

Economic Protest in Rural Society: Opposition to Parliamentary Enclosure in Buckinghamshire. *

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Hedge and Ditch as you please, plant what fence you will, yet let me tell you nothing will be sufficient to secure you from encroachments and incursions into that fair territory . . . when there are so many thousand of his Majesty's subjects who would be glad to give almost any price for so much of it as one might cover with one's hand.¹

The period of the mid-eighteenth to the mid-nineteenth century was one of broad and dramatic economic and social change in Britain, involving amongst other 'events' the 'Making of the Working Class'. It was also a period when 20 per cent of the land area of England was transformed by parliamentary enclosure. It seems reasonable to speculate that momentous changes in rural work patterns and social relationships arising from the transition to farming in severalty may have been part of that 'Making'. E.P. Thompson's words still echo, two decades after he wrote them, 'when all the sophistications are allowed for enclosure was a plain enough case of class robbery'. These sophistications included the veneer of democracy where Parliament presided over the division of spoils. Although this democratic game was 'played according to fair rules of property and law', those rules were laid down in the first place 'by a parliament of property owners and lawyers'.² The sophistications, evidently, are not at all subtle. This is supported by P. Mantoux who observed that 'All the Acts of Parliament on the Statute Book, without exception, are evidence of so many cases when the unanimous consent of the landowners could not be secured'.³ In contradiction, however, is J.D. Chambers' different interpretation of democracy, where the process – enclosure – recognised 'the *legal* rights [even] of humble men'.⁴

Essentially, Parliament dispensed justice and democracy by rubber stamping what by 1800 was a well tried system of endorsing locally framed bills which became acts. One contemporary referred to the appointment of the principal administrators – the commissioners – ostensibly by Parliament through naming them in the individual acts, but in actual fact as 'a little system of patronage' in which 'the lord of

the soil, the rector, and a few of the principal proprietors monopolise and distribute the appointments'.⁵ The strength of ownership was determined not numerically, but by the aggregate size of their property. This system of democracy was immortalised by the Hammonds in the simple but effective truism that 'the suffrages were not counted but weighed'. This diminishes rather than strengthens the impartiality of parliament and uncovers yet another of the less than subtle sophistications to which Thompson alludes. The work of the commissioners is likened to that of a capitalist press gang.⁶

Enclosure, therefore, seems to be an obvious variable in the 'class struggle'. But, the available evidence strongly suggests that the casualties of enclosure went meekly to their industrial resting places, or were dispossessed of both their real and customary property with but little demur. Between 1795 and 1815 when enclosure was one of the most time consuming preoccupations of private members' business at Westminster we are led to believe that the class struggle was at its height, with threatened insurrection and revolutionary spirit overspilling from France, with the United Irishman campaign in the early 1790s fuelling Republican talk, and with many examples of civil and military unrest. The governments of the day, faced with mounting pressures of civil disorder, in the midst of the severest inflation in living memory, with a financial panic resulting in the suspension of convertability in 1797, sent spies into the towns and countryside, to quell the potential for rebellion. Whether it was or was not a 'reign of terror', it was without doubt a troubled time.⁷ In the midst of it, over 40 per cent of all parliamentary enclosures were enacted. In each year there were on average over 100 new enclosure acts put on the statute book. What part did opposition to the capitalist press gang play in the threatened revolution? Seemingly none at all, and there is the problem. When it came to the reckoning, one of the hottest Marxist properties in the story of capitalism's rise had no teeth.

It is a problem with a ready solution. The price inflation of the 1790s and its relationship with food riots was a crisis which hit the population at large at the same time, and, with some relatively minor regional variations, to the same degree. It ended several decades of stable if not rising living standards. The revolutionary spirit overspilling from France and the threatened one from Ireland practically merged and were greeted widely in Britain with much the sort of joy that heralds a brave new world, in this case republicanism. The industrial revolution was just emerging as a significant exercise in de-skilling. But what of agriculture? If ever there was an 'agricultural revolution', it was a slow one of many generations, and the part that enclosure played in it was also slow. If all the more than five thousand

villages, parishes, or townships enclosed in some way or other by the power of Parliament were all enclosed in 1795 or 1800 or 1810, then perhaps we would have a tale to tell, but although most of these enclosures were concentrated in two main thrusts of activity – in the 1760s and 1770s and then during the French wars – they each only touched directly upon eight or nine per cent of the land area of England.⁸ This widely-spaced chronology is Thompson's reason for the seeming passivity of the victims of enclosure.⁹ In addition, it was a spatially diluted movement: there was a lack of greater neighbourhood consciousness against a background of protracted and piecemeal enclosure.

Food riots, sedition, and other problems came in the rising urban phase of British history and hardly touched the widely separated rural foundations. This is reflected in the National archives. The Home Office Papers are the bedrock for the historian of insurrection, bristling with food riots, anti-government and anti-monarchy activity, with at times reports of industrial unrest. They show the militia being sent this way, that way, every way to put down the armies of potential rebellion, but they are remarkably silent about opposition to the most momentous agrarian change of the age. What are we to conclude? Perhaps the Marxist model of enclosure, the tennis ball of twentieth century politicised historiography, is a figment of the imagination.

Certainly there are examples of protest, the Otmoor and other struggles described by the Hammonds really did take place. And if we search closely enough in the national archives we can add to that well publicised list, but it will be a long and hard search and eventually a quantitatively failed one.¹⁰ But the absence of a concerted anti-enclosure movement does not mean that locally people trekked supinely to their allotted places in class society. Enclose their commons and they did protest, send in the bailiffs and they were not quietly distraised, and tap the essentially local records and a story will be revealed.¹¹ But, as will be shown from the ensuing Buckinghamshire case study, social relationships within the countryside were complex and not so simply polarised into the class struggle of capitalist landowners against landless labourers, or of large capitalist landowners, by accident or conspiracy, 'robbing' their smaller compatriots of their ancestral homes.¹²

II

Many Buckinghamshire enclosure bills were presented to Parliament with some measure of dissent, though often it was trivial. Sometimes

it delayed or postponed the passing of a bill, in one case for forty years. In 1819 it was remarked locally that 'Parliament is well disposed at this time to enclosure', but it was on or about the early 1820s that opposition in Buckinghamshire was at its greatest and most violent.¹³ This may reflect the availability of sources or it may be related to the chronology of enclosure. Late enclosures were characterised by many small landowners – the late survival of the local peasantry – whose presence in the previous century held enclosures in abeyance.¹⁴ But it is also a reflection of changed economic circumstances, the end of farming prosperity during the French wars was followed by two decades of depression.

Opposition took many guises: dissenters refused to sign enclosure petitions, or they presented counter-petitions. They may not defeat a bill, and this may not have been their purpose, but they may have provoked Parliament into introducing more favourable clauses. Opposition was sometimes violent: either actively destructive against property or more frequently, assaulting the enclosure administrators. In Buckinghamshire the most common form of violence was against solicitors and others in their attempts to pin notices of intended enclosure in public places.

Violence never reached the level described by F.K. Donnelly for the enclosure of Sheffield in 1791–1805, where the commissioners and others were threatened, farm properties were destroyed and the militia was summoned to repel rioters, one of whom was executed. Acts of violence occurred elsewhere, but it must be emphasised that against the great volume of enclosures these were rare.¹⁵ Only one case of fence breaking has emerged for Buckinghamshire, and this, significantly, in the south of the county associated with the enclosure of extensive common and waste lands in and around Iver Heath. The famous enclosure riots, such as occurred at Otmoor, were similarly associated with extensive areas of common land and large concentrations of population, or at least high levels of commons' usage.¹⁶ Buckinghamshire, by contrast, was not well endowed with extensive commons. The same can be said elsewhere.¹⁷ Thompson's view that riots, fence breaking, arson and threatening letters were more common than historians have supposed, is unsupported in the light of evidence from completed county histories, though as J. Neeson suggests fence breaking and similar local crimes may have been heard summarily in local courts and not fully recorded or recorded at all.¹⁸

Considering the large number of enclosures taking place between 1750 and 1830 contemporary literature records very little opposition. General opinions about the efficacy of enclosures were mixed. John Byng, later the fifth Viscount Torrington, was strongly opposed to

enclosure,¹⁹ and on one occasion at least he 'broke down some rails' as he put it 'most courageously'.²⁰ But then Byng was violently opposed to change in many forms.²¹ Arthur Young's views varied a great deal over his lifetime, in particular with regard to the enclosure of commons and wastes. During his *Eastern Tour* of 1771 he was favourably disposed to enclosure, but by 1801 he had many doubts, summed up in his much quoted passage about the loss of the commons to the poor, that, 'by nineteen enclosure bills out of twenty they are injured.'²² This was an opinion shared by an anonymous writer in 1780 who spoke of 'the rage of enclosures' – which – 'scattered its pestilence about the nation' – for which – 'no reason can defend, no advantage can justify the injury committed by inclosing bills.'²³ These statements were an attack on the enclosure of commons and wastes. In general Young admitted to the general improvements of farming in severalty though he conceded that there was some injury to a minority of cottagers.²⁴

A parliamentary Select Committee of 1800 appointed to consider the best way of facilitating enclosure bills can be interpreted as a record of dormant opposition. The witnesses believed there would be more enclosures if the quantum of consent necessary to present successful petitions was lowered. In soliciting specific enclosures themselves they frequently found difficulty in obtaining the signatures of three-quarters to four-fifths of the interested parties.²⁵ The implications are important – there was opposition to enclosure, it could involve large numbers of people or collectively large proportions of parish landownership, but in the Britain of 1800 with the conflict with France aiding and abetting almost annual harvest problems, the solution to which was to improve agricultural productivity and avert as far as possible self-sufficiency crisis, Parliament was ready to be more sympathetic to enclosure petitions.

As we have already noted, Mantoux saw the entry of every enclosure act on the statutes as an indication of the breakdown of collective bargaining. He did not add that although enclosure per se may have been agreed upon, the precise terms of the agreement were not. In some instances tithe compensation was the only reason for petitioning Parliament – certainly this was the case at Moulsoe where a single landowner virtually held a land monopoly.²⁶ Tithe owners could oppose bills if they thought that the provisions for commutation were not to their clear economic advantage. In general however, 'every accommodation was made to the tithe owner at enclosure'.²⁷ And why not? He possessed substantial power in London in the House of Lords if he was a clerical tithe owner, and locally he virtually had a power of veto if the clauses of the bill did not match his

own appraisal of the value of the tithe, a veto which was reinforced by his right, usually, to nominate one of the commissioners.

III

W.E. Tate has listed the principal methods of opposition encountered on examining the parliamentary records.²⁸ The appendix tabulates this record of opposition for Buckinghamshire.²⁹ If failed bills indicate opposition, then it was considerable. Of the 118 enclosure petitions presented by 1830, 18 were not proceeded with at all. These included six successful counter-petitions from a total of 16 counter-petitions. Petitions which failed were usually re-submitted, though in some cases with considerable delays. Of 187 Leicestershire petitions 37 failed, of 170 in Nottinghamshire 39 failed, of 189 in Oxfordshire 60 failed, of 121 in Warwickshire submitted between 1730–99 22 failed, and of 174 for East Yorkshire 38 failed. Two thirds of all Northamptonshire enclosures were attended by some level of opposition, and in half of these it was opposition by people collectively in possession of between ten and thirty per cent of the land proposed for enclosure.³⁰ Opposition therefore was not always by odd individuals or just small owners. Many individuals could combine and they could be joined by large landowners as well. This is evident from the appendix where the dissents and neuters as a percentage of all owners was large in a number of cases. Of over 5,500 petitions submitted for all English counties between 1730–1839 nearly 1,500 were dropped and there were over 500 counter-petitions against those bills which were not dropped. In some shape and form there were over 2,000 cases of opposition against English enclosures detectable in the parliamentary record alone, which is over 35 per cent of all enclosures.³¹

Undoubtedly some of the opposition was weak. For example, the dissenters at Westbury (1765–66), Woughton (1768–69) and Great Brickhill (1771–72) were all small landowners and quite uninfluential in their parishes. In fact most of these early enclosures were attended with little resistance – the peasantry had been reduced in earlier centuries. The notable exceptions were Aylesbury (1771–72) and Whitchurch (1771–72). In the former parish those owning one-third of the land opposed the bill while another group owning 162 acres chose not to sign the petition, although they said they would not oppose it either. At Whitchurch the neutral parties owned 416 acres, which was twenty per cent of all the land proposed for enclosure.³² In spite of refusals to sign petitions, the characteristic phrasing in the

House of Commons' Journal was that 'no person appeared before the Committee to oppose the bill.' This should not surprise us, it was costly to present a counter-petition or to offer some other form of opposition. Legal fees in general could be as much as ten to twenty per cent of the total cost of an enclosure.³³ Moreover, before 1774 opposition may have been present but unable to find a voice in Parliament. Up to that year there was no compulsion in the Parliamentary Standing Orders to publicise intentions to seek enclosure acts.³⁴ As a Committee of 1775 put it, 'Persons residing at a Distance had their Estates cut through by a Canal, or were put to great Expences for an Inclosure, almost without any Notice at all, or at least too late to have an Opportunity of considering the Proposition maturely.'³⁵

After 1774 notices advertising applications for enclosure bills had to be pinned to the doors of the relevant parish church for three consecutive weeks in the summer before the parliamentary session at which the bill was considered.

Reasons for opposing enclosure bills are not always given, and where they are they indicate a disorganised opposition. The single opponent at Woughton (1768–69) refused to sign because his wife was not willing; the only opponent at Great Brickhill (1771–72) disliked enclosures and therefore would not sign; the Hitcham bill (1778–79) was opposed by proprietors of land with a combined assessment to the land tax of only £2 per annum (out of a total assessment of £940), but a second group owning land assessed at £46.75 per annum refused to sign the petition though they had no objection to the enclosure.³⁶ However curious that last case sounds it was, nonetheless, quite a familiar response, other examples occurring at Aylesbury, Whitchurch and Taplow. Why should parties refuse to sign enclosure petitions and yet have no objection to enclosure? A possible answer is found in the Princes Risborough enclosure papers (1820–23) which indicate that while not actively objecting to enclosure, certain people refused to sign the petition for fear of offending friends and neighbours.³⁷

According to Sheila Lambert the attitude of Parliament to the presentation of enclosure bills changed over the course of the eighteenth century. It conceived its function early on 'to authorise agreements arrived at, rather than to arbitrate between parties. If opposition appeared, the parties were told in effect, to go away, sort it out amongst themselves, and come back next year.' But later in the century it more actively regulated the contents of bills.³⁸ W.E. Tate, therefore, was incorrect in suggesting that bills 'were rarely subjected to any substantial amendment in their passage through either house.'³⁹ They could be recommitted and amendments could be made.⁴⁰

The House of Commons may have debated proceedings more after 1790, but in Buckinghamshire, as elsewhere, early enclosures usually proceeded unhindered. The abortive Simpson bill of 1762 is one of the earliest documented examples of opposition in Buckinghamshire. The first petition was presented late in 1762 on behalf of the lord of the manor, the patron of the parish church, and several others. A counter-petition was presented by 'Owners and Proprietors of four-fifths part, and upwards of the said fields, grounds and pastures, so intended to be inclosed, and of several rights and privileges incident thereto'. At face value they seemed to own most of the parish. This counter-petition was ordered to 'lie upon the table' until a report on the original petition was received from Committee.⁴¹ At a subsequent meeting counsel representing both parties was heard. It appeared that the original petitioners had stated their case to the satisfaction of the Committee but that several people had refused to sign the bill. One woman doubted that she could maintain her fences; another person would not sign because it opposed the views and wishes of his father, who was violently opposed to enclosure; and yet another said that 'he would lose his life before he would lose his land.' Six of the eight trustees of the parish poor and the trustees of other charities also opposed the bill. To add some intriguing variety, two of the more substantial opponents had in fact signed an Article of Agreement to enclose the parish just two years earlier. Evidently the main opposition agreed in principle to an enclosure, but remained in dispute with the leading petitioner on several issues.⁴²

Opposition amounted to land assessed to the land tax at £342.5 out of a total parish assessment of £799.75.⁴³ The amended bill was ordered to be engrossed although it was far short of the recommended majority of two-thirds to four-fifths of agreement.⁴⁴ In the Upper House their Lordships postponed their judgement.⁴⁵ These proceedings were reminiscent of the 1756 bill for Morton Morrel in Warwickshire, 'it is said that Morton Morrel having broken the wind in galloping uphill in its first career, will not be able to drag its hindmost legs into the other House this Session. Who is your rider? Much depends on the choice.'⁴⁶ This was an allusion to the Committee members who would carry the engrossed bill to the Upper House.

J.M. Martin's work on Parliamentary procedure and Warwickshire enclosures highlights the selfishness and intrigue of the gentry as they secured specific members of Parliament to sit on the committee stages of specific enclosures. A web of patronage and nepotism was spun. In at least 60 of the 80 Warwickshire enclosures enacted between 1720-42 the leading petitioners had friends or relations in either the Lords or Commons, and in over one half of all Warwickshire bills

discussed between 1730–79 there was a specific personal connection between the principal petitioners and at least one Committee member.⁴⁷ There was the smell of conspiracy everywhere, but it was not a simple model of class conspiracy, since struggles between individuals from the same class were just as, or even more likely.

Buckinghamshire was not excluded from these shady dealings. At Princes Risborough (1820–3) the parliamentary negotiations were determined as much by local politics as by the obvious economic merits of the case brought by the opponents of the bill. John Grubb, the leading promoter of the bill suspected it might fail because Lord Nugent, formerly in favour, might turn and aid the opposition. Such a move was thought to be a vote catcher.⁴⁸ The Monks Risborough enclosure of 1830–9 was attended by much opposition.⁴⁹ Locally there was a common of about 300 acres which the lord of the manor, the Earl of Buckinghamshire, wished to enclose, along with the open fields of the parish. This aroused local hostility because the common was valuable for fuel gathering and common pasturage. In addition, the Earl's London agent was named in the bill as one of the commissioners. It was against the Standing Orders of the House that a steward or agent of any proprietor should act as his commissioner.⁵⁰ The agent suggested this Order might be circumvented if the name of a willing party could be inserted in the bill only to resign in the agent's favour when the enclosure began. It was even suggested that the son of the Earl's solicitor's might be that willing party. The main opposition in Parliament was Lord Nugent abetted by Sir John Dashwood. The amended bill passed in the Commons. The London agent saw as his next task to secure the attendance of friendly peers on the Lords' Committee.

It must now therefore be our endeavour to secure the attendance of Peers on the committee. I saw Lord Goderich yesterday and hope to do so again tomorrow to make full arrangements with his Lordship. The Duke of Buckingham was kind enough at my request to attend the House today and has promised to attend the Committee with a friend or two. I hope also to procure the attendance of two or three other Peers through the medium of the Marquess of Winchester so that in spite of the indefatigable annoyance of our enemies I do not think the inquiry in the Lords' committee can occupy much time⁵¹

The bill was eventually passed but not before a unique clause was inserted appointing a special commissioner for the poor. The news was conveyed to the Earl thus, 'Sir John Dashwood King is appointed Commissioner for the poor, it is a matter of no consequence he is a blundering blockhead and in fact will not trouble himself about the

matter', and the opposition 'were as meek as mice, and died like cravens and the business of the second day was over in an hour.'⁵² In the event Sir John was a most dutiful commissioner, but the acrimonious negotiations lingered on for nine years. In embarking upon protracted objections in the late 1820s the small landowners exacerbated their poverty at a time of heightened agricultural distress.

Simpson was the first well-documented example of a Buckinghamshire counter-petition, but it was preceded by the more successful opposition at Iver in 1746. This was an early local attempt to enclose an expansive piece of common and waste land. The resulting counter-petition of 1746 delayed enclosure until 1800.⁵³ Two other counter-petitions which successfully delayed enclosures were presented at Stewkley and Quainton in 1803 and 1800 (eventually enclosed in 1811–14 and 1840–43).

On the third reading of the Stewkley bill in 1803 a counter-petition was submitted. It must have been persuasive because the proceedings were suspended at the committee stage.⁵⁴ The local negotiations were attended by much rioting. Four men, all of Stewkley and all described as yeomen, were indicted for riot and assault on a solicitor's clerk who was employed to pin notices to the doors of the parish church. On entering the church yard he was met by fifty or sixty people. They confiscated the notices and assaulted him. The crowd had been advised, 'our lawyers from Leighton [Leighton Buzzard] has told us not to suffer the notices be stuck up.' A second attempt was made in the company of a constable, but this time the clerk was pelted with stones. The accused were found guilty and sentenced to three months confinement. Of the four indicted three owned land when Stewkley was finally enclosed in 1814.⁵⁵

This assault at Stewkley had two distinguishing features compared with other local cases: it is the only detected incident of its kind that is not reported in the House of Commons Journal – similar incidents at Oakley (1819–21), Princes Risborough (1820–23) and Towersey (1822–25) were all reported⁵⁶; and it is the only case where the 'mob' acted on instructions from counsel. The ringleaders were owners of land whereas in the other examples the rioters were usually an assortment of labourers.⁵⁷

At Quainton⁵⁸ negotiations for an enclosure were opened in 1795 when two well known south Midlands' commissioners, John Fellows and William Collisson, were employed to assess the profitability of enclosing the parish.⁵⁹ A petition was presented in 1801 demonstrating the advantages of enclosure. On paper the promoters seemed to have a sound case: land values would improve and there would be a

bonus saving in the usual rate of enclosure costs because 'Quainton field is the only one in that part of the county of Buckinghamshire that remains uninclosed'. Consequently, because it was already surrounded by old enclosures, fencing costs would be low. An ensuing counter-petition alleged that,

the proprietors of the said commonable lands are very numerous, and the shares or properties belonging to most of them are so small, that the proposed Division and Inclosure would be attended with an Expenditure far exceeding any improvement to be derived therefrom; and that a great majority, in Number, of the said proprietors, dissent to the said Bill, and the proprietors of more than One-third and very nearly One-half Part, in Value, of the lands to be inclosed, also dissent thereto.⁶⁰

The parliamentary Committee contradicted the last allegation. The original petition met with their satisfaction because all had signed it except those who owned land assessed to the land tax at £39.63 who refused, and those assessed at £3.5 who remained neutral, out of a total land tax assessment for the parish of £246.43. The consenting parties numbered eight but numerically they were outnumbered by the 22 dissenters. There were four neutral parties.⁶¹ Mantoux's conclusion is inescapable, 'the opposition was of small landowners'.⁶² But he was unaware of an important point. The quoted figures included old enclosures as well as the open fields. The latter contained 44.5 yardlands of which the consenters owned nearly 24 and the dissenters nearly 19. The neutrals held just two yardlands. In reality, therefore, the opposition was much stronger,

the present Bill, being an attempt to force an Inclosure of Lands where the Property is nearly equally divided between those who consent to and those who dissent from, the Bill, and where the Numbers are as three to one against the Bill, it would be contrary to the Usage of Parliament, and to the Reason and Justice of the case if such Bill were permitted to pass into a law.⁶³

This argument persuaded Parliament for nearly forty years.⁶⁴

For many counter-petitions no details of the nature of the opposition survive, as at Upton (1809-19) and Langley Marish (1809-13).⁶⁵ For others the counter-petitioners did not always object to enclosure *per se*, but rather to the allegations and proposals of pending bills. Their familiar phrasing was, 'therefore praying that the bill may not pass into a law as it stands' or 'as it is now drawn'.⁶⁶ Counsel for both parties would attend the Committee and although the conflict might have been resolved by amending the original bill, there were still usually some dissenting voices.

At Newport Pagnell in 1794 the counter-petitioners claimed they were not consulted or appraised of the terms upon which the enclosure was to take place. They objected to the lord of the manor's claim for his rights of the soil of the waste, 'for there is no land of that description', and they disapproved of the selection procedure for the commissioners – nominated by the lord of the manor and the leading landowner, the two original petitioners. In fact the signatories to the counter-petition included every notable landowner in the parish except those two original petitioners. They also objected to the proposed fee of two guineas per day for the commissioners stating that this was greater than the usual allowance, and they even objected to the commissioners themselves, who were totally unknown to them.⁶⁷ Finally, they pointed out that some of them owned land in both of the divisions of the parish, Tickford Field and Portfield Field, and that if Portfield alone was enclosed then the expenses of those who owned land in both fields would be increased if ever Tickford should be enclosed.⁶⁸

The bill was amended, but the details are not known: the lord of the manor eventually received an allotment for his right of the waste, but it was only half an acre indicating that there was only about ten acres of waste to be allotted, and the commissioners received the original, and quite normal fee of two guineas per day.⁶⁹ Those owning 172.5 acres still objected to the enclosure, which was nearly 20 per cent of all the land enclosed.⁷⁰

W.E. Tate felt that whatever the mode of protest, counter-petitioning was not the favourite, although he described occasions where it was successful.⁷¹ Quantitatively, the Buckinghamshire evidence supports Tate because there were only 16 counter-petitions presented for over 120 enclosures. In Herefordshire there were only 5 out of 35 enclosures. These figures were both higher than in Northamptonshire where only 11 per cent of enclosures from 1750–1815 were contested by counter-petitions.⁷² However, the examples cited above and below indicate that where they were employed they successfully delayed proceedings and forced favourable clause amendments.

IV

It was the enclosure of large areas of common and waste which provoked most opposition in Buckinghamshire, as in other counties. Of the small number of enclosures in the south of the county, four were attended by counter-petitions.⁷³ They were all enclosed during

the inflation of the French wars and they all contained extensive wastes, marginal lands which were to see the plough, possibly for the first time. In fact heath and commons covered much of the extreme southern part of the county in the eighteenth century.⁷⁴ Wraysbury was said to contain about 1,500 acres of different qualities, including extensive commons and wastes.⁷⁵ The local population greatly benefited from this communal land and its loss for grazing and fuel gathering purposes was hard felt. The opposition at Wraysbury was mainly, if not entirely, composed of small landowners. By the Committee stage their ranks had dwindled to a meagre £6.9 in land tax assessment out of a total parish assessment of £295.7.⁷⁶

At Iver the opposition was much more substantial. Those with land assessed to the land tax at £167.1 dissented out of a total of £838.8, with a further £112.35 remaining neutral.⁷⁷ It was here, in Iver in 1802, that the only local case of fence breaking has been discovered.⁷⁸ Three people were convicted for breaking down fences in the new enclosures, and fined six pence each – a strangely nominal sum.⁷⁹ In 1803 four appeared and were convicted on the same charge. They were described as labourers from Iver. Two were sentenced to four months and two to two months hard labour.⁸⁰ Perhaps interference with the new enclosures had become common, and this would explain the later, harsher sentences.

The opposition in 1800 was on technical issues, opposing specific clauses in the bill.⁸¹ One of the leading opponents circulated a letter of protest,

understanding that the Bill may be tendered for your signature before it has been seen by all the proprietors, I ask you to withhold yours until it has been read and considered by everyone. The draft contains inaccuracies and wants important clauses such as protection of various ancient rights, and of the poor, and an allotment for the minister.⁸²

Two other letters similarly indicate support for enclosure, but stress the abuse of local rights. That such steps towards local self-protection resulted in counter-petitions is important, but they do diminish the real feeling of opposition to enclosure itself.⁸³

Iver, therefore, was another example where the main objection was the definition of rights rather than the principle to enclose. These objections included the lord's right to the soil of the waste, although this was a common enough clause; the terms for commuting the tithes, although once again these followed the usual procedures; finally, the objectors passed adverse comment on the proposed compensation for the poor of the parish, but they were not poor

themselves.⁸⁴ The fact that Iver contained 1,172 acres of wasteland – the largest single piece of waste in the county at the time – which the cottagers and poor had enjoyed, legally or otherwise, time out of mind, was virtually overlooked.⁸⁵ Ironically, a stronger case could have been made if this last point had been pursued, because Iver Heath and other local commons were free warren.⁸⁶ The opponents no doubt were rueful at the partition of the waste, but their major concern was the size of the allotments to the lord of the manor and the tithe owners, and the proportionate reductions in their own, rather than that the waste should remain open. Self-interest in the guise of community care shines through in this example, as it does elsewhere.

At nearby Stoke Poges John Penn, the lord of the manor, proposed that a sum of £50 per annum should be distributed among the poor as compensation for losing the common which he intended to enclose.⁸⁷ The ensuing opposition was another of those examples of support for enclosure but disputes over the proposed terms. One of the leading opponents considered Penn's proposals as nothing short of 'Robbery'. Another made his attitude clear, 'so I will finally tell you that if the measure is attempted without any meeting or preparative agreement with regard to the right of the poor people, however, reluctantly, yet I shall most certainly give it every opposition in my power.'⁸⁸ The phrasing suggests agreement with a scheme to enclose but not under the terms proposed. There is no record of this opposition reaching Parliament, by the time the petition was submitted it had been altered, setting aside 200 acres of the common as a fuel allotment for the poor.⁸⁹ In this example community care prevailed.

V

The Quanton example cited earlier showed that the quotation of consents, dissents and neutral parties at Parliament did not always reflect the true opinion of the parish. There are other similar examples. At Thornborough in 1797 it was stated that of the 62.5 yardlands proposed for enclosure, owners of 9.25 refused to sign and of 5.75 remained neutral. Other evidence shows that of 61.625 yardlands owners of 14.625 refused to sign and of 6.875 remained unobtainable, failing to appear at the meeting when the petition was discussed.⁹⁰ The one source gives the measure of agreement as 76 per cent of parish ownership – which was within the conventional two-thirds to four-fifths majority which impressed Parliament – and the other put it in the marginal category with just 65 per cent in agreement.

This limited evidence is not to suggest that petitioners falsified their submissions. It is more likely that in the interim between drafting the petition and presenting it to Parliament persuasion, possibly coercion was employed, and/or the buying out of opponents took place in order to present a more impressive case in committee.⁹¹ But misreporting or the absence of full information was also a fault of parliamentary procedure itself. Scratching below the parliamentary record reveals cases of conspiracy to protect the interests of the large owners and the tithe owners. By implication this was class robbery, a fraud against the small owners.⁹²

Table 1 compares the evidence finally presented to Parliament and the evidence which emerges from local pre-parliamentary discussions.

**TABLE 1 OPPOSITION TO PARLIAMENTARY ENCLOSURE:
A COMPARISON OF THE HOUSE OF COMMONS' JOURNAL
WITH OTHER SOURCES¹**

<i>Parish</i>	<i>Date of Act</i>	<i>How Measured²</i>	<i>Consents</i>	<i>Dissents</i>	<i>Neuters</i>	<i>Ratio of Consents to the Rest³ (% ages)</i>
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(i) *From the House of Commons' Journals*

Stoke Mandeville	1797	£ s d	165.6	10.3	—	94 : 6
Thornborough	1797	yardlands	47.5	9.25	5.75	76 : 14
Weston Turville	1798	£ s d	302.14	4.9	27.15	90 : 10
Iver	1800	£ s d	548.75	167.1	112.35	66 : 34
Quainton ⁴	1801	£ s d	203.3	39.63	3.5	82 : 18
Olney	1803	(no information given)				
Bledlow	1809	£ s d	231.1	40.11	76.83	66 : 34
Princes Risborough	1820	acres	2090	1087	701	54 : 46

(ii) *From Local Sources*

Stoke Mandeville	1797	£ s d	83.5	10.3	78.08	49 : 51
Thornborough	1797	yardlands	40.13	14.63	6.88	65 : 35
Weston Turville	1798	£ s d	302.14	4.9	27.15	90 : 10
Iver	1800	£ s d	548.75	167.1	112.35	66 : 34
Quainton	1801	yardlands	23.88	18.63	2.0	54 : 46
Olney	1803	common rts	75	—	5	94 : 6
Bledlow	1809	£ s d	231.1	40.11	76.83	66 : 34
Princes Risborough	1820	£ s d	242.78	154.1	83.48	50 : 50

Notes

- 1 Note how in the examples of Weston Turville, Iver and Bledlow the information is identical in both sources.
- 2 The favoured way of measuring parish opinion was either by acreage or by aggregate contribution to the land tax. I have reduced £ s d to £s.
- 3 This is my calculation. Note how in the examples of Stoke Mandeville, Thornborough, Quanton and Princes Risborough the quantum of consent improves or appears to improve when evidence is presented to Parliament.
- 4 The Quanton example is the only one in the list which did not become an act. The enclosure was delayed until 1840.

Thornborough and Quanton have been referred to already. At Stoke the neutral parties were eventually persuaded to change their minds and sign the petition, leaving a single opponent whose specific reason for opposing was that 'where there are long leases, which is my case, if the expence of Enclosure should fall on the landlord the Tenant reaps the profit'. Furthermore, there was not a sufficient quantity of waste to defray costs communally.⁹³ The single opponent at Weston Turville was eventually persuaded to sell his land.⁹⁴

In the case of Princes Risborough a third estimate of the distribution of property is available. It indicates that of 172 landowners paying a total land tax of £478.99 per annum, only 31 supported enclosure (£205.41), 129 were against (211.43), 14 were neutral (27.46) and 8 were uncertain (£34.69). This suggests a substantial opposition, almost half in value and well over half in number. Between the presentation of a counter-petition and the subsequent evidence given at Westminster a number of landowners withdrew their objections. Their original fears related to the prospective cost of enclosing, and they cited nearby Bledlow where costs amounted to £11 per acre. They were won over by an amendment allowing costs to be defrayed by the sale of communal land. William Collisson, one of the commissioners, had estimated the probable cost in advance of the negotiations, which he felt could be defrayed comfortably without levying a proportionate rate on the landowners. In the event his estimate was wildly inaccurate and a rate as well as land sales had to be resorted to. This was exactly what the opposition had been afraid of and the appeasing amendment was designed to avoid.⁹⁵

VI

The Stewkley opposition, assaulting administrators as they put up public notices, was the only form of violent opposition in Buckinghamshire. From similar cases cited in the parliamentary journals

Mantoux concluded 'This passionate opposition, in strong contrast with the villager's habitual timorousness, may have had no other cause than an instinctive distrust of change.'⁹⁶ Certainly they were generally conservative, but enclosures had been proceeding apace for many years and the economic and social consequences were closely observed at first hand in neighbouring parishes. It was more than simple distrust which was at stake, it was fear and apprehension for the future.

At Haddenham (enclosed in 1830–34), when word spread through the village that notices were being pinned to the doors of the church, 'the people went and toor [em] down. They were put up agen, but they toour em down.'⁹⁷ Similar actions took place at Oakley, (enclosed 1819–21), Princes Risborough (enclosed 1820–23) and Towersey (enclosed 1822–25).⁹⁸

At Oakley an attorney's representative was prevented from putting up his notice by a crowd of between thirty and forty persons, even though he was in the company of a constable. Instead he read it.⁹⁹ At Princes Risborough public notice of the intended enclosure was not given because local solicitors were met by a 'Tumultuous mob' at the doors of the parish church. This resulted in a charge of public riot.¹⁰⁰ Here, as at Stewkley, the accused were not landless villagers, they were landowners in their own right, albeit not substantial ones.¹⁰¹ A local conspiracy now took a firm hold on proceedings. The accused were approached by another landowner who pointed out that if found guilty they were liable to both a fine and imprisonment, but, 'he thought he could settle it if he [one of the accused] would sign a paper for the enclosure.' On receipt of the signature it would be arranged that no witnesses would appear at the trial.¹⁰² The bribe was refused. The web of conspiracy thickened – the prosecutor, Captain Grubb, was also the lord of the manor and the leading promoter of the bill. The accused were eventually found guilty and fined small sums. Some of them continued to oppose the enclosure and signed a formal counter-petition: at enclosure they were allotted amounts ranging from 74 acres down to one-eighth of an acre, but they were principally very small landowners. (see table 2)

At Towersey, a solicitor was met by a mob estimated at one hundred. A riot ensued and he was thrown from his horse.¹⁰³ The prominent members of the crowd refused to give their names to the constables, but in evidence, the local vicar identified the two ring-leaders. He said that he had never seen such a large assembly in Towersey before, at least treble the normal divine service crowd, but that it did not contain any strangers. This is an important point, defining the more or less insular nature of rural communities. This was in contrast to the Sheffield riots of 1791 where supporters from

TABLE 2 THE LANDHOLDINGS OF THE COUNTER-PETITIONERS AT PRINCES RISBOROUGH, 1820-23

<i>Names on the Counter-Petition</i>	<i>Allotment in the Enclosure of 1823 - in acres¹</i>	<i>Comments</i>
John Smith	12.21	indicted on a charge of riot
Mary Smith	16.81	
Edward Smith	56.06	stood surety for the rioters
William Loosely	43.62	
William Dorsett	54.98	stood surety for the rioters
Mary Stratton	9.98	indicted on a charge of riot
Richard Kingham	73.99	
Thomas Ayres	1.86	indicted on a charge of riot
John Ayres	1.33	indicted on a charge of riot
Thomas Dell	3.99	only owned old enclosures
Ann Dell		
J.F. Bristow	52.38	had no land at enclosure
Thomas Jarvis	11.41	
Rev. John Shepherd	40.03	chairman of the opposition
Joseph Lindsay		
William Darvill	5.46	
S. Clinch	27.65	
D. Ginger	0.52	
I. Claydon	14.26	
Thomas Stone	0.13	
Robert Winslow	13.09	

'and about 100 more proprietors'

Note

¹ roods and perches converted to decimal parts of an acre and rounded to two places.

Sources: B.R.O., Princes Risborough Enclosure Papers, IR/M/1/7(i), Counter-Petition of 26 September 1819, and Princes Risborough Enclosure Award of 1823, IR/87.

Birmingham, it is said, assembled for the disturbance.¹⁰⁴ At the enclosure of single parishes disturbances were small and localised, but where large areas of common and waste were concerned, the disturbances were proportionately larger, in terms of their sphere of influence - the large number of villages which shared the commons - and also in terms of actual or potential participation. For this reason none of the Buckinghamshire disturbances reached a level that could not be contained by the local authorities, and surely this was the case for most English villages.¹⁰⁵

VII

Much of the discussion indicates that opposition was directly or indirectly a reaction to economic considerations: common and waste was about to go under the hammer; the small landowners were fearful of the expected costs; or they were fearful of being left with too small an allotment after enclosure once the tithe owner had taken his share of the spoils. For some enclosures all of these perils lay in wait, but by 1815 they were exacerbated by the appearance of the most important crisis for agriculture in the period, the post-Napoleonic wars depression. Opposition to some of these enclosures must be understood in this light. The parishes of Princes Risborough (1820-3), Monks Risborough (1830-9), Towersey (1822-5), Oakley, (1819-21) and Haddenham (1830-4) were all enclosed in this period, and were attended by much opposition including violent assaults.

During the agricultural depression there was a slump in the returns to arable farming, and there was the prospect, with pending enclosures, of losing the use of the commons. The *Select Committee on Agricultural Distress of 1836* is retrospective evidence of mounting adversity since the close of the French wars. Rent abatements signalled the depression.¹⁰⁶ In Northamptonshire, at Helpston, there was a history of rent abatement stretching back to 1817, and the enclosure of the parish, which was conceived at a time of high wartime prices, was paid for during the depression with low prices and poor credit facilities.¹⁰⁷ A decline in wheat prices after 1813 prompted many landlords to reduce rents to obtain at least a minimum income on their land. At Haddenham in Buckinghamshire, the local squire was compassionate towards his tenants, 'He gin em stock and in some cases woont taiak any rent fur three yeeurs. If thaiur had bin moour men like him, Hadnum woont a suffered as it did',¹⁰⁸ but not all landlords were the same. They could not always afford to reduce or abate rents. Often, tenants were obliged to exhaust their working capital to meet the annual rents, and not infrequently they left the land altogether. The landlords then faced the problem of finding new tenants, and not infrequently farms lay idle for considerable periods, or rent collection was discontinued indefinitely.¹⁰⁹ At Princes Risborough one farm remained unoccupied for four years, and at Aylesbury in 1831 every farm was reported as untenanted and in the hands of the landlords.¹¹⁰

Finding tenants was not easy, but selling the land proved equally difficult.¹¹¹ As one witness explained, before the war there was a continuity in the occupation of the land, he had lived on the same farm since 1798 and his grandfather fifty years before him, 'but

looking round it will be found that there are perhaps half a dozen of my length of standing in the whole neighbourhood.¹¹² Of immediate concern was the extent to which landowners had mortgaged their estates during the war – to raise capital for land improvements during the contemporary inflation of food prices and farm incomes. Of wartime prices and attendant mortgages one witness was particularly bitter,

that is where the great evil has been; farmers having some capital, and looking forward to high prices, have purchased estates, and borrowing the greater part of the money, and now they have to pay the same rate of interest as when their produce was making double what it now makes.¹¹³

At Princes Risborough the smaller farms were already mortgaged to the extent of one-half to two-thirds of their value, and this was one of the major concerns of the opponents of this enclosure.¹¹⁴ The bigger estates could often fall back on alternative incomes, such as the sale of timber, but the same could not be said for the smaller landowners. At Haddenham mortgagees were suddenly faced with the immediate task of meeting the commissioners' expenses, 'Unable to raise the money, many parted with their ancestral plots for what they could get.'¹¹⁵

This is not to suggest a correlation between distress and enclosure: the distress was felt in all kinds of parish, whether open field or already enclosed. Besides, the 1836 Report, as it related to Buckinghamshire at least, made no reference to enclosure. The point is that they were enacted during this period of distress and included the enclosure of wastes as well as open-field arable. For the Risborough parishes, with relatively large populations, the value of this waste for fuel gathering and the grazing of animals, as a buffer against distress, was considerable.

VIII

Opposition to enclosure in Buckinghamshire, though extensive, was passive rather than active. People stubbornly refused to sign petitions or they remained neutral. Only occasionally were counter-petitions prepared, and even more rarely do we learn of riotous behaviour and fence breaking. Very often the opposition was not against enclosure as a means of agricultural improvement, but rather with the compensations proposed in the bills. It may be significant that the large proportion of counter-petitions involved parishes with large areas of common and waste, land which was traditionally associated with the subsistence

economy of the smaller landowners, the cottagers and the landless.

Recent researches have suggested that the cost of enclosure was greater than previously believed.¹¹⁶ In addition there were associated difficulties of raising funds to pay them. This resulted in a degree of forced social mobility down the agricultural and social ladder.¹¹⁷ Here then was the potential for economic costs bringing about social protests, the costs measured either directly through out of pocket expenses, or indirectly through the emasculation of commonality and other common property rights.

The plight of the small man may be projected in purely social terms, but it was economic costs, however they were measured, which were the crux of the issue. Even where commons and other lands were sold-off to finance enclosures, this was itself a considerable cost.¹¹⁸ In Kent such land sales ranged from 6 to 35 per cent of all the land allotted, with an average of 21 per cent, and for two Middlesex enclosures land sales represented 16 and 28 per cent respectively. In West Sussex, for 20 enclosures, land sales ranged from 1 to 40 per cent of all the land allotted with a mean of 15 per cent, and in 30 North Somerset enclosures the sale of wasteland ranged from 5 to 58 per cent of the land allotted.¹¹⁹ Allottees may have been spared direct out of pocket expenses but the commons were reduced in size and their economic worth to the community was eroded, often to the point of disappearing. Sometimes the money raised by the sale of commons was inadequate to cover all expenses and other, more direct means of raising funds became necessary. The three Buckinghamshire parishes of Langley, Princes Risborough and Monks Risborough, all attended by much opposition, fit this pattern, and in Stanton in Suffolk in the 1790s more land was sold than was originally proposed leaving the division of the remaining common into parcels so small – many of them below one acre in size – as to be of little use for farming. Four of the ‘poor’ owners of this parish sold out before the enclosure was completed.¹²⁰ In Aymestry and Kingsland in Herefordshire there was opposition, partly based on the belief that expenses would be so large that all of the common would have to be sold off to defray them.¹²¹

Even if individuals opted to have land deducted from their claims to be sold as full or part payment for their general enclosure costs, this deduction came usually after the tithe owner had been apportioned his one-fifth of the open field and one-seventh or eighth of the commons. For small landowners these deductions resulted in allotments much reduced in size compared with their former open-field estates, so small in some cases as to be little more than gardens. Here is the independant peasant shuffling inexorably down the agricultural

ladder. Large landowners could bear the loss of some land to throw off the burden of tithes, but not the small landowners.¹²²

In particular the economic burden of enclosing was worsened in the aftermath of the profit inflation of the Napoleonic wars. There was a bunching of abortive enclosure bills towards the end of and just after the wars, a feature observed in Herefordshire as well. The evidence suggests a relationship between opposition and the long-term depression after the inflation peaked in 1813.

If Thompson's class robbery existed it was mostly by default and not conspiracy. On previously published evidence I would be the last to deny that there were serious casualties from enclosure, but they were, in the main, struck by accident: they were in the path of a reorganisational movement which proceeded from 1750–1830 with but brief respite. It is a semantic argument perhaps – casualties are casualties whatever the packaging – but too often we see conspiracy lurking behind every tree. A number of my examples have shown the problem to be, rather, a conflict within and not across classes. Studies of rural conflict too readily and heavily assume the disputes are between the capitalist 'them' and the labouring 'us':¹²³ they dwell overly on politics without also considering down-to-earth local economics. It is this latter aspect which this study has attempted to balance.

Buckinghamshire is one of several counties which in recent years have formed the focus of attention for new ideas concerning the social and economic implications of parliamentary enclosure: in Warwickshire and Northamptonshire similar features have been unearthed. These counties share much in common. With their heavy soils there was a post-enclosure problem of lost employment opportunities through the conversion of labour intensive arable to less labour intensive pastoral farming. This offers an obvious but still fully unexplained link with opposition to enclosure.¹²⁴

A major part of the whole story which is still inadequately researched is a consideration of the consequences of enclosure for a large number of rural economic and social habits. We refer here to the use which was made of the commons and wastes, and also the open fields at certain times of the year, for other than obvious farming uses. These were nevertheless economic uses – furze cutting or casual pasturage – as well as the service provided by the commons for leisure pursuits.¹²⁵ This is expressed locally in Buckinghamshire by the verses of the Thornborough Lamentation which bemoan the loss of rights and grazing over the open fields, the loss of furze cutting for the poor, the probable end of cricket on the green, and of using the green for the time-honoured spooning activities of courting couples.¹²⁶ Opposition to enclosure took many forms therefore,

including lamenting this often idyllic romanticised view of pre-enclosure village life which was lost, because the land which was enclosed was such an integral part of local village economy and society.

The Thornborough Lamentation

or

Gang Monday No more Kept at Mill

- 1 Ye Thornbro' youths bewail with me;
Ye shepherds lay your Reeds aside;
No longer tune the merry glee,
For we are rob'd of all our pride.
The time alas will soon approach
When we must all our pastimes yeild;
The wealthy on our rights encroach
And will enclose our Common Field.
- 2 The herds will then no longer graze,
Or shall their flocks the shepherds lead;
The sportive lambs no longer play,
Or skip about the flowry mead.
The yellow corn its golden store,
Shall cease its pleanteous grain to yeild.
The Furze no longer for the poor.
Enclos'd will be our Common Field.
- 3 Gang Monday long our Holiday,
When sprightly youth or Bucksome Lass
To Thornbro Mill would bend their way,
To dance upon the verdant Grass.
No Longer shall they yearly meet,
Or youth the bat at cricket wield;
Nor, on the Green their Sweethearts treat,
Enclos'd will be our Common Field
- 4 The Farmer late tho' small his store,
Yet always had a welcome home;
Nor knew distress by being poor,
Must work, or to the Parish come.
But heaven more mighty than the Rich,
To punish those whose hearts are steel'd;
By means their wisdom cannot reach
May open yet our Common Field.

Anon. No date, but Thornborough was enclosed 1797-1800.

<i>Parish</i>	<i>Date of Bill</i>	<i>Consents</i>	<i>Dissents</i>	<i>Neuter</i>	<i>Ratio of² Consents to the Rest (% ages)</i>	<i>No Person Appeared Before the Committee</i>	<i>Counter-Petition Presented</i>	<i>Bill Dropped or not Presented</i>
Ashenden	1738		10 acres			*		
Iver	1746					*	*	*
Simpson	1763	£457.25	£342.5		57 : 43		*	*
Westbury	1764		£6.0					
Westcott	1765	33.25 yards.		0.75 yards.	98 : 2	*		
Simpson	1765							*
Winslow	1766	1400 acres		27 acres	98 : 2	*		
Little Horwood	1766	910 acres		50 acres	95 : 5	*		
Woughton	1768	1210 acres	30 acres		98 : 2	*		
Simpson	1770	£473.5	£215.75	£83.75	61 : 39		*	
Aylesbury	1771	1820 acres	616 acres	162 acres	70 : 30	*		
Whitchurch	1771	837 acres	360 acres	416 acres	52 : 48	*		
Great Brickhill	1771	1322 acres	4 acres		99 : 1	*		
North Crawley	1772	1503 acres	66 acres		96 : 4	*		
Soulbury	1772	2264 acres	10 acres	1 acre	99 : 1	*		
Stoke Hammond	1774	£94.05	£3.38		97 : 3	*		

<i>Parish</i>	<i>Date of Bill</i>	<i>Consents</i>	<i>Dissents</i>	<i>Neuter</i>	<i>Ratio of² Consents to the Rest</i> (% ages)	<i>No Person Appeared Before the Committee</i>	<i>Counter-Petition Presented</i>	<i>Bill Dropped or not Presented</i>
Hartwell and Stone	1776	£1030.03		£108.1	91 : 9	*		
Ludgershall	1777	43.25 yards	8.0 yards.		85 : 15	*		
Hitcham	1778	£891.0	£2.0	£46.75	95 : 5	*		
North Marston	1778	46.75 yards.	1.25 yards.		97 : 3	*		
Hanslope	1778	1816 acres	84 acres		96 : 4	*		
Taplow	1779	1240 acres		210 acres	86 : 14	*		
Bierton	1779	2418 acres	158 acres	10 acres	94 : 6	*		
Preston Bissett	1781						*	
Calverton	1782	1968 acres	30 acres		98 : 2	*		
Wavendon	1788	£156.64	£11.04	£4.3	91 : 9			
Bow Brickhill	1790	1916 acres	8 acres		99 : 1	*		
Little Woolstone	1791	511 acres	193 acres		73 : 27	*		
Wendover	1794	1397 acres		273 acres	84 : 16	*		
Newport Pagnell	1794	713 acres	173 acres		81 : 19		*	
Steeple Clayden	1795	86.5 yards	2.0 yards		97 : 3	*		
Padbury	1795	1697 acres	3 acres		99 : 1	*		
Little Brickhill	1796	558 acres	14 acres		98 : 2	*		
Grandborough	1796	869 acres	86 acres	13 acres	90 : 10	*		
Wing	1797	3149 acres	254 acres		93 : 7	*		
Wingrave	1797	2709 acres	47 acres		98 : 2	*		

Thornborough	1797	47.5 yards.	9.25 yards	5.75 yards.	76 : 24	*
Stoke Mandeville	1797	£165.6	£10.3		94 : 6	*
Adstock	1797	33.0 yards.		14.0 yards.	70 : 30	*
Weston Turville	1798	£302.14	£4.9	£27.15	90 : 10	*
Horton	1799	£191.0	£43.65	£40.6	69 : 31	*
Walton	1799	1189 acres	50 acres		96 : 4	*
Singleborough	1799	£47.58	£2.53		95 : 5	*
Wraysbury	1799	£288.8	£6.9		98 : 2	*
Iver	1800	£548.75	£167.1	£112.35	66 : 34	*
Quainton	1801	£203.3	£39.63	£3.5	82 : 18	*
Weedon	1801	1752 acres	45 acres		97 : 3	*
Maids Morton ³	1801	30.75 yards.	3.5 yards	5.5 yards.	76 : 24	*
(Maids Morton	1801	482 acres	54 acres	99 acres	76 : 24	*)
Wooburn ⁴	1801	765 acres	35 acres		96 : 4	*
(and of the old enclosures		1271 acres	429 acres		75 : 25)	*
Dinton	1802	£4360		£82	98 : 2	*
Newport Pagnell	1802					*
Hanslope	1803	1002 acres	167 acres		86 : 14	*
Stewkley	1803					*
Upton	1805					*
Upton	1808					*
Marsh Gibbon	1808					*
Langley Marish	1809	£454.7	£45.08	£10.34	89 : 11	*
Bledlow	1809	£231.1	£40.11	£76.83	66 : 34	*
Marsworth	1809	1200 acres	72 acres	15 acres	93 : 8	*

<i>Parish</i>	<i>Date of Bill</i>	<i>Consents</i>	<i>Dissents</i>	<i>Neuter</i>	<i>Ratio of² Consents to the Rest (% ages)</i>	<i>No Person Appeared Before the Committee</i>	<i>Counter-Petition Presented</i>	<i>Bill Dropped or not Presented</i>
Slapton	1810	1682 acres	10 acres		99 : 1	*		
Stewkley	1811	£290.58	£58.05	£5.4	82 : 18	*	*	
Fulmer	1812							*
Farnham Royal	1813							*
Mentmore	1813							*
Quainton	1814							*
Farnham Royal	1814							*
Mursley	1814	£242.08	£19.08	£17.49	87 : 13	*		
Amersham	1815	£7408.31	£542.35	£284.8	90 : 10	*		
Farnham Royal	1817							*
Oakley	1818							*
Oakley	1819	£127.89	£6.9	£63.78				*
Princes Risborough	1819							*
Princes Risborough	1820	2090 acres	1087 acres	701 acres	54 : 46		*	
Little Marlow	1820	£254.15	£11.0		96 : 4	*		
Towersey	1822	£130.1	£36.95	£14.49	72 : 28			
Eton	1825							*
Salcey Forest	1825	£865.81	£105.6	£16.43	88 : 12	*		
Eton	1826						*	*
Monks Risborough	1830						*	*

Notes

- 1 This is a summary of the proceedings reported in the *Journals*. Consents, Dissents and Neuters were variously reported in terms of annual contribution to the land tax, acreage, or other measures of land area, such as yardlands in this Buckinghamshire case study. The land tax was given in £ s d which I have reduced here to £s to two decimal places. The yardlands I have converted to two decimal places and the acres I have rounded to the nearest whole number. The number of persons involved was not, usually, reported. For 43 other Buckinghamshire bills, all of which became acts, no similar details are reported in the *Journals*.
- 2 This is not reported in the *Journals*. This is my calculation taken to the nearest whole number. Some of the ratios shown at 99 : 1 should rightly be rounded to 100 : 0.
- 3 At Maids Morton the distribution of opinion was reported in two different ways.
- 4 This Wooburn example shows the main opposition to be those landowners with old enclosures. It is a guess, but a reasonable one, to suppose that the opposition was based on the extinction of common rights which would accompany the enclosure of the open lands.

Notes

* My thanks to E.J. Davis and H. Hanley, successive county archivists for Buckinghamshire, and their staffs for patiently providing the manuscripts on which this study is based. My thanks also to the Knoop Research Fund of the University of Sheffield for finances for the purchase of microfilms from the Stowe Collection, The Henry Huntington Library, California. All acreage or money expressions have been converted into the whole or parts of a £ or acre.

¹ From the 1756 Edgehill enclosure in Warwickshire, reprinted in L. Dickens and M. Stenton (eds.), *An Eighteenth Century Correspondence* (London, 1910), p. 343.

² E.P. Thompson, *The Making of the English Working Class* (revised ed., London, 1970), pp. 237–8.

³ P. Mantoux, *The Industrial Revolution in the Eighteenth Century* (12th ed., London, 1955), p. 140.

⁴ J.D. Chambers, 'Enclosure and Labour Supply in the Industrial Revolution', reprinted in E.L. Jones (ed.), *Agriculture and Economic Growth in England 1650–1815* (London, 1967), pp. 104–5, Chambers' emphasis, my parenthesis.

⁵ J. Billingsley, *General View of the Agriculture of Somerset* (London, 1797), p. 59.

⁶ J.L. and B. Hammond, *The Village Labourer* (4th ed., London, 1927), p. 25; and in general Thompson, pp. 237–42.

⁷ From a large literature the latest major works include, R.A.E. Wells, *Insurrection: The British Experience 1795–1803* (Gloucester, 1983); J. Bohstedt, *Riots and Community Politics in England and Wales 1790–1810* (Cambridge, Mass., 1983); C. Emsley, 'An Aspect of "Pitt's Terror": Prosecutions for Sedition during the 1790s', *Social History*, 6 (1981), 155–84; *idem.*, 'Repression, "Terror", and the Rule of Law in England during the Decade of the French Revolution', *English Historical Review*, C, no. 397 (1985), 801–25.

⁸ Figures from M.E. Turner, *Enclosures in Britain 1750–1830* (London, 1984), chapter 2.

⁹ Thompson, p. 240.

¹⁰ At Cheshunt in Hertfordshire, for example, in Thompson, p. 240. In fact the Cheshunt example is a favourite with social historians. This may be because it is so colourful, but it may also indicate that there are so few examples in the Public Records. See, R.W. Malcolmson, *Life and Labour in England 1700–1780* (London, 1981), pp. 128–9.

¹¹ Most recently by J.M. Neeson, 'The Opponents of Enclosure in Eighteenth-Century Northamptonshire', *Past and Present*, 105 (1984), 114–39; at the very local scale see D. Dymond, 'Opposition to Enclosure in a Suffolk Village', *The Suffolk Review*, 5 (1980), 13–22.

¹² Which endorses M. Reed's thesis on nineteenth-century English peasantry, 'The Peasantry of Nineteenth-Century England: A Neglected Class?', *History Workshop*, 18 (1984), 53–76.

¹³ B[uckinghamshire] R[ecord] O[ffice], Aylesbury, Princes Risborough Enclosure Papers, IR/M/1/7, letter from C.T. Ellis, Parliamentary Agent to Acton Tindal an Aylesbury solicitor who became clerk to this commission; see also B.R.O., Miscellaneous Essays, T.W. Davis, *The Inclosure of Princes Risborough 1823* (1971), p. 5.

¹⁴ M.E. Turner, *English Parliamentary Enclosure* (Folkestone, 1980), chapter 7.

¹⁵ F.K. Donnelly, *Popular Disturbances in Sheffield 1790–1829* (Unpublished M.A. Dissertation, University of Sheffield, 1970), pp. 33–9; see also B. Hammond, 'Two

Towns' Enclosures', *Economic History*, 2 (1930-33), 258-66; Carolus Paulus, *Some Forgotten Facts in the History of Sheffield and District* (Sheffield, 1907), p. 78.

¹⁶ B.R.O., Quarter Sessions Records, vol. 27 (Michaelmas 1802 and Epiphany 1803), and Quarter Sessions Case Book 1802-10, QS/JC/1 (Epiphany 1803), for the parish of Iver, enclosed 1800-03. For examples of violence, usually associated with common and waste enclosure see, The Hammonds, *passim*; J. Godber, *History of Bedfordshire 1066-1888* (Bedford, 1969), p. 418; J. Stephenson, *Popular Disturbances in England 1700-1870* (London, 1979), pp. 42-3.

¹⁷ For example in Leicestershire, H.G. Hunt, *The Parliamentary Enclosure Movement in Leicestershire 1730-1842* (unpublished Ph.D. Thesis, University of London, 1956), pp. 138-9.

¹⁸ Thompson, p. 341; Neeson describes a small number of such riots in Northamptonshire, especially where commons were involved, 'Opponents of Enclosure', 129-31.

¹⁹ 'I hate enclosures . . . I look upon them as the greedy tyrannies of the wealthy few to oppress the indigent many, and an iniquitous purchase of invaluable right.' C. Bruyn Andrews (ed.), *The Torrington Diaries: Containing the Tours through England and Wales of the Honourable John Byng between the years 1781-94* (London, 1934), vol. 1, p. 7.

²⁰ Bruyn Andrews, vol II, p. 280.

²¹ In observing Birmingham, Manchester and Sheffield he was moved to denounce the rise of trade and industry. Bruyn Andrews, vol. II, p. 209, vol. III, pp. 32-3.

²² A. Young, *The Farmer's Tour through the East of England* (London, 1771), pp. 20 and 23; *idem.*, *An Inquiry into the Propriety of Applying Wastes to better maintenance and support of the Poor* (Bury, 1801), p. 37.

²³ Anon., *An Inquiry into Bills of Inclosure* (London, 1780), reprinted in A. Briggs (ed.), *How they Lived, An Anthology of Original Documents Written between 1700-1815* (Oxford, 1969), vol. III, pp. 191-2.

²⁴ A. Young (ed.), *The Annals of Agriculture*, XLII (London, 1804), 27, 38-40, 323-4; see also G.E. Mingay (ed.), *Arthur Young and His Times* (London, 1975), pp. 102-12; on productivity improvements and enclosure see M.E. Turner, 'English Open Fields and Enclosures: Retardation or Productivity Improvements', *Journal of Economic History*, XLVI (1986), pp. 669-92.

²⁵ *Reports from the Select Committee of the House of Commons*, vol. IX (1803), pp. 232-6.

²⁶ Lord Carrington received 1,325 acres out of 1,582 enclosed, the remainder was glebe and tithe, B.R.O., Moulsoe enclosure award map. At Monks Risborough the successful enclosure petition presented in 1830 was preceded by attempts which failed on this very issue of tithe commutation, B.R.O., Monks Risborough Enclosure Papers, IR/M/176/1, 'Statement on the part of Promoters of the Bill'; for similar problems in Herefordshire see W.K. Parker, 'Opposition to Parliamentary Enclosure in Herefordshire, 1793-1815', *Transactions of the Woolhope Nat. Field Club*, XLIV (1983), 79-90.

²⁷ See E.J. Evans, *The Contentious Tithe* (London, 1976), esp. pp. 96-7, 105.

²⁸ W.E. Tate, 'Parliamentary Counter-Petitions during the Enclosures of the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries', *English Historical Review*, 59 (1944), 392-403; *idem.*, 'Opposition to Parliamentary Enclosure in Eighteenth-Century England', *Agricultural History*, 19 (1945), 137-42.

²⁹ And for a similar table for Herefordshire see Parker, 'Opposition in Herefordshire', 82.

³⁰ Hunt, p. 110; Tate, 'Opposition in Eighteenth-Century England', 139; *idem.*,

'Members of Parliament and their Personal Relations with Enclosure', *Agricultural History*, 23 (1949), 214; J.M. Martin, 'Members of Parliament and Enclosure: A Reconsideration', *Agricultural History Review*, 27 (1979), 108; J.M. Crowther, *Parliamentary Enclosure in Eastern Yorkshire, 1725-1860* (Unpublished, Ph.D. Thesis, University of Hull), p. 224; Neeson, 'Opponents of Enclosure', 123.

³¹ My thanks to Trevor Wray who compiled these figures in preparation for his forthcoming Ph.D. on opposition to parliamentary enclosure (the University of Hull).

³² *H[ouse] of C[ommons'] J[ournal]*, 33 (1771), 98 and 141.

³³ Turner, *Enclosures in Britain*, pp. 60-3.

³⁴ *H.C.J.*, 34 (1774), 608.

³⁵ *H.C.J.*, 35 (1775), 443-4; This statement is not quite accurate. As Sheila Lambert has pointed out in her *Bills and Acts* (Cambridge, 1971), p. 130, notices publicising the sittings of Lords' Committees had to be given in the London Gazette after 1733, but when she tested the three sessions from 1739-41 she found that notices of only 4 committees from a possible 15 actually appeared.

³⁶ *H.C.J.*, 31 (1768), 605; *H.C.J.*, 33 (1771), 187; *H.C.J.*, 37 (1778), 717.

³⁷ B.R.O., Princes Risborough Enclosure Papers, IR/M/1/7, extracts from the clerk's memo book.

³⁸ Lambert, p. 136; by implementing stricter Standing Orders, for which see *H.C.J.*, 54-6 (1798-1801), *passim*.

³⁹ W.E. Tate, *The English Village Community and the Enclosure Movement* (London, 1967), p. 103; *idem.*, 'The Commons Journals as Sources of Information concerning the Eighteenth-Century Enclosure Movement', *Economic Journal*, LIV (1944), 75-95.

⁴⁰ Problems arise for the historian because these amendments are rarely mentioned in the journals of either House, except that Lords' amendments to Commons' bills usually appear in the *H.C.J.*, see Lambert, p. 136.

⁴¹ Full details in *H.C.J.*, 29 (1761-4), *passim*; and *H[ouse] of L[ords'] J[ournal]*, 30 (1760-4), *passim*.

⁴² It seems that opposition to clauses rather than to enclosure per se was common, Tate, 'Parliamentary Counter-Petitions', 394.

⁴³ The Committees at Westminster variously considered the acreage to be enclosed, land tax assessments, and sometimes land ownership in terms of poor rate assessments.

⁴⁴ This was not a prescription laid down in Standing Orders, but the level advocated by the Reverend Henry Homer as necessary, successfully to petition Parliament, based on his observations of customary practice. Henry Homer, *An Essay on the Nature and Method of Ascertaining the Specific Shares of Proprietors upon the Inclosure of Common Fields* (Oxford, 1766), p. 36.

⁴⁵ In the event the Simpson bill was dropped on the premature prorogation of Parliament. New bills were prepared in 1765 and 1770, the last of which was successful. It was attended by a counter-petition. The passage of the bill was clearly a close run affair. From a parish land tax assessment of £773 the opposition totalled £215.75 and the neutral parties £83.75. Details in *H.C.J.*, 30 and 32 (1765-6 and 1768-70), *passim*.

⁴⁶ Dickins and Stanton (eds.), p. 361.

⁴⁷ Martin, 'Members of Parliament'.

⁴⁸ B.R.O., Princes Risborough Enclosure Papers, IR/M/1/9, The Legal Papers of John Grubb, 1816-29.

⁴⁹ The full story of this enclosure is told in M.E. Turner, *Some Social and Economic Considerations of Parliamentary Enclosure in Buckinghamshire, 1738-1865* (Unpublished Ph.D. Thesis, University of Sheffield, 1973), pp. 203-9.

⁵⁰ Standing Orders of 2 July 1801, *H.C.J.*, 56 (1801), 661-3.

⁵¹ B.R.O., Monks Risborough Enclosure Papers, IR/M/8, letter of 13 May 1830 from James Grace to the Earl of Buckinghamshire.

⁵² B.R.O., IR/M/8, letter of 21 May 1830.

⁵³ Full details in *H.C.J.*, 25 (1745–50), 194, 256.

⁵⁴ *H.C.J.*, 58 (1803), *passim*.

⁵⁵ There was in fact an agreement as early as 1772 to enclose Stewkley, B.R.O., Stewkley Enclosure Papers, IR/M/10/1, 'Agreement of 14 January 1772'; for details of the first petition and the riot see *H.C.J.*, 58 (1802–3), 397, and B.R.O., Quarter Sessions' Inrolments, vol. 27 (Michaelmas, 1803 and Epiphany, 1804), and QS/JC/1, Quarter Sessions' Case Books, 1802–10 (Epiphany, 1804).

⁵⁶ In *H.C.J.*, 74 (1819), 406; *H.C.J.*, 75 (1820), 334; *H.C.J.*, 77 (1822), 213. Towersey at the time was in Buckinghamshire, it is now in Oxfordshire.

⁵⁷ The final chapter in the Stewkley enclosure was a successful petition of 1811 which became an act in spite of a counter-petition with opposition assessed at £58 out of a total land tax assessment of £354. See *H.C.J.*, 66 (1811), *passim*.

⁵⁸ Also discussed by Mantoux, *passim*.

⁵⁹ For details of both these commissioners see M.E. Turner, 'Enclosure Commissioners and Buckinghamshire Parliamentary Enclosure', *Agricultural History Review*, 25 (1977), 120–9; For the Quainton enclosure see B.R.O., Quainton Enclosure Papers, IR/M/9, papers relating to the unsuccessful bill of 1801.

⁶⁰ *H.C.J.*, 56 (1801), 298.

⁶¹ *H.C.J.*, 56 (1801), 544; for a similar Suffolk example see Dymond, 'Opposition to Enclosure', 18.

⁶² Mantoux, pp. 170–1.

⁶³ B.R.O., Quainton Enclosure Papers, IR/M/9, 'Statement of Property', no date; The *H.C.J.*, in fact quotes 42.5, 21.75, 19.5 and 1 yardland respectively.

⁶⁴ *H.C.J.*, 56 (1801), 545; A second petition was presented in 1814 but it did not even gain a first reading, *H.C.J.*, 70 (1814), 34; the two commissioners, Fellows and Collisson were employed by the promoters until at least 1810. The last document is a survey prepared by Fellows that year, B.R.O., Quainton Enclosure Papers, IR/M/9, 'Survey Respecting the Proposed Inclosure of Quainton', of 7 November 1810.

⁶⁵ *H.C.J.*, 63 (1808), 254 and *H.C.J.*, 64 (1809), 181.

⁶⁶ Wording taken from the counter-petitions presented for Iver and Preston Bissett in *H.C.J.*, 55 (1800), 513 and *H.C.J.*, 38 (1781), 443.

⁶⁷ In the 1790s a fee of two guineas per day was quite normal. One of the commissioners, John Chamberlain of Cropredy in Oxfordshire was making the first of his four appearances in the county, but he was well known elsewhere. See W.E. Tate, 'Oxfordshire Enclosure Commissioners, 1737–1856', *Journal of Modern History*, XXIII (1951), 141, and M.W. Beresford, 'The Commissioners of Enclosure', *Economic History Review*, 1st series, XVI (1946), 132.

⁶⁸ Details of Portfield from *H.C.J.*, 49 (1794), *passim*; Tickford was enclosed by 47 Geo. III, ch. 30, 1807.

⁶⁹ The maximum allotment in lieu of the rights of the soil of the common and waste was one-twentieth, so the extent of the waste of Portfield was about 10 acres.

⁷⁰ *H.C.J.*, 49 (1794), 555.

⁷¹ Tate, 'Parliamentary Counter-Petitions', p. 403; In *idem.*, 'Some Unexplored Records of the Enclosure Movement', *English Historical Review*, 57 (1942), 252, Tate describes the abortive attempts of 1781 and 1784 to enclose the Nottinghamshire parish of Great Leake. The enclosure was postponed until 1798–9 as a result of successful counter-petitioning; In *idem.*, 'Parliamentary Land Enclosures in the County of Nottingham during the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries (1743–1868)', *Thoroton*

Society Record Series, v (1935), he itemises ten occasions in the county where counter-petitions were presented to Parliament, 183.

⁷² Parker, 'Opposition in Herefordshire', 80; Neeson, 'Opponents of Enclosure', 136.

⁷³ Wraybury 1799–1803, Iver 1800–04, Upton 1808–19, and Langley Marish 1809–13.

⁷⁴ See D.W. Fryer, *Buckinghamshire*, being part 54 of L.D. Stamp (ed.), *The Land of Britain. The Report of the Land Utilisation Survey of Britain* (London, 1942), p. 65.

⁷⁵ *H.C.J.*, 54 (1799), 650.

⁷⁶ At Stanton in Suffolk the 16 counter-petitioners were all small freeholders, copyholders and local tradesmen, persons who were particularly sensitive about the loss of commons. Common right allotments were invariably small and not satisfactory substitutes for what was traditionally an almost unfettered use of the commons. The Stanton enclosure was postponed for 14 years. Dymond, 'Opposition to Enclosure'.

⁷⁷ *H.C.J.*, 54 (1799), 712 and *H.C.J.*, 55 (1800), 589.

⁷⁸ Neeson cites more examples of riot and damage in Northamptonshire than have been discovered for Buckinghamshire. 'Opponents of Enclosure', 129–31.

⁷⁹ B.R.O., Quarter Sessions' Inrolments, vol. 27 (Michaelmas, 1802).

⁸⁰ B.R.O., Quarter Sessions' Inrolments, vol. 27 (Epiphany, 1803), and QS/JC/1, Quarter Sessions' Case Book 1802–10 (Epiphany, 1803). At Marsworth and Upton there were convictions for carrying away rails that had been erected under recent enclosures. It is difficult to distinguish them as examples of opposition to enclosure as distinct from everyday rural crime. B.R.O., Quarter Sessions' Inrolments, vol. 32 (Michaelmas, 1814) and 31 (Easter, 1813).

⁸¹ Earlier attempts to enclose Iver were made in 1746 and 1791.

⁸² B.R.O., D/W/83/12, letter of 3 April 1800 from Charles Clowes, the principal objector.

⁸³ Corroborated in a letter from Clowes to Christopher Tower, a leading Iver land-owner, B.R.O., D/W/83/12, 19 April 1800, 'We have found the Bill in many respects imperfect, and several Clauses and parts of Clauses must be expunged, and other Clauses and parts of Clauses must be introduced . . . to make the Bill agreeable to the orders of the House of Commons.' An earlier letter of 14 September 1799 says, 'Out riding this morning I learnt of opposition to Mr Bernard's enclosure of Iver Heath Common Field, and that the freeholders are being invited to consider the best means of applying for an Act', *idem.*, D/W/83/4. These letters indicate that not all opposition was against enclosure per se, but more a protection by the various parties of their rights.

⁸⁴ Charles Clowes, the leading opponent, received 71 acres at enclosure.

⁸⁵ The cottagers were allotted 37.5 acres and the poor less than 12 acres.

⁸⁶ W.H. Ward and K.S. Black, *A History of the Manor and Parish of Iver* (London, 1933), p. 231, citing the Churchwardens Account Book of 19 November 1800.

⁸⁷ John Penn 1760–1834, was the grandson of William Penn the founder of Pennsylvania, and he devoted much of his time and resources to improving his seat at Stoke Park.

⁸⁸ Stoke Poges opposition is taken from *Stoke Poges Parish Council Newsletter*, nos. 16 and 21 (March 1971 and March 1972).

⁸⁹ From a total of about 1000 acres allotted in Stoke Poges and Wexham, about 300 was open fields and 700 was common and waste. In addition nearly 900 was old enclosure reallocated in exchanges.

⁹⁰ *H.C.J.*, 52 (1797), 425 and Henry Huntington Library, San Marino, California, Stowe Collection, (unsorted) folder of papers concerning Thornborough enclosure 1797–1800.

⁹¹ See also Parker, 'Opposition in Herefordshire', 83-4 and Neeson, 'Opponents of Enclosure', 119.

⁹² See Martin, 'Members of Parliament', who reinterprets Sheila Lambert's account of parliamentary procedure.

⁹³ B.R.O., Stoke Mandeville Enclosure Papers, IR/M/11, letter of 8 March 1797 from a Mr Johnson in reply to a request to sign the enclosure petition.

⁹⁴ Deed in B.R.O., Lowndes Estate Papers, D/19/84.

⁹⁵ For a table giving Collisson's estimation see M.E. Turner, 'The Cost of Parliamentary Enclosure in Buckinghamshire', *Agricultural History Review*, 21 (1973), 41; for the financing of enclosure see *idem.*, 'Cost, Finance, and Parliamentary Enclosure', *Economic History Review*, 2nd series, XXXIII (1981), 236-48.

⁹⁶ Mantoux, p. 175.

⁹⁷ H. Harman, *Buckinghamshire Dialect* (London, 1926), p. 95.

⁹⁸ In all three cases notices of intended enclosure could not be pinned to the doors of the parish church.

⁹⁹ *H.C.J.*, 74 (1819), 406.

¹⁰⁰ *H.C.J.*, 75 (1819), 334; see also Henry Huntington Library, Stowe Collection, uncatalogued affidavit of Thomas Ayres and others, 12 December 1819; B.R.O., Quarter Sessions' Rolls (Michaelmas 1819), Recognizances 38-42, where a 'true bill' was brought in against five accused.

¹⁰¹ Full details of the Princes Risborough opposition is told in Turner, *Some Social and Economic Considerations*, pp. 197-203.

¹⁰² Henry Huntington Library, Stowe Collection, uncatalogued affidavit which states that Mr Richard Holloway 'is a considerable Proprietor of Lands, Tenements and Hereditaments in the said parish', although at enclosure in 1823 he did not receive an allotment at all.

¹⁰³ *H.C.J.*, 77 (1822), 213; B.R.O., QS/JC/6, Quarter Sessions' Case Book (Epiphany, 1822).

¹⁰⁴ Modern researchers are sceptical on this point and are inclined to put it down to sensational journalism. Donnelly, *Popular Disturbances in Sheffield*, p. 34.

¹⁰⁵ The two ringleaders were found guilty and sentenced to one month and fourteen days in prison, and both were fined £5 and bound over to keep the peace for one year. B.R.O., QS/JC/6, Quarter Sessions' Case Book (Epiphany, 1822).

¹⁰⁶ *Select Committee appointed to Inquire into the State of Agriculture: with the Minutes of Evidence and Appendix* (3 Reports), British Parliamentary Papers, VIII (1836), 1st Report, questions 320, 322, 679, 1653, 1656, 3680; see also J. Oxley Parker, *The Oxley Parker Papers* (Colchester, 1964), pp. 70, 138-9.

¹⁰⁷ Scene of Clare's poem 'The Parish', John Barrell, *The Idea of Landscape and the Sense of Place: An Approach to the Poetry of John Clare* (Cambridge, 1972), p. 207-8.

¹⁰⁸ Harman, p. 98.

¹⁰⁹ *Select Committee* . . . 1st Report, Qs, 327-8, 355, 401, 526, 1356, 1365, 1389, 1662, 1773, 1803, 3675.

¹¹⁰ *Select Committee* . . . 3rd Report, Q 14137; J.K. Fowler, *Echoes of Old Country Life* (London, 1892), p. 258.

¹¹¹ *Select Committee* . . . 1st Report, Qs 432, 1141.

¹¹² *Select Committee* . . . 1st Report, Q 530, in reference to N.W. Buckinghamshire.

¹¹³ *Select Committee* . . . 1st Report, Q 1268.

¹¹⁴ B.R.O., Princes Risborough Enclosure Papers, IR/M/1/7(i), counter-petition.

¹¹⁵ W. Rose, *Good Neighbours - Recollections of an English Village and its People* (Cambridge, 1942), p. 5.

¹¹⁶ Summarised in Turner, *Enclosures in Britain*, chapter 4.

¹¹⁷ Summarised in Turner, *Enclosures in Britain*, chapter 5.

¹¹⁸ Turner, 'Cost, Finance', 240–2 and *idem.*, *Some Social and Economic Considerations*, pp. 332–41.

¹¹⁹ Turner, 'Cost', 241–2; J. Chapman, 'Land Purchases at Enclosure: Evidence from West Sussex', *Local Historian*, 12 (1977), 337–41; B.J. Buchanan, 'The Financing of Parliamentary Waste Land Enclosure: Some Evidence from North Somerset, 1770–1830', *Agricultural History Review*, 30 (1982), 112–26.

¹²⁰ Dymond, 'Opposition to Enclosure', 19.

¹²¹ Parker, 'Opposition in Herefordshire', 87.

¹²² See Turner, *Enclosures in Britain*, chapter 5.

¹²³ On the problems of this approach see in particular Reed, 'The Peasantry', 64.

¹²⁴ On the conversion of arable to pasture after enclosure see Turner, *English Parliamentary Enclosure*, chapter 6.

¹²⁵ Neeson, 'Opponents of Enclosure', 119, 124; see also Reed, 'The Peasantry', 57–8; on the loss of commons and its effect on the ability of the poor to keep a few stray animals after enclosure see K.D.M. Snell, *Annals of the Labouring Poor: Social Change and Agrarian England 1660–1900* (Cambridge, 1985), pp. 174–80.

¹²⁶ B.R.O., Dayrell Collection, BAS, AR/39/53, The Thornborough Lamentation (n.d., but Thornborough was enclosed 1797–1800).