of inheritance, which was not the case under copyhold for lives. Beneficial leases, although not strictly customary in character, were fixed upon the lives of three named individuals. Clay (1985), 198-208.

[85] Havinden (1961a), 53.

[86] Jordan (1857), 15.

[87] Corbett (1931), 136.

Despite the trend towards larger farms over the preceding half-century, the pattern of landholding in Spelsbury was similar in 1705 to what it had been in 1626. There were still 31 husbandmen, but they now held only 64% of the land, whilst four larger tenants split the remaining 36% between them. This change in the area occupied by the larger farms was due almost entirely to the expansion of the manor farm, which now stood at 10 yardlands, approximately 380 acres of leasehold land.[88] Otherwise Spelsbury remained a manor of small farmers, all but one of whom were customary tenants, indicating a high level of stability in the local agrarian system. In Enstone, too, the pattern of landholding appears not to have undergone significant change. A 1718 survey shows that the 17 yeomen farmers had maintained their dominant position in the parish, although smallholders and husbandmen now made up 58% of the total landholding population.[89] This growth in numbers had obviously been achieved by subdivision of lesser holdings or encroachment by squatters rather than at the expense of the larger farmer, since yeomen still held 86% of the land.[90] Indeed, in some of the townships, smallholdings were entirely absent by the early eighteenth century, something which had probably been the case for more than a century. When Gageingwell was enclosed in 1712, all the land was held by six farmers: 3 freeholders with farms of 105, 93 and 50 acres; one leaseholder with 43 acres; and two copyholders with 101 and 92 acres respectively.[91]

Enstone had, by 1718, witnessed change, not in the size of holdings but in their tenure. Although the parish retained its diverse mixture of copyhold, freehold and leasehold, there had been a definite shift towards short-term commercial leasing as ultimate ownership of the land was engrossed into fewer hands. By the early eighteenth century the large landowners, most notably the Earl of Litchfield, Nicholas Marshall

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[88] Survey 1705, DIL II/a/4e.
[89] Survey 1718, DIL III/b/2.
[90] Havinden (1961a), 188.
[91] Figures are drawn from Edward Grantham's 1713 enclosure map of Gageingwell, Bod. MS C17:49(III).

and Benjamin Marten, had acquired the freehold of much of the parish, and they were largely responsible for the expansion of leasing. Although some were descendants of the freeholders living in the parish in the 1600s, many of these men were recent arrivals in Enstone: Benjamin Marten, founder of the beef charity, came to Radford in the early eighteenth century from Rousham where his father had a small estate.[92] Expansion of leasehold tenure, which gathered pace over the course of the eighteenth century, depended ultimately for its timing on the rental policies of these larger landowners.[93]

"By 1780 the occupying owners, including freeholders, copyholders and lessees for lives, had ceased to be an outstanding feature of the English rural economy", and were disappearing from many of the parishes within the limestone uplands.[94] From the 1680s landowners in the area could buy up freeholders' land and allow beneficial leases and copyholds to run out without fearing the short-term consequences for their rental income, due to the emergence of a comprehensive mortgage market.[95] By 1700 this process was already well underway at Enstone, where landholding had for a long time been more concentrated. At Spelsbury, however, the change in approach to estate management seems to have occurred in 1705 and is documented in the manorial survey drawn up in that year. Until 1705 copyholds were renewed in the customary manner. At Spelsbury Manor Court on April 18th 1704 two half yardlands and a messuage in Spelsbury were let to Thomas Issard for the life of his son, Francis Issard, Francis's wife and child.[96] Yet less than a year later a survey document, entitled "A Particular of the Copyholders and Leaseholders Within the Manor of Spelsbury Taken March 11 1705", appeared.[97] It listed the names of all copyholders; the size of each holding; its annual rental value; the quit rent, and more revealingly, the number of lives remaining

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[92] Jordan (1857), 12-49.
[93] Taylor (1988), 336.
[94] Davis (1927), 110 quoted in Allen (1992), 79.
[95] Wordie (1982), 29-31.
[96] O.A. Account of all copyhold and leasehold estates let in Spelsbury and Enstone 1703-4, DIL II/a/4d.
[97] Survey 1705, DIL II/a/4e.

with the ages of the future tenants. Over the top of many of the names were noted, in a different hand, such observations as "In the lords hand and let to Coleing" and "deceased 1729, widows estate".

This document details a process, common throughout arable England in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries, of "running out" copyhold tenures and replacing them with short-term commercial leases.[98] The proportion of land at Spelsbury held under leasehold tenure steadily increased as individual tenements and yardlands within the open fields were relet piecemeal at commercial rates. In 1702 only 2 open field leasehold tenements appeared in the list of rentals for the Ditchley estate, whereas by 1720 the number was 6, and had risen to 22 by 1750.[99] From the rentals it is clear that the parcels of land being leased out remained within the common fields, and were not fully consolidated and enclosed holdings. As late as 1750 most of the leases were granted for land held in yardlands, the customary measurement in open fields. For instance, Robert Harris, a yeoman of Taston, was recorded as having rented two yardlands, one formerly Lawrence Cross's and one the Widow Hadland's.[100]

Wordie describes the "discontinuance of the seventeenth-century custom of taking a high entry fine and then charging a low rent under a lease for lives. After 1700, there was a swing towards shorter-term leases and letting at will. Entry fines therefore diminished or disappeared and rents rose".[101] By changing the system of tenure, a landlord could readily increase his annual income by raising rents without the necessity to undertake expensive and disruptive reorganisation of the landholding structure. However, Allen's argument that the elimination of small freeholders and customary tenants was done to create larger, more efficient farms which would yield higher rental

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[98] The debate about the evolution of rental policy on the great estates is covered in Allen (1992); Beckett (1977); Tawney (1912) and Wordie (1982).
[99] O.A. Ditchley Estate Accounts (hereafter Accounts), DIL I/l/33a_1,c_5,j_9.
[100] Accounts, DIL I/l/33j_9
[101] Wordie (1974), 599.

income for the landlord does not seem to be appropriate in this case.[102] In both Spelsbury and Enstone the mean size of farms increased only slightly over the course of the seventeenth century, and this situation did not alter markedly in the decades after 1700. The expansion of leasehold tenure came from the reletting of formerly customary holdings at commercial rates, as was noted above, and therefore most, especially in Spelsbury, were only one or two yardlands in size. There were numerous examples of two customary holdings being combined together. For instance, the barn and yardland, formerly belonging to Ryman, and the tenement and two yardlands of Rook's, were both being rented by Thomas Hyatt of Fulwell in 1750, but this was essentially only the initial stages of the consolidation process.[103]

However, the society created by these changes differed markedly from that which had gone before. With the gradual erosion of customary tenure husbandmen began to disappear, replaced by a social structure of landlord, commercial tenant farmer and cottager or landless labourer. This tripartite division was in no way universal or all embracing, since significant elements of customary tenure survived until enclosure, but it was representative of the new social order.[104] Despite the spread of short-term leasehold contracts at Ditchley, consolidation of holdings and the enclosure of open field land remained a protracted process, since customary tenants held land scattered throughout the common fields and longevity could delay the acquisition and reletting of particular tenements for decades. Landowners, however, were usually prepared to wait for nature to take its course, without seeking actively to evict tenants, since every holding converted to leasing straightaway provided an enhanced rental income. Rents could continue to climb so long as there were commercial farmers willing and able to pay them. "The prevalence of leasehold released the tenancy market from the

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[102] Allen (1992), 85-87.
[103] Accounts, DIL I/l/33j$_9$
[104] Neeson (1993), 55-71.

constraints of kinship and created a competition for tenancies".[105] The landlord could stand back from active participation, leaving farm production and its attendant risks to his commercial tenants, whilst he lived off the rents they paid.

2.5 Population trends and the agrarian economy

The population of England grew from around 3 million in 1550 to 5.8 million in 1750 and 8.7 million in 1800. Over this span three distinct demographic periods can be identified. Between the mid-sixteenth and mid-seventeenth century population almost doubled, increasing from 3 to 5.5 million at an average growth rate of 0.56% per annum. Growth then ceased, to be followed by a period of decline and stagnation, punctuated by a brief recovery in the 1670s, with slow growth only resuming during the early eighteenth century. The final period saw population levels accelerating upwards from the 1740s into the nineteenth century.[106] These overall trends, of course, disguised significant sectoral and regional variations. Within rural areas population expansion was more gradual and the impact of the late seventeenth century setback less noticeable. The agricultural population remained stable at around 3 million from 1600-70, before falling back to only 2.6 million in 1750, then rising again to 3.1 million by 1801.[107] These figures reflect a major outflow of people from the countryside to the towns, so that the proportion living in rural areas fell from 70% in 1600 to only 36% by 1801.[108]

Demographic trends at a regional level also diverged from the national picture, and at this level of aggregation the role of migration was often decisive. Many of the rural districts around London, for example, grew more slowly than their counterparts in the Midlands and North due to the outflow of population to the capital and stifling of rural

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[105] Bush (1984), 181.
[106] Wrigley & Schofield (1981), 207-11.
[107] Wrigley (1985), 700.
[108] Taylor (1988), 220.

industry.[109] Oxfordshire appears to have avoided the level of out-migration that took place from the Home Counties, although it did suffer a net loss of population during the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries.[110] Within the county the fertile redlands in the north were the most densely settled, whilst the heavier clays and gravels to the south supported fewer people. The limestone uplands fell somewhere between these two extremes, and, indeed, there were significant contrasts within this region too as a result of its varied soils and topography.[111] As was noted before, the valleys of the Evenlode, Dorn and Glyme were the most densely populated. This area, carved out of Wychwood Forest, consisted of large parishes with sizeable populations spread over a number of constituent townships. East of the Cherwell settlement was more nucleated, parishes smaller and population densities much lower.[112]

a) *Population estimates from static sources*

Estimates of parish population size during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries can be derived from various fiscal and ecclesiastical sources. Most of the forty study parishes are covered by the 1641-2 Protestation Returns; the 1662 or 1665 Hearth Taxes; the 1676 Compton Census, and Bishop Secker's Visitation of 1738. Each deals with a different section of the population, such as communicants or households, making direct comparison difficult, but estimates of total population can be derived from each with some degree of confidence using widely recognised multipliers.[113] The resulting population totals can be supplemented by figures taken from the first two censuses in 1801 and 1811, and together they provide a rough outline of population change in north-west Oxfordshire over the study period.

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[109] Clark (1979); Clark & Souden (1987); Spufford (1970).
[110] Allen (1992), 239-43; Taylor (1988), 223-24.
[111] Emery (1974), 71.
[112] Havinden (1961a), 42-4.
[113] These sources have been widely used by historians to derive population estimates for the early-modern period due to their relatively comprehensive coverage and standardised format. See Skipp (1978); Spufford (1974); Wrightson and Levine (1979).

The Protestation Returns list all men over 18 years of age, and are considered relatively accurate, although with a tendency to slightly underestimate.[114] Wrigley and Schofield's multiplier of 3.33 has been used to convert from taxpayers to total population, compensating for the exclusion of women and children from the returns.[115] The Hearth Tax is an altogether more problematic source. Theoretically the assessment for each parish recorded the names of householders and the number of hearths upon which tax was to be levied, followed by a list of those who were exempt from the tax. In reality, however, lists were often incomplete, exempt households were frequently omitted, and the tax was subject to widespread evasion, throwing into question the validity of the population totals calculated.[116] For parishes in Wootton Hundred it was possible to take the more accurate 1662 figures, but for the remainder values for 1662 had to be derived from the more dubious 1665 ones. This was done by calculating the mean difference between the 1662 and 1665 figures for those parishes where both existed, and then multiplying the remaining 1665 figures by this amount. Estimates of total population were then derived using a multiplier of 4.5 based on assumptions about average household size.[117] The resultant totals seem rather low in many cases when compared with those taken from the Protestation Returns, and consequently may be substantial underestimates.

The next available source, the Compton Census, is generally perceived as much more reliable. This recorded the number of communicants, recusants and dissenters in each parish to provide the Crown with a census of religious affiliation. For the purpose of demographic study communicants can be regarded as all adults over the age of 16, since few parishes in this area recorded a large number of papists or non-conformists,

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[114] Whiteman (1986), lxi.
[115] Wrigley & Schofield (1981), 567-8.
[116] Arkell (1992), 38-41.
[117] Taylor (1988), 224. This was the figure suggested for household size by Gregory King. Laslett found an overall mean of 4.75 for the period 1574-1821, but this was reduced to 4.3 for the years 1650-1749 when London parishes were excluded from his sample. Laslett (1972), 126-58.

and often the communicants figure erroneously included these individuals in any case.[118] Multiplying by 1.55 to allow for children should thus produce a good estimate of overall population in 1676 when the census was taken.[119] However, as Whiteman suggests, the returns are sometimes more complicated, referring only to male communicants or to the total population including children. Fortunately such anomalies can be identified by cross-referencing the Compton data with the 1811 census.[120] Wrigley showed that the population of England and Wales roughly doubled between 1676 and 1811, and thus, if one assumes that two-thirds of the population consisted of men and women over sixteen years of age, the ratio of census to Compton Census figures should be 3 to 1. When this test was applied to the study parishes only Duns Tew, Over Worton and Idbury had ratios low enough to suggest that the Compton figure might have included children as well as adult communicants. No parishes had ratios high enough to indicate that only adult males had been recorded. Once recognised these anomalies can be dealt with easily by simply failing to apply the multiplier to the figures for the parishes concerned.

The last set of documents used to provide population estimates for the study parishes was Bishop Secker's Visitation of 1738. Amongst other things, the bishop requested each parish priest to make a note of the number of houses or households under his jurisdiction. It seems that the two measures were considered interchangeable as each was used extensively throughout the region. A multiplier of 4.3 has been used to derive total population figures in this case under the assumption that average household size declined somewhat over the pre-industrial period.[121] Generally this source appears unproblematic, although in many parishes a suspiciously round number of houses or householders are recorded, suggesting that only a rough estimate has been made rather

[118] Whiteman (1986), lxxvi-lxxix.
[119] Wrigley & Schofield (1981), 214.
[120] Whiteman (1986), 413-27.
[121] This is the multiplier suggested by Laslett (1972). Arkell (1982) accepts the figure of 4.3 for households outside London, but notes that individual parishes could vary from 3.6-4.9.

than an actual count. Finally, population totals from the first accurate sources, the 1801 and 1811 censuses, have been added as a benchmark against which to judge the various estimates and the figures set out in tabular form.

Table 2.5 provides an outline of population size and the trajectory of growth within the study parishes from 1640-1811, clearly indicating that rural-urban migration was significant in the area, since numbers increased most rapidly in urban parishes such as Charlbury, Chipping Norton and Woodstock.[122] Other places witnessing a significant expansion of population over the period include Enstone and Shipton-under-Wychwood, both large parishes in or at the edge of Wychwood Forest, which had extensive common resources available to attract squatters. Most of the other parishes appear to have followed the national trend as outlined by Wrigley and Schofield.[123] Population levels are known to have fallen during the mid-seventeenth century and this is reflected in a 5% decline in the estimated total for the study area between 1641-2 and 1676. Subsequently, however, numbers began slowly to recover in this part of Oxfordshire. Few populations expanded as rapidly as Enstone's, which stood at 146% of its 1642 total in 1738, but most places had at least equalled their mid-seventeenth century levels by this date. Of the larger parishes only Spelsbury still showed a substantial decline: 118 men had been recorded at the Protestation Returns in 1642, but there appear only to have been 68 houses in the parish by 1738. Converted to population figures this represents a decline of 26%, something unmatched elsewhere in the study area.

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[122] Urban population growth during the early-modern period has been described by Clark (1979 and 1984); Corfield (1982); Patten (1973 and 1978); Wrigley (1985).
[123] Wrigley & Schofield (1981), 207-15.

b) *Aggregative population analysis*

Clearly the two neighbouring parishes, Spelsbury and Enstone, which form the central focus of this study, had widely divergent demographic experiences over the course of the study period. Whilst the population of Enstone grew steadily from the 1660s, Spelsbury underwent a prolonged period of stagnation which endured until the latter stages of the eighteenth century. In 1641-2 both parishes had estimated populations of around 400, yet the 1801 census shows Enstone with 912 inhabitants, almost double the 509 people living in Spelsbury (Table 2.5). Aggregative analysis of parish registers can be used to examine the demographic processes that brought about such patterns in greater detail.

Fortunately the parish registers for both Enstone and Spelsbury are relatively complete. Spelsbury's begins in 1541, and the few periods of defective recording during the second half of the sixteenth century and the Civil War period can be dealt with effectively by extrapolation. Enstone's register is more problematic as there is a gap in coverage between 1627 and 1649 caused by the loss of a register book, followed by further defective entries until 1690. Extrapolation has again been used to try to overcome these shortcomings, so the trend during the middle part of the seventeenth century must be treated with caution. Nevertheless plotting the aggregative figures for baptisms, marriages and burials from the two parishes using a 25 year moving average reveals contrasting demographic trends which go some way to explaining the differential rates of population growth.

In Spelsbury the mean number of baptisms remained little changed at around 12-14 throughout the study period, dipping to a low point of 10 or 11 at the turn of the seventeenth century. The trends in burials and marriages followed a similarly flat trajectory, providing additional evidence that the overall population of the parish had remained almost static (Fig. 2.14). Indeed convergence of the baptism and burial figures in the 1650s-60s and in the 1740s indicates the possibility that Spelsbury's

population may actually have declined periodically. In Enstone, on the other hand, the trend in baptisms is definitely upwards after 1680, almost doubling by 1760. Thereafter the increase was even more rapid before falling back in the last decade of the eighteenth century (Fig. 2.15). The average number of marriages had also doubled by 1800, although growth only commenced in 1740, suggesting that the base population of the parish must have significantly expanded in the early 1700s. Much of this growth may well have come from natural increase as there appears to have been a steady divergence of the trend in baptisms and burials from the late seventeenth century. It must be remembered, though, that the figures for the preceding half-century are missing or highly defective and the actual levels of baptisms and burials during the Civil War and Commonwealth periods may have been higher than those derived by extrapolation. However, given that the mid-seventeenth century is recognised as a period of population crisis, it seems unlikely that at Enstone the number of baptisms during this period would have exceeded the level at the beginning of the century, and these figures are substantially lower than those after 1700.

Thus the levels of fertility, mortality and nuptiality appear to have remained relatively constant in Spelsbury throughout the 1540-1800 period, whereas in Enstone the number of baptisms increased significantly from the late seventeenth century, followed by increases in the numbers of marriages and burials. Comparison with Taylor's figures for her thirteen study parishes lying within the stonebrash region on the opposite side of the Cherwell is instructive.[124] Enstone seems to follow more closely the overall trends that she identified, especially with regard to the growth trajectory post-1700. However, it does appear that the expansion in the number of baptisms took place earlier in Enstone than it did within Taylor's parishes. From a national perspective, though, both sets of series are rather flat, particularly during the two periods when population growth within the country as a whole was at its greatest: 1550-1640 and

[124] Taylor (1988), 240-65.

1700-1850.[125] Prior to 1700 there was a lack of any noticeable upward trend in the level of baptisms, burials and marriages in both Enstone and Spelsbury suggesting there had not been a significant increase in the population of either parish. This assumption is supported by the assembled population estimates, which in fact show a slight decline in both cases: Enstone had around 413 inhabitants in 1641-2 but only 388 in 1676, whilst Spelsbury went from 393 people to only 228 over the same period (Table 2.5). Spelsbury's baptism trend remained subdued until the close of the eighteenth century, and consequently genuine growth remained stalled here until after 1780 (Fig. 2.14).

The overall picture conveyed by the aggregate data is one of demographic stagnation, which in Spelsbury's case, at least, continued into the middle of the eighteenth century. However, there was a substantial surplus of baptisms over burials in both parishes throughout the study period, and thus this stagnation can only be explained by net outmigration. This process must have been prevalent throughout the limestone uplands, explaining the lower than expected population growth over the whole region picked up by Taylor, but its impact was differential. Clearly the effect upon Spelsbury of this outflow of people was more severe and lasted considerably longer.

Given that both parishes lay within the same natural region, their contrasting demographic experiences must be explained by institutional rather than environmental factors.[126] Certainly differences in the pattern of landholding had a significant impact upon population levels elsewhere. They influenced the availability of settlement opportunities and this directly affected the extent of outmigration.[127] So how can the differing landholding structures of Enstone and Spelsbury be related to their contrasting population histories? The demographic characteristics of the two parishes are in many ways similar to those of Bletchingdon and Kirtlington, the places upon which Taylor

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[125] Wrigley & Schofield (1981), 207-15.
[126] Both Spelsbury and Enstone lay within the stonebrash district outside the main forested area as did Taylor's 13 study parishes.
[127] Levine (1984); Wrightson (1982).

focused, Enstone having many features in common with the former, and Spelsbury more closely resembling the latter (Figs. 2.16a-b).[128] She explained her parishes' contrasting population trajectories with reference to their patterns of land ownership and enclosure history, and a similar exercise has been attempted here.

Bletchingdon was subject to early piecemeal enclosure culminating in an agreement dating from 1623 that completed the extinction of the open fields in the parish. The resulting concentration of landownership led to a polarisation of the village community, encouraging movement away from the parish, reflected in the baptism, marriage and burial records. All three indicators remain subdued throughout the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries, only picking up after 1750 when population growth was increasing at a national level. Kirtlington, on the other hand, remained a classic Midland open-field village until the middle of the eighteenth century, adapting to changing economic circumstances through innovations such as hitching and the use of ley pastures. The absence of extensive engrossment meant that the landholding structure remained more equitable, with many husbandmen, smallholders and labourers but few large farmers. Consequently the trend in baptisms and marriages was more buoyant than in neighbouring Bletchingdon during the earlier periods. After 1750, however, Kirtlington's series seem surprisingly flat, suggesting population stability rather than the expected growth. This coincides with the establishment of the Dashwood family in the parish, their acquisition of extensive tracts of land, and implementation of a policy of farm enlargement that would eventually lead to enclosure in 1815.[129]

Despite their contrasting demographic experiences, both Enstone and Spelsbury were late enclosers: Spelsbury finally lost its open fields in 1803, whilst the Parliamentary Act enclosing Church and Neat Enstone was not passed until 1843.[130] This gives a

[128] Taylor (1988), 242-48.
[129] Taylor (1988), 242-60.
[130] Corbett (1931), 237-38; Oxfordshire County Council (1963), 19,39.

somewhat misleading impression, however, since it has already been noted that both parishes contained a number of townships, many of which had abandoned common field agriculture at a much earlier date. Parts of Enstone had been subject to depopulating enclosure in the sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries, and two other townships, Gageingwell and Radford were enclosed in the opening decades of the eighteenth century. Moreover a disaggregated approach to the examination of the enclosure process reveals that the various components rarely coincided. More often it was through "piecemeal processes of change that a fully- functioning communal open-field system was gradually metamorphosed into a system of farming in severalty".[131]

One of the key elements of the process was the engrossment of land, and as we have already seen this had clearly been taking place throughout Enstone several centuries prior to the final act of enclosure. The manorial survey of 1634 indicates that already 53% of tenants had holdings of over 80 acres, and this group occupied 87% of the land.[132] This helps to explain the stability of Enstone's population during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries at a time when most rural parishes were experiencing substantial growth. Concentration of landholding must have restricted access to land, preventing new households from becoming established in the parish. Those without land may have been employed as servants in husbandry on one of the large farms, or alternatively may have chosen to move elsewhere in search of a livelihood. From the beginning of the eighteenth century Enstone like Bletchingdon appears to have experienced considerable population growth. This growth is picked up in the 1718 manorial survey, which reveals an increase in the number of smallholders within the parish. They constituted almost 60% of the tenantry, yet held only 14% of the land, indicating that they lived alongside the large farmers rather than having supplanted

[131] Taylor (1988), 278.
[132] Havinden (1961a), 49.

them.[133] Many of the newcomers may, in fact, have been squatters settling on the wastes.

Spelsbury, though smaller in area, had a similar population size to Enstone in 1641 and seems to have witnessed a certain amount of growth in the period between the Reformation and the Civil War, although both the numbers of baptisms and burials fluctuated quite extensively. In particular, 1546, 1597, 1616 and 1645 appear to have been years of epidemic mortality, which must have checked growth temporarily (Fig. 2.14). Thus Spelsbury fits more closely the national demographic trend, and its landholding structure has also been identified as more typical of the limestone uplands, and, indeed, the Midland open-field belt as a whole. There were relatively few large farms or smallholdings since around 75% of the land was tenanted by husbandmen holding between 20-80 acres. Moreover this pattern of landholding did not change significantly between the manorial surveys of 1626 and 1705 suggesting a good deal of tenurial stability.[134] As has been noted, change came soon afterwards as the main landowner, the Earl of Litchfield, began to convert copyholds to leaseholds and to consolidate holdings in a policy which culminated in the Enclosure Act of 1803. The impact of this engrossment, which gathered pace from the 1740s, can be seen in the parish register figures. There is no noticeable rise in the number of baptisms or marriages in the second half of the century to match that taking place in Enstone, indicating that population failed to expand during this period.

2.6 Land ownership, population and the policy of exclusion

The timing of engrossment in Enstone and Spelsbury differed, but in both cases its outcome was initially similar. Amalgamation of holdings restricted access to land, and consequently applied negative pressure upon population growth, encouraging

[133] Havinden (1961a), 188.
[134] Havinden (1961a), 49, 188.

outmigration from both parishes.[135] In the case of Enstone this resulted in a subdued growth rate in the period before the Civil War, whilst for Spelsbury it meant delayed participation in the general population expansion of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. The extent of the demographic impact varied between the two parishes, however, in accordance with the differing characteristics of land ownership. Throughout the study period ownership within Enstone was significantly divided, whereas Spelsbury was held by the Lee family as a unified estate. Consequently estate policy in Spelsbury had major ramifications for the socio-economic life of the parish, whilst in Enstone no individual could impose their authority on the population. Mills has noted that parishes dominated by a single estate rarely had large populations, because much of the area was taken up by parkland, woodland and the home farm, and additionally, in the name of efficient administration the landowner often sought to increase farm size especially after conversion of holdings to short term leases.[136] This certainly seems to have been the case in Spelsbury, where the Earl introduced such a leasing policy at the beginning of the eighteenth century.

Additionally the concentration of ownership in the hands of one man made possible a policy of exclusion, preventing immigrants, who might subsequently become a charge upon the poor rates, from settling in the parish.[137] Engrossment had often, by the eighteenth century, exacerbated rural inequality, depriving the poor of access to land and common resources as open field systems were dismantled or degraded. This considerably expanded the pool of landless wage labourers. In Spelsbury the Lee family seems to have made great efforts to exclude such people, using their rental policies to

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[135] There has been considerable debate about the demographic impact of enclosure. Some have suggested that the proletarianisation associated with loss of common rights tended to lead to lower age at marriage and hence population growth, since it removed the incentives to wait and save for independence. Snell (1985), 138-227. However, evidence for this can only be found from the late eighteenth century, whereas outmigration appears to have been a normal outcome of enclosure throughout the period of concern here. Crafts (1978), 177-82; Hammonds (1911), 74-9.

[136] Mills (1980), 28-9.

[137] Banks (1988); Holderness (1969); Mills & Short (1983).

preserve existing landholding dynasties, and severely restricting new housing provision so as to limit the opportunities for outsiders to settle. Whilst the Earl actively sought to convert his open field land within the parish from copyhold to leasehold during the early eighteenth century, most cottages continued to held under customary tenures. After 1705 no new copies were granted for yardland or half-yardland holdings, but tenants continued to rent smallholdings for the traditional duration of 99 years or three lives. This ensured a significant degree of continuity amongst the labouring families within Spelsbury and denied migrants access to housing. For instance, Humphrey Trinder surrendered his cottage in 1743 so that it could be passed on to his son-in-law John Cross. Both families had been resident in the parish for a considerable period and family members were in regular employment as labourers on the Ditchley estate.

Where there was a dominant landowner, the manor court usually proved an effective weapon against any migrants who had managed to establish themselves in a parish. The Spelsbury court rolls during the opening decades of the eighteenth century contain frequent references to residents being presented for "harbouring inmates", and the relatively large amercements imposed suggest that this was considered a serious offence. For instance, in April 1732 John Williams was presented at the court "for harbouring a blacksmith and his wife and two children". Williams was to be fined ten shillings if he failed to evict his sub-tenant within the space of five days. In 1739 he was fined a further twenty shillings for having entertained the same "inmates" over the previous five weeks. There is no indication as to whether the blacksmith and his family had resided in Spelsbury throughout the intervening period.

Williams was not the only parishioner to fall foul of the landlord's determination to control in-migration. In 1741, John Freeman and Nathaniel Cross had been "lodging and harbouring travellers and disorderly persons", and for each further offence they were to be fined five shillings apiece.[138] Many of these men were repeat offenders, as

[138] Court Rolls, DIL II/w/140-42.

the court rolls show, suggesting resistance to the landlord's policy by certain sectors of the community. However, the size of the amercements and the determination of the jury to see that they were paid in full suggest that the parochial elite supported the exclusion of migrants. It was in their interest to do so as landless newcomers could become a burden upon the parish poor rates which fell disproportionately upon them. This overriding motivation is clear in the instance where the largest fine was imposed. In 1750 Widow Davis was amerced £5 "for harbouring Hanah Cappay upon suspicion of her being great with child".[139] Clearly it was the implication that both mother and child had no means of support and would have drawn upon poor relief which exercised the minds of the jurors in taking the action that they did.

This evidence shows that the Earl of Litchfield was making every effort to maintain a stable population in Spelsbury, sufficient only to provide tenants for his land and a labour force for the estate. Such parishes where a dominant landowner used his control over land in this way to limit the opportunities for settlement have been termed closed.[140] They tended to be sparsely populated, socially stratified, and almost wholly agricultural in character. This contrasts sharply with Enstone, where the Lees had less of a landholding monopoly and were thus less able to keep out newcomers. Here power lay with a disparate group of large yeoman farmers, lesser gentry and absentee landowners such as the Lees and the Earl of Shrewsbury, who were too numerous to implement a coherent policy of exclusion. Reference to the court rolls indicates that presentment for "harbouring inmates" was a more regular occurrence here than in Spelsbury, but, in this case, this should be interpreted as a sign of weakness rather than a pointer to the effectiveness of the controls.[141] Repeat offending was endemic, fines

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[139] Court Rolls, DIL II/w/142.

[140] Mills (1980), 64-144. For a discussion of the validity of this concept see Banks (1988), 51-73.

[141] The Court Rolls show that the level of repeat offending and presentment for failure to pay fines was much higher than in neighbouring Spelsbury suggesting a breakdown of the system during the early eighteenth century which coincides with accelerated population growth in the parish. Court Rolls, DIL II/w/140-42.

were often not collected, and many of the offenders appear to have come from amongst the more prominent members of the parish community. Enstone had a somewhat broader occupational structure due to its situation astride the main routeway from London to Gloucester, and as a consequence certain residents drew their wealth predominantly from sources other than land. Henry Ely, a maltster, held only 4 acres in the common fields at Church Enstone, yet had an inventoried wealth in excess of £100. Men such as Ely, and William Andrews, Edmund Smith and Philip Margets, all presented in 1731, saw it as more advantageous to sub-let and benefit from the rental income this brought rather than to keep out migrants, since they made only a minor contribution to the poor rate.[142] This was calculated in accordance with the land tax assessment and thus fell most heavily upon the 20 or so yeoman farmers who dominated landholding in the parish.

Thus the contrasting demographic trajectories of Enstone and Spelsbury can be explained in relation to landholding evolution within the two parishes. Enstone witnessed early engrossment, but maintained a divided pattern of ownership. Spelsbury was concentrated in the hands of the Lee family from the early 1600s, and was not subject to concerted amalgamation of holdings until the middle decades of the eighteenth century. In each case the initial response of engrossment was delayed marriage and out-migration as the population adjusted itself to the reduction of economic opportunities. Goldstone has indicated the existence, during the early modern period, of a minimum resource threshold required for household formation. This he suggests determined the proportion of the population able to marry and the age at which they did so.[143] An increase in the average size of holdings within a parish, as occurred in both Enstone and Spelsbury during the course of the study period, reduced the opportunities for individuals to gain access to land. Faced with such limited openings

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[142] Holderness (1972); Mills (1980).
[143] Goldstone (1986), 19-23.

young parishioners could choose an extended period of service or employment as a wage labourer, or might leave in search of opportunities elsewhere.[144] The large farms in Enstone certainly provided more opportunities for farm servants than the yardland and half-yardland holdings in Spelsbury, but most of the demographic adjustment in each case must have been achieved through migration.

Enstone's demographic upturn from around 1750 can be explained in terms of the changing economy of the parish and increased proletarianisation of the agrarian labour force. The parish had, by this period, become established as a centre for provisioning and hostelry due to its location on a major thoroughfare. Also Enstone's farmers increasingly employed day labourers rather than farm servants. Both these changes attracted migrants to the parish, who the divided parochial elite were unable to prevent from settling. Moreover, the greater diversity of Enstone's economy meant there were more employment niches in the parish and thus less pressure for out-migration.[145] Thus both in-migration and lower levels of population outflow contributed to Enstone's higher rate of growth during the early eighteenth century. Subsequently this growth became self-perpetuating because the emergent group of proletarians and tradesmen had a propensity for earlier marriage. Spelsbury failed to participate in this population expansion until the beginning of the nineteenth century due to ongoing engrossment and firm landlord control of immigration made possible by the unity of land ownership.

Neither parish, however, operated in a socio-economic vacuum. The entire stonebrash region west of the Cherwell was closely bound together by a dense web of interconnections involving agricultural systems, population and commodity flows.[146] The whole system depended upon access to the common resources of Wychwood Forest. Forest edge townships had extensive intercommoning rights there and on assart

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[144] Taylor (1988), 202-8.
[145] Similar demographic trends were found west Norfolk by Banks (1988), 66-71.
[146] For examples of interaction between neighbouring parishes see Banks (1988); Lord (1989 and 1993); Mitson (1993).

lands, and provided a haven for rural industry and displaced population.[147] Thus Spelsbury was able to restrict settlement primarily because many of the neighbouring forest-edge townships were open to migrants. Places such as Stonesfield, Finstock, Fawler and Charlbury had populations that were rising rapidly during the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries, encouraged by the development of rural industries such as textiles, leather working and slate digging. Spelsbury farmers clearly drew much of their extra labour requirements during periods of peak demand from such townships and must have sold a proportion of their produce there.

2.7 The Ditchley estate, its administration and records

In the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries estates were a significant element of landholding over extensive areas of both lowland and upland Britain. By the 1700s, 10,000 or so gentry families owned over 50% of the land, and the aristocracy a further 15-20%, making land ownership in England more concentrated than almost anywhere else in Western Europe.[148] These estates formed sizeable landholding units under co-ordinated administration and, hence, their records document socio-economic activity across broad swathes of the British countryside.

a) *The configuration and characteristics of the estate*

The Ditchley estate in north-west Oxfordshire was selected for analysis primarily because of its well preserved manorial and estate records, and its relatively compact form.[149] The Lee family had consolidated their initial land purchases there sufficiently to create a clear nucleus to the estate within the parishes of Spelsbury and Enstone (Figs. 2.5-2.11). By 1700 Sir Edward Henry Lee, Earl of Litchfield, was lord of both

[147] Emery (1974), 176-77; Freeman (1996), 2-3.
[148] Mingay (1976), 74.
[149] The estate accounts, running from 1702-50, form the main source material. These documents are part of the Dillon Collection housed in the Oxfordshire County Record Office (Oxfordshire Archives) and survive as an uninterrupted sequence throughout the period.

Spelsbury and Enstone manors and held large tracts of land in most of the constituent townships, except for those located at the western extremities, furthest away from Ditchley itself (Fig. 2.17).

At Gageingwell he occupied 300 of the 500 acres in the open fields at enclosure in 1713,[150] and at both Neat and Church Enstone held about a third of the land. Most of the rest belong to gentry families who resided in the village (Fig. 2.17). The family's domination of land ownership was even more pronounced in Spelsbury, where the entire manor of Ditchley and most of Spelsbury were in their hands (Figs. 2.10-2.11). Few other major landholders can be found in the parish records, suggesting that the family had bought out any significant freeholders prior to the Civil War. When the Spelsbury Enclosure Act was drawn up in 1802, other than the Earl only Christ Church College and the vicar had holdings of any size.[151]

The Lees also owned significant tracts of land in neighbouring Charlbury, where they were also lords of the manor. During the middle part of the eighteenth century, however, much of this land was not owned by the Earl himself, but by his brother, Robert Lee, who briefly held the earldom from 1772-76, and lived for most of his adult life at Lee Place in Charlbury.[152] A plan of the Charlbury and Walcott estates, drawn up for the Duke of Marlborough in 1761, shows that only Lees Rest, an extensive area of woodland at the southern edge of the parish, and the Coat Closes, immediately south of the border with Spelsbury, were actually held from Ditchley. These were the sole pieces of Charlbury territory to feature in the Ditchley estate accounts (Fig. 2.18). On the plan other plots of enclosed ground are clearly marked as the property of the Honourable Robert Lee Esq., and they were scattered throughout the parish.[153]

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[150] O.A. Gageingwell enclosure agreement, DIL III/k/3.
[151] Corbett (1931), 237-238.
[152] Corbett (1931), 206-10.
[153] O.A. "A plan of Charlbury and Walcott estates.." surveyed by Thomas Pride (1761), Misc. Tree I/1.

Although Ditchley manor itself was heavily forested and consisted of poor agricultural land, the remainder of the estate was more fertile, and predominantly used for the sheep-corn husbandry which predominated in this part of Oxfordshire. The accounts suggest that wheat, barley and oats were extensively cultivated, and these cereals also appear regularly in the inventories of estate tenants.[154] Livestock rearing, too, particularly the grazing of sheep, seems to have been an important aspect of the estate economy in the early decades of the eighteenth century.[155] The Earl of Litchfield is known to have kept a flock of sheep at Ditchley at least from 1707, when he paid Thomas Alder, the tenant of Ditchley Farm, £75 19s for 126 ewes, 127 lambs, 3 rams and 169 dry sheep. Thereafter regular transaction involving the sale and purchase of sheep were recorded, together with payments to a shepherd, and for shearing, dyeing and winding wool.[156] Thus Ditchley in 1700 was a relatively compact estate located on the fringe of the Cotswolds in a mixed farming district, producing grain, malt and livestock for the market.

b) *The Lee family and the evolution of the estate*

The Lees, like most eighteenth-century landed families, actually had a fairly brief history of major land ownership. They were a relatively obscure gentry family with a seat at Quarrendon in Buckinghamshire who rose to prominence through royal patronage during the Tudor period.[157] The founder of the Oxfordshire branch of the family, Sir Henry Lee, was marked out for service to the king as a page when only 14, and subsequently acted as Elizabeth I's champion at jousting tournaments for nearly 30

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[154] Havinden suggests an expansion of wheat and pulse cultivation at the expense of barley and oats over the 1640-1750 period. The acreage devoted to wheat increased from 14% to 27%, and that for pulses from 15% to 20%, whilst barley fell from 60% to 49% and oats from 7% to 4%. Havinden (1961a), 199-200.

[155] Throughout the "Cornbrash District" the emphasis of mixed farming seems to have gradually tilted towards livestock rearing over the 1640-1750 period. Wordie (1984), 321.

[156] Accounts, DIL I/l/33.

[157] Quarrendon was a small compact estate in north central Buckinghamshire that had been the Lee family's ancestral home for over two hundred years in 1600.

years (Plate 2.1). As a reward for valiant service in the 1573 capture of rebel-held Edinburgh castle he was made Ranger of Woodstock Park, and it was with the proceeds of this appointment that he was able to purchase the neighbouring manor of Ditchley a decade later (Plate 2.2). The adjacent manor of Spelsbury, containing the townships of Spelsbury, Taston and Fulwell, was purchased from Sir John Fortescue in 1599, and numerous other small purchases were made during the 1590s to consolidate the existing holdings.[158]

Subsequent generations expanded the estate through judicious marriages. The second baronet, Sir Francis Henry Lee, married Anne, daughter of Sir John St. John of Lydiard Tregoz in Wiltshire, who held some tenements and yardlands at Ditchley which passed to his daughter at the marriage (Plate 2.3). After the baronet's premature death, his widow controlled the estate, despite having remarried to a Buckinghamshire landowner, Henry Wilmot Esq. Wilmot was created Lord Wilmot of Adderbury, and several years later the exiled Charles II made him Earl of Rochester in recognition of his devotion to the royalist cause. However, the newly promoted Earl spent the remainder of his life overseas during the Commonwealth period, leaving Anne to manage both his own estates and those of her former husband.[159] Since both sons from her first marriage died soon after reaching maturity, the Countess of Rochester managed Ditchley until her grandson, Sir Edward Henry Lee, assumed full control on reaching the age of 21 in 1684.[160] Hence, for almost half a century there were close ties between Ditchley and Adderbury, the family seat of the Countess. The estate accounts frequently refer to movement of people and commodities between the two estates. For instance, in August 1707 the estate steward reimbursed John Freeman, keeper of Ditchley Park, for expenses incurred supplying hurdles to mend the wood house at Adderbury.[161]

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[158] Corbett (1931), 107-20.
[159] Lee's eldest son, heir to the Ditchley estate, was only two years old at the time of his father's death.
[160] Jordan (1857), 126-129.
[161] Accounts, DIL 1/1/33a,

Significant expansion of the estate into the adjacent parish of Enstone came when the fourth baronet, Sir Francis Henry Lee married Elizabeth Pope. She was co-heiress to the estates of the Earl of Downe, and when these were divided up she received the manors of Enstone, Wilcote and Cogges.[162] The latter two, located some distance from the core estate, were sold (Wilcote to John Cary the faithful steward of Countess Rochester), but Enstone was fully integrated into the Ditchley estate and its transactions recorded alongside those for Spelsbury in the estate accounts. By the time Sir Edward Henry Lee, 1st Earl of Litchfield, inherited the estate in 1667 the acquisition of land within the study area was virtually complete (Plate 2.4).

c) *The administration of the estate*

Often estates were owned by absentee landlords, as at Ditchley during the period of control by Lady Rochester, and most of the gentry, the Lees included, were away from their country seats for long periods during the year. Thus day-to-day supervision of customary tenants and leaseholders was increasingly devolved to estate stewards and their deputies. Aristocrats who had amassed scattered estates through purchase and marriage depended upon stewards to administer each of the units. Large magnates such as the Leveson-Gowers possessed land in Yorkshire, Staffordshire, Shropshire and Kent,[163] and the Earls of Litchfield held a number of properties in addition to Ditchley: their ancestral seat at Quarrendon in Buckinghamshire, land at Adderbury and the Earl's London residence in Hanover Square amongst others.

Usually a chief steward or land agent was put in overall charge of affairs and provided the direct link with the landowner. Understewards administered individual estates aided by bands of bailiffs drawn from amongst the tenantry and local craftsmen, who were responsible for the actual collection of rents and supervision of tenants. Chief

[162] Jordan (1857), 129-130.
[163] Wordie (1982), 7-13.

stewards had to be educated men, with skills of organisation and tact, and usually came from the ranks of the lesser gentry, clergy or legal profession.[164] William Canning, steward at Ditchley during the early 1700s came from an Adderbury gentry family (he was related to George Canning, Prime Minister in 1827). John Cary, long-serving steward of the Countess of Rochester, was also of gentry stock, and by the time of his death in 1702 aged 101 had acquired from the Lees a manor of his own at Wilcote (Plates 2.5-2.6). Bailiffs required only basic literacy and accounting skills, and could expect scant remuneration for their part-time job: John Whiting, bailiff to the Earl of Litchfield from 1746 received only £15 per year in basic wages.[165]

The duties of an aristocrat's estate steward during the early-modern period were wide ranging: "setting of farms, drawing up leases, and tenancy agreements, seeing them observed, collecting rents, being the driving force behind the manorial court, if any, levying fines, 'riding the boundaries' in some districts, improving and supervising the home farm, keeping the estate accounts, including making payments to staffs, paying taxes, tithes and rates, watching poachers, and often supervising the household".[166] He was responsible, too, for the transfer of estate profits to London, where most of the landed elite resided for the bulk of the year and where a large percentage of their expenditure occurred. In the absence of effective national banking institutions this involved perilous dispatches of cash with servants or carriers, or the use of internal bills of exchange.[167] If any litigation was required the steward was responsible for seeking out witnesses and organising the landowner's case in conjunction with his attorney, although strenuous efforts were made to avoid this course through mediation because of

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[164] Hainsworth (1992), 17-28.
[165] Accounts, DIL 1/1/33j.
[166] Pollard (1965), 27.
[167] Hainsworth (1992), 75-107. The steward at Ditchley seems often to have used the Woodstock carrier, John Bellinger, to transfer cash to the Earl in London, frequently £100 at a time.

the huge costs involved.[168] In addition the steward had to keep in regular correspondence with his distant employer, dispatching weekly letters to keep him up to date with the affairs of the estate, and passing on intelligence about wider issues such as trade, county politics and gentry gossip.

These letters, where available, detail the relationship between steward and master, as well as providing an insight into the trials and tribulations of the daily operation of an estate. They show the steward as an intermediary, acting as the eyes and ears of the absent landowner, and able to funnel the grievances of estate residents and see to it that they were given a fair hearing. If the steward was also a clergyman, as many were during the late seventeenth century, he would also have been responsible for the pastoral care of the parish population. This was clearly an advantage, since it emphasised the fact that the steward was a mediator between "great society" and "popular culture" rather than simply a tool of aristocratic oppression.[169] It was the steward, too, who carried out the lord's charitable impulses, providing "pensions" to former servants, organising relief during crises, and providing gifts for the poor at Christmas and during other festivities. As an arbitrator, a channel through which to express grievances, and a provider of gifts and patronage, he was a powerful local figure, treated with deference by the tenantry (in public at least). Through a subtle manipulation of largesse and sanction, a successful steward could keep an estate running smoothly and ensure that the resident population was largely compliant with the landlord's instructions.

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[168] The steward does appear to have been involved in a protracted legal dispute with several Charlbury maltsters and grain dealers during the early eighteenth century over the evasion of market tolls and various other market offences. The accounts for 1720 list expenses incurred by several estate officials from attending the Assizes to pursue this case against two of the worst offenders, Roger Franklin and Edward Spendlove. See section 4.5d.

[169] Hainsworth (1992), 3.

d) *The steward as law enforcer*

The job of "constable", protecting the estate and its resources, fell to the steward and his deputies. The landlord had responsibility for the maintenance of law and order within the bounds of the estate, and it was also in his interest to defend his rights of ownership over the land against the competing interests of estate residents. Serious crime was rare in the countryside, but petty pilfering and poaching were rife, demanding resolute action by the stewards if it were to be kept to manageable proportions. They had to secure conviction of thieves; ward off encroachers and squatters; seize goods from debtors; defend forests and game animals from poachers, and generally uphold the lord's rights - a struggle which took up a good deal of their time and effort.[170]

Customary rights had to be exercised if they were not to lapse, and hence stewards actively pursued such dues as the heriot and Christmas goose against a tenantry that sought to avoid them. Heriots appeared regularly in the Ditchley accounts during the eighteenth century, attesting to the vigour with which the steward continued to pursue them. In 1720 six were received from the kin of deceased Spelsbury and Enstone tenants, the value exceeding £20.[171] Most of these rights were feudal in origin, emerging when the peasantry were firmly tied to their overlord, owing labour service as well as rent. The copyhold system, however, continued to incorporate many dues. In particular, large entry fines accompanied the commencement of a copy and the death of a sitting tenant left a heriot due from his widow.[172] This was supposed to be the deceased's best beast or most valuable chattel, a vague description that left the steward battling against tenant evasion. Often livestock could be sold prior to the death of the tenant or an inferior beast offered. Only a steward who was closely in touch with the affairs of his

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[170] Hainsworth (1992), 186-221.

[171] Accounts, DIL I/l/33c_5

[172] Allen (1992), 66-70; Baker (1978), 180-87; Campbell (1942), 105-55; Clay (1985), 198-208; Overton (1996), 31-35.

estate would be able to deal effectively with such practices. Moreover, even after the conversion of land to leasehold tenure certain ex-feudal rights were retained within the leasing agreements because of tradition and the income they generated. For instance, Thomas Couling, granted a 12 year lease on 2 yardlands in Taston and 2 in Fulwell in 1726, had to fetch 3 loads of coal from Stratford each year at 4s per load, and provide a Christmas goose for the landlord.[173] By the 1720s the exactions attached to leasehold contracts might seem trivial, but they retained more than symbolic significance and acted to underscore the landlord's superior right over the land.

On the other hand, there was also in the eighteenth century a battle by the landowner to uphold rights of private property against the customary rights of tenants and cottagers.[174] It was a contest between the market and moral economy, in which the steward was in the front line, fighting to preserve his master's private interests in the land. This contest is vividly revealed in documents detailing the efforts of the steward to protect woodland and game from the predations of local villagers. Unauthorised cutting of wood was punishable by fine from 1664, as the gentry asserted their private ownership over what had previously been considered a common resource.[175] Even before that it was possible for a major landowner to get royal permission to fence off areas of woodland as a private deer park and exclude local villagers, as Sir Henry Lee did in 1605.[176]

Profits from the sale of timber, underwood and bark were significant, since such products were always in short supply, and their effective management was viewed as an essential duty of the steward. Often a woodward was employed to do this. On the Earl of Litchfield's estate the two main wooded areas at Ditchley and Lees Rest each had a woodward, their work overseen by the Keeper of the Park, a post held by the Freeman

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[173] Accounts, DIL I/I/33e,
[174] Thompson (1991), 126-184.
[175] Grant (1991); Hainsworth (1992), 205-11.
[176] Corbett (1931), 137.

family for most of the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries. At the former, the trade in timber must have been significant because the accounts show a net income of over £250 from the sale of wood each year. However, tenants retained the ancient rights of housebote (timber for the repair of houses); ploughbote (timber for making farm implements); and firebote (timber for fuel), and continued to use them. The woodward and his superior, the Keeper, had the difficult task of deciding between legitimate custom and illegal pilfering of the lord's timber stocks.[177]

Poaching was a regular pastime of both substantial tenants and poor cottagers. Game was highly valued by the gentry as a source of social capital, since the right to hunt or trap it was reserved solely for the rural elite. It could not be legally bought or sold, and was used as a means of patronage.[178] The Earl of Litchfield provided gifts of venison, hares or game birds to neighbouring gentry families and the county magistrates, and had large quantities conveyed to London to lavish on his metropolitan friends. However, hunting on common land had been a customary right since feudal times, and people from all branches of society sought to challenge the private ownership of game. Gamekeepers, employed by the stewards, found the policing of thousands of acres of open land a near impossible task, and when brought before the manor court poachers had little to fear from the game laws since the jury system made comprehensive enforcement virtually impossible.[179] Stewards had to balance the need to prosecute in order to protect game against the danger of alienating influential neighbours and their own tenantry by too vigorous enforcement. In practice this usually meant concentrating on professional poachers, coming from outside the area and operating on a large scale,

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[177] The illegal cutting of timber was covered by the 'Pleas of the Vert'. It was an offence both in the Royal Forests and those owned by private landowners to cut wood valued at more than 4d without consent, with the fine usually amounting to 12d (more in the case of serious offenders). Grant (1991), 64.

[178] Hay (1975), 200-220.

[179] Defendants would often pay a fine to have their case decided by jury as this usually led to acquittal. Even when convicted, punishment of offenders against the game laws during the early eighteenth century was generally less severe than that inflicted on criminals against the common law outside the forest. Grant (1991), 60-64.

whilst turning a blind eye to a farmer shooting a deer which had damaged his crops or a poor cottager trapping the odd hare to supplement the meagre diet of his family.[180] Customary rights were accommodated in order to maintain a working relationship between landlord and tenant in the countryside: an example of co-existence between the moral economy and the market heading off the worst excesses of private ownership.

e) *The steward and the organisation of estate agriculture*

The most important role of the steward, however, was estate administration. The job had originally been concerned merely with rent collection, and even in the seventeenth century basic administration was still the core area of duty, despite the complex character which the profession had by then taken on. The steward worked with his deputies, the bailiffs and underagents, who were each responsible for a block of land within the estate. Together they carried out a wide range of tasks, some coercive, others supervisory, and also sought to encourage the widespread adoption of good practice.

One task of the steward was organisation of the estate rental policy, involving the establishment of a systematic framework to be followed when tenancy agreements were drawn up. During much of the seventeenth century this largely involved renewal of copyholds, admission of new tenants to vacant copies, and ensuring that the requisite entry fines, rents and heriots were paid. At Ditchley copyhold for lives predominated at the close of the seventeenth century, as throughout most of the stonebrash district. Thus the accounts continued to record the regular payment of entry fines, reversions and heriots in the opening decade of the eighteenth century. In 1704 William Rook of Spelsbury paid £13 for admittance to half a yardland, and William Freeman paid a £3 entry fine for a cottage on behalf of his son, William.[181] Entry fines could be varied and hence might be used as a means of securing extra income for the landlord at short

[180] Hainsworth (1992), 211-21.
[181] Accounts, DIL I/l/33a$_4$.

notice. However, the steward had to ensure that fines were not raised so high that tenants were unable to pay and new recruits could not be found for vacant plots. A more regular income could be obtained from the three large farms on the estate that were leased out at commercial rents. These were all over 9 yardlands in size and held under relatively long-term arrangements.[182] The rents were high, over £80 per year, and thus this land was restricted to a small core of wealthy farmers with sizeable capital assets, necessary because the farmer had to supply his own stock and seed and pay rent for a year before the first harvest brought a return. Few yeomen could bear such costs, and hence, other than these farms, little of the land on the estate was commercially rented in 1700.

The late seventeenth century brought a change in many landlords' attitudes towards the tenurial system on their estates, often prompted by a forward thinking steward, who saw the advantages to management efficiency of converting copyholds for lives or by inheritance to leasing at will.[183] For example, George Plaxton, the Leveson-Gower's estate steward, operated an aggressive policy to transform their estates' rentals in the 1700s,[184] and a similar process seems to have been taking place at Ditchley from 1705.[185] In some cases annual leases were introduced, but at Ditchley terms of between 3 and 21 years were more common. Written into many of the leasing agreements were allowances for ploughbote and cartbote, and tenants were often also excused payment of the Land Tax and constable's levy. Most did, however, have to maintain farm

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[182] Henry Curtis had a 21 year lease on Spelsbury Farm running from 1705-26; Edward Mitchell rented Ditchley Farm on an 8 year lease, 1720-28; and Daniel Kinch held Enstone Farm for the 9 years between 1722-31. O.A. Lease for Spelsbury Farm, DIL II/i/4; lease for Ditchley Farm, DIL I/c/5; lease of Enstone Farm, DIL II/h/10.

[183] The move towards short-term leasing is discussed with regard to patterns of tenure and landholding within the parishes of Spelsbury and Enstone in section 2.4 above. In addition to the authors noted there, notable contributions to the debate have been made by Clay (1981 and 1985); Gregson (1989); Hoyle (1990); Overton (1996); Spufford (1974) and Wrightson & Levine (1979) amongst others.

[184] Wordie (1982), 29-32.

[185] Tenure change at Ditchley is outlined in section 2.4.

buildings and enclosures, and pay the Church and Poor rates.[186] Longer leases were often favoured to increase the security of the tenants and encourage them to make farm improvements without fear that the lease would expire before they reaped the benefits. It was the steward's job to find a new reliable tenant to take over a holding if the sitting tenant would not renew a lease or if the steward considered his continued occupancy unwise.[187] Eviction was always seen as a last resort, because proficient tenants, capable of managing holdings as large as Ditchley Farm (Spelsbury side), were scarce and not to be disposed of lightly.[188]

The actual gathering in of rent was often delegated to bailiffs, but the steward retained overall responsibility for ensuring that cash continued to flow from the estate to the landowner, something that required considerable tact and flexibility. Too confrontational an attitude towards arrears was likely to alienate tenants and under certain circumstances might cause desertion of the land, depriving the landowner of any rental income from that particular holding. So the steward's aim was usually to maintain a flow of money from the estate satisfactory to the absent landowner, whilst taking account of tenant grievances and obvious signs of hardship, especially during periods of agrarian depression when arrears were frequently allowed to build up. At Ditchley payments were expected at Michaelmas and Lady Day, but in reality they took place whenever tenants could afford them, and large arrears might be carried over into the account for the following year. For instance, in 1721 Daniel Kinch paid off his £160 rent bill in a number of instalments, initially giving £5 to Robert Rimill, the bailiff, on 27th May. Subsequently he made 21 payments between 12th June 1721 and 20th March 1721/2, most involving settlement of taxes or the provision of farm produce which was set against his rent, leaving arrears of £27 at the close of the year (Fig. 2.19).

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[186] Accounts, DIL I/l/33c$_5$

[187] Hainsworth (1992), 67-74.

[188] The estate accounts for 1715 record the farm as being 12.5 yardlands in extent, equivalent to 275-300 acres. Accounts, DIL I/l/33b$_5$

The situation was similar for the wood account. In 1708 the woodward, Thomas Grace, received £4 more for the wood he sold than he paid out in disbursements on behalf of the estate, and this debt was not settled until Lady Day 1712.[189] Generally it appears that tenants were deliberately tardy with rent payments, handing over cash at their own convenience. Francis White wrote to his master Lord North on 26th March 1667, telling him that a certain tenant, Henry Dear had paid £20 off his debt and that "according to the custom of the country he will pay the rest as soon as he can".[190] Faced with such ingrained attitudes and constrained by the need to retain good tenants, the steward had to fight a continual battle to prevent arrears from building up to unmanageable proportions.

Another important role was the supervision of estate agriculture. The Lees, like most landed families, did not farm all of their lands themselves. Only minor country gentry such as the neighbouring Coles and Eyans would have been engaged in agriculture on a commercial scale, taking advantage of the fact that farmers made a minimum of 10% on their outlay, whilst rental income provided only a 3-4% return on the original investment.[191] At Ditchley, however, they did operate a home farm on which to experiment with new techniques and crop rotations, providing a lead for tenant farmers to follow, and sufficient food to meet the household's needs. This was located close to the house, and, in fact, constituted part of Ditchley Farm, which had been divided into Enstone and Spelsbury sides in 1707. Half of the land was leased out commercially and the remainder retained by the landlord, with the two portions being rotated periodically (Fig. 2.13). Only a dozen or so labourers were regularly employed by the steward, reflecting the farm's relatively modest size of around 10-12 yardlands. During haymaking and the harvest, however, the Earl took on around 30-40 people, mostly women and girls from neighbouring Taston, Spelsbury and Fulwell, for a couple of

[189] O.A. Wood account for Lees Rest 1707-12, DIL I/l/26c.
[190] Hainsworth (1992), 61-62.
[191] Mingay (1976), 82-83.

weeks. This was clearly not a large-scale agricultural enterprise, but it did produce sufficient grain to supply craftsmen and labourers working on the estate, and raised sheep for sale in the marketplace.[192]

The steward also had a role in the supervision of tenants' farming practices, ensuring that the stipulations of leasehold contracts were adhered to. Once a tenant had secured freehold or copyhold tenure the landowner had very little influence over farming techniques and methods for the duration of the occupancy. Individual yeomen were constrained primarily by their own township community through the instructions laid down by the manor court and by the simple fact that strip farming within an open field system demanded conformity between holders of adjacent strips.[193] Leasing contracts, on the other hand, contained covenants that provided the gentry with some control over farming practices and ensured that fertility was maintained and the capital assets of the farm safeguarded against serious depreciation. Such binding clauses were necessary in the commercial environment of eighteenth-century agriculture because large capitalist tenant farmers were less likely to feel bound by the community norms that had regulated open field farming over earlier centuries.[194] Leaseholders were often newcomers to an area; they lacked the rootedness in local society which bound other estate residents together and so did not feel the same commitment to the long term future of the area, nor was their position relative to the landowner as weak as many other groups.[195] Given the short duration and insecurity of leases, many tenants would have been tempted to be sparing with their inputs for a quick profit at the expense of soil fertility and building maintenance if it were not for the restraining influence of covenants.

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[192] Accounts, DIL I/1/33.

[193] Orwin & Orwin (1938), 124-60.

[194] Hainsworth (1992), 64-7; Wordie (1982), 179-81.

[195] The leaseholders of Ditchley and Spelsbury farms often came from parishes some distance from the estate. For instance Thomas Alder, tenant of Ditchley farm in 1703, came from Sparswell, Berkshire, Edward Mitchell was from Serswell Barton and William Bush from Langford, Berkshire.

Stewards had to enforce covenants controlling the amount of land ploughed up each year, and ensure that tenants repaired fixed capital assets provided by the landowner, and maintained hedges, ditches and woodland within their holdings. Covenants giving active instructions on rotation of crops and methods of cultivation became common only in the late eighteenth century, once agricultural improvement had taken more of a hold amongst the gentry.[196] Ditchley in the 1700s was typical of South Midlands estates in this respect: leasehold contracts sought primarily to ensure farmers handed over land in the condition in which they received it. For instance, the tenancy agreement for Ditchley Farm drawn up between the Earl and Thomas Alder in 1703 bound Alder to keep the farmhouse, malt house and all other buildings and fixed capital assets in good repair. Additionally he must ensure that the land was kept manured, that straw from the harvest was composted, and that a specified percentage of the land was left fallow in the final year of the lease.[197] In attempting to enforce such regulations, the steward had to overcome the back-sliding and blatant evasion of an independent-minded tenantry: another potential arena for conflict between the two parties which demanded compromise on both sides to ensure the smooth running of the estate.

f) *The estate accounts*

The steward was also responsible for drawing up estate accounts, used as a tool for ensuring efficient administration of the land and other resources. With such a large area to administer, book-keeping skills were essential for people at all levels in the hierarchy of estate management if the estate as a whole was to run effectively, something illustrated by the extensive estate accounts surviving for Stiffkey in Norfolk from 1587-98. The foremen and bailiffs kept a tally of the money they received and disbursed, as did other servants such as the housekeeper, gardener, coachman and woodward.[198]

[196] Clay (1985), 214-24.
[197] O.A. Lease for Ditchley Farm 1703, DIL 1/c/2.
[198] Hassell-Smith (1981), 6-27.

These records were then brought together by the steward to provide an overall account for the year, which he could use both to facilitate his own administration and forward planning, and provide the landowner with a clear picture of the year's operations. The account had to be extremely detailed, noting even the smallest expense, because the steward's absentee employer, isolated from his lands, would be liable to view any omission with suspicion of malpractice.[199]

It is the survival of documents produced for this purpose at Ditchley that makes possible a detailed analysis of transactions and the relationship between people living within the estate.[200] The structure of the Ditchley accounts shows a remarkable level of consistency over the course of the study period, since one man, James Allen, was steward for much of that time, and all the men holding the post appear to have recorded transactions in a similar way. Each year was set out in a separate account book running from Michaelmas to Michaelmas, and all of these books from the 1700-50 period have survived, providing a continuous series of data. Within the books, entries tended to be ordered chronologically, but were also split into a number of different categories. Firstly rentals were listed, followed by entry fines and heriots, and then separate sections for the wood account and tithe payments. Thereafter came the record of expenditure: college rents, payments for grain and livestock, wages paid to labourers and servants, and finally general disbursements during the year. Each transaction was given a monetary value, and these figures were tallied at the bottom of each page. Such uniformity of organisation ensures that year-to-year changes in the nature of the local economy can be clearly recognised.[201]

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[199] Hainsworth (1992), 11-7.

[200] The contrast between parishes lying within estates and those held predominantly by freeholders is particularly marked, the latter providing us with very little information about what people produced and consumed, bought and sold. It must be remembered that the patterns of interaction estate accounts reveal are specific to the particular organisational structure of the estate, albeit a structure which was a common feature of the rural landscape in the South Midlands as it was elsewhere in the country.

[201] Accounts, DIL I/I/33.

The Ditchley estate accounts were primarily a record of income and expenditure, as were most such accounts during the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries. The "charge and discharge" system used by the Cokes of Holkham, Norfolk was largely typical. "The money due from each individual in each area was first recorded and, together with the arrears due from the year before, it formed the 'Charge', the sum for which the agent must give account. There followed the 'Discharge' in which all items of expenditure for that area were noted. These items added to arrears due at the closing of the book, together with the 'neat' or 'net' money (that is, the amount actually passed on by the agent as net income) balanced the 'Charge'".[202] The estate was treated as a single financial entity and the accounts used to ensure that the books were kept balanced and debts not allowed to accrue. "Until about 1790.... the attitude of the landlord remained fundamentally the same as it had been a hundred years earlier - the estates were a source of revenue which was to be increased, if possible, by more efficient administration, not agricultural improvement".[203] In these circumstances it was perfectly adequate to operate the estate on the basis of accounts which simply detailed incomings and outgoings, coupled with a steward alert to opportunities for obtaining new sources of income.

It was not necessary for the accounting system to play the proactive role of promoting agrarian development by focusing on profit margins, because the landlord himself was not actively involved in agriculture on a commercial scale. During the eighteenth century it was the tenant farm and not the estate which was the capitalist enterprise. "The tenant farmer hired land and buildings from a landlord in order to combine these with his own stock and wage-labour in the production of agricultural commodities".[204] Certainly farmers rarely kept profit and loss accounts themselves during this period, as Arthur Young advocated that they should. However, most were

[202] Parker (1975), 6.
[203] Wordie (1982), 190.
[204] Tribe (1981), 82-3.

able to predict the timing and size of harvest, and hence the price obtainable for produce and total income from crop sales with a fair degree of accuracy from experience.

The "charge and discharge" format was incompatible with profit orientated estate administration because it did not permit calculation of value added during the farming process. Inputs were viewed only in terms of those supplied by the landowner, such as the money spent on land improvement, enclosure and the upkeep of farm buildings, hedges and ditches (fixed capital assets), whilst expenditure on working capital by the farmer was not included. Similarly only the rental output from the land was noted in the estate accounts. Agricultural income above this amount, retained by the farmer, did not appear in the calculation.[205] The steward felt no need to detail all inputs and outputs associated with each farm and, indeed, would not have been in possession of all the requisite information if he had so wished. He was interested not in maximising the profitability of agricultural production, but merely in ensuring rental income for his employer, and therefore did not enquire into the minutiae of farm management. Generally it was only during the late eighteenth century that increased gentry interest in agriculture led them to administer their estates and organise their accounting system with the profit motive in mind.[206]

2.8 The utility of estate accounts for economic analysis

Because of their characteristics, estate accounts can provide an insight into the relationship between the moral and market economy at the estate level. The Ditchley accounts are particularly suited to analysis because they are so voluminous and meticulously detailed throughout. They provide an overview of transactions taking place between the landlord and all those employed by him or residing within the

[205] Tribe (1981), 83-86.
[206] Clay (1985), 216-24.

bounds of the estate. The majority of entries relate to agriculture, which after all was the predominant occupation in the countryside. The steward recorded the sale and purchase of grain and livestock, often at locations far beyond the limits of the estate; provided a detailed account of the employment of various craftsmen; and drew up itemised lists of wages paid to labourers and their families for harvest work and the more day-to-day jobs they performed on the estate. Other incidental expenditure, such as payments associated with the manor courts, regularly crop up amongst the other entries,[207] but the accounts are overwhelmingly a documentary record of the day-to-day management of estate agriculture. They provide a firm foundation from which to gauge the relative strength of the two different ways in which the link between landlord and locality could be expressed, customary linkages and market forces, because of the details they give of everyday exchange relationships within a coherent overall spatial structure.

The accounting system had an essentially hierarchical structure. Estate officials kept detailed records of transactions in which they were involved, and these were then consolidated to produce the overall accounts. Such a structure allows analysis of the relationship between moral economy and the market on a micro-scale. In particular, it helps to highlight networks of neighbourhood exchange, hierarchically structured demand and payments in kind which may have become obscured by the time one reaches the aggregated figures of the overall accounts.[208] Individual book accounts, such as those of the woodward, gardener and bailiff often contain details of the earnings of individual labourers and the ratio of cash to kind in which they were paid. The way in which these sub-accounts were integrated into the overall estate accounts can reveal the position of such transactions in relation to the organisation of the estate as a whole. The

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[207] Accounts, DlL I/l/33i,

[208] Non-monetary transactions are thought to indicate the survival of a moral economy. Neeson (1993); Thompson (1971, 1976 and 1991).

structure of the account, in effect, represents the way in which the estate was organised, and reflects the underlying relations between moral and market economy.

Of the sub-accounts those of the huntsman, recording the purchase of flesh from local farmers for the lord's hounds, are especially useful in defining the zone of effective economic interaction.[209] They name those from whom horse meat was bought and often also record their places of residence, whereas the steward's accounts simply record lump sums paid to the huntsman for the purchase of flesh in each month.[210] There are also several single documents, one a set of woodward's accounts for 1708-9, another a list of labourers employed mending a road within the estate in 1733-4, which provide clues as to the organisation of the estate economy.[211] Another significant survival is a set of accounts relating to the construction of a new mansion at Ditchley from the 1720s to the 1740s under the supervision of the master builder, Francis Smith of Warwick (Plates 2.7-2.8).[212] Without this last set of documents references in the estate accounts to the payment of large sums of money for the mass production of bricks between 1710-25 would seem anomalous. For instance, payment of £86 7s 8d to a Bladon limeburner for 86,381 bricks is included in the 1725 estate accounts amongst regular purchases of grain and payments to labourers.[213]

Alongside the accounts, large bundles of bills and receipts have survived, especially for the 1720s and 1740s, detailing goods purchased by and work done for the Earl's household. Most of the bills are for luxury goods and services. For instance, one drawn

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[209] Hassell-Smith used the kitchen account books at Stiffkey in a similar manner, Hassell-Smith (1989), 378-79.

[210] O.A. Ditchley Huntsman's Account, 1728-46 (hereafter Huntsman's Account), DIL I/q/1g.

[211] O.A. Woodward's Accounts for Lees Rest 1708-9, DIL I/l/26c; "Workmen employed at Ditchley in pronding of trees and didging in the nusery and grubing of trees and laying of gravill from Monday the 13th of January 1733 to Satterday the 13th of April 1734", DIL I/m/9c/1.

[212] O.A. Bills and receipts for Ditchley house, 1724-33 (hereafter Misc. Bills), DIL I/o/22. These building accounts list payments made both to master craftsmen and locally recruited workers for labour and materials over the period of construction and tally with references to payments for building work in the main steward's accounts.

[213] Accounts, DIL I/l/33e$_3$.

up in 1745 records the purchase of 12lb of Churchman's chocolate from Joseph Wightman of St. Paul's Churchyard, London for £2 17s 8d (Fig. 2.20),[214] whilst another refers to a number of repairs made to coaches in the early 1740s.[215] However, not all the receipts are associated with conspicuous consumption. Some relate to day-to-day expenditure on such items as meat, bread, flour and dairy products, or to essential maintenance of saddles, carts, barrels and estate buildings. These local tradesmen often drew up accounts with the steward running for a year or more rather than dealing in terms of separate bills on each occasion. The distinction between the two can be illustrated by comparing the single transaction of the 10th July 1742 with the spring curtain maker, John Browne, for a large curtain, hooks and railing (Fig. 2.21), with the regular bills that the household received during 1683 for bread provided by Thomas Saman, a Hanborough baker.[216] Clearly such long-running accounts are more useful for the purpose of this study than bills representing one-off purchases from specialist shopkeepers in London. Men such as Saman were an integral part of the local agrarian economy and their bills can be analysed alongside the estate accounts. Indeed the nature of these documents would seem to suggest the presence of some underlying social relationships between transactors, although, of course, trade linkages may have endured for the purely commercial reason that there was only one available supplier of that good or service in the vicinity.

Estate accounts do, however, have a number of limitations as a source for socio-economic analysis that must be recognised. Unlike the Stiffkey accounts analysed by Hassell-Smith, those at Ditchley do not have their initial hierarchical structure preserved in its entirety. He was able to draw upon a large collection of sub-accounts, listing provisions purchased by individual members of the Stiffkey household, and the kitchen account books, which presented "a comprehensive picture of provisions sold to

[214] Misc. Bills, 1745, DIL I/o/25.
[215] Misc. Bills, 1743, DIL I/o/24.
[216] Ibid; Misc. Bills, 1683, DIL I/o/20.

Bacon's kitchen steward", as well as the overall steward's accounts.[217] Hence he could build up a relatively complete picture of the pattern of transactions associated with the estate, albeit covering a short period of time. At Ditchley, however, the steward's accounts provide the only comprehensive source. Other documents such as the woodward's and huntsman's accounts exist, but they provide only a very partial coverage of the 1700-50 period and rarely contain all the transaction information required. Nevertheless where they reveal any extra information these sub-accounts have been utilised.

Moreover, hierarchical accounts in general have a number of shortcomings. Despite being more comprehensive, the Stiffkey records share certain drawbacks with their Ditchley counterparts. Essentially, the problem is that such accounts are of necessity landlord orientated. They record transactions within an estate in relation to the landowner, giving the impression that an internally organised redistributive structure predominated. Viewed from the perspective of such sources, all transactions within the area appear to have been funnelled through the Earl's household. One easily loses sight of the fact that accounts were an instrument of estate management and not an exhaustive survey of the local economy.

As was noted above, accounting techniques in the early eighteenth century had changed little from those used by Henry Best (1617-45) and Robert Loder (1610-20).[218] Both at the estate and individual farm level full profit-and-loss accounting was still largely absent. Thus it was not considered necessary to list all agricultural inputs and outputs on individual holdings, but only the overall expenditure on and income derived from the estate.[219] In these circumstances the only transactions likely to have been

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[217] Hassell-Smith (1989), 390. He claims the Stiffkey accounts to be unique in their comprehensiveness and level of preservation.

[218] Woodward, ed. (1984), and Fussell, ed. (1936). Both these account books simply list day-to-day income and expenditure without trying to evaluate profits. Best's book was primarily an aid to memory and not intended to be a comprehensive record of all inputs and outputs.

[219] Wordie (1982), 178-83.

recorded in the Ditchley documents were those involving the estate administration directly. For instance, a commercial farmer such as Richard Howlett had a rent of £108 17s 7d in 1702, and yet he appears only to have supplied the landlord with £10 11s 6d worth of goods and services, and therefore had somehow to provide the balance in cash form.[220] To do this, he must have sold a significant proportion of his produce in the open market or to a dealer, but details of such transactions cannot be gleaned from the accounts except for isolated references where the landlord's interests were involved. Yet in aggregate economic terms such commercial transactions must have been responsible for the bulk of exchange taking place within a locality. To investigate the way in which farmers organised their affairs one must look to the evidence of probate inventories, market records or the occasional individual farm accounts that have survived.[221]

Another element of the local agrarian economy left largely unrecorded by account documents is neighbourhood exchange. In a society where farmers were overwhelmingly literate and numerate, such non-monetary trade links might be laid down in book accounts. This was the case in 1800s Massachusetts and consequently historians have been able to examine the complex interrelated pattern of reciprocal exchange there.[222] At Ditchley, however, diaries and account books of individual farmers are conspicuous by their absence. Without them access to the world of non-monetary exchange can come only from evidence of the utilisation of this system by the steward in his transactions with estate residents, such as the payment of labourers with grain after the harvest. For example, in 1710 James Butler, the ox-man had over half his £12 wages paid in the form of the regular provision of a small quantity of barley.[223]

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[220] Accounts, DIL I/1/33a$_1$.

[221] 600 inventories from the parishes surrounding the estate have been transcribed and used to examine farm production. There are no farm diaries or accounts from this part of Oxfordshire, although several relating to similar agricultural regions have been documented.

[222] Clark (1982).

[223] Accounts, DIL I/1/33a$_{10}$

Furthermore, if self-provisioning played an important role in the survival strategies of tenants and cottagers prior to late eighteenth-century enclosure, there are very few documents to reveal it. It has been suggested that as late as 1800 in some parishes which had not undergone Parliamentary enclosure, smallholders, cottagers and landless labourers, largely dependent upon the utilisation of common resources, made up over 50% of the population.[224] Although not prevalent in Spelsbury, which appears to have remained a closed parish throughout the period, commoners were relatively numerous in Enstone, Charlbury and other surrounding parishes.[225] Their presence is revealed in the absence from the estate accounts of a number of families recorded in the parish registers. Many more households had members working on the estate only sporadically and for short periods, indicating access to other sources of income, perhaps paid employment elsewhere, but just as likely self-provisioning. Whereas some labourers, such as Humphrey Trinder and Samuel Hauten of Taston, were employed for a number of years on what amounted to a permanent basis, others like Richard Parker of Combe crop up in the accounts only once or twice.[226]

There was comparable variation in the number of days worked by labourers on the Stiffkey estate: some men were employed throughout the year, others worked for only a few weeks and most women and children were called upon only during haymaking and the harvest.[227] Clearly those rarely occupied on the estate were not idle for the rest of the year. They tended their few animals; worked a garden plot; gathered useful material from the common; engaged in cottage industries such as spinning, wood-carving and basket-weaving, or toured the neighbourhood, working for other farmers and

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[224] Neeson (1993), 72-78.

[225] See section 2.6 above.

[226] Trinder worked throughout the year from 1720-50 and Hauten similarly between 1704 and 1736. Parker, on the other hand, was recorded in the accounts five times between 1720-25. He usually worked only for a few days, his longest stint being "16 weeks at the quarry" in the spring of 1721. (DIL 11 33c$_5$)

[227] Hassell-Smith (1989), [Part 1], 31.

landowners.[228] "Families in Stiffkey adopted a variety of living arrangements and work-strategies in an effort to gain maximum advantage from each opportunity offered by this multi-faceted economy".[229] Commoners may have appeared only infrequently in the accounts but they made up a significant sector of the community living within the parishes adjacent to the Ditchley estate.[230]

The final limitation of the accounts relates to their bias in favour of monetary transactions. Accounts, as lists of income and expenditure, have an inbuilt need to record all transactions in monetary terms whether cash changed hands or not. As a consequence some types of non-monetary exchange between individual estate residents are excluded, whilst other transactions are simply assigned a monetary value. For example the woodward was frequently recorded paying off craftsmen on behalf of the steward, and if it were not for the occasional addition of comments such as "paid in wood" scribbled in the margin, one would have to presume these were fully monetized deals.[231] Incidental references like this and common-sense lead to the conclusion that a significant proportion of estate transactions were non-monetary, as was true of the pattern of exchange outside the arena of the estate, something which I shall come back to later. It is necessary, however, to read between the lines in order to recover the true picture from beneath the formulaic structure which accounting procedure imposes on the recording of transactions.

Having acknowledged these drawbacks, the Ditchley estate accounts still provide a detailed and consistent record of the local agrarian economy of the Enstone and

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[228] Neeson (1993), 158-72.
[229] Hassell-Smith (1989), [Part 2], 375.
[230] Cottage industries such as textiles and leather working appear to have been increasingly important in neighbouring townships such as Finstock and Fawler during the early eighteenth century. Sibbit (1968); V.C.H. vol. 10 (1972), 144.
[231] Phillip Margets, the Enstone carpenter was paid with wood in 1715 (DIL I/l/33b_5) and the 1710 accounts reveal payment of labourers with small portions of barley and a shepherd with sheepskins (DIL I/l/33a_{10}).

Spelsbury area. Their analysis will thus be central to my examination of the exchange process.

2.9 Summary

The evidence outlined above emphasises that the Ditchley estate was not an autonomous unit but an integral part of the local agrarian economy in which it was embedded. As a result all aspects of the estate and its agriculture must be viewed from a broader regional perspective. For instance, manorial surveys show that farm holdings in Enstone were considerably larger than those in Spelsbury, yet inventory evidence seems to suggest that flock sizes in the latter were greater. This apparent contradiction can, however, be explained once the interdependence of township agrarian systems is recognised. Spelsbury was able to support more sheep because the tenants had access to intercommoning at Ditchley, a resource that was not available to their Enstone counterparts.

One manifestation of this wider agrarian regime was the network of exchange. Clearly there was a considerable circulation of commodities and labour within the local economy, reflecting the contrasting socio-economic characteristics of neighbouring townships and their interdependence. As a record of transactions involving the Ditchley estate, the accounts can provide only a partial picture of this complex web of exchanges. However, when viewed within a broader context, and supplemented by information from other contemporary sources, such as manorial surveys, court rolls and probate inventories, they can be used to examine the relationship between moral and market economy. Focusing on the totality of the local agrarian system emphasises the potential complementarity of these two forms of exchange. The home farm could not function effectively without access to the labour of smallholders, supported primarily by common resources and non-monetary neighbourhood exchange. Conversely commoners relied, to a certain extent, upon the opportunities for paid employment

which the estate provided. The distinction between small copyholders dependent upon the moral economy and large leaseholders reliant upon the market is thus too simplistic. New conceptualisations must be formulated which recognise the fact that the whole of agrarian society from the landlord down to the poorest labourer was, in reality, engaged in both customary and market spheres.

(3) THE BALANCE OF MONETARY AND NON-MONETARY EXCHANGE ON THE DITCHLEY ESTATE

3.1 Evidence of money and produce payments

Account entries were initially examined to establish whether money changed hands in the course of transactions, and to determine the relative importance of monetary and non-monetary traffic. It is assumed that the extent of monetization was a rough-and-ready indicator of market development, although clearly the presence of cash was itself not sufficient grounds for identification of free market exchange, since money could be used in a number of quite different ways.[1] Examples of both monetary and non-monetary exchange were first identified, and categorised according to the role, if any, that cash played in the relationship. This was then followed by a more detailed examination of four types of transaction (the purchase of grain, and payment of rents, tithes and labourers' wages) where there are sufficiently numerous entries to allow measurement of the balance between the two forms of exchange.

a) *Payment in kind*

i. Marginal references as an indicator of non-monetary exchange

Within peasant societies "survival and reproduction [were] not dependent on the sale of their products on the market".[2] Thus during the medieval period most agrarian production was primarily for use rather than exchange. The majority of households were, however, engaged in the market to some extent, selling surplus produce in order to acquire the money necessary for rent and tax payments.[3]

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[1] See chapter one. Polanyi (1957), 264-66.

[2] Brenner (1977), 37.

[3] Britnell (1993); Dyer (1992); Hodges (1988); Langton & Hoppe (1994); Spufford (1988).

The Ditchley accounts appear to suggest that elements of this peasant mentality survived into the 1700s, with many provisions continuing to be acquired by the estate through produce payments. The leaseholders of Ditchley, Spelsbury and Enstone farms continued to provide the Earl of Litchfield with grain to offset part of their rents throughout the 1700-50 period. Often such entries were accompanied in the margin of the account book by the comment "set against rent", leaving no doubt as to the non-monetary nature of the transaction. Additionally, the Keeper of Ditchley Park, John Freeman, often paid the wages of estate craftsmen and labourers "partly in wood" or some other basic commodity: in 1710 William Fletcher and William Trinder were paid in this manner.[4]

Confirmation of the non-monetary character of such transactions rests largely on marginal comments like those noted above; otherwise it is more difficult to categorise an entry definitely, since all account transactions were given a cash value. Clearly though, direct evidence of this kind points to the continuation, within the bounds of the estate, of a wide range of transactions involving payments in kind. Many more may also have done so, although accounting procedure has obscured the true character of the exchange. A number of other pointers, however, do enable one to tentatively allocate many transactions to one category or the other, and identify the majority of cases where payment was in kind.

ii. Evidence from the analysis of the estate accounts

The nature of transactions can frequently be determined from the manner in which they were recorded in the ledger. To illustrate this a number of examples have been selected indicating the wide range of evidence present amongst the Ditchley documents. The coverage is in no way exhaustive, but provides a representative sample of the types of non-monetary transaction encountered in the accounts.

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[4] Accounts, DIL 1/1/33a$_{10}$

Entries relating to the Keepers of Ditchley Park provide the first example. They were responsible for the management of parkland within the estate including the woods at Ditchley and Lees Rest, which involved organising the sale of timber and forest products (Fig. 2.11). A considerable amount of money was raised by such sales, on average around £250-300 per year, and successive Keepers were able to use some of this to pay estate workers, and in consequence rarely had to make a sizeable cash payment to the lord for wood sold.[5] However, many craftsmen and labourers would have preferred part payment in wood or other forest products. For some such as the carpenters, thatchers and coopers these were the raw materials of their trade, whilst all cottagers needed a regular supply of furze and firewood to cook food and keep themselves warm during the winter.[6] Direct evidence of this trade is, however, only occasionally available. For instance, William Varney, the mason was given "105 score faggots" *in lieu* of wages during 1715, and again received wood in 1720 along with William Canning, Henry Franklin and Thomas Blizzard.[7] Nevertheless, it is unlikely that Freeman would have sold wood to outsiders in order to make cash payments to workmen on the estate if he could simply have supplied woodland products to them instead. Although entries relating to the wood account were ordinarily recorded in cash terms, little money might actually have changed hands. The figures in the accounts relating to payments made by Freeman may have simply reflected a measurement of the notional value of the goods supplied or work done.

The accounts also document non-monetary transactions involving the provision of fodder supplies where the absence of cash from the exchange is indicated by the failure of the steward to record a money value, something which is very rare within the Ditchley

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[5] Accounts, DIL I/l/33a-c. For example, in 1709 John Freeman took £283 worth of underwood, lop and faggots from the Earl's land, selling it to men such as Mr. Norgrave, who bought bark for £2 5s. Using this money he was able to pay off numerous labourers and workmen on the estate, namely Henry Millen, the mole catcher; Samuel Hauten, Edward Busby and Thomas Cook, all labourers; Phillip Margets, the carpenter; Francis Scasebrook, the collarmaker and so on. Freeman also purchased hay, lime and salt, all of which was set against the money he owed to Lord Litchfield for the wood.

[6] Neeson (1993), 160-67.

[7] Accounts, DIL I/l/33b_5 & c_5.

estate accounts as a whole. The most significant example of this comes in a separate group of documents listing oats and beans supplied to members of the local elite between 1727 and 1730.[8] The value of goods was also occasionally omitted from transactions within the main body of the accounts. Some entries recording the supply of cereals to household servants, notably the housekeeper, carters and coachman, fall into this category. This grain was probably intended for use as animal fodder, although some may have been for human consumption. For instance, during 1710 the housekeeper, Mrs. Gunn, three times received 2 bushels of barley "for the pigeons and poultry".[9] However, most fodder acquired through internal channels went to sustain coach and cart horses used on the estate. Over the 1730-57 period the coachman received more than 1600 quarters of oats, beans and barley, whilst even the huntsman managed to use 800 quarters, emphasising the size of these internal transfers.[10]

Where had this grain come from? There are regular references to the purchase of oats from local farmers and at market, which indicates the prevalence of cash transactions in ensuring the major sources of supply, but when it came to redistribution of these supplies within the estate the use of money was no longer necessary.[11] Moreover, not all of the supplies were purchased. Some came from internal sources, and the accounts are littered with references to oats being "delivered" to the coachman, the groom or the carters by tenants: in 1705 the 7 quarters 4 bushels of oats which Thomas Alder had set against his rent were allocated to the carters to feed their team of horses.[12] This case of two non-monetary transactions combined together illustrates how the flow of goods through the estate without the intervention of money could be the most efficient means of conducting business: the tenant was able to reduce his rent payments and avoid time-consuming

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[8] The provision of grain to neighbouring gentry households is described in greater detail in chapter four.

[9] Accounts, DIL $I/l/33a_{10}$.

[10] Accounts, DIL $I/l/33f_{5}$.

[11] The fodder requirements of an aristocratic household could be considerable, demanding diverse strategies of acquisition. See Parker (1975); Rosenheim (1989); Wade-Martins (1980); and Wordie (1982).

[12] Accounts, DIL $I/l/33a_{5}$

marketing of his crop, whilst the carter got his supply of oats from a local and reliable source.

b) *Money transactions from the Ditchley estate accounts*

i. Money as a means of payment only

The majority of account entries relating to straightforward payment did clearly involve the transfer of cash, as they had long before the eighteenth century. This does not, however, necessarily indicate the development of a market economy, because money may have been used in its more primitive sense, as a means of payment only and not as a medium of exchange.[13] For instance, Ditchley tenants sometimes made cash payments for the land tax, window tax, poor levy and the like, although they were often able to set these payments against their rents, so that through one outlay of cash they were able to reduce the level of expenditure on another. Moreover, the sums of cash involved were usually relatively small, since the tax burden on the whole estate never exceeded £45 per year and was usually less than £25.[14] The £3 5s 3d which John Freeman paid Thomas Couling in September 1707 for tax on the part of Ditchley Farm held directly by the landlord was a considerable sum compared with many of the other entries recorded that year.[15] The size of payments was limited because of the multiplicity of sources from which they were made: some levies were paid directly by the steward; others by estate officials such as the Keeper of the Park; and the remainder were met by tenants eager to set payments against their rents. In general taxes associated with Charlbury, Finstock and Fawler, usually around £20, were paid by whoever rented the markets and fairs, and were set against the money they owed for this privilege. Spelsbury and Enstone taxes were

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[13] Polanyi (1957), 264.

[14] Peak tax demands appear to have occurred in the period 1710-15 at a time when grain prices were also high, but figures for the subsequent decade may be suspect since many of the regular levies imposed on the estate are not recorded in the accounts during these years.

[15] Accounts, DIL I/l/33a,

usually paid by a wider variety of people; notably the tax bill for Ditchley and Spelsbury Farms was often met by the sitting tenants, despite responsibility for such payments being placed in the hands of the landlord by the majority of leasehold agreements at the time (Table 3.1).

Thus the payment of taxes provided the accounts with a significant number of entries relating to monetary transactions, although in terms of overall estate expenditure their importance was relatively small. There were over 600 itemised tax payments from 1702-50, an average of 12-15 per year, but in any given year they made up only around 7% of total disbursements by each tenant. Nevertheless the taxation issue seems to have been taken seriously by the estate administration, who made every effort to limit the burden: £1 1s 6d was paid to Mr. Jesson in 1710 "for services in preventing Sir Edward Cook from doubling the tax on the estate".[16] Nevertheless expenditure on tax increased over time, reaching its highest level for Enstone and Spelsbury in 1750, largely due to the increases in the land tax, which stood at £13 1s for Ditchley Farm in 1710 but had risen to £16 5s by the close of the period in 1750 (Fig. 3.1 & Table 3.1).[17] Furthermore, most parishes seem to have used Land Tax valuations to assess local rates such as the poor and constable's levy, which explains why they also rose throughout the period.[18] However, this rise in the burden of taxation does not alter the fact that payment of such levies is not true monetary exchange, but merely the use of money as a required means of payment. One must look elsewhere within the accounts in order to find evidence of *monetized transactions* and *market exchange*.

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[16] Accounts, DIL 1/1/33a$_{10}$

[17] From 1698 the land tax was fixed with a quota of assessment applied to each individual township. Responsibility for the allocation of this quota was left with local administrators who based the level of tax on the rental value of the land. Internal revaluation for the Land Tax took place periodically in most townships, and this certainly seems to have been the case at Ditchley, with the consequence being that an increasing proportion of the quota was met by the Earl himself. Piecemeal enclosure and the conversion of land to short-term leasehold tenure clearly increased its rental value sufficiently to necessitate readjustments of Land tax payments. Ginter (1986), 180-184.

[18] Ginter (1986), 184.

ii. Conspicuous consumption and the Ditchley estate

A sizeable cash reserve was required to fund the lavish consumer spending that most aristocrats considered necessary to compete on the social circuit, and the Earl of Litchfield was no exception.[19] There are a few references to such spending in the general accounts, such as £2 15s paid to Joseph Ball for "making two pairs of wheels for the new carriage",[20] but these documents were primarily concerned with the running of Ditchley rather than providing a complete record of the Earl's overall income and expenditure.[21] Most evidence for expenditure on consumer goods comes from a large collection of bills and receipts detailing the landowner's purchase of luxury items and services from both London-based and local shopkeepers. Most of these transactions would certainly have been monetary in character. For example, between May 1724 and June 1725 the London confectioner Edward Lambert supplied the then Earl, Sir George Henry Lee, with "colerd candys, orange and lemon cakes, apricots, comfitts, angellico knots, spunge bisketts" and a variety of other luxury foodstuffs for £5 8s 7d (Plate 3.1). The quantity of each item purchased together with the price paid for it were meticulously recorded on the bill, which was settled in cash by a single payment in the summer of 1725.[22] Such attention to detail when equating the amount purchased with the price paid for it is symptomatic of a cash transaction, whereas payments in kind were frequently expressed in rounded cash figures.

Other examples of luxury purchases documented by the assorted bills include "a paire of buckskin bootes and a paire of spurrs" bought from John Yarratt of Yarnton in 1683; "one large spring curtain" acquired in London from John Browne in 1743; and "a blue and silver emblazoned vest" costing £7 7s supplied by Robart Carr in the same year.[23]

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[19] Aristocratic consumption is examined by Borsay (1989); McKendrick *et al* (1982).

[20] Accounts, DIL I/l/33c$_5$

[21] The estate accounts include only expenditure incurred whilst the Lees was at Ditchley, whereas they spent most of the year in London.

[22] Misc. Bills, 1724-5, DIL I/o/21.

[23] Misc. Bills, DIL I/o/20-26.

There are very rarely more than a couple of bills relating to the same individual, suggesting that most of these tradesmen and shopkeepers dealt with the Lee family on a limited number of occasions. Given this infrequency and irregularity of contact, coupled with the nature of the goods purchased, and both the format and level of detail found within the bills themselves, such transactions must have been monetary.

The evidence illustrated is sufficient to identify these as market transactions. However, the purchase of luxury goods by a community elite does not necessarily indicate that the community itself had become monetized and market oriented. Under redistributive social systems such as feudalism the ruling classes were able to accumulate wealth in the form of tribute allowing expenditure on conspicuous consumption.[24] In this case cash was acquired largely through administrative exploitation of the population rather than market exchange. Feudal society consisted of distinct patrician and plebeian cultures, the former supported by surpluses extracted from the latter, and operating within different economic spheres.[25] Luxury consumption by the landed elite during the early modern period does not appear to have differed materially from its medieval counterpart, and hence need not necessarily have been associated with the monetization of agrarian society.

iii. The provision of basic goods and services

The purchase of everyday items in money transactions provides better evidence for the wider monetization of the economy. This type of exchange features prominently amongst the earlier bills from the 1680s as well as the later ones covering the mid-eighteenth century. Local tradesmen such as the butcher, baker, miller, cooper, saddler and tailor seem regularly to have submitted bills, which are often broken down into just as much detail as those drawn up by specialised London shopkeepers. Humphrey Cox's bill of September 1680 documents individually every horse he has shoed or otherwise attended

[24] Sahlins (1988)
[25] Anderson (1974a).

to in the previous three years, recording in each entry the date, the nature of the service performed and the charge incurred. From his account it appears that the going rate for fitting a full set of new horse shoes was 2s regardless of the type of horse, and payment was expected to be in cash.[26] Although exchange links between the Earl and these local craftsmen were on a far more regular basis than those with London shopkeepers, the transactions were still probably monetary in nature. Had the two been engaged in an extensive non-monetary exchange relationship, documentation of the deals would have taken the form of running accounts rather than a bill outlining specific payment demands.

Evidence for the money purchase of basic commodities can also be found in the estate accounts. Some dealings with craftsmen living in the vicinity of the estate were listed here, and entries can sometimes be cross-referenced with surviving bills. For example, work done by the carpenters John, Phillip and William Margetts was recorded in bills dating from 1724 to 1733, and these same men appeared in the accounts throughout the 1700-50 period: William had an entry in 1715 "for mending the wagon that broke with a load of gravel in Charlbury field."[27] Entries relating to the sale and purchase of agricultural produce were also numerous, and most of these seem to have been commercial transactions since precise, fluctuating prices are recorded.

iv. Cash payment and the livestock trade

Most trade in livestock took place at fairs and in the marketplace during the early-modern period.[28] Transactions here would almost certainly have been monetary in nature since the absence of close ties between buyer and seller precluded the level of trust necessary for barter agreements.[29] For instance, the 30 sheep sold at Charlbury fair in

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[26] Misc. Bills, 1683, DIL I/o/20.

[27] Misc. Bills, DIL I/o/22; Accounts, DIL I/l/33.

[28] Cattle were the staple commodity of most fairs, and there were also many specialising in sheep or horses. Markets tended to sell a wider range of goods, but their livestock trade was often extensive. Chartres (1985); Edwards (1981, 1988); Everitt (1967).

[29] Hodges (1988); Polanyi (1957); Sahlins (1988).

September 1730 were valued at 10s each; an example of standardised pricing similar to that used for grain.[30] When stock was bought directly from other farmers the Earl was again forced to make cash payments: the 30 sheep supplied by Sir Robert Walter on 3rd December 1725 cost precisely 13s 9d apiece,[31] whilst a "brown bay gelding" sold to the Earl by Ralph Hasely in 1720 was valued at £6 5s.[32] Precisely documented prices are a clear indicator of monetary exchange, since they suggest commodification of the object within the bounds of an individual transaction rather than the maintenance of relations between the two parties concerned in the form of a running account.[33]

In non-monetary transactions involving livestock valuation was usually less precise, something illustrated by the feudal practice of heriot.[34] Whereas the accounts show a colt sold at Woodstock fair in 1730 for £4 18s and a gelding purchased in 1705 at Charlbury fair for £3 2s 6d, the "black stone horse" received as a heriot on the death of John Ryman in 1725 was simply priced at £8.[35] Certainly as the century progressed heriots became increasingly commodified and were often commuted to cash payments, but whether payment was in cash or kind there remained a tendency to round off the figure of valuation.[36]

The impression that the majority of account transactions were monetized is further supported by a series of bills relating to the purchase of horse flesh for the Ditchley hounds. The huntsman appears regularly to have bought live horses and the flesh of dead animals from farmers in parishes adjacent to the estate.[37] The detail in which these

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[30] Accounts, DIL I/l/33f$_5$

[31] Accounts, DIL I/l/33e$_3$

[32] Accounts, DIL I/l/33c$_5$

[33] Hodges (1988), 97-8; Marx (1867), 198-227.

[34] Heriot was a charge levied at the death of most copyhold tenants, and usually took the form of the tenant's best beast or most valuable chattel, or a money payment in lieu of this. Bowden (1967), 683.

[35] Accounts, DIL I/l/33.

[36] On Crown land heriots had often been converted to a fixed money payment from the sixteenth century. Campbell (1942), 116-17.

[37] The Earl was a keen hunter and kept a large pack of hounds at Ditchley throughout the eighteenth century, employing a huntsman to look after them. He kept a separate account of the expenses he incurred, which has survived between 1728 and 1747, providing a comprehensive record of purchases.

transactions were recorded suggests that payments were in cash, as do the fluctuating prices. Flesh was paid for by the "load", the price for which ranged between 1s and 3s 6d over the 1728-46 period, the average being around 2s 6d.[38] Often this fluctuation took place over a short period of time (a load of flesh sold by Joseph Wilson in early April 1744 fetched only 2s, yet a week later Richard Jakeman received 2s 6d, and by the beginning of May Farmer Salter of Hanborough was paid 2s 9d for a similar cargo), something which would have been unlikely had the transaction been non-monetary with a notional value simply attached to the product for accounting purposes.[39]

3.2 Monetization and the grain trade

Cereals had been produced commercially on large estates long before the eighteenth century and the grain market was already well developed during the medieval period.[40] A highly productive demesne such as Hemsby in Norfolk was providing, over the 1261-1335 period, a net disposable surplus consisting of 78% of the wheat harvest; 69% of the rye, and 49% of the barley.[41] Consequently one would expect a significant proportion of the grain at Ditchley to have been requisitioned through commercial channels. Farmers required a certain amount of cash income from the sale of produce in order to be able to pay rents, and with the expansion of short-term leasing during the eighteenth century these bills often rose substantially.[42]

Estate documents suggest that the trade in cereals at Ditchley was significantly commercialised. Grain prices recorded in the accounts were mostly precise, and were usually directly related to the volume of the particular cereal being purchased, just as one

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[38] The load was a measure used extensively throughout the country but varied widely in size. Within south-east England, however, it customarily consisted of 5 quarters. Harrison (1985), 818-819.

[39] Huntsman's Account, 1728-47, DIL I/q/1g.

[40] It has been argued that seigneurial demands for payment in cash rather than kind provided an impetus for market sale of produce from the thirteenth century. Campbell *et al* (1993), 8.

[41] Campbell (1991), 171.

[42] Allen (1992); Wordie (1974).

would expect in a price fixing market.[43] Whereas grain provided *in lieu* of rent might have had a rounded valuation, any farmer dealing with the estate administration on a commercial footing would have insisted on being paid the full market price for the produce he supplied. If a free market in grain was operating one would expect prices to vary over the course of the year with the fluctuating balance between supply and demand, and this does seem to have been the case at Ditchley: the 39 quarters of oats which George Bustin of Kiddington sold to the estate in January 1745/6 were priced at 11s 6d/qtr,[44] whereas those sold on November 29th by Mr. Browne cost only 10s 6d/qtr.[45] Indeed the prices that the steward paid for oats throughout 1745 appear to have followed London market prices relatively closely (Fig. 3.2). Such detailed documentation of prices applied not just to oats, but to every type of cereal recorded in the estate accounts, suggesting a general policy of requisitioning commercially from farmers outside the estate. Interestingly, in the list of barley purchases made in 1735, the only vendor whose entry does not include a record of the price per quarter is Daniel Kinch, who at the time was tenant of Enstone Farm.[46] The total value of the 7 quarters he supplied appears to have been omitted from the accounts, as it was on a number of other occasions, suggesting that this must have been a non-monetary transaction, perhaps acting as repayment for some service the landlord had provided for him or being set against his rent bill.

The general trend towards increased monetization of the agrarian economy is reflected in the balance between payments in cash and kind. Most account entries relating to grain purchases can be allocated to one or other of these two categories by careful examination of the exchange characteristics. For the purpose of this analysis all purchases from

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[43] Within a price fixing market there must be equivalency – goods must have a fixed rate of exchange at any given moment. Polanyi (1957), 267-69.

[44] Accounts, DIL 1/1/33i_7.

[45] This type of price fluctuation was in line with that expected given the changing pattern of supply and demand over the year. See chapter one.

[46] Accounts, DIL 1/1/33g_7

outsiders and copyhold tenants have been regarded as monetary, along with those made by travelling servants or in the regulated marketplace. Conversely purchases from leasehold tenants, entries relating to redistribution within the estate and instances where the purchaser remains unknown have been categorised as non-monetary transactions.[47] Subdividing the data in this way shows that over the fifty years covered by the documents, the number of entries associated with bulk provision of grain for a cash payment increases significantly, whereas the trend for non-monetary grain transactions within the bounds of the estate is less pronounced (Table 3.2). Between 1702 and 1710 cereals or hay were only purchased from outsiders on 14 occasions, whereas there were never fewer than 12 such cash deals per year in the period 1720-50 with a peak of 42 in 1725.[48]

The number of monetized transactions appears to have first surged upwards in 1720, although this coincided with a restructuring of the accounts which included separating out grain transactions from those involving other commodities. This alteration of the accounts may have been a response to changing requisitioning practices on the estate, but could equally have been a procedural change which just happened to result in a more complete documentation of transactions.[49] Thereafter, however, the level of commercial transactions remained much higher although there were considerable fluctuations. Between 1725 and 1730 the number of outsiders providing grain fell sharply from 42 to 12, but the subsequent trend was generally upwards. Acquisitions from leasehold tenants,

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[47] Purchases where the source of supply and the manner in which the grain was acquired are not revealed, have been regarded as non-monetary on the assumption that the steward did not bother to document the sources of supplies because the flows were internal, coming either from estate tenants or the landlord's home farm.

[48] The large figure for 1725 may be an anomaly, because 26 of the 42 entries relate to one individual, Thomas Bishop. His provision of vast quantities of oats to the Earl on a regular basis is not paralleled elsewhere within the accounts, and has considerably distorted the overall pattern of transactions. During the year Bishop supplied the estate with 254½ quarters of oats, suggesting that he was a middleman rather than a farmer.

[49] This sharp increase in grain requisitioning also coincided with the early phase of rebuilding work at Ditchley House. Thus the extra grain, mostly oats, may have been used to feed the large number of horses required for carting and other heavy work during the project.

one of the categories most likely to be made up of non-monetary transactors, do not display such a noticeable trend and lack any pronounced peaks, tending to fluctuate between 4 and 8 transactions per year in the mid-eighteenth century, only slightly higher than thirty years earlier (Table 3.2). This seems to suggest that during the course of the study period the flows of grain associated with the estate increased substantially, and that most of this increase was absorbed by commercial transactions.

Thus, the accounts appear to indicate that the greater proportion of sales and purchases involving cereals were monetized throughout most of the study period, especially after 1720, when the rising trend in the number of external suppliers is matched by a gradual decline in the importance of internal transactions (Fig. 3.3). The trend is, however, not so clear if one looks at the volume of grain rather than the number of transactions; although here too there is a relationship between rising external and falling internal purchases after 1730. There are clearly discernible peaks in non-monetary exchange in 1709 and 1730, whilst the volume of commercial purchases reaches its highest in 1725 before falling significantly (Fig. 3.4). Plotting flow volumes emphasises the size of the 1730 peak in internal exchange, showing that more than half the grain used by the estate came from such sources during that year; but throughout the remainder of the 1720-50 period outsiders consistently supplied more than two thirds of total grain requirements despite the fluctuations in the balance of transactions. Analysis of the period prior to 1715 is, as has already been noted, more problematic due to deficiencies in the documentation of the estate's grain trade within the accounts. Even here, however, a peak in non-monetary transactions in 1709 can be identified, but it hardly registers on the graph when the volume of supplies is plotted. Had there been a more complete data set during the earlier period this peak might well have been more pronounced.

Hence it appears that over the fifty years covered by the accounts there is an upward trend in monetary transactions within which there are two episodes of significant disturbance. The first in the years 1709-12 consists primarily of a rise in non-monetary

exchange, whilst the second between 1720 and 1730 is more complex, involving a more general increase in requisitioning of grain by the estate. During this latter period there was first a rise in commercial transactions between 1720 and 1725, which then fell back as levels of produce payment within the estate increased. After a peak in 1730 internal exchange declined steadily and the market once again became the main source of supplies.

After 1720 there appears to have been a fairly close relationship between the price of the main grain crops and the balance of monetary and non-monetary acquisition. The latter seem generally to have contributed a larger proportion of supplies when grain prices in Oxfordshire were falling sharply, whilst making a smaller contribution when there was a rising market (Figs. 3.5-3.7).[50] Thus in 1730, when 67% of the grain and hay purchased came from internal sources, wheat was only 36s 6d/qtr., but a year earlier a quarter had sold for 46s 10d.[51] Conversely, when wheat prices were 48s 6d/qtr. in 1725, the highest they had been for over a decade, only 19% of transactions were non-monetary in nature. Internal grain flow volumes appear to have been even more closely related to changes in barley and oats prices, which is hardly surprising given that these cereals were the most heavily represented amongst account entries. The price of oats, for instance, reached its highest point in 1729, one year before the concomitant peak in produce payments.[52] On the other hand, commercial dealings with outsiders appear to have made their largest contribution to the provisioning of the estate when grain was more costly (Fig. 3.8). The volume supplied commercially was greatest in 1725 and 1740, both years that witnessed relatively precipitous rises in the price of wheat and barley. Oats, somewhat anomalously, were cheaper in 1725 than they had been the previous year, but they were a lower value crop less often traded on the open market.[53]

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[50] Prices for wheat were taken from Stratton (1969), those for barley and oats came from Rogers (1902).
[51] Stratton (1969), 70-71.
[52] Rogers (1902).
[53] Chartres (1995), 124.

Low grain prices were usually associated with bumper harvests which would have left the estate with plentiful grain stocks and consequently less need to purchase supplies. This could explain why the total volume of grain acquired by the Ditchley household was lower in 1730, a year in which the harvest was "excellent", than it had been in 1725, which is described as "a year of extremes", with an unusually dry spring and cold, damp autumn.[54] Moreover, in good years most of the cereals required could be obtained from internal sources, since tenants would have sizeable surpluses and may well have been eager to dispose of a proportion of their crop through estate channels in order to avoid the expenses associated with marketing. Fewer cash purchases from outsiders were required under such conditions because the estate's demand for extra grain was lower and could be largely met without recourse to the market.[55] During periods of dearth, however, when prices were higher tenants may well have preferred to seek the maximum possible return in the marketplace, or may simply have had less surplus to sell, at the time when demand from the Ditchley household was at its highest due to the poor returns from the home farm. Consequently there would be lower levels of internal exchange and increased reliance on external sources of provision, as indeed occurred in 1725 and 1740, when 299 quarters of barley, oats, wheat and beans were acquired from outsiders, whilst only 79 quarters came from people within the estate (Table 3.3). The unreliability of supply from internal sources meant that, although a certain amount of grain always flowed through these channels, the Earl had to draw primarily on the market when crisis struck.

One might have expected that high grain prices in a volatile open market would persuade the steward to rely on potentially cheaper sources of supply within the estate. However, this seems only to have been considered as an option at Ditchley when there was serious harvest failure, since tenants would have preferred to market any surplus

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[54] Stratton (1969), 70-71.

[55] Snell (1985), 85-7 argues that it was also rational for farmers to hire farm servants rather than day labourers during periods of low grain prices since 80% of servants wages were paid in kind, whereas labourers received mostly cash. Payment in kind was more rational when harvests were good.

when prices were high. Such conditions arose only once during the early eighteenth century, in 1709-11, when the documentary evidence provided by the accounts for grain purchases is rather deficient, making analysis of trends difficult.[56] Nevertheless it is possible to identify a noticeable rise in the number of internal transactions during 1709 coinciding with the onset of a sequence of bad harvests and the highest cereal prices of the early eighteenth century. Perhaps this temporary reduction of participation in the cash economy and reversion to payment in kind during a period of grain shortage reflected the survival of a moral economy (as did the widespread occurrence of food riots at the time).[57] The prevalence of popular unrest and the increase in internal exchange might have been linked. Taking grain to market during a period of dearth carried extra risks for the farmer since he might be intimidated into selling at customary prices fixed by the local mob, although this withdrawal of grain from the market tended to reduce the supply further forcing prices even higher.[58] Perhaps it was safer to deal directly with the landowner during such periods, accepting a slightly lower price than could be gained in the open market but eliminating the attendant risks of such a strategy, or perhaps the landowner insisted upon this course of action during a dearth in order to ensure he had adequate supplies.

The limitations of these figures must, however, be recognised. The accounts do not provide a complete record of transactions taking place within the bounds of the study area, since the steward would only have recorded those transactions which involved the estate directly, and thus grain sold by Ditchley tenants on the open market would not have received a mention.[59] Consequently the picture painted is of flows of wheat, barley

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[56] The account books from 1702-20 do not include a separate section recording grain purchased for the estate unlike their later counterparts, and consequently many such transactions could have escaped documentation. The first comprehensive lists of purchases in fact appear in 1725 when the accounts were reorganised on a more systematic basis and a cash book introduced for the first time.

[57] Thompson (1971), 76-136.

[58] Walter & Wrightson (1976), 116-28.

[59] Tribe (1981), 86-7.

and oats channelled through the hands of the Ditchley household, whereas, in reality, much of the cereal crop not required by yeoman households for their own consumption would have been sold directly to corn factors or in the marketplace. Few farmers in Spelsbury and Enstone left any evidence of the extent of their market trade in agricultural products, although there are a number of ways in which the magnitude of such flows can be estimated. Inventories can be used as a source of information as regards the size of grain yields in some cases,[60] and the level of rent paid in cash by the farmer indicates the lowest possible value for these additional transactions, but neither provides an accurate assessment of a farmer's trade links.

The evidence available does, however, suggest that the percentage of transactions involving non-monetary exchange of grain was rather smaller than the accounts alone suggest, not because such transactions were not commonplace, but due to the huge volume of the monetized trade. The rents paid by Ditchley leaseholders provide a very crude measure of this commercial dominance of the grain trade. Between 1735-40 income from leases stood at around £600, enough for the purchase of 300 quarters of wheat or 600 quarters of oats. The estate accounts reveal that the total quantity of all grains requisitioned in any given year during this period was 375 quarters, of which less than 30% came from non-monetary transactions (Table 3.3). Assuming that Ditchley leaseholders derived their entire income from cereals, they would have to sell the equivalent of over 300 quarters of wheat simply to pay rents, and much more in order to meet other costs and make a viable living. In reality a system of sheep-corn husbandry operated in this part of Oxfordshire, but the sale of wool and mutton was of secondary importance to the production of barley and wheat.[61] Moreover, grain would have been marketed not only by leasehold tenants, but also by the Ditchley copyholders and other

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[60] The procedure is first outlined by Overton (1979), and refined by Glennie (1988, 1991); Overton (1990, 1991). Criticism of the method can be found in Allen (1988a).

[61] Havinden (1961a), 16, 73; Thirsk (1967), 64-5.

farmers in the vicinity of the estate. Looked at from this perspective the flows of grain within the estate pale into insignificance.

The volume of various cereals recorded in farmer's inventories also suggests that large quantities passed through monetized channels. For example, at the time of his death in 1738, John Issard had one wheat rick valued at £25, a stack of oats valued at £2 15s. and "a crope of corn upon the grownd" worth £200, almost a half of his total inventoried wealth.[62] Such large quantities of corn in the ground indicate that Issard, the lessee of Spelsbury Farm, must have had a significant role in the local agrarian economy, yet in 1735, only three years before the inventory was drawn up, he supplied the estate with only 3 quarters of barley.[63] Clearly his contribution towards meeting the estate's grain requirements is a poor indicator of his overall involvement in the marketing of corn. The overall median value of cereals in Enstone and Spelsbury inventories was, however, much lower, at around £10, although this figure must be viewed in the context of a trebling in the value of corn left by decedents between the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries (Tables 2.1, 2.3). Additionally inventory evidence indicates a doubling in the acreage of wheat between 1660 and 1730 at the expense of barley and oats. This still left 49% of arable land occupied by barley, but represented a clear move in favour of market orientation of production. Four-wheel wagons also became more common in the stonebrash district, suggesting an increasing need to transport bulk produce to market: only 9% of yeomen owned a wagon in 1670-90, whilst 38% had one by 1690-1730.[64]

Not only farmers produced grain for the market. Many tradesmen and artisans did so too, selling crops in the marketplace alongside yeomen and commercial tenant farmers.[65] Arthur Wickins, who rented 1.5 yardlands plus part of the Crackland Closes in 1730 and

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[62] O.A. MS wills Oxon., 303/1/4.
[63] Accounts, DIL I/l/33g,
[64] Havinden (1961a), 204-6.
[65] Woodward (1995), 237.

sold oats to the Earl's coachman in 1727, was a joiner by profession (Fig. 2.7). However, the majority of craftsmen and smallholders did not produce a saleable surplus on a regular basis, and needed most of what they grew for personal consumption.[66] This suggests that their production was primarily for use rather than exchange.[67] For instance, Thomas Saman, the baker of Hanborough, who regularly supplied the Ditchley household with bread during the 1680s, left a crop of corn in the ground worth £18 when he died in 1698 as well as 5 cows, 4 horses and a rick of hay.[68] Tradesmen such as Saman rarely provided the Lee household with grain, but this is hardly surprising considering the small amount they produced each year. Eden calculated that a Banbury labourer in 1795 with a wife and six children required 468 half-peck loaves per year, around 2,300lb of bread.[69] 6 quarters 3 bushels of wheat were needed to produce this number of loaves.[70] Given the prevailing price of £3 8s 4d/qtr. in 1680, Saman's £18 worth of wheat would only have amounted to 5 quarters 2 bushels, considerably less than was required to feed the Banbury family in 1795.

3.3 The payment of wages - cash or kind?

a) *Household servants*

One area of the accounts in which one might expect the use of money to have been widespread is the payment of wages to estate employees, but detailed analysis reveals a more complex picture with transactions in both cash and kind. Servants such as the maids, gardener and housekeeper were paid both wages and board wages, indicating that on top of their basic monetary income they received a weekly cash sum in place of meals

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[66] Mills (1980); Neeson (1993); Reed (1990b); Snell (1985).

[67] Clark (1979), 172-73; Henretta (1978), 18-19; Hodges (1988), 96-124; Hoppe & Langton (1994); Langton (1996), 210-11.

[68] O.A. MS wills Oxon., 150/1/34.

[69] Eden (1928), 281-82.

[70] Until 1710 in was assumed that 418 pounds of bread could be made from each quarter of wheat; in 1710 this was reduced to 417 pounds and in 1758 to 365. Thwaites (1986), 174.

throughout most of the year.[71] Indeed, board wages usually formed the larger portion of the servant's income. For instance, in 1712 Sarah Trinder was paid 2s per week board wages on top of her £1 basic wage, so that her total income over the year came to £6 4s. The same was true of the Ditchley housekeeper, Mrs. Gunn, who received £6 wages and £10 8s board wages, amounting to 4s per week.[72] Board wages such as these were frequently paid during the eighteenth century to servants remaining behind when a landed family was not in residence, because they tended to curb extravagance by compelling each employee to find their own food, and additionally reduced the responsibilities which the landlord had for his distant household.[73] This appears to have been the case in the Lee household, where the 1712 entry for Trinder also records that she had 4s "deducted and allowed for the 2 weeks the time my Lord was at Ditchley from May 27 to June 9".[74] Clearly the servants at Ditchley were forced to provide their own meals except when the landowner was in residence, when they received meals and had their board wages deducted accordingly.

Money allowances for food extended to many of those employed full-time on the estate, although the term board wages was not used in their case. For example, the carter Robart Langford usually received 5s per week, yet when the landlord was in residence at Ditchley for 14 weeks in the summer of 1710 he had 2s 6d per week deducted "for his diet".[75] This evidence suggests that the household economy was overwhelmingly monetized for much of the time in the early eighteenth century, with a reversion to a more traditional paternalist model when the Earl visited the estate.

However, the use of board wages during the 1709-12 period at Ditchley does seem to be somewhat contradictory, since many of the wage payments made to the servants were,

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71 Hecht (1956), 153-57.
72 Accounts, DIL I/l/33b$_2$
73 Hecht (1956), 153-54.
74 Accounts, DIL I/l/33b$_2$
75 Accounts, DIL I/l/33a$_{10}$

in fact, in wheat or other agricultural products over these years as a result of the high grain prices.[76] Thus the gardener, William Paine, in 1712 received 8 quarters of peas and 4 quarters of barley worth £7 6s 8d and £2 10s respectively, as well as having £1 16s in board wages deducted for the 9 weeks when the Lord or Lady were in residence, resulting in him only getting £13 7s 4d in cash payments during the year.[77] Hence he was sometimes allocated money in place of the provision of meals, only for payment of this sum to be made partially in kind. The Earl was therefore still, in reality, providing his servants with food, although they would have to prepare and cook it themselves. Perhaps this period was untypical of the eighteenth century as a whole, since evidence of significant levels of payment in kind to Ditchley servants cannot be found elsewhere within the accounts, but it does illustrate the complexity of the transactions taking place within the household. Any attempt to deduce the relative importance of monetary and non-monetary payments must take into consideration these contradictory signals.

The overriding impression remains that the relationship between landlord and servant at Ditchley was largely monetized, but it could be argued that the accounts are likely to have recorded primarily money transactions in any case. Certainly the combination of wages and board wages ensured that servants usually had a sizeable cash income and consequently a considerable degree of consumer sovereignty. The provision of food, the most significant element of a labourers' income which could be paid in kind, had been eliminated from the equation. William Killock, the gardener at Ditchley during the early years of the eighteenth century, received £25 per year, whilst the housekeeper at this time, Mrs. Caune had an annual wage of £16 8s.[78] Monetary incomes of this size would have been sufficient to allow a certain degree of comfort, but appear somewhat low given the responsibilities associated with jobs of such seniority within the estate's administrative

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[76] For discussion of the impact of high grain prices see section 3.2.
[77] Accounts, DIL I/l/33b,
[78] Accounts, DIL I/l/33a-b.

hierarchy. Lowly dairy and housemaids, on the other hand, received cash payments ranging from £4-6, hardly enough to live off for a year, given that day labourers at Ditchley made on average £12 per year in this period.[79] Although a labourer would have had to keep a family from his income, and women usually earned much less than their male counterparts during the eighteenth century, it is clear that most household servants must also have received remuneration from other sources.

One of these was "vails", fees that had customarily been collected from guests of the house. This distribution usually took place just before the guest was about to depart, with the servants lining up in two files either side of the door awaiting the donation. The practice, although resented by the gentry as a burdensome expense, had become entrenched by the eighteenth century and would certainly have been in operation at Ditchley.[80] There are a number of references within the accounts to payments that the Earl made to various servants when he himself was a guest. Every year whilst attended the Enstone court baron he seems to have stayed with either the Coles or Eyans, and to have paid out vails on each occasion. For instance, in 1708 the Earl gave 2s "to Eyans servants when he dined there".[81] Over a year the servants of a socially active gentleman could accrue a considerable income from this source entirely in cash form. Unfortunately it is not possible to ascertain how significantly Ditchley servants benefited from vails, but given that the landlord was only resident at the house for a few weeks a year the number of visitors must have been relatively small and the monetary rewards not all that significant.

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[79] Ibid. Average annual earnings are difficult to calculate during the early modern period as wages were usually paid on a daily basis or at piece rates, and the number of days worked in the course of a year is often an unknown quantity. Daily wage rates for agricultural labourers appear to have remained at around 11d throughout the seventeenth century, rising to 12d by 1750. Assuming a working year of 300 days this rate would provide a yearly income of £13 15s rising to £15 by the mid-eighteenth century. Bowden (1985), 3-6, 876-78.

[80] Hecht (1956), 158-68.

[81] Accounts, DIL I/l/33a$_8$

Nevertheless, the non-monetary component of servants' wages at Ditchley continued to be important. The Earl provided members of the household with shelter and clothing, as well as basic sustenance when he was in residence, so that their money income could often be used for other purposes. All household servants would almost certainly have been given lodgings in servants quarters attached to Ditchley House, or provided with cottages elsewhere within the grounds rent free.[82] The leasehold agreement for Ditchley Farm drawn up between the Earl and Thomas Alder in 1703 reveals that John Freeman, the Keeper of the Park, held rent-free "a house and adjoining piece of pasture ground" within the bounds of the farm.[83] Other servants living outside the main house at Ditchley included the gardener, gamekeeper and huntsman, but the remainder seem to have been domiciled at the house. Regardless of where they were lodged, however, the savings in rent from living-in account for a significant proportion of the income differentials between servants and labourers.

Other non-monetary income received by estate servants included clothing.[84] Only livery servants were entitled to apparel as part of their regular maintenance, yet many other employees were often provided with various articles of clothing through a combination of landlord generosity and self-interest.[85] During the early eighteenth century various members of the Ditchley household were clothed by courtesy of the Earl. John Porter claimed in his bill of 8th February 1725/6 for "a new pair of breeches" and a pair of shoes which he had purchased on his travels, whilst in 1743 Samuel Baughan was paid for making suits for Mr. Wilberforce, the bailiff, Mr. Dowdy, the butler, and the

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[82] Servants usually lodged with their employer because they tended to be young and unmarried. Moreover, service became increasingly the preserve of women over the course of the eighteenth century, with only the wealthiest households employing male servants. Hecht (1956); Hill (1989), 125-47; Hill (1996); Shoemaker (1998), 175-79.

[83] O.A. Lease for Ditchley Farm 1703, DIL I/c/2.

[84] For examples of clothing given *in lieu* of wages see Griffiths (1933), 1-32; Shammas (1990), 210-12; Woodward (1984), 164-97.

[85] Hecht (1956), 115-16.

cook.[86] Most of these were, of course, livery servants, and often bills submitted to the Earl specifically state that the clothing being made was destined for such people: for example, the hosier, John Lewes, produced "9 pairs of black livery hose" in 1743.[87] Nevertheless, other servants appear also to have received garments, although on a less regular basis. In 1746 the huntsman, Edward Wilkins was provided with breeches and a cap valued at £1 14s, as well as a cash wage of £16 6s 6d.[88] However, there are relatively few references in the accounts to household servants receiving clothing, suggesting that perhaps they often had to buy it themselves.[89] Hannah Richeson's 1724 entry simply notes the 32 weeks and 2 days of board wages owed to her and records the settling of this bill in two instalments without any reference to the manner in which it was paid: presumably only cash was used.[90]

To examine non-monetary payments more closely it is necessary to look beyond the overall estate accounts to sub-accounts drawn up by individual estate employees. The shepherd's account for 1709 is particularly useful because it records not only when payments were made but also what form they took. What emerges is a set of transactions far more complex than one would envisage from the simple record of wages owed which appears in the overall accounts. The shepherd, William Fletcher, received £2 of his quarterly wages of £2 12s in cash from the steward, and a further £1 from Farmer Curtis, who then set this payment against his rent bill.[91] However, Fletcher was also paid in kind on numerous occasions during the year. On the 22nd June he was paid with 5 sheep skins valued at 3s 4d and 1 bushel of barley. This was followed by a further bushel of barley a week later; 2 more bushels on July 10th; 4 bushels of peas at the end of November; and

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[86] Misc. Bills, 1724-5, DIL I/o/21; Misc. Bills, 1743, DIL I/o/24.

[87] Misc. Bills, 1743, DIL I/o/24.

[88] Misc. Bills, 1746, DIL I/o/25.

[89] Servants seem often to have relied upon the significant trade in second-hand clothing which had developed by the early eighteenth century, meeting the needs of poorer consumers. Lemire (1991), 61-76.

[90] Misc. Bills, 1724-5, DIL I/o/21.

[91] Fletcher was actually 17s overpaid at the end of this first quarter in 1709, but this surplus was offset by reduced payments later so that he ended the year with his account in balance.

finally wood worth £2 12s from Mr. Freeman.[92] In all Fletcher received 36% of his 1709 income in kind (Table 3.4).

Such arrangements appear to have been the norm at Ditchley during 1709-13, with regular references made to partially non-monetary payment of wages.[93] Thus Fletcher got 53% of his income from payments in kind in 1710, 50% in 1711 and 40% in 1712, and the carter Robart Langford never had more than 66% of his yearly wage in cash over the same period (Table 3.4, Fig. 3.9). Most of the non-monetary transactions in each case seem to have consisted of small portions of various grain crops, but other agricultural products could sometimes be involved: William Fletcher was given a "giddy sheep" valued at 2s 6d in 1712.[94]

The overall impression gained from the evidence available is that servants could expect to receive their income in a combination of cash and kind, the balance depending upon the practicalities of estate administration and long-term trends in the wider economy. The form of servants' remuneration was determined to a large extent by whether the Earl was in residence or not. Payment strategies also varied considerably over time, with the 1709-13 period, in particular, being notable for its higher than average level of non-monetary provision. Payment in kind often suited the employer when prices were stable, but during periods of inflation it could be of considerable burden to them and benefit to the wage earner.[95] Writing during the early seventeenth century when grain prices were rising rapidly, Robert Loder frequently bemoans the expenses he incurred in feeding and clothing his servants.[96] There were, however, few inflationary pressures during the opening decades of the eighteenth century.[97] Consequently the pressure to maintain

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[92] Accounts, DIL 1/1/33a_{10}

[93] Some of these references were noted earlier in connection with the examination of the role of board wages, in particular payments in grain to Sarah Trinder, Mrs. Gunn, and William Paine.

[94] Accounts, DIL 1/1/33b_2

[95] Shammas (1990), 213.

[96] Fussell (1936), 172.

[97] The major period of inflation was between 1540 and 1600. Thereafter the rate slackened, and from 1640 onwards prices remained relatively stable until the mid-eighteenth century. Outhwaite (1969), 9-15.

payment in kind was reduced, and the account evidence suggests that throughout most of this period members of the Lee household had a predominantly cash-based income.

b) *Estate craftsmen*

Another group of employees who were usually paid predominantly in cash were craftsmen, ranging from the local carpenter to the renowned interior designers involved in the rebuilding of Ditchley House. Unlike servants and tenants, few of them had the inclination or the opportunity to develop close social ties with their employers, since they dealt with numerous different people. Consequently their relationship with each employer was usually purely business-like and in most cases this meant payment in cash was required. Most relevant account entries for Ditchley craftsmen clearly indicate that an actual rather than a notional transfer of money had taken place. Thus the disbursements which John Freeman made on behalf of the Earl were usually with cash which he had accumulated from the sale of timber, underwood and other forest products. In some years the documentary record includes a breakdown of these transactions detailed enough to enable one to trace the flow of money as it passed through Freeman's hands. In 1710 he sold underwood from Bottom and High Wood for £115 8s 10d, and lop from the same sites for £22 12s. Underwood, lop and faggots were also taken from Lees Rest, the Court Closes and several places in the Ditchley fields during the years and the total income of the wood account amounted to £216 4s. Directly below these entries is a list of disbursements made by Freeman on behalf of the Earl, most of which were probably in cash, since reference was made to payments in kind when these took place.[98] The Keeper paid part of the wages of several labourers such as Thomas Bull, Samuel Hauten and James Butler; paid for goods, such as "1 load of wheat straw for thatching at the farm", and settled the bills of a number of craftsmen including the glazier, Thomas Sereven.[99]

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[98] See section 3.1.

[99] Accounts, DIL I/l/33a$_{10}$

These references to cash payments suggest that most craftsmen and labourers must have been paid at least partially in this manner.

Evidence from elsewhere in the accounts emphasises the dominance of monetary payments. Each year the craftsmen working regularly at Ditchley were listed as a group along with their bills for the previous twelve months. Except for the atypical 1709-13 period,[100] only on rare occasions was there any reference to payments in kind. Frequently it was stated that the person in question had been "paid in part", suggesting that money was handed over in instalments when it became available to estate officials. As in previous examples there was often a precise record of the amount of work done and/or the rate at which it was to be paid, detail usually associated with commercial cash transactions. For instance, the limeburner Thomas Mallard of Bladon submitted a bill in May 1724 for 86,381 bricks made for the new house at a cost of £1 per 1,000.[101]

The bundles of bills and receipts from the rebuilding of Ditchley House tend to confirm the impression that all contractors involved received regular money payments, in this case via the master builder, Francis Smith of Warwick.[102] He in turn was furnished with the necessary cash by the Earl in the form of bills of exchange. £100 bills appear to have been sent up to Ditchley every few months during the period of construction, each one being noted in Smith's accounts. The flow of money through these transactions is illustrated by a bill of 14th February 1733 from the carpenter Thomas Fletcher, which notes that he had "received of the Right Honourable Earle of Litchfield of the hand of Francis Smith forty pounds seventeen shillings and three pence in full".[103] Given that Fletcher was a local man, who had worked for the Earl for a number of years, and had been paid partially with wood in the past, one can assume that other such craftsmen

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100 These years are unusual in that significant non-monetary payments, largely small portions of wheat and barley, are recorded as having been received by most estate employees - servants, labourers and craftsmen.

101 Accounts, DIL I/l/33e$_1$

102 Smith was one of the leading master builders in the Midlands during the early eighteenth century. Colvin (1978), 747-49.

103 Misc. Bills, DIL I/o/22.

would have received similar treatment. Thus payments for work rebuilding the house seem overwhelmingly to have been in cash.

Yet is the case for the primacy of cash transactions in the payment of local craftsmen so clear-cut? It has already been noted that some such as Thomas Fletcher were on occasions paid partially with wood, and these oblique references can be clarified for some years in the accounts where there is a full breakdown of craftsmen's wage payments. The accounts for 1711 are especially useful in this respect, and it is from here that evidence has been taken for three artisans who feature prominently within the documents: the slater, Henry Franklin, the mason, William Varney, and the smith, Goodman Haten. Each man's bill is set out on a separate page with demands listed on the left hand side and payments on the right, and any credit or money owing at the bottom. In 1711 Franklin submitted a bill for £8 8s 11d, which was paid off in a number of small instalments, most of which consisted of payments in kind. In fact the slater received only £2 9s in cash that year, paid via Mr. Freeman, the rest being paid via small transfers of barley, wheat or peas. The same was true of Varney, who received 23% of his bill in kind, and a further £8 via a promissory note drawn by the steward on Humphrey Cox, the local blacksmith.[104] Haten was paid a lump sum of £9 6s 8d on 21st December, with £4 17s 8d's worth of wood from John Freeman and 2 bushels of barley in addition.[105]

Were these payments to Ditchley craftsmen in 1711 unusual or do they reflect in detail what was really happening from year to year on the estate? Certainly the account books for the following few years record a similar situation, yet by the time one reaches 1714 the usual vague references to "payment in part" have returned. This contrast may simply be the result of different standards of data recording by the steward, although an alternative explanation may be sought in the timing of the changes. The period around

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[104] Promissory notes were a rudimentary form of credit, whereby a third party who owed money to the debtor agreed to pay the creditor on his or her behalf. Muldrew (1998), 108-9.

[105] Accounts, DIL I/I/33b,

1710, as has been noted before, was marked by a significant rise in grain prices, something which might have encouraged craftsmen and labourers alike to request payment of their wages in wheat or barley to guarantee themselves access to these scarce commodities.[106] This, of course, raises the question as to whether the decision to make payments in kind was at the discretion of the steward or was prompted by the demands of the craftsman himself.[107] The answer can only be guessed at, although the latter is suggested by the fact that all craftsmen received grain, a staple commodity, whereas carpenters seem to have acquired wood in this manner more often than men in other trades.

3.4 Labourers' wages at Ditchley: continuity and change

Serfs toiled in the fields for entirely non-monetary rewards, but over the centuries a process of creeping proletarianization had taken place, so that by the 1600s a significant number of people relied predominantly for their livelihood upon a wage.[108] Nevertheless payments in kind continued to constitute a significant element of most labourers' income due to the prevalence of hierarchically ordered demand. Rather than pay workers with cash, which was in short supply, most gentry and yeoman farmers preferred to hire servants in husbandry who lived as part of their households,[109] or alternatively to employ day labourers who were paid partially in perquisites, gifts and allowances.[110] During the seventeenth century 33-60% of the income received by the average day labourer came in the form of food, clothing and shelter, leaving little scope for consumer choice.[111] Numerous examples of such payments in kind can be found in the *Memorandum Book* of

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106 Shammas (1990), 213

107 Contemporary evidence suggests that landlords often resented the perceived expense associated with providing food for their servants and labourers. Fussell (1936), 170-73.

108 Everitt (1967); Hassell-Smith (1989); Lachmann (1987); MacFarlane (1978); Poos (1991).

109 Kussmaul (1981); Snell (1985).

110 Everitt (1967), 435-38.

111 Shammas (1990), 213-14.

Henry Best, who farmed at Elmswell in Yorkshire during the early seventeenth century. An entry in 1624 records that John Bonwicke was to have "£6 in money, 6 bushels of barley, 2 bushels rye and a bushel of peas, and every week a thrave of straw from Christmas to Lady Day in Lent [25 March] and 5s. for a coat besides 1s. I gave him for godspenny."[112]

Was the purchasing power of the labourers at Ditchley in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth century still similarly constrained? If so it contradicted the trend over most parts of lowland England by the 1700s, since over the course of the early-modern period there is evidence for a gradual diminution of gentry involvement in the provision of food, clothing and housing for their labour force as servants in husbandry were increasingly replaced by day labourers.[113] Servants employed on an annual basis and forming part of their employer's household were very much a part of the open field economy which was being steadily eroded at Ditchley by piecemeal enclosure and farm amalgamation during the first half of the eighteenth century. The message which commentators in the middle of the century conveyed was clear. "Progressive farmers with large enclosed holdings hired (or should hire) day-labourers; only small, inefficient farmers hired (or should hire) servants."[114] Given the regular fluctuations in prices for goods, payments in kind to servants in husbandry were increasingly considered not to be in the interests of the employer, who was often left subsidising his workforce if the cost of food rose rapidly, whilst his neighbour employing mostly day labourers had to pay only fixed wage rates.

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[112] Woodward ed. (1984), 178.

[113] Woodward, drawing on evidence from the north of England, suggests that by the late seventeenth century most labourers "received the bulk of their remuneration in cash". A daily drink allowance and occasional treats of food were relatively commonplace, but only those working away from home were provided with their full dietary needs. Woodward (1995), 168.

[114] Kussmaul (1981), 120-121.

a) *The survival of payment in kind in the early eighteenth century*

Examination of the account entries relating to labourers leaves the payment debate somewhat unresolved. One would expect workmen on the Ditchley estate to have received a significant proportion of their wages in cash, but the evidence from the accounts is not clear enough to permit any definitive statements to this effect. There are large numbers of references within the documents to both specific tasks undertaken and, more generally, to "work done" by labourers, alongside which are noted the earnings obtained as a result. For instance, William Trinder was paid £1 7s 6d in April 1704 for "5 weeks, 3 days digging stones", whilst in January 1704/5 Samuel Hauten received 9s 7d for "digging stones at Ditchley and clearing fallen trees".[115] No reference was made to the duration of the work in this latter case, something which is often true in the earlier account books. Many of these payments were made via John Freeman using cash accumulated in the wood account: Hauten, together with James Butler and Thomas Bull had part of their wages paid in such a manner in March 1709/10.[116] Thus the initial impression gained from the documents is that most labourers by the beginning of the eighteenth century were paid in cash at a predetermined daily rate which was dependent upon the nature of the work.[117]

The doubt must remain, however, that money values have sometimes been included in the accounts purely for the purpose of calculating overall estate expenditure, concealing the fact that many of the Ditchley labour force received recompense for their work in a variety of different forms. On occasions incidental evidence of payment in kind is forthcoming, an example being the reference in the 1720 wood account to Thomas Freeman being reimbursed for providing faggots valued at 10s to the labourer Thomas

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115 Accounts, DIL I/l/33a$_4$

116 Accounts, DIL I/l/33a$_9$

117 Mowing grass was paid at a rate of 5d/day, whilst the more strenuous task of digging stones brought 10d/day. Accounts, DIL I/l/33.

Blizzard.[118] Clearly the faggots had been given to Blizzard as a payment in kind set against his wages. Also the accounts reveal that on 1st August 1720 2lb. of bacon and 4 quarts of ale were provided for Mr. Grace and Mr. Markham's men at a cost of 2s,[119] whilst the sheep shearers usually received an allowance of bread and cheese additional to their wages. In 1710 the 6 shearers were paid the sum of 10s 6d, yet the bread and cheese they were supplied with was valued at a further 5s 6d, confirming that food provided to workmen could make up a considerable proportion of their income.[120]

There is little evidence, however, to suggest that the provision of food for consumption whilst at work was widespread on the estate, and it could well be that it was restricted to men hired temporarily for specific tasks, such as shearers, brickmakers and thatchers. Certainly at harvest time the landlord conventionally provided drinks for the workforce at the end of each day and contributed towards the cost of a feast held after the reaping had been completed.[121] However, references to large-scale purchases of bread and cheese found within the bundles of miscellaneous bills and receipts seem to suggest that the provision of food for the Ditchley labour-force may have been on a more regular basis. They show that between May and December of 1724 the steward bought 300lbs. of cheese from Peter Lichere at a cost of £5 13s 2d, whilst Peter Reedfield supplied the household with £26 16s 4d's worth of bread in the course of that year,[122] a vast quantity if one considers that the price of a small household loaf in the early eighteenth century was only 1d.[123] These foodstuffs were the staple diet of most labourers and servants, but would not have been consumed in any quantity by the Lee family themselves.[124] Given the relatively small size of the household when the landlord was not in residence at

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118 Accounts, DIL I/l/33c$_5$

119 Ibid.

120 Accounts, DIL I/l/33a$_{10}$. Farmers still provided meals out in the fields to their workers in many parts of England in the early twentieth century.

121 Feasting after the harvest was a longstanding tradition in arable England. Everitt (1967), 436.

122 Misc. Bills, 1724-5, DIL I/o/21.

123 Thwaites (1986), 174.

124 Everitt (1967), 450-51.

Ditchley, why would such large amounts of bread and cheese have been purchased if not to be distributed amongst day labourers as part of their wages?

Another indication that workers' pay at Ditchley may not have been wholly monetary comes from the part of the accounts detailing purchases of estate-produced grain. Between 1709 and 1712 long lists of labourers and craftsmen seemingly made regular purchases of small quantities of barley, oats and peas, which were described as being "winnowed and delivered". For instance, John Kirby was supplied with 2 bushels of barley on 22nd June 1709, followed by a further 2 bushels on the 29th June, and then again on the 10th and 18th July.[125] Over the course of the year the price paid by the workmen per bushel fluctuated considerably, suggesting the influence of market forces, and the value of each transaction was recorded precisely. Elsewhere in the accounts such evidence has been considered sufficient to categorise the exchange as monetary, but in this case the small size of each "purchase" and the regularity with which they took place dissuades one from jumping to such a conclusion. Grain supplied to labourers could have been valued according to prevailing market prices but, rather than being bought with cash, might have been given as a payment in kind set against wages. Given that small denomination coinage was in short supply, would it not have been strange if the steward had paid estate workers in cash, only to see them use that money to purchase goods off the estate, when such transactions could be conducted just as effectively through internal non-monetary exchange? (A lack of cash on the estate would have been partly due to the transfer of large quantities to London to fund the Earl's extravagant living.)

Evidence relating to the payment of a number of labourers for their services 1709-13 indicates that this was probably the case.[126] The 1710 entry for William Trinder lists not only the tasks he had carried out over the year, such as harvest work, digging lime, sifting coals, thatching, digging posts and cutting wood, but also notes the manner in which he

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[125] Accounts, DIL I/l/33a,

[126] The account entries described here are similar to those for craftsmen and servants.

was paid on the other side of the page. Rather than receiving purely monetary payments, Trinder's wage was made up of a combination of cash and kind, with small measures of barley especially prominent.[127] Non-monetary transactions made up 54% of his income (Table 3.4), and in 1711 he again received non-monetary payments throughout the autumn, when grain from the harvest was readily available. On 16th September he was provided with "2 pecks of wheat and a bushel of barley" by Farmer Curtis, whilst on the 21st he received a bushel of barley, followed by similar deliveries on the 11th and 31st of October. Over the year Trinder's cash income amounted to £3 0s 8d, and supplies of grain added up to a further £2 18s 2d, suggesting that payment in kind was far from being merely a symbolic element of income.[128] He was not an isolated example. Labourers such as John Kirby, Thomas Bull and Samuel Hauten were recorded as having received wheat or barley as part-payment of their wages throughout 1709-13. During this time Ditchley labourers seem on average to have received around 45% of their income in kind, and many had a much bigger non-monetary element, indicating that money was either not freely available or not maximally desirable to estate labourers over these years (Table 3.4).

A more detailed examination was made of the payments made to Samuel Haten and James Butler. Haten was a day labourer and Butler the estate ox-man: both were employed regularly by the Earl over many years, and both appear from the accounts to have been paid a considerable proportion of their wages in kind. Between 1709 and 1712 Haten never received more than 35% of his income in cash, although he does not feature in the account book for 1713 (Table 3.4). Most of his non-monetary payments took the form of small allocations of wheat or barley, which occurred primarily between the end of September and the beginning of May.[129] Grain appears usually to have been provided out

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[127] Accounts, DIL I/l/33a_9-b_3

[128] Accounts, DIL I/l/33b_1

[129] Accounts, DIL I/l/33a_9-b_3

of central estate reserves, since the documents often contain comments such as "paid by 2 bushels wheat", but sometimes supply via a third party is indicated. For instance, Haten's wage account for 1712 includes a reference to the payment of Farmer Curtis "for 19 bushels of barley and for wheat straw".[130] This barley had clearly been provided by Curtis acting on behalf of the landowner, and he had subsequently been recompensed by the steward, and the value of the grain deducted from the labourer's wages. Curtis was the tenant of nearby Spelsbury Farm, who no doubt would have had a sizeable surplus of grain each year, some of which was clearly disposed of through internal channels in this manner.

James Butler was somewhat less dependent upon payments in kind. In 1709 only 24% of his wages were in this form, although the figure rose considerably over the following three years, reaching a peak of 58% in 1712 before falling rapidly to only 16% a year later (Table 3.4) Whereas the level of non-monetary payments associated with Samuel Haten appear unusually large, Butler's wage characteristics seem in line with the general pattern amongst the Ditchley workforce. Compared with some of the other labourers he received more peas, which were lower in value than wheat, and consequently constituted a smaller proportion of his income.[131] The woodward, John Freeman, using money from the wood account, also gave him lump sums of cash on a relatively frequent basis. Nevertheless the quantities of cereals that Butler acquired would have been sufficient to provide for his family over the year: in 1712 he had 28 bushels of wheat, 19 bushels of barley, and 9 bushels of peas. Samuel Haten, in contrast, received 48 bushels of wheat, and 48 bushels of barley, but only $2^{1}/_{2}$ bushels of peas.[132]

These examples show that rather than being paid wholly in cash, many labourers acquired most of their grain requirements, plus some meat in the form of the odd pig or

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[130] Accounts, DIL 1/1/33b$_2$

[131] The average price of peas in the South Midlands during the early eighteenth century was around 21s/qtr., whereas that for wheat fluctuated between 32-40s/qtr. Bowden (1985), 864-69.

[132] Accounts, DIL 1/1/33b$_2$

couple of chickens, from internal estate sources. The fact remains, however, that documentary evidence for the payment of labourers and craftsmen in kind is limited largely to the period 1709-13, whereas elsewhere in the accounts entries simply refer to such men being paid "in part". Moreover, the appearance of widespread reference to payment in kind coincides with the listing of small "purchases" of grain by labourers and local craftsmen described earlier, and these two features of the documents disappear simultaneously, which clearly suggests some link between the two. Careful cross-tabulation indicates that both, in fact, refer to the same set of transactions; that is the provision of grain to estate workers *in lieu* of wages. For instance, the 1712 accounts show that Thomas Bull was paid with 1 bushel of wheat on the 3rd, 9th and 19th of September; the 4th and 14th of October; the 4th and 21st of November and so on, and within that year's list for "wheat winoed and delivered" there are entries referring to Bull being supplied with small portions on precisely these dates.[133]

The lists, therefore, appear to be a relatively comprehensive record of grain used for payment in kind on the estate in any given year. They confirm that non-monetary transactions involving cereals were only significant between 1709 and 1712. The volume of supplies to estate workers peaked in 1711, had declined slightly by the following year, and thereafter fell away quite markedly, something which is also reflected in the disappearance of references to payment in corn within the wages section of the accounts at around this time (Table 3.4, Fig. 3.9). In 1711 estate workers were receiving, on average, 48% of their wages in the form of grain or other agricultural products; by 1712 they were getting 34%, and by 1713 only 8% (Table 3.4). The corn accounts indicate that wheat made up on average about 65% of the grain provided, although there were also significant quantities of barley and peas, suggesting that the Ditchley workforce was using payment in kind to acquire basic subsistence and perhaps also a little fodder for a

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133 Ibid.

cow or a few pigs. Such an impression is reinforced by the fact that entries appear on an almost weekly basis and record only small quantities changing hands, usually only 1 or 2 bushels at a time, which would have been just about adequate to feed the average family. When there was a longer interval between deliveries individuals often compensated for this by doubling the quantity they received from the steward.

b) *A temporary increase in produce payment: 1709-13*

The high levels of payment in kind just described for estate labourers closely match those found for both servants and craftsmen between 1709 and 1713 (Fig. 3.10). This suggests that Ditchley's labour force was operating during this period within a partially non-monetary regime, which contrasted sharply with evidence of commercialisation in the accounts before and after this period.[134] Clearly there must have been some reason for such a major upheaval in the everyday operation of the local estate economy. The appearance of widespread produce payment at Ditchley came just when grain prices were at their highest during the first half of the eighteenth century (Fig. 3.11). Economic rationale dictates that during periods of rising grain prices farmers should be reducing the number of farm servants receiving payments in kind and hiring more day labourers paid in cash.[135] The fact that this does not appear to have been happening between 1709 and 1713 suggests that non-economic forces were exerting pressure on the system. The accounts at this time are not describing the normal operation of the local agrarian system but a response to an extraordinary situation. Perhaps this is evidence of the moral economy in action.

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[134] Hassell Smith found a similar situation at Stiffkey where labourers were being supplied with basic products such as malt, straw, wood, barley and hay, and handing over any surplus eggs, butter, poultry or vegetables they might have direct to the steward, suggesting that such non-monetary transactions might have been responsible for the social cohesion of the local community.

[135] Snell (1985), 85-7.

With grain in short supply local labourers would have found it galling if the landlord and his tenant farmers had stored away their crop or taken it to market leaving insufficient to provide for the local population. In the eighteenth century the poor were still attached to the moral economy, believing that corn should be consumed in the region in which it had been grown rather than transported elsewhere, particularly in times of scarcity.[136] The 1709-12 period was certainly one of serious grain shortage due to a succession of poor harvests, and consequently one might expect normal marketing procedures for cereals to have been at least partially suspended.[137] 1709 was a year of food riots throughout the country,[138] lending weight to this argument: in Suffolk a dealer described how "the Mobb rose, he thinks several hundreds, and said that the corn should not be carryed out of town".[139] By providing the Ditchley labour force with grain *in lieu* of wages for the duration of this crisis the steward defused potential unrest in the area by ensuring all the workers had an adequate and reasonably priced supply of corn.

c) *Cash payment and the transformation of labour relations*

Subtle changes in the character of the estate accounts reflect the increasing commercialisation of the agrarian economy during the early eighteenth century. The sections dealing with labourers' wages are particularly significantly affected, with a tendency for listings to be more systematically organised rather than entries relating to specific tasks undertaken by individual workmen being scattered throughout the documents. From 1709 several pages of the accounts were set aside each year to list all the labourers employed on the estate, and the format used in this section becomes

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136 Thompson (1971), 98-101; Walter & Wrightson (1976), 116-22.

137 1708 was a very bad year for agriculture with hoar frost in June and rainy weather over the harvest period, and this was followed by poor weather in 1709 and 1710. There were serious grain shortages throughout England, the price of wheat rose 200% in two years and famine conditions ensued. Stratton & Houghton Brown (1978), 66-68.

138 Charlesworth ed. (1983), 63-80; Stevenson (1985), 232-33.

139 Thompson (1971), 98.

increasingly standardised after 1725.[140] Each year there is a breakdown of the various jobs engaged in by labourers on the estate, together with a record of the number of days worked and the wages earned. For example, Thomas Blizzard was paid 2s/week for ploughing in 1730 making £2 7s 4d, and received a further £13 12s 8d for mowing grass, harvest work and miscellaneous other jobs throughout the year.[141] It is only after 1725 that entries relating to labourers are fully segregated from other aspects of the estate's administration in this way, forming an autonomous section of the account book. Nevertheless the detailed nature of some earlier entries, especially between 1709 and 1712, and the systematic manner in which they were recorded, suggests that a gradual transformation in the way labourers at Ditchley were paid may have taken place during the opening decades of the eighteenth century.[142]

Between 1702 and 1708 account entries mostly record payments for individual tasks such as digging stones, helping the thatcher or ploughing, with the only systematic documentation relating to haymaking, weeding and harvest work. A page in each account book was devoted to these jobs, listing all the people involved, the number of days they had worked, and how much they had been paid. It is only from 1709 that a few complete yearly bills for specific labourers begin to appear, but entries relating to payment for specific tasks continued to be found elsewhere in the documents, and haymaking and harvest work were still featured separately. Thus there are elements of continuity in the organisation of the accounts over the first two decades of the eighteenth century, but also significant changes. The more detailed and coherently structured record of labourers

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[140] Accounts, DIL I/I/33.

[141] Accounts, DIL I/I/33f$_5$. The record of work done during the year is usually organised chronologically, so that it is possible to trace the labourer's activities from day-to-day over the year and work out both the length of each job and the rate of pay for it.

[142] Changes to the format of the accounts could, of course, merely be the consequence of using different accounting procedures. This, however, does not seem to be a likely option in this case because the documents continued to be written in the same hand and the overall structure remains fundamentally the same, and only a few areas such as the records of wage payments to labourers underwent significant alteration.

activities from 1709 marks a definite point of discontinuity, which perhaps reflects the onset of a transformation from a customary to a market-oriented labour regime. Entries relating to wage labour at Ditchley were not brought together in a standardised format until 1725, when separate yearly accounts for individual labourers appear for the first time, and this system then continued throughout the remainder of the study period.

In 1725 a separate "cash book" also appeared for the first time to supplement the accounts, presumably listing all the estate transactions where cash payments were made.[143] Within these "books" most of the entries relating to estate income are those one would expect to be money-based such as rentals, entry fines, and deals struck in the neighbouring markets, but within the section covering expenditure a large number of small cash payments to labourers are recorded alongside those to servants and craftsmen. Thomas Batson, for instance, appears to have been paid in 28 separate instalments during 1725, receiving sums which rarely exceeded 10s every 11 days or so.[144] A number of the other day labourers seem to have had similar arrangement, being paid weekly or once every two weeks in cash. This contrasts sharply with the combination of more irregular payments in cash and kind which appears to have been the norm just ten years earlier. The cash books provide a complete record of all cash disbursements made to Ditchley labourers over the year, and thus the sum of all payments indicates the size of monetary income earned by the Ditchley workforce. In 1725 this figure amounted to £147 5s 6d split amongst 31 men, many of whom worked for only a few weeks on the estate and so received a relatively small sum (Table 3.5). 11 labourers were employed throughout the year and received regular money payments. The cash books provide systematic documentation of these payments for the first time, appearing to reflect not merely a

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[143] The cash books were set out systematically with entries related to income listed chronologically on each left hand page, and those relating to expenditure similarly arranged on the right hand pages. They were bound separately from the main accounts and form a continuous run from 1725 to 1750

[144] Accounts (Cash book 1725), DIL I/l/33e;

rationalisation of accounting procedure, but a real reorganisation of the labour process at Ditchley.

Labourers listed in the books can be grouped into three categories: those receiving small regular payments throughout the year; those receiving larger payments on a more occasional basis; and those only paid over part of the year (Table 3.5, Fig. 3.12). The first two categories can be assumed to be full-time workers on the estate, the last probably consisted of men employed casually during periods of peak labour demand. Notably, many of the labourers in this latter group do not appear in the Ditchley or Enstone parish registers and so can be assumed to be outsiders. Their presence in the accounts supports the assertion that population flows within this part of north-west Oxfordshire were considerable during the early eighteenth century. Townships on the fringes of Wychwood Forest witnessed rapid population growth during this period, and hence had large reserves of underemployed labour which the estate could draw upon when the need arose.[145]

Most of these temporary hirings fit in with recognised patterns of seasonal labour demand. Eight of the casual labourers were employed only during the harvest and winter ploughing period from July to October, suggesting that they had been hired specifically for this purpose, whilst five others, including Edward and Thomas Fortnam appear in the records only in April and early May when haymaking and lambing were taking place (Figs. 3.24-3.36). Their employment was a reflection of the fluctuating labour requirements which were an endemic feature of even mixed farming areas, with work in particularly short supply during the winter months, whilst during the harvest period (July-September) labour shortages were common and both men and women had their highest employment levels.[146] At Ditchley, however, other labourers seem strangely to have been taken on temporarily in January and February, months when agricultural work was usually in short supply (Figs. 3.37-3.43). Their presence in the cash book record can only

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[145] See section 2.5.

[146] Snell (1985), 17-22.

be explained by cross-referencing with the main account documents, which show that during the winter months of 1725 large quantities of bricks were produced in preparation for the construction of the new mansion, and it is likely that these men were hired to help the brick-makers Martin Mallard and James Wells.[147]

Despite the different times of the year when they were employed, all the casual labourers at Ditchley had a good deal in common. Most received payments over a period of between three weeks and two months, and apart from the two Claridge brothers none worked for more than 52 days in total. Moreover, the cash books reveal that they were paid relatively frequently, rarely having to wait more than 30 days between instalments (Table 3.5). By comparing these figures with those found in the main accounts it can be seen that payment was usually made entirely in cash, as one would expect given that the majority of the men had been hired on a casual basis and had no long term exchange relationship with the estate administration. Of those who do appear to have received some payment in kind, Richard and Phillip Claridge had a close association with the Ditchley area, whilst Edward Fortnam lived in Radford only about a mile away and had been employed for a number of years on the Enstone part of the estate.[148]

From the 1720s full-time labourers are relatively common in the accounts. Where there is a detailed breakdown of an individual's employment over the year, adding together the number of days worked at each task confirms that by this time many men were being retained throughout the year, with some recorded as working for more than 320 days. In 1745 five men exceeded this figure, and a further eight did over 300 days.[149] Any labourer working in excess of 300 days must be viewed as full-time if one considers that a six day week was customary, and thus the maximum length of service during any given

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147 Accounts, DIL I/l/33e,

148 All of these men received most of their wages in cash. Richard Clarridge had 7.3% as a non-monetary payment, Phillip Clarridge had 20.2%, and Edward Fortnam 17.7%.

149 Accounts, DIL I/l/33i,

year was theoretically 313 days.[150] It is clear that this type of employment became increasingly important over the course of the eighteenth century.

Using information derived from the cash books these full-time employees can be divided into two categories based on the manner in which they were paid. Those such as Thomas Batson, William Cooper and John Austin, who carried out a whole range of tasks on the estate over the year, tended to receive their wages in regular small instalments (Figs. 3.19-23). Batson was paid on average 8s 4d every 11 days or so throughout 1725, though this overall figure in fact conceals a more complex picture (Table 3.5). In reality he received weekly 5s sums between April and July, but was paid 15s every 3 weeks for the remainder of the year (Fig. 3.20). Perhaps Batson was atypical, in that the other labourers dealt with in a similar manner tended to get sums ranging from 10-15s every two or three weeks, but such regular cash disbursements represented a significant change in the method of payment on the estate.[151]

Traditionally young single men and women were hired on an annual basis, domiciled with their employer, and usually paid at the close of the year. On marriage these servants became 'labourers' like those described above, were paid weekly or fortnightly, and no longer received board and lodgings.[152] The practice of servantship-in-husbandry remained common in the early eighteenth century: 50% of hirings in the south of England between 1701 and 1740 were still for two years or more, although the average length of service did begin to decline markedly thereafter.[153] Farm service arrangements at Ditchley appear, however, to have been rather more flexible.[154] A number of the workmen

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[150] Evidence from the accounts confirms that labourers worked a six day week, since total earnings, the rate of payment per day and number of weeks worked are often recorded, allowing the number of days worked to be calculated.

[151] Phelps Brown and Hopkins calculated that labourers' wages in southern England c.1700 were 12-14s per week, rising to 16s per week by 1750. Brown and Hopkins (1981), 11.

[152] Kussmaul (1981), 133-4. Snell (1985), 81-84 argues that this distinction between labourers and farm servants is rather inflexible.

[153] Snell (1985), 74.

[154] Experiences of service were similarly diverse elsewhere. See Hassell-Smith (1989a), 15.

employed at Ditchley in 1725 were paid in a few large lump sums spread over the year, a clear sign that they had been hired on yearly contracts. These men differed from the traditional model of the farm servant since they did not receive board and lodgings, but were paid sums of money as board wages at fairly regular intervals.[155] Most appear to have been engaged in more specialist tasks and they generally received 12d as opposed to 10d per day (Table 3.5). Two of them, Thomas Collet and Edward Smith, were the main Ditchley carters; Samuel Haten may well have become shepherd by this date; John Jones appears to have been employed primarily to assist the brickmakers, and Thomas Mitchell is recorded in the accounts as being paid solely "for cutting straw" (Figs. 3.13-18).[156]

Payments to these men were much less frequent than to the other full-time labourers, but they do not appear to have been in receipt of a significantly larger non-monetary portion to their income in 1725, with only an average of 11.6% of their accounted earnings not recorded amongst the cash book's list of payments. Thus this category of labourers does not seem to have been any more significantly integrated into the customary economy, suggesting that the differing character of disbursements made to them may have been for reasons of practicality. Unlike a labourer engaged in general agricultural work, someone primarily specialising in specific tasks would be employed more sporadically making it difficult to assign a standard weekly wage rate for what was effectively piece work. For instance both Edward Smith, the carter, and Thomas Mitchell were retained as estate employees throughout the year, yet they were only paid for 215 and 231 days work respectively (Table 3.5). Given that such men might work solidly during one week, but only for half a day during another, it would have made more sense

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155 Snell has outlined the various practices that can be grouped under the heading of farm service. He argues that some farm labourers were hired yearly but did not live in the farm-house, and could be paid on a regular, and sometimes even weekly basis. Perhaps both types of full-time labourer at Ditchley fall within this category. Snell (1985), 81-4.

156 Accounts, DIL I/I/33e,

to space payments more widely, allowing all the money earned over a period of several months to be paid at once.

The general impression gained is that all full-time labourers at Ditchley were, without exception, in receipt of a largely monetary income by 1725 regardless of the manner in which they were paid. This can be confirmed by comparing the total earnings of each individual, set out in the accounts, with the value of disbursements to these same men recorded in the cash books. Analysis of the resulting figures for 1725 shows that only around 15% of the wages earned by full-time labourers at Ditchley could not be accounted for by entries in the cash books, and thus could perhaps have been paid in kind, although these sums could alternatively have been carried over as arrears into the following year.[157]

Entirely cash-based wages were also characteristic of temporary employees after 1725 as the cash books illustrate,[158] but prior to this they seem sometimes to have continued to be paid partially in kind, a situation which is illustrated by the entry for William Crosbegan in 1720. Unlike most of the other labourers employed during the 1720s, Crosbegan's bill includes a complete breakdown of the payments made to him for the 18 weeks work he performed for the Earl. Since he was paid 5s/week, the total amount owed to him that year was £4 10s, but only a shilling of this was paid in cash. On 19th December he received 4 loaves of bread, meat and a pair of boots valued at 16s 6d, then on the 21st of the same month 29lb. of cheese, a loaf of bread and a sheep's head, and thereafter between 12th January and 2nd March he was supplied with 16lb. of butter, 2lb. of flour, a pair of breeches, a hat, a waistcoat, bacon, oats and so on.[159] In other words

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[157] The possibility that some wages were paid in arrears does not invalidate these conclusions, because, assuming that 1725 was an average year, arrears would be no greater than in the previous twelve months. Payment of money owed from the year before would consequently offset any amount remaining to be settled at the end of 1725.

[158] Of the 20 men employed for less than 90 days during 1725, only 3 received any non-monetary payment, and two of them were paid cash sums which were actually slightly larger than the wages they were owed.

[159] Accounts, DIL I/l/33c$_5$

Crosbegan was able to acquire most of the food and clothing he needed directly from the landowner, rather than having to buy them himself, a situation which was clearly no longer the case for any labourers at Ditchley less than a decade later.

d) *Harvest work: a case study of labour transformation*

Casual labour was clearly an essential feature of the estate labour force after 1725, but it should not be assumed that prior to this most workers had been retained throughout the year. On the contrary the employment of people for specific tasks or short periods appears to have been more common at the beginning of the eighteenth century, as has already been noted. The example of Crosbegan illustrates that payments to such casual labourers could sometimes be in kind, but money transactions appear to have been the norm especially in the case of harvest work. Many families had traditionally used such employment to supplement their monetary income, because payment at haymaking and harvest time were conventionally in cash, although most landowners also provided some food and drink to the harvesters, recognising the arduous nature of the job and the speed with which it was necessary to accomplish it.[160] There were changes to payment practice for this type of work over the course of the first five decades of the eighteenth century. In the earlier accounts payments for haymaking and harvest work were usually recorded separately and whole families seem to have been involved. For instance, in 1704 Goody Huckwell did 5 days haymaking along with her daughter Ann, and Goody Cook was accompanied by both her son and daughter.[161] Being very labour intensive, haymaking was able to employ not only the men, who mostly mowed grass, but also the women and children, who gathered the wet grass together and turned it over to ensure it dried before

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[160] The high wages offered during the harvest period drew in workers from neighbouring towns and non-agrarian occupations, and contributed to a seasonal marriage peak in the autumn months. Everitt (1967), 436-37; Hill (1989), 34-36, 45; Kussmaul (1990), 14-45.

[161] Accounts, DIL I/l/33a,

helping to load up the hay carts.[162] These were times of communal effort when the whole village worked together.

Such images of community solidarity are, however, less apparent in the documentary record of the mid-eighteenth century. Whereas haymaking and harvest work had previously been done by the estate families, it appears now to have been accomplished largely by day labourers, some of whom were employed on a casual basis.[163] Whereas many of the women and children employed at the beginning of the century came from long established families of copyholders and cottagers, the wage labourers who replaced them were frequently relatively recent arrivals in the parish.[164] This apparent diminution of family involvement during the harvest period is perhaps early evidence of the marginalization of female labour within arable farming areas, notable during the late eighteenth century.[165] In many ways these changes affecting harvest work can be seen as reflecting the overall rationalisation and monetization of the labour process on the Ditchley estate, and indeed the general shift towards monetization and commercialisation of the agrarian economy. The stable village community was being gradually eroded and replaced by a more transient proletarianized population.[166]

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[162] Division of labour at harvest time was accentuated by the replacement of the sickle by the scythe during the early eighteenth century. Greater strength was required for the two-handled scythe, effectively limiting its use to men. However, mowing left behind more subsidiary raking and gathering work, and this was usually done by women and children. Roberts (1979), 3-28.

[163] There are some references in the lists of tasks performed by labourers over the year to money owed to their wives or daughters for work done during harvest or haymaking, but these tend to have disappeared by 1720. For instance, Samuel Haten's bill for 1712 records 18s 8d owed to his daughter for "28 dayes at harvist" and 2s 6d for "5 dayes serveing thatcher".

[164] Analysis of surnames from the parish registers indicates that many of the casual day labourers employed at harvest time from 1725 were not resident in Spelsbury or Enstone parishes, or had been established there for 30 years or less. Agricultural wage labourers were far more mobile than customary tenants as they had few ties to the land, and would be likely to move if job opportunities became scarce.

[165] Snell (1985), 15-66.

[166] For general discussion of the transformation of agrarian labour see Kussmaul (1981, 1990); Snell (1985); Woodward (1995)

e) *The transformation of wages and changes to the labour process*

The preceding sections have shown that the character of wage payments and accounting procedures used by the steward changed significantly between 1700 and 1750. During the early-modern period those labourers who were not hired on annual contracts were often employed as pieceworkers. Their wage payments were usually linked to the performance of specific tasks, which were normally recorded in the accounts separately, along with the number of days they had taken to complete. This made much of agricultural work appear casual in character, giving the impression that the labourer would only be employed when there was work to be done rather than being retained throughout the year.[167] In fact this was often not the case, because if the days worked on various jobs over the year are added together a figure of over 300 is arrived at; but the suspicion remains that had any of these tasks not been necessary the labourer would not have been retained. This type of wage payment, Clarke suggests, "went together with a 'customary' output, built into price books and linked to labour processes where it was difficult to increase surplus value extraction without changing or substituting the processes themselves."[168] Such wage rates were fixed for each category of job according to long established norms so that they were not free to fluctuate in line with market principles.[169] This simplified the accounting procedure, but left the landlord at the mercy of established precedent. Increasing labour productivity was difficult when wage rates were fixed for each task, and the number of days necessary to complete them was usually arranged between the labourer and estate bailiff beforehand.[170]

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[167] Everitt (1967), 436.

[168] Clarke (1992), 58.

[169] Historically wages had been regulated by Justices of the Peace according to rules laid down in the Statute of Artificers (1563). These assessments established maximum daily wage rates for each type of work, although their effectiveness was been widely questioned, and by the eighteenth century magistrates were rarely prepared to set accustomed rates. Minchinton ed. (1972); Roberts (1981).

[170] Gilboy (1934), 16-18.

During the eighteenth century such casual daily rates came increasingly to be replaced by more overtly time-based ones, or by piece-rates in the case of certain tasks such as sawing wood.[171] Within the Ditchley documents these changes are reflected initially in the move from separate recording of tasks to the production of consolidated wage accounts for each labourer. Instead of being scattered throughout an account book, the entries relating to a particular individual were now gathered together on a separate page, and the level of detail is often such that one can almost reconstruct the entire working year of the labourer on a weekly basis, although the ability to do this decreases over time as the references to work done become more oblique. This reduction of detail reflects the fact that it was increasingly the number of days worked rather than the nature of the tasks completed that was regarded as important. For instance, in 1712 Samuel Hauten spent 5 weeks sowing and harrowing; 2 weeks threshing old oats; 4 weeks cleaving wood; 4 days filling and emptying the lime kiln; 2 weeks mowing grass, and so on.[172] The entry for the same labourer in 1722, however, records only the number of days worked between particular dates without specifying the nature of the employment.[173] Many of the jobs in 1712 appear to have attracted different levels of pay: cleaving wood and filling the dung cart were rated at 5s/week, whilst mowing grass was worth 7s/week, and carrying mould in the garden only 4s/week.[174] By 1722, on the other hand, the standard weekly rate appears to have been 6s, falling to 5s between mid-September and November.[175] The separate documentation of each task in 1712 shows the continued influence of traditional "accustomed wages", and the casual employment of labour, whereas standardised weekly wage rates, paying no regard to the nature of the work being performed during any given week, were representative of more regular employment and time-based payment.[176]

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171 Clarke (1992), 68.
172 Accounts, DIL I/l/33b$_2$
173 Accounts, DIL I/l/33d$_2$
174 Accounts, DIL I/l/33b$_2$
175 This reflected the shorter length of the working day in winter. Accounts, DIL I/l/33d$_2$.
176 Clarke (1992), 57-8.

The changing form of the accounts reflects a transformation of the labour process on the estate during the early eighteenth century. In 1700 the payment of labourers and craftsmen was organised along remarkably similar lines, since both were being paid at task-based rates. Yet by the 1720s most day labourers were receiving what were clearly fixed weekly sums regardless of the precise nature of the task in which they were engaged. The accounts thus appear to describe a transition from customary payment by the task to the purchase of labour time.[177]

Weekly rates also suggest long-term employment and the more regular payment of wages,[178] something which certainly appears to have happened at Ditchley: Thomas Batson was the only labourer to be paid as often as every 14 days in 1725, but by 1750 weekly or fortnightly payments were commonplace (Fig. 3.20). Wage differentials, of course, had not entirely been eliminated by this transformation of the wage form, but they had come to be associated with an extension of the division of labour, creating an increasing number of agrarian specialisms, rather than being the result of different customary rates for different tasks.[179] Information from the 1725 cash books indicates that a boy under the age of 16 was likely to be paid 3s/week, whereas an adult labourer could expect 5s, and anyone specialising in a particular area of agriculture such as ploughing, carting or cutting corn would be likely to receive between 5s 4d and 6s (Table 3.5). Different pay rates seem to have operated in winter and summer, perhaps reflecting the extra work associated with haymaking and the harvest during the latter period and the longer hours of daylight, but these rates appear to have applied to all labourers, so that any changes took place across the board when economic conditions dictated that wage rates should rise.[180]

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177 Marx (1867), 510-11.

178 Although weekly wage rates are often associated with long-term employment they could also be applied to people hired on a short-term basis as analysis of the 1725 cash book has already illustrated.

179 Armstrong (1989), 671-95.

180 The entry for Samuel Hawten in the 1722 accounts illustrates this, showing that between 25th March and 10th August he was paid 6s/week, but this fell to 5s during the intervening winter months. These rates

The increasing use of weekly rates reflected the freeing up of the labour market, whereas task-based day rates were often associated with administrative fixing of wage levels in line with historically predetermined norms.[181] The changing manner of wage payment was thus indicative not only of an increasingly monetized agrarian labour force, but also one that was more obviously subject to market imperatives.

3.5 Rent payments and their impact on the character of exchange

Most landowners were rentiers rather than farmers, whose wealth depended upon the extraction of a surplus from tenants, and given the conspicuous consumption in which most of the elite engaged, a sizeable monetary income was necessary.[182] Thus it would be surprising if the Earl of Litchfield had not insisted that rents were paid largely in cash. Indeed, his steward regularly sent as much as £100 to London, where the family lived for much of the year, indicating a considerable outflow of money from the estate.[183] The settling up of rent seems invariably to have required significant monetary outlay on the part of the tenant, usually in a number of instalments spread over the year, suggesting a relatively minor role for other forms of payment. However, only a detailed examination of the manner in which the main customary and commercial tenants settled up their rental accounts with the landlord will yield definite conclusions about the relative proportion of money and produce payments at Ditchley.

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of payment, however, applied regardless of the task in which Hawten was engaged and so do not constitute customary wages.

[181] Clarke (1992), 63-5.

[182] Allen (1992), 85-86.

[183] This money was usually sent via the Woodstock carrier, John Bellenger, either in the form of cash or bills of exchange drawn on a major London merchant. The transactions are often noted in the accounts when there was an actual transfer of money in order to ensure that income and expenditure sections balance at the end of the year.

a) *The nature of customary rent payments at Ditchley*

In open field agriculture tenants had various rights associated with the use of common resources, and historically had paid a proportion of their dues to the landlord in kind.[184] This is important since considerable tracts of land on the Ditchley estate in 1700 continued to be held under copyhold tenure.[185] A significant portion of the Earl's income was thus still supplied by entry fines in the early eighteenth century, and customary exactions such as the heriot, yet to be regularly converted to a cash payment, remained important.[186] Nevertheless, fines and rents do appear from the accounts to have been paid mostly in cash form, and even in Spelsbury parish the extent of copyhold land never exceeded 50% of the total arable area during the eighteenth century. Consequently land held under customary tenure had an impact upon the balance between payments in cash and kind at Ditchley, but its size must be kept in perspective given that tenurial transformation was taking place at the time.

Once copyholders had paid the initial large entry fine yearly rents were only nominal, and consequently their names are absent from the list of rentals in the accounts.[187] This does not, however, mean that these customary tenants did not have any cash dealings with the landowner, since the estate accounts show that the majority of copyhold rental income at Ditchley, both from fines and nominal rents, was in cash form.[188] If copies had been allowed to run their full course one would expect the landowner to have received a small monetary income from annual rent payments, periodically supplemented by the exaction

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[184] Bowden (1967), 682-83; (1985), 70-71.

[185] The survey of all copyholders and life-leaseholders within Spelsbury, Taston and Fulwell in 1705 (DIL II/a/4d) indicates that there were 48 yardlands of customary holdings at this time and 33.5 yardlands on fixed term leases. See section 2.4.

[186] See section 3.1b(iv).

[187] The rentals section of the accounts includes only those holdings under short-term commercial leasehold tenure. In the early eighteenth century this category was restricted to Ditchley and Spelsbury Farms, one yardland in Taston linked to the parsonage, and Coldron Mill. It was only after 1720, when the new policy of running out copies began to take effect, that a wider range of holdings began to feature in this section of the documents.

[188] Entry fine payments are listed in the cash book after 1725 and there is no reason to believe that they were not similarly paid in cash prior to this.

of sizeable fines on average every 70-90 years at the commencement of a fresh copy. In reality, however, most copies were surrendered early, with the sitting tenant being readmitted on payment of a renewal. This ensured hereditary transfer of the land and also provided the landlord with a slightly more regular income.[189] Yet from the close of the seventeenth century instances of new tenants being admitted to holdings at Ditchley on the payment of a full entry fine are comparatively rare, the last example being Anthony Hadland, who paid a £260 fine in 1708 for a house and 2 yardlands at Taston for three lives.[190]

Although such payments were sizeable, they were only occasional, and had they been spread over the entire period of the copy, the yearly expenditure by the tenant would have been relatively small. Indeed, it was usually stipulated that these sums would be paid in a number of instalments: at Spelsbury Court in April 1704 Thomas Issard agreed to pay off an entry fine of £116 5s over 15 years.[191] Consequently the fine need not have imposed too large a monetary burden upon the copyholder in any given year, and more importantly once he had completed the required payments, only the nominal cash rent remained. Thus Richard Eyans had paid a fine of £1520 in 1648 to secure the lease of Enstone Farm for three lives, but had only to pay £6 per year rent.[192] Nevertheless, combined together fines and rents constituted a sizeable expenditure of cash on the part of the tenant, and the major source of income, monetary or otherwise, for most landowners.

What then were the non-monetary elements of copyholders' rent which might be set against these cash outlays in order to determine the balance between the two? The most important was probably the heriot, customarily the deceased person's most valuable piece

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189 Copyhold land at Ditchley was held for three lives, usually the farmer, his wife and eldest surviving son. Unlike the copyhold of inheritance practised in eastern England this tenure was less secure as the tenant's family had no right to inherit once the copy had expired, and the size of the entry fine was more likely to be at the discretion of the landowner. Consequently it was usual practice for a renewal of the agreement to be sought prior to the expiry of the existing arrangement. Clay (1985), 199-200.

190 Accounts, DIL I/l/33a_8

191 O.A. Account of all Copyhold and Leasehold Estates let in Spelsbury and Enstone 1703-4, DIL II/a/4d.

192 O.A. Particulars of Leases for Lives, c.1695, DIL II/a/4c.

of moveable property.[193] The size of heriot varied with the wealth of the deceased and the amount of land they had held, and separate heriots were paid on each holding which had been in the possession of the individual. For example, in 1725 John Ryman's widow surrendered "a black stone horse" valued at £8 plus £12 7s 6d to cover the three or more other heriots which he had incurred.[194]

This example illustrates that heriots were not necessarily paid in kind, but could be rendered in cash. In most cases the money provided was directly *in lieu* of a payment in kind, as in the case of Ryman, but fixed sums were sometimes ascribed, especially in the case of cottages and smallholdings. For instance the heriot due on a smallholding in north-west England in 1670 comprised the "best good" of the tenant or £4 in money.[195] At Ditchley such standardisation of heriots as cash payments seems not to have occurred, although there is some indication that commutation to a money payment became more prevalent around 1720. Before then no mention is made in any of the account entries of the type of good being handed over: presumably all heriots were paid in kind at the time. However, subsequently the item being taken is often noted, and sometimes there is a direct reference to the fact that payment was actually in cash. For instance, in 1745 widow Margetts paid "money *in lieu* of a cow taken as a heriot at the death of John Margetts".[196] Perhaps the increasingly detailed documentation reflected the move towards commodification of this formerly customary exaction, of which the conversion to a monetary payment was symptomatic.

Rent payments themselves were also often partly paid in kind. During the sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries this "provided a practical way of maintaining the purchasing power of estate revenues in the face of rapidly rising prices".[197] However, given the

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[193] Clay (1985), 199-200.
[194] Accounts, DIL I/l/33e,
[195] Bowden (1985), 71.
[196] Accounts, DIL I/l/33i,
[197] Bowden (1985), 70.

relative price stability of grain crops over the first half of the eighteenth century, widespread payment of rents in kind became more of an encumbrance to the landowner and they were usually converted to cash sums. Copyholders, of course, had only to pay relatively low quit rents on a yearly basis and thus their non-monetary contributions were never very significant. Nevertheless even amongst the copyhold tenants at Ditchley vestiges of the former produce rents remained in the form of token payments attached to some of the leases for lives granted at Spelsbury and Enstone Courts at the close of the seventeenth century.[198] For instance, a document from the 1690s detailing the particulars of leases notes that William Bolton's 18s 6d per year cash disbursement for rent was supplemented by the provision of "two fat hens at Michaelmas and two fat capons on St. Thomas's Day". Three other tenants were also required to make token payments as part of their rent settlement: Richard Hutchens had to supply "1 good hen at the Feast of St. John the Baptist", whilst Steven Fortnam owed the landlord 1s Martinmas money and "2 fat hens at Michaelmas", and Edward Drinkwater was obliged to hand over "2 good hens at St. Thomas' Day".[199] To the average yeoman farmer such payments would be relatively insignificant, but for many cottagers the supply of capons, hens, eggs and butter to the landlord was an integral part of their rent payment regime.[200]

Non-monetary rental transactions were not restricted to minor copyholders on the Ditchley estate in the early eighteenth century: the Earl himself provided several Oxford

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198 1640-1750 many landowners in western England converted some of their copyhold land to leases for ninety-nine years determinable upon three lives, that is, for ninety-nine years or the lives of three named people, whichever was shorter. The terms were usually similar to copyholds for lives, with the tenant continuing to pay a fine and small quit rent. Heriots and other non-monetary exactions were also retained. The advantages to the landlord were the ending of the widows right to "free bench", and the possibility of enforcing the tenant's obligations more successfully through written covenants. Clay (1981), 90-96. At Ditchley the conversion of copyholds to life leases seems to have begun in the last two decades of the seventeenth century, and had advanced considerably further in Enstone than it had in Spelsbury by 1705, when 11 properties were held under this form of tenure in the former parish, but only 3 in the latter. Subsequently both life leasehold and copyhold property was subject to the new estate policy of running out long term tenurial agreements and introducing a system of short-term commercial leases.

199 O.A. Particulars of Leases for Lives, c.1695, DIL II/a/4c.

200 Bowden (1985), 71.

colleges with agricultural produce as well as cash to meet rent he owed to them. Payments to these institutions were consistently made partly in money, partly in wheat and partly in malt.[201] In this case money was employed only as a measure of value, not as a means of payment or medium of exchange.[202] The payments to Christ Church College in 1706/7 consisted of £42 3s 8d, of which £13 6s 8d was in money, £6 10s 0d was in wheat, and £22 0s 0d was in malt.[203] The quantity of wheat and malt supplied to both Christ Church and New College each year remained fixed in size throughout the study period: the former always received 40 bushels of wheat and 160 bushels of malt, whilst the latter got 4.5 bushels of wheat and 6.5 bushels of malt. The colleges benefited financially from this arrangement when grain prices were rising rapidly, but tended to suffer when they were more stable. Throughout the 1700-20 period the notional value of wheat and malt delivered to the colleges appears usually to have been within 10% of the market average for that year. This consistency was interrupted in 1709, however, when wheat and malt supplied to New College were valued at over 40% below the contemporary market prices, whilst wheat delivered to Christ Church was conversely 41% more expensive than the market average for that year (Fig. 3.45-3.46). These figures illustrate the impact of price volatility on produce rents clearly. It would seem that the small delivery to New College had been completed early in 1709 before the harvest failure of the previous year had affected prices significantly, whereas grain was supplied to Christ Church later in the year when price inflation was rampant. This illustrates the fact that although the notional monetary values given to produce payments were lower

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201 Produce rents were particularly favoured by institutional landowners such as Oxford and Cambridge colleges because they had a large number of people to cater for. The Oxbridge colleges and the schools of Eton and Winchester were, in fact, empowered by an act of parliament in 1576 (18 Eliz. I, c.6) to take one-third of their leasehold rents in corn. In the early seventeenth century such rents in kind provided a useful way of maintaining purchasing power at a time of rapidly rising food prices, although this justification held less weight once these had stabilised in the eighteenth century and produce rents may have been preserved largely as a consequence of institutional inertia. Bowden (1985), 70.

202 Polanyi (1957), 264-66.

203 Accounts, DIL I/l/33a$_7$.

than prevailing market prices, they were usually related to them. Customary prices reflected market trends, but tended to avoid the more violent fluctuations of the marketplace.

Tenants of customary holdings also continued to possess rights of access to common resources, which often provided a significant part of their income. All copyholders and the majority of cottagers had grazing rights on the extensive waste and forest land at Ditchley, and within the open fields after the harvest.[204] For instance, the glebeland held by the vicar of Spelsbury entitled him to common grazing for 100 sheep in Taston and Fulwell fields, according to an account entry of 1745.[205] A few tenants also appear to have had the right to lop trees within the bounds of their holding in order to provide building material or firewood: the lease for lives granted to William Bolton Jnr. in the 1690s states that he has full common rights as regards the lop of trees on his land and free liberty of ingress to carry the timber away.[206] Such rights were valuable to the Ditchley residents, and many cottagers could not have survived without them. The presence of customary tenure on the estate thus not only reduced the money rental income derived from it, but also acted to dampen demand for goods on the open market, since residents could meet many of their needs through self-provision as a result of their access to common rights.[207] Open field agriculture is thus widely regarded as having placed a major constraint upon the spread of capitalist social relations into the countryside.

b) *Short-term leasing and its impact on the character of rent payments*

At the onset of the eighteenth century a significant portion of the estate was already held under commercial leasehold, mostly within the two large holdings of Ditchley and Spelsbury Farms. The former, effectively the Home Farm, abutted the Park wall,

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[204] See section 2.4.

[205] Accounts, DIL I/I/33i,

[206] O.A. Ditchley, Particulars of Leases for Lives c.1695, DIL II/a/4c.

[207] Mills (1980); Neeson (1993), 55-80; Reed (1990a).

extending westwards towards Taston and Spelsbury fields, and comprised around 22 yardlands in total (Fig. 2.11). During the course of 1707, however, it was divided into two parts, described as the Enstone and Spelsbury sides, and only one of these was subsequently rented out each year, the other being retained by the landlord.[208] The second large commercial holding, Spelsbury Farm, comprised 9 yardlands, and its tenant was by far the largest landholder in Spelsbury township in the early eighteenth century (Fig. 2.10).[209] The length of leases under which the two farms were held contrasted sharply, although both certainly fell into the category of commercial leasehold.[210] Spelsbury Farm was consistently rented out for 16 year terms throughout the study period, so that four men, Thomas Dennett, Henry Curtis, John Issard and William Couling lived there between 1700 and 1750.[211] Ditchley Farm seems to have had a more turbulent history. The longest leases recorded are those for 8 years granted to Edward Mitchell between 1720-28 and William Ryman for the period after 1743, and no fewer than seven men held the land over the fifty year period.[212] Other than these two holdings the rack-rented land within the estate in 1702 consisted of only the Court Closes, an area of old enclosure at the northern edge of Charlbury parish where it bordered Spelsbury; 8 acres of glebeland in the possession of Edward Lankford; the 2 yardlands which made up the balklands, and a yardland in Spelsbury belonging to the parsonage.[213]

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208 The 1720 accounts record that Ditchley Farm on the Spelsbury side consisted of 12 yardlands, whilst the Enstone side of the farm was slightly smaller at 10 yardlands.

209 The farm was situated in Spelsbury field, taking up several furlongs between the Chipping Norton road and Taston Sainfoin Ground.

210 The length of leases depended, to some extent, upon the economic outlook. When prices were low or sharply fluctuating and farming profits uncertain, tenants would be unwilling to tie themselves to a long lease unless offered very favourable terms. Thus the period of low grain prices during the 1730s and 1740s saw a move towards generally shorter tenancies. Clay (1985), 213-14.

211 Details of the leases were recorded in the rentals section of the accounts throughout 1700-50 (DIL I/l/33a-j). Additionally a number of the leasing agreements for Spelsbury Farm have survived, noting amongst other things the length of the lease. An example is the agreement drawn up between the Earl and Henry Curtis of Ratley, Warwickshire in 1710 (DIL II/i/4).

212 Accounts, DIL I/l/33a-j.

213 Accounts, DIL I/l/33a_1.

The rent paid by Richard Howlett, then Thomas Alder, for Ditchley Farm until 1706 was £130 per year, but Francis Clements, who took over only the Enstone side, paid just £40, since the subdivision of the farm had considerably reduced its acreage.[214] The magnitude of such payments indicates the much higher rents imposed on short-term leasehold land than its customary counterpart: rack-rented land generally appears to have been rented at levels six to ten times higher than the equivalent area held under copy or life leasehold if fines associated with the latter are excluded.[215] Rents for other leasehold land within the estate were equally large, suggesting that the Home Farm was not an isolated example, attracting a higher rent because of extra capital inputs and improvements made by the landowner, but was representative of commercially leased land on the estate as a whole.[216]

In 1705 it was decided to run out the remaining copies and life leases at Ditchley and relet the land for terms of years at commercial rates.[217] The process of tenure transition was described in chapter two, and what is of importance at this juncture is the impact of these changes upon the character of rent payments, especially the balance between cash and kind. Clearly the huge rise in the level of rent per yardland would, in the long term, bring a considerable increase in yearly rental income, but any change would not have been dramatic since the new rentals policy could only be implemented gradually as tenants died and their copies lapsed. It was not until 1725 that a steady flow of holdings into the leasehold sector built up, and even in 1750 six yardlands in Taston were still in copyhold tenure (Fig. 3.47-3.49). Most of these remaining customary holdings had been

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214 Accounts, DIL I/l/33a$_7$.

215 Large farms were, however, somewhat unrepresentative of leasehold property as a whole, since they offered economies of scale, allowing the landlord to extract a larger rent per acre from the land. Allen (1992), 185-86.

216 For instance the estimated rent payments in 1705 for two yardlands of copyhold land at Taston held by Thomas Wilkes were only £2 5s 9d, yet in 1740, by which time this holding was being leased commercially, the total yearly rent bill amounted to £14.

217 See section 2.4.

occupied by relatively young families in 1705 (Table 3.6).[218] For instance, James Busby was only 34 and his wife 35, so it is hardly surprising to find their son, John still farming the land in 1750.[219]

The trend in rental income illustrates this gradual shift in favour of rack-renting: after an initial fall in 1706-7 due to the subdivision of Ditchley Farm, the direction of movement was consistently upwards (Fig. 3.50; Table 3.7). The dramatic increase in income from leases between 1710 and 1720 arose primarily from the inclusion of Enstone Farm after 1713, which provided an additional sum of £165 per year. This explains the levelling off of the figures between 1720 and 1725.[220] The graph shows that the main period of tenure conversion took place between 1725 and 1740, when commercial rental income at Ditchley increased from £420 18s 6d to £630 16s 0d. After that there was a slight fall in rental income due to the reduction in the amount levied on Ditchley Farm from £100 to £60, perhaps related to a further reorganisation of the landholding here, a deterioration of soil quality, or the significant slump in grain and livestock prices which took place after 1741.[221] As the middle of the century approached much of the land had been converted to short-term leasehold tenure, and so further significant rises in the level of rental income due to tenure conversion were unlikely.

The number of yardlands and rental value of land under leasehold tenure expanded at a faster rate than the number of holdings, indicating that a gradual process of engrossment was underway on the estate. Most of the newly leased holdings are described by reference to their previous customary tenant, indicating that the land continued to be farmed as

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[218] Compiled from the rentals section of the accounts; account references to heriots paid at the decease of a customary tenant; details of baptisms and burials extracted from the Spelsbury parish register, and evidence regards the inheritance of copyhold land found in some wills and inventories.

[219] Survey 1705, DIL II/a/4e.

[220] Enstone Farm including "Hutchens' land" consisted of approximately 14.5 yardlands making it the largest extant holding on the estate after the 1706-7 subdivision of Ditchley Farm. Prior to being rented out on a commercial basis to the Kinch family it had been held by the Eyans, a minor gentry family, under a lease for three lives.

[221] See Fig. 3.11 for evidence of the stagnant grain prices at this time.

strips within the open fields. For instance, in 1750, Humphrey Trinder was paying £2 5s for "a tenement and orchard formerly Lawrence Crosse's", and John Freeman leased 2 acres in Gageingwell "falling to the Earl on the death of Widow Freeman".[222] However, leaseholders frequently took over land previously held by more than one copyholder, leading to amalgamation of holdings: Robert Harris rented two yardlands at Taston in 1750, one formerly belonging to Lawrence Cross, the other to Anthony Hadland (Fig. 3.48). Over the first half of the eighteenth century the transition from a landholding community of several dozen small husbandmen to one of relatively fewer large commercial farmers was initiated and appears to have made significant progress.[223] This increase in the average size of holdings was important, in that it enabled the landowner to extract a greater rental income per acre due to the economies of scale which made large-scale farming more profitable.

The income from rack-renting in 1750 was thus almost four times higher than in 1710, but what impact had this had upon the balance of monetary and non-monetary payments? It appears logical that the proportion of cash involved in transactions must have increased still further from the already high levels which had existed under copyhold tenure, largely due to the elimination of such customary exactions as the heriot. Money could be used for most rent payments, since commercial tenants, who were actively engaged in the market, would have had plentiful supplies of cash, particularly immediately after the harvest. Yet examination of the accounts reveals that direct reference to payment in cash is relatively rare, with most entries simply noting that the rent bill had been paid in part. For instance, in 1721 it was noted that £10 of the rent owed by Daniel Kinch for Enstone Farm had

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[222] Accounts, DIL I/l/33j.

[223] In terms of land area held in commercial as opposed to customary tenure the transformation between 1702 and 1750 was significant, but copyholders still made up almost 60% of tenants holding land from the Earl in Spelsbury parish in 1750.

been "received by William Varney in part", whilst Robert Ryman, the bailiff, had been given a further £5.[224]

These transactions were perhaps cash-based, but it is necessary to turn to the cash books in order to prove that this was the case. The receipts section of the 1725 book indicates that overall around 65% of rack-rents were paid in cash during that particular year, the remaining sums presumably being paid in kind or remaining as arrears (Table 3.8). This overall figure, however, masks a considerable degree of variation between holdings. In general it seems that tenants with larger bills were more likely to offset a proportion through providing produce to the landlord or to carry more over to the following year: John Issard the tenant of Spelsbury Farm appears only to have met 53% of his rent bill in cash form, and his counterpart at Ditchley Farm, Edward Mitchell, a mere 15.5% (Table 3.8). Smaller farmers renting a yardland or less, were more likely to make mostly money payments, as were men such as John Parsons who rented the Enstone Wells and Thomas Bulley who held Coldron Mill (Fig. 3.51).[225] Clearly non-monetary transactions continued to play an important role in many tenants' rent payment strategy after the implementation of the new commercial leasing policy at Ditchley.

Some token produce rents continued to be written into leasing agreements ensuring that few tenants could avoid making any non-monetary transfers.[226] In the lease of Ditchley Farm, the tenant was required to provide two flitches of bacon and a fat hog, salted and dried, on 21st December, whilst the lessee of Spelsbury Farm had to provide the Earl with "a couple of fat pullets" every Christmas.[227] Much more significant, however, were the payments in kind made voluntarily by leaseholders to set against their rents. In 1721 Daniel Kinch made such use of produce payments that his cash rent for

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[224] Accounts, DIL I/l/33a$_7$.

[225] There is, in fact, quite a close relationship between holding size and the percentage of rent paid in kind, with the coefficient value of 0.63 representing a fairly close correlation.

[226] Bowden (1985), 70-71.

[227] Accounts, DIL I/l/33.

Enstone Farm amounted to only 18% of the total bill. During the year he supplied the estate with 14 quarters of oats on June 10th, 3 quarters 2 bushels of vetches, and a further 40 quarters of oats at around Michaelmas. Additionally he delivered 40 chaldrons of coal, provided carting services to the value of £12 18s 9d, and was responsible for making 12 quarters of malt.[228] During the 1700-50 period as a whole the leaseholders of the three large estate farms offset on average 18.1% of their rent payments each year through the transfer of goods to the Earl (Table 3.9).[229]

This evidence supports the contention that produce payment was not incompatible with leasehold tenure.[230] The balance between payment in cash and kind, in fact, appears to have varied over time independently of the trend in tenurial change. Whereas there was a relatively continuous growth in the income derived from leasing on the estate, the balance of payments fluctuated considerably from year to year. In some years such as 1703 almost all rent demands were met in cash by one or more of the farmers, whilst there were definite peaks in non-monetary transactions in 1707 and 1720 (Fig. 3.52; Table 3.9). The first of these involved only Ditchley Farm, where the tenant Thomas Alder met 99.5% of all demands through the provision of goods. Most of these transactions were connected to the subdivision of Ditchley Farm, and the subsequent retention of half by the Earl for sheep grazing, since the majority of the produce payments concerned the provision of "6 score and 6 ewes, 6 score and 7 lambs, and 8 score and 9 dry sheep, including 3 rams".[231]

The coincidence of above average levels of payment in kind for all three farms around 1720 was different. Produce payments in this case were varied, including hay, wheat,

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[228] Accounts, DIL I/I/33d$_1$.

[229] Ditchley Farm had the highest proportion of produce payments at 24%, followed by Enstone Farm at 17% and Spelsbury Farm at 13%. The extent of payment in kind was, of course, lower for smaller leasehold tenants as was indicated in the previous section.

[230] Landlords often wrote produce payments into leasehold agreements during the sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries, as a means of countering inflation. Such measures continued to be adopted during periods of price volatility such as the 1690s. Bowden (1967), 682-83.

[231] Accounts, DIL I/I/33a$_7$.

coal, oats and carting services. Grain prices were low compared with the preceding decade, which might have persuaded some tenants that off-loading supplies within the estate was preferable to trying their luck in the open market, but even lower prices between 1701-8 had not elicited this type of response (Fig. 3.11).[232] It is necessary to look to the overall pattern of spending on the estate in the early 1720s for a possible answer. This period marked the onset of expenditure on the rebuilding of Ditchley House, with the old Tudor structure being demolished in 1718 and the shell of the new building completed by 1722.[233] Given the vast amounts of money which would have been tied up in this venture perhaps the landlord would have sought to limit the cash outlay in other areas making use of internal sources of supply for agricultural produce where possible. A more plausible explanation, however, is that building work required a larger labour force and the employment of numerous draught animals, the extra fodder for which could be most easily supplied by the Earl's own tenants.

c) *The overall character of rent payments at Ditchley, 1702-50.*

This overview of rent payments at Ditchley over the 1700-50 period shows that identifying any trend in the balance between payments in cash and kind is difficult. The estate consisted of a mixture of copyhold, life leasehold and commercial leasehold land, and the proportion of each changed over time. Moreover there was no neat relationship between tenurial structure and the proportion of money and produce payments. The balance between the two appears to have fluctuated from year to year, reflecting not only changing patterns of landholding, but also external factors such as agricultural commodity prices, overall landlord income and expenditure, and the individual decision-

232 The coincidence of high produce payments with low grain prices is the reverse of the pattern described by Bowden (1967) for the Tudor period. Sixteenth-century produce rents were often enforced by clauses in leasing agreements, and were primarily to the benefit of the landlord. In contrast, payment in kind at Ditchley appears to have been voluntary, as it was in the best interests of both parties.
233 Oswald (1934), 591-3.

making of the tenants themselves. Consequently in any given year one tenant could meet almost his entire bill in cash, whilst his neighbour made mostly produce payments, yet the situation might be reversed in the following year.

Figures for the percentage of produce payments made by commercial leaseholders can be derived relatively easily by comparing each tenant's rent bill with his/her total payments in kind.[234] The latter predominantly comprised goods and services provided voluntarily by the leaseholder, but also included token provisions written into leasing agreements. So long as the accounts provide a complete record of transactions involving the estate, the resultant figures will be an accurate representation of the balance between cash and kind payments. Calculating the proportion of yearly rent bills paid in kind by customary tenants is more difficult because of the complexity of the transactions involved. Some exactions were periodic, others annual, and any figure derived will depend upon the criteria used to define "yearly payments". Clearly if one excludes periodic disbursements the importance of non-monetary exchange will be maximised, but the percentage figures which result will fairly describe the real flows generated by tenants on the estate in a "normal" year. On the other hand, inclusion of occasional expenditure such as entry fines and heriots, spread over the duration of the copy, will give a better indication of the balance of monetary and non-monetary payments over the lifetime of each tenant.[235] Calculations were based on the years 1705 and 1750 to allow for any change over the period and because both have the requisite source material.[236]

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234 This information is readily available within the accounts, which record the size of the rent bills and list the various instalments in which they were paid off.

235 Estimated figures for the balance between money and produce payments over the lifetime of each copyholder were calculated by adding together the various components which made up yearly rent, separating out those elements which were non-monetary. Items of occasional expenditure were divided by thirty in the case of heriots and sixty for entry fines to spread the cost over the duration of the copy. (See Table 3.7 for information on the length of copies in Spelsbury parish).

236 The year 1705 has been chosen because of the availability of a number of useful documents in addition to the accounts themselves, in particular a list of all the copyholders recording the fine and nominal rent they were each required to pay at that time. 1750 has an especially comprehensive list of leasehold rentals and is also, of course, the final year covered by the study. Spelsbury in this case excludes the township of

The results are somewhat surprising (Tables 3.10-3.11). Overall the proportion of rent paid in kind was 13.2% in 1705 and 17.2% in 1750, suggesting that the spread of commercial leasing *increased* the propensity to engage in produce payment.[237] Yet the ratio remained relatively stable and, to a certain extent it could be argued that, since the majority of rental income already came from leasehold properties in 1705, with land in customary tenure only providing 19% in Spelsbury parish, one would not expect a major change in the level of kind payments as commercial tenure was extended further.[238] Over the fifty year period leasehold land never provided less than three times the income accruing from its customary counterpart, and the trend in overall rent receipts was determined almost entirely by changes taking place in the commercial sector. Changes in the level of non-monetary transactions within the commercial leasehold sector had the main impact on the overall figures for payment in kind, although copyholders consistently paid a larger percentage of their rent in this form (Fig. 3.53; Table 3.12).

The two most recognisable peaks in produce payment in 1707 and 1720 were both largely a consequence of leasehold tenants increasing their provision of grain to the landlord *in lieu* of rent. Copyholders, in general, appear to have supplied similar volumes of goods to the estate throughout the study period, with the only peaks of any note occurring between 1730 and 1735 when higher levels of provision by customary tenants were matched by a reduction in the produce payments made by leaseholders (Fig. 3.53). Perhaps the tenants of Ditchley and Spelsbury farms during this period were unwilling to supply produce to the Earl because of higher prices forcing him to rely upon other estate residents for his supplies? Nevertheless, despite the short-term fluctuations in the level of

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Dean, which did not lie within the territory of the Earl of Litchfield and hence was not included in the account documents.

[237] For the purpose of this analysis heriots were identified solely as a produce payment, and consequently the figures may slightly under-estimate the level of cash utilisation especially in 1705 when copyholding was more prevalent.

[238] By 1750 only 7.7% of estate income was derived from copyhold land and most of the remaining holdings were small, consisting of a single yardland or half-yardland.

non-monetary payments, the general trend seems to be one of steady increase at a rate slightly faster than the overall growth of rental income, the consequence being that such internal transactions continued to make up between 13% and 18% of the total throughout the first half of the eighteenth century.

This stability over time in the proportion of cash and produce payments conceals significant changes in the manner in which rent was paid. The bills of copyholders and life leaseholders were significantly lower than those faced by lessees, and, as a result, relatively minor exactions could alter the figures for customary tenants considerably. Moreover, their non-monetary contributions came largely in the form of customary exactions such as the heriot and "Christmas goose", whereas leaseholders often made a conscious decision to engage in produce payments to offset some of their rent. Customary payments have conventionally been tied closely to the moral economy, whilst the actions taken by commercial tenants can be perceived as economically rational in the sense that it usually enabled them to avoid the expenses associated with marketing the produce without significantly sacrificing the potential financial rewards. Thus, the Ditchley documents illustrate the fact that non-monetary transactions were not necessarily incompatible with the commercialisation of the estate economy.

3.6 The monetization of a customary exaction: tithe payments at Ditchley, 1702-50

One of the most important transactions where payment could be either monetary or non-monetary was the tithe. This was a customary exaction levied by the Church, amounting to a tenth of all agricultural produce, which came in three forms: predial tithes, payable on corn, hay, wood, fruit and other crops; agistment tithes, payable on animal products; and personal tithes, payable on the gain from labour or industry.[239] As the Ditchley estate had been monastic land prior to the Dissolution its tithe rights were not

[239] Kain & Prince (1985), 7-9; Prince (1959), 14.

vested in the Church, but had been sold to the landowner, and consequently tithe transactions appear within the estate accounts.[240] Traditionally tithe owners had the right to claim payment of the tithe in kind, and most great tithes were rendered in this manner until the mid-seventeenth century.[241] Subsequently, however, the provision of produce was increasingly substituted by money payments, negotiated locally and carrying the force of parochial custom.[242]

At Ditchley the Lees retained most of the great tithes, notably those for grain and wood, but had allotted the small tithes to the vicars of Enstone and Spelsbury. Payments to both appear still to have been partially in kind at the beginning of the eighteenth century: an account entry for 1707 documents the provision of "tithe hay, wool and lambs" to the vicar of Enstone, Mr. Turner.[243] Similarly, in 1683 the vicar of Spelsbury was supplied with "tithe milk and tithe calves" to the value of £1 3s 11d. Fortunately the bill relating to this transaction has survived, providing a clearer picture of the manner in which small tithes were taken at Ditchley. It shows that the tithe of milk was appropriated by the vicar on a number of assigned "teyeth days", with a pre-determined amount taken on each occasion. William Whitton, the Ditchley bailiff recorded in his bill that "the milke of 6 cowes comeing in to pay the teyeth on the first Teyeth Day" was valued at half a crown per cow.[244] Milk was a difficult product to collect, and hard to market due to its perishable nature, and consequently tithes had frequently been converted to a fixed

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240 Hill (1956), 132-67.

241 Tithes were traditionally of two types. The Great Tithes were those of corn, hay and wood, and were usually by far the most valuable. Small Tithes made up the remainder, for example those payable on livestock and animal products such as wool, milk and honey, and also personal tithes levied on the profits of milling, fishing etc. In retaining the Great Tithes and dispensing the Small ones to the parish vicar, the Earl was following the usual practice amongst absentee rectors (bishops, priors or colleges). Evans (1970), 21-22.

242 Hill (1956), 95.

243 Accounts, DIL I/l/33a$_7$.

244 Misc. Bills, DIL I/o/20.

customary payment, the modus, during the medieval period, but this does not appear to have happened at Ditchley.[245]

The exact form of tithe payments is often difficult to ascertain because of the complexity of customary practises. The provision of tithe hay is referred to in the accounts on a number of occasions, suggesting that this must also have been a payment in kind. However, Evans noted that hay was the product whose tithe was most commonly replaced by a modus, because it was impractical for the tithe owner to collect large quantities from everyone within the parish when he only required a small amount himself and would have difficulty marketing the remainder.[246] The tithe William Coleing owed for the hay ground in 1703 was certainly paid in money, but in the form of a composition, settled up at the same time as the tithe on his farm, rather than a customary modus.[247] The £1 14s which John Freeman paid to Mr. Brabant for the tithe hay of the Court Closes in 1708 is, however, more problematic, because it is not clear whether the figure refers to a sum of money handed over or an assessment of the value of the hay taken.[248] If the transaction was monetary, as seems likely given the rarity of tithing in kind for hay by the eighteenth century, then was this a customary fixed payment or had the value of the tithe been agreed between Brabant and the Earl on the basis of the market price for hay? This distinction is important, because the hay tithe can only be considered truly commodified if a composition was in operation. Moduses were fixed by custom and, hence, did not reflect the prevailing balance of supply and demand within the economy. They simply involved using cash as a means of payment, just like the heriot, and cannot be viewed as evidence of market penetration into the agrarian system.[249]

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[245] Evans (1976), 18-19.
[246] Evans (1970), 23.
[247] Accounts, DIL I/l/33a_3.
[248] Accounts, DIL I/l/33a_8.
[249] Kain & Prince (1985), 14-16.

a) *Small tithes*

Transactions associated with the small tithes first appear in the account record in 1708. Thereafter payments were made each year to the vicar of Spelsbury for what is usually described as being a combination of the small tithes, plus the tithe of underwood cut in the parish, and 6 bushels of "custom wheat". The vicar may also have been entitled to tithe hay, because on a number of occasions he was in receipt of this for the Spelsbury side of Ditchley Farm too.[250] All these transfers added together constituted a much smaller sum than the great tithes taken by the landlord, rarely valued at more than £18 in any one year.[251] The fact that this sum fluctuated from year to year suggests that payments were perhaps still being made partially in kind. For example, in 1708 the Spelsbury vicar received £16 5s 6d, whereas in 1709 he got £17 6s 6d and in 1710 only £13 18s 6d (Table 3.13; Fig. 3.54). The employment of moduses would have fixed the tithes at a particular level, as with the tithe of hay, whereas the taking of 10% of produce each year would produce variable figures such as these.

The variable level of tithe payments to the Spelsbury vicar can be accounted for by changes in two of the constituent elements; the size of the tithe of underwood, and the value of the 6 bushels of customary wheat.[252] The tithe income from underwood sales varied from year to year as different parts of the estate's woodland were harvested.[253] Thus, in 1710 the woodward sold £115 8s 10d's worth of underwood from Bottom and High Wood, whereas in 1750 £145 10s was made from the somewhat larger area of woodland at Henley Knapp.[254] Tithe payments appear to have accounted for anything between 4% and 9% of the total value of wood sales in any given year, but on the two

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250 References to this effect can be found scattered throughout the earlier account documents.

251 The great tithes for Spelsbury township alone were rented out for £32 5s, and in 1710 those for Taston and Fulwell raised £44 5s 8.5d and £17 respectively.

252 The third element – the small tithes – appear to have been converted to a fixed modus payment of 15 shillings by the early eighteenth century.

253 The forest land on the estate was organised into a number of separate woods, a few of which were harvested each year. They were of different sizes, so the amount of underwood they produced varied.

254 Accounts, DIL I/l/33a_{10}; DIL I/l/33j_9

occasions when a separate figure for underwood could be derived it was very close to 10%, suggesting that tithing conventions were being adhered to (Table 3.13).

The value of the 6 bushels of custom wheat was determined by the prevailing market price on the first Sunday after the 11th of November, and thus varied with the vicissitudes of the grain market. When market prices were high, as in 1709-10, there was a corresponding rise in the price of tithe wheat, although this tended to be muted. Similarly when the grain market was depressed, the value attached to custom wheat fell as well, but often remained somewhat higher than market levels. This again reflects the fact that fixed prices, even when they shadowed the market, were unable to follow price fluctuations immediately (Fig. 3.55). In any case changing wheat prices had a less significant impact on the trend in tithe values than the quantity of underwood harvested because custom wheat was always a relatively minor component of tithe payments to the vicar. Its peak value of around £3 in 1709 was far lower than the £10 usually derived from underwood sales.

As a result there is a fairly close correlation between the level of tithe payments and income derived from the harvesting of wood in the parish (Fig. 3.56). Whether this or the provision of custom wheat actually involved non-monetary exchange is, however, open to question. Perhaps a 10% share of the underwood was handed directly to the vicar as a payment in kind, but it is equally likely that he was simply paid the appropriate amount in cash. Such large quantities of underwood would have been awkward to collect and dispose of, and, in any case, the bill was often paid by the tenant of Ditchley Farm, who was forbidden from taking wood by his leasehold agreement, but had plentiful access to cash through the sale of agricultural produce. The evidence points towards the Ditchley small tithes being cash payments *in lieu* of non-monetary exactions. They were not, however, compositions, because the size of payment reflected what would have been the

full value of the tithe. Consequently this was almost certainly an example of cash used as a means of payment, similar in character to the entries relating to taxation.[255]

b) *The great tithes and composition payment*

The accounts include yearly lists of great tithes taken by the landlord from copyhold tenants in Spelsbury parish, and there is little doubt that these were monetary payments. Like many lay tithe-owners, the Lee family must have considered the collection of tithes as purely a business transaction and hence, to minimise the expense involved, adopted a system of individual compositions. These were agreements between the tithe-owner and parish residents guaranteeing that each parishioner would pay "his certain sum of money annually *in lieu* of all tythes and dues whatsoever".[256] Such compositions were temporary arrangements whereby tithe-payers could commute their dues to a cash payment, whose value could be raised or lowered to take account of changes in output from the land and prevailing market prices. They usually lagged well behind market trends, however, often becoming enshrined in parish custom.[257]

Compositions paid by copyholders at Ditchley appear to have been fixed according to the number of yardlands or half yardlands held. Thus the tenant of a two yardland holding could reckon on paying around double the amount of someone with only a single yardland.[258] This was true throughout Spelsbury parish, although the level of payments varied significantly between the constituent townships. Fulwell consisted primarily of one and half yardland holdings, and correspondingly almost all tithe payments were for either £1 10s 11d or 15s 4½d (Fig. 3.57). Taston and Dean, on the other hand, contained largely

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[255] See section 3.1b(i).

[256] Evans (1970), 26-27.

[257] Kain & Prince (1985), 15.

[258] The documents show that at Spelsbury in the early eighteenth century one yardland was the equivalent of 23-24 acres. The extent of a half yardland was, however, more variable, including all those holdings of less than 20 acres, ranging from 11 acres 1 rod for Robert Piedmont's land to 19 acres 2 rods for William Harris'. O.A. DIL II/a/1d.

1 and 2 yardland units, and had a range of payment levels for each holding size, perhaps indicative of variable land quality or ownership of subsidiary land parcels by some of the tithe-payers: the account entries sometimes refer to closes or hay ground also being tithed. For instance, the average sum demanded for a 2 yardland farm in Taston was £3 9s, but payments varied from £3 4s to £3 14d (Fig. 3.58). Dean tithes exhibited a similar range of values for the various holding sizes, but a number of intermediate payments complicated the pattern (Fig. 3.59). Unfortunately documentary evidence of tithe payments for Spelsbury township is not available since the tithe rights were farmed out to the tenant of Spelsbury Farm for a fee of £32 5s, and as a result estimated figures have to be used.[259]

Changes over time in the size of tithe payments indicate the length of composition being used by the landowner. Again there are some differences between the townships, suggesting that tithing assessments were conducted separately, at least at the beginning of the eighteenth century. Thus Dean holdings appear not to have undergone any noticeable reappraisal of tithe over the entire 1702-50 period (Fig. 3.59), whereas at Fulwell small-scale adjustments were made 1702-4 in order to harmonise the figures for holdings of similar size (Fig. 3.57). This perhaps reflected a move from payment in kind to the use of standardised compositions, although there is no evidence from the accounts that payment was non-monetized during these years. The trend in tithe payments at Taston, however, shows a sequence of four distinct stages replicated for 1, 2 and 3 yardland holdings (Fig. 3.58). Prior to 1704 there was a harmonisation of payments similar to that occurring in Fulwell, but in 1708 they fell quite sharply, only recovering to their former level in 1715. Given that all the Taston tithe-payers had stable bills between 1704 and 1708, this might represent the duration of a particular composition, which was revised downwards in 1709

[259] Evidence for the leasing out of the Spelsbury tithes at commercial rates can be found in the rentals section of the accounts. Presumably the landlord found it more convenient to farm off tithe collection to the tenant of the Farm rather than employ someone to gather the money himself.

due to the hardships being endured at the time: the fall in the level of tithe payments occurred exactly when grain prices were at their highest, presumably as the result of a failed harvest.[260] Perhaps the use of compositions was abandoned during these years of crisis in favour of tithing in kind or a cash payment related directly to the size of the harvest. There was certainly less stability in the level of tithe over the following decade. The values of Taston tithes became fixed only from 1715, at least a decade after Dean and Fulwell.

The freezing of tithe composition levels throughout Spelsbury parish from the first decade of the eighteenth century requires some explanation. The inelasticity of demand for grain meant that prices usually rose disproportionately when the quantity produced fell as a result of poor harvests, but a farmer could only benefit significantly from this if his output was large enough to exceed subsistence requirements. Thus only the larger farmers reaped financial rewards during a period of dearth; their smaller counterparts gained larger incomes when harvests were bountiful and they had an adequate surplus to sell (Table 3.14).[261] Consequently for small farmers the highest grain prices could coincide with an inability to pay tithe compositions. Under the old system of payment in kind this would have resulted in reduced tithe payments as happened in 1709-10. Conversely, a low grain price reflecting a bumper harvest, would previously have resulted in a large non-monetary tithe payment. This suggests that in order to assess the real reason for the trend in the value of tithes, the volume of the harvest as well as the price of the crop must be taken into consideration.

Certainly the 1709-10 peak in Oxford wheat prices seems to have been brought about by crop failure due to inclement weather at harvest time in 1708 and 1709. In the former year "rainy weather prevailing from August 30th to September 20th" took a heavy toll on

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[260] Elsewhere it has been noted that the 1708-10 period was one of serious harvest failure, resulting in a precipitous rise in grain prices in 1709 and 1710.
[261] Hoppe & Langton (1994), 2-3.

most cereal crops throughout the Midlands and South.[262] In these circumstances the reduction in tithe levels is understandable. Subsequently the price only surpassed 65s/qtr. on one occasion in 1741 due to a run of relatively good harvests. Maybe it was the consequent relative price stability which persuaded the tenants to stick with the existing composition agreement. The landlord would certainly have approved of fixing tithes, because it would eliminate the expense associated with reassessing composition levels.[263] These costs were already kept to a minimum at Ditchley where the cheapest possible method of assessment was almost certainly used; that is a particular level of composition was agreed for a number of years, being reviewed only in the event of exceptional circumstances. As no incident of severe distress occurred after 1710 throughout the remainder of the period, the landlord was able to impose a fixed payment regime.

There is, however, another factor that has to be taken into consideration during the mid-eighteenth century. From 1720 onwards there was a steady transition from copyhold to leasehold tenure within the open fields of both Enstone and Spelsbury, and thus some of the holdings whose tithes are listed in the documents were undergoing tenurial change during the study period.[264] This may have had some impact upon the manner in which compositions were calculated, perhaps restating their position as a fixed payment within the text of the leasehold agreement itself. No doubt if a significant proportion of the township land was leasehold with fixed tithes it would be uneconomic for the landowner to continue to regularly assess the remaining copyhold holdings in order to vary their tithes. In such circumstances a uniform rate would make the most sense.

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[262] Stratton & Houghton Brown (1978), 66-67.

[263] Evans suggests that the cost of employing surveyors to ascertain the correct value for the tithe was a significant disincentive to regular reappraisal of the composition for all but the wealthiest of landowners.

[264] See section 2.4.

c) *Tithe payments: an overview*

The overall impression gained from examining tithe payments is that payment was predominantly in cash, although some non-monetary exchange was involved, especially in the case of the small tithes at the end of the seventeenth century. Tithing in kind undoubtedly continued to be of importance elsewhere in England: a survey conducted by Pitt in 1791-2 found that it was still a common practice in twelve counties including neighbouring Berkshire and Buckinghamshire.[265] However, lay tithe-owners such as the Lee family were in the forefront of the campaign to transform the exaction into a monetary payment as this suited their needs better. To them the tithe was just another source of revenue to be collected in the most convenient manner possible.[266] Hence most account entries relating to the tithe are monetary transactions, but involve money used merely as a means of payment. At Ditchley the tithe was in effect a money tax imposed by the landlord on all his commercial and customary tenants.

3.7 The balance of monetary and non-monetary exchange: some reflections

Analysis of the Ditchley documents clearly indicates that transactions on the estate were conducted in both cash and kind during the early eighteenth century. Evidence of produce payments could be found throughout the accounts, suggesting that non-monetary exchange was widespread, and involved all sectors of the estate community. Assessment of the balance between these different forms of payment is, however, more problematic than its identification. Some parts of the accounts seem to suggest that the balance had swung considerably towards monetization by the first decade of the eighteenth century, whilst in other areas payment in kind continued to play a significant role at the close of the period. This role may, however, be somewhat overstated, as the nature of the source material is likely to have produced a significant bias in favour of non-monetary

[265] Evans (1976), 22.
[266] Kain & Prince (1985), 10.

exchange.[267] In reality the role of cash transactions in the agrarian economy as a whole was already overwhelming by 1700, and continued steadily to increase over the following fifty years as the accounts amply illustrate. The volume of grain purchased from outsiders shows an upward trend particularly after 1725, when a separate cash book was introduced for the first time. References to the payment of estate employees in kind also steadily declined from the 1720s, paralleled by an increased structuring of the accounts and the gradual transition from customary to commercial leasehold tenure.

Overlying this apparent pattern of creeping monetization were short-term fluctuations in the balance of monetary and non-monetary exchange, which seem to correlate relatively closely with variations in the price of basic agricultural products, and episodes of unusually high household expenditure. Of particular note are two peaks in produce payments in 1709-12 and during the early 1720s, the first of these coinciding with the crisis years of 1709-10, when poor harvests led to a dramatic increase in grain prices, the second with the rebuilding of Ditchley House, when the estate labour force must have been considerably larger than normal and extra draught animals would almost certainly have been required. It remains unclear whether these peaks represented a divergence from the overall trend, or if a transient balance between payments in cash and kind was the norm. For example, the relationship between the character of rent payments and the process of tenurial change is far from clear. The provision of produce *in lieu* of rent appears to have been equally likely in copyhold and leasehold sectors. Its prevalence was determined more by the underlying conditions of the agrarian economy, and in particular by the volatility of grain prices, than by changes in landholding and tenurial structure.[268] This suggests that assumptions of progressive monetization may be erroneous. The choice between cash and produce payment was clearly influenced by a variety of factors,

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[267] See the discussion of the limitations of estate accounts (Section 2.8).
[268] Everitt (1967), 682-83.

rather than being a simple economic decision, and the balance between the two need not have followed any pre-determined trajectory.

Analysis of the accounts also suggests that the association of money transactions with market exchange and payment in kind with the moral economy is too simplistic. Cash transactions could be governed by administrative forces or fixed by custom, with money being used as little more than a convenient means of payment.[269] Similarly, produce payment could be economically rational, with goods valued according to market prices, albeit often lagged behind the prevailing market trend. Certainly grain provided as a payment in kind was usually valued at below market rates, perhaps indicating the force of custom. However, it must be remembered that internal estate provisioning would have significantly reduced transport costs, something that may account for the price differential.[270] So too could differences in the age or quality of the crop.[271] Due to this potential for wide price variation it has been argued that one should focus on relative price movements rather than absolute levels.[272] From this perspective the notional prices attached to produce payments appear to have lagged somewhat behind the market trend, but to have followed it relatively closely. Thus the distinction between customary and market pricing becomes somewhat blurred. Rather than being based on any moral assumptions, many customary prices seem often merely to have reflected administrative procedures, fixing prices according to the given market rate at a particular moment in time.

Under these circumstances the identification of monetary and non-monetary exchange cannot by itself be used to examine the relationship between moral and market economy at Ditchley. A clearer understanding of the exchange characteristics of estate transactions is needed in order to take the analysis further.

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[269] Tax and tithe payments fall into this category of money transaction.
[270] Chartres (1985), 465-68.
[271] Harrison (1985), 815.
[272] Chartres (1995), 128.

(4) THE CHARACTER OF THE EXCHANGE PROCESS AT DITCHLEY

4.1 From monetization to moral and market economy

The previous chapter has shown that both monetary and non-monetary exchange are wide-ranging terms, covering a multitude of different types of transaction. This suggests that any attempt to categorise transactions in terms of market and moral economy will be fraught with difficulty. The level of monetization alone has been shown to be an inadequate indicator: clearly a more detailed examination of the character of exchange is required. Even so, it must be recognised that the forms of exchange described in the accounts lay at various points along the continuum between pure reciprocity and free market exchange.[1] Thus any categorisation will, to a certain extent, be arbitrary, focusing on certain aspects of the exchange process whilst neglecting others.

The various forms of non-monetary exchange have, as their main unifying features, the absence of cash as a medium of exchange and the imbrication of social and economic process. Thus payment in kind has often been closely associated with notions of moral economy.[2] Pure reciprocity, as practised by primitive tribal societies,[3] and the use of running accounts in early eighteenth-century England and North America,[4] both fall within this classification. Moral economy could, however, extend beyond produce payments to include those cash transactions where the value of goods is determined by customary norms, rather than external market forces of supply and demand.[5] Conversely, it is possible for the value of an item to reflect market prices despite the absence of overt monetary transfer. The exchange of goods *in lieu* of cash provides a clear example of this,

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[1] See section 1.3.
[2] Reed (1990b), 84-5.
[3] Hodges (1988); Polanyi (1957); (Sahlins (1988).
[4] Clark (1990); Henretta (1978); Reed (1990b).
[5] Commuted heriot and tithe payment would fall into this category.

so long as each item is valued in accordance with prevailing market conditions.[6] Clearly it is the nature of the relationship between transactors rather than the use or failure to use money that is central to the definition of the various categories of exchange.

Monetary exchange can most readily be associated with the market arena, because the universality of coinage means that it is not necessary for the participants in a deal to have previous social linkages.[7] The use of money as a means of exchange acts as a guarantee of fairness, allowing individuals to form links with an unlimited number of trade partners. Consequently goods become commodified: they attain a specific monetary value at any given moment in time.[8] This exchange value is governed by supply and demand within the economy as a whole, rather than being the outcome of barter between individual transactors who rely for guidance on customary precedent. The presence of monetary exchange does not, however, automatically indicate market relations, since money was in use within pre-capitalist societies and, as we have seen, continued to play a role in the moral economic sector during the eighteenth century.[9] Only where money was used as a means of exchange and a means of terminating the exchange relationship could the transaction be considered to have taken place within the free market arena.[10] When examining the documents it is therefore necessary to watch out for such features as the partial cash settlement of running accounts, and the use of customarily regulated cash prices.[11] One must often make a considered judgement as to whether the cash price paid for a particular commodity was free to fluctuate with the market or pegged by customary regulation.

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[6] Grain supplied to the Earl by Ditchley leasehold tenants provides a good example of this type of transaction.

[7] Harris (1980), 238.

[8] Langton (1996), 207.

[9] At Ditchley money often continued to be used as a means of payment only. Heriots and tithes had frequently been commuted, and cash was also used to settle tax bills and pay tithe compositions.

[10] Hart (1986), 643.

[11] The assize of bread continued to function in the early eighteenth century, controlling the price of this staple food for the benefit of poor consumers.

Since it has been established that the relative importance of market and moral economy cannot be gleaned from the Ditchley accounts merely by separating out monetary from non-monetary transactions, each entry must be examined individually to assess whether social relations might have played a significant role in the exchange process. In reality market and customary sectors were inextricably bound together, and thus there is an absence of clearly definable boundaries between the two once we move from theoretical modelling to practical application. However, it is still possible to group transactions according to certain basic criteria, and the estate accounts remain a viable source for this purpose, capable of yielding the qualitative evidence necessary to classify the various forms of exchange.

Analysis of the accounts and other estate documents has been organised to fit the structure of customary and market exchange categories outlined in the opening chapter. I have dealt first with the moral economy, examining in turn, pure reciprocity, balanced reciprocity, and redistribution.[12] This is followed by an examination of the evidence relating to market exchange.

4.2 Reciprocity

a) *Reciprocity as an instrument of landlord control*

Reciprocity, in its purest form, is most often associated with primitive tribal societies,[13] but it can also be found in early-modern communities with strong networks of social relations and limited access to cash.[14] In essence, its primary purpose is the cementing of

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[12] Although each of these categories is an identifiably different facet of customary exchange, there is a good deal of overlap. In reality the moral economy consisted of a myriad different forms of exchange, governed by any number of different motivations and historical precedents. In this chaos, systems of categorisation merely provide convenient labels, covering areas that have certain common characteristics, in order to impose some sort of understandable order.

[13] Sahlins (1988)

[14] Clark (1982, 1990); Henretta (1978); Merrill (1977); Reed (1990b).

social relations, something that can be illustrated by the Earl of Litchfield's dealings with the provincial gentry.

During their long history of landownership at Quarrendon, and subsequently at Ditchley, the Lee family maintained a highly developed social network, including many members of the elite from Oxfordshire and surrounding counties. The estate documents frequently refer to exchanges of goods with neighbouring gentry families, clearly instituted for the purpose of cementing group solidarity rather than being commercial transactions. For instance the Earl's corn accounts for 1727-32 reveal deliveries to such prominent local landowners as Lord Gower, Lord Abingdon, Sir Robert Jenkinson and Sir Robert Walter with no record of payment, indicating that these were probably gifts.[15] In fact most of the forty or so people listed in this document as recipients of "oats and beans" from the Earl had significant links with either the family or the Ditchley estate, underlining the fact that these were socially motivated supplies (Table 4.1). A few of the entries refer to people who had kinship connections with the Lees (Fig. 4.1). Lord Abingdon, for example, had married the Earl's eldest cousin, Ellenora,[16] and Mr. Calvert was his son-in-law.[17] Others who seem to have benefited regularly from Litchfield's generosity were the vicars of Spelsbury, Enstone and Charlbury, and Sir Robert Jenkinson and Sir Robert Walter, who, as Justices of the Peace, presided over the local Quarter Sessions and were members of the Assize (Plate 4.1). As a major landowner in the area, the Earl had much to gain from ingratiating himself with them.

The remainder of those named in the corn accounts were local gentlemen and aristocrats, ranging in seniority from Viscount Clarendon, the owner of Cornbury Park, to Mr. John Sutton, who lived in Charlbury. He was a friend of the Earl's brother, Robert Lee, who resided at Lee's Place in the town.[18] Most of these men were probably just

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[15] O.A. Ditchley Corn Accounts 1727-32, DIL I/j/32a-b.
[16] Corbett (1931), 154.
[17] Corbett (1931), 141-142.
[18] Corbett (1931), 205.

friends and neighbours from the family's social circle, but some did have landowning interest in Spelsbury or Enstone. For instance, Lord Shrewsbury leased the manor of Lidstone from Wadham College, Oxford, and appears to have owned land in Neat Enstone field, receiving a plot of 105 acres that abutted onto the Ditchley estate when the township was enclosed in 1843.[19]

The fact that these grain transactions were recorded separately from those involving Ditchley tenants and other farmers or corn factors suggests that they were qualitatively different. The recipients can be recognised, from the descriptions outlined above, as people likely to have had close connections with the Lee family. They were the friends and acquaintances with whom the Earl and his family socialised; the lawyers, merchants and fellow landowners with whom he conducted business; and the influential local figures with whom it was necessary to keep on good terms if dispute and litigation were to be avoided. Reciprocation for this largesse is occasionally revealed in the accounts. During 1725 Sir Robert Walter twice provided 30 sheep, valued at £33 6s.[20] These may have been purely commercial transactions, with Walter being paid by the steward, or this could be another instance of reciprocal exchange, only entered with a monetary value in the document so as to aid accounting.[21]

Reciprocity was especially significant in the case of game, the hunting of which was restricted to the propertied classes, thereby imbuing it with a certain social exclusivity.[22] On several occasions Litchfield gave game to neighbouring landowning families, such as the "brace of does" he sent to the keepers of Woodstock Park in 1707.[23] The Park was, indeed, closely associated with the Lee family. The first Sir Henry Lee, who originally

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[19] Jordan (1857), 16, 21.

[20] Accounts, DIL I/l/33e$_3$

[21] Most gifts from neighbouring gentry families are unlikely to have appeared in the estate accounts as they did not impact upon estate expenditure.

[22] Hay (1975), 245-253.

[23] Accounts, DIL I/l/33a$_7$.

purchased the Ditchley estate, was made Ranger there by Elizabeth I. Subsequently the sons of the 4th Baronet resided at the lodge in the Park in 1687, where the errant Earl of Rochester, only son of the Dowager Countess, also died in 1689.[24] The Park appears to have been in the possession of the Lees until it was incorporated into the Blenheim estate, and thus the provision of venison to the keepers can be regarded as a reward for their faithful service over the years.

There are numerous other instances of game animals proffered as a gift to neighbouring gentry families and loyal estate officials, such as the side of venison sent up to Mr. Allen, the steward at Ditchley, and the half buck delivered to Brundell Rook Esq. by John Bellinger, the Woodstock carrier, in 1741.[25] These were almost certainly gifts rather than monetary transactions, because the game laws, in theory, prohibited the sale or purchase of such animals in order to preserve their exclusivity.[26] In fact poachers comprehensively flouted the law supplying a thriving underground game trade which continued throughout the early modern period largely undisturbed, but this does not alter the fact that the landed classes used game solely as a means of patronage.[27] Game was not only "part of the massive meals which country gentlemen were expected to provide at their tables, it was also packed into baskets and sent off to friends, dependants and neighbours, even though they might not be legally qualified to possess it."[28]

The last example of generalised reciprocity from the estate documents was the payment for the Courts Leet and Baron held at Spelsbury, Enstone and Charlbury. The Earl of Litchfield provided the court dinner and drinks for the jurors as well as paying the court crier, the clerk and an attorney for "keeping the courts".[29] This expenditure was incurred every year, and had taken on customary characteristics because relatively fixed sums

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[24] Jordan (1857), 129-130.
[25] Misc. Bills, 1743, DIL 1/o/24.
[26] Hay (1975), 190-95.
[27] Munsche (1981), 29-32, 55-69.
[28] Munsche (1981), 29.
[29] Accounts, DIL 1/1/33a-b.

appear to have been paid for particular duties. For instance, the clerks at Spelsbury, Enstone and Charlbury were consistently paid 1s for crying at the Court, clearly a nominal payment only. The attorney, Mr. Parrot, paid for "keeping the Courts" between 1702 and 1715 received £2 10s each year, and the men who succeeded him in this job were paid the slightly lower amount of £2 without fail 1720-50.[30] Even the expense of providing a court dinner seems to have been constrained by customary criteria.[31] The tenant of Spelsbury Farm, in whose house the Court was convened each year, usually supplied the Spelsbury Court dinner, which the accounts record as having cost exactly 15s on every occasion between 1702 and 1750.[32] The provision of a meal must be viewed as a duty imposed by the landlord on his tenant, recompense for which was a purely arbitrary figure based on historical precedent. Fluctuating prices for grain, meat and other foodstuffs would certainly have ensured that the real cost of feeding those present varied from year to year. This price variation is, to some extent, exemplified by the changing level of expenses incurred by Mrs. Hacker for providing the Court dinner at Charlbury. This was clearly a more lavish affair, costing between 16s 3d and £1 7s, with the price varying from year to year: perhaps the fact Mrs. Hacker was not one of the Earl's tenants, tied into the internal estate economy, made these transactions more commercial in character.[33]

This relatively liberal provision of resources was undertaken by the landlord to ensure the proper operation of the manorial court system, essential if his estate was to be managed effectively and his finances kept in order. Since such courts dealt with debtors and fixed entry fines and other dues, it was in the interest of the Earl to be generous in the expectation that the courts' decisions would be favourable to him.[34] In this part of

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[30] Accounts, DIL I/l/33a-j.

[31] During litigation in the 1590s, Sir Henry Lee argued that the tenants of Charlbury should pay for the court dinners, although these had formerly been provided by Eynsham Abbey when it held the manor.

[32] Accounts, DIL I/l/33a-j.

[33] Ibid.

[34] The various roles of the manor court are outlined in chapter two.

Oxfordshire, the financing of the proceedings was entirely in the hands of the Lee family, who could effectively control the courts in their own interest. At Charlbury the Court not only dealt with entry fines, breaches of the peace, the organisation of agriculture, and the appointment of tithingmen and constables, but also policed market regulations.[35] Consequently, financing the Court's operation gave the Earl influence over the commercial as well as the agricultural activities of the parish. Indeed it was Edward, Earl of Litchfield, who had obtained a charter from Charles II in 1678 reviving the market, which had fallen into decay by the later medieval period, granting the right to hold four one-day fairs yearly.[36] Having expended so much effort in re-establishing Charlbury as a market centre, it is not surprising that the Earl wished to safeguard its successful operation through influencing manor court proceedings.[37]

b) *Reciprocity within the rural community*

Despite the importance of aristocratic paternalism, it was amongst the poorer elements of rural society that the moral economy was most heavily embedded, and reciprocal exchange was one element of this economy, alongside self-provisioning through the utilisation of common resources.[38] Maintenance of this system based on customary expectations and norms of behaviour provided the small copyholder and landless labourer with a degree of autonomy not shared by those living under a market economy. It was essentially a means of resistance to the expansion of the free market, stemming from widely held beliefs that it was immoral to profit from the provision of necessities to the people, "a peasant conception of social justice, of rights and obligations, of reciprocity."[39] Local social networks acted as a means of flexible credit or, *in extremis*, pooling

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35 V.C.H. *Oxon.* (1972), 146-147.

36 The market charter granted to the Lee family by Charles II is preserved amongst the Dillon Collection, DIL IV/b/12.

37 V.C.H. *Oxon.* (1972), 145.

38 Neeson (1993), 158-177.

39 Scott (1976), 6.

resources, allowing co-operation between friends and relatives to meet household demands, when these arose, through the exchange of goods and services. This neighbourhood exchange insulated the community from the harsh realities of the market by ensuring basic household provision.[40]

Amongst the township populations in the vicinity of Ditchley neighbourhood exchange must have been commonplace, as there was an intricate web of interconnection within and between families, many of which had been resident in the area for several centuries. Dynastic families, such as the Coulings and Issards in Spelsbury, and the Drinkwaters in Enstone, held a sizeable percentage of the copyhold land within the estate, and had branches living in many of the surrounding parishes, providing an ideal social framework for trade linkages within the neighbourhood area (Fig. 4.2). However, documentary evidence for such traffic is hard to obtain, because the Ditchley accounts rarely dealt with transactions that did not involve the estate directly. Furthermore, the very informality of such local exchange systems ensured that they rarely left a written record, although the few surviving diaries and household accounts indicate just how complex these networks of non-monetary exchange relationships could be.[41] In his book Good Neighbours, Walter Rose describes how during his childhood in the 1870s,

> "A large part of the trade within the village was carried on by a system called gnawing it out – a method something like the primitive trade by barter in days before coin came into general use... The butcher, having had his cart repaired by the wheelwright, rather than part with ready cash, expected the wheelwright to run up a bill for meat in settlement. The system worked both ways, the wheelwright often being of like mind and motive. It was more or less the same in almost all the other trades: each individual secured to himself an assured amount of custom and the whole village kept its trade in its own circle."[42]

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[40] Clark (1982, 1990); Reed (1990b).
[41] Fussell ed. (1936); Macfarlane (1976); Woodward ed. (1984).
[42] Rose (1942), 54.

Drawing his evidence from household account books, Reed argues that such non-monetary transactions were common during the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. For instance, Jonathan Baker, a Gloucestershire shoemaker repaired shoes for William Ranels in 1786 at a 'cost' of 3s 3d. This 'debt' was cleared by Ranels doing four days work in February of the following year at 1 shilling per day, leaving Baker ninepence in his debt.[43] North American sources provide more numerous examples of this type of exchange, since the eighteenth-century farming population there was broadly literate.[44] However, association of such transactions with moral economy has less relevance in an American context, because the relative cheapness of land inhibited the growth of a labouring poor.[45]

Thus very few individuals left a formal record of everyday exchange activities during their lifetime. Running accounts between households were rarely documented, and it is often only at the point of death, when outstanding bills were settled, that we can glimpse the complexity of the web of debts and credits through probate inventories.[46] Indeed, the transactions of several people living in proximity to the Ditchley estate can be investigated in this way. One of the earliest examples is provided by the 1600 inventory of Charles Parrett, described as being a servant to Sir Henry Lee. He was owed small sums of money by Audry Ripingham of Enstone, Richard Irons of Woodstock and Sim, a fellow servant, amongst others. None of these debts came to more than £2, and several were under 6s, suggesting that they were casual in nature, perhaps the result of non-monetary exchange relationships. The debts listed in John Crosse of Chadlington's 1685 inventory reveal a similar pattern. He was owed £3 by Robert Ryman and £3 14s by Edward Ryman, both of whom lived in the same township. On several occasions there is

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[43] Reed (1990b), 86.

[44] Clark (1982, 1990), Henretta (1978).

[45] Vickers (1990), 15-20.

[46] Debtors lists in inventories are examined by Cox & Cox (1984), 222-26; Holderness (1975, 1976); Johnston (1978), 204-06; Muldrew (1993a, 1998); Spufford (1984), 33-41. The limitations of this source are set out in Spufford (1990).

a definite kinship link between debtor and creditor, emphasising the fact that social relationships underpinned many transactions. For example, Elizabeth Bennett of Shorthampton was owed money by Thomas and James Bennett, whilst one of Edward Sleamaker's creditors in 1638 was his brother, John. This inventory evidence provides a tantalising glimpse of the complex web of exchange within the local communities around Ditchley. It suggests that many households were engaged in a large number of small transactions with their neighbours, friends and kinsfolk. However, whether these transactions were monetary or not remains unclear. To examine this a more detailed record of household transactions would be required.

Fortunately there exists a complete list of debts and credits, dating from 1769, for one particular individual, John Gardner of Charlbury.[47] His widow Mary listed some commercial transactions, such as regular payments for leasing the tithe rights of Charlbury and £11 5s of interest due on a £50 bond issued by Richard Davis. The majority of the entries in the debit section of the accounts, however, were for payments due for work done, goods supplied or money lent. The amount involved was usually little more than £3-4 and considering the number of entries (over forty) it can be assumed that these were not all short term commercial arrangements interrupted by the untimely death of the householder. Some of the creditors also owed John Gardner money, indicating that reciprocal transactions along the lines of neighbourhood exchange are perhaps being glimpsed in snapshot form. For instance, Parker Busby was owed 14s for hoeing peas and a further £8 4s 11d in debts, and himself owed Gardner 11s 6d. Many of the creditors requisitioned farm equipment, animals or grain from the estate of the deceased to set against what was owed to them. Isaac Mobbs, owed £2 19s 4 1/2d, bought a quarter of oats for 15s 6d, and Richard Morris, owed only 6s, purchased malt and oats to the value

[47] O.A. MS wills, Oxon., 302/4/36. Gardner had not only an inventory but also a probate account. Such documents are relatively rare, and list all debts and credits of the deceased. See Erickson (1990).

of £2 5s 9d.[48] What we see here is circumstantial evidence for the existence of a substantial web of localised exchange relations. The same surnames recur in the lists of debtors and creditors - Franklin, Claydon, Holloway, Morris - all important families in the Charlbury area.[49] Similarly those supplied with grain and livestock from the widow's estate included both the appraisers of the inventory, Richard Franklin and William Robbins. Clearly, John Gardner had conducted significant proportions of his business within a close network of local friends and relations on an informal basis, although as a successful farmer he was certainly committed to the market and commercial credit facilities.

c) *Tradesmen and the use of running accounts*

The use of running accounts was not restricted to the local agrarian community. It appears also that the Earl frequently expected similar flexibility in the timing of payment from those with whom he did business, often settling up "in part" on a regular basis with local tradesmen and maintaining an account with them over a number of years. Transactions were usually cash-based and market prices adhered to, but it was rare for full payment and termination of the exchange relationship to occur on the completion of a job or provision of a good. For instance, the bill drawn up with the saddler, Richard George of Burford, in 1683 begins with the comment, "left unpaid of a bill last yeare - £13 14s 6d". Subsequently there are entries dating from the provision of a "curry combe and brush" on 1st February 1682/3 to the purchase of "a broad oyled bridle with a Rippon snaffle" sometime in December. Despite the fact that the total sum owed had by now reached £26 6s, only £6 was offered as part payment on 7th December. This suggests that

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[48] Ibid.

[49] These surnames occur regularly within the Charlbury parish registers throughout the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, and many of them are also revealed as significant landholders within Charlbury parish by an estate map drawn up in 1761 for the main landowner, George, Duke of Marlborough. For example, Richard Morris leased over 319 acres, whilst Edward Claydon and Samuel Holloway also held considerable tracts of land. O.A. Misc. Tree I/1.

Mr. George did not expect full settlement of debts each year, preferring to operate a running account with the Lee's steward rather than conducting transactions on an individual basis.[50]

The fact that one party was continuously indebted to the other ensured that the ties between them were perpetuated. Some form of social relationship had to exist between the transactors for such forms of exchange to function effectively, since a good deal of trust was necessary when bills were not settled immediately.[51] In some ways this requirement for social underpinning of the exchange was similar to the notions lying behind the neighbourhood concept. However, the influence of the market was also evident insofar as payment was usually in cash and the length of time over which a debt could remain unpaid was relatively limited. To some extent this indicates the artificiality of rigid exchange categories, as such transactions were clearly monetized and commercial, but contained elements of reciprocity.

4.3 Balanced reciprocity

Balanced reciprocity could be distinguished from the purer forms outlined above, as a transfer of goods in both directions in which the initiator of the exchange expected a speedy and equivalent return. Due to the immediacy of the reciprocation, such transactions could take place between people who were only distantly related or even complete strangers. The system relied upon the perceived fairness of the exchange, which was achieved through universal recognition of customarily controlled prices, determined by the needs of the people rather than the dictates of the market.[52] Account entries can thus be categorised as involving balanced reciprocity if there is evidence of customary fair pricing. Additionally, long-term monetary exchange relationships with particular

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[50] Misc. Bills, 1683, DIL 1/o/20.
[51] Muldrew (1993a), 169.
[52] Sahlins (1988), 194-195.

farmers and craftsmen were usually underscored by social linkages and can consequently also be characterised in this way. It should, however, be recognised that we are dealing here not with a clearly definable category of transaction, but with a sub-set of a continuum ranging from pure reciprocity to free market exchange. It is thus necessary to identify all those entries, whether the exchange was monetary or non-monetary, where reciprocation was immediate, but market forces were not able to operate freely.

a) *The flexibility of rent payments*

One group of transactions recognised as falling within the bounds of balanced reciprocity are those where there was an immediate return, but the choice of transaction partners was limited by social pressures. A vendor might be obliged to sell to someone with leverage over him due to unequal power relations between them.[53] For instance a landlord could significantly influence the trading activities of his leasehold tenants because they were constrained by the rent debts they owed to him. Additionally, the exchange relationship between the two was likely to be relatively long-standing. This clearly gave the tenant an advantage over outsiders when it came to provisioning the estate. The social relationship between landlord and tenant thus played a significant role: it mediated and privileged the exchange.

The character of rent payments at Ditchley indicates a considerable degree of flexibility on the part of the Earl. By accepting grain, carting services and other non-monetary payments *in lieu* of cash,[54] he was, to a certain extent, mimicking the actions of the country shopkeeper, who would accept either goods or cash as payment from his customers.[55] The terms of exchange appear to have been agreed independently between the parties, since market prices were not always adhered to. For instance, in 1705,

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[53] Reddy (1987), 64-73.

[54] See examples of produce payment of rents in section 3.4.

[55] Clark (1982), ;Mui & Mui (1989), 201-20.

Thomas Dennet, the tenant of Spelsbury Farm was paid only £1 5s 0d for 10 quarters of chaff, a good 10% below the market value at the time recorded in sales to outsiders.[56] Clearly most of the deals between landlord and tenant recorded in the farm accounts were conducted on an individual basis, not within the competitive arena of the marketplace. Prices may well have been influenced by market precedent, but they were not determined by the market mechanism.

However the extent of these internal non-monetary transactions was limited: on only five out of the forty one occasions examined did the tenants of the three large leasehold farms on the estate offset more than 30% of their yearly rent (Table 3.9). Moreover, two of these examples were the result of special circumstances, and hence unrepresentative of the typical landlord-tenant relationship. The expenses that John Freeman set against his rent in 1720 were largely incurred through his management of the Park's timber stocks and game.[57] Similarly the £85 credit which Thomas Alder amassed in 1707, whilst he was a tenant of Ditchley Farm, stemmed largely from the supply of 425 sheep to the Earl. This coincided with the subdivision of Ditchley Farm, only half of which was subsequently let to Francis Clements for a much reduced rent. Clearly the landlord had decided to take the other portion into his own hands, and bought up the flock already grazing there from the outgoing tenant.[58]

Thus it was relatively rare for one of the larger leaseholders to be able to meet more than a third of his rent debt through internal exchange of goods and services within the estate. On average non-monetary transactions with the landlord covered only 18% of the amount owed (Table 3.9). In 1702 the tenant farmer Richard Howlett paid Mr. Franklin of Oxford for "50 deale bords" and brought them back with him in his cart, consequently

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[56] Accounts, DIL I/l/33a_5.

[57] Accounts, DIL I/l/33c_5

[58] Accounts, DIL I/l/33a_7

setting £10 against his £55 half-year rent,[59] but both before and after the transformation of Ditchley Farm this was an exceptional example. In most years the leaseholder would simply pay the land tax, receive his allowance of timber, and perhaps supply some grain to the Lee household. This was non-monetary reciprocal exchange, but on a relatively modest scale, and reliance on quasi-market prices to determine the value of goods being transacted suggests that landlord and tenant pragmatism was more important than any sense of communal solidarity in encouraging such linkages.

Landlords were also relatively flexible over the deferral of rent payments, especially in conditions of dearth. It was unusual at Ditchley for a tenant to settle up fully at Michaelmas and Lady Day, since this might not fit in with his farming calendar.[60] A trusted tenant was often allowed to pay at his own convenience so long as sizeable arrears did not accumulate and debts did not remain outstanding for too long. A document of 1743 listing money owed by Ditchley tenants up to Christmas of the previous year indicates that delayed payment was endemic in the estate's farming system, with most tenants between three quarters of a year and a year in arrears (Fig. 4.3).[61] Some, such as Thomas Blackwell, were up to a year and three quarters behind with payments, and arrears amounted to 94.7% of the total annual take.[62] No tenant, however, was two years behind with their rent, suggesting that there were limits to landlord flexibility in the timing of payments.

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[59] Accounts, DIL I/I/33a$_1$.

[60] Michaelmas and Lady Day are on 29th September and 25th March, splitting the year into two halves. Farmers were likely to have surplus cash available at Michaelmas, coinciding with the end of the autumn harvest and on Lady Day, after the main period of spring lambing. Nevertheless not all farmers would have found it convenient to settle their rent bills on these dates as major capital outlay was often required on other items at these times in the farming year.

[61] The fact that a list of those in arrears was drawn up during this particular year may, of course, indicate that 1742 was an exceptional year for late payment of rent rather than being typical of the eighteenth century as a whole. Yet Stratton and Houghton Brown noted that harvests between 1741 and 1743 were excellent due to hot and dry weather in August, so it would be surprising if the Ditchley tenants had been suffering unusual hardship during these years. Stratton & Houghton Brown (1969, 2nd ed. 1978), 75.

[62] O.A. An Account of Arrears of Rent due on the Earl of Litchfield's Estate in Oxfordshire to Christmas 1742, DIL I/I/34a.

Rather than settling up in full on the two allotted days, most leaseholders paid smaller instalments throughout the year when cash came to hand, or supplied goods to the household. The 1725/6 cash book shows that Daniel Kench of Enstone farm made 12 payments towards his rent bill of £165 and remained just over £25 in arrears on May 1st of the following year. Most instalments were of £12 or less, concentrated between November and February, and in late April.[63] The first period followed the harvest when Kench was likely to have been relatively well supplied with money, and the second coincided with the end of the leasing year. This was a time at which most tenants sought to settle up to the best of their ability in order to avoid the build-up of arrears. Often, though, arrears were carried over into the next year (as we have just seen for 1742). In 1705 Thomas Alder's rent bill included £115 13s in debts built up over the previous couple of years.[64] This coincided with a sustained period of low grain prices from 1701-5, and he certainly seems to have restored his financial position once prices began to rise again: an entry for 6th March 1706 notes Alder sending "£43 to London via the Woodstock carrier", and by 1706 his rent payments had returned to their normal level of £130 per year.[65]

The above discussion emphasises the individuality of the relationship between the landlord and each of his tenants. Transactions, whether monetary or non-monetary, were clearly conditioned more by the particular circumstances of the relationship between them than by market forces. So long as a certain level of trust had been established, small rent arrears could be tolerated and flexible payment arrangements put in place, which were to the benefit of both parties. Tenants still saw it as their right to follow the traditional rhythms of the farming year, making payments when and in what form they saw fit.[66] Landowners were, to a certain extent, forced to make allowances for the

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[63] Accounts (Cash book 1725), DIL I/l/33e_4.

[64] Accounts, DIL I/l/33a_5.

[65] Accounts, DIL I/l/33a_6.

[66] Hainsworth (1992), 60-3.

conservatism of the rural population and their continued attachment to the precepts of the moral economy, even when this contradicted the desire to manage their estates according to economically rational principles. The result was transactions that compromised their desire for commercial efficiency and the villagers' wishes to preserve customary practices and reciprocal exchange.

b) *Long-term exchange relationships*

The examination of rent payments illustrates that exchange did not have to be non-monetary to be reciprocal in character. When cash transactions were conducted between two people over a long period there was a tendency for social relations to develop, encouraging the continuation of the linkage to the exclusion of other potential trade partners.[67] This appears to have been the case at Ditchley, with the Earl favouring certain tradesmen whose services he regularly employed though they were never part of the household. Links these men forged with estate officials were not mediated by the market but rather maintained by social networks. This is illustrated by the case of George Noble, a Charlbury cooper who put in two bills in 1683 for mops, besoms and brooms, and for making and repairing barrels of various shapes and sizes, amounting to a total cost of £3 6s 9d.[68] He reappears in the farm accounts of 1702, being paid 8s 10d for cooper's work, and there are twelve further entries, the last in April 1720.[69] Thus Noble had a regular association with the Lee family stretching for at least 37 years, during which time he was the only cooper employed on the estate. After his retirement Robert Jefferson, another Charlbury man, appears to have fulfilled the same role, being paid a yearly wage of £6 between 1725 and 1750 for "keeping the brewing vessels in good repair".[70]

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[67] Sahlins (1988).

[68] Misc. Bills, 1683, DIL I/o/20.

[69] Accounts, DIL I/l/33a_1-c_5.

[70] Accounts, DIL I/l/33e_3-j_{10}

Other craftsmen employed in a similar way included the slater, Henry Franklin of Fawler (1702-50); the mason, William Varney of Cleveley (1702-32), and various members of the Margetts family, who provided the estate with its carpenters throughout the study period.[71] These men not only did day-to-day maintenance work on the Ditchley buildings, but also played prominent roles in the construction of the new house during the 1720s and 1730s.[72] In January 1724 Franklin was paid £27 2s for "slating offices and the lower house", whilst Varney seems to have been employed full-time at Ditchley during the main building phase, earning £70-80 each year.[73] None of these men was a salaried estate employee, yet the regularity with which their services were called upon suggests that they must have built up a close working relationship with the steward and his deputies. In some cases, particularly where the individual's trade was relatively specialised, there may have been few alternative craftsmen to whom the Earl could turn, but there were plenty of other carpenters and masons available in the area if he had wished to seek out the cheapest alternative. Failure to do so indicates that the lord was prepared to allow his steward to rely, to a significant extent, upon the network of relations which he himself and the other household servants had established with craftsmen and traders living in the neighbouring communities.[74] The exchange relationship in each case was monetary in nature, but it was not conducted through the competitive arena of the marketplace.

Although more common in cases where the vendor was providing a service, long term exchange relationships could sometimes develop with people supplying goods. Certainly Nathaniel Bacon of Stiffkey appears to have requisitioned much of the produce for his kitchen through the kinship ties of his servants rather than in the marketplace, suggesting

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[71] Accounts, DIL I/l/33a-j.

[72] Oswald (1934).

[73] Misc. Bills, 1724-33, DIL I/o/22.

[74] Similar linkages can be found at Stiffkey, where many of the craftsmen and casual labourers employed by Nathaniel Bacon came from local families and had relatives working as servants on the estate. Hassell Smith (1989), 378-79.

that social linkages could be important in determining the pattern of transactions.[75] The shorter duration of contact between buyer and seller, however, ensured that lasting ties between the two were less likely to emerge than with craftsmen who might spend several weeks or months during the year working for a particular customer. Nevertheless, a farmer or dealer who became known to the household as a supplier of good quality corn or livestock might expect to receive further orders, especially if he had close ties with one of the servants responsible for requisitioning provisions.

William Varney was able to capitalise on the long-running relationship he had built up with the Lee family through his employment as a mason, selling agricultural produce to them on a number of occasions. In September 1720 he supplied 2 quarters of malt at 3s 8d/bushel, and ten years later he again appears in the accounts selling 6 quarters 4 bushels of barley for 13s 9d/qtr.[76] Henry Franklin may also have used his links with the Ditchley estate to secure the sale of grain, although in his case the beneficiaries were other family members, notably the yeoman farmer, Lawrence, and the maltsters Roger and Staple Franklin. Other regular suppliers of corn to the Earl were simply prominent local families, such as the Issards, Coulings, Bishops and Fortnams. These dynastic families were tied together by complex kinship linkages, and must also have built up a reputation for dependability, quality and honest dealing over the years they were resident on the estate. All these transactions were conducted in cash and at prices which did not deviate noticeably from prevailing market rates, and thus the influence of social ties upon the exchange process, whilst probably present, can only be tentatively suggested. Deals such as these lay right on the boundary between what could be considered customary and market exchange.

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[75] Hassell-Smith (1989), 378-79.

[76] Accounts, DIL I/I/33c_5 & f_5

4.4 The regulated marketplace

a) *The nature of regulation*

Market regulation was an administrative response to the perceived need for fairness in exchange. It provided legal backing for customary beliefs that prices should reflect the needs of the poor consumer, and transaction practices should not act against their interests. Like its counterparts throughout the country, Charlbury market was still subject to significant regulation in the early eighteenth century, having impositions levied and restrictions placed upon the actions of sellers. These clearly reflected the dual role of market controls, which were perceived both as a source of manorial revenue and a mechanism to ensure consumer protection. Whatever the purpose of these controls, their effect was to prevent the free operation of market forces. Thus their survival can be seen as recognition of the continued legitimacy of the moral economy, whereas evidence of evasion reflected a challenge by the forces of the market to this legitimacy.[77]

Farmers were required to pay tolls for bringing grain into Charlbury during the early eighteenth century, as in all market towns. Efforts were still being made to preserve this customary exaction in the early-modern period, although the market rights had frequently been leased out for a fixed sum, suggesting that tolls had become increasingly difficult to collect. For instance, Thomas Ryves, the bailiff of Woodstock manor, noted that in 1709 the profits from the markets and fairs there had been farmed out to James Grove, "who takes toll for corne everyday in the weeke aswell as market dayes when it is brought to the maltsters and sold".[78] The profits of the markets and fairs at Charlbury were farmed out too, usually to the bailiff of the manor. Michael Gardner, who held this post in 1709, reckoned that he made around £5 to £6 a year, although most of this came from the renting of stalls.[79] By the early eighteenth century, the income accruing from tolls

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[77] Thompson (1971), 83-88.

[78] O.A. Letter from Thomas Ryves to the Earl of Litchfield - 26 July 1709, DIL IV/b/13ii$_a$

[79] O.A. DIL IV/b/13.

themselves had dwindled significantly, suggesting that market regulations were being widely flouted,[80] something which is highlighted in the following section looking at consumer protection, the second aspect of market control.

Many of the regulations established over the centuries were introduced primarily to prevent fraud and speculation by unscrupulous tradesmen. All grain was supposed to be pitched in the open market, and sold between allotted hours on market days, so that small purchasers and large dealers would have equal access. This was certainly the case in the sixteenth century, when there were frequent presentments in the manor court at Spelsbury for taking excessive gain. For instance, a 1503 entry notes that Alice Ty of Spelsbury had "beforesold" bread and candles in booths and taken undue profit. She was fined 4d for these offences.[81] However, a few individuals were presented for profiteering on a regular basis, suggesting perhaps that the fines were regarded more as a necessary business expense than a genuine deterrent.[82] Indeed, the comments by Thomas Ryves seem to indicate that trade took place throughout the week by the 1700s, with farmers selling only by sample on market days, although measures to combat practices such as forestalling, engrossing and regrating do appear to have remained in place. Certainly the town population continued to believe in their legitimacy: in 1693 Charlbury men set upon the wagons of a man thought to be engrossing corn.[83] Moreover, the notion of a "just" price, codified in the Book of Orders, still informed the actions of local magistrates during periods of dearth.[84] As late as 1800 they were forced to act when a crowd of tradesmen and artisans from Witney went to Fawler mill to insist that the miller grind corn more cheaply.[85]

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[80] At Charlbury the tolls taken in 1708 amounted to only £1 10s for 15 bushels of barley and 3s for 44lbs. of wheat. DIL IV/b/13 quoted in V.C.H. *Oxon.* (1972), 145.
[81] Corbett (1931), 73.
[82] Corbett (1931), 68-83.
[83] Kibble (1930), 59.
[84] Thompson (1971), 108-109.
[85] Kibble (1930), 51.

It was also primarily for consumer protection that market officials checked weights and measures and regulated the weighing of produce. During the sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries these regulations appear to have been rigorously enforced through the manor courts: Alice Nelmys was fined in 1503 for selling underweight candles.[86] It seems that similar controls were still in place in 1709 when the steward noted that

> "At Woodstock.....the Common Councell have given to the Mayor the benefitt and advantage of weighing cheese sold in the faires or marketts with prohibition to all townsmen to weigh cheese on the faire dayes. Noe person can put up any scales or signpost or erect any penthouse without the consent of the Mayor".[87]

Market customs could, however, vary from place to place: at Chipping Norton it was the usual practice for the shopkeeper "to way cheese on the faire days in his owne shop without paying any duty or fee". Only those selling in the marketplace had to abide by the customary restrictions.[88]

Regulations were also in place to control the sale of certain essential commodities through mechanisms such as the Assizes of Bread and Ale. The court rolls are littered with examples of individuals being fined for brewing and baking offences throughout the sixteenth century, emphasising the importance customarily attached to enforcing these measures.[89] Those who brewed ale too weak, sold underweight bread, or overcharged for such basic necessities attracted the disapproval of the local community, since their actions were against the interests of the poor. In Oxfordshire both assizes continued to function well into the eighteenth century, although outside Oxford they were probably not enforced on a regular basis, but only sporadically during periods of inflated corn prices.

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[86] Corbett (1931), 71.

[87] O.A. Letter from Thomas Ryves to the Earl of Litchfield - 26 July 1709, DIL IV/b/13ii$_a$

[88] O.A. Letter from Michael Gardner to the Earl of Litchfield – 22 Aug. 1709, DIL IV/b/13ii$_b$

[89] William Wetherhede was fined on 17 occasions between 1550 and 1556 for brewing, baking and butchering offences. Corbett (1931), 76.

The Assize of Bread, set individually in each locality, was not a mechanism for reducing bread prices, but for eliminating suspicion of sharp-practice on the part of the bakers by ensuring that these prices "bore a relationship to the prevailing price of wheat".[90] Given the absence of any coherent records from the study area, I have used assize documents relating to Oxford market. These cover the relevant period, except for the years between 1700 and 1733, largely due to the diligent record-keeping of the University officials who controlled the market, but their relevance to the assizes set in other parts of Oxfordshire cannot be taken for granted.[91]

Throughout most of the period the assize was fixed "in relation to the second highest price paid for a bushel of wheat in Oxford market", plus an allowance to "cover the cost of wood, candles, yeast, salt, wages and the miller's fee".[92] There were three different types of loaf, white, wheaten and household, and they were produced at constant prices in Oxford until 1774. The consumer could purchase a small 1d or 2d loaf, or a larger 1s loaf, and so on. The baker was able to vary the size of each loaf to reflect the price of grain according to the pricing formula laid out in the assize. At a time of dearth, the higher prices paid for corn would be translated into a reduced weight for the 1d and 16d loaf alike.[93] Unfortunately, since weight was the variable factor of this regulatory policy, it is difficult to prove, by reference to account data, whether the assize of bread was being implemented at Ditchley.

Many account entries relate to the purchase of bread, but in most cases it was lumped together with other groceries, and where the price of a loaf can be determined, the weight

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[90] Thwaites (1986), 172.

[91] The Oxford assize of bread was set by two University officials, the Clerks of the Market, from the time of the St. Scholastica's Day Massacre in 1355 until 1836. Assize books are available for the years 1692-1700 and 1733-1836. See Thwaites (1986), 172.

[92] Thwaites (1986), 172-173.

[93] Thwaites (1986), 173-176.

was not recorded.[94] A number of bakers' bills have, however, survived amongst the bundles of bills and receipts relating to the provisioning of Ditchley House. Those drawn up by Thomas Saman of Hanborough provide a breakdown of each individual purchase made from May to December in 1683.[95] Saman appears to have provided the Earl with 1s 6d's worth of bread every three days, but the number of loaves is not specified. Assuming the food requirements of the household remained relatively constant over the year, this would suggest that the same quantity of bread was supplied on each occasion.[96] If so, the bill can be seen as illustrating a stable relationship between the price and weight of a loaf running for several months, just as one would expect if the assize was being adhered to, since this was usually set quarterly. Of course, the stable prices may have been the result of a private contract between the Earl and this baker, paying no regard to the assize price set by the magistrates. However, it would be strange if the landowner had disregarded this piece of market regulation after working so consistently to preserve customary controls in other aspects of marketing.

There are no examples of the enforcement of assize regulations during the study period in either Charlbury, Enstone or Spelsbury manor court rolls, but fragmentary evidence from other towns suggests that it did operate sporadically throughout Oxfordshire in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries. In Henley offenders were occasionally fined for breaking the regulations, and short-weight bread was seized in Banbury as late as 1795.[97] Enforcement of the assize through the Quarter Sessions only occurred in 1758, when six men including Thomas Hitchman of Sandford St. Martin and John Berrisford of

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[94] The fact that the prices paid for loaves at Ditchley remained as rounded figures throughout the accounts could, however, be viewed as evidence that it was weight rather than price which was varying over time, and thus the assize was still operating within the vicinity of the estate.

[95] Misc. Bills, 1683, DIL 1/o/20.

[96] Such an assumption may be unwarranted, as the Earl was usually only resident at Ditchley for part of the year. During his absence many of those in the household appear to have been paid board wages rather than having their meals provided.

[97] Thwaites (1986), 171.

Great Tew, both near Ditchley, were fined for producing underweight bread or loaves which were incorrectly marked.[98]

Even if outside Oxford and Henley the Assize of Bread was not set or enforced on a regular basis, but used as a temporary measure when shortages caused grain prices to rise rapidly and trigger distress, this does not negate its importance as an institutional support for the moral economy.[99] Its mere existence ensured the survival of a widely held conviction that such a basic foodstuff should not have its price determined solely by the dictates of the market. Bakers such as Thomas Saman continued, perhaps subconsciously, or more likely out of fear that they might excite local disapproval, to be influenced by customary norms when setting prices.

All these practices prohibited by customary regulation would have been perfectly legitimate under a free market system, and any capitalist would have considered restrictions imposed upon trade, such as the Assizes of Bread and Ale, as an unwarranted impediment. Such formal limitations placed upon trade thus suggest a continued attachment to certain aspects of the moral economy not only amongst the poor but also within the rural elite.[100] Like many landowners of the time, the Earl of Litchfield had a rather ambiguous attitude towards the market. Where commercialisation enhanced estate revenue, as with rental policy, it was eagerly embraced, but where lucrative ancient privileges were at risk landlords were often a bulwark against change. "Many gentlemen still resented the middleman as an interloper. Where lords of the manor retained market rights they resented the loss (through sample-sales etc.) of their market tolls. If they were landlord-farmers, who witnessed meat or flour being marketed at prices disproportionately high in relation to their own receipts from the dealers, they resented the profits of these common tradesmen all the more".[101]

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[98] O.A. MS Oxford Quarter Sessions Rolls 1687-1830: Vol. IX, p.65.
[99] Thwaites (1986), 172.
[100] Thompson (1971), 95-97.
[101] Thompson (1971), 95.

The elite also remained wary of the continued belief in customary fair prices amongst the populace, which expressed itself in food riots when shortages arose and the cost of grain escalated.[102] In June 1757 a riot in Oxford was occasioned by suspicion that a load of corn brought to market had already been sold by sample.[103] Consequently, the apparatus of customary regulation was perpetuated in Charlbury and the other market towns around Ditchley through an unlikely alliance of gentry paternalism and popular support for the precepts of the moral economy. However, it is beyond doubt that this regulation was largely ineffectual: the bailiff at Charlbury made a net profit of only £2 4s 3d in 1708, mostly from stall rents rather than market tolls.[104] Such laxity of enforcement can be seen as an indication of the extent to which the market had penetrated the local agrarian economy by this date.

b) *Estate participation in the regulated marketplace*

Most dealings in the marketplace would have involved yeomen and commercial farmers acting independently, whilst only transactions conducted on behalf of the Earl himself are recorded in the accounts. Nevertheless the documents contain plenty of evidence to suggest that the Earl continued to use the pitched market as an outlet for some surplus corn supplies. He also remained active as both a buyer and seller of livestock and horses at neighbouring markets and fairs, since the traditional marketplace remained the most effective arena for trading in animals.

Estate officials seem to have turned to the traditional open market for the sale of cereals on a few occasions during the early eighteenth century, although participation became more irregular as the century progressed. For instance, in March 1709 charges of

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[102] After 1660 statutes limiting monopolistic practices were only implemented during such periods of dearth in order to ensure adequate supplies were delivered to London, the armed forces and the poor. Clarkson (1971), 176-77; Stevenson (1985), 229.

[103] Thompson (1971), 86.

[104] O.A. An Account of the Income derived from Markets and Fairs at Charlbury, 1708, DIL IV/b/13iv.

1s 2d were incurred by "the team at Woodstock selling barley", and a later entry in the 1709 account book notes the sale of a further 6 quarters of the crop.[105] Another 4 quarters of barley were then sold at the same market the following February, indicating that there was a surfeit of barley on the estate that spring which could not be disposed of through the usual internal channels for an adequate return.[106] The 1707 accounts refer to Thomas Alder selling beans at Chipping Norton fair for £8 9s 6d,[107] and in April 1740, £11 2s 6d was made from the sale of a load of wheat at Oxford.[108] This last example is something of an exception: most sales and purchases of grain appear to have taken place at Charlbury, Woodstock and Chipping Norton, all within three or four hours' walk of Ditchley, and few other entries relate to the period after 1715. Most of the sales in the pitched market took place between 1707 and 1711, when wheat and barley prices were rising steeply and selling in the urban marketplace might have seemed a more attractive proposition.[109] More importantly, the fact that 1709 and 1710 were designated as famine years may well have prompted the more rigorous enforcement of market regulations, so that the direct purchase of grain from farmers was temporarily removed as an option open to the steward.[110]

Examples of livestock bought and sold in the marketplace are much more plentiful, and illustrate the range of market outlets utilised by the Earl's retainers. Most transactions involved the sale of sheep in Charlbury, whose market rights were owned by the Earl: frequent references to the reimbursement of John Booten for "going to market with the

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105 Accounts, DIL I/l/33a$_9$.

106 Accounts, DIL I/l/33a$_{10}$

107 Accounts, DIL I/l/33a$_7$

108 Accounts, DIL I/l/33h$_8$

109 Bad weather throughout spring and summer lasting well into the harvest in 1708-10 resulted in poor crop yields during each of these years. Consequently prices for wheat and barley, the crops most sensitive to adverse conditions, rose rapidly causing famine conditions and the prohibition of grain exports. This background must have had a significant impact upon the grain requisitioning strategies followed by the Ditchley estate administration. Stratton & Houghton Brown (1969, 2nd ed. 1978), 66-67.

110 Forestalling and the transfer of grain out of the area tended to prompt a hostile response from the people during periods of dearth. Thompson (1971); Walter & Wrightson (1976).

sheep" indicate the extent of this trade by the eighteenth century. In 1707 Booten was paid for six days taking sheep to sell at markets and fairs,[111] and in 1710 he spent "14 days at market selling sheep and buying wheat".[112] The Ditchley shepherd, William Fletcher, was also involved in the marketing: in November 1707 a boy was paid 4d to look after the sheep whilst Fletcher was at market.[113]

Although the weekly market could be used to buy and sell livestock, most trade took place at periodic fairs, because they drew in suppliers and customers from farther afield and offered opportunities for bulk sales and purchases.[114] Transactions at fairs accounted for 38 entries in the Ditchley estate documents, and closer examination of these entries reveals definite hierarchical ordering of the exchange relationships, a good indicator of market forces (Fig. 4.4). Sales and purchases of sheep were often in bulk, but they were restricted to the three closest fairs at Charlbury, Woodstock and Chipping Norton. From 1707, when the landlord seems to have begun large-scale sheep rearing on one half of Ditchley Farm, regular entries appear in the accounts detailing the marketing of sheep.[115] On the 6th October in that year the shepherd, Thomas Davis, sold 15 "wether sheep", 23 ewes and 30 lambs at Charlbury fair, and then on the 19th November a further 19 ewes and 10 lambs at Woodstock fair.[116] Such large-scale transactions involved a good deal of organisation, symptomised by expenditure on "pens for 50 sheep at Charlbury fair" on the 29th September 1710 prior to the sale of the sheep for 10s each later that day.[117]

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[111] Accounts, DIL I/l/33a$_7$

[112] Accounts, DIL I/l/33a$_{10}$

[113] Accounts, DIL I/l/33a$_7$

[114] Everitt (1967), 532-43.

[115] It was in 1707 that the outgoing tenant of Ditchley Farm, Thomas Alder, is recorded as supplying the landlord with over 400 sheep of various types to set against his rent bill. The incoming tenant seems only to have held half of the farm (the Enstone side) for a much reduced rent.

[116] Accounts, DIL I/l/33a$_7$

[117] Accounts, DIL I/l/33a$_{10}$. Four fairs were held in Charlbury each year: There was the Michaelmas Fair (September 29th); St. Thomas's Fair (December 21st); Lent Fair (2nd Friday in Lent); and May Fair (2nd Friday after May 12th). The Earl appears only to have sold sheep at the Michaelmas fair, although this is noted in V.C.H. as primarily a cheese and hiring fair. The accounts, however, record cattle and horses being bought at two of the other fairs (Lent and May).

Cattle and horses were more expensive purchases, usually bought individually or in small groups. They were higher order commodities and a customer could be expected to travel further to ensure a bargain. The horse trade, in particular, was dominated by metropolitan dealers who bought large numbers of animals at the more prestigious fairs such as Rothwell and Northampton.[118] The Ditchley accounts reflect this link between the distance a purchaser was prepared to travel and variations in the status of different types of livestock (Fig. 4.4). The Earl may have bought a "little cow" at Woodstock Fair in 1707, and sold two cows and a calf at Charlbury's May Fair in 1708, but cattle were more regularly purchased at Bicester and Banbury, which had better stocked fairs.[119] The accounts record six transactions in Bicester and four in Banbury which appear to have been for more valuable beasts. The "black finched cow" and the "brinded cow" both purchased in Bicester on 12th July 1706 cost £4 5s and £4 10s respectively,[120] whilst the two oxen acquired at Banbury fair in 1710 had a combined value of £12 5s.[121] Cows traded at Charlbury, in contrast, rarely made over £4. Horses recorded in the Ditchley documents had an even more diffuse marketing pattern. Some were requisitioned from farmers and tradesmen in the neighbourhood to provide flesh for the hounds,[122] others were purchased for relatively low prices at local fairs, but the highest quality geldings and colts required a journey over the county border to Winchcombe and Stow-on-the-Wold in Gloucestershire (Fig. 4.4).

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[118] Edwards (1988), 62-63.

[119] In his *Book of Fairs*, William Owen noted that Banbury had six fairs specialising in cattle amongst other things. These occurred on the first Thursday after January 17th; the first Thursday of Lent; Ascension Day; Corpus Christi - June 13th; August 12th; and October 29th. Bicester had just the one fair at which cattle were sold in significant numbers, on the Friday of Easter week, but this was of considerable local importance and attracted traders from all over the South Midlands. Many of the entries in the accounts relating to the purchase of cattle in Banbury or Bicester occur on one or other of these fair days. Owen (1756).

[120] Accounts, DIL I/l/33a_6.

[121] Accounts, DIL I/l/33a_{10}.

[122] Huntsman's Account, 1727-46, DIL I/q/1g.

These records indicate that the regulated marketplace continued to perform a central role in the marketing of agricultural produce in early eighteenth-century Oxfordshire. Markets and fairs were held at Charlbury, Chipping Norton, Woodstock, Bicester and, Oxford, none more than 20km away from Ditchley, and the Earl made use of all these trade outlets. However, the effectiveness of this regulation appears to have been significantly eroded by the onset of the study period, since the pattern of transactions reveals a relatively comprehensive hierarchy of market centres, at each level of which the landlord traded predominantly in different types of commodity. In the marketplace at Charlbury, Chipping Norton and Woodstock buying and selling usually involved oats, barley or sheep, which were relatively inexpensive and widely available. More valuable crops and livestock, such as wheat and cattle were frequently purchased farther afield at Banbury, Bicester, Oxford and Wallingford, and the most sought after animals, good quality horses, were often acquired from specialist fairs scattered throughout the Midlands. The presence of such a hierarchy suggests that markets were becoming increasingly commercialised, and integrated into an interlocking central place system.[123]

Fairs may well have been regulated in defence of customary imperatives, but they provided an arena for market exchange in which the individual had a large degree of freedom. Only a small number of necessities were subject to price control, and tolls taken on grain and livestock were usually low and easily evaded, so that stallholders operating within almost as free a market environment as private shopkeepers.[124]

4.5 Redistribution

The final element of the moral economy to be investigated is redistribution. This is likely to be well represented within the Ditchley documents, despite the fact that it is difficult to disentangle from the various categories of reciprocity, given that it represents

[123] Hodges (1988), 62-95; Smith (1976b), 20-47.
[124] Everitt (1967), 534.

the concentration of resources followed by re-dispersal in the form of patronage. Although by the eighteenth century the pooling and reallocation of resources had become more institutionalised, it still formed a central tenet of the estate system, but one that was under attack from the encroachment of the free market.

a) *The internal grain trade*

Redistribution is best illustrated in the accounts by the network of internal exchange through which a significant proportion of the grain produced on estate farms was funnelled.[125] Indeed, areas of sheep-corn husbandry, within which the Ditchley estate can be included, were especially suited to such "estate-orientated marketing systems", where tenants supplied produce to the landlord, to be distributed amongst the labour force in place of a full money wage.[126] It has already been noted that Ditchley leaseholders regularly supplied grain to the landlord, which was set against their rents.[127] Estate officials were also heavily entangled in the network of exchange due to the seemingly continual need to requisition oats for the horses. For example, in August 1707 John Freeman, the Keeper of Ditchley Park, "paid Richard Righton for 6 quarters of oats for the cart horses" and sought, in recompense, to set this expense against the money he had made from the sale of estate timber.[128]

Although oats were the most important internally marketed crop, barley, wheat, straw, hay, and occasionally livestock were also frequently set against rent by tenant farmers during the period covered by the accounts.[129] For example, in 1725, Edward Mitchell of Ditchley Farm supplied the Earl with 12 quarters of wheat, 6 loads of straw, and a further

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[125] See section 3.2.

[126] Hassell Smith (1989), 378.

[127] See section 3.4b.

[128] Accounts, DIL 1/1/33a,

[129] Details of the volumes of produce payments made by estate tenants, and the proportion of rent bills paid in kind can be found in chapter three, section 3.4.

5 loads of straw later in the year reducing his rent payments by £31 8s 4d.[130] This appears to represent a mutually beneficial network of internal exchange, conducted wholly within the estate, which was entirely non-monetary in character. By dealing directly with the landlord, the tenants had a guaranteed purchaser for part of their crop; they could avoid the trouble and expense of marketing, and could reduce the monetary burden of their rents. The Earl gained by being able to secure the provisions he required to maintain the estate from a known source, at a price that was frequently below that in the open market.[131] With coinage in short supply, providing goods to offset rent was of significant benefit to the economy as a whole.[132]

Although not entirely shielded from market stimuli, such systems of internal exchange were open to the influence of the customary pricing tradition as a result of being basically redistributive in character. Produce acquired in this way tended to be cheaper than similar goods bought in the open market, and this discrepancy was usually too large to be explained by the avoidance of transport and "middleman" costs achieved through local provisioning.[133] Comparisons between four categories of vendor suggest that the prices received for oats by leaseholders were consistently lower than those at Oxford market throughout the study period, and they fluctuated less than those for purchases by the household or from copyholders and outsiders (Figs. 4.5-4.8).[134] Lessees only obtained more than 15s/qtr. on two occasions, and received a mean return 1700-50 of 12s/qtr., whilst outside vendors regularly supplied oats at over 18s/qtr., trading on average at 14s 5d/qtr. There was also greater seasonal price variation amongst the entries for non-leaseholders. Prices achieved by outsiders could vary by as much as 10s/qtr. over the

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[130] Accounts, DIL I/l/33e$_3$

[131] Bowden (1967), 682-83.

[132] Muldrew (1998), 98-103.

[133] Tenants delivering coals to the Earl in 1750 were reimbursed at a rate of 9d per cwt (DIL I/o/56g). Similar charges for the carriage of grain would not have materially affected its price.

[134] The oats supplied by leaseholders could, of course, have been of inferior quality to those purchased in the marketplace, although such a sustained differential makes this explanation less likely.

course of a single year; those for leaseholders rarely fluctuated by more than 3s/qtr. (Tables 4.2-4.4). These statistics provide further evidence that social relations impinged on the transaction process. The landlord as creditor could exert pressure on the tenant to peg prices below market levels, avoiding the dramatic fluctuations of the marketplace. Leaseholders received a return within the range of prices paid on the open market during that year, albeit often at the lower end of this scale. The prices they were paid reflected prevailing market levels even if the two were not identical.

The provision of grain *in lieu* of rent was only one side of the redistributive internal marketing system at Ditchley. Corn supplies, gathered together from the tenants and the Earl's own land, were subsequently distributed amongst members of the household and regular wage labourers.[135] This amounted to a considerable number of people: the 1730 composition of excise on malt recorded 20 persons within the Ditchley household, which would include only those residing at Ditchley House itself, not the labourers and employees living in cottages elsewhere on the estate.[136] However, household servants received their wages in a variety of forms: only part of their income came from the provision of food and lodgings, with the remainder being in cash.[137] Lists within the accounts, naming those in receipt of small quantities of corn, indicate which people received supplies from the landlord's stock. The housekeeper, of course, was provided with sufficient corn to furnish the kitchen and feed the pigs, chickens and turkeys, and the steward always ensured that there were plentiful supplies of hay, beans and, above all, oats for the horses. The 1730 corn account refers to 2800 quarters of oats and beans delivered to the groom, 2000 quarters to the carters, and 1600 quarters to the coachman over the previous 27 years.[138]

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[135] See sections 3.2-3.4.

[136] Accounts, DIL I/l/33f$_5$

[137] See earlier references to board wages, cash payments *in lieu* of food, when the landlord was away from Ditchley. When the Earl was present, however, servants were provided with meals, and additionally they lodged at the House throughout the year.

[138] O.A. Ditchley Corn Accounts 1730, DIL I/j/32b.

Additionally, a number of labourers and craftsmen seem to have been supplied with wheat or barley from Ditchley stocks as part of their wages on a regular basis until 1720. Names such as James Butler, the ox-man; Samuel Hauten, John Kirby, Thomas Cross, all labourers; Jarvis Wesson, the giner, and Henry Franklin, the slater crop up in the accounts from 1709-12, making small purchases of barley every ten to fifteen days. It has already been noted that the volume of produce payments during these few years were exceptional, and linked to a rapid increase in grain prices after successive harvest failures in 1708-10.[139] Such payments were, however, symptomatic of an internal system of redistribution, operating at a lower level throughout the early years of the eighteenth century. During 1710 27 quarters of barley, $8^1/_2$ quarters of peas and 5 quarters of wheat were provided to estate workers, a considerable quantity, although well short of the hundred or so quarters supplied to the stables over the equivalent period.[140] The recipients were predominantly full-time estate employees, to all intents and purposes part of the household, and were fully integrated into the internally organised redistributive network.

Such internal transactions would have brought them considerable benefits during this period of soaring prices, since barley, wheat and legumes provided by the steward were consistently valued at well below the prevailing market price. Barley prices rose dramatically at the beginning of 1709 and continued upwards for the next two years, yet the small quantities supplied to Ditchley labourers were consistently valued a good 5-10s per quarter lower than barley sold at Oxford market, and if anything prices drifted slightly downwards over time (Fig. 4.9).[141] This clearly suggests paternalistic motivations behind

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[139] See section 3.4a.

[140] Accounts, DIL I/l/33a_{10}

[141] Somewhat surprisingly the prices received by the Earl from bulk sales of barley also appear usually to have been a good deal lower than the market price: the 6 quarter sold at Witney on 16th March 1709/10 fetched only 24s 8d/qtr., whilst on 26th February 1710/11 4 quarters were sold at Woodstock for 24s 6d/qtr. Certainly by this time of year this would probably have been old barley, but market prices in Oxford at the time averaged over 34s/qtr. Only bulk purchases from outsiders show any evidence of correspondence with prevailing market rates, with the 10 quarters purchased from Mr. Crafts of Sutton costing 31s 6d/qtr., within 2s of the market price.

the decision to provide labourers with grain *in lieu* of wages during this period of dearth and high cereal prices. Indeed, the figures from the accounts can be seen as representing customary fair prices since the barley supplied to estate workers was pegged at around 24s/qtr., close to the mean price throughout the early eighteenth century as a whole (Fig. 4.10). The continued use of large-scale redistribution within the estate at a time of crisis provides clear evidence of the at least sporadic survival of a moral economy at Ditchley. As the Lee household was large, the number of transactions involved and the volume of grain circulating within the system was substantial.

Although not at first obvious, this system of internal grain flows was in fact based around a complex redistributive cycle. The landlord was effectively acting in a similar way to a tribal chieftain, requisitioning corn, produced on the estate by farm servants and hired labourers, only to redistribute part of it to these same people. For example, in 1709 Goodman Butler, the ox-man, was "paid partially in peas and bush barley" for 26 weeks' work mowing and ploughing on the home farm.[142] The system was organised by estate officials, acting as intermediaries, who themselves were indebted to the lord. John Freeman, for example, was responsible for the management of the wood account, selling estate timber and then reimbursing the Earl from the proceeds.[143] This debt obligation placed him at the centre of a network of exchanges helping to integrate the local economy in the service of the estate.

b) *Hierarchically ordered demand*

The retention of some elements of a hierarchical demand structure within the Ditchley household helps to emphasise the redistributive character of exchange on the estate. Servants, labourers and craftsmen appear often to have lacked consumer sovereignty,

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[142] Accounts, DIL I/l/33a$_9$

[143] Accounts, DIL I/l/33a-c.

since they were paid partially in kind.[144] Employers frequently chose to make bulk purchases of clothes, exotic groceries and utensils on behalf of their workforce, rather than paying cash wages so that they could buy goods for themselves.[145] Sixteenth and early seventeenth-century wage assessments suggest that farm servants would have received around 67% of their wages in kind, with the corresponding figure for day labourers being around 50% if their diet was provided. However, employers' control over consumption declined steadily over the course of the early-modern period.[146] After the 1650s only personal servants continued to have livery written into their service contracts, and during the eighteenth century there is evidence from some assessments that only drink was provided rather than a full diet.[147] Nevertheless hierarchically structured demand continued to have a significant impact upon the local economy of large estates such as Ditchley.

Livery clothing continued to form a major element of income for household servants, and its provision represented a considerable outlay on the part of the landlord.[148] For instance, the woollen draper, Robert Goodchild, was paid £61 4s 6d in 1742/3 for "six full livery coats compleat, 7 livery westcoats, 7 pair of shagg breeches", and various other cloths destined for use as servant garb.[149] The wealthy landowner was able to make savings by such bulk purchase of goods from London wholesalers and dealers whom the servants would not individually have been able to visit. Such centralised purchasing distorted the whole market system, with the capital and larger towns getting a disproportionate percentage of the trade.[150] Without individual consumer choice these

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144 Shammas (1990), 213-14.

145 Examples of hierarchically structured demand can be found in Blencowe ed. (1850); Fussell ed. (1936); Glennie (forthcoming); Woodward ed. (1984).

146 Shammas (1990), 212-16.

147 Gilboy (1934), 88-90, 125, 197, 202.

148 An analysis of wage rates set by county magistrates during the seventeenth century suggests that the ceiling for the amount to be spent on livery was 10-20% of the total wage. Minchinton ed. (1972), 206-25.

149 O.A. Receipts, 1742/3, DIL 1/o/24. For further references to the provision of clothing to members of the Ditchley household, see section 3.3a.

150 Shammas (1990), 203.

transactions could not represent the emergence of a market system, because demand was regulated by a third party, rather than being expressed directly by those making use of the goods. This system was redistributive, because the landowner was extracting labour value from members of his household and then reallocating resources they had helped to accumulate to meet their subsistence needs, and it was also non-monetary, since it removed the necessity to recompense servants fully in cash for their work.

Hierarchically ordered demand at Ditchley extended beyond the group of permanently employed household servants. Itinerant craftsmen appear sometimes to have lived-in with the family for a short time whilst they completed work. Payment was primarily in the form of the board and lodgings provided, with some additional cash or other goods thrown in. Unlike most of the other tradesmen who lodged for a time at Ditchley House, it has proved possible to trace the dealings of the tailor John Mason in some detail, due largely to his untimely death in the autumn of 1725. Because he died whilst in the service of the lord, the accounts record all arrangements made for the settlement of his debts and credits. Mason had been resident at Ditchley since at least January 1723, receiving £4 board wages from the landlord for a year's work, but had supplemented this income by providing clothing for the household's servants and other people working regularly on the estate. He was owed money by various members of the household, such as Edward Poole, the gardener, for coats, waistcoats or breeches, and Thomas Bowell, the thatcher, for a cloth coat. At the same time, he owed money to various people for unpaid bills and expenses connected with his funeral. Charles Potter, the lord's coachman, claimed 2s for carrying the coffin, whilst Mr George Booth, the family apothecary, had provided 7s 6d's worth of pills and cordials in an attempt to cure the tailor's illness.[151] The web of linkages that Mason had forged on the estate over such a relatively short time illustrates the complexity of the hierarchical demand relationship. Whilst he himself was clearly

[151] Accounts, DIL I/l/33e,

receiving considerable payments in kind in addition to his £4 money income, the clothes he made for Ditchley servants must have been set against their wages, or why else would such entries feature in the estate accounts? Mason was thus both a recipient and a producer, actively involved in the provision of patronage.

This type of demand structure was typical of a system organised along redistributive lines, including significant elements of non-monetary exchange. The flow of capital was internalised within the estate, going from landlord to servant, and then back to the landlord again. It took purchasing power out of the hands of the servants or labourers, since they lacked access to the cash which, as a medium of exchange, would have given them the opportunity to make their own purchasing decisions.

4.6 Free market exchange

The previous chapter examined the prevalence of market exchange at Ditchley in the early eighteenth century through analysis of the level of monetization and the price fluctuation of basic commodities, indicating that there had been a good deal of commercial penetration into the customary economy. It is, however, also possible to identify the workings of the market by studying the basic characteristics of exchange and the nature of social relations between transactors.

a) *The direct marketing of grain*

The early eighteenth century was a period of tenurial change and landholding reorganisation at Ditchley, as the Earl sought to "run out" existing copies, take the land into his own hands, and then relet it on a commercial basis for a short-term lease.[152] This fundamental transformation of social relations, although only in its embryonic stages, was already having a noticeable impact on the exchange behaviour of farmers living on the

[152] See section 2.4.

estate. Conservative copyholders, tied to the moral economy by underlying social relations, were increasingly replaced by commercial tenant farmers, who were often newcomers to the area, and depended upon active participation in the market to acquire sufficient cash for rental payments.[153] Faced with high fluctuating market rents, they were forced to become more competitive; to depend to a greater extent upon immediate cash payment; to seek out customers willing to pay the highest price, and to minimise marketing overheads.

One way in which overheads could be limited was through dealing directly with major customers, rather than going through traditional market channels, and in the process incurring tolls and being subject to market regulation of prices. However, trading in grain and other foodstuffs outside the pitched market, whether in an urban inn or at the farm gate, was a breach of statutory regulation codified in the *Book of Orders*, leaving offenders open to prosecution through the manor court.[154] Despite this, forestalling was widespread throughout the country by the late seventeenth century, symptomatic of the increased influence of the free market in the countryside. By 1700 many of the markets in Oxfordshire, such as Charlbury, were no longer significant centres of trade in basic agricultural commodities, with most farmers bringing only samples to the marketplace.[155] This explains previous references to the fact that tolls were only taken on 15 bushels of barley and 44lb of wheat during 1708.[156]

The Earl himself appears regularly to have shunned the open market, purchasing significant quantities of grain directly from both yeomen and commercial farmers living locally. Many of them had only tenuous links with the estate, suggesting that these were

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[153] Although some of the tenants of Ditchley and Spelsbury Farms were members of established families in the area, John Issard and William Couling for example, others came from outside the region. Thus Thomas Alder was a native of Sparsholt in Berkshire before taking over Ditchley Farm, whilst Henry Curtis hailed from Ratley in south Warwickshire.

[154] Thompson (1971), 83-84, 108-112.

[155] Chartres (1985), 471-72. Contemporary reference to sample selling can be found in Defoe (1745), 181.

[156] O.A. An Account of the Income derived from Markets and Fairs at Charlbury, 1708, DIL IV/b/13iv.

commercial transactions not based on kinship and social network connections.[157] The only people appearing repeatedly in grain transactions were Ditchley tenants operating within the internal marketing system of the estate (Fig. 4.11). Other farmers dealt with the Lees on a more *ad hoc* basis, not supplying oats, barley, wheat and straw often enough to build up close social ties with estate officials. For example, George Bustin, a Kiddington yeoman, dealt with the Earl on five occasions during 1740, and once in both 1745 and 1750, providing almost 100 quarters of oats through these transactions.[158] Since he lived close to the borders of the estate Bustin would have been an obvious source for oats and barley to feed the horses, and therefore the relative regularity of his dealings with the Ditchley household are not surprising. However, he had no obvious links to any members of the household, and conducted no other accounted business with the Lee family, suggesting that this was a purely commercial relationship. Other farmers from whom corn was acquired lived farther afield and often appeared only once or twice in the accounts: Rook Wyton of Hook Norton, who supplied 6 quarters 9 bushels of oats in 1745, was typical of this group (Fig. 4.12).[159] Entries referring to the reimbursement of Ditchley servants for money spent on grain sometimes include information on the vendor, who, again, was usually unconnected with the estate. Seed barley, for instance, could rarely be found locally, and thus John Booten, the Ditchley bailiff, had to travel 8 miles to "Willington, near Shipton", in 1708 to buy from a Mr. Grimott.[160] In 1709 Booten was also compensated for the outlay of £6 for oats at Ratley, which lay over the border in Warwickshire, and £2 9s for some purchased at Chipping Norton market.[161]

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[157] See section 3.2.

[158] Accounts, DIL I/l/33h_8-j_9

[159] Accounts, DIL I/l/33i_7

[160] Accounts, DIL I/l/33a_8

[161] Accounts, DIL I/l/33a_9

b) *The diversity of purchasing strategies at Ditchley*

This last example shows how grain was acquired from a number of sources, sometimes directly from the farm gate, sometimes through the pitched market. The choice of supplier appears to have been based on expediency, with estate officials exploiting opportunities to requisition grain when they arose, whether in non-monetary transactions with Ditchley tenants, regulated trade in the marketplace, or free market dealings with commercial farmers. The balance between these types of exchange is summarised in Table 3.2, which shows that 49.5% of transactions were with people who did not rent land within the estate, were not employed regularly by the Earl, and lacked any close kinship links with members of the Ditchley household. Leaseholders made up 17% of transactors, followed by copyholders and internal transfers between servants, which both stood at around 12%. Notably, a relatively small proportion of grain was procured from Ditchley's customary tenants: only 11.3% of oats and a smaller proportion of other grains (Table 4.5). Customary tenants would usually have consumed most of what they produced, and the smaller rent bills they faced must have given them greater freedom when disposing of any surplus.

The most obvious feature of the Ditchley grain trade was the dominance of direct purchases from outsiders within the category of external transactions. In contrast dealings within the bounds of the estate were spread fairly equally across a number of different groupings.[162] However, there were also wide variations in the balance of transactions for the various cereal crops. Oats, wheat, beans and hay were most often bought from outsiders, whereas barley was more readily obtained through the internal estate market from leasehold tenants (Table 4.5). This perhaps reflects the fact that barley was the most extensively cultivated crop within the bounds of the estate, as it was throughout the

[162] Account entries relating to internal transactions can be categorised under four headings: purchases from Ditchley copyholders; purchases from leaseholders; purchases where the supplier remained unspecified; and redistribution between servants on the estate.

stonebrash district during the early-modern period.[163] The 1689 inventory of Richard Righton, a yeoman farmer from Church Enstone, records barley valued at £42, but only £17 10s of wheat; £9 12s of oats and £5 12s of peas. Yet examination of grain volumes shows that oats made up by far the largest proportion of internal as well as external supplies: leasehold tenants provided only 168 quarters of barley and 443 quarters of oats between 1702 and 1750 (Table 3.3).

The overall impression gained is that the estate requisitioned most of its corn directly from commercial farmers. This was especially true for wheat, which was produced most extensively on larger commercial farms and was seen by most farmers as their main source of cash income.[164] Its value meant that a long distance trade had developed, supplying London and the Home Counties, and farmers generally preferred to operate within this market arena rather than rely upon internal transactions where profits were often lower.[165] Barley was also a significant cash crop, with a valuable market amongst urban brewers and distillers by the late seventeenth century, although price behaviour suggests less integration than for the wheat market. Oats, beans and hay, however, were all relatively inexpensive commodities, with more limited marketing horizons, and all would have been staple crops on even the smallest customary holdings.[166] Nevertheless significant quantities of each of these crops were purchased from outsiders. In this case it seems likely that reliance on external sources was a result of demand exceeding local supplies rather than there being disincentives for tenants to channel their produce internally. Whereas the limited demand for barley could be met largely from internal sources, the Earl had to look beyond the estate for the necessary quantities of oats, beans

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[163] Havinden (1961a), 66-7.

[164] Inventory evidence suggests that the acreage of wheat doubled between 1660 and 1730 at the expense of barley as new rotations were introduced to the open fields of the stonebrash district. Havinden (1961a), 199-201.

[165] The evolution of the grain market is examined in Campbell *et al* (1993); Chartres (1985, 1995); Gras (1915); Wrigley (1985).

[166] Chartres (1995), 125-28.

and hay. It appears that internal supplies, when available, were generally favoured by the steward, as these were likely to be cheaper and more reliable, whilst outside sources were sought if the requisite amounts could not be procured from the home farm or Ditchley tenants. However, there was a definite swing towards increased reliance on outside provision over the course of the eighteenth century.[167] Apart from a brief resurgence in 1730, internal sources seem never to have supplied more than 30% of total grain requirements after 1720.

c) *The role of the middleman in eighteenth-century agriculture*

Analysis of the estate accounts confirms that market exchange dominated the trade in agricultural produce, but indicates that most of this trade did not pass through the regulated marketplace. After 1660, regulations were only enforced during periods of dearth, since they flew in the face of normal marketing procedures.[168] Middlemen, buying in bulk from commercial farmers and supplying both the urban market and estate households, became increasingly influential.[169] A 1733 petition to the House of Commons from the borough of Haslemere in Surrey complained about their practises, stating that millers and mealmen had "secretly bought great quantities of corn by small samples, refusing to buy such as hath been pitch'd in open market".[170] Forestalling and sample selling had clearly become widespread by the early eighteenth century, although such practices were viewed with extreme suspicion by large sectors of the rural population.[171] There is much evidence for the operation of these grain dealers, both direct

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[167] See section 3.2.

[168] Anderson & Latham (1986).

[169] Chartres (1977), 36-52; Gras (1915), 100-12; Westerfield (1915); Willan (1967), 43.

[170] *Commons Journals*, 2 March 1733, quoted in Thompson (1971), 79.

[171] Sample selling was increasingly employed by farmers during the eighteenth century. Rather than taking all their produce to the marketplace they would carry only a small sample in a bag which would be shown to potential customers, often in on of the inns which dominated many market towns rather than in the marketplace. This enabled farmers to evade tolls and increase their profits. Most of the grain sold in this manner was purchased by corn factors, maltsters and the like, who requisitioned grain over a large area and often channelled it towards the London market.

and indirect, within the accounts and other associated documents, indicating that commercialisation of grain marketing within the study area was progressing relatively rapidly, just as it was elsewhere within London's sphere of influence.[172]

The market at Charlbury was already in a state of severe decline by the mid-seventeenth century, frequently being described as mean or decayed, and it was only through the influence of the Lee family that it was re-established. Lord Litchfield obtained a charter in 1678, reviving the town's status as a market centre, and granting the right to hold four one-day fairs during the year.[173] In 1696 the steward, John Cary, wrote to John Ball, at the time bailiff of Charlbury manor, suggesting that he erect stalls in "som voyd places in the street upon the lords road in the towne of Charlbury", which might "inable him the better to make proffit of the said markets and faires".[174] This indicates market expansion, but much of this growth was in the leather working trades, and it depended to a significant extent on active promotion by the landowner.

It thus appears that by the late seventeenth century the pitched market in Charlbury played a relatively minor role in the marketing of agricultural produce. Much of the developing grain trade seems to have fallen into the hands of the major maltsters in the town, notably William Padbury, John Hawtin and Edward Spendlove (Plates 4.2-4.3). The paltry amount of grain passing through Charlbury market each year certainly seems to indicate that the use of sample selling to evade tolls had become pervasive. These middlemen bought corn directly from farmers either at the farm gate or in one of Charlbury's inns, such as the 'Bell', the 'Bull', and the 'Rose and Crown' (Plate 4.4).[175] Often farmers still brought to market a single load of corn 'to make a show of a market,

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[172] It has been argued that north-west Oxfordshire lay just outside the London price region during the medieval period, since the Thames was not navigable beyond Abingdon. Campbell *et al* (1993), 63-9. However, recent research suggests of existence of a national market for wheat by the late seventeenth century, and considerable regional price integration for other crops. Chartres (1995).

[173] V.C.H. *Oxon.* (1972), 145.

[174] O.A. Letter from John Cary to John Ball 1696, DIL IV/b/13i.

[175] V.C.H. *Oxon.* (1972), 132.

and to have a price set', but the main business was done in 'parcels of corn in a bag or handkerchief which are called samples'".[176]

Evidence for the activities of corn factors in Charlbury comes from a letter written by the steward to the Earl of Litchfield in 1717, listing a number of ways in which the men of Charlbury had been "unresonable against the Lord of the Mannors interest".[177] It will be quoted at length as it illustrates clearly the transformations taking place in the marketing of agricultural produce, and the attitude of the Earl towards such changes.

According to the steward,

> "unresonable men have given out at severall times that the markets ought to be free markets for everybody and for that end they pretend that they gave money at first that it should be so, and for that end they would rout out Michael Gardner[178] now and take a lease of my Lord that they may make a free market of it, and then they shall bring it to be a good market. For now they say that Michael Gardner has spoyled the market by taking of more tole than he should of severall farmers, as they nominated to my Lord last Monday September 2nd 1717, but this is a trick of deceipt to cloke themselves under laying the blame on Michael Gardner. For all the malsters in Chalbury goe to Chiping Norton market and they buye their barly there for maulting of the farmers by samples to save the tole to themselves and then the farmers carry it to Chalbury on the week dayes,[179] for the

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[176] Anon. (1718) *An Essay to prove that Regrators, Engrossers, Forestallers, Hawkers, and Jobbers of Corn, Cattle, and other Marketable Goods are Destructive of Trade, Oppressors of the Poor, and a Common Nuisance to the Kingdom in General.* London, pp.13 and 18-20, quoted in Thompson (1971), 85.

[177] Charlbury market was in a decayed state for much of the study period. After seemingly having failed during the Civil War, it was re-established by charter of Charles II in 1679, but was not listed amongst the Oxfordshire markets and fairs by G. Miege in his *New state of England*, published in 1694. Indeed, a note written by the Earl of Litchfield's steward, John Cary on 19 Aug. 1696 talks of "som voyd places in the street upon the lords wast in the towne of Charlbury which are very convenient to erect stalls for tradesmen for the good and benefit of the market and faires there"(DIL IV/b/13i). Presumably this general lack of trade at Charlbury lay behind protests against sample selling by farmers in other nearby markets.

[178] Michael Gardner was the unpopular bailiff of Charlbury manor, to whom the profits from the markets and fairs had been farmed. The stall-holders complaints against him arose largely from the fact that the land on which the market stood was town land, on which they did not believe the Lord had the right to levy a rent.

[179] This illustrates the tactics used by the maltsters to circumvent market regulation. They purchased grain by sample at nearby Chipping Norton and then had it delivered to Charlbury on days when the market was not operating and hence tolls not being taken.

farmers alwayes carry so much corne as the tole comes to more than so many quarters as they sold to the maulsters, which trick has been played by the maulsters at Chiping Norton, Woodstock, Wallingford and at severall other places formerly but now of late years the Lords of those Mannors have taken toll of all corne that is brought into the market townes on week dayes and if the maulsters or farmers have refused to pay the tole the Lords of the Mannors have answered and bid them take their course but no malster nor farmer yet has stood it out and tryed it at law as I have heard of by those that know it, and most market towns make the farmers pay for all corne brought in on the week dayes, and in my opinion this course ought to be taken at Chalbury and then the maulsters in Chalbury will buy their barly in Chalbury market rather than to go to other markets to buy by sample. I have some time since persuaded Michael Gardner to take tole of those farmers that brought barly to the maulsters on the weekdayes, and Michael Gardner proseeded to take tole of a farmer in Edward Spindelow's backside and Spindelow layed hands on Michael Gardner when he was on the waggon as if he would have faught him or tumbled him off the waggon, which made Michael desist from medling with it any more, but if my Lord would stand by it that it shall be done, then the rent may be increased. And this is one of the chifest reasons that the maulsters would get Michael out and to take a lease of the markets and fayers to prevent the Lords takeing of tole on the week dayes which will be a great loss to the maulsters, which have heatherto bin of great gaine to them, and for that very end and means they have spoyled the market and have keept it so meane as it is and for these reasons abovesaid it was that my late Lord would not admit Spindelow to speak to him".[180]

Spendlove also appears in the accounts, leasing Coldron Mill for £10 per year between 1702 and 1710, suggesting that he had expanded his activities from dealing in grain to milling, consolidating his position as the largest wholesaler of grain, flour and malt within the neighbourhood.[181] He built up a large fortune through this trade, and the family

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[180] O.A. Document detailing the offences of certain Charlbury men against the lord of the manor's interests, DIL IV/b/13iii.

[181] Accounts, DIL I/l/33a_1-a_{10}

remained amongst Charlbury's leading landowners and commercial figures for much of the eighteenth century.[182] In his 1728 will his estate was divided between two sons: Edward Jnr. received the house and holdings in Charlbury, and his brother William was bequeathed land in Long Combe and Wootton plus £300 in cash.[183] Edward Spendlove Jnr., usually described in documents as a maltster, also presents an image of considerable wealth through his will, in which he gave £50 gifts to several friends such as Thomas French of Hook Norton, from whose father he had purchased land prior to his death.[184]

Like many of the leading tradesmen in Charlbury, Spendlove was a Quaker, and his will highlights a county-wide network of business connections with fellow believers.[185] Indeed, other studies reveal that Quakers were frequently involved in the victualling trades, as millers, maltster, bakers, brewers and corn factors.[186] The dispersed settlement pattern, high level of mobility and extensive kinship linkages within this dissenting community meant that it was particularly suited to mercantile activity. Quakers also had a strong work ethic and disdain for ostentatious living, both of which proved useful attributes in business.[187] Within Charlbury they formed a cohesive group, capable of challenging manorial authority and often at odd with the Earl and his officials.[188] As a minority group, which had amassed considerable wealth from what many regarded as "stock jobbing", the Quaker community was also viewed with considerable suspicion by the mass of the population, although open hostility tended only to surface when grain prices were high.[189] It was then, when food riots occurred or threatened, that magistrates deemed it necessary to act in the interests of the consumer against the operation of a free

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[182] V.C.H. Oxon., (1972), 154.
[183] O.A. MS wills, Oxon., 151/2/14.
[184] O.A. MS wills Oxon., P III/iv/1.
[185] O.A. MS wills, PIII.iv/1. Spendlove had ties with Henley, Hook Norton, South Newington and Milton.
[186] Reay (1980a), 69-72; Vann (1969), 87.
[187] Walvin (1997), 50, 81-90.
[188] The Compton Census reveals that there were 48 nonconformists in the parish (including Chadlington) in 1669, and most of these were Quakers. V.C.H. *Oxon.*, (1972), 153-54.
[189] Reay (1980b), 400-06.

market in grain.[190] Indeed, they continued to do so as late as 1800, when there were widespread disturbances at Charlbury, Woodstock and Fawler.[191] At other times enforcement of market regulation was lax, since rigorous policing would have been very disruptive to the local agrarian economy.

The accounts reveal that such corn factors played an increasingly prominent role in provisioning Ditchley as the eighteenth century progressed. The steward purchased 8 quarters of oats from the Chadlington maltster, Richard Taylor, in 1740, and three loads of wheat straw from his Bladon counterpart John Slater in 1750.[192] Millers appear also to have been involved in the supply of corn to the Lee family. Henry Coleman of Wootton not only provided 6 quarters of oats in the summer of 1735, but also found the Ditchley estate a grateful recipient of the oat hulls that were the waste product of milling: the accounts record 39 quarters of hulls purchased in 1735 and a further 34 quarters in 1740.[193]

More indirect evidence for the prevalence of middlemen within the rural economy of north-west Oxfordshire comes from the paucity of references to cereals purchased in the pitched market. If the Earl was acquiring a significant quantity of his grain this way servants would frequently have been reimbursed for expenditure incurred at market and for the carriage of the goods back to Ditchley. Such references certainly do occur, but not as often as would be expected if the markets at Charlbury, Woodstock and Chipping Norton were the major source of supplies. For instance in April 1715 the team was paid for fetching 7 quarters 4 bushels of oats from Chipping Norton,[194] and in January 1720/1 Robert Rymill was allowed 1s 8d for "five journeys to Chipping Norton to buy oats and

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[190] Thompson (1971); Walter & Wrightson (1976)
[191] Thwaites (1985), 128.
[192] Accounts, DIL I/l/33h_8 & j_9
[193] Accounts, DIL I/l/33g_7-h_8
[194] Accounts, DIL I/l/33b_5

beans".[195] In the opening two decades of the eighteenth century the bailiffs John Booten and Robert Rymill often visited the neighbouring market towns to purchase corn, indicating that the estate still relied to some extent upon the pitched market at this time.. Subsequently, however, references to purchases in the marketplace decrease and there is a concomitant increase in the number of transactions with individual farmers.

Besides, even if all entries where grain was bought from an unknown source, or where only the reimbursement of estate officials was recorded, represented transactions in a regulated marketplace, these still make up a mere 24% of the total number, with a downward trend over time (Table 4.6). In the first two decades of the eighteenth century recording of the estate's buying and selling of corn was patchy, but the proportion of documented transactions which could possibly have taken place at the pitched market rarely fell below 40%. Between 1730 and 1750 the total number of actual account entries dealing with grain purchases was far higher, yet the corresponding figure for the percentage of transactions which might have been in the pitched market never rose above 12% (Fig. 4.13). Regression analysis of these percentage figures suggests that the transition from the marketplace to reliance upon direct dealings with farmers and corn factors took place steadily over the first half of the eighteenth century. This is confirmed by a correlation coefficient of -0.75, relatively strong despite the frequent violent short-term swings around the trend, probably brought about by fluctuating grain prices. Nevertheless it is important to bear in mind the limitations of the data sources from which these statistics were derived: estate officials may have bought from Ditchley tenants or outside farmers rather than at the marketplace, and the omission of a vendor's name is not conclusive proof that a transaction took place in the pitched market. The actual proportion of corn purchased in this manner may well have been much lower than the statistics suggest.

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[195] Accounts, DIL I/l/33c$_5$

d) *Shops and the provisioning of the estate*

i. Gentry consumerism and the development of retailing

Despite the decay of the pitched market for the sale of grain during the eighteenth century, livestock and manufactured goods continued to be widely traded there. However, the growing domination of the corn trade by wholesale dealers operating out of inns and private premises was paralleled by an expansion in the number and variety of retail shops.[196] These changing modes of market exchange are reflected in the Ditchley records, which include many bills run up with local craftsmen and shopkeepers. There are also frequent references to purchases of goods in London, where the Earl had a house in Hanover Square, and the carriage of goods from London to Ditchley.[197]

Like most aristocratic families the Lees were basically rentiers, living off the high rents and entry fines charged to capitalist tenants, and spending largely on conspicuous consumption, in particular the purchase of luxury goods and the rebuilding of their country seat at Ditchley. The Earls of Litchfield spent much of their time in London, engaged in politics and the social circuit. All the 18 children of Sir Edward Lee, the 1st Earl, were born in London, and when he died his entry in the Spelsbury burial register noted that the body had been brought "from London".[198] The presence of the family at Ditchley was the exception, and usually prompted a comment in the accounts' margin to explain the increased expenditure on provisions and the temporary suspension of board wages to servants.[199]

A good deal of estate income was spent on luxury goods and specialist services from London shopkeepers and tradesmen, which is unsurprising given the amount of time the

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196 Mui & Mui (1989); Shammas (1990).

197 Misc. Bills, 1742-45, DIL I/o/24-26.

198 Corbett (1931), 191-203. During the reign of Charles II the 1st Earl held a number of offices of state, his influence stemming from his marriage to Charles' illegitimate daughter Charlotte Fitzroy, which allowed him to move amongst the highest circles in London. He visited Ditchley only for short spells each year, and both he and his wife died in the capital in 1716 and 1718 respectively, though their bodies were brought to Ditchley for burial.

199 See section 3.3a.

Lees spent in the capital. Large numbers of surviving bills indicate that long term exchange relationships were rare, payment was usually relatively prompt, given the logistical problems of transferring money from outlying estates to the capital, and market prices appear largely to have been adhered to. To illustrate, in 1743 there were bills for "2 hogshead red port and 1 hogshead and 10 dozen bottles of claret" from London wine merchants James and Claude Bennett for £145 14s 6d. Such levels of expenditure were not exceptional and were clearly conducted through the market, because a year before the Earl had bought port, Madeira, hock, claret and Burgundy wines from William Jephson, a rival wine merchant.[200] Dealings with London shopkeepers were rarely on a long-term basis and full receipts were drawn up, suggesting that the Earl shopped around and did not feel bound to particular suppliers by social bonds. In his relationship with these London shopkeepers he acted just as Simmel suggested: the conclusion of a transaction brought the ties with a particular trader to an end so that the Earl felt no compulsion to deal with that shopkeeper again when he next needed to purchase similar goods.[201]

Closer examination of individual bills helps to underline the temporary nature of these exchange relationships. The bills and receipts often indicate the date of purchase and the dates of payment, in however many instalments these were made. For instance William Thorp, a coach-harness maker, had an account with the Earl, the first entry in which is for miscellaneous repairs on 15th November 1740. There are numerous other entries over the next three years, but the entire bill had been settled by 28th May 1743, a short time compared with some running accounts. The account with the tailor, Robert Goodchild ran for even shorter: the first purchase was made on the 16th February 1742/3 and payment was completed by 17th May in the same year.[202] In these cases the Earl found payment in cash, constrained by the disciplines of the market, the most convenient (and, perhaps, the

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200 Misc. Bills, 1742/3, DIL I/o/24.
201 Simmel (1978), 477.
202 Misc. Bills, 1742/3, DIL I/o/24.

only) option open to him. The culture of delayed payment lingered on within all sectors of society during the eighteenth century, but it was being steadily eroded by market imperatives.

ii. Retailing and the rural population

Not only the rural elite made purchases from private shopkeepers. As the eighteenth century progressed, shops became increasingly important for the general rural population, who by this time were largely monetized. The myth that eighteenth-century villagers continued to depend upon self-provisioning or open markets has now been exploded, as evidence has revealed that small shops could function effectively in the "pre-industrial economy" due to the increasing proletarianization of the agrarian labour force.[203] Rather than suddenly emerging as a result of revolutionary change in labour organisation following Parliamentary enclosure, they are now believed to have increased in number gradually in the decades after the Civil War.[204] The emergence of rural retailing was thus a long transition rather than a revolution, though it was rarely reflected in contemporary records because most petty shopkeepers had other occupations and consequently were not described as retailers in wills, title deeds and other surviving documents.[205] Moreover, the prevalence of illiteracy meant that few kept records of their business, and any bills outlining transactions, if they ever existed, are unlikely to have survived. Yet the importance of the country shop to the village community can be seen in the proliferation of such outlets throughout rural England during the eighteenth century.[206] It would be

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[203] The transition from farm servants to day labourers during the eighteenth century significantly altered the balance of payments in cash and kind. Kussmaul (1981); Snell (1985).

[204] Mui & Mui (1989), 3-28, 158-159. Local studies trace this process of proliferation. See Buck (1991); Mitchell (1981); Pennington & Sleights (1991).

[205] Shammas (1990), 230-38.

[206] It is estimated that by the middle of the eighteenth century in the south of England there was one shop for every 36 people, mostly small country shops serving local village populations. Mui & Mui (1989), 38-39.

surprising if the inflow of money into the local economy at Ditchley arising from widespread payment of wages in cash was unable to support a local retail sector.

Servants within the Lee household itself would have needed the services provided by rural shopkeepers for much of the year because they were paid board wages when the landlord was not in residence. By giving servants money *in lieu* of meals, the Earl abrogated responsibility for providing their sustenance. Moreover, the demand of the Ditchley labour force was no longer significantly hierarchically structured by the early eighteenth century.[207] Widespread produce payments to labourers appear to have ceased in 1715, with no references to the provision of grain after this date. Additionally, after 1710 the accounts list a number of labourers paid in regular instalments throughout the year, whereas previously entries refer only to people carrying out specific tasks. This perhaps suggests a movement away from hiring servants in husbandry in favour of employing day labourers, something that would have had a significant effect on the level of monetization in the local economy.[208] These trends may well have been exaggerated by a coincident expansion in the volume of low-value copper coinage during the early eighteenth century, as this form of money was used largely by the poor, although the amount of currency in circulation remained inadequate.[209] As a result most trade was done on credit – whether it was a husbandman selling corn in the marketplace, a petty shopkeeper supplying groceries to the poor, or a wholesale merchant imported textiles from the Indies.[210] Thus the monetization of small exchanges may have been more notional than real, being underpinned by an extensive network of credit between local shopkeepers and the agrarian workforce.[211]

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[207] See section 4.4b.

[208] Snell (1985), 86-7.

[209] It is estimates that in 1696 there were 6.75 million pounds worth of silver, and 9.25 million pounds worth of gold coins in circulation. This represented only about three pounds worth of coins per person. Styles (1980), 173.

[210] Earle (1989), 115-23; Brewer (1982), 203-14; Muldrew (1998), 95-119.

[211] Everitt (1967), 567-68; Holderness (1976), 97-109.

Because the purchases made by estate workers from local victuallers and petty shopkeepers do not appear in the accounts, it is necessary to use sources such as parish registers, court rolls, wills and inventories to discover the state of retailing in this part of eighteenth-century north-west Oxfordshire. Significantly the presence of occupations in Enstone parish registers between 1699 and 1704 allows one measurement of the importance of retailing. Some of the men recorded in these entries were clearly petty shopkeepers: William Reade of Neat Enstone was described as such when he was buried in May 1700.[212] Assuming that tradesmen such as bakers, butchers and millers can be included in the ranks of small-scale retailers, this group made up between 18-21% of households in the parish depending upon which register one considers most representative of the local population as a whole (Table 4.7, Fig. 4.14).[213]

Early eighteenth-century wills from Spelsbury, Enstone and surrounding parishes also indicate a good number of petty shopkeepers within the vicinity of the estate. Enstone residents Richard Hitchman and Daniel Kinch were both small-scale retailers, as was William Couling of Spelsbury, described as a higgler at his death in 1780. Kinch had clearly made a good living from his trade, holding three yardlands when he died. He had also recently built a house, slaughterhouse and stables, occupied at his death by a local butcher, John White.[214] The concentration of rural retailers in Enstone, in particular, appears similar to that found in the nearby Feldon area of south-east Warwickshire, which also had extensive surviving tracts of common land in the mid-eighteenth century. In many large parishes such as Tysoe and Brailes around 20% of the families were involved

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[212] O.A. Enstone parish register transcripts.

[213] The higher figure of 21.5% is probably accurate since the baptism register is more likely to have provided an accurate representation of the economically active parochial population. The burial register, where the corresponding figure is only 18%, would include a sizeable proportion of economically inactive elderly. Indeed, four burial entries had to be discounted because the deceased was referred to simply as a "poor man".

[214] O.A. MS wills Oxon., 138/5/9, 135/1/10, 129/2/7.

in the retailing of food, a comparable figure to the one computed for Enstone, and many of them were indeed poor cottagers reliant upon access to common resources.[215]

There were, of course, also many retail outlets in nearby Charlbury, Chipping Norton and Woodstock, some of which would have provided basic foodstuffs, as well as imported groceries, in the small portions required by the growing number of wage labourers and small-scale commodity producers in the vicinity. The widespread switch from home production and the open market for the purchase of necessities from retailers could not, however, have occurred any earlier than the Civil War, since the 1623 inventory of the Charlbury mercer, Thomas Harris contains no reference to the sale of basic commodities.[216] His stock appears primarily to have consisted of cloth, haberdashery and groceries, such as raisins and spices, goods rarely purchased by the poor.[217] In contrast eighteenth-century country shopkeepers stocked flour, bread, and sometimes even meat and dairy products as well as groceries, because their clientele was predominantly drawn from amongst the labouring population in a restricted geographical area due to the proximity of competitors and the low level of customer mobility.[218]

Often rural retailers were supplied by neighbouring town-based shopkeepers, as seems to have been the case with Richard Hitchman. His will instructs that £120 in ready money should be set aside to enable his wife, Ann to continue the shopkeeping business, or alternatively be held as a bond by William Clarke, a Charlbury mercer.[219] Clarke and Hitchman obviously had a relatively close business relationship, and it would not be

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[215] Martin (1984), 181-183.

[216] Vaisey (1966), 107-116.

[217] Other groceries such as tea, sugar and tobacco did, however, filter down to poorer consumers during the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries. Glennie (forthcoming); Shammas (1990), 77-86.

[218] In the 1600s most retail outlets were located in large towns and served a restricted clientele making relatively large purchases. William Wray operating in Ripon between 1588 and 1598 was predominantly engaged in supplying local gentry families and peddlers, who brought the goods directly to the consumer, and consequently only 9.5% of his trade involved small purchases. However, by the 1670s shops had begun to spread extensively into small towns such as Charlbury, and increasingly they were willing to sell goods in small portions and offer credit. Shammas (1990), 241-252.

[219] O.A. MS wills Oxon., 135/1/10.

surprising if the former had at least partially supplied the latter's stock. Parallels can be drawn with the accounts of the Lancaster mercer, William Stout, who in the early eighteenth century set up Elin Godsalve as a petty shopkeeper, providing her with about £10 value of groceries on a weekly basis. She paid for these with ready cash from the previous week's sales, so that Stout was in effect supporting a satellite retail outlet enabling him to gain access to a group of consumers who would not normally have visited his town-based shop.[220] The provincial retail hierarchy thus essentially depended on a complex web of commercial credit linkages, the extent of which is illustrated by the huge volume of litigation passing through the courts.[221] Large specialist retailers, like those in London frequented by the Earl, acquired goods wholesale from a wide variety of sources. They then supplied the more general mercers and grocers in small towns such as Charlbury, who in turn had close connections with petty shopkeepers in their hinterland.[222]

During the early eighteenth century Woodstock and Charlbury appear to have been home to a number of mercers, who may well have supported a network of country shops in surrounding parishes. Some of those in Woodstock amassed considerable amounts of money from what were clearly major businesses. John Davies, for instance, who died in 1710, left stock in his shop and warehouse valued at £2114 and owed £2305 to his suppliers, whilst his associate Benjamin Johnson had inventoried wealth of £1616 despite having retired from business some years before his death in 1715.[223] However, evidence for a network of satellite retailers is largely absent from the documentary record. Indeed, it is rare for wills and inventories to specifically refer to someone as a mercer or shopkeeper unless they operated on a considerable scale. More often they were described

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[220] Mui & Mui (1989), 201-203.
[221] Brooks (1986); Muldrew (1990, 1993b).
[222] Braudel (1982, vol. 2); Mui & Mui (1989); Shammas (1990); Willan (1970).
[223] O.A. MS wills Oxon., 164/2/43, 137/1/28.

as innholders, alehouse keepers or, indeed, widows, since retailing was frequently a dual occupation.[224]

By the early eighteenth century many craftsmen had become more specialised, and were often involved in the retail sale of the goods they produced, as well as doing jobs for specific customers.[225] Others had diversified into more general retailing.[226] For example, John Malins, a plumber and glazier of Charlbury, had lead, glass and lumber in his "workhouse and shop" worth £15 when he died in 1738,[227] whilst the Bicester clockmaker, Edward Hemings' lengthy inventory contained two pages listing the tools and assorted clock and watch parts "in the shop".[228] It is not clear, however, whether "shop" in these cases refers to a workshop or a retail outlet, since most of the articles listed appear to be tools and raw materials rather than saleable items. In some instances though the evidence of retail activity is more certain, an example being the 1724 inventory of William Gardner, a Finstock clothier. His appraisers listed both a "working shop", containing "2 looms and other working tools, 1 oil vat and lumber", and a "little shop", in which were found "1 spice mortar, 1 steel mill, a clock, 3 pairs of scales and weights and other lumber".[229] These articles suggest that Gardner was selling groceries as well as the cloth produced in his workshop, operating as a country shopkeeper as a sideline to his textile business.[230]

Significantly, country shops offered generous credit facilities to their customers, often maintaining running accounts that were settled largely at the customers' convenience. Such long-term credit relationships were, indeed, the basis for most small transactions in

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224 Mui & Mui (1989), 201-20; Overton *et al* (forthcoming); Spufford (1984).

225 Berg (1994), 259-69.

226 Overton *et al* (forthcoming).

227 O.A. MS wills Oxon., 303/4/4.

228 O.A. MS wills Oxon., 302/5/31.

229 O.A. MS wills Oxon., 130/1/17.

230 Significant rural industries had become established in Finstock and neighbouring townships by the early eighteenth century, and thus there would have been a sizeable independent wage-earning population in the area that relied upon country shops.

early-modern England, since cash was in short supply, and was often only available at certain times of the year, such as after the harvest.[231] Debts were either remembered, or recorded in account books, and then mutually cancelled by comparing accounts at convenient intervals. Adam Eyre, a seventeenth-century yeoman, records in his diary that he met someone 'to cast up our reckonings', and as a result some of his debts were subtracted from what the man owed in rent.[232] A similar pattern of credit-based trade relationships can be found in North America. In early nineteenth-century Massachusetts, shopkeepers frequently accepted payment in kind and offered flexible credit to customers. As late as the 1830s only around 25% of business was conducted in cash, and book accounts ran for years without full settlement.[233]

Certainly petty shopkeepers in north-west Oxfordshire were far from rigid in their adherence to free market principles.[234] Most had considerable debt entanglements, being both owed money by customers, and indebted to wholesale suppliers. Thomas Saman, a Hanborough baker, had book debts of £32 at his death in 1698, bigger in value than all his household possessions.[235] Thus the trade relationship between a petty chandler and his customers need not have been monetary in character. Although some cash transactions would have been necessary to enable the shopkeeper to purchase stock, prompt payment was rarely expected, and social ties between shopkeeper and customer were often relatively close. "A strong moral language of credit and the justice of contracts remained integral to the way marketing was conceived".[236] Nevertheless the transition from self-provisioning and informal neighbourhood exchange to reliance on specific members of the community providing petty retailing services could only have taken place within a

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231 Holderness (1975), 106-8; Tawney (1926), 43-4.

232 Muldrew (1993a), 173.

233 Clark (1982), 169-172.

234 Models of free market exchange assume payment in cash as a means of bringing immediate closure to the social relationship between transactors. Hart (1986), 643; Hodges (1988), 97-104.

235 O.A. MS wills Oxon., 150/1/34.

236 Muldrew (1993a), 177.

society which was becoming increasingly monetized and integrated into the wider capitalist economy.

iii. The retail trade and the rebuilding of Ditchley House

Both specialised shopkeepers and petty traders were able to flourish during the eighteenth century because a greater proportion of the population had consumer sovereignty, and there was an increasing volume of cash circulating within the local rural economy. Changes to land tenure, marketing practices for agricultural produce, and the proletarianization of large sectors of the agrarian labour force all played a part in this process, but the actions of the major landowner, who had command over most local resources, were bound also to have a significant influence. Occasional lavish outlays of capital on specific projects could temporarily boost the amount of money circulating within the estate hinterland, encouraging further commercialisation of exchange relations amongst the entire local population not just those involved directly in the scheme.

The rebuilding of Ditchley as a Palladian mansion between 1720-45 involved the Earl in massive expenditure, part of which is recorded in a detailed set of accounts covering the period of construction. Francis Smith of Warwick, the builder, produced an estimate of £1975 for "building the carcase of the house", and the craftsmen employed, including renowned interior designers, had bills running to over £4000.[237] They were paid annually, in a number of instalments depending upon the availability of cash reserves. More important, however, were the labourers employed to assist these master craftsmen, since their presence in the area certainly increased the volume of cash within the local retail economy. Smith is recorded as having received £100 from the Earl on 27th October 1732 and again on 29th March 1733, both in the form of bills drawn on his London goldsmith, Mr. Childe. With this he paid Thomas Fletcher and the rest of the carpenters, amongst

[237] Misc. Bills, 1724-33, DIL I/o/22. By January of 1724 Francis Smith had made total disbursements on the project of £6554, and this was a relatively early stage in the construction work.

others, for their work on the building that year. Fletcher notes at the bottom of his bill that he had received what he was owed from "the Right Honourable Earle of Litchfield of the hand of Francis Smith", confirming that the money had flowed along this route.[238] No doubt much of this money would have ended up in the pockets of subordinates working for Fletcher, who would almost certainly have frequented local country shops.

Many of the sums involved in these transactions were large, suggesting that each master craftsman had to use some of the money to pay people working for him. The 1723 account lists £104 14s 6d paid to "Joshua Needham and his men in part", and £26 to Richard Walton and "others" for carving and setting up 6 stone vases on the top of the house frontage.[239] Consequently there were an unusually large number of people living in the neighbourhood at the time in receipt of monetary income, who need not all have been outsiders moving to the area specifically for the building of the mansion. Many of the craftsmen lived locally and had previously been employed in day-to-day maintenance work on the estate. The mason, William Varney, for example, came from Cleveley, and in addition to his involvement in mansion building during the 1720s and 30s, also appeared regularly in the accounts from 1702 performing such tasks as repairing the Enstone Wells and the park wall.[240] In general, local men carried out most of the basic carpentry, slating and masonry work. It was only jobs needing specialist skills that required the talents of outsiders. Thomas Edmunds was employed specifically to lay the "smoaking room floor", and some of the more impressive interiors were designed by William Kent and Henry Flitcroft, both of whom were London based. Yet even these outsiders would often have made use of local labour. Perhaps it is not surprising that some of the first direct evidence for the presence of country shopkeepers comes from the period of construction at Ditchley House.

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238 Misc. Bills, 1724-33, DIL I/o/22.
239 Ibid.
240 Accounts, DIL I/l/33a-j.

Although there were close connections between the estate's administrators and many of those employed building the house, contracts were almost certainly based on market prices. It was Francis Smith of Warwick, the master builder, who actually employed the various craftsmen and labourers, and he was much more likely to have had social ties with specialists such as Kent, with whom he regularly dealt, than with local carpenters and masons.[241] Smith must have relied on the estate steward or his deputies to suggest the names of reliable local craftsmen for the more mundane construction jobs. Consequently, the relationship between the builder and his employees was purely commercial, which is evident from the bills that have survived. The carpenters Thomas Fletcher, Richard Hitchman, Thomas Edwards, and John and Phillip Margetts consistently received 16d for a "long day" and 14d for a "short day" over the winter of 1732/3. Their wages were paid by Smith at regular intervals to ensure that the bills were settled in full by the end of the year. In this respect he was not always successful because comments such as "paid... last year's bill in part" frequently appear in the documents, but few outstanding debts remained beyond two years, a short period compared with the flexible credit arrangements associated with neighbourhood exchange. All the men were, of course, paid in cash, as has already been noted: the heading above one list of Smith's disbursements reads "an account of money paid for work done and matterialls at the Right Honourable the Earle of Litchfields since my last bill".[242]

The rebuilding of Ditchley House thus provided a temporary injection of cash into the local agrarian economy, which was already undergoing significant evolution due to tenurial change and the transformation of labour relations. Although of limited long-term significance this inflow of money served to emphasise the changing character of

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241 Smith's regular associates included Edward Poynton of Nottingham, carver; Thomas Eboral of Warwick, joiner; John Reading of Derby, painter; and Joshua Needham of Derby, plasterer, all of whom worked at Ditchley. Colvin (1978), 748.

242 Misc. Bills, 1724-33, DIL I/o/22.

exchange, and to highlight features of the emerging market economy such as the private sale and purchase of agricultural produce and the appearance of country shops.

e) *The impact of consumption on market exchange*

It is possible to make certain assumption about the nature of exchange based on analysis of household consumption. Consumer goods could be acquired through home production, inheritance or barter, but most would have been purchased at some point in the marketplace. The industrious revolution model suggests that such market-supplied goods came increasingly to be seen as superior to their home-produced counterparts during the early-modern period, and that this had a significant impact upon the propensity to consume.[243] If this were the case one would expect to find a growing abundance of such manufactured goods amongst the items listed in the probate inventories of Oxfordshire households.

Most studies of consumption culture have focused on the proliferation of consumer durables, since these can be most readily identified from the inventory listings.[244] Changes to consumer behaviour can be inferred by examining the presence or absence, variety and quantity of these goods, and looking at how patterns varied over time. Certain new types of furniture, furnishings and utensils were selected for analysis on the basis of their novelty and complex manufacture, which made home production unlikely.[245] Figures calculated from the sample of 600 Oxfordshire inventories show that clocks, looking glasses and chests-of-drawers all first appear during the quarter century between 1680 and 1705, somewhat later than in a number of other similar studies (Table 4.8).[246]

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[243] de Vries (1993), 107-21.

[244] Carr & Walsh (1980), 81-104; Shammas (1990), 86-100; Weatherill (1988).

[245] The selection of 'key' consumption goods is examined by Weatherill (1988), 203-7.

[246] Looking glasses were found in more than 10% of Kentish inventories before 1650, and clocks were equally common by 1660-69. Both objects were owned by over 50% of sampled households by the 1730s. The Oxfordshire figures relate more closely to those for peripheral areas such as Cornwall, which show a much later and slower adoption of novel goods. Overton *et al* (forthcoming). See also Shammas (1980), 1-24; Spufford (1984); Weatherill (1988), 25-42.

This suggests that the propensity to purchase new goods was rather muted in the stonebrash district during the late seventeenth century, when compared with regions closer to London. The proportion of households with a clock had, however, more than trebled by 1730, whilst the number with a chest-of-drawers quadrupled, indicating that, once introduced, ownership of such items spread rapidly amongst the middling sort in the Ditchley area. Other new goods such as hot drinks utensils and china seem not to have been widely used in this part of Oxfordshire until after 1750. Both categories of good appear in the inventory sample only once, in the very detailed 1781 inventory of Joseph Walker of Dean (Fig. 4.15). This minor gentleman had a wide selection of china ware and glass, together with several tea and coffee pots, reflecting the rather comfortable lifestyle of the late eighteenth-century provincial squire.

Walker's inventory highlights the fact that the material from which an item was made could be as indicative of market purchase as its form. Clearly goods made from imported materials such as china, mahogany or cane could not have been home produced. These luxury items were, however, only found in a small number of inventories. On the other hand, everyday objects such as pewter tableware and brass or iron cooking utensils were almost certainly produced by specialist craftsmen, and they were found in around 80% of inventories, emphasising that nearly all households from the sixteenth century onwards must have been engaged in some market exchange.

What is central to the discussion here is whether there was an expansion in the volume of household goods acquired through market exchange. One way of addressing this question is to look at the quantity of certain items commonly recorded throughout the period. Looking first at furniture, it can be seen that the median number of chairs per household increased from one during the early seventeenth century to three by the closing decades and five after 1700 (Table 4.9). This trend is similar to that found in Cornwall, but differs markedly from that in Kent, where the number of chairs increased from three

in 1600 to fifteen by 1750.[247] A similar analysis can be done for tableware, since pewter was often recorded separately in inventories, although in this case explanation of the trends is complicated by significant changes in the nature of dining. Overall, the quantity of tableware declined during much of the seventeenth century, from ten to seven pieces per household, only for this trend to be reversed after 1700.[248] These figures, however, conceal an increase in the number of plates and dishes, and a parallel decline in the number of platters, porringers and saucers (Table 4.10).[249] The transition from platters to plates is particularly marked, and reflects the growing preference for individual place settings and refinement of dining etiquette during the Georgian period.

What these examples show is that the volume of consumption goods held my middling households did increase over the course of the study period, but this was only one element of the changes taking place in material culture. New goods, such as clocks and looking glasses, were found amongst inventoried goods with increasing frequency during the early eighteenth century, but other items became less prevalent over time. This suggests that, to some extent, the inventories are describing a process of replacement rather than the accumulation of goods. Many of the new items were composite goods, involving complex manufacturing techniques, and thus could not be supplied by local craftsmen. For instance, looking glasses were imported in large quantities from France throughout the seventeenth century, and subsequently production was confined to a few factories in London.[250] Disappearing goods, on the other hand, tended to be made from basic materials and would usually have been produced locally, if not necessarily in the home. For example, benches and forms were displaced by chairs, whilst tables with joined frames came to replace those resting on trestles (Table 4.8). Whereas forms and

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[247] Overton *et al* (forthcoming).

[248] A similar picture of decline, followed by expansion during the early eighteenth century has been found in other parts of the country. See Overton (forthcoming).

[249] Platters were large communal plates placed in the middle of the table; porringers were soup or porridge bowls with small ear-like handles; saucers were small plates used for sauces. Havinden (1965), 317-38.

[250] Jones (1973), 204; Wills (1965).

trestle tables may have been home-produced, the better quality joined furniture would have been made by a specialist craftsman, and hence purchased in the marketplace.

Despite this emphasis on replacement, mid-eighteenth century households did possess a much wider variety of consumption goods than their counterparts a hundred years earlier. In 1618 Percival Pearson of Kiddington had in his hall a trestle table, a form, a chair, some dishes, spoons and trenchers, illustrating the basic layout of most house interiors in the early seventeenth century. Yet John Malins, a Charlbury glazier, who died just over a century later, had two tables, seven chairs, ten pictures and a clock amongst the goods in his parlour. However, this did not necessarily represent a significant increase in the inventoried value of household goods, since the new items were often cheaper than those they replaced. For instance, earthenware and china dishes cost considerably less than pewter, and light-weight cane chairs usually had a lower inventoried value than the heavy, intricately carved chairs of the early seventeenth century. Nevertheless, it is likely that consumer expenditure increased overall, as most of these new goods were less durable, and hence had to be replaced at more regular intervals.

The increasing variety of goods and the prevalence of new, less durable items can thus both be taken as indicative of an increased propensity to consume. In effect this represented a displacement of home-produced 'Z goods' by purchased manufactures. It has been argued that a preference for such market-supplied goods encouraged households to devote a greater proportion of labour resources to production for exchange, and to substitute work for leisure time.[251] It could be argued that the growth of private grain dealing, spread of leasehold tenure and consolidation of landholding were manifestations of this shift in favour of production for the market.

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[251] de Vries (1993), 108-11.

4.7 The complementarity of moral and market economy

The overall pattern of transactions at Ditchley during the early eighteenth century does not present a clear-cut picture of either a fully functioning moral economy or an integrated market-based system. In fact, many of the exchange relationships described could not be so neatly categorised. The boundary between customary and market transaction appears often to have been rather blurred, with distinctions having to be made on the basis of such intangible criteria as the levels of trust between trade partners, or the length of a particular exchange relationship. Nevertheless certain broad trends can be identified.

When studying the evolution of exchange economies, most historians have hitherto chosen to examine the impact of regulation on market development, focusing on attempts by paternalist Tudor government to control prices and limit marketing freedom.[252] The finding from the Ditchley accounts seem to support their general conclusions that regulation was neither very popular, nor particularly effective, and probably in decline as early as the 1600s. However, during periods of dearth, intervention in the marketing of corn continued here, as elsewhere, since it was essential for the maintenance of order in the country.[253] Account evidence suggests that such circumstances arose only once over the course of the study period, between 1709 and 1711, when payment in kind was temporarily resumed throughout the estate. The paternalist model of customary regulation thus had "an ideal existence, and also a fragmentary real existence. In years of good harvest and moderate prices, the authorities lapsed into forgetfulness. But if prices rose and the poor became turbulent, it was revived, at least for symbolic effect".[254]

Overt regulation of exchange in north-west Oxfordshire was thus rather limited during the average year. Other formal restrictions on participation in the marketplace were also

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[252] Minchinton ed. (1972); Polanyi (1945); Tawney (1925); Thompson (1971).
[253] Thompson (1971), 76-94; Walter & Wrightson (1976), 22-42; Walter (1989), 75-128.
[254] Thompson (1971), 88.

on the wane, with only token produce payments being written into estate leasehold agreements, and clear evidence that servants and labourers were being paid either board wages or day rates. This virtual elimination of hierarchically structured demand at Ditchley in the early eighteenth century represented a significant increase in consumer sovereignty for the estate labour force. Such a degradation of institutional support for the customary economy does not, however, seem to have reflected a general atmosphere antagonistic to moral precepts. On the contrary, it appears that a moral economy continued to flourish, but one that was based on individual choice rather than institutional or seigneurial coercion.

Significant areas of the local economy lay beyond the influence of the market, either because production was for use rather than exchange or because the value of goods was set by custom and not in the marketplace.[255] Non-monetary neighbourhood exchange continued to fulfil an important role in the Ditchley area, no doubt helped by the relative stability of the landholding population. Moreover, the volume of agricultural produce channelled internally through the redistributive structure of the estate remained significant, despite major changes to the agrarian regime and pattern of landholding. Non-monetary exchange was clearly often the preferred means of satisfying local needs. This is not to say, however, that there was not plentiful evidence of market development during the study period. Numerous account entries allude to the expansion of private transactions with middlemen; to the monetization of exchange; and to the increasing sophistication of trading hierarchies, particularly in the livestock sector. Additionally other sources point to the proliferation of retail shops, and to the growing consumer orientation of middling agrarian households. Add to this the evidence of population growth, a transition to leasehold tenure, the engrossment of estate land, and the increasing use of wage labour, and a picture of extensive market encroachment begins to emerge.

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[255] Dodgshon (1987), 223.

However, the market exchange in which the estate engaged was not necessarily free from moral imperative, since trade relationships were frequently long-term and intertwined in a complex network of credit. As a result, trust continued to be central to the transaction process, with contemporaries describing the marketplace in terms of mutual interdependence, obligation and contract rather than private profit and self-interest.[256] During the early eighteenth century the Ditchley workforce effectively broke free from the vertical obligations of a reciprocal non-monetary exchange relationship with the landowner, only to establish a similar set of horizontal obligations with local country shopkeepers. Individuals were now free to make their own consumption decisions, but their transactions were still enmeshed in a web of social relations due to a dependence upon credit.

The evidence suggests that eighteenth-century households were engaged in both the market and the moral economy. There was, in fact, no clear distinction between the two, since the marketplace encapsulated many of the same moral imperatives as the customary sector. Householders recognised the potential benefits of market exchange, but were also aware of the possible pitfalls. Forced increasingly to sell produce in the market and purchase groceries and manufactured goods with cash from local stores, they were exposed to dangers which had been absent from a system of neighbourhood exchange. Goods sold in the market had to be standardised and of guaranteed quality to satisfy dealers, who could pick and choose what they purchased. Prices could also fluctuate significantly due to changes in the balance of supply and demand, so that an adequate return was not guaranteed. However, transactions continued to be underpinned by a raft of social relations, ensuring that exchange was not governed only by self-interest. Moreover, the network of contacts through which non-monetary exchange was channelled remained in place, and could be utilised when the needs arose.

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[256] Muldrew (1993a), 176-79.

The choice between market and moral economy was thus not as stark as it first appears. Tenants sold the majority of their crops and livestock through commercial channels, whilst continuing to participate in networks of internal exchange within the bounds of the estate, since this gave them the opportunity to profit whilst ensuring basic security. Most of the population were prepared to go along with commercialisation of the agrarian economy, since they recognised elements of continuity with the exchange systems which it had displaced. Moreover, they were secure in the knowledge that there remained a general consensus about the need to deploy customary restrictions upon the market during periods of scarcity. Dense networks of social relations were maintained throughout this period of commercialisation, because they were essential to both market and non-market transactions. In order to understand why such customary linkages should have survived to so great an extent into the eighteenth century at Ditchley it is necessary to examine more closely the kinship and friendship ties which provided the network of conduits through which neighbourhood exchange flowed.

(5) THE MARKET AND MORAL ECONOMY: A LOCAL LEVEL STUDY

5.1 Analysis of exchange networks

Previous sections have identified various different forms of exchange, the relationships between them, and the extent to which these relationships altered over time. In doing so, they have shown the essential co-existence of moral and market economy. However, little insight has emerged into how this conjunction of customary and commercial transactions was organised on the ground, something that is required if there is to be a better understanding of the processes taking place. In order to tackle this omission it is necessary to look at the spatial manifestations of exchange, and establish the characteristics of the networks through which much of it was channelled.

5.2 The utility of the neighbourhood concept

The neighbourhood was the arena where the moral economy operated; the area of shared local experience and common interest. It must, therefore, form the basic framework for analysis of exchange networks.[1] However, neighbourhood is itself a problematic concept which defies precise definition and has been used to refer to different levels in the local socio-spatial hierarchy by different researchers. For Levine and Wrightson 'neighbourhood' is "moulded by the institutional structures of parish and manor", and defined by these overlapping territorial jurisdictions,[2] yet for Phythian-Adams and Mitson it refers to a group of three or four adjacent parishes, bound together by inter-parochial landholding, patterns of mobility, intermarriage and the resultant kinship and friendship networks.[3] For them the neighbourhood area is essentially a social

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[1] Phythian-Adams ed. (1993), 20-22.

[2] Levine & Wrightson (1991), 279. Most studies of local 'community' have focused on a single parish: Hey (1974); Howell (1983); Wrightson & Levine (1979).

[3] Phythian-Adams (1991), 22-23; Mitson (1993), 24-26.

entity, delimited by the interaction pattern concentrated within it. This wider definition is supported by Spufford, who argues that local historical research should examine not "a number of contrasting village communities, but a number of contrasting neighbourhoods or social areas."[4] Such blocs tended to have had a radius of less than eight miles from a central point, so that any location inside the area was less than a day's walk from anywhere else within it.[5]

This concept of a wider neighbourhood is a relatively recent one. Phythian-Adams and the Leicester School of Local History have been central in this re-appraisal, which seeks to break out from narrow parochialism to provide knowledge relevant to regional and national histories. He has suggested a hierarchy of socio-spatial levels, with the neighbourhood area as the basic unit, capable of being used to compare local communities "according to their contrasted individual relationships to a conceptualised national framework."[6] The complete hierarchy, put forward as a potential blueprint for historical study, stretches from the community core at the lowest level, made up of dynastic families that continued to have members resident in a particular township for a considerable period. At the next level up is the community itself, consisting of this semi-permanent nucleus and a larger number of transient households; then the neighbourhood unit, and above this a looser social area and regional framework. At all levels the hierarchy is socially defined, with the intensity of interaction decreasing as one moves up the scale.[7]

In the course of this research I have used this conception of neighbourhood as a social structure, restricted to a small number of adjacent parishes within which interaction was at its most intense, nested within a wider social region where links were looser. Most people with whom an individual would have regular contact lived within the same

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[4] Spufford (1974), 57.
[5] Lord (1989), 171-175.
[6] Phythian-Adams (1991), 15.
[7] Phythian-Adams (1991), 43-49.

neighbourhood area, and since familiarity and trust between transaction partners was one of the essential features of moral economy, it is not surprising that both market transactions and non-monetary neighbourhood exchange tended to be concentrated within this sphere.[8] A closer examination of the spatial pattern of transactions should thus help to answer questions about the relationships between the market and moral economies during the early 1700s, and the way in which they were integrated through the actions of individual farmers and tradesmen.

5.3 Delimitation of the neighbourhood unit

The neighbourhood unit encompasses the area within which kinship and friendship linkages were strongest and most extensive. In the construction of such a local social area, I have followed the methodology employed in Mitson's study of south-west Nottinghamshire, reconstructing the kinship networks of various dynastic families.[9] These groups "long comprised the typical and usually small semi-permanent cores of so many rural communities", and by their circulation through the wider locality defined the basic spatial unit of shared experience; the 'social area'.[10] Characteristically such families were dispersed over a group of contiguous parishes, where they dominated landholding and local administration, holding posts such as churchwarden and overseer of the poor. They consisted mostly of yeomen and craftsmen, and had often lived in the area for several centuries, forming tight networks of kinship interconnection as a consequence of their rootedness and frequent intermarriage.[11] "These core groups kept alive and passed on local culture. They set patterns to which newcomers into the area conformed."[12]

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[8] Muldrew (1993a), 173-74.
[9] Mitson (1993), 35-72.
[10] Phythian-Adams (1991), 33.
[11] Everitt (1982); Phythian-Adams (1991); Prior (1982).
[12] Mitson (1993), 50.

Family reconstitution allows definition of putative neighbourhood boundaries based on concentration of surnames for known dynastic families. Networks of family linkages can then be mapped onto these areas to produce what is, in effect, a geography of local kinship relations.

5.4 Parameters of the study

Thirty eight families were selected for this study. All featured prominently in the Ditchley estate accounts and were well represented in the Spelsbury and Enstone parish registers.[13] Most of them can be recognised as dynastic, since they were recorded in the parishes over a long period. For instance, John Sowche was born in Spelsbury on 28 Apr. 1541 and the Souch family was still present in the parish in 1750.[14] The selected families were predominantly of yeoman stock, or had a long-standing tradition of occupation in a particular trade.

The area within which these families were reconstituted has been limited to a block of parishes in north-western Oxfordshire, lying within the river catchments of the Evenlode, Glyme and their tributaries, partially for reasons of practicality, but also because watersheds are recognised as having had a significant impact on patterns of interaction.[15] The failure of many dynastic families to cross watersheds and other geographical obstacles such as navigable rivers, was possibly a consequence of the chronological sequence of initial land clearance and settlement in the distant past, as people moved outwards from the river valleys to colonise the hillsides. "Drainage basins pre-dispose

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[13] The representativeness of the study families is discussed in section 5.6c.

[14] O.A. Spelsbury parish register transcripts.

[15] Phythian-Adams argued that drainage basins had a defining role in the establishment of a hierarchy of social areas. The watersheds of the major river systems separated various cultural provinces, whilst their tributaries provided the focus for the constituent shire societies, and within them neighbourhood areas. Constant had previously found that such minor barriers acted as a significant check to movement in a study of rural Northamptonshire and Huntingdonshire, and this observation has been upheld by Mitson's more recent work on marriage horizons in south-west Nottinghamshire. Phythian-Adams (1993), 38-42; Constant (1948), 83-87; Mitson (1993), 24-76.

their inhabitants to look inwards, to look along a broad natural axis, and to face influences which tend to emanate from the same general (often foreign) direction".[16] The concept of *pays* may come into play too, where the land on either side of the watershed has a different settlement history and cultural landscape: the Oxfordshire clay vale is culturally as well as agriculturally distinct from the Cotswold escarpment and North Oxfordshire Heights.[17] A correlation between the spatial configurations of drainage basins and areas of kinship interaction would perhaps provide a useful initial suggestion as to the delimitation of the neighbourhood area.

To test the validity of this limitation of the study area, a number of control parishes from elsewhere in Oxfordshire were selected, and their reconstituted families compared with the thirty eight used in the main analysis. The three chosen parishes, Goring, Watlington and Piddington are all relatively large, had sizeable populations during the eighteenth century, and are located in parts of Oxfordshire remote from the study area (Fig. 2.1). Goring and Watlington are both in the south of the county, and the latter was also formerly a small market town, raising the possibility that people might have forged links with places beyond the immediate bounds of their neighbourhood. Piddington is situated close to the Buckinghamshire border in the east. Families found in sizeable clusters in these three parishes differed from those in the north-west of the county, whilst the thirty eight families studied in detail were mostly absent. Goring had two Busby households and a single baptism for a Paine amongst the thousands of entries in the register; Piddington had solitary Baylis and Castle households, together with two Busbys; and even Watlington had only thirteen relevant examples, despite having a significantly larger population. The obvious conclusion to be drawn from these findings is that the distribution pattern of the selected families did have a restricted range, and hence limitation of the search for kinship clusters to north-west Oxfordshire is legitimate.

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[16] Phythian-Adams ed. (1993), 13.
[17] Emery (1974), 27-32.

5.5 Methodology of initial reconstitution

Within the delimited area there were forty parishes,[18] and the selected families have been reconstituted over thirty six of them. The remainder - Glympton, Little Rollright, Wilcote and Fifield - lacked parish register data (Fig. 5.1).[19] The reconstitution process was simplified, focusing primarily on baptism records, in order to maximise the area of coverage in the time available. Taking each parish in turn, every baptism entry for the selected families was allocated to a particular married couple on the basis of information provided in the registers. Often this was a relatively simple procedure, since the parents of the child and their place of residence in the parish were recorded. However, on many occasions, especially prior to 1550, only the name of the child appeared, or there were two fathers with the same Christian name living at the same time. In these cases judgement was based on dating evidence, and where the parentage of a particular child remained ambiguous, the baptism was omitted from the study. This technique provides an approximate figure for the number of households in each surname category resident in a parish from the beginning of the register until 1760.[20] The figures can only be approximate because concentrating primarily upon baptisms excluded families who were childless or had their children baptised elsewhere. Moreover, the length of time a particular household resided in any one parish could vary considerably, something that was reflected in the number of children they had baptised there. Clearly families who had one child before moving elsewhere cannot be regarded as permanent residents, yet they appear in the statistics no differently from a lifelong parishioner who had baptised a string of children. However, it is the proportions of families in the various parishes and, in

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18 The Evenlode catchment extends into Gloucestershire, and Warwickshire but parishes there are peripheral to the main focus of study, the Ditchley estate, and time pressure prevented their inclusion.

19 There are also three extra-parochial areas within the study region - Blenheim Park, Bruern and Cornbury Park. These were private estates without a significant resident population or any baptism records of their own and therefore have been excluded from the study.

20 1760 rather than 1750 is used as the cut-off point to ensure that those families which were only just being established around 1750 are counted.

particular, the presence of clusters which are of most interest. Although a series of transient households with a common surname passing through a parish may be misrepresented as a significant concentration of families, in most cases patterns reflecting real variations in the distribution should still be visible.

Once the figures had been extracted from the parish registers they could have been mapped in their raw form. The resultant distribution patterns may, however, simply have reflected population density, rather than representing actual concentrations of the families involved.[21] For this reason the data were weighted before analysis, according to parish population size, and the extent of register survival. Even so the results must be used with caution, since the weighting procedure may well itself have introduced inaccuracies, particularly in parishes where the total number of reconstituted families was small.[22] For instance, the single entry of three Busbys in Heythrop was magnified to thirty nine, when allowing for the small population size and limited coverage of the registers for this parish. Whereas a family recorded once in a poor register will be exaggerated by the weighting procedure, any families noted as absent from the parish will still be recorded as such at the end of the data modification. Despite these disadvantages, the weighting procedure was essential for the accurate identification of clusters, revealing patterns which would have remained hidden had raw reconstitution figures been used.

The principal reason for modifying the data was to take account of the fact that the parishes of the study area had vastly different populations. Towns such as Chipping Norton, Charlbury and Woodstock were obviously more heavily populated than small rural parishes like Over and Nether Worton. In order to ensure that the large numbers of reconstituted families found in certain parishes could not simply be put down to a larger parent population, it was necessary to weight figures according to the number of people

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[21] Population densities varied considerably within the stonebrash district. Most people were concentrated into the more fertile river valleys, whilst there had been significant village desertion on the upland pastures. Emery (1974), 94-106; Havinden (1961a), 42-5.

[22] This procedure is outlined below.

in each parish. Since the baptism registers were used for the reconstitutions, they were also utilised for modifying the figures. An index of population was constructed for each parish, based on the number of baptisms recorded in the five years around 1680, 1715 and 1750. The yearly mean number of baptisms was calculated from these totals, and divided by ten to provide more manageable figures. Dividing by these numbers produced weighted totals for each reconstituted family in each parish, adjusted to account for parochial population size.[23]

There are also well-known problems associated with parish registers, including patchy coverage, and, in particular, the absence of some register books in many cases. Missing registers almost invariably covered the early years, usually prior to 1650, although a few places have lost later ones.[24] Fragmentary lists inevitably include fewer entries for the selected families, and thus weighting was again used in an effort to minimise any distortions. The problem was tackled via an analysis of six parishes whose baptism records are relatively comprehensive. Shipton-under-Wychwood, Hanborough, North Leigh, Chipping Norton, Chadlington and Charlbury each contain a significant number of reconstituted families too, and thus were ideal candidates for an examination of the percentage of such families lying within a series of allotted periods, each except the last, of fifty years in duration.

Table 5.1 shows that the number of recorded people within the reconstituted families increased over time, in parallel with population levels. This trend was interrupted only from 1650-99, almost certainly due to the Commonwealth period, when the power of the Anglican Church was diminished. Some parishes, such as Hanborough, also had breaks in

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[23] These indices can not be considered wholly accurate, since the data on which they are based has a number of faults. For this reason they have only been calculated to two decimal places, and the weighted figures rounded to whole numbers.

[24] The quality of parish registers is discussed by Krause (1965); Levine (1976); Wrigley & Schofield (1981).

the baptisms sequence between 1600 and 1649, a consequence of disruption caused by the Civil War, or loss through fire, damp storage conditions or other misfortunes.

Years	Shipton-under-Wychwood	Hanborough	North Leigh	Chipping Norton	Chadlington	Charlbury	Mean
1550-99	22.2	25.0	9.8	7.6	11.3	10.4	14.4
1600-49	26.4	8.3	31.1	25.9	28.8	22.6	23.9
1650-99	21.8	11.1	14.8	19.6	27.5	19.4	19.0
1700-49	22.7	33.3	26.2	36.7	26.3	36.5	30.3
1750-60	6.9	22.2	18.0	10.1	6.3	10.4	12.3

* Figures are percentages.

Table 5.1 *Temporal distribution of baptisms within thirty nine selected families in six parishes.*

The mean percentages of reconstituted families in each fifty year period was used to weight the figures for each study parish, so that those parishes which had limited temporal coverage were not unduly under-represented. Totals for parishes where the register began before 1575 remained unchanged; those commencing between 1576 and 1625 were multiplied by 1.144; those starting between 1626 and 1675 by 1.383 and so on. Hence, the eight Busbys recorded in Sandford St. Martin between 1695 and 1760 were increased to a weighted figure of thirteen when allowance was made for the small population of the parish and the poor survival of its early registers.

The weighted figures were mapped to show any clustering of family names in groups of adjacent parishes (Figs. 5.2-5.39). This suggested potential zones of neighbourhood interaction reflecting kinship connections.

5.6 Analysis of clustering

A relatively simple Chi-squared procedure was used to examine variations in the density of reconstituted families. This was performed on the weighted reconstitution data to establish the number of reconstituted families one would expect in each parish if they were equally distributed over the study area, varying only according to population density and the extent of parish register coverage. A comparison of the actual and predicted

figures indicated where clustering of particular families occurred, and suggested which were likely to form the basis of social networks centred on Spelsbury, Enstone and the Ditchley estate. The results were mapped using a fourfold categorisation to measure the degree of clustering, as follows:-

1 - Number of reconstituted families within the parish more than twice the predicted value.

2 - Number of reconstituted families more than the predicted value, but less than double.

3 - Number of reconstituted families within the parish less than predicted under an even distribution.

4 - Absence of particular family from parish.

These maps show a wide range of patterns of family clustering. Some families are focused in a single cluster, with a clear pattern of distance decay from one or two core parishes with the highest concentrations: the Issards appear to be an example of this (Fig. 5.27). Others display multiple clustering, which in extreme cases may indicate several unconnected dynasties of the same name, making the tracing of kinship networks virtually impossible. This is especially likely when the surname is a common one, lacking locational specificity, such as Cross and Harris amongst the thirty eight families examined in this study (Figs. 5.16, 5.23). Since the initial purpose of reconstitution was to define the neighbourhood area/s encompassing the Ditchley estate, family clusters centred on the neighbouring parishes form the main focus of analysis. Concentrations of a particular dynastic surname suggest cross-boundary movement and kinship interconnection, and thus parishes regularly occurring in the same cluster as either Enstone or Spelsbury were potentially members of the same neighbourhood area.

Enstone and Spelsbury rarely occurred together within the same family cluster, despite the fact that the Ditchley estate straddled the parish boundary and one might expect its unifying influence to have moulded patterns of interaction. On the contrary, there was a tendency for Enstone to form concentrations with parishes to the north and east, whilst Spelsbury was most often linked to the south and west. Such findings accord with topography: Enstone lies in the catchment of the Glyme, but Spelsbury is predominantly

in the Evenlode valley, and the boundary between the parishes largely follows the watershed. This perhaps indicates that the Ditchley estate cut across the boundary between two existing neighbourhood areas, something that may have had a profound effect upon the orientation of exchange relationships.

a) *Description of family clusters*

Location quotients have been used to quantify these patterns, enabling similarities to be assessed (Tables 5.2-5.3). This statistic indicates the deviation of family concentration in each parish from the regional average, with figures greater than 1.00 reflecting an above average number of households with a particular surname. Taking each dynastic family in turn, it is clear that parishes with high quotients tended to form broad groupings that coincide with those visible in the mapped data. Only in the case of the Margets and Claridge families did both Spelsbury and Enstone have location quotients of greater than one, confirming the impression gained from the maps that family clusters rarely crossed this parochial boundary. Several distinctive groupings of parishes were also recognisable from the family cluster data.

i. Spelsbury-based clusters

There were eighteen families with greater than expected concentrations in Spelsbury (reflected in location quotients of greater than 1.00): nine had one dominant cluster centred on the parish, and three others had multiple clusters, one of which was focused on Spelsbury. Often the number of reconstituted families in Spelsbury itself far outstripped that of the surrounding parishes, indicating that this was probably the core location from which dispersal over the immediate area had taken place through marriage and short-distance migration. For instance, thirty-eight Couling households have been traced from Spelsbury baptism records between 1541 and 1760, with the first entry being for Robert

Couling, baptised in 1542.[25] Parishes with an above average concentration of Coulings are situated primarily to the south and west of Spelsbury, forming a bloc running through Chadlington, Lyneham, Sarsden and Churchill (Fig. 5.15). At the western edge of the area there were extensions northwards into Salford and Chipping Norton, and southwards towards Shipton-under-Wychwood. There appeared also to be a separate core to the south around North Leigh and Ramsden, but the most notable feature is the almost complete absence of the family from the Glyme catchment: there were only single Couling households in Wootton and Kiddington. The location quotients reveal Ramsden to be the area with the highest concentration of Coulings, with a figure of 5.22, but this figure is exaggerated by the weighting applied to compensate the small size of the parish. Of greater significance is the fact that Spelsbury, at 2.64, has the second largest figure, and the other parishes with above average numbers are located further to the west or in close proximity to Ramsden. These figures accord well with the map evidence.

Similar Spelsbury-based family clusters were also found for the Issard, Rook, Trinder, Kerry, Sansom, Clarridge and Souch families, although each family's pattern had its own peculiarities. The Issards, Rooks, Sansoms, and Souches (Figs. 5.27, 5.34-5.36) appear to have been orientated more towards the south and immediate east than to the west: for the Rooks and Sansoms the dominant area of concentration was through Stonesfield to Combe and Wootton (Figs. 5.34-5.35). These families were also linked to similar groupings of parishes with high quotient values, those to the immediate south-east of Spelsbury.

In the majority of cases, however, the other parishes which formed part of one of Spelsbury's surname clusters were located to the south and west, ranging in an arc from Chipping Norton to Shipton-under-Wychwood, perhaps reflecting the relatively recent colonisation of such forest edge townships. Moreover, those parishes closest to Spelsbury

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[25] O.A. Spelsbury parish register transcripts.

appeared generally to have had the highest concentration of households sharing these dynastic surnames.[26] Chadlington, immediately to the west, is the most likely candidate for inclusion in the neighbourhood area of Spelsbury, since most Spelsbury-based dynastic families had branches there, and in case of the Coulings, Crosses, Gadfields and Issards, the location quotients exceeded 1.00 (Table 5.3). Chadlington was also the parish with the largest or second largest number of reconstituted households for each of these families,[27] demonstrating the presence of kinship linkages crossing the parochial boundary (Figs. 5.15-5.16, 5.22, 5.27).

ii. Enstone-based clusters

The pattern of clusters associated with families centred on Enstone is similarly diverse. The Busbys provide the classic example: they were a widely distributed and numerically important family whose distribution displayed a marked bias towards the north and east of the study area (Fig. 5.9). Busbys lived as far apart as Milton-under-Wychwood and Duns Tew, but almost all the parishes where numbers were above those predicted under the assumption of an even distribution were situated, at least partially, within the Glyme catchment.[28] The location quotients support this map analysis, since the seven highest figures were all for parishes lying north of Spelsbury. Although Chipping Norton and Enstone had the largest actual number of reconstituted families, Kiddington, Sandford St. Martin, Westcot and Steeple Barton seem to have represented the areas of peak concentration once the figures have been weighted. These four parishes had quotients ranging from 2.96 for Steeple Barton to 4.63 for Kiddington, and were only exceeded by

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[26] Watson noted a tendency for the number of common surnames between two parishes to decrease as the distance between them increased. Watson (1975), 29.

[27] Both the Bishop and Cross families had their cluster distribution centred on Chadlington, with Spelsbury playing a secondary role.

[28] There was an anomalous secondary cluster within the forest area at Ascot-under-Wychwood and Leafield.

Heythrop, whose figures are suspect due to the extremely poor survival of the parish registers (Table 5.3).

In general, Enstone-based families seem to have formed parish clusters in two distinct areas, depending upon where they lived in the parish. Those based in Lidstone, Church Enstone and Neat Enstone had family connections predominantly orientated in a northerly and westerly direction, with above average concentrations also being found in Chipping Norton, Heythrop, Great Tew and Sandford St. Martin: the Colletts, Fortnams, Hutchins and Wisdomes are examples of this category (Figs. 5.14, 5.20, 5.26, 5.39). Those families who lived in Radford, Gageingwell and, to a lesser extent, Cleveley tended to form clusters with parishes to the south east, especially Kiddington, Stonesfield, Combe, Wootton and North Leigh. Location quotients for these parishes were often significantly higher than those for the north-eastern part of the study area. For instance, the Drinkwaters, who held large areas of land in Gageingwell, spread across an elongated cluster of parishes stretching as far south as North Leigh, yet only three Drinkwaters were baptised in the north-eastern part of the study area, at Duns Tew (Fig. 5.18).[29] Stonesfield, Woodstock and North Leigh each had quotients of more than 3.00, helping to define the core area of this cluster.

The role of rivers as a barrier to movement does not seem to have been important in this case, since both Gageingwell and Radford lay on the northern side of the Glyme, yet were linked to parishes to the south. The same watercourse does, however, appear to have acted as a barrier in the case of the Busbys, well represented in the two most easterly Enstone townships with the core of their population cluster in Kiddington, Steeple Barton, Westcot Barton and Sandford St. Martin to the north-east (Fig. 5.9).

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[29] There were, however, anomalously seven Drinkwaters in Chadlington who were distantly related to the Gageingwell branch of the family.

iii. Some preliminary conclusions

Perhaps these variations in the patterns associated with families found in different parts of Enstone indicate the need to divide large parishes into their component townships for the purpose of surname analysis. Enstone and Spelsbury are both large and elongated, and their extremities could be more closely linked to a neighbouring parish than to the rest of their own parochial unit. For example, Fulwell is 2-3km from the other settlements in Spelsbury, and on the Enstone side of the watershed, and thus it is unsurprising that it had significant links with the latter parish, containing branches of prominent Enstone families such as the Blackwells, Castles and Rymans (Figs. 5.4, 5.12). Additionally, Spelsbury families who were concentrated in the Fulwell area, notably the Rooks and Souches, formed clusters with parishes to the immediate east, rather than following the more usual Spelsbury orientation towards the south-west. Both families were largely confined to Spelsbury parish itself, but individual households had established themselves in Stonesfield, Kiddington and Combe (Figs. 5.34, 5.36).

Similarly, Dean lies on the border of Spelsbury and Chadlington, and family reconstitution reveals widespread intermarriage and kinship linkages crossing this particular boundary.[30] This is probably the reason for the regular inclusion of Chadlington in the cluster patterns of prominent Spelsbury families like the Coulings, Issards, Bishops and Crosses. Both these examples suggest that the core social area for many dynastic families was the township and not the parish. This was the jurisdiction within which their daily lives were organised through the operation of the local agrarian system. If townships were the basic unit of social relations, this must have significant implications for the study of local exchange.

[30] Dean was the only Spelsbury township which was not part of the Ditchley estate.

b) *Analysis of cluster regularities*

The maps and location quotients provide a useful pictorial and numerical description of the spatial patterns of the various families. However, neither technique allows easy grouping together of families producing similar patterns, which is essential if neighbourhood areas are to be defined. Two methods were used to search for similarities in the patterns. The simplest involved mapping the frequency with which each parish exceeded expected family concentrations. Those parishes, which had several strong family linkages to Enstone or Spelsbury, identified by locational quotients of more than 1.00, were judged to be worthy of consideration as members of the same neighbourhood unit. This proved inconclusive: no obvious concentrations in a particular part of the study area were visible for either parish. Areas regularly associated with Spelsbury formed a broad swathe stretching southwards from Great Rollright to Wootton, with both of these fringe areas anomalously appearing to be the most frequently linked (Fig. 5.40). Enstone, on the other hand, had a more dispersed pattern including pockets of frequently appearing parishes everywhere apart from the extreme west (Fig. 5.41).

Despite the apparent failure of this procedure to isolate an area of particularly intense kinship interconnection, the differing orientation of Enstone and Spelsbury-based families is confirmed by the contrasting distribution patterns they produced. Whereas Spelsbury-based families had a definite bias towards the south-western part of the study area, Enstone-centred ones were better represented in the eastern half of the region, although they too appear to be most heavily concentrated to the south. This apparent concentration is, however, largely illusory since most of the quotients for southern parishes are relatively low, and often represented only one or two members of a particular family living in each. In fact, parishes in which there were few quotients greater than 1.00 were frequently more closely linked to Enstone or Spelsbury than those where there were many, since concentrations of those families present were higher. The maps treat all quotients equally, and thus ignore differences in the level of a family's presence in any

particular parish, and hence the likelihood of a significant kinship connection with that parish. Amongst the Spelsbury-based families, Charlbury and Chadlington may have been restricted to four appearances in the composite distribution pattern, and Stonesfield to five, but only in three cases was the quotient in question lower than 2.00 (Table 5.3). These places can consequently be considered closely related to Spelsbury through kinship, unlike Shipton-under-Wychwood, which despite having significant concentrations of five families, only twice registered a quotient of 2.00. These two families, the Carys and Gadfields, were of slight importance in the study area, since the total number of households reconstituted for them was 4 and 12 respectively, and neither was concentrated enough in any parish to be properly regarded as a dynastic family.

The second procedure involved superimposing a circle over the study area, centred on Ditchley, and splitting it into north-east, north-west, south-east and south-west segments. The distribution map for each family was then analysed using this framework, to ascertain the proportion of reconstituted families lying within each sector (Fig. 5.42). Unlike the previous technique, the weighted reconstitution figures themselves were used, and where a parish straddled two sectors it was allocated to the one within which the main settlement area lay. In this way it was possible to describe each map distribution numerically, so that the families could be grouped according to mathematical criteria rather than simply on the basis of visual impression (Table 5.4).

In order to identify patterns, these figures (representing the number of households in each quadrant) were coded, so that the north-west sector became A, the north-east B, and so on. These coded quadrants were arranged in descending order according to the number of reconstituted families recorded in each. Thus the distribution pattern of each dynastic family could be described, in simplified form, by a sequence of four letters representing the four quadrants, with only 24 possible combinations (Table 5.5). The first two letters were usually sufficient to define the nature of a particular family distribution, since they represented the two quadrants within which the largest number of households resided.

Where families had similar number sequences the mapped distribution patterns were often comparable too, although the statistics sometimes identified areas of concentration not immediately recognisable from cartographic evidence due to differences in the size of parishes, and hence their shaded area on the map. A combined analysis of the quadrant number sequences and distribution maps makes it possible to define a number of broad surname groupings with similarly aligned zones of settlement.

Initially statistics were calculated including the figures for Enstone and Spelsbury families within the relevant quadrants (Tables 5.4-5.5). This had several drawbacks. Because the two parishes straddle the sector boundaries, the allocation of households between quadrants was problematic. Additionally, the high concentrations of most of the study families there swamped the figures for other parts of the distribution. Those names which were Spelsbury-focused usually produced a sequence in which the south-west was the dominant quadrant, since most of the parish lay within this zone: the same was true for Enstone, except that the north-east sector was the leading one in this case. Nevertheless the identification of such tendencies, in itself, suggests a definite contrast between the distribution patterns of families centred in Enstone and Spelsbury. Rather than mixing across the boundary separating them, households appear to have been orientated in opposite directions, which is reflected in the clear subdivision of the number sequences into two groupings.

The procedure was thus repeated with Spelsbury and Enstone reconstitution data excluded (Tables 5.6-5.7). The Baylis and Castle families were the only ones lacking a focus in Spelsbury or Enstone, and consequently their number sequences were unaffected by the change in procedure, and additionally displayed perfect correlation, which is borne out by the striking similarities of the two map distributions (Figs. 5.2, 5.12). Of the households centred on Enstone, one group was orientated predominantly towards the north and the south-east; a second was aligned along a north-east to south-west axis, and a third extended southwards, predominantly in an easterly direction. These groupings

illustrate more comprehensively the differences between the distribution patterns of the Busbys and Drinkwaters noted earlier. Whilst the Busbys fell into the first of the three groupings, the Drinkwaters fell into the third category. Spelsbury-focused families may be similarly divided, although the groupings are less obvious. Firstly there were those households, such as the Trinders, Hiats and Freemans, whose area of concentration formed a hemispherical arc in the west of the study area. The next set of families also had their largest presence in the south-west, but were also well represented in the north-east. The remaining households had a predominantly southern orientation, with the south-east quadrant becoming progressively more important as one descends the list. Thus the Bishops, Coulings and Kerrys had distribution patterns dominated by the zone from Chadlington round to Shipton-under-Wychwood in the south-west, whilst the Issards and Rooks had almost equally strong linkages both to the south-west and south-east, and by the time one reaches the Callcotts and Dennetts the latter trend is dominant.

Two families centred on Spelsbury had distributions different from those just described, and their mapped areas were not adequately described by either method of spatial classification. The Claridges and Margets displayed classic distance decay patterns with little regard to the watershed barrier which constrained the other families, extending from their Spelsbury core into Enstone to the north, Charlbury to the south, and Wootton to the east (Figs. 5.13, 5.30). They were both occupational rather than landholding dynasties, the Margets being carpenters and the Claridges carters. Additionally, both worked extensively on the Ditchley estate, which may have provided a social area different from that of the local yeoman and husbandmen. Whereas most villagers operated within the social *milieu* of the neighbourhood, perhaps these families, regularly employed by the Lee family over the years, had patterns of interaction constrained more by the boundaries of the Ditchley estate. The Margets, for instance, carried out much of the carpentry work on the estate, repairing fences, cottages and outbuildings, and were recorded as felling timber from woodland situated in all parts of the Lee's land. Such

activities must have brought them into contact with people from all corners of the estate, which included parts of Charlbury and Enstone, laying the foundation for the development of friendship links and increasing the likelihood of them choosing a marriage partner from these parishes.

c) *Cluster patterns and local population flows*

Mapping the data clearly shows the contrasting orientation of Spelsbury- and Enstone-based family clusters. Indeed, there appears to have been little overlap between families in the two parishes. Spelsbury was regularly excluded from cluster patterns centred on Enstone, even when parishes to the south, such as Charlbury, Lyneham, Combe and Stonesfield, featured prominently. Similarly, very few Spelsbury families managed to establish a foothold in Enstone.

It is not, however, being suggested that the residents of Spelsbury and Enstone remained immobile. On the contrary there is evidence for an extensive circulation of population within Wychwood forest and its environs, related to the seasonality of labour requirements, the expansion of rural industries, inter-parochial landholding, and intercommoning practices.[31] Evidence from family reconstitution suggests that the percentage of males living in the same parish throughout their lives varied between 9 per cent and 52 per cent. The figures for females were even lower, between 3 per cent and 36 per cent.[32] Annual turnover of village populations ranged between 4 and 6 per cent throughout the pre-industrial period, emphasising that high levels of mobility within rural areas had always been widespread.[33] Children usually left home in their teens to enter service or apprenticeship, whilst others moved after marriage or in search of work, but few appear to have travelled beyond the bounds of their neighbourhood area.[34]

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[31] See section 2.6.
[32] Souden (1984), 11-27.
[33] Kitch (1992), 62-84.
[34] Kussmaul (1981), 49-93.

What the mapping of clusters shows is that, despite this high level of local mobility, few inhabitants of Spelsbury were able to settle in Enstone and *visa versa*. Certain forces more powerful than the constraining influence of the watershed must have been at work to have established such a clear barrier to settlement. In fact, it has been shown in chapter two that the Earl of Litchfield was engaged in a definite policy of exclusion at Ditchley, using the manor courts to prevent the establishment of outsiders in townships under his jurisdiction, and continuing to rent cottages under customary tenure so as to maintain continuity amongst labouring households on the estate.[35] As a result Spelsbury had a small and relatively stable population throughout the seventeenth and early eighteenth century. Nearly all the labourers and craftsmen recorded as resident in the parish registers worked regularly at Ditchley, so that the Earl depended upon other workers coming in from Enstone, Charlbury, Stonesfield and Combe to provide an adequate workforce during periods of peak labour demand.[36]

There were also limited opportunities for new farming families to establish themselves in Spelsbury, because of the relative stability of the landholding population. By 1750 commercial leasing was becoming increasingly important in the parish, but there still remained a significant group of small customary tenants.[37] This is important as Turner has shown that expansion of the leasehold sector might lead to significant increases in population turnover. From analysis of Buckinghamshire land tax assessments and manorial records, he found that the shorter and less secure leasehold agreements which emerged after enclosure tended to prevent the continuation of parochial landholding dynasties.[38] This partially explains the smaller number of dynastic families in Enstone,

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[35] See section 2.6.
[36] Accounts, DIL 1/l/33.
[37] Havinden (1961a), 188.
[38] Turner (1975), 567-569.

where leasing was more common. The Earl also had less of a landholding monopoly here, and thus could not prevent settlement of migrants so effectively.[39]

A quick survey of the parish registers confirms their differing characteristics, showing that the range of surnames found in Enstone was significantly more diverse than in Spelsbury, and that the number of family lineages surviving in the parish for more than a century were comparatively fewer.[40] As a result of this higher level of turnover, fewer Enstone dynasties could be used in the cluster analysis (Table 5.8). There were 252 different surnames amongst the 1233 entries recorded in the Enstone baptisms register, whilst Spelsbury had only 191, despite having a similar number of entries at 1056. 35.9% of Spelsbury baptisms were for the ten most commonly appearing surnames in the register, whereas the figure for Enstone was only 21.7% (Table 5.9). Both these percentages indicate a relatively low level of turnover within the two parishes, when compared with similar statistics compiled for South Cambridgeshire and Nantwich, Cheshire, and the Spelsbury figure exceeds the 34.1% derived by Watson for the chapelry of Colne in Lancashire, an isolated upland area.[41] This evidence for a lower turnover of families in Spelsbury is not, though, matched by a comparable variation between the two parishes in length of family residence. Using the duration that each surname was present in the pre-1750 baptism records as a measure of residence length, the number of families living in the two parishes for over a century were broadly similar: Spelsbury had 24 and Enstone 22 (Tables 5.10-5.11).[42] Clearly there was a similar number of core families in both parishes, and any difference arose from more branches of each family being able to find niches in Spelsbury.

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[39] Spelsbury households had kinship linkages primarily with the forest edge townships to the south and west and hence the number of migrants moving from Spelsbury to Enstone was limited.

[40] O.A. Spelsbury parish register transcripts.

[41] The studies conducted in these two areas produced much lower percentages for the ten most common surnames, although the period covered was different in both cases. Watson (1975), 27-28; Wyatt (1989), 48-51.

[42] The 50 Spelsbury families of longest standing had an average residency of 54 years, whereas the figure for Enstone was actually greater at 59 years.

50.4% of baptisms in Spelsbury between 1650 and 1750 involved children from one of the thirty eight study families, but the corresponding figure for Enstone was only 26.7%,[43] perhaps indicating that the chosen families here did not cover the important dynasties so comprehensively (Tables 5.10-5.11).[44] Closer examination of the figures, however, reveals that many of the significant Enstone families omitted from the study group were minor gentry, such as the Coles and Eyans, who would not have participated actively in estate affairs. Others, like the Smiths and Taylors, had such common surnames that lineages would have been impossible to trace. Consequently some credence can be given to the figures as being representative of the local rural community: they show that there continued to be a sizeable core group of yeoman families present in Spelsbury over a long period of time, something which was clearly less apparent in Enstone.

Dynastic family households residing in a parish throughout their life cycle would usually have had all their children within that parish. Thus a parish in which a large proportion of baptisms was associated with a small number of families must have had a relatively stable landholding population. This was certainly true of Spelsbury during the early-modern period.[45] Indeed, the range of surnames in the parish began to increase in the mid-eighteenth century just at the point when the Earl's policy of conversion to leasehold tenure was beginning to bear fruit. Clearly the settlement of new families here was prevented as much by the continuity of landholding as by an active policy of exclusion on the part of the landowner. In contrast, Enstone is known to have been subject to early engrossment of land, followed by an increase in the number of smallholders in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries. Thus the increasing

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[43] These figures were calculated from the baptism registers by adding up the total number of baptism entries, the number of different surnames recorded, and the number of baptisms for each surname. The study families were then separated out from the rest to produce the percentage figures.

[44] The choice of the 38 families on which the study has been focused was based on the regularity of their appearance in the estate accounts not the parish registers. The lesser number of Enstone families studied was thus a consequence of the less significant role which this parish played in the affairs of the Ditchley estate.

[45] Havinden (1961a), 182-88.

number of different surnames found here was a reflection primarily of in-migration and population growth.[46]

5.7 Marriage horizons: an alternative method of neighbourhood definition

The division between north-east and south-west of the study region is clear from analysis of surname clustering, yet subtle variations in the distribution patterns of different families make the identification of neighbourhood areas difficult. Certainly there was no single distribution pattern, associated with families centred either in Enstone or Spelsbury, which might be utilised to delimit a community area. Each family appears to have had its own unique pattern of settlement, and presumably interaction, stretching beyond the local community and based on land inheritance, marriage linkages and the availability of employment niches so that, although broad groupings of families with similar distributions can be identified, mapping surname clusters and describing them in the form of numerical sequences does not provide a definitive solution to the problem of neighbourhood area definition.

This inability to fully isolate a single area of concentration using either method is almost certainly a reflection of the fact that the spatial distribution of a particular surname may not be a true indication of the effective zone of kin interrelationship. Distant relations living in a parish relatively isolated from the main family grouping may have had only irregular contact with their kinsfolk, if any at all, whilst in-laws with different surnames would certainly have been fully integrated into the families' social networks, but are entirely absent from the distribution patterns. Moreover, people with common names, especially those with an occupational or locally originating locative root, may not even have been related. This problem can only be solved by identifying the relative strength of relations between family branches, to produce a more restricted distribution

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[46] See section 2.5.

map of *effective* kinship linkages, rather than the broad picture of *potential* ties which has so far been produced.[47] The maps do, however, provide a useful framework onto which such actual kinship connections can be plotted, helping to identify neighbourhood units concealed within the overall surname distribution patterns. In this case an examination of marriage horizons seems the most appropriate means of determining the extent of actual kin relationships, since it makes use of parochial data which has already been collected for other parts of the analysis.

Marriage involved elements of personal choice and societal constraint. The selection of a partner usually reflected established social linkages, and subsequently the marriage bound the two families together to an even greater extent.[48] Thus the combined pattern of individual marriage horizons will provide a good indication of the strength of kinship and friendship connections. Marriages tended to "create identifiable webs of new social relationships over definable districts", a high concentration of partners coming from a particular area being representative of a dense network of interaction.[49] For this reason marriage horizons have frequently been used to define local social areas. For example, by cross-referencing birth-place data relating to married couples with marriage entries in seven parishes in south-east Surrey during the early nineteenth century, Lord showed that only 21.5% of individuals had been baptised in the parish in which their marriage was registered.[50] Her conclusion that marriage horizons often extended beyond the parish boundary into the wider locality is supported by the comparable level of parochial exogamy found in a group of Otmoor parishes in Oxfordshire.[51] Using information on the distribution of marriage partners Lord was able to define putative neighbourhood areas within which interaction appeared to be particularly intense.

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[47] Lord (1993), 164-78.
[48] Lord (1989), 91.
[49] Phythian-Adams (1991), 35.
[50] Lord (1989), 114-115.
[51] Kuchemann, Boyce & Harrison (1973), 211-213.

a) *Marriage horizons at Ditchley*

Rather than cover a group of parishes, I have looked at the distribution pattern of marriage partners for residents of Spelsbury and Enstone alone, plus former residents of the two parishes recorded in other parish registers, to identify those neighbouring parishes with which they had most linkages. The particular township of residence in addition to the parish has also been recorded where possible, to identify any internal mobility within these large parishes.

There was apparently a high level of parochial endogamy. 48.4% of marriages recorded in Spelsbury and 48.9% of those in Enstone were between partners both resident in the parish, compared with Mitson's highest figure of 41% at Attenborough in her study of south-west Nottinghamshire.[52] These high percentages for within-parish marriages may partially be explained by the failure to include some Spelsbury and Enstone residents whose marriage took place elsewhere. Additionally, my analysis was not restricted to the seventeenth century, but covered the period up until 1760, by which time endogamous marriage was often more common, particularly in parishes with concentrated land ownership.[53] However, the most important distinction between my figures and those derived by Mitson, was that hers referred to true endogamy. Marriages were only categorised as endogamous where both partners had been born in the parish where they were married, as opposed to merely being resident there prior to the wedding.[54] Only 21.5% of marriages in south-east Surrey were truly endogamous, whereas 75.5% were of partners both recorded as 'of the parish'.[55] Bearing this in mind the level of parochial

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[52] Mitson (1993), 59.

[53] Souden (1984), 24.

[54] It was customary for marriage to take place in the parish of the bride's father, although she may well have resided elsewhere. Thus levels of female parochial endogamy are likely to have been exaggerated. Snell (1984), 31-32.

[55] Lord (1989), 105-115. Pain and Smith have also questioned the reliability of using the stated place of residence in the parish register as an indicator of birthplace. From a study of Stanhope parish, County Durham 1798-1812 they suggest that relying solely on the registers results in a significant underestimation of exogamous marriages. Pain & Smith (1984), 44-48.

endogamy suggested by the Spelsbury and Enstone figures was, perhaps, surprisingly low, considering the large size of the two parishes, their relatively large populations, and consequent wider choice of potential marriage partners.[56] Had it been possible in the time available to identify the proportion of marriages in the two parishes that were truly endogamous, the percentages would probably have been considerably lower than the 41% found in Attenborough.

Extra-parochial marriages reveal relatively extensive marriage horizons for both Enstone and Spelsbury, and these provide "a surrogate measure for spatial interaction", being themselves an element of that interaction.[57] Most people chose partners from within a 5-6 mile radius and few came from more than 10 miles away, although there were several exceptions.[58] For instance, Sir Henry Lee, the heir to the Ditchley estate, married Ann Danvers of West Lavington, Wiltshire in 1655.[59] Generally the more mobile gentry, merchants and carriers had the widest marriage horizons. Yeomen and craftsmen tended to have horizons limited to the areas over which they had personal experience, and most labourers married within the parish in which they lived, although not necessarily in which they were born.[60] Hence the social structure of the two parishes may have had an impact on the pattern of marriage linkages they produced.

The distribution patterns of marriage partners for Enstone and Spelsbury residents did not differ markedly, although they corresponded to some extent with the results obtained from the analysis of dynastic families, supporting the tentatively suggested alignment of neighbourhood areas. Spelsbury residents chose marriage partners from all parts of the county and beyond into Gloucestershire, Warwickshire and Northamptonshire (Fig. 5.43).

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[56] Coleman (1977), 105.

[57] Millard (1982), 11-12. Marriage horizons have also been used to examine spatial interaction patterns by Constant (1948), 78-88; Kuchemann et al. (1973), 209-218; Maltby (1971), 32-42; Ogden (1973).

[58] These marriage horizons correspond relatively closely with those found by Peel in Northamptonshire and Millard in Buckinghamshire. Peel (1942), 22-30; Millard (1982), 10-31.

[59] O.A. Spelsbury parish register transcripts.

[60] In south-east Surrey 7% of labourers married outside their parish of residence compared with 83% of gentlemen. Lord (1993), 159-160.

Despite this 84% of identified exogamous partners came from the 36 parishes of the study area, most of which lay within a 5 mile radius of the centre of Spelsbury.[61] The area east of the Cherwell was poorly represented, suggesting again that the river acted as an effective barrier to interaction.[62] Bicester failed to register in the analysis despite being a significant marketing centre, which featured in the Ditchley accounts on a number of occasions. Additionally only eight linkages were forged with people further north than Deddington, only one of them with Banbury, and Oxford itself provided only four marriage partners.

Most parishes in north-west Oxfordshire had conjugal ties to Spelsbury, although there was a tendency for parishioners to marry people from places to the south and west, with especially large numbers coming from the neighbouring parishes of Chadlington and Charlbury.[63] The 18 marriage linkages with Charlbury were not surprising, given that this was the closest urban settlement and market centre: the figures for Chipping Norton (8) and Woodstock (6) were also sizeable. The provision of 23 marriage partners by Chadlington, on the other hand, was significant, in that this was a relatively small parish without urban pretensions. Together with the evidence from the family cluster distributions, this supports the conclusion that Spelsbury and Chadlington must have fallen within the same neighbourhood unit, with parts of Charlbury, Stonesfield and Combe also probably bound together with them.

The marriage horizons of Enstone parishioners were similarly extensive, and here too there was a concentration of partners within the study area: 80% of spouses came from these parishes (Fig. 5.44). However, the distribution pattern was somewhat less

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[61] These figures should be regarded as a relative rather than an actual measure of exogamous marriage, since the registers tended to understate marriage mobility, particularly for women. Snell (1984), 31-33.

[62] Charlton-on-Otmoor residents rarely married people from west of the river Cherwell, suggesting that there was "a cultural break between the populations" on either side of the river. Kuchemann *et al.* (1973), 212-213.

[63] Peel found a similar directional bias in the distribution of marriage partners in Northamptonshire. Peel (1942), 28-30.

concentrated. The number of parishes appearing at least three times in the marriage registers was greater, whilst no one place was linked with Enstone on more than 11 occasions. Noticeably more Enstone residents ventured east of the Cherwell or south to the area around Oxford in search of a partner. Seven people married Oxford residents. four were wed to men or women from Witney, and there were also seven marital connections with Deddington. On balance the predominant orientation seems to have been towards the north and east, with the south-west, in particular, less well represented than in the Spelsbury distribution. Due to the lack of any obvious pockets of concentration potential neighbourhood areas are more difficult to identify. Heythrop is a likely candidate, despite its poor showing in the distribution pattern, due to its proximity and low population density. Otherwise the corridor from Kiddington to Wootton and Woodstock, and the broad band of parishes from Great Tew, Sandford St. Martin and the Bartons as far north as Deddington show an above average level of interconnection.

There were also extensive marital ties across the border between Spelsbury and Enstone, which could not have been anticipated from the surname distribution patterns. In total there were 19 marriages between Spelsbury and Enstone residents, yet few family names crossed the parochial divide. This suggests that more often than not the husband was already settled in his home parish, and after marriage his wife moved there to join him. In two-thirds of cases the male partner was Enstone-based, emphasising the fact that there were more opportunities for settlement there. Clearly there was little movement of established households across the Enstone-Spelsbury boundary despite the frequency of marital links, but kinship connections across the parochial divide must nevertheless have been extensive, although invisible to maps of surnames. Indeed, since matrilocal marriage was conventionally observed, most of the entries in the Spelsbury and Enstone registers

were for female parishioners and their spouses, whether fellow residents or outsiders.[64] Thus it is hardly surprising that the maps of marriage horizons differ from the distribution patterns of the various families. Whereas the spatial pattern of a particular surname reflected the availability of the holdings and employment niches which a newly establishes household required to guarantee its survival, marriage horizons primarily picked up patterns of female migration and social contact.

Of course, there may also have been some inter-township movement which has remained hidden, since analysis so far has dealt only with individuals who crossed a parochial boundary to wed. An examination of those register entries where both partners came from the same study parish provides the evidence necessary to deal with this uncertainty, so long as the records reveal the township in which each individual was resident (Table 5.12). Unfortunately a large percentage of such entries simply refer to the couple as being "of this parish". However, where residence within a particular township was specified, it shows a predominance of endogamy at the township as well as the parochial level. Of the 14 men recorded as coming from Dean, 10 married women from their own township, and the figures for Spelsbury, Taston and Fulwell are even more conclusive. Out of the 44 entries where township of residence was specified, there were only 5 occasions where husband and wife came from different parts of Spelsbury. The figures for Enstone are less clear-cut, mainly due to the smaller number of entries where township of residence was recorded. Only 10 of the 170 entries do so, and four of them reveal movement within the parish.

Perhaps the more dynastic nature of Spelsbury families might have limited movement from one township to another. Certainly the greater security of tenure offered by a long copyholding tradition meant that most landholding families remained rooted to a

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[64] Men usually married in their wives' parish and therefore are more difficult to trace, especially if their partner lived beyond the county boundary or they had already moved from their parish of origin prior to the marriage.

particular township throughout the period. Mitson noted that intermarriage between such families was often endemic, and although links were often forged with fellow dynastic families from neighbouring townships and parishes, a good many of the partners came from the office-holding elite of the same village.[65] Enstone had fewer family dynasties, and hence a less fossilised pattern of land ownership, so that households could move more freely within the parish, as well as beyond it.

b) *Measures of female pre-marital mobility*

One category of marriage which has so far been ignored is that between partners who both resided outside the parish in which the ceremony took place. Since neither the man nor the woman lived in the parish whose register was being examined, such entries have conventionally been excluded by researchers examining marriage horizons. A neutral location may have been chosen for various reasons, such as parental disapproval of the marriage, but most frequently the parish in question was, in fact, the birthplace of the bride. Many women who left their parental homes during their teens to seek employment in service, returned to their native parish to marry, although they might now be living a considerable distance away and their partner was likely to be living close to their present location. Consequently the place of residence for the bride recorded in these marriage register entries provides information about pre-marital female migration patterns, but cannot contribute towards knowledge of that parish's marriage horizons. As a result I have mapped these distributions patterns separately (Figs. 5.45-5.46).

The small number of entries for both Enstone and Spelsbury in which both partners came from outside the parish suggests either that few women had moved prior to marriage, or more likely that the registers significantly understate female mobility.[66] Nevertheless mapping of these entries provides a good indication of the sphere within

[65] Mitson (1993), 37-50.
[66] Snell (1984), 31-35.

which young unmarried Enstone and Spelsbury-born people interacted. Most non-resident Spelsbury brides appear to have lived in immediately adjacent parishes, especially Charlbury where there were ten, and Chipping Norton and Enstone, which had four each (Fig. 5.45). Beyond this the distribution formed a broad band, stretching from Chastleton and the Warwickshire/Gloucestershire border in the north west towards Oxford in the south east. The most significant variations from the marriage horizons distribution was the almost complete absence of women residing in the north east and the smaller numbers in the south west. These omissions lead to a greater emphasis on the parishes lying along the route southwards to Oxford. For instance, Combe, North Leigh, Kidlington and Woodstock each had two women married in Spelsbury. The area within which young Enstone women interacted is harder to define, since only 19 marriages between outsiders were recorded, and seven of these came from the urban centres of Woodstock, Charlbury and Chipping Norton (Fig. 5.46). It may tentatively be suggested that there was less of a directional bias to the pattern, but overall the most significant feature at Enstone was the limited outflow of women before marriage, or alternatively the failure of the registers to fully record out-migration that was taking place.

The greater number of recorded marriages between outsiders in Spelsbury may reflect the fact that there were fewer available employment niches there and less rented accommodation, and so more young people were forced to leave the parish in search of work. The strong control which the Lee family exerted restricted the number of cottages available and prevented subdivision of holdings, making it difficult for a newly formed household to become established in the parish, unless it was replacing an existing one which had come to the end of its life-cycle. Landholding was dominated by a small group of dynastic families whose continued presence was ensured by their tenurial security. In Enstone the Earl of Litchfield's influence was less all-pervading, despite his position as lord of the manor and his large landholding, since a number of sizeable freeholders also resided there, amongst them the Coles, Eyans and Tilliards. In all there were ten

residences in Enstone with more than five hearths compared with only three in Spelsbury.[67] Moreover, Enstone lay on an important routeway, and thus many residents owed their wealth primarily to trade rather than land. The Earl had little control over the actions of such families, and often it benefited them more to sublet and build cottages rather than follow a policy of limiting population and excluding outsiders.

c) *Contextualising patterns of mobility*

Evidence from marriage horizons suggests that the contrasting patterns of mobility between the parishes had two main elements. Internal movement between the townships in Spelsbury was limited, but out-migration from the parish relatively extensive. Enstone, on the other hand, appears to have had greater internal movements, but somewhat lower levels of population outflow. Clearly Spelsbury was a parish where a number of families remained rooted to particular townships for generations, but their younger sons and daughters, who did not inherit or marry into holdings, were often forced to move elsewhere in search of a niche. The concentration of certain family names not just within the parish but within each of the constituent townships largely confirms this impression: for instance, 24 of the 38 recorded Coulings came from Dean.[68] Enstone had fewer and predominantly shorter lived dynasties and fewer restrictions on the establishment of new households, due to the more fragmented nature of land ownership. Consequently younger children, unlikely to inherit the family holding, could often establish themselves elsewhere in the parish, but this did not produce higher levels of surname concentration because such economic niches were also available to outsiders.

These divergent trends can be related to the contrasting demographic and tenurial histories of the two parishes outlined in chapter two.[69] Increasing out-migration from

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[67] Weinstock ed. (1940), 167-173.
[68] O.A. Spelsbury parish register transcripts.
[69] See section 2.5-2.6.

Spelsbury was associated with the amalgamation of customary holdings, which gathered pace during the early eighteenth century, and formed the prelude to enclosure. Conversely, the lower levels of exogamous marriage in Enstone run parallel with sustained population growth. Here engrossment had taken place much earlier, and during the study period the most obvious development was a proliferation of smallholders.[70]

5.8 The Ditchley neighbourhood

This chapter has attempted to define the neighbourhood area or areas associated with the Ditchley estate by mapping various aspects of local interaction. Both the pattern of marriage horizons and the distribution of surname clusters provide a partial description of the circulation of population within the local social area. In doing so they define the potential zone of greatest kinship interconnection.

The analysis has shown that there were relatively high levels of mobility in this part of Oxfordshire, but this was mostly constrained within a limited geographical area. Clearly whether people left their parental home in search of work or after household formation, they rarely strayed more than 15km from their place of birth. This was the "wider social and cultural locality" described by Phythian-Adams, which stood one stage up in the hierarchy from the neighbourhood. It was a zone of relatively regular but less intense interaction than the community area.[71] In this case the boundaries of the region were roughly defined by the Cherwell to the east, Oxford and the Berkshire border to the south, the area around Banbury to the north, and the watershed of the Evenlode catchment in the west, extending over the border into Gloucestershire and the southern corner of Warwickshire.

Nested within this zone were the neighbourhood areas of Spelsbury and Enstone (Fig. 5.47). The evidence suggests that these were quite separate, with the watershed between

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[70] Havinden (1961a), 179-82.

[71] Phythian-Adams (1991), 45.

the Evenlode and Glyme catchments forming a definite barrier to interaction between the two parishes. Spelsbury appears to have formed a neighbourhood encompassing Chadlington, Stonesfield and most of Charlbury, whilst Enstone was most often linked with adjacent parishes to the north and east. What we know of the local agrarian economy supports this alignment of social areas. The townships with intercommoning rights at Ditchley were precisely those placed within the same neighbourhood as Spelsbury, and the estate's casual labour force appears also to have been recruited primarily from these villages. Enstone was integrated into the estate at a later date, and much of the land remained in the hands of gentry freeholders who often had connections with neighbouring parishes to the north-east. This largely explains the northerly orientation of its neighbourhood area.

Despite the limitations of the data sources used, it has proved possible to define putative social areas within which interaction appears to have been concentrated. It is within this spatial framework that I conducted further analysis of kinship linkages.

(6) KINSHIP, NEIGHBOURHOOD AND THE DITCHLEY ESTATE ECONOMY

6.1 Kinship and the moral economy

The previous chapter indicates that neighbourhood areas were defined by the interaction of the populations within their bounds. The neighbourhood was a conduit for labour and commodity flows, and the framework within which much of the local agrarian economy operated. Transactions taking place within this framework, whether they were monetary or non-monetary, were thus embedded in a network of social relations. They were, therefore, essentially moral in character. In order to ascertain the pervasiveness of this moral economy at Ditchley it is necessary to examine the influence of kinship and friendship linkages upon the exchange process.

6.2 Wills as a source for the study of kinship

There has been considerable debate amongst historians about the strength and effectiveness of the family linkages used to define social areas in the previous chapter.[1] Indeed, the degree to which family ties extended beyond the nuclear household has remained contentious since MacFarlane refuted the then received wisdom that society had been strongly kin-based during the medieval period, being gradually eroded by the modernisation of society and economy after the Black Death. He used diary entries to show that, although Ralph Joselin, a seventeenth-century Essex clergyman, mentioned members of his wider family regularly, "from week to week his relations with those of his neighbours who were also close friends were more important; cumulatively his exchanges with them of loans, gifts, hospitality and help in emergencies was greater than those with

[1] Discussions of kinship can be found in Clark (1977); Everitt (1969, repr. 1972); Laslett (1983); Smith ed. (1984); Wrightson (1982).

his kin."[2] Other community studies have supported this view that friends were more important than kinsmen in the everyday lives of villagers and townsmen alike.[3] Wrightson and Levine found that kinship in rural Terling, Essex was "both shallow in depth and narrow in range."[4] Their study of Whickham, on the Durham coalfield, yielded a similar picture,[5] and other research has found a lack of effective kin connections, explained variously by reference to growing individualism, the role of the Church, inheritance patterns or the commercialisation of rural economy.[6] Whatever the explanation proposed, they all contend that "there was no well-defined group of kinsmen larger than the elementary family to which most individuals owed loyalty."[7]

These views are based primarily on evidence from wills, which Wrightson and Levine consider to be a valuable source of information about the extent of kin recognition, since testators often made small bequests to people beyond their own nuclear family as a token of affection. In both Terling and Whickham they found that 70-80% of testators recognised a wider group of kinfolk, with widows and the unmarried especially likely to mention more distant relations. Once wives, children and grandchildren had been provided for, it was not unusual for siblings, nephews and nieces, parents (if living), and brothers- and sisters-in-law to be recognised. Yet they argue that this did not indicate the existence of extensive kinship networks, because family reconstitution revealed that most testators mentioned only a small proportion of their surviving relatives. In Terling, for instance, only 0.3% of possible kinship links were mentioned in wills.[8] "The impression given is that kinship sentiments and obligations were focused within a cluster of

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[2] MacFarlane ed. (1976), 55.
[3] Friendship linkages are widely recognised as central to the functioning of the early-modern exchange economy, but they fall outside the scope of the present study. Hey (1974); Levine & Wrightson (1991); Macfarlane (1976, 1977); Muldrew (1993a); Wrightson & Levine (1979).
[4] Wrightson & Levine (1979), 82-3.
[5] Wrightson & Levine (1991), 332-3.
[6] Smith (1979), 219-256; Stone (1982); Howell (1976).
[7] Houlbrooke (1984), 19.
[8] Wrightson & Levine (1979), 86-7.

households linked by close ties of consanguinity, affinity and geographical proximity: that range of effective kin described in contemporary parlance as 'friends'".[9]

Statistics compiled from 178 wills of Spelsbury and Enstone residents who were mentioned in the Ditchley accounts do not appear to conflict with this picture of relatively narrow and shallow kinship connections (Table 6.1). Almost 60% of wills referred to the testator's wife, sons or daughters, whilst only 26% mentioned grandchildren, 15% nephews or nieces, and 10% cousins. Only 5 testators mentioned godchildren, less than the 32 who gave token bequests to friends or servants. These figures are similar to those derived for Essex and Wiltshire yeomen and tradesmen in the 1680s (Table 6.2).[10] Seemingly kinship links in this part of north-west Oxfordshire were as loose as elsewhere in southern England at the time.

However, many people *did* mention non-nuclear kin in their wills, and letters, diaries and other documents often allude to far wider kinship recognition than MacFarlane found in the writings of Ralph Josselin.[11] For instance, Oliver Heywood made three dozen trips across the Pennines from his Halifax home to relatives in Lancashire, and Alice Thornton lived with her mother for 8 years after marriage, gave support to her niece when she was orphaned, and chose godparents from amongst her kin.[12] Such kinship links were not confined to the propertied classes: "luxuriant thickets of family" existed amongst the bargemen of Fisher Row in Oxford, and early nineteenth-century hamlets in Connecticut often consisted of extended families which frequently engaged in non-monetary exchange and intermarried heavily.[13] Clearly many people during the early-modern period kept in

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[9] Levine & Wrightson (1991), 285.

[10] The Essex and Wiltshire figures for wives, sons and daughters are around 10% higher, whilst fewer bequests were made to friends and servants. These differences can be partly explained by the fact that the Spelsbury and Enstone wills were examined over a longer time period and included minor gentry as well as yeoman and tradesmen. Cressy (1986), 55.

[11] Macfarlane (1970, 1976).

[12] Houlbrooke (1984), 54-60.

[13] Prior (1982); Clark (1982), 89-90. Evidence of extensive kinship linkages can also be found in Chaytor (1980), 25-60; Cressy (1987) and Reed (1990b).

touch with a wide range of distant relations, and felt a good deal of affection and a sense of duty towards them.

The apparent contradiction between these two strands of evidence stems from the fact that the documents most often used were not produced with the intention of recording details of social relationships, and hence may not accurately depict the true extent of kin interaction. Wills were primarily a means of transmitting property, and hence are bound to focus upon the nuclear family.[14] The testator needed to clarify the position of the widow and to assign portions to those children not inheriting land. Thus, the very fact that other relatives did frequently receive token bequests is evidence of relatively close kinship ties. Indeed, some testators went to great length to recognise kin outside their immediate nuclear family. For instance, Thomas Kinch, a maltster of Church Enstone, made provisions not only for his wife and three children, but also gave bequests to his grandchildren and to the daughter of his deceased grand-daughter Elizabeth.[15] The childless widow Margaret Issard could distribute her legacy amongst more distant relatives, indicating the extent of kin recognition likely to be found within the yeoman population, though usually not evident from the contents of their wills. The main beneficiary was her cousin Mary, wife of Edward Issard, who was made sole executor and received a cottage in Spelsbury and a quantity of household utensils. Bequests were also made to her aunt Margaret, the wife of Thomas Couling of Dean, and Abigail, daughter of her cousin Richard Taylor of Dean. Margaret Issard's kinship links were thus numerous, though restricted to the neighbourhood where she lived.[16]

This evidence suggests a relatively dense matrix of kin, much of which would not normally be apparent in wills and other documents customarily used to gauge the extent

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[14] Cressy (1986), 59-61.

[15] Will of Thomas Kinch, O.A. MS wills Oxon., 138/4/47.

[16] Will of Margaret Issard, O.A. MS wills Oxon., 137/1/43. Issard had, however, also soon before her death purchased a close at Ducklington, a good 10 miles from Spelsbury, and included a bequest of 20s to the poor of that parish in her will.

of family linkages. Wills provide only a static picture of kinship networks, frozen at the moment of the testator's decease, and consequently often when he or she was in the latter stages of the life cycle. The kinship universe of an individual, however, is likely to have varied over time, reaching its widest in early middle age, and the closeness of the relationship with the various members of this group would depend very much upon the circumstances of the time.[17] The autonomous nuclear family was prone to "nuclear-hardship" on the death of a spouse, unemployment or sickness, which was primarily alleviated by support from relatives outside the household.[18] Kin were necessary allies, helping with loans, setting up children with apprenticeships, providing mutual aid in times of crisis, and helping to channel migration flows and transactions. Having concluded that kinship linkages were likely to have been relatively extensive in the Ditchley area, it is now necessary to devise a more systematic means of identifying them.

6.3 Methodology of kinship network reconstruction

The study of kinship networks through family reconstitution is basically a more refined version of the cluster analysis described in the previous chapter, but all evidence from the forty parish registers is utilised rather than just the baptism record, and wills and estate documents provide additional information. Unlike most reconstitution studies, this analysis has been based on a much wider area than the individual parish. As a result many of the limitations customarily imposed upon English family reconstitution need not be observed when looking at the Ditchley lineages.[19]

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[17] Cressy (1986), 58-9.

[18] Laslett asserts that the nuclear-hardship hypothesis implies that the more rigorously neo-local marriage practices, which lay it down that every person had to leave the parental home upon marriage, were applied, the greater would be the role of kinship linkages and collective institutions in providing security for the individual. Thus England, where the nuclear family had long been the norm, was likely to have had a well developed kinship support system. Laslett (1988), 153-158.

[19] Wrigley suggests that reconstitution should only be carried out in parishes which were relatively large, so that the impact of migration was minimised. The chosen parishes should also have complete registers, and each register entry should contain enough information adequately to identify the individuals listed. He sets out the rules of observation that should be followed in the course of reconstitution, concluding that when

Conventionally, analysis has been restricted to couples who were baptised and married in the study parish because these were the only households for which a complete demographic history could be derived from that parish register alone.[20] Yet only a small section of the population would have fallen into this category. By the late seventeenth century, a reduction of population pressure and more rigorous enforcement of the Settlement Laws may have reduced migration flows from their Tudor peak, but levels of mobility amongst young adults remained high, due to the prevalence of service or apprenticeship prior to marriage.[21] Taking data from fourteen separate reconstitutions, Souden concluded that over three-quarters of the parochial population was likely to have migrated before marriage, and consequently had to be eliminated from any study.[22] Ruggles has suggested even more stringent limitations, including only those households where the wife still lived in the parish at the age of 50, in order to allow for migration after marriage. He concluded that only 4.2% of baptisms could be utilised in a reconstitution study: those of people in couples who remained in a particular parish throughout their lifetimes.[23]

The main aim of reconstituting the thirty study families at Ditchley, however, is not to compile unbiased demographic statistics from a single parish study, but to gather as much information about each household as possible from whatever sources are available and to link them together into lineages. Since they have been constructed to reveal the role of kinship in the lives of estate residents, it is essential that these lineages cover migratory movement. Kinship links across parish boundaries can only be traced by examining exogenous marriages and the circulation of households within the study area, and thus

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looking at the suitability of families for analysis, "the more fully reconstituted they are, the less migratory they must have been". Wrigley ed. (1966), 123-53.

[20] Wrigley & Schofield (1981); Wrigley (1972), 243-274; Wrigley & Schofield (1983).

[21] Clark & Souden (1987); Kussmaul (1981); Landau (1988); Snell (1985).

[22] Souden (1981), 191-92. See also Souden (1984), 11-27. Souden takes those baptised in a particular parish and looks for evidence of marriage and burial there. Where this is absent he has inferred that the individual had migrated.

[23] Ruggles (1992), 511-14.

this reconstitution included information from all parish registers within the study area and from county-wide indexes.

a) *The reconstitution of the families*

The initial stage of reconstruction involved collecting information from the parish registers for the thirty dynastic families used in the study and filling out reconstitution forms for each household.[24] These include the details of both marriage partners, their parentage and their children, enabling kinship linkages to be forged both backwards and forwards from the nuclear household. Much of the information required to complete the forms was found in the Spelsbury, Enstone and Charlbury parish registers, since parochial endogamy was relatively high in the area and the parishes themselves were large.[25] For instance, Thomas Souch was born in Dean, but baptised his first four children in Taston before returning to Dean, where his youngest son was born in 1748. Movements of this sort, often associated with stages of the life-cycle, were relatively common in both Enstone and Spelsbury, particularly between Spelsbury and Taston townships, which lay less than two miles apart.

Even so, most of the reconstitution forms remained incomplete after all relevant information had been extracted from the three parish registers, and it was necessary to use other sources. Marriages in a bride's parish outside the study area could often be traced in county-based marriage indexes, as long as the couple baptised children in Enstone or Spelsbury to provide a clue to the date of their union.[26] Families that moved away from

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[24] The general family reconstitution form designed by the Cambridge Group for the History of Population and Social Structure was used to collate all the necessary information at the household level. It was possible to construct adequate lineages for only thirty of the original thirty eight families due to the absence of an entire book from the Enstone register covering the 1626-50 period.

[25] In many respects Enstone and Spelsbury meet the criteria laid down by Wrigley in that they are large parishes and have well preserved and relatively comprehensive registers. Wrigley (1966), 102-11. See chapter five for further details about intra-parish mobility and levels of parochial endogamy in the study area.

[26] The International Genealogical Index (IGI) provides a complete national coverage of baptism and marriage records, although Spelsbury and a number of other parishes within the study area have been

Ditchley after marriage could be partially covered by making use of the surname distributions to extend the search to likely locations in the surrounding region. Often, reappraisal of the baptism data used to map surname clusters revealed that the pattern produced was not simply a passive description of a family's distribution, but that baptisms registered to people of the same name in different parishes often traced the movement of particular Spelsbury or Enstone-based households. Recognition of this allowed many of the incomplete reconstitution forms to be upgraded, and provided a picture of household mobility.

Some families appear to have moved fairly regularly during the wife's child-bearing years, within a geographical area roughly commensurate with the neighbourhood units defined in the previous chapter. Henry Rook, for instance, was baptised in Spelsbury in 1692, and lived at Fulwell until the birth of his first child in 1723, but his other two children were born in Stonesfield and Enstone. The household then moved to Combe, before returning to Enstone, where Henry was buried in 1762. Evidence gleaned from parish registers suggests that Henry Rook was highly mobile, and given that these sources provide us with only fleeting glimpses of an individual's life he may have moved on many other occasions, although he almost certainly remained within north-west Oxfordshire throughout his lifetime.[27] The reconstitution forms provide many other examples of similarly mobile households. Henry Sansom was raised in Spelsbury township and lived there for 14 years after his marriage, baptising 7 children, before moving first to Wootton, and finally to the hamlet of Hensington in Bladon parish, where his last two children were born. Sansom and his wife lived at Hensington until their deaths, but were brought to be buried in Spelsbury churchyard, illustrating the attachment

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omitted. More useful is the Oxfordshire Family History Society Marriage Index, which is more comprehensive and also contains detail such as the residence of marriage partners as well as noting the place at which they were married.

[27] These mobility patterns must, however, be viewed with some caution, since baptisms need not always have been registered in the parish of residence. Snell (1984), 31-32.

people felt for the parish of their birth despite a high level of mobility within the neighbourhood area and sometimes beyond it.

Nevertheless, adult members of the thirty study families lived on average in only 1.8 parishes or townships during their lifetimes. This low figure can be explained partly by the peculiarity of the sources used. Many of the reconstituted families remained as landholders in the same township throughout their lives, something which was especially true of established yeoman dynasties, which made up a significant proportion of the study families. Some other households baptised one child before disappearing from the documents, and are therefore recorded as having moved only once, although this must under-estimate the true level of movement. Moreover, each form provides a partial life history of a particular family, picking up only a piece of its migratory history, notably during the mother's child-bearing years. Movement prior to marriage and after completion of the family is concealed, and thus average mobility figures almost certainly understate the true extent of migration.

Thus the picture of mobility in eighteenth-century Oxfordshire must remain fragmentary. Even when family reconstitution uses information from a group of parishes, many individuals disappear from the record when they moved elsewhere. All migrants are customarily excluded from family reconstitution, since data is usually drawn from only one register. Yet, if the present study had been conducted in this manner, drawing information from either Spelsbury or Enstone depending upon where each family was based, a mere 18.5% of the married adults appearing within reconstituted households would have met Wrigley's selection criteria, and 9.5% Ruggles' (Tables 6.3a-b). The level of completeness of the reconstitution is increased considerably by using information from marriage indexes and other parish registers, so that coverage can be extended to 35.4% and 19.3% respectively depending upon the criteria adopted.

'Total reconstitution' produces an even more complete reconstruction of family linkages.[28] This involves bringing together all the records relating to the thirty dynastic families, and adding any relevant information to the reconstitution forms. 'Total reconstitution' provides a relatively detailed biography of each individual within the study population, often making up for deficiencies in the parish register record.[29] However, in the time available it was not possible to deal with all the potentially useful sources, and therefore only a small sample of the more comprehensive records were selected. Most of the supplementary data came from wills and estate documents such as rentals, tithing lists, accounts and terriers. These documents were "not merely additive; each extra record illuminates all the previously assembled ones", and consequently they made it possible to trace some of the movements involving members of the study families.[30] Although the time involved in this extra analysis was considerable, the more complete family lineages created are necessary for kinship *networks* to be defined.

b) *Lineage construction and appraisal*

The construction of lineages remains a difficult task because, despite the range of information they contained, many reconstitution forms were incomplete. For instance, the custom of naming eldest sons after fathers often led to confusion when several people of the same name lived in one parish. Wills help overcome such problems, since they frequently plot out the testator's family tree over three or more generations and may provide additional information, such as the residence of a brother or cousin, allowing the relevant parish register data to be sought out. As a result they were extensively used in the construction of the thirty lineages of dynastic families living in Spelsbury and

[28] MacFarlane, Harrison & Jardine (1977), 36-80.
[29] Sharpe illustrates this point with the example of Isaac Drower, a carpenter from Colyton. She found seven documents referring to this individual, although on his reconstitution form no baptism is recorded for him or his wife Mary and they did not marry in Colyton. Sharpe (1990), 44-45.
[30] MacFarlane, Harrison & Jardine (1977), 36.

Enstone, but other sources mentioned above were also drawn upon. The resulting family trees varied considerably in size and degree of completeness, but most stretched across at least four generations, covering the majority of the family members likely to have been alive during the study period of 1680-1750.[31]

6.4 The evidence for kinship networks from family lineages

Once constructed, lineages show how many members of a family were resident in each parish and the surrounding neighbourhood area at any one time. From this information it is possible to calculate the number of possible kinship linkages of each. These could be vertical, between ascendant and descendant, or horizontal, between kinsfolk of the same generation who might have no roots in the particular parish.[32] The former were more common amongst the dynastic families which were the focus of study because nearly all of them had by definition been living in the area for at least half a century by 1680. Examination of a few of these families illustrates just how numerous kinship links were and consequently how potentially dense the network of interaction could be.[33]

The Couling family were landholders in the west of Spelsbury parish throughout the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, consistently having several households resident in the parish at any one time.[34] Their family tree was complex and could be traced back over

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[31] Bold type has been used for a number of individuals in each lineage to indicate their appearance as landholders in the Ditchley estate accounts. Where the person was also involved in a documented transaction their lineage entry was additionally placed in italics.

[32] Lord (1993), 164-67.

[33] Although only a proportion of the lineages are referred to in the text, all 30 family trees and kinship network diagrams are included in the statistical appendices, arranged in alphabetical order.

[34] Three separate family trees, labelled (a)-(c), have been constructed for the Coulings, since it was not possible to link together all the reconstituted households due to omissions from the parish registers particularly during the Commonwealth period. Similar problems were encountered with other families such as the Busbys, Crosses, Freemans, Issards, Rooks, Souches and Trinders. The failure to produce a single lineage may, in some cases, be because two unconnected families of the same name lived in the area. However, given the frequent transmission of property between members of separate trees, it is more likely that linkages did exist but cannot now be identified readily from the sources available. Thus the separate trees have been treated as single entities during analysis, although it is recognised that this may be an unwarranted assumption.

eight generations from 1750, by which time subsidiary branches had become established in Chadlington, Charlbury and North Leigh (Fig. 6.9). In 1680 the Coulings were highly concentrated in Dean township, where five households resided, with a further two located at Taston to the north-east. Over the next 70 years the family increased in size and gradually spread out from Dean into the surrounding neighbourhood, and then more widely across Oxfordshire. By 1725 there were eight Couling households within Spelsbury and an additional four beyond the parish, but by 1750 there were almost as many lineage households outside Spelsbury as in it. By this time the branch established in Chadlington in the early seventeenth century had become re-integrated into the main family tree through inheritance and intermarriage with the Coulings in Dean. Thus David, the youngest son of Thomas Couling of Dean, settled in Chadlington and raised his children there, whilst Thomas's eldest daughter, Catherine married a man from that branch of the family. Intermarriage appears to have been relatively common amongst large dynasties: three couples within this particular lineage consisted of partners both of whom were Coulings.

Not all the dynastic families in Enstone and Spelsbury were as large and long-resident as the Coulings. Most could only be traced back over five or six generations and had only one or two households in the vicinity of the Ditchley estate at any particular time. In 1680 there were two Sansom households in Spelsbury, those of Henry, a yeoman, and his widowed mother Margaret (Fig. 6.26). For a time after 1685, however, the family was absent from the parish, moving first to Wootton and then to Hensington, close to the southern edge of the Blenheim estate. It was not until 1725 that Henry's son, Josiah, retraced his steps northwards via Wootton and Stonesfield, returning to Spelsbury at the age of 50 to baptise his last child and live out his later years. Nevertheless, throughout this period most members of the family were buried in Spelsbury churchyard, suggesting a continued association with the parish, and it is almost certain that copyhold land in

Spelsbury township was retained by a Sansom regardless of where within the neighbourhood members of the family resided.

Given that the Sansom family lineage was far smaller than that of the Coulings, the range of potential kinship links was lower, and consequently the kinship network less dense. However, the mobility of the family ensured that the network encompassed several parishes within Spelsbury's neighbourhood area. Whilst moving between Wootton, Stonesfield and then Spelsbury, Josiah Sansom is likely to have maintained links with his mother, his sister Elizabeth, and his brothers Henry and Richard in Hensington. Of his other siblings, Mary married Edward Claydon of Charlbury and settled there, William moved to Horley, and Lucy to Hook Norton with her husband John Pittham. If Josiah maintained contact with all these relatives, his kinship linkages must have been extensive, although one would not have suspected this from his will, which mentioned only his children.

6.5 The mapping of kinship networks

Family reconstitution makes it possible to define more fully the extent of the kinship networks associated with the main dynastic families at Ditchley. These could then be mapped so as to build up an outline of the conduits through which local exchange flowed. In order to avoid these maps becoming unduly complex only surviving parents, children, grandchildren, siblings, nephews and nieces were charted. Where any of these lived in a different place from the individual, a line was drawn joining the two places together, and the thickness of each line was varied in proportion to the number of connections counted. Ties brought about by marriage, such as to a mother- or father-in-law, were recorded separately using a dotted line, since these linkages were likely to be more specific to the particular household in question, rather than being recognised by other members of the family. Where it was clear that two references related to the same household at different times during its history, a line was drawn between the two settlements where the

household had resided, with an arrow indicating the direction of movement. This ensured that one mobile household was not mistaken for two or more separate branches of the same family.

a) *Outline of Enstone and Spelsbury networks*

Most of the lineage diagrams have a dense web of linkages in the immediate area of Spelsbury or Enstone and a more dispersed pattern beyond. This reflected intense interaction between family members in a restricted core area, accompanied by scattered links with other relatives spread over a wider area of north Oxfordshire and surrounding counties. In effect the networks describe a spatial hierarchy of kinship density similar to that outlined by Phythian-Adams.[35] The Cross family's kinship network was focused on the townships of Dean, Spelsbury, Taston and Chadlington, with family members also living in the servants' quarters at Ditchley (Fig. 6.40). This must have been the locality with which the Crosses were particularly familiar, the area of their most intense interaction. Yet other Crosses with close kinship ties lived further afield. Humphrey Trinder, the grandson of Thomas Cross of Taston, who had been a stable boy at Ditchley, moved to Woodstock after his marriage to Mary Wells in 1746. It is likely, however, that he kept in touch with his father Humphrey, still living in Taston, and his brothers, sisters, aunts and uncles, most of whom lived in Spelsbury or its vicinity (Fig. 6.10). Similarly, Ann Cross probably maintained contact with her siblings in Spelsbury after her marriage to John Parrot of Minster Lovell.

The Trinders' own network had a marked south-eastern orientation, stretching beyond the bounds of the study area (Fig. 6.58), yet examination of the family lineage leads one to conclude that effective kinship linkages could span this distance. The survival of close contact with kin despite residential dispersal is confirmed by wills and other documents

[35] Phythian-Adams (1991), 44-49.

relating to members of the lineage (Fig. 6.28). Humphrey Trinder of Taston certainly maintained close ties with his siblings: when he died intestate in 1697, his brother-in-law, John Trinder of Bletchingdon, administered his estate.[36] Around half a century later in 1743 Humphrey's son, Humphrey Jnr., surrendered to the Earl the title deeds to a cottage at Taston so that it could be granted out to his nephew John Cross, who was working as a labourer in Woodstock at the time.[37]

Enstone-based lineages appear to have formed networks with broadly similar characteristics, although the orientation of linkages was somewhat different. The Drinkwaters provide a good example, having two foci to their network at Church Enstone and Gageingwell (Fig. 6.42). The Gageingwell branch had links northwards with Great Rollright, South Newington and Epwell, whilst the Drinkwaters at Church Enstone had connections to the south in Wootton and Charlbury. These two branches were themselves interlinked, forming part of the same overall lineage. This included branches in Chadlington and Shipton-under-Wychwood, both of which were distantly related to the Enstone grouping by the beginning of the eighteenth century (Fig. 6.12). Another Enstone family, the Fortnams, has a more restricted network, with most of its constituent households residing within the western part of Enstone, at Lidstone and Neat Enstone (Fig. 6.43). Stephen Fortnam had ventured as far as Binsey on the outskirts of Oxford by 1696, but his four brothers remained in Enstone, working predominantly as labourers. Two of them, Thomas and Edward, were employed on the Ditchley estate during the early eighteenth century (Fig. 6.13).

[36] Bond of Humphrey Trinder of Taston, O.A. MS wills Oxon., 175/2/33.
[37] O.A. Surrender document for a cottage at Taston, Misc. Sp. I/2.

b) *Kinship networks and the explanation of surname distributions*

Kinship networks provide a more precise means of identifying patterns of interaction and defining neighbourhood areas than maps of surnames, since they include only households that were actually related. The double recording of households who changed their parish of residence is also eliminated, since family reconstitution and the construction of kinship networks allows such movements to be traced. Nevertheless, there is still a close correspondence between the patterns produced by mapping surname data and the orientations of most families' networks. For example, in the case of the Freemans both the surname distribution and kinship network pick up the links to Steeple Barton and Shipton-under-Wychwood, whilst neither shows a sizeable presence of the family in the south of the study area (Figs. 5.21 and 6.44). However, it is only family reconstitution, and the drawing up of a network, which reveals that there were two sets of Freemans centred on Spelsbury parish. One branch was based primarily at Ditchley, where Freemans were Keepers of the Park for several generations, and extended into eastern Enstone and Steeple Barton. The other branch lived as yeoman farmers in Dean and Spelsbury with kin in Chadlington, Shipton and Chipping Norton. Similarly, the surname distribution of the Wisdome family shows clusters in the Enstone and Sarsden/Shipton areas (Fig. 5.39), and family reconstitution indicates that the latter was a subsidiary branch of the Enstone-based family, first established when Edward Wisdom moved to Sarsden around 1630 (Fig. 6.30). Wisdomes in Hanborough and Hornton suggest that this yeoman family had become fairly widely scattered outside its area of origin, and kinship links between constituent households may consequently have been looser (Fig. 6.60).

c) *General characteristics of the network diagrams*

Certain generalisations can be made about the thirty kinship networks produced, relating both to the characteristics of the dynastic families themselves and the social *milieu* within which they moved (Figs. 6.31-6.60). The networks can be divided into two

groups of roughly equal size: 14 were largely restricted to Spelsbury, Enstone and neighbouring parishes, whilst the other 16 included linkages to places beyond the main study area.

The former consisted primarily of smaller lineages, whose roots in the Ditchley area stretched back over only three or four generations. Indeed, most were labouring dynasties or engaged in a particular trade, rather than being of yeoman stock, and this might account for their relatively short residence in the vicinity. The Gadfields were newcomers to the area in the 1670s, being employed as gardeners at Ditchley, and subsequently moved to Charlbury without apparently establishing any kinship links within the study area (Fig. 6.45). The Millens, on the other hand, were primarily labourers, whose kinship network formed a rectangular block centred on Ditchley, where Henry Millen was the mole-catcher for most of the first half of the eighteenth century (Fig. 6.52). Other families with localised networks included the Claridges, Hiats, Oldacres and Wickins, none of whom were major landholding dynasties (Figs. 6.38, 6.47, 6.54, and 6.59). There were, however, exceptions to this rule such as the Rooks and Souches who, despite a tradition of customary tenure, failed to disperse significantly so that their kinship network remained largely restricted to the local neighbourhood area (Figs. 6.55 & 6.57).

Networks in the second group covered extensive areas of north Oxfordshire and the fringes of surrounding counties. They usually belonged to those lineages that dominated landholding in the townships of Spelsbury and Enstone. The Issards had a dense web of kinship connections within Spelsbury, and extending into Chadlington, with longer distance links to Chipping Norton, Eynsham, Yarnton, Weston-on-the-Green, Oxford and Blockley in Worcestershire (Fig. 6.48). This corresponds to the south-east Surrey pattern of "intense local kinship activity within a looser mesh of relationships over a wider region".[38] These networks were almost always orientated in a particular direction: the

[38] Lord (1989), 220.

Burboroughs looked from Enstone towards Adderbury and Deddington, where the Enstone branch of the family had originated in the mid-seventeenth century (Fig. 6.34), whilst the Issards and Trinders had a south-eastern orientation (Figs. 6.48 & 6.58). In most cases the configuration of the network matched the surname cluster pattern fairly closely, indicating that it is reasonable to use the latter to define neighbourhood areas. Where the two patterns differed it was usually the result of independent families bearing the same surname, or because branches of a family established early in the seventeenth century were only distantly related to the Spelsbury- or Enstone-based branch by 1700.

6.6 Competing social areas: the neighbourhood and estate

Spelsbury-based lineages looked south-eastwards towards Charlbury, Woodstock and Oxford, whilst their Enstone-based counterparts were orientated either north-eastwards or north-westwards. This correlates closely with the distribution of surname clusters and suggests that historical patterns of interaction continued to influence the behaviour of many dynastic families several centuries after they had originally evolved.[39] Those dynasties whose networks of kinship had helped to define the boundaries of the local social area still had their mobility and pattern of family linkages constrained within this area of shared local experience. They were effectively both a product of the social structure within which they lived and a recreator of it through the geography of their social relations.[40]

However, several networks straddled the neighbourhood divide. Five families, the Burboroughs, Claridges, Freemans, Margets and Millins, had networks encompassing parts of both Spelsbury and Enstone (Figs. 6.34, 6.38, 6.44, 6.51 & 6.52). For the Claridges and Margets, Spelsbury seems to have formed the hub, with links extending outwards into Enstone, Dean, Charlbury and beyond. The Burboroughs, Freemans and

[39] Marriage horizons also appear to have been similarly aligned.
[40] Phythian-Adams (1993), 6.

Millins, on the other hand, had kinship networks which converged on Ditchley, clearly indicating the main influence on their orientation. All these dynasties had members regularly employed on the Ditchley estate in various capacities, and seem thus to have had their patterns of interaction constrained more by the boundaries of the estate than by the historical interplay of economic, cultural and kinship relations which had defined the wider neighbourhood areas. The Freemans, for instance, as Keepers of the Park, had their main residence close to Ditchley House, but also owned land in Gageingwell and frequently retired there in old age (Fig. 6.14). The Burboroughs established themselves as bakers at Church Enstone in 1695, but half a century later several members of the family were employed as servants by the Earl (Fig. 6.4). None of these five families had a tradition of landholding in the Ditchley area: they were either tradesmen (Margets and Burboroughs), labourers (Millens and Claridges) or estate administrators (Freemans).

It seems clear therefore that tenure of land was a contributory factor in deciding whether a family would interact within the social framework of the neighbourhood area or the estate. Those who held land and depended on farming tended to marry and have social and economic contacts with others of similar status, and this tended to occur within the framework of the neighbourhood, a social area which their interaction perpetuated. Craftsmen, labourers, and estate servants, however, were dependent upon the employment provided by the Earl of Litchfield, and their area of experience was focused on the estate within which they worked.

6.7 The impact of social networks on the pattern of transactions

The central aim of this thesis is to ascertain the relationship between market and moral economy within eighteenth-century rural Oxfordshire. Exchange could be categorised as moral when transactions were significantly influenced by underlying social relations, and since kinship is one of the strongest and most easily identifiable forms of social relationship, its analysis should enable the extent of the moral economy to be

determined.[41] By checking entries in the estate accounts against the various family dynasties it should be possible to suggest whether transactions were purely commercial or potentially influenced by kinship connections.

In most cases account entries could be linked with information from the reconstitution forms. In this way, it was possible to distinguish which members of each lineage were involved in estate affairs, and to search for kinship linkages between them (Table 6.4).

a) *The impact of kinship upon transactions: the nuclear family*

This procedure reveals numerous examples of kinship influencing transactions on the estate, particularly in the case of families which had Ditchley-focused kinship networks and were not major landholders in the area. Henry Millen of Cleveley and his three sons, Edward of Cleveley, Henry of Combe, and William of Wootton were all actively engaged on the estate despite two of the sons having moved away from the immediate vicinity of Ditchley after they married (Fig. 6.22). Henry Millen Snr. was the mole-catcher, paid 10s a year from 1704 until handing over the job to his son, Edward, some time in the 1720s.[42] Henry was also paid in March 1707/8, along with his son, for "2 days topping the hedge on the lane to Kiddington".[43] His second son, Henry Jnr. was employed as a child to keep the crows off the corn, and re-appeared in the accounts in 1730, providing the Earl with a load of straw for 16s.[44] By this time he had moved from Cleveley, first to Wootton and finally to Combe, four miles away. The steward must surely have been able to procure straw closer to the estate, and the use of Millen as a supplier on this occasion may well have been linked to his father's and brother's long-time employment at Ditchley. Presumably the family were on good terms with the steward and his deputies who were responsible for provisioning. Another brother, William, resident in Wootton, was brought

[41] Muldrew (1993a), 176-78.
[42] Accounts, DIL I/l/33.
[43] Accounts, DIL I/l/33a_7
[44] Accounts, DIL I/l/33f_5.

in to help plant "quicksets" when part of the estate was enclosed between 1745 and 1750, suggesting that the family's association with the estate was enduring.[45]

There are many more examples of people who lived at a considerable distance from Ditchley and yet were employed by the Earl or provided him with goods, perhaps because they had close kinship links with someone living or working on the estate.[46] Edward Busby, a limeburner of Bladon, was employed to make bricks in 1703 and 1707-8, despite living five miles from Ditchley House, because of his connections with the estate.[47] He held land in Gageingwell, and in the very years that he was engaged in brickmaking, his father was renting grazing land from the Earl in part of the Court Closes (Fig. 6.5). Similarly John Freeman of Chadlington, who delivered "cart coals" to Ditchley in 1745, was the son of the Dean copyholder John Snr., who had provided the estate household with barley, oats and beans on numerous occasions in the early eighteenth century (Fig. 6.14).[48] Once integrated into the estate economy families clearly continued to be involved in transactions at Ditchley for many generations: much of the land remained copyhold and so was passed down through lineages by inheritance; sons often took over jobs on the estate which their fathers had held;[49] and successive stewards tended to retain established sources of supply, dealing with the widows and heirs of farmers with whom they had previously done business.

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[45] Accounts, DIL I/l/33i_7-j_9. Quicksets were the fast growing hedges planted during enclosure to mark out the boundaries of the new field structure. This task was often undertaken by teams of specialist hedgers and ditchers who contracted for work over a considerable area from as far back as the late sixteenth century. (Hassell Smith (1989), 21-22). Perhaps William Millen was one of these specialist labourers seeking employment over a number of parishes in north Oxfordshire.

[46] Other studies have found that the kinship linkages of existing estate workers were often crucial in the recruitment of new employees. Hassell Smith (1989), 15-16; Houlbrooke (1984); Kussmaul (1981), 41.

[47] Accounts, DIL I/l/33a_3 & a_{7-8}.

[48] Accounts, DIL I/l/33.

[49] The Freemans and Millens provide examples of this.

b) *The impact of kinship upon transactions: beyond the immediate household*

Evidence for the economic significance of close kinship linkages appears conclusive, but it could be argued that the relationship between parent and offspring would obviously have been close even after sons and daughters had established their own separate households. It is, therefore, hardly surprising that the children of long-serving estate workers were also occasionally involved in transactions with estate officials. Proof that the estate's internal network of exchange was embedded in social relations depends upon evidence that linkages with more distant kinsmen also had a major impact on the pattern of transactions.[50]

Analysis of the accounts indicates that there was often a distant family linkage between transaction partners, but then many of the larger lineages had extensive kinship connections within the locality, and may not have been able to avoid contact with kinsmen had they wished to do so. In other words the presence of a small number of transactions between kin is itself not sufficient evidence to suggest that exchange at Ditchley was governed by underlying social relations. In order to establish this it is necessary to provide evidence that links were significantly biased in favour of family. For instance, Edward Wilkins of Glympton married into the long established Margets dynasty in 1724, and from 1730 was the huntsman at Ditchley (Fig. 6.21). Thereafter the huntsman's accounts regularly record his procurement of "flesh for the hounds" from neighbouring farmers, some of whom were distant relations.[51] The majority of flesh purchases were, however, from unrelated households, and it is unclear whether kinship connections significantly influenced Wilkins' requisitioning policy.

The weight of evidence does, however, suggest that kinship linkages *were* effective beyond the bounds of the nuclear household. Mary Stow, a member of the Millen lineage,

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[50] Friendship links may have been more important in the everyday lives of many villagers: credit was usually obtained from friends and neighbours rather than kin. However, kinship connections were likely to be more enduring because of the bonds of duty which people felt towards relatives, however distant.
[51] Huntsman's Account, DIL I/q/1g.

was employed as a laundry maid in 1740 (Fig. 6.22). Neither of her parents feature in the accounts, but her maternal grandfather was Henry Millen, the Ditchley mole-catcher. Another example of distant kinship links being utilised for the requisitioning of estate provisions relates to the Fortnam family (Fig. 6.13). One branch was resident in Enstone, and three of its members appear in the accounts between 1715 and 1725, two as small landholders, and the third, Edward, as a labourer working mostly on the Enstone part of the estate. More important, though, are the six entries relating to the provision of large quantities of oats by John, Charles and Edward Fortnam in 1735 and 1745.[52] None of them were resident in Enstone, nor could they be traced within the established lineage, suggesting that perhaps they came from a separate branch of the family based in the area around Swalcliffe and Bloxham. Examination of wills and parish registers confirms that the men came from this area just south of Banbury, and since oats were a widely available commodity, the fact that they were purchased from such distant sources suggests the operation of an extensive Fortnam kinship network.[53]

Further analysis of subsidiary estate documents such as the huntsman's accounts provides a clearer picture of effective linkages to more distant kinsfolk. They list all the people from whom the Earl purchased horse flesh to feed his hounds, and reveal that the huntsman often had to look beyond the immediate neighbourhood, drawing on supplies from farmers throughout north-west Oxfordshire, some of them kinsmen of Ditchley residents (Figs. 6.61-6.62). For instance, Jonathan Smith of Chadlington, who provided a load of flesh in May 1742, was married to Mary Couling, whose brothers Thomas, George and William all featured regularly in the estate accounts (Fig. 6.9).[54] The North Leigh branch of the Coulings, only distantly related to their cousins in Spelsbury, also supplied horse meat for the hounds on a number of occasions between 1729 and 1732.[55]

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[52] Accounts, DIL I/l/33.
[53] Oats were usually marketed locally due to their relatively low value. Chartres (1995), 124.
[54] Huntsman's Account, 1742, DIL I/q/1g/viii.
[55] Huntsman's Accounts 1729-32, DIL I/q/1g/ii-v.

The link with North Leigh appears to have been particularly strong, since eight other individuals from this relatively distant parish also provided flesh or live horses, although none of them had obvious kinship ties with any estate workers. Perhaps this reflected the utilisation of extended chains of kinship.[56] The other families in North Leigh may have been related to the branch of the Coulings that was resident there, although equally they may simply have been friends and neighbours. This illustrates how kinship and friendship ties could become so intertwined as to be indistinguishable. Requisitioning from North Leigh may have been governed partially by the kinship linkages of the Couling family, and the choice of transaction partners within the village could have been determined primarily by the extent of that family's social circle.

The Coulings were not the only family whose kinship links with distant cousins were used by Wilkins to requisition flesh: Farmer Burborough of Sandford St. Martin, who was related to the Church Enstone baking dynasty, supplied a live horse and two loads of flesh in 1737,[57] and William Freeman of Combe received 6s 6d for a horse in 1729.[58] In all, the huntsman's accounts contain 24 examples of purchases from members of dynastic families featured in the study, and a further 23 entries involving people bearing one of the lineage surnames, who were therefore probably distantly related to these families (Table 6.5). A further 123 purchases of flesh were from individuals with no immediately obvious links to the 30 study families, although 36 of them shared the surnames of other Ditchley employees, and a further 24 were Spelsbury or Enstone residents. This, however, still leaves a significant minority of transactions that must have been either entirely market-based, or determined by social ties other than kinship. Perhaps some of the transactions

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[56] The idea of kinship chains suggests that the linkages established between two families by marriage gave each access to the other's entire kinship network. If this were the case it would imply the existence of extremely dense webs of interconnections, as most dynasties within a particular area would almost certainly be bound together to a greater or lesser degree. Chaytor (1980), 45-49.

[57] Huntsman's Accounts 1737, DIL I/q/1g/vi.

[58] Huntsman's Accounts 1729, DIL 1/q/1g/ii.

Nature of vendors' links with the Ditchley estate	No. of vendors	% of vendors
Member of study dynasty	24	14.1
Distant relative of a study family	23	13.5
Kin of another Ditchley employee	36	21.2
Other Spelsbury/Enstone resident	24	14.1
Outsider without known kinship connections	63	37.1
Total	170	100

Table 6.5 *Linkages between the Ditchley estate and those supplying flesh for the hounds*

where there were no obvious links with the estate or any of its inhabitants involved friends of Wilkins and his deputies, although the operation of free market forces cannot be ruled out. Indeed, several of the more distant vendors sold their horses to the huntsman at either Chipping Norton or Woodstock fairs.[59]

Markets and fairs were commonly used for purchasing livestock of all kinds during the eighteenth century, and both Chipping Norton and Woodstock were prominent centres of the horse trade, so it is perhaps surprising that so few of Wilkins' purchases occurred there.[60] Yet there is considerable evidence that transactions were increasingly being conducted privately. Throughout the country, the toll books for horse markets and fairs become more fragmentary over time, containing fewer entries each year, clearly indicating that deregulation of commerce had reached the horse trade by the close of the seventeenth century.[61] At Oxford toll books span the 1673-1745 period, but the number of

[59] Huntsman's Accounts, DIL I/q/1g. Only 11 of the 188 recorded purchases of flesh or live horses were at fairs, less than 6% of the total.

[60] Horses were sold in large numbers at all of the Cotswold fairs as the widespread enclosed pasture in the area provided ample fodder for the animals before they were sold. Banbury, Bicester, Deddington, Chipping Norton, Burford and Hook Norton were especially important in this trade. Owen (1756),

[61] Toll books were first introduced during the reigns of Mary and Elizabeth aimed at reducing the incidence of horse stealing and regulating the trade in an animal which was vital to the economic and social life of the country. Edwards (1988), 1-2.

transactions recorded dwindles from the 1690s, as dealers became increasingly prominent.[62] By the mid-eighteenth century one might have expected some of Wilkins' suppliers to be horse traders operating outside the pitched market, but the apparent domination of private transactions is surprising. However, most vendors were not commercial dealers, but yeoman farmers, disposing of ageing horses no longer useful as draught animals. This suggests that there had always been a significant private trade amongst friends, neighbours and relatives throughout the period of regulation, illustrated in this case by the provision of horses for flesh. Historians have tended to focus on the regulated marketplace and its subversion, and consequently have often ignored this element of continuity within the overall pattern of exchange: a continuity that was expressed in explicitly moral terms.[63]

Of the transactors featured in the huntsman's accounts, 63% could be linked to the Ditchley estate by kinship or residence.[64] This suggests that despite cash payment in most cases, the requisitioning of supplies for the estate remained bound up with the moral economy. Only on eleven occasions did the Earl have to rely upon the marketplace to procure flesh for his hounds because in general he was able to depend on the network of contacts established by his huntsman. Kinship was, of course, only one of the determinants of this network, but it was an important one. Distance was also important, both because using local suppliers minimised transport costs, and because estate officials were more likely to be familiar with people living nearby, and hence know when they had the requisite goods available for sale (Fig. 6.61). Long established conduits of supply were important too, and had a tendency to cloud the picture, since they involved regular bulk purchases often from outsiders. In this case the huntsman knew that certain tradesmen such as butchers and collarmakers could provide him with a guaranteed supply

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[62] Edwards (1988), 70-76.
[63] Muldrew (1993a), 174-78.
[64] This figure is perhaps an underestimate, since only a proportion of Enstone and Spelsbury families were reconstituted.

of flesh, since it was a by-product of their trades. Thus, the accounts reveal long-term exchange relationships with families such as the Scasebrooks and Knibbs, both of whom were collarmakers.[65] The very endurance of such exchange relationships, however, would have depended upon the establishment of close ties between the huntsman and his suppliers.

6.8 Servants' kinship networks

In requisitioning provisions and hiring labour for the estate, different families had different degrees of influence on the decision-making process. Those who were largely copyhold or leasehold tenants could only sway purchasing and hiring decisions indirectly, suggesting to the steward relatives who might be able to meet particular needs or fulfil specific tasks. Craftsmen employed by the Earl also had a limited role in commodity transactions, although they were usually responsible for hiring the day labourers who assisted them. Thomas Fletcher, the carpenter during the rebuilding of Ditchley House in the 1720s, drew up a number of bills between 1724 and 1733 listing men he hired for the work.[66] Amongst them were two sets of brothers, Thomas and John Edwards, and John and Phillip Margets, but neither appears to have been related to the Fletcher family. Friendship rather than kinship links are the more likely connection in this case, since Fletcher lived locally in Charlbury, whilst the Margets dynasty was Enstone and Spelsbury based. Co-operation must have been commonplace amongst families engaged in the same occupation, who would certainly have been in regular contact.[67]

The people with greatest control over estate transactions were the servants of the household who ensured the efficient day-to-day operation of the estate, and, more importantly, the administrators who made strategic decisions. The latter were directly

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[65] Huntsman's Accounts, DIL I/q/1g.
[66] Misc. Bills, 1724-33, DIL I/o/22.
[67] Inter-marriage between occupational dynasties that were engaged in the same craft must also have been commonplace.

responsible for selling estate produce, managing internal commodity flows, purchasing goods from outsiders, and hiring and payment of the Ditchley labour force.[68] They were best placed amongst the thirty dynasties to influence transactions through their kinship networks. For instance, at Stiffkey, Norfolk, during the late sixteenth century, the landowner got most fresh food and other provisions from local families through the "sensitive and widespread personal networks" of his servants. A map of sales and purchases indicates the concentration of transactions within a seven-mile radius of Stiffkey, but the distribution is relatively uneven. Rather than a simple pattern of distance decay spreading outwards from the estate, which one might associate with the operation of a free market, there was a "ragged network", more indicative of non-market exchange. Servants made use of their own kinship and friendship networks to acquire provisions instead of seeking out the nearest or cheapest sources of supply.[69]

a) *The Freeman dynasty and its kin connections*

The Ditchley documents are not as comprehensive as those for Stiffkey and they were drawn up over a century later, but they cover a longer time-scale, more than fifty years, and do reveal a similar pattern of transactions and a similar role for the kinship networks of some household servants. The Freemans, Keepers of the Park throughout the 1680-1750 period, had a network of close kin extending into Enstone, where they owned land at Gageingwell, Steeple Barton, and Blackthorn, about seven miles to the east of the estate (Figs. 6.14 & 6.44). Some of these kinsfolk appear regularly in the accounts as estate employees or vendors of goods, although others are entirely absent, attesting to the fact that most individuals recognised only a proportion of their kin universe, primarily close relatives living nearby.[70]

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[68] See section 2.7.
[69] Hassell Smith (1989), 378-79. Information was also taken from a seminar given by Prof. Hassell Smith in HFL, Oxford University, November 1991.
[70] Wrightson & Levine (1979), 93-94.

A close kinsman of the Freemans who regularly had dealings with the Earl was Henry Lardner, married to Elizabeth, sister of Thomas Freeman (Fig. 6.14). Thomas was Keeper of the Park in the late seventeenth century, and thus may have been responsible for his brother-in-law being hired as a livery servant: Lardner was paid board wages and received "new livery shoes and stockings" in 1683,[71] and in 1704 his wife and son spent 15 days haymaking, earning 8s 9d.[72] The next Keeper, John Freeman, married Abigail Busby of Radford, linking himself into one of the major Enstone dynasties, whose kinship network stretched across the northern half of the study area from Chipping Norton to Stonesfield. Subsequently a number of Busbys appeared in the accounts, mostly in connection with the renting of land, although Robert Busby was paid £1 2s 4d for mason's work in 1703.[73] Perhaps the Freemans also inherited some land through the Busby marriage because John's brother Thomas moved to Radford from Blackthorn some time around 1700, and Thomas's youngest son Compton, born there in 1704, was an occasional employee on the estate during the 1740s. He rented a cottage adjoining the parsonage at Dean from 1730, perhaps acquired through his uncle, and in 1750 purchased a cart from John Margets.[74]

Kinship links often existed between major leaseholders and the estate administrators who supervised them as the two groups were of roughly comparable social status.[75] In 1722, John, brother of the then Keeper Thomas Freeman, married Elizabeth Mitchell, a kinswoman of Edward Mitchell who held Ditchley Farm at the time and was a regular supplier of grain to the estate. Two decades later another individual to benefit from family association with the Freemans was John Whiting, who was appointed Ditchley

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[71] Misc. Bills, 1683, DIL 1/o/20.
[72] Accounts, DIL $1/1/33a_4$
[73] Accounts, DIL $1/1/33a_3$
[74] Accounts, DIL $1/1/33f_5$-j_9.
[75] Social status was an important consideration when deciding upon marriage partners. Lord found that 85% of those marrying in her eight Surrey parishes between 1750 and 1851 chose partners from the same socio-economic background. Lord (1993), 149-62.

bailiff in 1746 around the time that he married Elizabeth, sister of the newly incumbent Keeper of the Park, John Freeman.

Another branch of the Freemans were yeoman farmers in the western part of Spelsbury parish, and well represented in Chadlington and Stonesfield (Fig. 6.14). They were only distantly related to the dynasty of Keepers if at all, but their appearance in the accounts selling produce and working for the Earl suggests that they may have benefited from kinship connections. John Freeman of Dean supplied the estate with sainfoin straw in 1704 and 1 quarter of beans in the following year, and rented part of the Court Closes for several years at the beginning of the eighteenth century.[76] Moreover, a John Freeman, possibly the same man, although maybe the Keeper of the Park himself, rented Ditchley Farm for 8 years between 1712 and 1720.[77] This was the largest farm on the estate, providing a significant return, and would have been highly sought after.[78] The fact that a Freeman and a kinsman of the family (Edward Mitchell) both held the land for a time while the family held high office in the estate administration is at least suggestive.

b) *Kinship links and turnover in the Ditchley household*

Other servants must also have made use of their kinship links whilst conducted estate affairs, although the absence of individual accounts listing their sales and purchases,[79] and the fact that many of them were employed for only a short time makes analysis more difficult. Most young women viewed service as merely an interlude before marriage,[80] and even the more senior posts such as gardener and housekeeper changed hands regularly at Ditchley. Between 1700 and 1730 there were seven housekeepers, each serving on average about three years, whilst lesser servants such as the housemaids,

[76] Accounts, DIL I/l/33a.
[77] Accounts, DIL I/l/33b_2-c_5.
[78] See section 3.5b.
[79] These were available at Stiffkey. Hassell Smith (1989)
[80] Hecht (1956); Hill (1989, 1996); Kussmaul (1981), 70-93.

laundry and dairy maids often spent even shorter periods in the Earl's employ (Table 6.6).[81] Given this high rate of turnover within the Ditchley household, its web of kinship connections must have been in a constant state of flux, and therefore one would expect the pattern of estate requisitioning to lack significant continuity if goods were being purchased through servants' kinship connections.[82] The family ties of each servant would be utilised whilst they were employed by the Earl, but once they left his employ their replacement would bring a different set of kinship linkages with them.

A coincident absence of continuity in both the employment of servants and choice of exchange partners is consistent with, although not necessarily indicative of, close links between the two. On the other hand, continued use of the same sources of supply, despite changes in the composition of the household, would suggest that there was little connection between them. The high turnover of personnel within the Ditchley household would lead to continual changes in the sources of supply drawn upon by the Ditchley administration if servants were significantly influencing the choice of transaction partners.[83] This, however, throws up a dilemma, since thus far the perpetuation of an exchange partnership has been regarded as evidence of underlying social relations, whilst prompt termination of ties between transactors has been seen as indicative of the market.[84] Clearly where kinship linkages were transitory the distinction between moral and market economy cannot be determined by the length of exchange relationship alone.

In any case the evidence from the accounts is at best inconclusive. Unlike the transitory exchange relationships at Stiffkey in the 1590s, at Ditchley some regular suppliers appear to have had long associations with the estate. Thomas Freeman, the Keeper of the Park, provided the Earl with cereals and hay throughout 1725-45, and George Bustin of

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[81] The turnover of female domestic servants was remarkably high, due to the regularity of both dismissal and voluntary termination of contract. Hill (1989), 136-41.
[82] This would, of course, also have been the case if a fully functioning free market was operating.
[83] Hassell Smith (1991).
[84] Hodges (1988), 87-8.

Kiddington was a major supplier of oats between 1740 and 1750.[85] Moreover, only grain transactions appear in the accounts in sufficient numbers for this kind of analysis, yet trade in cereals was much more commercialised than that in vegetables, meat and dairy products, and therefore less likely to reveal evidence of kinship networks exerting an influence on purchasing.[86] A further drawback stems from the sampling of the estate accounts after 1710, which ensures that the record of transactions remains incomplete.[87]

Nevertheless, in some cases it is possible to determine whether trade relationships were short- or long-term in character. Where an individual appeared in the accounts for only one year, they could not possibly have been linked to the estate for more than nine, or this would have been picked up in the previous and subsequent accounts used.[88] Of the 144 people recorded selling cereals, hay or sheep, 107 or 74% fall into this category, indicating a turnover of exchange partners as high as that of servants (Table 6.7). However, 18 suppliers provisioned the estate for at least 10 years and often considerably longer, appearing in three or more of the sampled account books. Thomas Hailes, a Churchill gentleman, supplied hay in 1730, 1735 and 1745 and is likely to have had dealings with the Lees between these dates. If the maintenance of trade linkages over more than a decade is taken to constitute a long-term relationship, the grain accounts seem to suggest that around 23% of Ditchley's suppliers were of this kind.[89] Thus only a quarter of vendors traded with the estate long enough to rule out the possibility that their

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[85] Accounts, DIL I/l/33e_3-j_9. Thomas Freeman was Keeper of the Park throughout the period during which he supplied grain to the Earl. George Bustin had no obvious family ties to any long-serving member of the household.

[86] These were the goods most often supplied through kinship connections at Stiffkey. Hassell Smith (1989), 378-79.

[87] Sampling methods are discussed in section 2.8.

[88] In most cases it seems likely that individuals appearing only once in the accounts as a vendor conducted transactions with the Earl for no more than two or three years, something confirmed by a complete transcription of the accounts covering the 1702-10 period.

[89] All individuals appearing in two or more consecutive sampled account books are included in this figure, since someone selling produce to the Earl in 1730 and 1735, for example, could have been a supplier throughout the 1726-39 period, and is likely to have had a trade link stretching for more than ten years.

selection as transaction partners was determined partially by kinship linkages with a Ditchley servant.

This does not necessarily mean that the remaining 75% of suppliers were all integrated into the family networks of the various household members. Only 47% of transactors had clearly definable kinship ties with one of the 30 reconstituted study families, and even fewer could be linked to one of the estate's servants. Moreover, the minority of long-term suppliers were responsible for a disproportionate amount of the total volume of cereals: 55% of oats, for instance. This can largely be attributed to the characteristics of the group, most of whom were estate leaseholders, lived locally or held gentry status. Regardless of whether they had kinship ties with the household, it was in the interest of tenants to provide the landlord with grain to set against their rent, and, as the largest farmers on the estate, they were also the most obvious source of bulk supplies. Men like Joseph Walker, Thomas Hailes and William Cripps had different reasons for continued links with Ditchley. Although probably too lowly to be associates of the Lees, they would certainly have moved within the same social circle as the steward, and had the surplus produce necessary to be a reliable source of grain when shortages arose. They were the large yeoman farmers, producing specifically for the market, who have conventionally been seen as being at the forefront of the drive towards agrarian capitalism.[90] The account evidence illustrates, however, that they could also be tied into long-term exchange relationships with specific customers, relationships that may not have been influenced by kinship, but must have been underpinned by mutual trust and obligation.[91]

The overall impression gained, therefore, is that turnover amongst those supplying grain to the estate was relatively high, and may to some extent have reflected the equally rapid changes in the composition of the household. Long surviving linkages could usually be explained by the close proximity of the person to Ditchley or their association with the

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[90] Brenner (1985), 274-323; Marx (1867), 877-95.
[91] Muldrew (1998), 148-172.

upper echelons of the administration: there was a good deal of continuity at the top of the estate hierarchy.[92] Consequently it would be unwise to rule out the possibility that kinship networks played a significant role in determining from whom grain supplies were sought when the estate had a deficit. Moreover, cereals were particularly amenable to market exchange, since they were mass produced, non-perishable and extensively traded, and consequently one would expect the involvement of servants' kinship networks to be even more common for goods such as vegetables and dairy products which were perishable and produced on a small scale.[93]

c) *Kinship networks and the choice of transaction partner*

Whether servants' social networks were being used to obtain goods and labour for the estate can also be determined by looking for family linkages between members of the Ditchley household and those individuals appearing in the accounts in a particular year. Of the 50 or so junior ranking servants named in the accounts over the years covered in the study, only 17 had overt kinship connections with one of the 30 families whose lineages have been reconstructed (Table 6.8).[94] Even for this group the evidence is inconclusive, since in only a few cases are there clear connections between the employment of a family member as a servant and the purchase of goods from other members of that family. Nevertheless there are enough examples to suggest that kinship did play some role in the requisitioning of goods at Ditchley.[95] A member of the Bishop dynasty, Elizabeth, was a maid at the house in 1725, and her brother Thomas provided

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[92] The position of Keeper of the Park was held by the Freemans throughout the 1680-1750 period, during which time the Earl had only three stewards. Thomas Cary, William Canning and James Allen each served for over a decade and must have built up an extensive web of kinship and friendship connections over the years, which they could draw upon when needed.

[93] Hassell Smith (1989), 378.

[94] For discussion of the representativeness of these study families, see section 5.6c.

[95] The commodities most often purchased at Stiffkey through servants' contacts, namely bacon, poultry, eggs, fruit and vegetables, do not feature in the Ditchley accounts. These concentrate predominantly on the bulk purchasing of grain, which was less likely to have been acquired through kinship connections.

oats, beans and sainfoin seed on no fewer than 34 occasions during that year.[96] No member of the Bishop family had previously supplied the Earl, and subsequently Thomas re-appeared in the accounts only in 1735, when oats were again supplied.[97] The Hiats sold produce to the Earl only twice, in 1710 and 1745, the latter occasion being soon after Martha Hiat's employment as a scullery maid between 1740 and 1744. In both these instances close relatives appear to have been the beneficiaries, but more distant kinship ties may also have been utilised. For example, John Fortnam of Swalcliffe near Banbury supplied 25 quarters of oats to the estate in 1735, when his second cousin Sibble Hauten was kitchen maid at Ditchley.[98]

This evidence could be mere coincidence, since there are other examples where information relating to servants' employment and the purchase of goods appears to conflict. The baker John Burborough sold bran to the steward in 1710, but during 1725-50, when his daughter Mary and son-in-law Henry Haines were employed at Ditchley, the family did not sell bread or any other commodity to the Earl (Fig. 6.4). However, Mary's brother Joseph was hired as a livery servant in 1725, and another brother Jonas worked on the estate as a labourer for several months during 1735. For other families such as the Crosses and Trinders the situation was more complex (Figs. 6.10 & 6.28). There does sometimes appear to be a correlation between the hiring of a particular servant and purchasing of goods from their family, but purchases were also made when there were no family members in the Ditchley household. Elizabeth Cross was kitchen maid in 1745, when a member of her family purchased a cow from the bailiff, but no Crosses were members of the household in 1709-10 or 1750 when the family also supplied provisions.[99]

Yet both the Crosses and Trinders were employed on the estate as labourers and helped out at harvest time throughout the 1700-50 period, suggesting a more symbiotic process.

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[96] Accounts, DIL I/l/33e_3.
[97] Accounts, DIL I/l/33g_7.
[98] Accounts, DIL I/l/33.
[99] Ibid.

Dynasties with a long history of employment on the estate were more likely to provide servants to the household.[100] Once they had been hired these servants could make use of their kinship networks to alter the pattern of requisitioning and increase the likelihood that other members of their family would become part of the Ditchley workforce. Consequently the whole system became mutually reinforcing, ensuring that certain labouring dynasties such as the Crosses and Trinders dominated recruitment into the household.

6.9 The extent of kin involvement in the pattern of exchange

From the evidence so far examined in can be concluded that kinship did exert a significant influence upon commodity exchange on the Ditchley estate during the early eighteenth century. It also appears that the larger lineages and those heavily represented amongst servants were likely to make most use of kinship connections. What is not yet clear, however, is the extent to which family lineages at Ditchley could transform the pattern of transactions centred on the estate. Aggregate statistics allow us to examine this question and to determine the basic dynasty characteristics that favoured the effective deployment of a particular family's kinship network.

The involvement of each dynastic family in estate affairs was initially established by comparing the number of references to a family in the estate accounts with the number of reconstituted households within their lineage. This indicates the depth of integration, removing bias in favour of the larger dynasties such as the Issards and Coulings, who might appear to be the most heavily involved in the Ditchley economy due to sheer weight of numbers (Table 6.9). Only households which were extant at some point between 1680 and 1750 were included, which accounts for the small figures for several lineages, such as the Dennetts, who were less influential in the late seventeenth century

[100] The wide variety of formal and informal hiring practices for servants during the eighteenth century are described by Hill (1995), 159-63.

than they had been half a century earlier (Fig. 6.11). The number of reconstituted households for each of the families, present at some point within Enstone and Spelsbury, was also noted. This was especially significant in the few cases where comprehensive reconstruction of the lineage was not possible, due to the family's high level of mobility or the absence of necessary parish register data.[101]

a) *Contrasting patterns of kinship effectiveness*

The results reveal wide variations in the level of family participation in the estate economy which do not appear to be random, since dynasties seem to fall into three groupings (Table 6.9). Most notable is the block containing the Freemans, Coulings, Issards, Crosses and Trinders, each mentioned in more than 100 separate account entries. In contrast the Wisdomes, Oldacres, Claridges and Burboroughs appeared in the accounts fewer than 15 times. To some extent these contrasting levels of involvement in estate affairs were a function of the variable size of lineages: there were, for example, 29 reconstituted Couling households, but only 4 Wisdomes, and a mean figure of 9 for the study families as a whole. Thus, the frequency with which a particular family appeared in the accounts does illustrate how influential they were within the Ditchley economy, but does not indicate the strength of their commitment to, or dependence on, the estate.

This problem can be addressed by plotting the information on a graph and fitting a regression line. Families above the line had a greater than average level of integration into the estate economy, those below it were more loosely linked (Fig. 6.63). The differing characteristics of these two groups are immediately apparent, and this may go some way towards explaining which types of household were more likely to utilise their kinship linkages to mould the pattern of transactions. Those lineages with above average levels of integration consisted primarily of labourers, leasehold tenants or household

[101] Register books for Enstone are missing between 1626 and 1660, preventing branches of certain families, such as the Bowells and Busbys, from being drawn together.

servants. The last of these categories is self-explanatory: both the Freemans and Gadfields, as employees, were involved in the day-to-day administration of the estate and so it is hardly surprising to find them appearing regularly in the accounts. Leaseholders, too, were bound tightly into the Ditchley economy, often taking advantage of the opportunity to offset part of their rent payments by supplying goods and services to the Earl.[102] Similarly labourers, especially those who were hired throughout the year, depended upon the estate for their livelihood. Frequently they received payment in kind, rented a cottage or bought supplies directly from the landowner ensuring a regular mention in the accounts.[103] Families playing a limited role in estate affairs were predominantly of yeoman stock and had a strong bias towards Enstone, suggesting that the estate economy was centred on Spelsbury, where the Earl owned most of the land. The estate's holdings in Enstone, acquired through marriage in the 1660s, were clearly of lesser significance, and residents there consequently had more interests outside the scope of the estate accounts.

Where a significant proportion of the people within a lineage appeared in the accounts, it can be assumed that they formed a relatively close-knit kin grouping, whose interconnections were reflected in the pattern of transactions. On the other hand, poor representation in the accounts suggests that a family was unable to deploy its network of kinship linkages effectively. In this case the employment of one family member on the estate would not necessarily favour the formation of trade linkages with other members. For example, the Callcotts lineage contained 74 individuals, only one of whom appeared in the Ditchley accounts (Table 6.9 & Fig. 6.63). Richard Callcott moved to Ditchley to work as a smith, later settling in Dean where he held some copyhold land. His association with the landlord did not, however, encourage the formation of exchange relationships

[102] See section 3.5b.

[103] See section 3.4. Unlike many of the yeoman farmers in the district the Earl of Litchfield relied largely on day labourers rather than employing servants-in-husbandry.

with other members of the lineage because most still lived in North Leigh and its environs. The Ditchley Callcotts were recent arrivals and had yet to establish an extensive local web of kinship, simply having links to their parish of origin, which lay some 5 miles south of the estate.

b) *Neighbourhood and estate*

The Drinkwaters, Sansoms, Souches, Millens, Bowells and Wisdomes also had less representation within the accounts than one would have expected given the size of their lineages, indicating either that their interest in the estate was more peripheral or that the effectiveness of their kinship networks was limited (Fig. 6.63). Family members who were involved in transactions with the Earl did not introduce relatives into the estate economy, either because they did not wish to, or lacked the necessary means to do so. Most were customary landholding dynasties, or leased land beyond the bounds of the estate, and as a consequence were less integrated into the estate system.

In contrast other lineages had a higher number of members appearing in the Ditchley accounts than would be expected given their size. The Crosses, Trinders and Freemans, for instance, were particularly heavily involved in estate affairs: of the 104 Crosses baptised between 1680 and 1750, 24 appeared in the accounts. Many of those not mentioned may have died in infancy or moved away, so such a large representation in the accounts reflects an extremely high degree of family commitment to the Ditchley estate. Indeed, over 50% of the adult members of the Spelsbury-based Cross lineage living in Oxfordshire were probably involved in transactions with the Earl during the first half of the eighteenth century. The Trinder family, too, had 17 individuals mentioned in the documents from a lineage population of only 62, whilst the Freemans had 21 from 114. The Crosses and Trinders were predominantly labourers, which would certainly have encouraged their integration into the estate economy, since Ditchley was the major

employer in the vicinity, and households of such lowly social status were more likely to have remained within the neighbourhood area than dispersed more widely.

This continued spatial concentration of certain labouring families within a restricted area encouraged the preservation of strong kinship linkages and may have contributed to the regular hiring of such families by landowners. Dynasties established by labourers generally tended to be shorter lived and extended over a more limited area, usually coextensive with the neighbourhood, and so members of these families were often in a position to make use of kinship connections to secure employment for their relatives.[104] Since the steward at Ditchley frequently required labour at short notice to fulfil specific tasks and to help during haymaking and the harvest, he relied on his existing workforce of day labourers to provide him with contacts to other workers. Many of those hired for only a few days were relatives of full-time employees, usually members of their nuclear family rather than being more distantly related. For instance, (Goody) Mary Trinder, wife of William, did several weeks haymaking accompanied variously by her son or daughter between 1704 and 1707. Other kinsfolk were hired at harvest time, such as Goody Lardner, sister of Thomas Freeman, and her son, Thomas, who were also paid for 9 days work in 1704. A detailed study of the Ditchley labour force in 1725 reveals similar evidence of kinship linkages in action, such as the 52 days' employment of John Cross, possibly received through the influence of his brother William and brother-in-law Humphrey Trinder, both of whom worked at Ditchley throughout the year (Table 3.6). Indeed, there were at least five members of the Cross lineage out of a total estate workforce of only 31 in 1725. Labouring dynasties, therefore, clearly had some influence over the recruitment of the Ditchley labour force, and perhaps once employed were able to impact upon the pattern of commodity transactions as well as labour recruitment.

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[104] Lord (1993), 151.

Major landholding dynasties such as the Issards, Rooks and Coulings appear to have made only moderate use of their kinship connections to influence the pattern of transactions. The same is also true of the Margets, who were carpenters on the estate throughout the period, but seem not to have used their position to encourage the requisitioning of goods from other members of their family. Of the 156 Issards who lived during the study period only 22 appear in the accounts, and many of these entries relate simply to the payment of rent and tithes on their land. Similarly there were over 100 Coulings, of whom only 19 were engaged in transactions with the Earl. This suggests that landholders were more likely to consider the neighbourhood as their social arena, and were thus less heavily integrated into the estate economy. These major landholding dynasties tended to make up the community core: the group of families responsible for defining the neighbourhood area as a spatial expression of their social relations and establishing local societal norms and traditions to which newcomers to the area had to conform.[105] It is not surprising, therefore, that their interaction was channelled primarily through the neighbourhood rather than the estate, since intermarriage ensured that their neighbours in the open field farming community were often also their kin. Members of such families were not as a rule employed as servants by the Earl, and so they had limited scope to draw upon their extensive kinship networks when requisitioning decisions were being made on the estate.

c) *The estate community*

The families whose social universe was significantly influenced by the Ditchley estate can be classified into two occupational groupings: labourers/artisans and servants/estate officials. Both groups relied on the landowner for most of their income, and hence must necessarily have been more heavily committed to the estate. Moreover, from their

[105] Phythian-Adams (1991), 43-45.

position as insiders, labourers and servants were better placed to utilise their kinship connections when procurement decisions were being made. This does not, of course, mean that their networks of kinship were any stronger or more effective than those of other occupational groups. These dynasties, which were directly or indirectly responsible for estate procurement of goods, simply had more opportunities to make use of their kinship connections and thus appeared most regularly in the estate accounts.

This emphasises a significant drawback of using estate accounts to examine exchange relationships within a rural community: they illustrate only the utilisation of kinship linkages for transactions involving the estate, so that the bulk of exchange relationships, which took place in the local agrarian economy cannot be investigated. It is clear, however, that kinship was used to cement community and neighbourhood solidarity. What the estate accounts show is merely a snapshot of one small part of the overall web of family interconnection, the remainder of which can only be glimpsed through diaries or inferred from the wills of estate residents and other contemporary documents.

6.10 Reflections

At this point it is useful to look again at the pattern of estate transactions. By the early eighteenth century most exchange may certainly have appeared from a surface reading of the accounts to be monetary in character, but family reconstitution has shown that the choice of transaction partner was often determined more by bonds of kinship and friendship than by market forces. Many of the account entries classified under market exchange have thus to be reappraised in the light of the extra material provided by the reconstructed lineages. Without this information the 19 quarters of oats provided by John Poulton of Hailey in 1740/1 would have been considered an entirely commercial transaction.[106] However, Poulton was the husband of Sarah, daughter of John Issard, who

[106] Accounts, DIL $1/1/33h_8$.

had a long history of association with the estate, renting Spelsbury Farm from 1725 until his death in 1738 (Fig. 6.18).[107] This is not an isolated example, but seems to be representative of the purchasing policy at Ditchley.

Assuming that the Ditchley estate is not atypical, one must conclude that the internalisation of the rural economy within such institutional boundaries had the effect of emphasising the role of social relations, which were also operating within the wider community. Inside the boundaries of the neighbourhood area, villagers often sought assistance from friends and relatives in time of need, just like the farmers in nineteenth-century Massachusetts and the bargemen of Fisher Row.[108] The estate system simply created a macro-scale framework for purchasing, which emphasises the kinship connections of those individuals involved in procurement, and provides a documentary record of the transactions that took place. Exchange associated with the estate was significantly influenced by kinship, because this same web of family linkages underpinned eighteenth-century rural society.

At Ditchley it was the labourers, craftsmen and servants, the proletarians and artisans, who were most heavily dependent on kinship linkages. They used family ties to secure employment for relatives or to acquire goods for their master, so offsetting some of the more invidious aspects of the free market. This compares closely with the situation in the Lancashire mining industry during the eighteenth century, where in each of three reconstituted lineages, every miner's son became a miner.[109] Ditchley tenants, on the other hand, remained relatively secure within the open field village community and its wider neighbourhood setting throughout much of the eighteenth century, due to the significant continuity within the landholding population. There was only limited tenurial

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[107] O.A. Lease for Spelsbury Farm to John Issard of Spelsbury 1725, DIL II/i/7.
[108] Clark (1982); Prior (1982).
[109] Langton (forthcoming).

change in Spelsbury before the 1730s, and most townships were enclosed late, with Church and Neat Enstone not losing their open fields until 1843-44.[110]

Proletarianization thus seems not to have undermined, but rather to have reinforced kinship as a safeguard against change. Industrial communities were increasingly the "epicentres of food rioting" in support of customary pricing, since they were more vulnerable to market fluctuations in the price of food.[111] A century later the Lancashire proletariat, "particularly preferred kin as the source of assistance, rather than neighbours or friends", confirming the impression that the breakdown of local community which accompanied industrialisation increased dependence upon the kinship 'safety net'.[112] Agricultural labourers retained many elements of the village community, even after enclosure, so that kinship was just one of the avenues through which they could assert their customary rights.[113] Nevertheless labouring remained an insecure occupation, and thus kinship continued to fulfil an important role. The moral economy, rather than gradually fading into the background, became increasingly important during the eighteenth century, as it offered greater flexibility and security at a time of considerable uncertainty caused by fundamental changes in economy and society.[114]

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[110] Gageingwell was enclosed by private agreement in 1712-14, and open field farming ended in Dean (1779) and Spelsbury (1803) via Acts of Parliament. Oxfordshire County Council (1963), 19, 39-40.
[111] Williams (1984), 278-280.
[112] Anderson (1971), 162.
[113] Charlesworth & Randall (1987), 203-204.
[114] Thompson (1971), 83-88.

(7) CONCLUSION

This study set out initially to discover the extent to which moral economy had been superseded by the market, and as a subsidiary question to determine the reasons for this transformation. These issues were addressed by examining the economy and society of a north Oxfordshire estate during the early eighteenth century. Analysis was framed in terms of the competing models of moral economy and industrious revolution. The former views transition as a struggle between the forces of capitalism and the deep-rooted customary beliefs of the poor. Plebeian attitudes towards the market are characterised in terms of passive acceptance, punctuated by episodes of active resistance during periods of distress.[1] The latter, in contrast, suggests that the rural population actively sought to participate in the marketplace in order to acquire the money necessary to purchase consumption goods.[2] The evidence presented appears to reflect elements of both models, but not to validate either entirely.

The inhabitants of the Ditchley area do appear, to some extent, to have been coerced into market participation. Certainly, detailed analysis of the accounts in chapters three and four leaves no doubt that the market played an important role in the affairs of the estate throughout the study period. The majority of transactions must have been consistently cash based, since Ditchley's tenant farmers had to sell most of their surplus produce commercially in order to acquire money for rent payments. Changes in rental policy implemented at the beginning of the century began to take effect around 1725, leading to a gradual shift from copyhold to short-term leasehold tenure. This brought higher revisable rents and encouraged amalgamation of landholdings, so that estate tenants were more commercially oriented by the close of the period. Payments to

[1] Thompson (1971, 1991); Williams (1984).
[2] de Vries (1975, 1993).

labourers working on the estate were also substantially rationalised during the early eighteenth century, reflecting a movement away from a customary labour regime to more regular daily rates. These developments support the moral economy model, since they indicate external imposition of the market. Rental policy and labour relations at Ditchley were the responsibility of the landlord and his steward, and therefore any changes were primarily a consequence of the Earl's desire to modernise administration of the estate and maximise the potential returns.

There is, however, also some indication that large sections of the population were willing participants in commercialisation of the agrarian economy. Inventory evidence shows changing attitudes towards consumption amongst the larger tenant farmers, many of whom were clearly buying a wide variety of durable goods by the mid-eighteenth century. The substitution of these purchased manufactures for home-produced goods reflected a clear shift towards market-orientation, something also suggested by the prevalence of middlemen and the private sale of farm produce.[3] After 1725 the accounts record a dramatic increase in the volume of grain purchased with cash from outsiders. Similarly, the proliferation of country shops, noted in chapter four, is an indication of the growing demand for groceries and cheap manufactured goods within the poorer sectors of society.[4] This was as much a response to dietary shifts as to the breakdown of hierarchically structured distribution, prompted partly by the decline of farm service.[5] Coupled with evidence of emerging proto-industry and the growing market-orientation of agrarian production, this suggests that involvement in the market was extensive and participation often active.

Significant areas of the local economy, however, lay outside the domain of the market. Non-monetary payments appear to have been widespread both within the bounds of the

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[3] de Vries (1975), 205-266.
[4] Mui & Mui (1989), 201-20; Shammas (1990), 225-60.
[5] Shammas (1990), 86-112; Snell (1985), 86-8.

estate and in the wider rural community, and self-provisioning remained the primary source of sustenance for the husbandmen and smallholders, who still constituted the majority of tenants in 1750.[6] Certainly common rights continued to be exercised within fully functioning open field systems in many of the Spelsbury and Enstone townships. Neighbourhood exchange was also an important conduit for local commodity flows, although one which has proved difficult to quantify.[7] Some indication of its extent has, however, been gleaned from family reconstitution. Through the construction of lineages it is possible to identify kinship linkages between the parties in many transactions that were initially regarded as purely commercial. Moreover, the Ditchley accounts reveal that an extensive, largely non-monetized internal market in goods operated within the estate alongside the monetized external market. This was utilised both by tenants seeking to offset a proportion of their rents, and by craftsmen and labourers, who were often paid partially in kind. Such parochial marketing systems were said by Hassell Smith to be typical of sheep/corn farming areas, of which both Ditchley and his study area of Stiffkey are examples.[8] Such internal exchange was fundamentally redistributive in character, and indicates the survival of elements of a hierarchical demand structure at Ditchley, which only gradually faded into the background over the course of the eighteenth century.

Over the course of the study period there does appear to have been a general expansion of market exchange. Chapter three shows that cash transactions became increasingly important at Ditchley over the fifty years covered by the accounts, with 1725 appearing to be a significant watershed. However, this was not a unilinear trend: the balance of monetary and non-monetary exchange appears, in fact, to have fluctuated substantially over time in relation to grain prices and shifting estate policy. The reversion to produce payment between 1709-12 coincided with the highest wheat prices of the period, and

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[6] Havinden (1961a), 188-89.
[7] Few farmers left a written record of their everyday activities.
[8] Hassell Smith (1989), 378.

must reflect a return to elements of the moral economy prompted by real distress amongst the Ditchley workforce.[9] The peak in the early 1720s is more problematic, but was probably a consequence of the inflated labouring population during the rebuilding of Ditchley House. Such trends reflect the survival of elements of aristocratic paternalism. The Earl, like many landowners of the period, had an ambivalent attitude to commercialisation, especially during times of scarcity. This indicates the need to move beyond notions of progressive monetization and commodification to actually question the parameters of the transition debate itself.

A mutually exclusive dualistic categorisation of transactions as pertaining to market or moral economy is too simple because there were, in fact, a number of overlapping conduits for exchange. A myriad of different possible trajectories were simultaneously being followed by different members of the community, each acting according to their individual needs and perceptions. Someone requiring a particular good could turn to a country shopkeeper; the pitched market; a network of friends and relatives living within the neighbourhood area; work-based connections within the estate, or, of course, produce the item themselves. As a result exchange must be viewed within several contrasting spatial frameworks, namely the neighbourhood, estate, local marketplace and national market. Each reflected aspects of economic integration at a different socio-spatial level.

The neighbourhood area was the spatial expression of the kinship and friendship linkages of landholding dynasties, providing a local societal framework for both their monetary and, more significantly, non-monetary exchange. Long-standing yeoman dynasties were the most likely to have a social universe based on the neighbourhood, as it was the interaction patterns of these families which were largely responsible for defining and maintaining the integrity of such areas. I have only been able to examine kinship connections, but the evidence outlined in chapters five and six is sufficient to confirm that

[9] Thompson (1971); Walter & Wrightson (1976).

neighbourhood affiliations at Ditchley cut across the estate boundaries. Enstone was clearly part of a northward orientated social area encompassing adjacent parishes such as Heythrop, Great Tew and Sandford St. Martin, whilst Spelsbury was part of a neighbourhood unit including Stonesfield, Wootton and Chadlington. This evidence ties in with what is known about local population mobility and the integration of the local agrarian system through such practices as intercommoning. The various landholding dynasties at Ditchley were heavily intermarried and formed a tight-knit community, co-operating daily in the organisation of the farming system, and further held together by a web of informal non-monetary exchanges few of which are visible through the estate accounts.

The estate incorporated parts of both neighbourhood areas, and it too exerted an influence upon local exchange flows through its internal marketing system and central position in the local agrarian economy. Leasehold tenants used this conduit to dispose of a proportion of their surplus each year, usually set against rent bills, since most were newcomers to the area and lacked a firm kinship base. The Kinches, for instance, moved to Enstone from Middleton Stoney in 1713, whilst Henry Curtis moved from Ratley, Warwickshire to take on the lease of Spelsbury Farm in 1705.[10] Thus leaseholders did not operate solely within the market arena, but were integrated into the internal redistributive system at Ditchley. Craftsmen and labourers seem also to have moved predominantly within the bounds of the same social area. Their kinship universe coincided with the estate rather than the neighbourhood unit because for them the location of kinsmen was a reflection of the availability of employment niches not the pattern of landholding, and the largest employer of labour in both Enstone and Spelsbury was the Earl himself. Labourers and craftsmen were increasingly dependent on kinship connections as the eighteenth century progressed because they were the groups whose position became steadily more

[10] Lease for Spelsbury Farm to Henry Curtis of Ratley, Warwickshire. 1705, DIL II/i/4.

precarious as the market economy became more pervasive. Both formed part of the emerging rural proletariat, disinherited from their communal rights by landlord inspired enclosure, farm engrossment and population growth.

The market was not a single uniform arena for transactions, but incorporated a complex hierarchy of interrelated spheres, reflecting the multiplicity of commodities being traded and the variety of market forms. The regulated marketplace organised space primarily at a local level, with each town in the stonebrash district controlling its own rural hinterland. Vertical integration was largely restricted to those sectors of the economy that served wider markets, such as woollen textiles and livestock, something illustrated by account entries relating to the purchase of horses and cattle. The decline of regulation and emergence of competitive markets during the early modern period was, however, associated with the establishment of a more complete central place hierarchy.[11] National markets emerged for certain products such as wheat, with the extent of price integration diminishing progressively as one moved down the hierarchy.[12] Thus Oxfordshire formed a regional market area, which was roughly defined by the Thames watershed.[13] Parts of the county were also integrated into the metropolitan grain market through the activities of wholesale traders, although the stonebrash district is thought to have lain outside this area since the Thames was not navigable beyond Abingdon.[14] Nevertheless, maltsters and mealmen controlled much of the flow of cereals from this part of Oxfordshire, suggesting that the district was significantly engaged in the competitive marketplace. Although their pre-eminence was frequently berated by the steward and market bailiff, the fact that so little grain passed through Charlbury market seems to indicate that little effort was made to restrict the activities of these middlemen.

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[11] Dodgshon (1987), 287-351; Hodges (1988), 62-95.
[12] Chartres (1995), 124-28.
[13] Everitt (1967), 490-502; John (1960), 126-27; Rogers (1866-1900).
[14] Campbell *et al* (1993), 46-69; Havinden (1961a), 175-76.

Given that there were these various overlapping spheres of exchange, and that individual households were engaged in each of them to a greater or lesser degree, it would be wise to reassess the terms in which the study was conceptualised. It appears that moral economy was not simply superseded progressively by the market. They coexisted throughout the early modern period, at the same time complementary and in competition, fulfilling specific economic roles for different people at different times.[15] Indeed the evidence suggests that the two systems were dependent upon one another due to the high level of integration within the local agrarian economy.[16] Commercial agriculture at Ditchley relied on access to the labour of smallholders, whose support came primarily from common resources and neighbourhood exchange, whilst the smallholders were, to some extent, dependent upon the wages they earned through working on the estate.[17] Similarly tenants were keen to offset a proportion of their rents with produce payments so as to have sufficient money income to purchase manufactured goods, many of which may have been produced by proto-industrial households, partially reliant upon access to common resources. Most households thus appear to have regarded both market and moral economy as equally important elements of their overall survival strategy. Individuals did not behave according to some fixed criteria determined by external socio-economic process, they made rational decisions about exchange based upon their knowledge of the opportunities available and assessment of what was best for their needs.

This complementarity of moral and market economy was largely a consequence of their essential continuity. During the early eighteenth century most forms of exchange were underpinned by moral obligation, although the set of social relations surrounding each transaction were different. Some transactions were influenced by the burden of debt; kinship and friendship linkages mediated others; and yet more were elements of long-

[15] Reed (1990), 84.
[16] Goodacre (1994); Taylor (1988).
[17] Neeson (1993), 40-43.

term exchange relationships, dependent upon the maintenance of trust between transaction partners. This would appear to leave only a minor role for the free market.[18] The impression gained is that the pattern of exchange at Ditchley was essentially moral in character, regardless of whether transactions were monetized or not. Given that money was in short supply, transactions were often based on credit, so that households accumulated numerous reciprocal debt relationships over time.[19] The use of running accounts meant that 'cash transactions' conducted privately or in the marketplace were clearly often as firmly embedded in social relations as non-monetary payments.

Many of the market transactions recorded in the estate accounts involved kinship connections, because such social relations were one means of establishing the necessary level of trust between trade partners where goods were being bought and sold on credit. Market exchange at Ditchley during the early eighteenth century was thus effectively embedded within "a moral economy of individualistic contractual relations".[20] For this reason it would be unwise to describe rural Oxfordshire as moving towards a free market economy and society during the early eighteenth century, just as it is now recognised to be wrong to label late-medieval England as purely feudal in character.[21] The customary economy of kinsman and neighbour continued to flourish and to complement the expanding market economy, because both had a moral component. For the villagers of the Ditchley area there was no clear dichotomy between the two.

One major theme running through this study has been the question of when the population became dependent upon the market. The prevailing opinion appears to be that this happened some time during the early eighteenth century: both the upsurge of food rioting,[22] and the spread of consumer goods to the labouring classes[23] have been proposed

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[18] Only wholesale trade was conducted primarily on the basis of commercial credit facilities rather than on trust between individual transactors.
[19] Muldrew (1993a), 169-74.
[20] Muldrew (1993a), 169.
[21] Britnell (1993); Macfarlane (1978).
[22] Bohstedt (1983); Williams (1984).

as indicators of such a process. Through the evidence presented, however, I have been able to show that the moral economy was still effective during this period. Money was not used on a large enough scale to alienate exchange from its social context in the Marxist sense of a "cash nexus".[24] Indeed, cash was in short supply from the 1640s, when Parliament withdrew farthings and ha'pennys, leading many retailers to produce their own trade tokens.[25] By 1762 total silver circulation was only £800,000, and copper coin was in a terrible state, consisting mostly of counterfeits, blanks and private issues.[26] It could thus be argued that what existed was essentially "a credit economy in which everything was measured by monetary prices, but where money was not the primary means of exchange".[27]

Clearly Oxfordshire did not possess a fully-fledged peasantry in 1750, or indeed in 1700, but neither was the population entirely committed to the market economy. Where customary practises still served the people well, they continued to flourish, yet where the market offered opportunities these were certainly not scorned. Households did not live in some idealised local community isolated from national economic processes against which they struggled for survival, nor had they forsaken the moral economy in the interests of consumption. Instead most households moved within a complex web of overlapping spatial and social relationships between market, neighbourhood and estate. There was not one local reality but innumerable competing yet complementary realities being played out over the same geographical space.

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[23] Glennie (forthcoming); de Vries (1993).
[24] Muldrew (1998), 98-103.
[25] Shammas (1990), 198-99.
[26] Brewer (1982), 206-7.
[27] Muldrew (1998), 101.

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