

The mortality pattern of the Wiltshire lords of the manor, 1242–1377¹

A. E. NASH

Introduction

There has been much concern recently amongst historical demographers with the analysis of medieval population changes. The majority of this work has concentrated on very detailed studies of individual manors, for example, the work by Smith in Suffolk,² or by Razi on Halesowen.³ Attention has been concentrated on the peasantry; indeed, established opinion on demographic change in the Middle Ages concerns itself largely with this group.⁴ Yet, it can be argued that although the peasantry formed a large part of England's population in this period,⁵ they are not the only individuals worthy of analysis. For example, if one was concerned to test some of the assertions advanced by Schofield,⁶ particularly that marriage in a pre-industrial society, if it depended on access to scarce resources, was linked to the death of a parent and thus to the inheritance of land, then it would be useful to consider not only the peasantry (where this is intuitively likely to occur), but also the landholding classes (where one might expect the opposite to occur). Thus, the sons of peers, it could be anticipated, would be marrying before their fathers died in order to ensure the safe descent of lands to the next generation. This is only one example of where it would be a salutary lesson to compare the various groups' behaviour within the population at any one time. Yet work in this field has been very restricted. Only the pioneer work by Hollingsworth⁷ on the medieval peerage can be cited as a real attempt to study a non-peasant group, and unfortunately his lead has not been followed in this country.

In many ways this omission is not surprising, since workers within medieval demography are severely restricted by the data available to them. Thus the above-mentioned works on peasant populations have made skilful use of the manorial court roll⁸ as a source which is

one of the more commonly available, whilst other scholars have devoted their studies to Domesday Book,⁹ or to the Poll Tax of 1377.¹⁰ All of these sources, however, only either enable national population totals to be derived, or detailed manorial studies to be constructed. It is thus not surprising that Hollingsworth was forced into much genealogical work to obtain the necessary data for his study, since the above sources are not germane to the problem at hand.

The present study is an attempt to establish the pattern of mortality for the lords of the manor within medieval Wiltshire, in the hope that this will enable, in the future, at least some of the problems mentioned above to be resolved, and that some fresh light will be thrown on this neglected group's demographic behaviour.

The inquisitiones post mortem

The material used for this analysis was the Wiltshire *Inquisitiones Post Mortem*, from 1242 to 1377,¹¹ and because this source can present problems it is first necessary to discuss the salient issues involved in its treatment.¹²

Under feudalism, all land was in theory held from the Crown. If a lord died without heirs, then this property reverted to the king, via his right of escheat.¹³ Thus, on the death of a tenant-in-chief, a manorial lord, or occasionally, even a manorial tenant, an inquiry was held into the lands, rents and services held by the deceased. The *inquisitiones post mortem*, as this was called, was held by the king's escheator, in the county, and it was his duty to establish whether the king was entitled to seize any holdings arising from the death of the lord involved.

On the basis of an analysis of the escheators who held inquisitions in Wiltshire from 1250 to 1377, it is possible to say that these men were usually substantial men in their own right, and were often also knights and county sheriffs. For example, Thomas de Seymour, who was an escheator in 1347, was a knight of the realm, and by the time he died in 1358 had given lands to the value of £40 to the church and still retained property to the value of £20 13s 4d.¹⁴ Occasionally, an inquisition was held by the sub-escheator for the county,¹⁵ or a bailiff, or a justice of the peace, but in the vast majority of cases it was the escheator who led the investigation.

He was helped in his task by a 'jury' of twelve men. This figure rarely varies, and usually their surnames suggest most of them lived in the area in which the deceased held lands. Thus, James de

Grundewell, Robert de Lusteshall and William de Hynton would all seem to have come from places near Broad Blunsdon,¹⁶ if their *locative* surnames can be accepted as a guide.¹⁷

If this is the case, then it is clear that such men would have been of considerable assistance in the compilation of the document, because of their local knowledge. It would seem that the witnesses were usually manorial tenants, because it is generally impossible to find any further reference to them in later inquisitions. Exceptionally, an important lord of the manor might act as a witness at the inquisition of a neighbour, or if the deceased was of a similar status to himself. Thus John Giffard, descended from the family which held Broughton Giffard and had produced two bishops, acted as witness at the inquisition held in 1372, of Ralph, earl of Stafford, whose total property in Wiltshire was valued at £152 11s 0d per annum.¹⁸ However, such cases seem to be the exception. More usually they were a locally derived group of people, who were probably of a lower status than the deceased, but who were able to give a detailed account of his property, and the date of his death.

As a result of the inquisition an inventory was compiled listing all the property that the deceased held. Typically, the names of the manors he held were given, and then this was followed by details concerning the acreages of arable, meadow and pasture, the numbers of messuages (dwellings and adjoining lands) and tofts (homesteads) held, and the number of tenants, and their status (free or servile). This was completed by a series of valuations: the value of the land per acre, of the houses and mills, and of the rents, services, and customary payments owed by the tenants to the lord. The rents and services the lord himself owed to the king and to other lords were also catalogued, and then a final figure, the 'worth' of the holding, was given.

The second important component in the inquisition usually followed the detailed description of the holding. This section was concerned to establish who was the next heir, and their age, sex, and relationship to the deceased. A typical example would be that of Bartholomew de Lisle, who died in 1345, and whose heir was his eldest son, John, who was nine years old on 15 December 1345. In this case, the lands would have passed into the hands of the escheator for the twelve years of John's minority.¹⁹

In perhaps the majority of cases, the heir was over twenty-one years old (the age of majority). For example, Robert Hoppegras was succeeded by his son Richard, in 1349, who was then aged twenty-four.²⁰ The problem then becomes to ascertain why these

inquisitions were carried out, when clearly there was no case for an escheat.

There are perhaps three main reasons: first, that the escheator was not aware that an heir did exist, or if he was that the heir was in fact over the age of majority. Secondly, that although the family was known to have heirs, it was not clear who was entitled to inherit; this was clearly the motive behind the very long series of inquisitions relating to the Giffards in 1327, a case complicated by both Elias and John Giffard having married twice and thus producing seven possible heirs to the manor of Brumesfeld.²¹ Alternatively, there might be an heir, but because he was illegitimate he was not allowed to take over the holding: an example from 1361 records that William Randolph held the vill of Forde and Milleforde, but as he was a bastard, then he 'had no issue', and so the estate was escheated.²² A third reason, and this may well prove to be the most important, was that while none doubted the outcome of the inquiry, machinery of the inquisition was used by the authorities in order to monitor the land-holding situation,²³ and to build up a picture of its development through time, in order that claims to land could be verified or disproved. Cases can be found where previous documents were searched: thus the inquisition for Godefrey Scudemore records that a writ directed the barons of the Exchequer to search the Red Book of Exchequer to ascertain the knight's fees held by Godefrey; another example shows Domesday Book itself being consulted in order to clarify an issue.²⁴ Thus while there is no direct evidence that this was in fact the purpose to which these documents were put, it does not seem unlikely that they would be very useful in such a context. Furthermore, it would explain why so many inquisitions were held in cases where there was obviously no other reason for them to be compiled.

The third important component in the inquisition deals with the date of death itself. It is necessary to realize, as Professor Russell shows,²⁵ that before an inquisition was held, a writ had to be issued, and this itself followed the date of death by a variable time lag. The Wiltshire *inquisitiones* fall into two large groups: from 1242 to 1342 the actual date of death was seldom recorded, the date of the inquisition being that most usually noted on the document. From 1342 until 1377 (the end of the study period), both the date of death and the date of the inquisition were recorded. Thus it is possible to establish, first, the average interval between death and inquisition, and secondly whether it is possible to use the date of inquisition as a surrogate for the date of death throughout the study period.

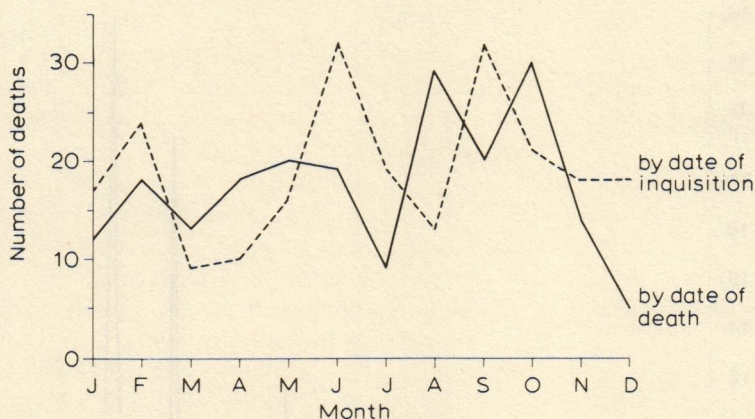


FIG 1: *A comparison between the date of death and the date of inquisition 1342–77.*

An analysis of the twenty-six cases between 1242 and 1342 which give both date of inquisition and date of death clearly points to an interval between the two of 2.18 months. The same comparison from 1342 to 1377 lowers this mean to just below two months (as can be clearly seen in Figure 1) particularly for the summer months. Obviously there are anomalies (for example, seventeen years elapsed before John de Bensted's inquisition was held in 1376)²⁶ but these are exceptional and do not disturb the general picture. This, then, enables the date of inquisition to be used in place of the date of death and consequently means that the whole of the period 1242 to 1377 can be considered in this study.

Trends in mortality, 1242–1377

The annual totals for mortality are presented in Figure 2, and it can be seen that this graph contains two important features. First, throughout the period, the majority of annual mortality totals falls within the range of one to eight deaths per year; there appears to be little tendency for these data to trend either upwards or downwards, which would be necessary to indicate a systematic alteration in annual death rates. The second factor of interest lies in the two clear peaks, one for 1349 and the other for 1361. These comprise 3.83 per cent and 6.27 per cent respectively of the total mortality of the period under examination. Intuitively, these would be expected to

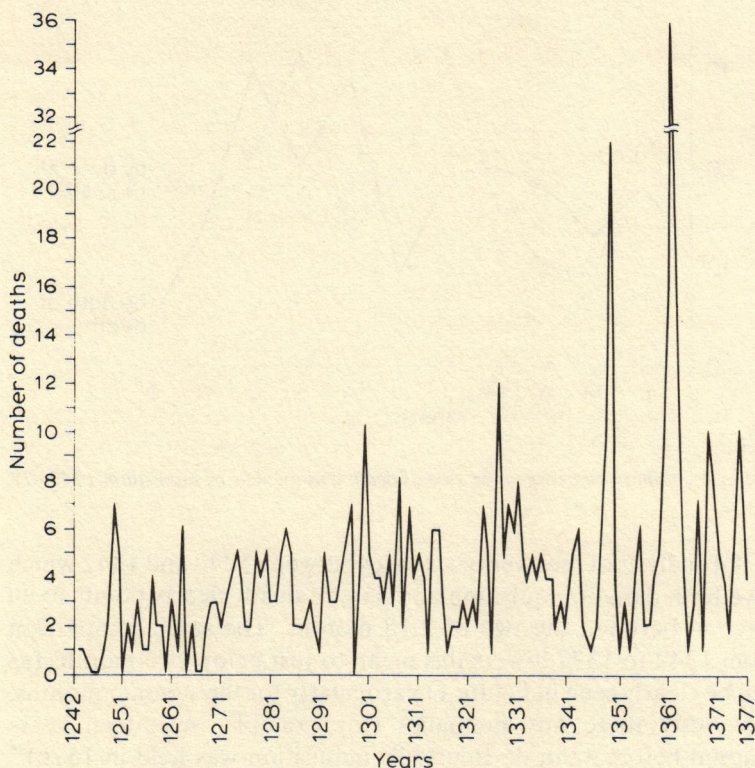


FIG 2: *The mortality of the lords of the manor 1242–1377*
 (Source: *Wiltshire Inquisitiones Post-Mortem*).

have been caused by outbreaks of bubonic plague or Black Death: the problem is how to verify this conclusion.

In the first instance, a number of scholarly works, particularly those by Ziegler and Shrewsbury²⁷ indicate that the plague would have reached western England by late 1348 and early 1349;²⁸ others also point to 1361²⁹ as being the time of the next important outbreak of the illness. In addition, Watts' study of the Titchfield estates³⁰ in southern Hampshire showed that the effects were far more devastating in 1361 than in 1349; a conclusion which agrees well with the Wiltshire data. A second verifying feature lies in the number of inquisitions which, while they never give the cause of death of the lord, do mention it for the tenantry. For example, at Cowesfield it is stated in 1349 that

there are sixty acres of wood, twenty acres of which in past time were worth 40s per annum but now nothing, for want of buyers *on account of the plague*. There are £4 rents of assize, but *all the tenants are dead*, except three freeholders, who pay 6s per annum'.³¹ In 1361, the deaths of large numbers of the peasantry were recorded for Castlecombe, and Standen,³² while at Blunsdon Gay 'there are no rents because *the tenements are in decay and the tenants have died*' (my italics).³³

It would not seem unreasonable to suggest that if the manorial population was being afflicted by plague, then this may also be the cause of the increased mortality of the lords in 1349 and 1361.

The final piece of evidence concerns the seasonality of death. It is generally agreed that plague tends to be a disease of late summer and early autumn, largely because outdoor temperatures later become too cold for flea activity (the vector responsible for transmitting the plague bacillus).³⁴ This is shown clearly in Bradley's recent analysis of plague at Eyam in 1665-6. Here the weekly totals of burials peaked markedly in July, August, and September.³⁵ Further, Roger Schofield describes the 'classic profile of mortality from bubonic plague' as having the bulk of deaths in the summer months, with a long steep rise and then fall of mortality from April to November.³⁶ This would contrast with the profile expected from, for example, famine. In this case deaths would begin occurring when food supplies from the last harvest ran short, but before the produce from the next became available: usually the period of late winter, spring and early summer.³⁷ It is useful to be able to distinguish these profiles because one may expect famine to have been an important factor in mortality, given its widespread effect in Europe in the early fourteenth century.³⁸

In an attempt to examine the seasonality of death, for the lords of the manor, Figures 3 and 4 were constructed. The first covers the period 1242 to 1377, and in order to do this the date of the inquisition has had to be used throughout. It can be seen that usually deaths occur in small numbers randomly dispersed throughout the year. The period of famine, between 1315 and 1320, does not cause any alteration to this pattern, and thus it can be suggested that there was no increase in spring deaths of manorial lords, indicating that they were not affected by the widespread starvation that many peasants were experiencing.

In 1349, and again from 1360 to 1362, however, a great increase in deaths is shown. This can be seen the more accurately, because fortunately the inquisitions began consistently recording the actual date of death from 1342, and this is shown on Figure 4. Apart from

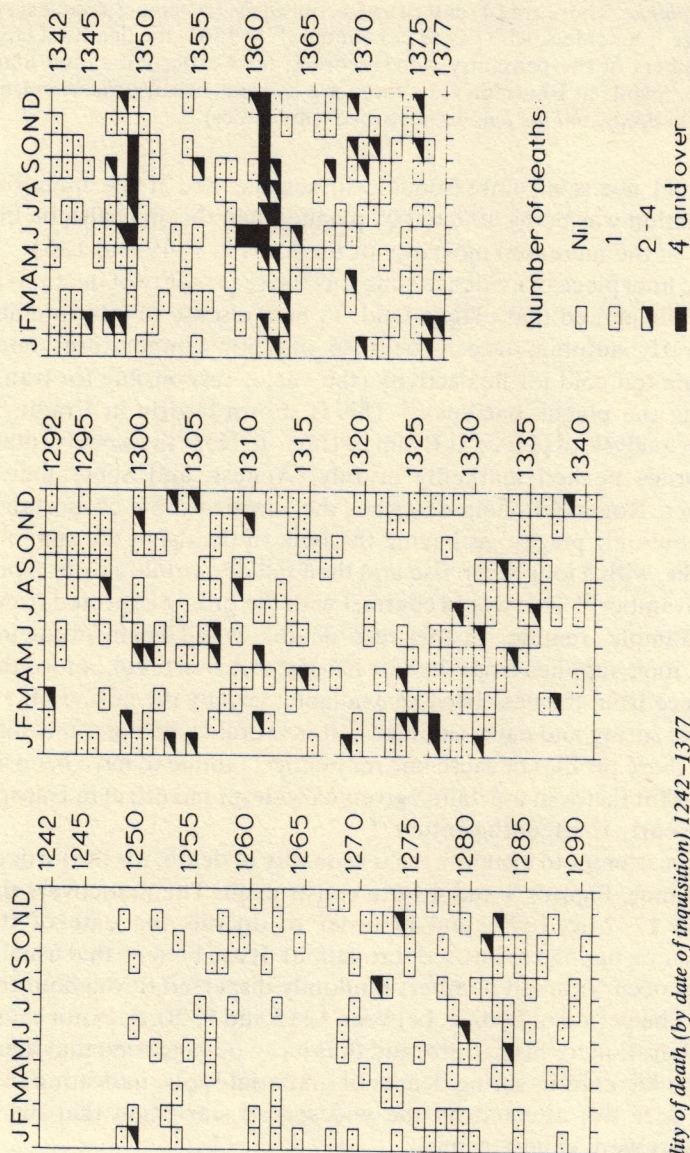


FIG 3: Seasonality of death (by date of inquisition) 1242-1377
(Source: *Wiltshire Inquisitiones Post-Mortem*).

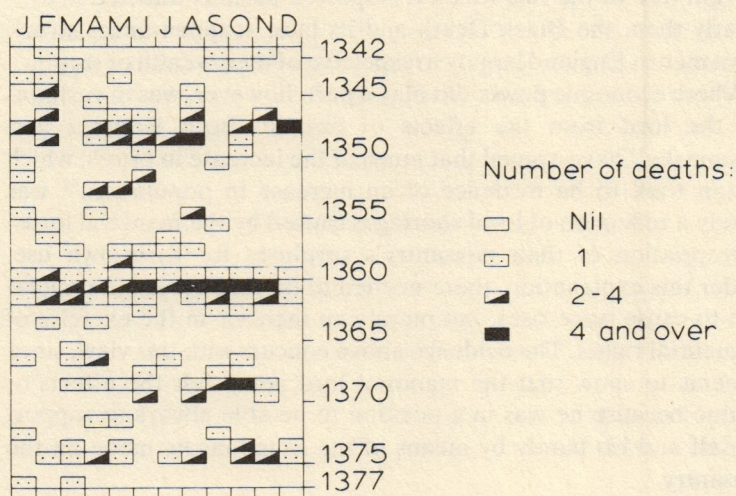


FIG 4: Seasonality of death (by date of death) 1342-77
(Source: *Wiltshire Inquisitiones Post-Mortem*).

three deaths in February, in 1349 deaths began to rise in number from May until August, when seven died. This was followed by a marked fall-off in mortality for the rest of the year. These characteristics are better illustrated in 1361, with a slow rise from two deaths per month in March, April, and May, to give three in June and August, seven in September and thirteen in October, with again a dramatic fall in mortality in the winter months. After 1361 this pattern does not occur again for the rest of the period under study, indicating that the epidemics of 1369 and 1374³⁹ did not affect the population group under consideration to any noticeable extent.

Conclusions

The evidence presented above points towards three major conclusions. While it is very difficult to be precise for the nature of a disease in the past, it does seem that the Wiltshire lords of the manor were victims of the bubonic plague outbreaks of 1349 and 1361. It would appear that they were as prone to this disease as the peasantry, despite (presumably) better living conditions in more substantial houses than those of the peasantry, which might have been

thought free of the rats which transported bacillus-infected fleas.⁴⁰ Clearly then, the Black Death and its later reappearances struck down men in England largely irrespective of their wealth or station.

Where economic power did play a part, however, was in cushioning the lord from the effects of famine. Both Brenner and Kosminsky⁴¹ have argued that much of the increase in prices, which Postan took to be evidence of an increase in population,⁴² was merely a reflection of local shortages caused by the manorial lords' appropriation of their peasantry's surpluses for their own use. Under this explanation, there needed to be no increase in population to cause price rises, but merely an increase in the exercise of seigniorial rights. The evidence above concurs with this view, since it seems to show that the manorial lord never felt the effects of famine because he was in a position to be able always to support himself and his family by means of the exactions he made on the peasantry.

Finally, previous workers have shown that if one considers the broad demographic situation from 1242 to 1377, the peasantry experienced marked changes in their number, declining particularly after 1300 and again after 1348, indicative of an increasing rate of mortality.⁴³ This contrasts considerably with the evidence presented here for the Wiltshire lords of the manor. Over this period the data suggest very strongly that, with the major exception of plague years, the lords experienced very little alteration in their annual death rate, and thus point to a major demographic difference between these two groups.

Notes

¹ The author wishes to express his thanks to Dr A. R. H. Baker, Dr R. E. Glasscock, the Vaughan Cornish Memorial Research Institute, and Mr A. Shelley who kindly drew the diagrams. This study is part of a larger project which also examines aspects such as age at death and replacement rates.

² R. M. Smith, 'English Peasant Life Cycles and Socio-economic Networks; a Quantitative Geographical Case Study' (unpub. Ph.D. thesis, Cambridge Univ. 1975).

³ Z. Razi, 'The Peasants of Halesowen, 1270-1400, a Demographic and Economic Study' (unpub. Ph.D. Thesis, Birmingham Univ. 1977). The latest general statements on this period are J. Hatcher, *Plague, Population and the English Economy, 1348-1530* (1977); E. Miller and J. Hatcher, *Medieval England* (1978); E. King, *England 1175-1425* (1979).

⁴ M. M. Postan, 'Some Economic Evidence of Declining Population in the Later Middle Ages', *Economic History Review*, 2nd ser., II (1950), pp. 221-45. The existence of a 'peasantry' in medieval England has been re-evaluated in a series of papers by A. Macfarlane, *The Origins of English Individualism* (1978), pp. 194-203; 'The Peasantry in England before the Industrial Revolution. A mythical model?', in *Social Organisation and Settlement*, ed. D. Green et al. (Oxford, 1978), pp. 323-42; 'Modes of Reproduction', in *Population and Development*, ed. by G.

Hawthorn (1978), pp. 100–20. The definition used here is ‘an occupying owner or a tenant of a holding capable, but only just capable, of providing his family with a “subsistence income”’ – M. M. Postan, ‘Medieval Agrarian Society in its Prime – Section 7, England’, in, *The Agrarian Life of the Middle Ages*, vol. 1 of *The Cambridge Economic History of Europe*, 2nd ed, ed. M. M. Postan (Cambridge, 1966), p. 620.

⁵ H. S. Bennett, *Life on The English Manor, 1150–1400* (Cambridge, 1937); M. M. Postan, *The Medieval Economy and Society* (1972), p. 158.

⁶ R. Schofield, ‘The relationship between demographic structure and environment in pre-industrial Europe’ in *Sozialgeschichte der Familie in der Neuzeit Europas: neue Forschungen*, ed. Werner Conze (Stuttgart, 1976), pp. 147–60.

⁷ T. H. Hollingsworth, ‘The Demography of the English Peerage’ (unpub. Ph.D. thesis, London Univ. 1963); ‘A Note on the Medieval Longevity of the Secular Peerage, 1350–1500’, *Population Studies*, xix (1965), pp. 156–9. Also relevant is K. B. McFarlane, *The Nobility of Later Medieval England* (Oxford, 1973). Both were concerned largely with the upper sections of the nobility.

⁸ A. Macfarlane et al., *Reconstructing Historical Communities* (Cambridge, 1977), provides a useful introduction to this source.

⁹ H. C. Darby, *Domesday England* (Cambridge, 1977).

¹⁰ M. Beresford: ‘Poll-Tax Payers of 1377’, in *The Victoria County History of Wiltshire*, iv (1959), pp. 304–11.

¹¹ The National Series are listed in the *C(alendar of) I(nquisitions) P(ost) M(ortem) and other analogous documents in the Public Record Office (Henry III – 7 Rich. II)*, 15 vols. (1904–70). The Wiltshire documents are contained in *Abstracts of the Wiltshire Inquisitiones Post Mortem*, ed. E. A. Fry, vol. 1 1242–1310, vol. 2 1311–77 (Wiltshire Archaeological and Natural History Society and the British Record Society, 1908). For a valuable introduction to economic and social conditions in Wiltshire during this period see John Hare, ‘Lords and Tenants in Wiltshire, c. 1380–c. 1520, with Special Reference to Regional and Seigneurial Variations (unpub. Ph.D. thesis, London Univ. 1975).

¹² A general introduction to this source is given in R. H. Hilton, ‘Sources of English Agrarian History’, *The Agricultural History Review*, III (1955); C. D. Ross and T. B. Pugh, ‘Materials for the Study of Baronial Incomes in Fifteenth-century England’, *Econ. H. R.*, 2nd ser., vi (1953); *The Guide to the Contents of the Public Record Office*, 1 (1963), p. 27; V. H. Galbraith, *The Public Records* (Oxford, 1934), p. 43. For a more detailed critique see J. C. Russell, *British Medieval Population* (Albuquerque, 1948). This work has, however, severe limitations, which are indicated in J. T. Krause, ‘The Medieval Household, Large or Small?’, *Econ. H. R.*, 2nd ser., xi (1958); M. M. Postan, *Econ. H. R.*, 2nd ser., II; G. Ohlin, ‘No Safety in Numbers: Some Pitfalls of Historical Statistics’, in, *Industrialisation in Two Systems: Essays in Honour of Alexander Gerschenkron*, ed. H. Rosovsky (New York, 1966), pp. 68–90; J. Z. Titow, *English Rural Society, 1200–1350* (1969), pp. 66–73; J. Hatcher, *Plague, Population and Economy*, pp. 13–15. A variety of scholars make use of *inquisitiones post mortem* but seldom in any systematic way. See, for example, Richenda Payne, ‘Agrarian Conditions on the Wiltshire Estates of the Duchy of Lancaster, The Lords Hungerford, and the Bishopric of Winchester in the Thirteenth, Fourteenth, and Fifteenth Centuries’ (unpub. Ph.D. thesis, London Univ. 1939), pp. 67–9 where the de Mohuns are discussed; B. Reynolds, ‘Late Medieval Dorset: Three Essays in Historical Geography’ (unpub. M.A. thesis, London Univ. 1958), p. 42; T. H. Hollingsworth, *Historical Demography* (1969), pp. 375–80, where replacement rates based on Russell’s figures are calculated; R. H. Hilton, *The English Peasantry in the Later Middle Ages* (Oxford, 1975), pp. 115, 118–19. More substantial use, apart from Russell’s (*Medieval Population*), is to be found in E. A. Kosminsky, *Studies in the Agrarian History of England in the Thirteenth Century* (Oxford, 1956) pp. 46–67; J. A. Raftis, *Assart Data and Land Values: Two Studies in the East Midlands, 1200–1300* (Toronto, 1974), especially pp. 12–22.

¹³ I. H. Adams, *Agrarian Landscape Terms: a Glossary for Historical Geography*, Institute of British Geographers' Special Publication No. 9 (1976), p. 190. The role of the escheator is fully described in E. R. Stevenson, 'The Escheator', in *The English Government at Work*, 1326–36, II, ed. W. A. Morris and J. R. Strayer (Cambridge, Mass., 1942) and in S. Walker, 'Royal Wardship in Medieval England' (unpub. Ph.D. thesis, Chicago Univ. 1966).

¹⁴ C(hancery) I(nquisition) P(ost) M(ortem) Edw(ard) III File 140, 1358.

¹⁵ For example, Sir William de Kaune, who was 'sub-escheator' for the county in 1263.

¹⁶ C.I.P.M. 25 Edw. I no. 22, 30 June 1297. These men were amongst the witnesses at the inquisition of John de Golafre held at 'Bluntesdone' or Broad Blunsdon.

¹⁷ This technique is used to examine migration by J. A. Raftis in 'Geographical Mobility in the Lay Subsidy Rolls', *Medieval Studies*, xxxviii (1976), pp. 385–403.

¹⁸ C.I.P.M. Edw. III file 230, 25 September 1372.

¹⁹ C.I.P.M. Edw. III file 77, no. 8, 1345.

²⁰ C.I.P.M. Edw. III file 104, 6 Aug 1349.

²¹ C.I.P.M. Edw. III file no. 2, 21 Feb 1327 represents the most important inquisition.

²² C.I.P.M. Edw. III file 164, 1361.

²³ Walker (*Royal Wardship*), pp. 112–19, calls it a 'clearing house'.

²⁴ C.I.P.M. Edw. III file 223, 22 October 1371. C.I.P.M. Edw. III file 25, no. 13, 30 January 1331.

²⁵ Russell, *Medieval Population*. See his chapter on the *inquisitions post mortem*.

²⁶ C.I.P.M. Edw. III file 256. The Inquisition was held in 1376, whilst he died in 1359.

²⁷ P. Ziegler, *The Black Death* (Harmondsworth, 1970). Full accounts of the plague's aetiology and epidemiology, showing that both sexes and all classes were equally liable to die, having contracted the disease, can be found in J. F. D. Shrewsbury, *A History of Bubonic Plague in the British Isles* (Cambridge, 1970) and in J. N. Biraben and J. Le Goff, 'The Plague in the Early Middle Ages', *Annales: Economies, Sociétés, Civilisations*, 24 (1969), pp. 1484–1510.

²⁸ M. W. Dols, *The Black Death in the Middle East* (Princeton, 1977); A. E. Levett, *The Black Death on the Estates of the See of Winchester*, Oxford Studies in Social and Legal History, v (Oxford, 1916); C. Creighton, *A History of Epidemics in Britain*, ed. D. E. C. Eversley et al. (London, 1965); Ziegler, *Black Death*, p. 148.

²⁹ A. R. H. Baker, 'Changes in the Later Middle Ages', in *A New Historical Geography of England*, ed. H. C. Darby (Cambridge, 1973), p. 188; this outbreak was known as the '*pestis secunda*' or '*pestis puerorum*', G. M. Howe, *Man, Environment, and Disease in Britain* (New York, 1972), p. 104.

³⁰ B. Watts, 'The Estates of Titchfield Abbey c. 1245–1380' (unpub. B.Litt. thesis, Oxford Univ. 1957); I. Blanchard reached the same conclusion for the Derbyshire clergy, 'Economic Change in Derbyshire in the Late Middle Ages 1272–1540' (unpub. Ph. D. thesis, London Univ. 1961), p. 475; K. B. McFarlane also found that the 1361 outbreak was more severe than that of 1348, amongst the nobility: *Nobility*, p. 170. The precise reasons for this are at present problematic.

³¹ C.I.P.M. Edw. III file 98, 16 April 1349.

³² C.I.P.M. Edw. III file 158, 22 November 1361, and C.I.P.M. Edw. III file 159, 6 September 1361.

³³ C.I.P.M. Edw. III file 171, 1 June 1362.

³⁴ Shrewsbury, *Bubonic Plague*, pp. 317, 511.

³⁵ L. Bradley, 'The Most Famous of All English Plagues – a Detailed Analysis of the Plague at Eyam 1665–6' in *The Plague Reconsidered: A New Look at its Origins and Effects in Sixteenth and Seventeenth Century England* (Local Population Studies Supplement, 1977), p. 87.

³⁶ R. Schofield, 'An anatomy of an epidemic: Colyton, November 1645 to November 1646', *Plague Reconsidered*, p. 101.

³⁷ J. D. Post, *The Last Great Subsistence Crisis in the Western World* (Baltimore, 1977), pp. 122–32.

³⁸ H. S. Lucas, 'The Great European Famine of 1315, 1316, and 1317', *Speculum*, v (1930), pp. 341–77; I. Kershaw, 'The Great Famine and Agrarian Crisis in England, 1315–22', *Past and Present*, 59 (1973).

³⁹ The so-called *Pestis tertia* and *Pestis quarta*, Howe, *Man and Disease*, p. 105; Baker, *Historical Geography*, p. 188. Shrewsbury (*Bubonic Plague*) believed the 1361 outbreak was in fact epidemic influenza, but the seasonality pattern of mortality, at least in Wiltshire, would seem to indicate bubonic plague as the culprit, a view confirmed by J. M. W. Bean, 'Plague, Population and Economic Decline in the Later Middle Ages', *Econ. H. R.*, 2nd ser., 15 (1963), pp. 423–38.

⁴⁰ It is worth noting that this conclusion is in marked contrast to K. B. McFarlane's view that the higher nobility 'escaped the mortality that affected the population as a whole' (*Nobility*, p. 169). His conclusion was that their mortality was little different from pre-plague years, but was unable to suggest why (*Nobility*, p. 170). It may be that because he was only looking at the higher members of the aristocracy he found people who were able to avoid infection, perhaps because of better stone-built accommodation. On the problem of housing standards see A. Selkirk, 'Goltho – a deserted medieval village and its manor house', *Current Archaeology*, 56 (1977), pp. 262–70; R. K. Field, 'The Worcestershire Peasantry in the Later Middle Ages' (unpub. M.A. thesis, Birmingham Univ. 1962), Chapt. 1; M. W. Beresford and J. G. Hurst, *Deserted Medieval Villages* (1971).

⁴¹ R. Brenner, 'Agrarian Class Structure and Economic Development in Pre-industrial Europe', *Past and Present*, 70 (1976), pp. 30–75; E. A. Kosminsky, 'The Evolution of Feudal Rent in England, from the Eleventh to the Fourteenth Centuries', *Past and Present*, 7 (1955), pp. 12–36.

⁴² Postan, *Econ. H. R.*, 2nd ser. II.

⁴³ J. D. Chambers, *Population, Economy and Society in Pre-Industrial England* (Oxford, 1972), p. 19.