Farm and Family: Administering the Estate of William Poore, A Hampshire Downland Farmer, 1593–9

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Probate wills and inventories are so widely used in studies of the social and economic life of early modern England that their value hardly needs emphasizing here.[1] Separately, but preferably together, they give answers to a range of questions relating to economic activity and social relationships. Nonetheless, they have their limitations. In essence, they are snapshots, freezing certain events in time, and do little to help us obtain a dynamic picture of the actions of individuals. To a certain extent, this deficiency can be remedied by examining records of administration, drawn up for probate purposes, and filed with the rest of the documentation. They are far less common than wills and inventories and the survival rate is patchy, some areas being much better served than others. Where extant, they add an extra dimension to the study of probate records, providing further detail and indicating developments that took place over time.[2]

Executors and administrators of wills were required to give an account of their actions to the officials at the probate court. From this information it is possible to discover what happened to the estate after the testator's death. Clearly, the volume of material contained in individual accounts is related to the period covered by the administration: in the diocese of Canterbury in the second half of the seventeenth century the length of time between the making of the inventory and the presentation of the accounts normally fell within the range nine months to two years. The best are those which deal with an estate during a prolonged minority for there one can examine events as they unfold.[3]

Administrators carried out a variety of tasks and this is what gives probate accounts their special value. From them, historians of early modern England can gain insights into various aspects of contemporary life, information, moreover, which is often unique to this source. Depending upon the occupation of the deceased, they provide evidence of the organization of agriculture and industry and the scale and nature of individual economic enterprises. In the countryside, they illustrate the way in which farms were run, shedding light on such matters as farming practices, the husbanding, harvesting and marketing of farm products and the management of the workforce. Of course, estate accounts contain this information but few examples survive for people below the social standing of the gentry. Probate accounts contain much social material too. They tell us of family relationships, for example, as well as the roles played by neighbours and the wider kinship group. If there were any children, the accounts indicate how they were brought up and by whom. They may also refer to educational provision.

Probate accounts are valuable sources of information by themselves but they become even more useful when analysed in conjunction with other documents. Probate inventories, for instance, may list farmstock but they give little or no indication of what happened thereafter to the crops and animals. Probate accounts provide the answer. Similarly, they reveal how faithfully the wishes of the deceased, as expressed in his or her will, were carried out. Were the debts paid, for instance, and were the legacies distributed as desired? A joint examination of parish registers and probate accounts and wills, moreover, produces a more rounded picture of a family and the relationships between individual members than each document could do by itself.

It is for this reason that the accounts of the administration of the estate of William Poore, a prosperous yeoman farmer from Longstock (Hants.), are so interesting.[4] The documentation itself is good, covering a number of years and giving much incidental detail. In turn, the evidence can be augmented by other sources of information. Although Longstock's parish registers do not survive for the period, other classes of record exist. William's will and inventory are particularly informative, as are those for other members of the family. In addition, his farming enterprise can be placed in its proper context by examining local inventories as well as manorial surveys and court rolls. His standing in the community, moreover, can be gauged from tax returns.

When he died on 17 July 1593 William left a wife and eight children. Two of the children were married but the other six were single and aged under twenty-one. In his will, made four days before his death, he named his wife, Anne, as his sole executrix. She was to enjoy the profits of both farms for life, and with them she had to pay all her husband's debts, see to it that the legacies were distributed and bring up their children. Wives regularly acted in this capacity, indicating that in spite of contemporary notions of female inferiority, many men felt confident in their wife's ability to manage affairs.

Unfortunately, Anne died soon afterwards, perhaps of the same sickness that killed her husband. The accounts refer to the treatment of both of them by one Peasley, an Andover apothecary, as well as to payments made to several women who attended them. Because of Anne's death, administration of the will was granted to the four overseers on 6 August. Alexander Tutt of Oxenwood (Wilts.), Richard Tutt of Abbots Worthy (Hants.) and Thomas Tutt of Chilbolton (Hants.) were all styled gentlemen, whilst George Strong of Goodworth Clatford was called a yeoman. William Poore called them his 'brothers' and 'cousins' and they may have been related to him through marriage.

The accounts, which cover the period from July 1593 to January 1598/9, suggest that the administrators carried out their duties in a responsible manner, fulfilling the wishes of the testator and protecting the interests of the children. The bulk of their work was concentrated in the months after William's death: when they first took their accounts to Winchester for exhibition in December 1594 just over two-thirds of their total expenditure had been made. They received a similar proportion of the receipts during the same period. Thereafter, they continued to act as administrators until 23 January 1598/9 when they presented their final accounts. Altogether, they spent £1182 7s. 11d. but as they had received £1231 5s. 7½d., they were in credit.

The settling of the accounts was associated with the coming of age of William's third son, Augustine. He had celebrated his twenty-first birthday in 1597 and that Michaelmas had received the lease of the Lower Farm, as bequeathed in his father's will. He travelled to Winchester with the administrators when they handed in their accounts and vouched for the accuracy of the sums stated to have been laid out on his behalf. His younger brothers, Thomas and Alexander, had not received their bequest, the lease of the Upper Farm, and were still being boarded out, but it is possible that Augustine had agreed to take over. The final bill for the upkeep of the boys, for the quarter ending 10 February 1598/9, was included in the account and elsewhere it reveals that Augustine was being paid sums of money to clothe them.

I

Longstock, the parish in which William Poore farmed, is situated on the Hampshire downs, ten miles south of Andover and fifteen miles north-east of Winchester, the diocesan centre.The River Test forms much of the eastern border. From the valley bottom the land climbs up to the top of the chalk ridge, making it a typical downland parish. In the sixteenth century, too, its farming practice, with its emphasis on sheep and corn, was characteristic of such communities. For farmers like William, the market town of Stockbridge, 2½ miles across the River Test, offered a convenient outlet for goods but others lay within easy reach. Weyhill, the great sheep fair, for instance, was less than twelve miles to the north-west.

The extensive downland pastures enabled farmers to maintain large flocks of sheep, more than they could have kept on their holdings alone. In 1552 the common downs available to tenants of the largest manor, comprised 300 acres, which could, with the help of the fields, support 4000 sheep. Sheep could also be kept on another area of downland and the cattle on the riverside marshes. Because of the existence of so much common land tenants were stinted generously, being allowed to keep sixty sheep and four cattle or horses for every yardland (twenty-four acres) held. A survey of 1591 mentions a further resource, a detached portion of woodland called Downwood, 110 acres in extent, lying to the west of Romsey. There, the tenants had rights of pannage and herbage.[5]

In the late sixteenth century the manor was owned by the Queen, as part of the duchy of Lancaster.[6] To it was annexed a sub-manor, known as Longstock Harrington, which had been carved out of it in the middle ages. Sub-manors, like this, were quite common, many of them, as at Longstock, having originated as freehold estates. As a result, some were quite small. Longstock Harrington, for instance, was said to be seven and a half yardlands in extent. Also in the parish was the small manor of Prior's Court, owned by the abbess and nuns of St. Mary's Winchester until the Dissolution. Thereafter, it was acquired by Lord Sandys, who, by that date, had obtained the sub-manor of Longstock Harrington.[7]

What could a landowner gain from creating his own manor? Apart from the added status, there was a financial incentive, an income being generated through the operation of the manor courts. Some saw it as a means of freeing themselves from their tenurial obligations to the old manor, although such a move was likely to be strenuously resisted.[8] At Longstock, Longstock Harrington possessed all the trappings of a manor; Lord Sandys held courts leet and baron, sometimes together, and in 1602 nineteen copyholders and two leaseholders owed suit of court there. He did, however, recognise the superior manor and paid a chief rent of 6s. for his property.[9]

II

The Poore family had several branches in Longstock and in the neighbouring parishes. This is typical; there was a good deal of movement in sixteenth century England, even if much of the migration was short-distance. Thus, one would expect to find members of a family scattered over a group of parishes, apart from the one from which it had originated. Examples of families settling in strength in a single parish can be found: Anne Mitson gives the example of the Widdowsons of Trowell (Notts.) and names others from South-west Nottinghamshire.The Tarts of Leighton (Shrops.) similarly spring to mind. However, such families were less common than whose links extended across a number of often contiguous parishes. Anne Mitson terms this area, 'the neighbourhood'.[10]

People migrated for a variety of reasons. Young unmarried adults moved to acquire farming or craft skills, craftsmen and labourers sought work and farmers looked for land. Of course, some families seem to have been more settled than others and in places one can discern differences between social groups, though there is no uniformity in the country as a whole. At Longstock there is no obvious pattern; certainly the labourers were highly mobile, as one would expect, but among the farming community there were examples of short- and long-stay families across the social spectrum.[11]

At the beginning of the sixteenth century, the Poore family's main home appears to have been at Wherwell, the parish which bordered Longstock to the north-east. When a member of the family, another William Poore, gave evidence in a case heard at the consistory court at Winchester in 1583, he described himself as a husbandman, living in Longstock but a native of Wherwell. Then aged seventy-five, he deposed that he had lived at Wherwell for twenty-nine years before moving to Leckford, a parish which touched on it to the south. The occasion of the move may well have been his marriage and the lease of a farm at Leckford. He stayed there for thirty years before settling at Longstock.[12] By this time (1567) he would have found other members of the family in residence. Indeed, they had been there for over forty years at least and had become an established family there. The lay subsidy return for 1525 shows that there were two prosperous branches of the family in the area, one headed by Andrew Poore, farming at Wherwell, and the other, by Richard Poore senior at Longstock. There was another branch at Longstock too.[13]

Our subject was the great grandson of Richard Poore senior. This branch of the family seem to have been among the leading farmers in the parish for much of the sixteenth century. In 1525 Richard was assessed on goods worth £22, the highest valuation there, as was the £20 rating of his son, Richard, in 1544. Translated into actual stock on the ground, this was the sum assessed on a large downland farm. When he died in 1549 Richard junior left a flock of 600 sheep and 172 acres of crops.[14] As the century progressed, such people paid less and less in real terms. In 1586 William, along with Robert Douse, had the highest valuations in parish, being assessed on goods worth £10. For such men, the 10s. tax they paid is hardly a measure of their wealth, reflecting the extent to which the system of assessment had become fossilized. When William died on 17 July 1593 his goods were valued at £1498 1s. 3d. His great grandfather had paid £1 2s. on a net personal estate of £95 12s.[15]

William, nonetheless, owed a lot of money. Debts are often recorded in a person's will but in his, William merely exhorted his widow to 'see my debtes payd'. The probate account fills in the details, referring to debts totalling £489 1s, owed to twenty-three people. Perversely, this reflected his standing in the community, credit-worthiness being directly related to status.[16] Because of the shortage of specie and the 'lumpiness' of income and expenditure, the giving and taking of credit was commonplace, especially in commercial transactions.[17] Credit facilities developed and in many villages it was possible for individuals to obtain money locally. However, neighbours and kinsfolk remained an important source of funds and this was certainly true in William's case. Apart from owing various members of his immediate family £75, he was also indebted to his kinsfolk, the Tutts, for £81 13s. 4d. Other creditors include people with recognizable Longstock names.

Economic circumstances in the late sixteenth century favoured large farmers like William Poore. Population grew rapidly and, as a result, demand for foodstuff increased dramatically. Prices rose and those with considerable surpluses to sell, prospered. Those who did best were freeholders, copyholders of inheritance and leaseholders with long leases because their outgoings were small in comparison to their income. Small farmers did not fare so well, especially if they held short leases or copyholds at will. They gained an increment from the price rise but it may have been insufficient to cover their extra costs. Moreover, if they had to supplement their income by wage labour, they faced increased competition for jobs and worked for poor wages. They tended to get squeezed off the land too. Landowners might enlarge their demesne or engross holdings, putting them beyond the means of small farmers. The same yeomen farmers who took over these composite farms, were at the same time buying additional land or acquiring other leases and copies.[18]

Such developments caused greater polarization in rural society, especially in mixed farming communities where commercial farming was strong. There, economies of scale were particularly effective and less reliance was placed on family labour. The middling farmers, those holding between fifteen and fifty acres, seem to have been hardest hit. The gap thus opened up in the social structure tended to emphasize the exalted position of the larger farmers. Indeed, some of them were beginning to aspire to gentle status. In addition, they sought a greater role in local administration and in places like Longstock with no resident lord, they tended to dominate affairs.[19]

Apart from acquiring extra land, often by a variety of tenures, substantial yeomen also began to spend some of their income on improving their quality of life. In particular, they extended their homes, creating a number of specialist rooms and filling them with a greater range of furniture and furnishings. In this respect, they were in the van of the movement termed 'The Re-building of Rural England' by Professor Hoskins. Although later studies, notably that of Dr. Machin, have modified Professor Hoskins's thesis, in particular pushing the date of the take-off period further forward, the concept remains a valid one.[20] Indeed, prosperous yeomen like William Poore were among the first to enlarge their homes and were doing so before the end of the sixteenth century.

Economic and social developments at Longstock mirrored many of the changes taking place in the country as a whole. At the end of the sixteenth century less than a dozen men formed an elite group of farmers. They held at least fifty acres, seemingly the dividing line between those who paid the subsidy and those who did not. Within this group, men like William Poore and Robert Douse stand out. In both cases, their status can be seen in the size of their farms and the quality of their living accommodation.[21] However, polarization had not gone as far in Longstock as it had done in some other downland communities, as at Chippenham in Cambridgeshire for example. There, the middling farmers disappeared during the course of the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries.[22] At Longstock, the successors of the medieval virgaters, remained numerous, protected, in many cases by long leases sealed in the mid sixteenth century. Their demise seems to have occurred later, during the course of the seventeenth century. In the hearth tax returns for 1665 exactly half of the 66 entries for Longstock were listed as non-chargeable.[23] This pattern is repeated in a number of the parishes around Longstock.

III

Although William Poore had some freehold land, his main income was derived from his two leasehold properties, an example of engrossing common among members of his class. The Lower Farm comprised the demesne land on the queen's manor, whilst the Upper Farm belonged to Lord Sandys. William made good use of both farms, dovetailing the activities on each into his overall scheme. In this respect, the names of the farms are illuminating. Corn production was based at the Lower Farm, where, significantly the farmhouse had a carter's chamber. The sheep flock, on the other hand, was run from the Upper Farmhouse, where one of the rooms was called the shepherd's chamber. William lived with his family at the Lower Farm, in the bigger of the two farmhouses.

To help him run his business William had a number of servants, who lived and worked on the farms. The practice of boarding-in farm servants was a common one, stretching back to the medieval famuli and beyond and not finally exinct in parts of the country, notably in the North, until the twentieth century.[24] Of course, the numbers involved varied according to the scale and nature of the enterprise. Most of the farm servants were young adults, who were hired for the year before (perhaps) moving on to another farm. For many people this was an essential part of the life-cycle. Although they may have left home, they were still (to a certain degree) in a sheltered environment and they could concentrate on learning skills essential to them in their working life.[25]

William Poore's accounts record payments to nine male – and four female servants, a reflection of the scale and diversity of William's farming activities. At the top were one or two skilled workers, vital to the smooth running of the farm, and perhaps older than the other servants. These included Knight and Robert, carters, and Knight, the shepherd. The servants were divided between the two farmhouses, according to function. Not surprisingly, most lived at the Lower Farm. William's inventory lists five bedrooms containing seven beds at the Lower Farmhouse and two bedrooms with three beds at the Upper Farm. There may have been others in unrecorded rooms but one should not always expect an exact match. It was common practice in early modern England for people to share the same bed, even strangers staying the night at an inn.[26]

The plan of the Lower Farmhouse certainly shows that the housing revolution had begun. The house, probably consisting of a front range of three units, including a cross-wing, was two full storeys high with cocklofts above. The hall had ceased to serve as a cooking space, and was being used as a dining and living room. Food was prepared in the kitchen, located in an outshot at the back, with a cockloft above. In the range of work rooms brewing, malting and dairy production were carried on. William and Anne slept in the inner lower chamber, a ground floor room, and normally called the parlour. Typically, the head of the household was the last person to move his bedroom upstairs and among the yeomanry this generally occurred in the seventeenth century.[27] Theirs was the only bed in the room and with its woollen fringed curtains and bedding was, at £7, by far the most expensive bed in the house.

The Upper Farm house was smaller, with perhaps a hall, a chamber and outhouses on the ground floor and two chambers above. By inference the rooms included a malt house. Because of its association with sheep-keeping, the shepherd stayed in the house. His chamber, however, was sparsely furnished with a bedstead, bolster and blanket worth 3s. 4d. The best chamber was much better equipped with its truckle bed, two feather mattresses, three feather bolsters, three blankets and two coverlets, priced at £4. The emphasis on sheep can also be seen in the references to eight weights of wool in the wool chamber, valued at £47 10s., and five weights of locks of lambs' tow worth £3 in the chamber by the malt house.

The contents of the Lower Farm indicate that William Poore and his family lived a comfortable, if not ostentatious, life. Although he and his wife were the only ones to enjoy any real privacy, the other members of the household had reasonable living and working conditions. The house was well-furnished and the furniture solidly made. There was a wealth of soft furnishings. Cushions of tapestry and tufted moccado could be found in the hall, and bedding, of various materials, in the chambers. The best linen was kept in two locked chests.

All the mattresses were stuffed with feathers and there were pillows filled with down. The quality and range of furniture and soft furnishings in the house suggests that the revolution in internal fitments that occurred during the course of the seventeenth century was already underway by 1600.[28]

William Poore's farming activities were typical of those pursued by the substantial farmers of the area. Large-scale farming developed early on the Hampshire downs and was already well-established in the middle of the sixteenth century.[29] By 1593 the Hampshire downs were renowned for the size of their farms, based on a system of sheep-corn husbandry. Men such as William Poore had hundreds of acres of farm land and open downs at their disposal. The lease of the demesne of the Queen's manor alone gave him a farmstead and over 200 acres of farm land, as well as common for 400 sheep, thirty-one cattle and eight horses. He also gained preferential grazing rights on the aftermath and fallows in the common fields and a flock of 116 sheep, kept to fold on the arable land. He controlled a stretch of the River Test too.

The most valuable aspect of William Poore's farming activities was his sheep flock, over 1000 strong at the time of his death. It comprised mainly ewes, lambs and wethers but there were some 'fatting' sheep too. Together with wool in store, William's flock was worth £329 11s. On light soil farms, operating a sheep-corn system, sheep were specifically employed to keep the arable fields in good heart.[30] This was true on William's farm; references in his inventory to "vii dossen of Hurdelles att the Folde" (13s. 4d.) and to a further three dozen hurdles (7s.) indicate the practice. He also acquired an income from the sale of wool, wethers and fatstock. Given the general lack of interest in providing animals specifically for the meat market at the time, the fatstock may have been old or barren beasts.[31] It is true that the pull of the London market was already being felt in the South-east and this encouraged some farmers in the region to involve themselves in fattening stock. Longstock certainly came within the orbit of the metropolitan market and William did have good meadow ground readily available. However, at this distance, demand was somewhat selective and the emphasis of William's farming lay elsewhere.

William had a large acreage under the plough, mainly wheat and barley, the characteristic grains of the area. In his final year William sowed 100 acres with wheat, 100 acres with barley, 22 acres with peas and vetches and 26 acres with oats and dredge. From the entries referring to the processing of the corn and its subsequent disposal an impression of yields per acre can be obtained (adding a tenth to allow for tithe corn taken before threshing). The evidence suggests that barley yields were at a reasonable level and those for wheat low. Altogether 174 quarters and one bushel of new barley were threshed, giving a mean gross yield of 15.32 bushels per acre before deduction of tithe. Whilst this does not compare with yields on some contemporary manors, it is still above average. Ten bushels may have been the norm, the sort of yields Hertfordshire farmers were obtaining at the time.[32] In contrast, sixty-one quarters and seven bushels of new wheat were threshed, though recorded sales exceeded this by twenty-one and a half quarters. At best, therefore, yields were a mere 7.34 bushels an acre (on 100 acres). These figures look false and seem to under-estimate the true picture, though as prices rose sharply in 1594, there may have been problems the previous year.[33] According to the amount threshed, the yield produced by dredge and oats was 12.6 bushels per acre.

Some of the crops were grown as fodder. All the peas and vetches, referred to in the accounts, were fed to cart horses working on the farms at harvest-time. William used horses for all his draught purposes. This was not uncommon; light soil areas were in the forefront of the movement away from oxen for there the speed and strength of the horses could be harnessed to maximum effect. Elsewhere, on heavier land, substantial farmers were likely to use both horses and oxen, the horses for carting and road work and the oxen for ploughing. Interestingly, in such areas small farmers tended to employ solely horses because of their greater flexibility.[34]

As was customary with large-scale Hampshire downland farmers, William had other agricultural interests too.[35] He possessed thirty head of cattle, mainly kept for rearing, though the young fat bullock was probably destined for his own table. He also reared pigs, fed on the residues of the malting and dairying processes. These were largely kept for home consumption if the fate of the previous year's herd is typical: the appraisers listed eleven flitches of bacon worth £2 5s. at the Upper Farm.

IV

One of the first concerns of the administrators was the running of the farm. Apart from having to take care of the animals and prepare for the impending harvest, they also had to think about the property itself. Consequently, the land was let to two subtenants, both Longstock men. Robert Smith leased Lower Farm and Richard Gale Upper Farm, paying rents of £36 and £70 respectively. Out of these sums, the administrators had to give £8 1s. 4d. in rent plus 1s. 8d. cow money and a 6s. quit rent to the Queen and £8 16s. in rent to Lord Sandys. They also spent money on occasional travelling charges to the Queen's receiver at Newbury or St. Albans. Even allowing for the need to pay running costs and recoup the cost of the entry fine, no more than four times the annual rent, they were left with a tidy profit. It was characteristic of the often lax administration of the Crown estate that William Poore paid the same rent as had Richard Lister when he acquired a 31 year lease of the property in 1551.[36]

Before they could take over, the harvest of 1593 had to be brought in. This was supervised by John Legge, William's brother-in-law, who used the deceased's home as the centre of operations. John and his wife, Mary, were paid £2 10s. for looking after the house from William's death until a fortnight after the following Michaelmas. From his account of the operation, we gain an insight into the management of a large farm and how the work-force was utilised. We know, for instance, that the couple provided food and drink for the labourers during the harvest period, much of it produced on the farm. Wheat was baked into bread, the malt brewed into beer and existing stocks of cheese brought out. A fat cow was killed, as were a number of sheep and lambs. An indication of the varied diet of the household is revealed by references to fish (ling, pilchards and eels), meat (beef and mutton), spices (cinnamon, mace and pepper) and dried fruit (raisins and currants) in John Legge's bills. He also purchased salt to preserve the meat. The beef was largely obtained at Andover, Romsey and Weyhill.

The need to get the crops in quickly ensured that at harvest time labourers (and small farmers) received a much-welcomed boost to their income, with guaranteed work, higher wage rates and other benefits. At critical times of the year like this, more people were required than normal. Typically, John Legge had to augment William's regular work-force, the farm servants, by bringing in day labourers, hired by the day or the task. Altogether 17 male and 15 female labourers were paid for work done in 1593. Some of these people were smallholders, eking out the income derived from their property by working for others. William Hall, for instance, held a copyhold on the royal manor, consisting of a cottage, 1½ acres of arable land and a parcel of meadow ground. Larger farmers were involved too, including William Smith, who had a ½ yardland farm on the same manor. This reveals not only how circumstances of the time affected the farming community in different ways but also how important an economic role large mixed farmers played in the village, providing jobs and an income to a large section of society.

Most of the work done by the labourers was paid by the day but some of it was fixed at piece rates. Thus, Edmond Barnaby received 5s. for reaping 1½ acres of wheat 'to task'. Women were an integral part of the work-force in the field, as the numbers suggest, though they were hired in a more casual manner than were the men. This is reflected in the respective wage bills, £11 15s. 5d. for the male labourers and £2 12s. 3d. for the female ones. Women were also less well paid than were the men, even for the same work.[37] George Newell was paid 6d. a day for four days' reaping, whilst women earned only 3d. to 4d. These rates reflect the normal differential between the sexes. When George Newell did three days' mowing he received 1s. 8d., a somewhat better rate because of the physically demanding nature of the work. Overall, these sums seem lower than average for the time, generally between 8d. and 10d. a day, but to them should be added the cost of the food and drink given to the labourers.[38]

Male and female labourers largely did different jobs in the field. Most of the reaping and raking was carried out by female labourers, whilst men did the mowing, ploughing and tending to the cattle. Women did all of the winnowing of the corn and men the more strenuous task of threshing. Husbands and wives might be employed separately, and, as in the case of the Hall family, their children too. William earned 11s. 8d. for four weeks' work and one week's threshing, his wife 4d. for a day's raking and his son 2s. for a month's work. Anne Hall, who received 13s. 4d. as a servant of William Poore, may have been his daughter. Three couples worked together in the field, two of them with their servants.

V

Between July 1593 and December 1594 the administrators disposed of much of William Poore's personal estate, selling household goods and farm equipment, as well as agricultural products such as corn, wool and livestock. From this evidence much can be learned of the way in which the rural economy operated. It should, nonetheless, be borne in mind that the records deal with what was in effect a disposal sale and might not necessarily reflect the normal situation. Whilst one would expect dealers to be present, including those who regularly did business with William Poore, others might appear. In particular, local inhabitants were more likely to be involved, attracted by the chance of a bargain, and their purchases might obscure the normal pattern of trade. Parishioners were certainly prominent among buyers of some of the items, as were the administrators themselves. Robert Smith and Richard Gale, the under-tenants, had an obvious interest too.

The accounts show that a good deal of the product of the farm did not leave the parish, either because it remained on the farm or because it was sold to neighbours. The under-tenants bought the most. Richard Gale obtained eleven quarters of wheat, twenty-six quarters of barley and sixteen loads of hay, as well as straw and hulls. Robert Smith, often in association with a fellow-parishioner, Russell, acquired thirteen and a half quarters of wheat, thirty quarters of barley, seventeen quarters of oats, and four quarters one bushel of dredge, apart from parcels of straw. A number of the people who worked on William Poore's farms acquired some of the corn, normally a bushel or two of wheat. Some of the old corn and malt was consumed on the premises, especially at harvest time. The residue, 11¼ quarters of wheat, barley and malt, was mostly taken to Stockbridge market. Of the new corn, only fifteen quarters of wheat were disposed of publicly, a mere five per cent of total sales. Only one-third of the oats and none of the peas and vetches left Longstock, much of it remaining on the farm to feed the animals. Typically, all the outsiders (except John Franklin, William's son-in-law) came from within ten miles of Longstock. The prices obtained for the corn varied according to the type of grain and its quality, though all of them were a few pence more than the national average for that year.[39] In general, wheat, with a median value of 3s. 8d. a bushel, was virtually double the price of barley and three times that of oats.

Parishioners and kinfolk were less prominent among the purchasers of livestock. The Tutts bought some cattle, sheep and poultry and the two sub-tenants acquired hundreds of sheep, no doubt to maintain the system on the farms in full working order. Most of the sheep were sold privately or sent to the celebrated sheep fair at Weyhill. A consignment was taken to the Michaelmas Fair there in 1594 when 4s. 10d. was spent on sheep pens and for other charges.

Some of the purchasers of sheep may have been large-scale sheep-corn farmers operating a system very similar to the one practised by William Poore. Others were probably dealers, representatives of a class of people increasing in importance and number in the late sixteenth century. As the demand for agricultural goods rose, the traditional marketing organisation proved inadequate and problems of supply occurred. Dealers helped overcome this problem by moving goods from areas of surplus to those with shortages, thereby integrating the nation's economy to a greater extent and reducing inequalities in supply and price. Contemporaries, nonetheless, viewed them with suspicion, believing that they cornered the market, causing shortages and raising prices.[40]

It is significant that in William Poore's accounts, dealers seem to have been most active in buying those goods closely associated with large-scale production. The growth of the malting industry, for instance, led to the emergence of large-scale maltsters and the bulk buying in barley.[41] Of William's corn, barley tended to be sold in the largest consignments, with prices often being quoted in quarters rather than in bushels. The biggest customers were perhaps corn badgers or maltsters and came from outside the parish. With regard to the livestock, some of the purchasers may well have been dealers, either buying the animals directly from the farm or at Weyhill. Several people, including Richard Miller of Amport, who bought 100 ewes, came from villages near Weyhill. On the other hand, the person who obtained the largest flock, one Spiring of Farleigh Chamberlain, was probably a farmer. He acquired 115 ewes of various qualities, 224 lambs and eight rams at a cost of £67 13s. 4d. Like William Poore he had diversified his activities. Apart from a horse and four geldings and a cart and a plough harness, he also purchased a bull and three kine.

Of particular interest is the destination of William's wool clip. Virtually the whole consignment of wool was bought by Taylor, a Salisbury clothier, for use in the important West Country broadcloth industry.[42] He paid £51 for 38 weights of wool. Bulk buying and private dealing was normal procedure in the wool trade. Although clothiers often obtained their supplies from middlemen, notably the wool staplers, they also established direct links with the producers. Because of the long-established importance of wool to the English economy, marketing practice had attained a high level of sophistication by the end of the sixteenth century. In particular, private contracts with large-scale producers for the whole of the year's clip were commonplace.[43] The West Country market was of increasing importance to Hampshire sheepmasters at the time for it helped to offset reduced demand from the local textile industry, then in decline. From the clothiers' point of view, it offered them a fresh source of wool, as their traditional supplies from the Midlands began to dry up.[44] Unfortunately, the wool was not of the same quality and this must have had a detrimental effect on sales, especially abroad.

The break-up of the family home led to the sale of many of the household goods and furnishings, now surplus to requirements. All manner of stuff was disposed of, ranging in price from 2d. for a very old torn blanket to a featherbed weighing 61 lbs at £1 10s. 6d. Bedding formed the largest category and brought in the greatest amount of money. Altogether £28 8s. 5d. was raised. Most people only bought one or two items, often spending a few pence or a shilling or two. Overwhelmingly, the purchasers were local men and women, well over four-fifths of the items by value being bought by residents of Longstock. Clearly, such sales had a social value, helping to distribute domestic goods more widely around the community and benefiting the less well-to-do families in particular.They included a number of women from the village, mainly looking for bed coverings.

Because William Poore's probate file includes both the inventory and the administrators' accounts a comparison between the two can be made. In particular, the records can help to illustrate the relationship between inventory valuations and actual sale prices. Research, already undertaken, suggests that the former tended to be pitched at levels below those obtainable in the market-place.[45] The two sets of figures did move in tandem, however, proving that in general appraisers were competent and that the prices had been calculated at second hand values. The data in William Poore's account is rather inconclusive but it is evident that sale prices were not always higher than the ones recorded in the inventory. Undoubtedly, the valuations exerted a greater influence over the prices at which the goods were sold than if they had been taken to a market or fair. One might characterise them as reserve prices at an auction, if there had not been items sold more cheaply.

With regard to farm stock, movements in market prices between their appraisal and sale might account for any variation between the two figures. Thus, the corn harvest of 1593 was the third good one in a row, though, as noted above, at Longstock barley yields proved to be much better than those of wheat.[46] As a result, barley prices fell. Five quarters, appraised at £3 6s. 8d. in July, were sold for £3 1s. 4d. later in the year. Ironically, if the administrators had not acted so promptly, they could have earned more money, as prices were driven up by the succession of terrible harvests that followed. In fact, values do show an upward drift, as stocks began to run out and as the realisation dawned that the 1594 harvest was going to be bad.

Sale prices for livestock varied. Horses, swine and poultry improved on their inventory valuations, whilst sheep and cattle did not. Bowden's index suggests that sheep should have fared the worst but in fact they performed better than cattle. According to the index, the market for wool was buoyant in 1593 and so it proved on William's farm.[47] The thirty-eight weights of wool, for which Taylor of Salisbury had paid £51, had been assessed at £47 10s. by the appraisers.

Because of joint entries for farm equipment and household goods, it is more difficult to compare the two sets of figures. Only a small sample can be used, which, since it excludes beds and bedding, is, perhaps, unrepresentative. Most of the items were sold at or near their valuation, suggesting that this was taken as the guide price. Thus, Thomas Hurst paid 7s. each for three pairs of sheets, equal to the £1 8s. valuation given by the appraisers to four pairs. Similarly, he obtained a dozen of the eighteen saucers at 6d. each. He also paid 8s. for six cushions of tufted moccado. On the other hand, he gave a little more for the chamber pots, fruit plates and less for the old platters. Robert Smith, one of the sub-tenants, spent £1 6s. 8d. on a malt quern, valued at £1 7s. Other equipment commanded higher prices. The fodder cart at 9s. was sold for 2s. 4d. more than its valuation and the three iron-bound carts, assessed at £5, for an additional 12s. 0d.

The administrators were obviously in a good position to obtain a bargain and they did buy a range of items. In general, they acted fairly, though George Strong seems to have acquired wheat and straw at favourable rates. Richard and Thomas Tutt bought household goods but they barely spent £3 on them. With purchases such as two pairs of coarse canvas sheets 'somewhat worn', twenty pounds of 'musty' hops, two 'old worn' riphooks and eight 'old torn' sacks, their intention seems to have been to clear out the house as quickly as possible rather than to use the sale as a means of re-fitting their own homes.

VI

At the same time, the administrators had to execute the terms of William Poore's will, paying off the debts, disposing of the legacies and supervising the children. From the will alone inheritance customs can be examined and they show us that, in practice, testators did not stick rigidly to a set pattern, but tended to adopt a course best suited the needs of their families.[48] In particular, they sought not unnaturally to provide for the whole family and not merely the heir or heirs.[49] Where land was concerned, the norm was for the property to descend to the eldest son. This was generally the case for freehold land, if less true of manorial property where instances of partible inheritance and Borough English were not uncommon. It did make sense to keep an estate or holding together, and if the testator wanted to give some land to the younger children, he might bequeath to them outlying plots, or parcels of land specially purchased or leased for them. Another common practice was for the eldest son to acquire the whole property, out of which he had to pay his siblings annuities or lump sums of money.[50]

What did William Poore do? From the records it is clear that he did try to use his resources to benefit all his children. He also thought about his wife. She was to enjoy the income of both of his leasehold farms "soe longe as she shall lyve a sole & pure wydowe". This was the custom on copyhold land in the Queen's manor. In 1591 the jury avowed that the "wife of any customary tenant dying in possession of any lands and tenements within the said manor is to enjoy the same for her widowhood lyvinge sole and Chaste".[51] Such a proviso was typical, though the proportion of the estate she could keep for her life varied from place to place. If she re-married, Anne would lose control of the Upper Farm but not the Lower Farm, her home. Of course, at the time William expected her to look after their children.

William did not give all his property to one child, dividing the leases of the Upper and Lower Farms between his sons, Augustine, Thomas and Alexander, with reversions to James, William and Richard. James, the eldest son, received an annuity of £13 6s. 8d. out of the profits of the Upper Farm and £6 13s. 4d. out of the Lower Farm, payments to begin at Michaelmas 1598. William and Richard were to receive £100 each when they reached the age of 21. Mary was also to receive £100 when she reached her majority. Her married sister, Christian Franklin, already provided for, was bequeathed a feather bed.

In these arrangements there is a sense that something has been left out. Why did James not receive any property? In fact, it seems as though James had already been given his patrimony, William's freehold property. The 1591 survey shows that William possessed freehold property half a yardland in extent, paying a chief rent of 5s.[52] James might have obtained other free- and copyhold property from his father too. William's father had leased out his freehold farm of two yardlands to John Poore, a relative, and this may have descended to his son.[53] James certainly acquired a copyhold in Lord Sandys's manor of Longstock Harrington, for he is listed as a customary tenant there on the manor court roll of 25 May 1602. It was not unusual for a person to make provision for his heir during his life. At Chippenham (Wilts.) in the early seventeenth century, Thomas Dillamore, a large yeoman farmer, gave several parcels of land to his eldest son, Thomas, some years before his death. Thomas junior also received the bulk of the estate in his father's will but two of his five brothers acquired land too.[54]

The practice of providing for the widow and all of the children helped sustain the nuclear family, the characteristic form of family organisation in England. It enabled widows to maintain an independent existence and siblings to set off to seek their fortune or, if married, to establish their own households.[55] This did not mean that individuals could not turn to the family for help. Kinship links were exploited for jobs and business partnerships or as sources of credit. They also stood surety when debts were incurred or when a family member was granted bail. However, there seems to have been a distinction made between the immediate family, with whom individuals had regular contact, and more distant kin who were less involved.[56] Indeed, members of a community tended to associate themselves more closely with their neighbours than they did with their many kinsfolk.

The records show that William Poore and his relations did have close dealings with their neighbours, especially with those of a similar social standing. Because of their status, the Poores probably had a wider circle of associates than most of the people in the village, for many of them came from neighbouring parishes and even further afield. The Poores intermarried with other yeomen families in the parish such as the Legges but also linked themselves with outsiders like the Strongs and the Tutts.[57] They drew on this circle for people to act as witnesses and overseers of their wills, whilst their executors called on them to appraise their goods after death. As noted above, they were also used as a source of credit.

In one important respect the family took a leading role, that is, whenever an aged parent or dependent children needed looking after. This is what happened in William's case. His daughter, Mary, went to stay with her married sister, Christian, and her brother-in-law, John Franklin, at Rockley. As a result, he was given charge of her legacy of £100 to use on her behalf. The older boys, William and Augustine, may also have lived with members of the family but seemed to have enjoyed a certain amount of independence. Entries suggest that they were given an allowance for their upkeep. When, at Michaelmas 1597, Augustine took over the lease of the Lower Farm, he began to receive money for matters associated with the property. On 26 October 1598 Augustine was given £3 for the repair of his house, "in respect of the decay thereof whilst we received the profits of his farm".

The three youngest boys, Richard, Thomas and Alexander, were first of all looked after by James but early in 1595 they went to board at John Strong's house at Andover. John must have been related to George Strong, one of the administrators and a kinsman of the Poores. The move seems was associated with the needs of education, for the boys were subsequently taught by Mr. Tuichener, a schoolmaster in the town. Richard, the eldest of the three, left on 26 May 1597 to take up an apprenticeship with a Mr. Yerberry. He had already received his legacy of £100 at Michaelmas 1596, although still under 21 years' old. The two events were probably connected. With the money Richard could afford to pay the high premium required to gain entry into a high grade craft or trade, perhaps as a merchant's apprentice. One would like to know Mr. Yerberry's occupation and residence. Thomas and Alexander remained with John Strong until February 1598/9, when they came back to Longstock, probably to live with their elder brother, Augustine.

Altogether, the administrators spent £227 10s. 10d. on the children, most of it on living expenses for the three youngest sons. By 19 June 1595, James had received £63 1s. 9d. from the administrators for boarding and teaching his younger brothers. From 10 February 1594/5, they boarded at Andover and the accounts provide us with details of their expenditure there. For the first three years costs increased. In the final year, only two of the children had to be maintained. Clearly, the disastrous harvests of the period had an effect on the cost of provision. In the first year board was fixed at £1 13s. 4d. a boy per quarter. In the following year it rose to £1 19s. and then to £2 6s. 8d. Including clothing, teaching and other incidentals, each child cost between £10 and £11 to maintain for a year. A day labourer at Longstock would not have earned as much.[58]

Clothing was a considerable item of expenditure. Cloth was bought – on one occasion from Marlborough – and fashioned into clothes by local tailors. One of the men employed was John Rainger from Longstock. Tailors did a good deal of bespoke work and for a man such as Rainger, prosperous neighbours like William Poore were valued customers. William had patronised him before, as is indicated by payment to him on 20 October 1597 of £1 16s. 8d. "for work done for the testator as for making the apparell for himself and his family". Rainger charged 5s. for making a jerkin, doublet and hose for Richard when he was about to take up his apprenticeship with Mr. Yerberry. Also purchased for the youth were stockings and a hat, as well as lockram to make shirts. Altogether, Richard's new wardrobe cost £2 9s. 6d. On occasion, Andover tailors were employed to clothe the boys.

It is not clear if William was fully literate, though he belonged to a class which benefited from the expansion in education provision during the course of the sixteenth century. Analysis of contemporary records for signatures suggests that some yeomen could write their names and, as reading was taught before writing, this is taken to mean that they had already acquired this skill.[59] William did sign his name on the bottom of the will but the hand is somewhat shaky, perhaps due to his illness. This certainly was the case when his son. Augustine, put a mark on his will in January 1633/4.[60] Thirty-five years earlier he had signed the release, discharging the administrators of their duties. William, however, did employ a clerk. One entry in the accounts records the payment of 3s. 4d. to John Broadway for arrears of wages for his services as a clerk.

Whatever William's own level of attainment, he wished his sons to be well-educated. His three eldest boys had already finished school so in his will he dealt with the three youngest ones but typically not his younger daughter. There, the overseers, in the event of his wife's death, were exhorted "to see them to be well broughte vppe takinge a reasonable allowance for ye chardge of theire educacion". Initially, the boys were given a basic education in the parish. John Broadway was involved in this process. On one occasion he received 4s. 2d. for teaching Richard, Thomas and Alexander. Other payments to him may be hidden behind the entries referring to money given to James for teaching and boarding his brothers. Thereafter, the boys were sent away to school. They were taught privately rather than in a grammar school, though sons of yeomen were going to such establishments.[61] James had himself boarded with John Strong when he went to school at Andover. Richard spent some time with a Mr. Cotman, a schoolmaster from Newbury, as well as being taught alongside Thomas and Alexander at Longstock.

The three then left for Andover. Mr. Tuichener charged 5s. per quarter for each pupil, a not inconsiderable sum but not excessive. It was half the cost of educating the the children of Edward Hirst, the vicar of Linsted (Kent), in *c.* 1619.[62] Mr. Tuichener had probably already taught James. He was certainly known to the family, having earlier been asked for his advice. The possibility that Richard was destined for a career in trade or commerce is suggested by an entry, recording the payment of £1 6s. 8d. for teaching him "to write and to cipher". Other payments were made for books. On 17 December 1596 one Wild of Andover received £1 3s. 5d. for books and other things for Richard, Thomas and Alexander and in January 1597/8 a fellow-townsman, Pearsley, was paid 6s. for books for Thomas and Alexander.

VII

William Poore may have died in 1593, worried about his young family and concerned for their welfare. He had done what he could to ensure that they were well-provided for, even if he could not see them all grow up, marry and settle down. Moreover, by dying when he did, he ensured that they achieved a sort of immortality. From the accounts of his administrators, the family comes alive and its members emerge as individuals. The Poores appear as a closely-knit family, in touch with the wider kin group. They were associated with William during his life and helped to settle his affairs, as well as give homes to his dependents after his death. Of course, William's wealth, social position and contacts smoothed their path and guaranteed that his widow, and his sons and daughters, would be better placed than most. The turn of the sixteenth century was a critical one for many people and those without adequate resources to take advantage of the economic trends, tended to fall foul of them.

Economically, too, the accounts allow us to enlarge on the bare facts recorded in William's probate will and inventory. We can see his debts being paid off, his legacies discharged and his property transferred. Moreover, they give us insights into the mechanism of farm production. Not only do we learn the scale of William's farming activities but also of the labour and other imputs needed to sustain it. It is also possible to discern the extent to which output on such farms was geared towards an outside market, as well as the amount consumed at home. In addition, we can examine the impact that such enterprises had on the local community not only in terms of jobs and produce but also (in such case as this one) as a source of household goods too.

In short, probate accounts form an extremely important class of documentation and one which should be more widely known about and used. In particular, they offer historians insights into numerous aspects of social and economic life in early modern England. They are certainly useful when examined by themselves, providing information obtainable from no other source, but they are of even greater value when analysed in conjunction with other records. The documents, themselves, are easy to handle, only the details of probate being written in Latin, and exist in some number in various diocesan archive repositories. Whilst the survival rate is variable, some areas are well covered and offer scope for historians in the region to work on them.

Notes

[1] I am grateful to Dr Thirsk for reading the article and for making a number of valuable suggestions.

[2] For example, see J. Bower, 'Probate Accounts as a Source for Kentish Early Modern Economic and Social History', *Archaeologia Cantiana*, 109 (1991), pp. 51–62. Probate accounts also form the basis of Amy Erickson's book, *Women and Property in Early Modern England* (1993).

[3] P. Spufford, 'Credit in Rural England before the Advent of Country Banks', Paper read at a Conference on Banking and Credit, Genoa, 1–6 October 1990, pp. 897–902.

[4] William Poore's probate file is in the Hampshire R.O. (hereafter HRO) 1593 B62.

[5] PRO, DL 42/108, 116.

[6] *Ibid.*

[7] *The Victoria History of Hampshire*, IV (1911), pp. 450–1.

[8] E. Kerridge, *Agrarian Problems in the Sixteenth Century and After* (1969), pp. 17–8.

[9] HRO, 13 M 63/12; PRO, DL/42/108.

[10] A. Mitson, 'The Significance of Kinship Networks in the Seventeenth Century: South-West Nottinghamshire', in C.A. Phythian-Adams (ed.), *Societies, Cultures and Kinship 1580–1850* (Leicester U.P. 1993), pp. 35–49; Leighton, *Shrops. Parish Reg. Soc.*, Lichfield, XIV, i (1916).

[11] K. Wrightson, *English Society 1580–1680* (1982), p. 43.

[12] A.J. Willis, ed. *Consistory Court Depositions 1561–1602* (Winchester, 1960), p. 23.

[13] PRO, E179/173/183.

[14] HRO, Probate 1549 B 103/2.

[15] PRO, E179/173/183, E179/173/217, E179/174/386; C.R. Davey (ed.), 'The Hampshire Lay Subsidy Rolls 1586', *Hants. Rec. Soc.* IV (1981), p. 93.

[16] J.S. Moore, 'Probate Inventories: Problems and Prospects', in P. Riden (ed.), *Probate Records and the Local Community* (Gloucester, 1985), p. 12.

[17] A.M. Everitt, 'The Marketing of Agricultural Produce', in J. Thirsk (ed.), *The Agrarian History of England and Wales, IV, 1500–1640* (Cambridge U.P. 1967), pp. 557, 567

[18] D.M. Palliser, *The Age of Elizabeth* (1983), pp. 187–8

[19] *Ibid.*; Wrightson, *English Society*, pp. 35–8

[20] W.G. Hoskins, 'The Rebuilding of Rural England, 1570–1640', in W.G. Hoskins, *Provincial England* (1965), pp. 131–148; R. Machin, 'The Great Rebuilding: a Reassessment', *Past & Present*, no. 77 (1977), pp. 33–56.

[21] HRO, Probate of Robert Douse, 1607 B 024/1–2.

[22] J. Thirsk, 'The Farming Regions of England' , in Thirsk, *Agrarian History*, IV, pp. 65–6; M. Spufford, *Contrasting Communities* (Cambridge 1974), pp. 65–85.

[23] E. Hughes and P. White (eds.), 'The Hampshire Hearth Tax Assessment 1665', *Hampshire Record Series*, 11 (1991), pp. 278–9 .

[24] A. Kussmaul, *Servants in Husbandry in Early Modern England* (Cambridge 1981), pp 7, 130–4.

[25] *Ibid.*, pp. 70–85.

[26] For an example see C. Morris (ed.), *The Journeys of Celia Fiennes* (1947), p. 103.

[27] M.W. Barley, *The English Farmhouse and Cottage*, 1961, pp. 28, 77, 171–2.

[28] M. Spufford, *The Great Reclothing of Rural England* (1984), pp. 108–118; Hoskins, 'Rebuilding', p. 138.

[29] Thirsk, 'Farming Regions', p. 65.

[30] Thirsk, 'Farming Techniques', in Thirsk, *Agrarian History*, IV, pp. 168, 188.

[31] P. Bowden, 'Agricultural Prices, Farm Profits and Rents', in Thirsk, *Agrarian History*, IV, pp. 643–4; P. Edwards, 'The Cattle Trade of Shropshire in the late Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries', *Midland History*, 6 (1981), p. 78.

[32] Bowden, 'Agricultural Prices', pp. 651–2; 19. P. Glennie, 'Continuity and Change in Hertfordshire Agriculture, 1550–1700: II – Trends in Crop Yields and their Determinants', *Ag. Hist. Rev.*, 36 (1988), p. 147.

[33] Bowden, 'Agricultural Prices', p. 820.

[34] P. Edwards, *The Horse Trade of Tudor and Stuart England* (Cambridge U.P., 1988), pp. 4–6.

[35] Thirsk, 'Farming Regions', p. 65.

[36] D. Thomas, 'Leases of Crown Lands in the Reign of Elizabeth I' in R.W. Hoyle (ed.), *The Estates of the English Crown, 1558–1640* (Cambridge U.P., 1992), p. 173; G. Batho, 'Landlords in England', in Thirsk, *Agrarian History*, IV, pp. 265–8; PRO, DL 42/108.

[37] L. Charles and L. Duffin (eds.), *Women and Work in Pre-Industrial England*, (1985), pp. 7, 11, 18–9.

[38] P. Bowden,' Statistical Appendix', in Thirsk, *Agrarian History*, p. 864; E.H. Phelps-Brown and S.V. Hopkins, 'Seven Centuries of Building Wages', in E.M. Carus-Wilson (ed.), *Essays in Economic History*, II, 1962, p. 177.

[39] Bowden, 'Statistical Appendix', p. 820.

[40] Edwards, *Horse Trade*, pp. 99–103; Everitt, 'Marketing', pp. 552–73.

[41] Everitt, 'Marketing', p. 556.

[42] P. Bowden, *The Wool Trade of Tudor and Stuart England* (1971), p. 45.

[43] *Ibid.*, pp. 80–3, 85–7.

[44] *Ibid.*, pp. 58–9.

[45] N. and J. Cox, 'Valuations in Probate Inventories: Part II', *Local Historian*, 17, 2 (1986), pp. 85–100.

[46] W.G. Hoskins, 'Harvest Fluctuations and English Economic History 1480–1619', in W.E. Minchinton (ed.), *Essays in Agrarian History, I* (Newton Abbot, 1968), pp. 106–7; Bowden, 'Statistical Appendix', pp. 826, 844.

[47] Bowden, 'Statistical Appendix', pp. 826, 844.

[48] Wrightson, *English Society*, pp. 111–2.

[49] M. Spufford, 'Peasant Inheritance Customs and Land Distribution in Cambridgeshire from the Sixteenth to the Eighteenth Centuries', in J. Goody *et al, Family and Inheritance* (Cambridge 1978), p. 157.

[50] Wrightson, *English Society*, pp. 111–2.

[51] PRO, DL 42/116.

[52] *Ibid.*

[53] HRO, Probate, 1580/B68/1–3.

[54] Spufford, *Contrasting Communities*, pp. 86–7.

[55] P. Laslett, *The World we have Lost- further Explored* (1983), pp. 91–4.

[56] Wrightson, *English Society*, pp. 44–57.

[57] PRO, E179/173/183; E179/173/217.

[58] Bowden, 'Agricultural Prices', p. 657; Bower, 'Probate Accounts', p. 53.

[59] D. Cressy, *Literacy and the Social Order: Reading and Writing in Tudor and Stuart England* (1980), pp. 106–7.

[60] HRO, Probate 1634 A58/1.

[61] J. Simon, *Education and Society in Tudor England* (1967), pp. 297, 382–3.

[62] Bower, 'Probate Accounts', p. 53.