

Andover Antecedents? Hampshire New Poor-Law Scandals, 1834–1842

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I. Introduction

The Andover workhouse scandal – with its grim symbolic feature, the gnawing of raw meat from bones being ground manually by starving inmates – broke in 1845. In the process of public exposure additional claims were made. The master, and his wife – the matron – had enriched themselves by fraudulently and illegally reducing inmates' regulated food-intake by underweight and cheaper meals, and denied the sick the dietary extras ordered by the doctor to expedite recovery. Violence was not restricted to boys, as beatings were extended to adolescent girls. The master was also revealed as a regular drunkard, who repeatedly indecently assaulted teenage inmate lasses, and with less regularity had full sexual relationships with adult women, including younger widows. Psychological cruelties were extended to all inmates by the master and the matron. In short, the management had engaged – undetected – in a regime of terror for eight years.¹

In 1846, a Commons select committee inquiry of unprecedented duration preceded the abolition of the Poor Law Commission, the widely-despised central agency responsible since 1834 for the New Poor Law's implementation and administration, and rapidly became a contemporary *cause célèbre*. If this episode secured Hampshire's centrality to the demonology engulfing the Victorian welfare system and re-affirmed its symbolisation by workhouses themselves in populist perceptions, the county had previously experienced national notoriety through the mechanism of parliamentary investigation into the implementation of the 1834 Act. In 1837 a Commons select committee, a reputedly 'unparalleled' exemplar of its important genre,² spent nine days interrogating witnesses from the adjacent south-eastern Hampshire Poor-Law Unions of Fareham³ and Droxford⁴ – one locality among four others investigated, including West Sussex. These details achieved an importance, particularly the proven abuse of very young children in Fareham's new

model workhouse and the more disputed question of the adequacy of welfare provision, especially medical aid, under the new system in the Droxford Union.

There is an extensive corpus of studies of the New Poor Law from both notionally national, regional and more localised perspectives, which established that there were many and often substantial variations within a system ironically designed to establish uniform welfare practices across England and Wales. This diversity reflected many conditional elements, not simply the product of contrasting communities, of which the urban-rural was the most self-evident. Other, often more subtle factors, among them the attitudes of both those who were at the coal-face of implementation, namely the propertied ratepayers who served on the new Boards of Guardians, and the much larger proportion of society who were claimants, or whose predominantly working-class status exposed them to the very real probability of becoming claimants at some point in their lives. The implementation of the Act impacted in some way on virtually everybody, because in *administrative* terms it was revolutionary, and in Karel Williams' view represented a 'brilliant triumph' in the dramatic reduction of able-bodied pauperism achieved by the mid-1860s. Other historians, notably Professors Brundage and Digby have played down these elemental features, in part through the diversity emergent from contemporaneously much-trumpeted uniformity, but also because some critical components of the process have been underestimated, under-researched and even ignored, notably ostensibly mundane matters;⁵ these include re-rating procedures to update commonly bizarrely outdated parochial valuations of property, the termination of public subsidies of workers' rents and provision of plebeian domestic housing, and the privatisation of other communal property, amongst it land.

The centrality of the workhouse to the New Poor Law is reflected in its contemporary denomination as the 'workhouse system'. Historically, workhouses had a notorious reputation; reforming them as institutions had a statutory trajectory which included the permissive Acts of Knatchbull and Gilbert, respectively of 1722 and 1782, and were also important among the multiple reasons behind the creation of different local administrations under hundreds of Local Acts – predominantly but not exclusively for towns and cities (or parts thereof) – passed since the first for Bristol in 1696.⁶ In some senses the architects of the New Poor Law – given their adoption of a sub-theme in this history, namely deterrence – should be seen as part of this reforming tradition, and the Commissioners were very conscious of the political imperative for terminating the causes of notoriety, notably all categories of corruption, especially financial, the psychological and physical abuse of inmates – including

violence and sexual exploitation. The encouragement to erect new workhouses rather than to alter existing buildings, aimed to promote hygiene, sanitation and rudimentary comfort, coupled with improved deterrence features, inmate classification, dietary and discipline, underpinned by comprehensive rules and regulations. The Commission was convinced it could use the powers of the state with which it was armed to enforce the observation of the latter from its headquarters in Somerset House, and in its first annual report in 1835 stated that the Commissioners 'direct[ed] our chief attention to the general introduction of the workhouse system'. While it is true that many alleged scandals were found either to be devoid of foundation, or exaggerations, publicised by the new system's oft-vituperative opponents, scholarly analysis to date of workhouse and other poor-law scandals has been surprisingly slight, and the one specific debate, proved remarkably superficial.⁷

Ironically, none of the scandals at Bishops Waltham and Fareham workhouses investigated in 1837, or their Andover counterpart in 1846, derived from *either* the Commission, with its expanding central bureaucracy, *or* its inspectorate in the form of the assistant commissioners responsible for policing Union administrations in the localities, and essential for ensuring their Boards of Guardians complied with the law and the regulations formulated in London and enforceable under the Act. Nor did their exposure emanate from their respective Boards or their officers. Their initial exposures were the direct product of Act's opponents, notably clergymen and local politicians, including one Guardian – be it belatedly and indirectly – at Andover, able to liaise with campaigning parliamentarians, especially in the Commons.⁸ These included John Walter, Tory MP for Berkshire, who also critically owned *The Times*, John Fielden a Radical who sat for Oldham, the medical reformer and Radical MP for Finsbury, Dr Thomas Wakley, who owned *The Lancet*, and the now un-remembered Captain Pechell, the radical-Whig who represented Brighton. These men, aided by the fact that the New Poor Law divided both main parties, and the amorphous group of Radicals, were able to force both Whig and Tory Home Secretaries to concede investigations through the select committee system. Their procedures, which focused on the evidence of witnesses summonsed by members, and who were then interrogated at length, a process which enabled the opponents who served to embrace many more relevant facets of the new welfare system than just workhouses. These included many key elements of local administration, including the performance of relieving officers, to whom claimants applied, and medical officers who treated the sick poor, and eventually the only form of outdoor relief available to able-bodied males aged over sixteen, and their families, in

many Unions. Furthermore, much evidence was unearthed relating to the impact of the reformed system on that huge sector of every community designated generically as 'the poor', none of any greater importance than that on their standard of living.

The fact that in the space of nine years three Hampshire Unions were subjected to such investigations serves to remind us that no English community, whether county or parochial, urban or rural, existed in a vacuum. Although Local Acts of parliament were numerous, the most important statutes were those universally applied to England and Wales, and the significance of what is sometimes dubbed 'the centre' comprising the executive government and parliament, was reinforced by the state's centralising tendencies, and of which the New Poor Law and its Commission are key components, whatever individual historian's views on the old debate on the perceived 'revolution in government'. Although all historians of the provinces are aware of this reality, the temptation for especially those studying localities or regions to adopt – sometimes one suspects unconsciously – a semi-myopic approach to their 'patch' is remarkable. This is not to suggest that the events and developments are regionally organically inter-related, though the Andover Board's arrogance in its determination to advance the 'thorough' administrative approach in apparent indifference to the traumatic experiences which befell their south-eastern Hampshire counterparts is telling. Although the anti-New Poor-Law movement was at its most organised in the North, its presence was national as revealed for example in the initial publicity to scandals given by the local press, to which *The Times* was repeatedly indebted. It is asserted here that events and developments at the centre can impact powerfully in the provinces, not necessarily uniformly, and in our context that includes political stances of successive governments and actions of successive parliaments. These are also critical to our understanding of the exposure of poor-law scandals, and in turn their significance. To degrees, this study comprises an examination of the interactions and ultimately the relationship between the state and local communities in early Victorian Britain.

If the implementation and subsequent stabilisation (or not) of the new system was an important factor everywhere, they were of greater significance for those communities thrust into the limelight by scandals. Here we look in some detail at the process of implementation, and eventually the problems encountered by the historian with the considerable volume of *contested* evidence deriving from the 1837 parliamentary investigation. Moreover, Hampshire's earlier experiences during the famous Swing quasi-insurrection of 1830 were a significant component in the political detonation which convinced the new Whig government

that maladministration of the Old Poor Law – essentially founded on the Elizabethan Act of 1601 – was a critical ingredient within Swing's causes; radical revision of existing welfare practices were perceived as a prerequisite to the prevention of any recurrence, by raising labourers' living standards and restoring their 'independence', and more, namely what Professor Mandler describes 'as the restoration of the natural order in the countryside and . . . right relations between the classes', a view eventually endorsed by most of the landed elite in Hampshire and elsewhere. According to the seventh Duke of Bedford's retrospective view in 1841, the old poor-law 'system was stopt short just in time . . . as the [New] Poor Law came into operation to save the landed property of the kingdom', and its owners from insolvency.⁹

II. Hampshire and the Captain Swing Revolt in the Autumn of 1830

Swing's socio-economic causes derived from the enduring post-war agricultural depression, whatever the geographical and chronological variations in its impact.¹⁰ Ironically, as farm-gate prices appeared to be irreversibly falling in 1821-2, one Hampshire Petty Sessional Bench attempted to re-introduce the classic Speenhamland scale with its key *cost of living* element and numbers of dependent children, for maintaining the purchasing power of especially labourers with larger families. At the time of its original introduction during the late spring of 1795, the immediate trigger had been the escalating food prices as the then famine intensified, though even at this time the mechanics of the sliding scale would also have immediately reduced the levels of allowances in-aid-of wages, and with them poor-law expenditure, after prices peaked and started to fall. In 1822, an immediate cut in relief was engineered, together with further ones activated as market prices continued their anticipated downward trajectory, and was roundly denounced by *The Times*. However, when prices recovered to degrees from 1823, this Bench unsurprisingly abandoned these principles, and when adjudicating on relief cases ruled 'according to the circumstances of . . . [each] particular case', a device to contain costs.¹¹ The well-known decline in the traditional practice of live-in service, especially for adolescent boys, youths and young men, served to inflate the labour supply. When employed by farmers – and these categories of males were often discriminated against – their wages 'were pressed down to a Payment without reference to the [value of their] Labour, which will barely support him'. When they were employed by the parish, notably on the roads, it was said as early as 1819 that they 'only pretend to work', with the result

that they developed 'habits of sloth, & sullen discontent'. Both the practice and the deleterious effect on these youngsters intensified, as what should have been a resource 'more profitably' exploited by farmers in Hambleton vestrymen's perception, was 'wasted or frittered away'.¹²

Securing higher wages and more regular employment were the central objectives for Hampshire's agricultural labourers' participation in Swing.¹³ But if the former required exacting agreement from farmers, securing the latter also appeared to depend – at least in part – on eradicating winter labour-saving threshing machines. These also disadvantaged many artisans in the rural service industries, as machines were increasingly made – and maintained – by specialist agricultural engineering firms, with the result that different categories of tradesmen joined their labouring neighbours in destroying farmers' machines and demolishing engineers' premises. In places, principally where tithes had not been eliminated during the process of parliamentary enclosures, farmers insisted that their tithe payments pre-empted wage increases, encouraging protesters to confront incumbents who were virtually forced to reduce tithe demands, and it was perhaps initial resistance at Preston Candover which underlay protesters' (unusual) threat to demolish the church.¹⁴ Some activists also entertained political objectives, especially those advanced by William Cobbett – who had a strong following in many villages, notably but not exclusively in the Dever valley – for democratisation of the political system. Although the Hampshire evidence relating to overt protests might suggest that poor-law issues were *relatively* less significant than in Kent and Sussex, in the thirteen recorded arson attacks in the county – which seriously *under-rated* their incidence – the labourers responsible had taken additional 'offence' against farmers in their capacity as overseers of the poor, and retaliated, according to one knowledgeable observer. Workhouses at Selborne and Headley were sacked, and threatened elsewhere, including Alton; in all three the principal grievance appears to have been the largely-loathed practice of taking some of the children from large families into the house rather than support them through allowances in-aid-of wages. In places wage increases negotiated during the revolt were coupled with others stipulating raised child allowances, and at Stockbridge they reincarnated Speenhamland-type provisions based on the price of a gallon loaf. However, an identical suggestion from magistrates at Boldre, was refused by local ratepayers on cost grounds.¹⁵

It is worth pausing to consider the broader contexts of the Swing revolt, together with its nature in, and impact on Hampshire. First, demands for constitutional reform, and the apparent indifference of especially Tory politicians, resulted in relentless press 'attacks upon the

landowners', which according to Earl Grey was destroying 'all respect for rank and station, and for the institutions of government' by the start of 1830. Secondly, the insurrectionary overthrow of the restored Bourbon monarchy in France in late July 1830, was quickly followed by two episodes of further barricading and street-fighting in Brussels in August and September, which ended in the defeat of royal troops and the dissolution of the amalgamation of the Netherlands and Belgium created by the Congress of Vienna. Thirdly, revolution appeared to be taking a broader continental hold with populist uprisings in several medium-sized German states, especially Brunswick and Saxony; in the former the king abdicated, while in the latter a constitution was conceded along with the abolition of feudal and seigneurial relations in rural regions.¹⁶ Copious coverage of all these events in the British press helped unleash the spectre of historical precedents, namely the French Revolution of 1789 and all that came in its recurrently violent wake, among them the destruction of customary landed societies. Fourthly, the death of George IV automatically precipitated a general election, a protracted business which embraced July's 'three glorious days' in Paris; although in party terms the election could be described as inconclusive, in constituencies with larger electorates anti-aristocratic sentiments and votes were directed against candidates from great magnate families irrespective of whether they were Whig or Tory; commentators accurately noted that the experience 'taught the small freeholders their real importance, and . . . how titled wealth might be driven from the field . . . [in county constituencies by] swarms of independent yeomen' and 'small gentlemen', also sickened by successive governments' failure to positively intervene against the agricultural depression. Moreover, in private at least, many of the principal victims acknowledged this socio-psychological reality. If July's continental events came to late to impact greatly on the election, the subsequent spread of revolution and insurrectionary impulses to central Europe had a profound impact on parliamentarians' attitudes to the increasingly key issue of constitutional reform by September, and also stimulated burgeoning activity by lower-class populist democrats and their established leaders with national reputations, including Henry Hunt and William Cobbett.¹⁷

What proved to be the start of the Swing conflagration ostensibly commenced in late August in Kent with a series of assaults by mobile crowds on threshing machines followed by a spate of arson attacks – some very intensive – on landlords' and farmers' barns and stacks. The latter's coincidence with widespread incendiaryism in Normandy, commonly perceived as a manifestation of revolutionary tentacles penetrating the uncomfortably close northern French countryside, subsequently

provoked understandable fears that the real authors of Kentish firings were French revolutionary agents, a belief which endured throughout the Swing risings in October and November: at one point this escapist interpretation was seriously investigated by Home Office agencies.¹⁸ The Home Office also closely monitored Cobbett's activities, first during his addresses to radicals at metropolitan venues and subsequently in mid-October when he went on a lecture tour to Kent and Sussex extolling the achievements of Parisian revolutionaries, holding collections for the families of those killed, emphasising the paramountcy of democratic parliamentary reform and circulating petitions to that end for signatures at his meetings.¹⁹

All of these manifestations, and others, served to strengthen conviction among parliamentarians and the elite more generally, that only constitutional reform would neutralize revolutionary portents. From mid-September 'the prospect that London might follow Paris was being mentioned everywhere', according to a staid historian of the Reform Bill episode. The most notable non-convert to this view was prime minister Wellington – also the Lord Lieutenant of Hampshire – but whose final absolute declaration against reform speedily precipitated the collapse of his government. His resignation on 16 November, proved protracted, and it was not until the 23rd that the Whig Grey (with a lifetime's commitment to reform) actually succeeded the Duke, and accepted the seals of office with the new Home Secretary Melbourne taking over from Peel. Swing suddenly exploded in Hampshire during this central governmental hiatus. From a county perspective during this key week, there were at least six epicentres of insurrection, not merely of farm labourers, but of all major categories of workers; these were not restricted to villages and a significant proportion appeared to have radical political motives and implied political objectives. Placards abounded, exemplified by one later presented to Melbourne by the Revd. Wright JP of Itchen Abbas:

"The Flags of freedom and liberty are flying over the churches and steeples on the continent; rise Englishmen, and assert your rights, and pull down priestcraft and oppression. . . . Down with the tithes! down with the taxes! Down with the [sinecure] places! And down with the pensions!"

Moreover, not only had Hampshire's Volunteer force – created as a form of civil guard during the tremulous events of the 1790s in the shadow of the French Revolution and the war – been finally disbanded in 1827, there were few troops in the county except at Portsmouth. Although Dr Ruscombe Foster has provided a persuasive account of how containing

the mobilisations was launched by the resident gentry *before* Wellington's arrival from London on the 23rd, Foster's analysis despite the citation of some of the evidence, underestimates the severity of the traumas experienced by both the elite and the more affluent inhabitants. Initially, in many locations, the risings galvanised a panicky response, unsurprising given the size and bellicosity of some crowds, and the paucity of regular troops.²⁰

Threatening letters added to the alarm; some went further than threats of arson which often terrified recipients, exemplified by the missive addressed to Captain Purvis JP:

Tyrant, at seven o'clock last evening the mussel of a gun was elevated at your heart, and one moment your soul would have been in hell: but your momentary impulse in starting as the gun was aimed at you, I lost the present opportunity, and must wait for another. Tyrant, prepare to meet your God; your life is short, and your death is certain . . . it can be at a post or a lamp-iron.²¹

This had an organic Parisian quality. When John Bonham-Carter's wife opened a similar letter to him while he was in the field against Swing, she was so alarmed that he directly sent a messenger with a note of reassurance. Knowledge of actual crowds was conflated with rumours of others and their supposed size, 1500, two or even four thousand; the effects were exacerbated when small contingents of dragoons, some of whom had arrived by 'steam vessels' at Southampton, once led by magistrates and aided by 'scouts, gentlemen on horseback . . . riding in every minute with dismal reports [of mobilisations] but no one had seen them himself'. Faced by a conjunction of crowds, reputedly 1400 strong, certainly amassing before an intended attack on Winchester, and joined by men from the city, to release arrested rioters confined in the overflowing county jail and seize the militia's arms store, 'The farmers were ready to desert their houses, barns and all'. The mayor of Romsey, accompanied by his 'principal inhabitants' lobbied the combative magistrate Sloane-Stanley to release prisoners incarcerated in the town's lock-up; 'otherwise' the town 'sh[oul]d all be burnt'.²²

Initially, some landowners not unnaturally gave priority to the defence of their mansions and their families which were very vulnerable. Stratton House was defended by ten special constables drawn from the tenancy and armed with blunderbusses, while at Avington the Duke of Buckingham – fearing of an attack by an insurrectionary force reputedly of 4000 drawn from Easton, Martyr Worthy and Candover – 'Had two cannon', rushed from his yacht in the Solent, 'at his principal doors, a swivel [mounted rifle] at each window and 100 men of his village armed

with cutlasses'. Other magistrates refused to enter the affray alone and remained at home, too frightened to venture out, once from a local perspective the countryside appeared to be 'wholly in the hands of the Rebels'.

Less socially-elevated Swing targets also took what contingency measures they could. When Selborne workhouse master William Harrison got wind of an imminent attack on his establishment and intentions 'to murder his family', he sent them six miles to Liphook, though he himself stayed put, and in the event the crowd were satisfied with vengeance exacted through making a bonfire of his furniture, bedding and clothing. Confusion intensified as scores of 'Express[es] begging for troops' were despatched to recipients repeatedly unable to comply, forcing some magistrates to demarcate more clearly between different categories of crowd, typified by one of Bonham-Carter's informants who calculated that:

the Mob from the lawless districts of Selborne, Kingsley, Hawley etc is of a more formidable description than the Common one of Mobs at present . . . a force I could not in common prudence attempt to resist with a few Special Constables. . . . 30 soldiers would prevent any violence by *any* number of the Mob. You will probably think this smacks too much of the old Soldier.

County justices were particularly surprised when they encountered 'very eloquent' rural tradesmen – some miles from their homes – tailors, shoemakers, carpenters and blacksmiths, whom were 'universally politicians', and later one Special Commission of Assize judge revealed his lack of imagination when castigating representatives of the last two categories for being 'foremost' in the demolition of threshing machines. Grandee Sir William Heathcote claimed that this was one ingredient in the 'evidence that a revolutionary spirit has been infused in some parts' of Hampshire 'at least with more success than some are apt to believe', though his colleague, chairman of the county Bench Sir Richard Pollen, remained sceptical over claims made by prisoners that cores of activists from Kent and Sussex had gone westwards to agitate for further risings. Finally, some gentry directing 'much harassed' soldiers entertained fears that the regulars might not prove reliable, as privately hinted by one of the Barings, 'currying favour with the dragoons by helping them to beer'.

In that part of Hampshire soon to be embraced in the Fareham and Droxford Unions, Swing was *relatively* muted, and in places, including Hambledon, followed repeated failed attempts by vestries to secure farmers' agreement to increase employment through the introduction of quotas of labourers based on individuals' ratings.²³ The flurry of

threatening letters sent in early November was followed by the torching of a rick-yard in Fareham on the 16th, with three further fires, including one at Droxford, on the 17th. Mobilisations commenced on the 19th, with demands for an end to machine-threshing and increased wages in Warnford and West Meon, followed by separate assemblies at neighbouring Upham and Durley on the 23rd. The Upham crowd in customary style 'pressed' men encountered working in the fields and led by Abraham Childs – a 48 year-old widower with seven children – went first to the Rector of both parishes, Haygarth, demanding that he reduced his tithes, and insisting that farmers raised wages. They then proceeded to the Corhampton mansion of justice Walter Long; he was away, but they also demanded food, drink and money – a regular impost legitimated by wages lost while righting public wrongs – though legally defined as robbery. Having received all three, they wrecked a hay-making machine. Their Durley counterparts, with two tithingmen in their ranks, destroyed farmers' threshing machines, before proceeding to Bishops Waltham, where money was unsuccessfully demanded from curate Scard of Durley and three gentleman farmers. On the morrow some of these activists reconvened with others on Horton Heath, and then divided; one division, again led by Childs – dubbed the 'rebel ruffian' when encountered by justice Jones – smashed more threshing machines in Swathling and South Stoneham, while the other went east, again pressing men, to Soberton and on to Droxford, where another threshing machine was destroyed.²⁴ At Soberton, the curate Stephen Butler, in a pre-emptive tactic, chaired a vestry which decided to increase wages to a weekly 10/6. In an identical move, his father, Thomas, Rector of Hambledon and chairman of the district Petty Sessions, assembled farmers at the George Inn, where a similar advance was agreed, with 'usual Monthly' allowances in-aid retained. Butler added that renewed negotiations to increase employment were in progress, and – unusually – an embryonic commitment by proprietors to reduce weekly cottage rents to a shilling. His reverence's announcement, from an upper window, was cheered by a growing crowd of villagers.²⁵

All of the places mentioned in the previous paragraph, with the exceptions of Swathling and Stoneham, were to go into Droxford Union. Parishes which later comprised the Fareham Union saw hardly any Swing mobilisations, though it is probable that the assembly which materialised on Shenfield Common also on the 23rd contained men – armed with axes, spades and stakes – came from more than one community. Having smashed threshing machines, they ignored a recital of the riot act from justice Poore, who secured a 'handful of soldiers' and made three arrests. The crowd which penetrated Stoneham attempted

to flee from another party of dragoons, who seized 53 prisoners in the melee, of whom but ten were identified as particularly prominent, among them rebel-ruffian Childs. Elsewhere, some vestries agreed to wage increases, among them Titchfield, which also announced members' determination to resist intimidation, while stressing local labourers' 'praiseworthy . . . peaceable deportment'.²⁶

Wellington himself was 'astonished' at the speed the county was 'tranquillized' after the big meeting of justices he chaired at Winchester on 25 November, though perceptions of 'revolutionary' activity endured long after the rising was suppressed. But workers openly armed at most with iron palings, hammers and bludgeons were no match even for small possés of cavalry, at least in open as opposed to wooded country; 'Off we galloped', reported Bingham Baring, and 'Away flew the men across the fields'. Humiliation followed arrests, exemplified by Bonham-Carter following 'in the rear of 12 prisoners chained toget[her] in a fish Cart with soldiers in anothe[er] cart'. In Wellington's printed bill summarising the county authority's position on 25 November, he warned the 'labouring classes' that violence 'if persisting in, must lead to the most disastrous and fatal consequences to themselves'. In an age of revolutions ultimately 'old Soldiers' from the officer ranks were prepared to use their forces with devastating effect.²⁷

III. Swing's Legacy in Hampshire

Although the revolt in the county was suppressed so speedily, legal retribution was severe, with three executed – five if the men hanged in 1832 for arson committed in 1830 at Barton Stacey are included – and well over a hundred sentenced to transportation at the Special Commission. In parts of the county riot leaders and followers were subjected to witch hunts, notably those who had assaulted magistrates and others known to be politically motivated, with some victims, especially the executed teenager Cook for robbery – whose real offence was to have hit Bingham Baring – and his fellow capital convict, the cavalier political speechifier James Thomas Cooper, were the targets of a frightened and vindictive magistracy, powerfully abetted by a new and inexperienced government determined to prove that its commitment to constitutional reform did not extend to condoning insurrection. 'Besieged' senior Home Office staff worked on Christmas Day, wading through hundreds of depositions taken from prosecution witnesses – which included some of those arrested. In response, Melbourne, fixated by tradesmen's participation and their Cobbettite populist politics, demanded a full analysis, including the earnings of such people. Less well known, are the extraordinary

lengths some county justices went in order to pre-empt pleas in mitigation, exemplified by the working prosecution papers of Sir Thomas Baring, among them a list of one farmer's labourers who abandoned their work when 'call'd on' by the crowd, and the names of those who 'did not leave their work at all': only one was 'compeld by force'. A 'List of poor persons having pigs at the time of the Riots' at East and West Stratton, named 35 men with one, and eight with two or three.²⁸ However, there is no evidence of any such manipulative intervention respecting the eighteen men tried from our district. Only two were acquitted; no less than seven had death sentences recorded, but commuted in five cases to transportation terms, though in two, to eighteen months in prison. One received a straightforward seven-year transportation sentence, with the others imprisoned for one to twelve months.²⁹

The Yeomanry were quickly re-established, though not without reverses – 'very bad Turn[s]' – and the force formed into eight divisions between them covering the entire county, each commanded by a gentleman, one of whom was W H T Hawley the future Assistant Poor Law Commissioner. But even this did not counter traumas originating during the rising; the Revd. Wright – one of several justices injured by protesters – believed he would 'feel the riots to the day of my death'. If this was due in part to the head injury sustained, he became so paranoid about proletarian radicals plotting in the new beershops that he created 'a system of petty police at my own expense' to mount surveillance and report to him on those functioning in neighbouring villages; similar systems of 'subscription volunteer police' were established in other communities. And Wright's enduring alarm was reasonable. The rejection of widespread petitions for clemency for those sentenced to death and transportation – principally and significantly – from 'nearly every town', and signed by 'every tradesman', further soured public opinion. In some locations, democratic activists created 'Independent Union' associations, early in 1831; that at Hambledon aimed to 'eradicate Tyranny Oppression and petty interference'.³⁰ Cobbett chose one radical and Swing epicentre, Sutton Scotney for his well-publicised Chopstick Festival on 7 August 1832 in celebration of the passage of the Reform Act. If Cobbett had given the Act conditional support, Henry Hunt decried its limitations, and in the autumn at least two populist Political Unions – pledged to maintain the struggle for manhood suffrage – were created in Winchester and Andover. They directly encouraged further activity which was not confined to already politicised rural communities like those in the Dever Valley, but extended it to districts previously believed untouched, exemplified by Avington, the Duke of Buckingham's seat, and was further reflected in the formation of the 'Hants Political Union'. Welling-

ton, in a flurry of correspondence with magistrates, orchestrated an intelligence-gathering operation, and – despite the Yeomanry – troops were sent from Dorset as a precaution against the prevailing ‘refractory spirit’. If this re-assured an alarmed Bench, and terminated magistrates’ commitment of evidence to writing, it is significant that the Lord Lieutenant dishonestly told the uneasy Mayor of Winchester that he did not ‘know of a single instance’ where ‘Disaffected People’ had persuaded regulars to disobey orders to preserve the peace.³¹ The movement was soundly denounced at length by Walter Long, a Tory candidate for North Hampshire in the general election of December 1832, as motivated by aspirant ‘usur[ers] of the function of Government’. More perceptive observers poignantly noted that the Hampshire Special Commission created by the government, punished ‘at least one member of many families’; only manhood suffrage could prevent the state’s future exploitation of the savage criminal code to terrorise the people.³²

It seems that activists thereafter adopted a lower profile, though the still troubled Mayor kept city purveyors of the radical unstamped press under surveillance – including mail intercepts – and in May 1833 revealed that one, a whitesmith, sought supplies from London of Richard Carlile’s *Gauntlet*, and praising that recently-imprisoned proprietor for ‘extend[ing] the principles of Republicanism’.³³ Although this is not the place for more than a mention, it is probable that the repressive moves by the Hampshire elite served to discourage active participation in the campaign waged under the auspices of the Grand National Consolidated Trade Union later in 1833. It penetrated some southerly rural districts, including Dorset, where the principal known outcome was the experimentation with agrarian trades unionism, which ended in the offensive promoted by members of that county’s Bench against the leadership, to culminate in the notorious genesis of the Tolpuddle Martyrs, a local strategy eventually fully supported by Melbourne at the Home Office.³⁴

As early as December 1830, the London-based *Morning Chronicle* detected that the Hampshire press ‘through dread . . . of the Unpaid’, namely the county magistracy, was self-censoring reportage of local news, notably through omitting to cover incendiaryism; subsequently, the *Salisbury and Winchester Journal* asserted that ‘it is needless to enter into particulars’ of the incidence of arson, while Cobbett shortly and correctly claimed that grandee pressure on county editors in league with the insurance companies, were responsible.³⁵ Nightly patrols of Volunteers were introduced, which failed to stop fears in April 1831 of a recrudescence of rioting. Tensions persisted, with much magisterial concern, amounting almost to collective phobia, focusing on beershops, fractured licensing laws – notably by opening during church services –

and their clients' penchants for brawling, and thieving after closing time, which in mid-1833 provoked the Quarter Sessions Grand Jury into petitioning both houses of parliament, following chairman Pollen's address that the Beer Act had 'done more to demoralize the country than any one ever passed'. In afforested districts 'Owing to the poverty of these wastes and forest lands', combined with population pressure, proprietors turned a blind eye to those who 'ran up mud cottages', often with gardens and bits of land on which they 'pasture horses, cows, pigs etc to their great relief'. These concerns were aggravated by a burgeoning problem of vagrants, many of them Irish – allegedly driven out of London by the new Metropolitan Police – and who supposedly supported themselves by itinerant peddling and opportunistic crime, notably burgling farmworkers' cottages while their occupants laboured in the fields. Gypsy encampments, among them Lock's Drove near Andover, also flourished, and if nomads did any work, it was at the expense of the indigenous population. Some magistrates publicly asserted that the only solution lay in police reform.³⁶

A number of Hampshire grandees had experimented with different philanthropic schemes aimed at the 'restoration of the labourer to his former standing in the Community' before 1830, including the contested issue of allotment provision, as at Micheldever which commenced in 1811. They tended to prove ephemeral, not least owing to unpopular stipulations exemplified by the latter's condition that allottees received no poor relief, though a renewed campaign in Hampshire was launched in 1821-2; supporters wanted the best allottees to graduate to smallholders, but it was resisted by farmers.³⁷ In some locations where access to common rights was infringed or challenged, exemplified by the Manor of Droxford, vestries polarised with opponents clearly commanding majorities, which in 1826-7 saw off a proposed enclosure during the Bill's parliamentary passage.³⁸ If the Duke of Buckingham coincidentally launched another allotment scheme barely two months before Swing exploded, with contentious and unusually generous allocations of between a quarter and two acres at Avington and Easton, from 1830-1 additional allotment provision by parish vestries (permitted for adoptees of the 1819 Select Vestries Act), philanthropic landlords and a few farmers, occurred in some villages, among them Hambleton where it was of the 'highest importance', Soberton and Bishop's Waltham. At the latter, moves to secure for heads of labouring families a 'certain portion of Land to occupy for his own benefit', ironically commenced a week before Swing, which served to concentrate minds including the Bishop of Winchester's, who agreed to 'Grant allotments of Waste Land... for... the Poor'; this timing was symbolic considering the

April-1830 introduction of his lordship's fir-plantation policy and indifference to manorial bondholders' mass disaffection expressed over this 'invasion of their [common] rights'. Bishops Waltham's select vestry agreed to rent a further forty acres from the Bishop, double what was permitted under the statute, though acreages were increased to fifty by legislation passed in 1831-2.³⁹

If these initiatives and others were praised in the county press, farmers in general 'were very much opposed' because they gave their labourers a measure of 'independence'. Farmers also believed that provision of allotments was a device for 'Landlords keeping up their rents'. Some enthusiasts argued that if the magistracy was 'less liberal in their "*bread allowance*"', labourers' interest would increase. Conversely, owing it was said to the Duchess of Buckingham's 'mistaken kindness', allottees retained their poor-law allowances. But even supporters acknowledged that the produce of small allotments which farmers calculated would not undermine their men's dependency, and were therefore a preferable compromise, failed to eradicate holders' need for poor-law allowances. This situation tended to endure owing to a common device where the amount of land worked by an individual was to 'increase or decrease according to the numbers in each man's family'. Another deterrent derived from allotments situated at a distance from allottees' homes; only 'handy' ones were acceptable.⁴⁰ The evidence given to the 1837 select committee by witnesses from Droxford Union parishes is ambiguous, not least because they juxtaposed public and privately-owned land. An early provider of quarter acres from the latter category, one of the biggest farmers in Bishops Waltham and who commenced in 1833, reported that only three men – none of whom were in regular receipt of poor relief – took advantage, though in Soberton about this date similar offers from the Revd. Butler were eagerly accepted.⁴¹ There is little evidence of labourers' enthusiasm for allotments *prior to the implementation of the New Poor Law*,⁴² except in unusual communities, two of which were embraced in our territory. One of the very few examples derived from a Hambledon surgeon in October 1834, who said that 'Paupers' – a term used synonymously for farmworkers – 'are begging and praying for land', and would pay £2 an acre rent for it, but even he added near their cottages. In fact, in this locality, labourers actually demanded 'no less' than three acres, precisely the minimum necessary to gain that degree of independency feared by farmers.⁴³

In some Hampshire locations, wage increases achieved during Swing were removed within weeks, and it was claimed that labourers engaged in the political movement also aimed to use industrial action to restore them. Some vestries experimented with initiatives designed to discipline

and/or deter claimants. Renting a field and putting labourers to 'spade husbandry' was one mode, because it was possible to set targets and measure productivity. Elsewhere wage and relief increases were maintained, though in some parishes not without threats. At Hambledon, for example, 'Ever since the riots . . . refractory paupers . . . have assumed a tone of authority . . . which the Parish Officers can with difficulty at all Control', exemplified in January 1832 by a note - 'The True Hambledon Union or Swing' - threatening a 'worst disaster' if the arsonist responsible for a recent blaze was prosecuted, in response to a Home Office sanctioned pardon for an accomplice and a local reward of no less than £250 promised by the propertyed. It was said that here and in other parishes coming into the Droxford Union, that wages fixed by Swing endured, a point made to an assistant commissioner's face; 'they attributed it to the dread, on the part of the proprietors to a repetition of the . . . scenes of 1830'. Under and un-employment in some parishes was tackled through adoption of the permissory and temporary Labourers' Employment Act of 1832, which allowed labour rates, whereby costs to farmers through hiring a greater number than their quota of workers, calculated usually on rentals, was directly deductible from their rates; if this helped reduce the numbers of farmworkers toiling on the roads, it was often opposed by small farmers and other non-employing ratepayers, and adopting parishes commonly dropped it after experimentation. At most, this had a modest and usually ephemeral impact. Disciplinary experiments usually exhausted their authors rather than their targets. In Widley's parish field there was often 'not a spade in the ground' according to the responsible overseer, while another popular device, paying roadworkers less than the going rate for farm labourers simply failed, with one observer torpedoing his own 'amazement' at claimants' preference for the roads, with the explanation that the work actually done remained 'so light' and 'carelessly superintended'. Numbers often dictated no alternative. Even at Hambledon in December 1833, where allotment provision and land hired for digging was so considerable, 22 unemployed men and boys could not be accommodated; an unsigned, undated note, scrawled on a piece of paper two by three inches, and addressed to road-foreman Mason, says tersely - 'put the Bearer to Work on the Road or stonepicking until Saturday next'.⁴⁴

A further long-term problem, but causing increasing concern after Swing, derived from the state of plebeian housing stock. Few villages, irrespective of their "close" or "open" character, escaped pressure on *existing* houses. At Hambledon the 1821 census revealed that the 385 families lived in 278 houses; none were vacant and five were under construction. According to one observer, 'The Cottages have become

very objectionable containing two familieys when only one with decency can be lodged'. Many craftsmen, shopkeepers and others with skills and modest surplus incomes, speculatively either erected or had new cottages built for letting to labourers, and constituted a national countryside phenomenon. Whereas the gentry, it was claimed with some justification, were 'liberal to the poor in letting' at modest rents, which did not 'oppress the poor', 'speculators . . . care nothing about the interest of the poor': a new cottage, costing £60–70 could be let for an annual £5–6, thus returning over eight per cent. But even the gentry were not angels; historically, they were responsible for allowing cottages to be run up on wastes, and in places this tradition was maintained, but where they controlled "close" parishes they commonly prevented further cottage-building, leaving that to speculators in diversely-owned "open" villages, knowing that a proportion of their tenants would walk to adjacent "close" parishes for work. In aggregate this housing supply failed to keep abreast of demand, despite the fact that vestries either hired them or guaranteed the rent, whereby owners of most descriptions 'insure their rent'. *De facto* pensions for elderly people who owned their cottages, were often made conditional on the property accruing to the parish on their deaths, and by this means many vestries controlled significant numbers, and bought and/or built further cottages, whereby – as Dr Broad has recently shown – some acquired substantial portfolios, up to thirty or so per cent of houses in some parishes. 'Parish houses are very common in Hampshire' reported one incumbent; in the mid-1830s Widley possessed 'five tenements, and five Rooms', occupied by unmarried mothers with their offspring, and others, though pressure meant that even a single room often accommodated a family with four children. At Titchfield, a building originally acquired as a 'pest house' to isolate those with infectious diseases, and redundant after smallpox inoculation became effective, had been rudely partitioned and housed three large families. Despite promiscuous expediencies, inter-parochial competition for tenancies was almost universal, exemplified by Meonstoke officials snapping up vacancies before their counterparts from adjoining Corhampton and Exton could secure them. Rents commensurately rose to 'unreasonable' levels, literally partly fuelled by public funding, putting more pressure on cottagers' family incomes and inevitably inflated claims for allowances in-aid-of wages.⁴⁵

Although it is not possible to chart an accurate trajectory of work-house provision, not least because some vestries experimented often by renting suitable accommodation, and subsequently abandoning the idea. Towns and the larger villages usually possessed them. Bishops Waltham rented premises since the 1720s and in 1742 erected an isolated pest-

house on the Chase; plans to replace the former were aborted in 1808 by a vestry committee – which included Cobbett – and another attempt was fatally delayed by the abandoned demolition of a property anticipated to produce a ‘large Sale of Building Materials’.⁴⁶ Managed institutions were quite widespread by 1830. Wickham had adopted Gilbert’s Act in 1800 which gave authority to secure loans on the poor rates, and borrowed £600 to erect a ‘Brick’d and Tyled large square House, with Outhouses’; Hambledon planned to take the same route in 1809, and borrow £800, but the Bishop of Winchester’s refusal to sell ten acres of forest land for the purpose negated the plan, and Hambledon rented alternative premises. Widley simply borrowed £700 in 1816 for their workhouse, while Portchester opportunistically purchased a redundant Quaker meeting house – replete with graveyard. Farmers commonly employed inmates; thirty-eight were working for those at Hambledon in May 1833, while male teenagers aged between thirteen and eighteen at Millbrook house in April 1835, earned from two to five-pence for a twelve-hour day, with their food provided by the governor. Village workhouses had poor reputations; vestries often intervened as at Hambledon in 1828 where inmates’ recurrent ‘disorderly conduct’ brought regulations restricting egress to those with a written order from either an overseer or a select vestryman. Others were unmanaged ‘poorhouses’ – sometimes former workhouses – as at Portchester where it had been converted into ‘small tenements’. Southwick owned ‘Seven Tenements . . . called the . . . Poor House’.⁴⁷

Many parishes, notably but not exclusively “open” ones, were in serious cumulative debt by the early 1830s. Substantial loans originally incurred to finance workhouse construction was one major source, often aggravated by recurrent liquidity crises, when officials literally ran out of cash to pay the poor and borrowed more. Precise statistics are rarely available, owing to the innumeracy of parish officials, and not least because many and largely unsecured loans had been made by local landowners and others, usually with interest at market rates, exemplified by Widley’s 1816 loan at five per cent from an unrecorded number of lenders. By the mid-1830s all the remaining bonds were supposedly ‘in the possession of the Revd. . . . Hanville’, curate of both Widley and Wymering. The relevant vestry minutes had disappeared, and if some older inhabitants confirmed that the original stipulation of £50 annual repayments had not been ‘complied with’, some to different parties made in the 1820s were recorded in the overseers’ accounts, and on this manifestly defective evidence, the present officials calculated an outstanding debt of £499-19-0. That was in 1836; five years later, another parish bond holder emerged from the woodwork, and his solicitor was soon in

contact with the Poor Law Commission's lawyers seeking a solution. The debt issue was further complicated by arrears owed by many rate-payers, among them the Revd. Scard, domiciled at Bishop Waltham, who was fourteen months behind. This possibly derived from a refusal to pay arbitrary increases of the rate on tithes, which was certainly the case with the lay proprietor subjected to the same treatment at Titchfield, when their value was upped from £1200 to £1800. Almost every parish's paper-work reveals repeated threats to resort to litigation, and rather fewer actions, not least because incarcerating debtors in prisons was politically sensitive, and counter-productive in socio-economic terms, especially while the agricultural depression endured. Although precise amounts varied, parish officers annually wrote off hundreds of pounds worth of unpaid rates.⁴⁸

The majority of labouring tenants did not pay rates, as demands usually provoked successful appeals to the Bench, with the result the most parish officers did not rate these properties, nor ironically the 'very small houses' many cottage proprietors lived in. Although some parishes used a Sturges Bourne clause to rate owners, sometimes illegally, there was little point in rating where the overseers subsidised or paid the rent: 'we loose the greater part by sufferance', concluded one vestry clerk. However, rates were commonly not excused on the homes of non-settled workers, a device initially adopted to deter unwanted intruders, especially in the context defined by the 1795 changes to the law of settlement, and notably after 1815 when labour surpluses manifested themselves. In places, closely interlinked parishes agreed not to rate the tenements of each other's settled poor, but even where they were exacted the effect was circumvented by settlement parishes paying the host parish's rate as part of non-resident relief payments, which included subsidising wages, in often desperate attempts to preserve these people in jobs where they were domiciled.⁴⁹

Revaluations to 'equalize the rates' by updating in response to changes over the years were politically notoriously difficult to engineer, except in "close" parishes where there was often less reason to do so. In 1819 Titchfield employed a Devonian to ensure neutrality to revalue, at the enormous sum of £250, but the result was denounced as 'very partial, and unequal': over two years later, all those 'aggrieved' were invited to submit a written statement; 'several' were received and all were rejected. In 1831 Droxford, crucially a select vestry adoptee, dominated by the larger farmers and owners, voted for a revaluation as the present one was as 'unjust' as it was 'old'. After a shaky – indeed illegal – start, a sub-committee was appointed, to oversee the operation under a surveyor, who was not to be a Hampshire man, to survey 'Every Field Meadow

Coppice or other Inclosure of Lands . . . valued Separately', and the rectoral tithe, together with all tenements 'in order to ground a poor Rate'. The latter proposition clearly hinted at rating the owners. The cost for 5000 plus acres, largely arable, together with some 300 houses, among them 'eight mansions', came to £75 and took about nine months. The outcome was immediately contested, though in reply a select vestry chaired by Richard Stares came to an uncompromising decision, that 'to alter, or amend, the Rate as fixed by the Valuation recently made . . . would . . . at once invalidate it'; furthermore as vestrymen did not wish to push ratepayers into 'unnecessary expenses of litigation', they somewhat disingenuously announced that protesters could appeal to the Quarter Sessions, with the rider that if the court 'quashed or amended' the valuation the cost would be met by the parish, so either way the costs would eventually fall on the ratepayers. By way of contrast, a similarly timed move to 'equalize' at Hambledon was minuted once and no more of it was heard.⁵⁰

For traditional overseers of the poor, serving their year by rotation was an historically-proven unpleasant task, usually stuck between their fellow ratepayers and claimants, and commonly unable to act the referee to the satisfaction of both; the unpleasantness intensified incrementally as expenditure rocketed, and especially after the war when the depression spawned mass under- and unemployment. Moreover, owing to the time scale, by the 1830s a third generation of dependent plebeians was literally emerging, and evidence exists of its implied *acceptance* as the norm has already been cited, but rarely so explicitly as by Richard Hearnsey of the Hampshire hamlet of South Amersham. Born in the 1790s and in a parish house occupied rent-free by his father, Richard blandly informed an Assize court in 1840 that he had 'received parish relief as soon as his family was sufficiently large to entitle him', which included his father's free tenement; Richard did not expect to start paying rent after a total of 43 years in the family.⁵¹ Such characters – and there were thousands of them – were difficult to say the least, notably for the overseers in the front line. Although full-time salaried overseers were widely hired, with some hard-pressed farmers, not all of them small, paid for acting part-time, they only took some of the heat off the elected overseers, who were their bosses, especially where they retained the awesome responsibility for actually collecting the rates. Where this occurred, vestries responded by nominating one or two additional elected overseers, as at Titchfield in 1831, and where the inevitable protest was countered by the fact that there were four highway surveyors, the onerous nature of their post being aggravated by the numbers of unemployed put to work on the highways; the surveyors' 'Office' claimed the pro-

testers, 'is not a tenth part of the Trouble as Overseer as the business is now more difficult and troublesome than formerly'. The appropriately named 'Mr Headache' served his year at Basingstoke.⁵²

Several historians have identified the Swing episode as the trigger which conditioned the political climate in parliament vital for the great investigation into the poor law and the passage of the Amending Bill.⁵³ To that should be added the fact that since the late 1790s, some politicians, among them the current prime minister, had become converts to poor-law reform on Benthamite principles,⁵⁴ together with the socio-economic and political situation in counties including Hampshire.⁵⁵ We should re-emphasise too the weak impact of perceived remedial statutory measures, notably the Labourers Employment Act and provisions for allotments. Although local responses to Swing varied immensely, with some communities persevering in increased wages and welfare payments, while others reversed them wholly or in part, the morass preceding the Captain's intervention seemed to re-emerge shaken but not *structurally* different. This scenario's apparent insolubility facilitated the literal seduction of a high proportion of landlords with their reducing rent receipts, by the ideological underpinnings so brilliantly contrived by Nassau Senior and Chadwick's manipulative deployment of the evidence in *both* the 1833 interim (or *Extracts*) and the final report of the Royal Commissioners in 1834.⁵⁶

IV. Poor-Law Reform and the Genesis of Opposition

Therein, almost all Hampshire's current relief practices were identified as abuses. The genesis of a dependency culture, with what was accurately denominated 'hereditary pauperism', required eradication through a fundamental overhaul of the welfare system based on the application of *laissez-faire* economic principles, a proposition in part legitimated by marginalizing contemporary claims that the problem originated in a perceived large over-supply of countryside workers – dubbed 'surplus labourers'. The initial aim was the abolition of all assistance (other than medical) to able-bodied males and their families. Although the Commissioners argued that the resultant significant reductions in relief costs would enable rate-paying farmers to increase wages and employment levels, those who failed to secure work at wages adequate to maintain their dependants, were to be offered workhouse accommodation. Incarceration was legitimated as a self-acting test of destitution, with calculated dietary levels under what independent labourers consumed imposing less eligibility, reinforced by compulsory work and other regulations, together with institutionalised classification whereby men were separ-

ated from their wives, and both from their children over the age of nurture.⁵⁷

If the New Poor Law's implementation was under the Poor Law Commission's superintendence, the most important functionaries were the assistant commissioners, responsible for the identification of parishes to be incorporated into the new Unions, the election of Guardians to their administrative Boards, the appointment of various officials – notably relieving and medical officers – and the provision of workhouses and their staff. All Unions inherited some parish workhouses, though few of these were suitable, or easily modified to the standards required by the Commission; those used in our two Unions were 'old sort of houses', with little potential for discrete accommodation for at least six classes of inmates, commonly 'dilapidated' and 'in the most filthy state' whether parish-owned or rented.⁵⁸ Colonel A'Court – Hampshire's first assistant commissioner – encouraged most of his Boards to commit themselves to the erection of new buildings adequate to meet the anticipated demand for places under the classification system to enforce the self-acting test. In the interim period, existing workhouses were often used despite the common necessity for separate institutions for the able-bodied, children, and the aged and infirm, with the result that children's separation from their parents involved location in different villages, while a significant proportion of the elderly were housed at a distance from their home parishes. Fareham quickly started to implement this strategy, though it was eschewed by its neighbour Droxford. However, the elderly 'wholly unable to work', were entitled to outdoor relief; implementing that loose definition comprised one of the magistracy's few remaining poor-law powers under the Act, and most magistrates used it sympathetically, with its pleasurable bonus in terms of public relations. The vast majority of elderly opted for out relief, even if it meant hiring a single room, rather than institutionalisation, which was principally reserved for those incapable of looking after themselves and unable to secure help from family or friends.⁵⁹

Securing adequate workhouse accommodation and terminating outdoor relief to able-bodied men constituted the Commission's principal initial task, and if a range of circumstances dictated a staggered implementation, with for example, allowances in-aid-of wages being continued with payments partly or wholly in kind instead of cash, the ultimate objective involved the formal issue of (non-medical) outdoor relief prohibition orders. Immediate changes included the end of parish make-work schemes funded from the poor rate (though not road maintenance financed from the highway rate⁶⁰), a reduction in the roles of parish officials and with them the erosion of traditional parochial autonomy.

The virtual eradication of magisterial powers over poor relief reflected their contrived notoriety derived historically from legitimating allowances in-aid, and more recently for supposedly sympathetically dealing with claimants' appeals against relief applications disallowed by economising vestries.⁶¹

South-eastern Hampshire experienced little of the rural popular protest attendant on interim measures imposed elsewhere, notably in Sussex, Kent, Bedfordshire and East Anglia, and these were reported at length in the county press.⁶² The Yeomanry were put on full alert and troops rushed to Winchester in mid-October 1834 in response to nervous city JPs, though the Home Office dryly observed that magisterial 'grounds were in some degree exaggerated'.⁶³ On the first occasion (18 January 1835) that cash payments were partially paid in kind, farmworkers mobilised menacingly at Hambledon – one of the most pauperised parishes and with a enduring reputation for unruliness associated with the neighbouring denizens of the Forest of Bere extending back to the early eighteenth century and beyond – refused to accept the bread, and were supported in sentiment, it was claimed, by most ratepayers. The final flourish comprised a demonstration led by a highly-paid well-digger and probable Cobbettite, who flourished a copy of the 1834 Act and demanded three-acre allotments. A Court offered publicly-funded emigration provided for under it, and secured a promise from the locally-influential to facilitate it. On this occasion only an ephemeral 'scene of confusion' materialised.⁶⁴ Other opponents and critics of the new system included several Anglican clergymen, among them the 'intelligent' but allegedly 'timid' magistrate and Rector of Hambledon, the Revd. Butler, his son Stephen, curate of Soberton, and Rector Brock of Bishops Waltham. Initially, most farmers of all categories were sceptical, though the bigger variant – with a 'great interest' in the reduction of the poor-rates – were soon converts to the Act's utility, once rates fell substantially: their smaller brethren together with many other minor ratepayers remained essentially hostile, as did the vast majority of the Act's main targets, agricultural labourers and their families. However, this hostility was not reflected in anti-New Poor Law figures being elected to either Board, though such a candidate stood unsuccessfully at Titchfield.⁶⁵

Utilitarians also argued that the eradication of Old Poor-Law abuses would not only morally sanitise the labouring class, but through poor-rate reductions restore the fortunes of agrarian capital, thereby engineering an antidote to the enduring post-war agricultural depression; farmers' profitability would be restored, and with it landlords' incomes significantly reduced by enforced rent reductions and further compromised by untenanted farms as mostly smaller farmers gave up or were forced out

through bankruptcies. For many substantial farmers, market conditions dictated increased stockholding – cattle and sheep – and with it fodder crops, particularly in the downland parishes in the Droxford Union. Many seized the opportunities to take over land vacated by smaller farming neighbours thereby aggressively increasing their acreages, correctly calculating that enhanced production – including cereals – compensated for low prices. Ironically, this ‘engrossing of farms’ in contemporary parlance, served to increase plebeian housing be it in the tied form: ‘Where two or three farms have been consolidated, the old farm houses have been converted into two or three tenements under one roof’. Smaller farmers who hung on, did not possess the capital to expand; for them survival dictated that any extra income through rising product prices from the mid-thirties was best devoted – at least initially – to clearing debts.⁶⁶

If the South never developed an anti-New Poor Law movement even remotely comparable to the famous northern phenomenon, southern opponents were not as isolated and therefore powerless as is often assumed.⁶⁷ One national focus comprised a vociferous minority of MPs, some of whom were named above. Although few were outright repealers, the numbers of those wanting significant changes, particularly to ameliorate the harshness of the Act, grew especially from the start of 1835 through to the summer of 1836, the period which saw the Act implemented over much of rural and predominantly agrarian England. John Walter used his *Times* to literally harass the Commissioners, their assistants in the field, publicising the inevitable hitches and glitches automatic on such a fundamental change to a long-established welfare system, and maximising coverage of more serious problems, none more gleefully than those with an element of scandal attached. *The Times* naturally had its opponents within the ranks of its fellow London dailies which supported the new system, while the provincial press divided similarly; most Whig papers could be relied upon for not necessarily uncritical support, while Tory organs, usually ideologically hostile to the Commissioners and centralised control, gave often sceptical coverage with support for amelioration commonly coupled with demands for much greater autonomy for local Boards of Guardians. The provincial press proved a recurrent source for London dailies’ hostile reports. The Commissioners ‘occasionally’ engineered ‘contradictions’ of anti-New Poor Law stories, though editors’ endemic plagiarism dictated that one denial often had to find space in three or more papers. Contradiction or not, the original stories were used by abolitionist and ameliorist MPs to embarrass and pressurise the government during the parliamentary sessions of 1835 and 1836, and in the summer of 1836 succeeded in

exacting a promise from the responsible minister, the Whig Home Secretary, Lord John Russell, to create a Commons select committee enquiry in the next session into the administration of the new law under the Commission, a strategy designed to put recommending repeal beyond the committee's remit.⁶⁸

On 24 February 1837, soon after the start of the new session, Walter in a lengthy and wide-ranging speech in support of a formal motion to establish a committee, included details of a breaking story, namely abusive treatment of young boys housed in the Fareham workhouse, and the recent reduction of relieving officers in the Droxford Union from three to one, which had seriously compromised poor claimants' access to especially medical aid. Sensing further embarrassment, the Commissioners immediately contacted A'Court, ordering him to mount an official enquiry into the treatment of child inmates at Fareham, though in the allegations made about Droxford the only defence lay in refuting them, as any changes in Union officers' strength had to be, and had been, authorised by Somerset House.⁶⁹

However, these developments – among them why little lads from the Droxford Union were accommodated in a neighbouring Union's workhouse – can only be appreciated by a detailed investigation of the regional implementation of the 1834 Act. The evidence from the south-eastern Hampshire witnesses identified by the opponents of the Act on the select committee, and formally summonsed by it, together with that from their fellow witnesses marshalled under the Commission's auspices, comprises a major source of both hotly contested information on the new system's implementation, though this material has not received the systematic and critical evaluation its historical significance warrants.⁷⁰ Although the committee – in common with its important genre – had a strong government majority, in this case bolstered by Tory MPs, including Peel's *de facto* deputy in the Commons, Sir James Graham. The opponents led by the Tory Walter, were Thomas Law Hodges, the radical-Whig MP for West Kent, Wakley, and his fellow Radical London MP and newspaper-owner, Thomas Harvey. These four constituted the minority, though some of the Tory members, while part of the majority of sixteen, were open-minded over some oppositional arguments. Although Walter's strategy was to prove 'cruelty, tyranny, or mismanagement' on the Commissioners' part, they aimed at the Act's repeal despite the committee's remit. The public were invited to send supporting evidence to them, though at the outset *The Times* opined that Walter's witnesses' evidence was unlikely to be 'sustained' given the committee's make-up.⁷¹ We can subsequently analyse the interrogatory profile of committee members on the Hampshire witnesses called, and

contiguous regional developments over the period before and during their questioning (10 April to 10 May 1837), to reveal aspects of the interactions between the state and local communities.

V. Fareham and Droxford Poor Law Unions 1835-37

The 1834 Poor Law Report on its publication early that year generated much debate, which extended beyond parlours, pubs and vestries, to the local press and was soon occupying many columns. Copies of the Act were despatched to every parish in August, followed in early September by a circular to parish officers enjoining them to pay 'strict attention to economy' in poor-law administration and inviting details of 'any evils' to be sent to Somerset House, though a proposal to enclose printed questionnaires demanding information on a number of topics, including the names and occupations of current overseers and churchwardens was withdrawn;⁷² the circular itself was a charter for locals to denounce present practices and responsible officials. One of the more thoughtful of the many Hampshire respondents, overseer Roberts of Northington, argued that the Commission should announce that any child born after the royal assent to the New Poor Law was ineligible for outdoor relief, which he believed would contain the proverbial Malthusian nightmare of 'improvident marriages', a proposal later identified as a possible compromise to outdoor relief prohibitory orders.⁷³ An 'instructional' circular to assistant commissioners a month later also demanded details of 'abuses', notably payments of allowances in-aid-of wages and claimants' rents. The former were to be phased out. Rent payments were to cease as soon as possible, though this instruction was belatedly clarified in January 1836.⁷⁴ The circular also directed that the common practice of relieving large families by taking one or more children into workhouses, a clause in the 1601 Act specifically repealed in 1834, was to cease. As an interim measure they were only to be accommodated during the day, have all their meals, and return to their parents each night. In Hampshire, Quarter Sessions chairman Pollen used his charge to the Grand Jury at Michaelmas 1834 to eulogise the Act and those parochial authorities who had already commenced implementing some of its provisions, despite localised protests, notably incendiarism, only one of which ended in a successful prosecution and the March 1835 execution of a New Forest labourer.⁷⁵

The initial primary objective of the assistant commissioners lay in the identification of parishes to be grouped into the new Unions. In this sensitive operation, the assistants had to reconcile a number of significant factors, and one preferred model for predominantly rural districts

emerged, namely Unions embracing a market town and its hinterland. Even modest market towns commonly hosted radical nuclei, from whose ranks – it was anticipated with some reason – a proportion of hostile urban Guardians would be elected, and under this structure their influence would be neutered by more pliable middling to larger, and principally conservative farmers, correctly expected to constitute the bulk of the men elected by rural parishes.⁷⁶ But achieving this structure was not so simple as socio-economic factors alone ostensibly suggested. First, according to some New Poor-Law historians, an over-riding complicatory consideration, was the precise geographies of major landowners' estates, and such magnates' concern to have their landed interests dovetailed with the new local administrations.⁷⁷ However, south-east Hampshire was not dominated by huge estates, though much land in the Droxford district was owned by the Bishop of Winchester, who confusingly had the Marquis of Winchester as one leaseholder, but this was of restricted consequence, not least because many of the largest farmers were principally owner-occupiers 'managing extensive Businesses'.⁷⁸ Secondly, "open" parishes with little capacity to restrict population growth tended to be the most impoverished. The assistants often experienced considerable resistance from "close" parish proprietors and their ratepayers to the inclusion of populous "open" parishes in the same, and otherwise coherent prospective Unions.⁷⁹ Thirdly, in some localities where an existing large workhouse existed, the assistants sometimes calculated that these could be altered to meet Somerset House standards at far less expense than the cost of new establishments, and attractive to ratepayers anxious to minimise the costs falling on them. South Stoneham parish sold its workhouse to the Union centred there for no less than £1416.⁸⁰ Also in this category were the oft substantial workhouses belonging to adoptees of Gilbert's permissive Act of 1782. The Gilbert Unions, or single parish adoptees of this statute, formed the fourth complication, because their existing Guardians had to vote by a two-thirds majority to voluntarily dissolve themselves under the 1834 Act. Hampshire had a number of both. That centred on the City of Winchester comprised most urban parishes and a number of neighbouring rural ones. It, like the single parish adoptee at Selborne,⁸¹ voted to dissolve, but other small Gilbert Unions, including Farnborough, Headley, and the single parish of Alverstoke – which embraced populous Gosport – refused.⁸²

In common with his counterparts, A'Court saw substantial landowners privately, addressed village vestries, and on occasion spoke at public meetings, to establish the preferences of the powerful, and counter the fears of lesser ratepayers, while offering re-assurances in answer

to questions about the incoming system. At Basingstoke for example, where he faced a 'vexatious opposition' faction, he denied that elderly married couples would be put in workhouses and separated, though this might be the fate of abusers of the old system, he instanced by men who married widows with large families in order to get child allowances. On occasion some strong interest groups made representations over his head to Somerset House, among them the six clergymen resisting his plan to modify the big workhouse at South Stoneham and make that parish the centre of a prospective Union, on the grounds that it was two miles from the nearest church and its Sunday School. When A'Court convened meetings in parishes earmarked for the Droxford Union, he found 'little of unanimity . . . on any subject', especially at Hambledon where the elderly Revd. Butler JP, and others including William Long, of Corhampton and the defeated Tory county candidate in 1832, posed a string of questions. Many farmers argued for smaller Unions than those being proposed, in fears of imminent domination by Droxford itself, while other parishes' ratepayers opposed any Union with notoriously unruly, populous and very impoverished Hambledon, and by way of explanation offered fears of further incendiarism. A'Court, who had already experienced this problem with Boldre in the projected Lymington Union, privately assuaged major doubters among them the wealthy Edward Wyatt,⁸³ and A'Court also bravely returned to Hambledon to lecture its 'refractory paupers' on what they might expect under the incoming system. He subsequently claimed that his harangue cowed his targets to the 'astonishment' of the parish officers when claimants' customary 'insulting language towards' them ceased. In common with most of his ilk, A'Court was easily provoked by hostile questioners, replying to some at Andover 'in a very facetious manner'. But if the assistant had satisfied the likes of Wyatt, justice Butler remained 'anything but a convert', despite the fact that A'Court had speedily arranged for an Exchequer loan to finance the emigration to Canada of six families containing 28 people, all previously publicly-supported for 'most' of the year.⁸⁴

Initially A'Court explored the possibility of combining Portsmouth, Portsea and Alverstoke, only to be told by the latter's Guardians that they had spent the colossal sum of £12000 on their workhouse, were suspicious over losing their investment, and – most importantly – wanted to retain their autonomy. This also precluded its alternative amalgamation with rural parishes to the immediate west. Such resistance proved fortuitous, because the Commissioners' experiences elsewhere soon revealed that amalgamating 'Country parishes' with 'great towns' – as opposed to modest market-centres – proved politically problematic

and administratively precarious.⁸⁵ One outcome was the market-town 'conveniently centre[d]' Union of Fareham; conversely Droxford, 'not a market town' was selected because the only alternative, declining Bishops Waltham, was perhaps even worse than Hambledon for much the same reasons. Droxford was less volatile with a population of only 1620 and represented a compromise. These Unions respectively embraced nine and eleven parishes. Fareham, also a brick-making centre, was home to 4402 souls, among them a large number of principally naval officers on half pay or retired, one reason why in its select vestry political 'party feelings . . . never fail to manifest themselves', so vociferously that A'Court repeatedly worried over his ability to engineer a consensus, but the 'formidable opposition' soon 'subsided'. That was probably the result of their triumph over rival Titchfield's (population, 3712) claims, and A'Court's refusal to budge from his strict rule of one Guardian per thousand inhabitants, which dictated but three for Titchfield, whereupon its inhabitants conceded that their trades-folk would not get the big contracts for workhouse supplies. The inaugural meetings of their new Boards respectively took place on 2 April and 29 May 1835; as a matter of practice A'Court attended both. Fareham small-town politicians soon revealed their true colours, namely control of patronage; the unpaid chairman was elected by a majority of one, while the Petty Sessions Clerk, a qualified lawyer, preferred by A'Court was beaten by the town's assistant overseer, to the salaried clerkship of the new Board.⁸⁶

County – but not Borough – magistrates domiciled in Unions were *ex officio* Guardians, and in many Unions were elected as chairmen and vice-chairmen, reflecting their status, although some assistant commissioners favoured elected Guardians for one or both posts. Elected Guardians were however elevated to both positions in Droxford and Fareham. At the latter the chairman, Rear Admiral Austen was of gentry stock, and of somewhat grander status than his Droxford counterpart, Robert H Stares, an owner-occupying farmer of some 500 acres, but archetypal 'engrosser of farms', who acquired the tenancies of several smaller farms in his locality, namely Droxford parish itself. The principal difference between the two Boards was the participation of eligible magistrates. At Fareham there was a regular attendance from a core of five. In Droxford parishes, a long-standing antipathy between substantial farmers and the Bench, derived from the Bench's humiliating treatment of some Guardians in their previous role as overseers – both Stares and his deputy, Henry Wooldridge, had been long-serving officials under the Old Poor Law – when upholding claimants' appeals against their decisions.⁸⁷ Only one member of the Bench, which convened at Droxford, Walter Long,

was known to be pro-New Poor Law, and he attended the Board but once, namely its inaugural, and shared colleagues' jealousy over their loss of most judicial powers in the welfare theatre; the elder Butler, put in very occasional appearances at the Board when he considered important issues were on the agenda,⁸⁸ only to resent his apparent inability to persuade his elected colleagues to mitigate what he saw as harsh relief policies. As early as January 1836, A'Court dryly observed that this Board had been 'little assisted by the local magistracy', though ironically Staes categorically asserted that former Guardians' current regular attendance would collapse if justices exercised their right, and muscled in. One newly-arrived major ratepayer, the eccentric Peter Lovekin of Droxford, accurately claimed that the Union was controlled by an oligarchic clique of substantial farmers.⁸⁹

Both Boards revealed enthusiastic and large majorities for rapid progression towards full implementation. One acid test for commitment was in the erection of model workhouses, architects' plans for which were available from the Commission, through whom loans could also be secured from the Exchequer. At A'Court's instigation both Boards committed themselves to their provision at their inaugural meetings; within days the Droxford chairman sought 'General plans and elevations' and travelled to Somerset House to collect them personally, while Fareham equally quickly asked for plans for a workhouse to accommodate between three and four hundred inmates.⁹⁰ Fareham parish itself owned a suitable plot of land, ironically recently bought for a replacement parish workhouse, which was immediately purchased by the Union, with contracts signed for a building to accommodate 300. Erection commenced during the autumn; despite disputes with the contractors, it was finished in May 1836, and inmates began moving in during June.⁹¹ A suitable site was not identified at Droxford until January 1836, and complications over its tenant's leasehold status, dragged negotiations into 1837, with a further reversal, even after building started, interrupting the finalisation of the sale; occupancy was delayed until the autumn. The only positive product of the delay, was that in the interim A'Court prevailed on the Guardians to reduce the size of the planned accommodation from their 300 to his 200.⁹²

These delays dictated that both Unions were forced to use inherited parish workhouses for indoor relief, while adopting other interim measures to address the problem represented by unemployed able-bodied men. Initially, having failed to hire accommodation for able-bodied inmates in Alverstoke's workhouse, Fareham adopted a common policy of designating different workhouses for various categories of inmates. The Wickham establishment was designated for girls and younger boys

and run by Mrs Jolliffe. The able-bodied went to the Titchfield house under the existing governor, former marine Thomas Bourne and his wife, while Fareham's housed the elderly. A'Court, as a matter of principle, believed this arrangement was 'extremely objectionable', but did not intervene, not least because it was the cheapest way to immediately implement classification rules. In the event, the plan was neither fully implemented, nor formally rescinded, though the most likely explanation is that it generated much local criticism of the Board – which exhibited signs of paranoia – and provoked riots when implemented in Sussex and elsewhere.⁹³ Droxford inherited at least five workhouses; one, Warnford was not used, but others at Hambledon, Bishops Waltham, Droxford and Soberton were, be it very ephemerally in the latter's case, though classification was not effected through dispersal of inmates.⁹⁴

A'Court's advice over size reflected his own experience since 1834; at the outset, calculating the required workhouse accommodation for individual new Unions was an inexact science. A rule of thumb used in predominantly rural Unions in 1834–5 and based on current pauper statistics suggested that room should be provided for 'at least' five per cent of each Union's aggregate population; A'Court used this calculation in early negotiations with Boards, though he was pleased to secure four per cent and avoid 'frighten[ing] people by an over-whelming expense in the first instance', and therefore jeopardise Guardians' 'willing co-operation'. Experience soon proved that demand never exceeded two and a half per cent, and that countryside workhouses would rarely if ever be 'swamped' if a percentage of one and a half to two was adopted.⁹⁵ Ironically, it was the radical reduction in the scale of potential demand already apparent in the Fareham Union while its new workhouse was under construction, which indicated that it would be 'considerably larger' than needed though too far advanced to alter. In January 1836 Fareham's solution was to approach Droxford with a view to renting out its spare capacity once available, 'almost indispensable' in view of the latter's difficulties in A'Court's estimation. Guardians in both unions even entertained hopes that such an arrangement might presage a union of Unions, with cost savings all round, though A'Court was privately opposed.⁹⁶ Agreement was reached in principle by mid-March 1836, and subsequently sanctioned by the Commissioners on condition that all inmates admitted from Droxford were 'healthy'; following a deputation of Droxford Guardians to inspect the new building in late May, a final agreement was reached putting a ceiling on a maximum of one hundred places. The price per inmate was the same as those charged to Fareham parishes, plus a 'rent' equalling a third of Fareham's interest payments and workhouse officers' salaries. Droxford also supplied fifty beds – desig-

nated to sleep eighty. For Droxford Guardians, one principal advantage was for children, as the new establishment had a school, and a schoolmistress, though the arrangement also embraced the able-bodied. This enabled the retention of just the recently-whitewashed Bishops Waltham house, and with the by now regular sale of redundant workhouse 'furniture', in this case realising about £60.⁹⁷

Significant downward revision of required workhouse accommodation also reflected a virtual evaporation of the problem of surplus able-bodied males in both Unions. A common interim measure advanced by assistant commissioners was to put the workless to spade-husbandry on parish-owned or rented land, paid by the piece and less than those in private employ, during the first winter under the new system when under- and unemployment traditionally peaked, and as an alternative to customary road work. The Commissioners appreciated that this interim measure 'must be very difficult to manage', notably 'getting rid of the allowance system' before adequate workhouse provision was available, and argued that 'no "Scale"' of remuneration should be used. A'Court enthusiastically tried to enforce the rule, especially to the primary target, men with large families, who were to receive allowances in bread and flour 'in uncertain quantities' dependent on productivity. The initiative aimed to prove to the unemployed that they could no longer anticipate publicly-organised work constituting the easy option, either in terms of physical effort or income. The Fareham Board ordered all component parish officers to secure land where necessary, and although this instruction was resisted in several parishes, some complied, Fareham itself for example taking an eighteen-acre field. The Board decreed that each worker was to bring his own tools and dig independently, facilitating measuring 'each Pauper[s]' exact productivity; those proving neglectful, careless, or detected thieving, were automatically dismissed. But these intrusions generated conflict, exemplified by the order to Titchfield overseers concerned to expeditiously harvest the potato crop not to employ the able-bodied 'while any partial able can be procured'. Droxford proved more problematic; its Board ignored A'Court's request for specific reports. The relieving officers directed parochial officials, though the latter's irritation was reflected in mischievously instructing their men to 'break . . . up . . . the Forest Land' on the Bishop's estate. Several Droxford parishes clung to roadwork, with Bishops Waltham's defiant launch of substantial highway improvement schemes. Conversely the Fareham Board reminded component parish authorities that if they 'find Work with the Waywarden, it cannot be paid out of the Poor Rate'. In Fareham, Widley overseers were forewarned that whomsoever was employed to dig potatoes on parish land, the Union auditor would require 'a

detailed Account of the Charges & the Produce to be duly entered in their Quarterly abstracts', and later decided that before submission each parish's abstracts would be scrutinised by the Board, as their respective Guardians 'from their local knowledge, have the means of frequently detecting improper expenditure which it might not be so easy for the Auditor to do'. Accounting by some parish officials in the Droxford Union recurrently proved deficient – and at times, incomprehensible – hardly surprising as among them were men 'who can scarcely read or write', while others were wholly illiterate, a problem subsequently said to have worsened.⁹⁸

Despite these shortcomings, significant reductions in parochial expenditures became speedily apparent. As early as mid-June 1835, Droxford chairman Stares proudly announced cuts of between twenty and fifty per cent in individual parishes, and an average reduction of forty per cent across the Union was reported by A'Court the following January. He shortly relayed intelligence from Fareham, that all component parishes had reduced expenditure by forty, with some in excess of 55 per cent, which was trumpeted in the county press. Far fewer farmworkers were unemployed even in the depths of winter. In pauperised Hambledon, where unemployed labourers had previously totalled between seventy and eighty, their numbers had fallen to the mid-twenties, and most of this residue were not fully able-bodied. Many Guardians were also impressed with what was described as the 'moral improvement of the labouring classes', revealed by farmworkers actively seeking employment, working harder in order to retain their positions, reflecting that the disciplinary element was operative as they were 'taught to feel the value of industry'. Younger, and especially unmarried labourers, searched for work outside their immediate neighbourhoods. These developments served to suggest that huge labour surpluses were a myth. Reduced costs also derived from a revisions of non-resident relief lists, excluding able-bodied recipients, together with its more rigorous administration facilitated by inter-Union co-operation. Further reductions came through the termination of payments for, or subsidising plebeians' house rents in the private sector. Following the Commission's November 1835 refusal to sanction rent payments made in the Basingstoke Union both Fareham and Droxford Boards issued orders to this effect, and as any defiance would be revealed by overseers' accounts, they were complied with, terminating what one assistant commissioner dubbed the 'nefarious system of jobbing long pursued by the owners of cottage property'. If this source of rent inflation was dampened, rents remained stubbornly 'exorbitantly high'. But despite the attempt by Droxford, overseers could not be forced to *introduce* rents respecting cot-

tage properties *owned* by the parish and at no cost to tenants,⁹⁹ with the result that a proportion of farmworkers, especially those with large families, and the elderly remained in rent-free accommodation.¹⁰⁰

These were all interim measures towards the first major objective, the eradication of all non-medical assistance to able-bodied males, and the symbolic and legal instrument was for Boards to seek outdoor-relief prohibitory orders to that effect from the Commissioners, the 'death blow' to outdoor relief in assistant Hawley's usual extravagant terminology, not least because they also made Guardians personally liable for authorizing illegal expenditure. Fareham announced its intention to apply for one timed to come into force on 1 July 1836, to coincide with the projected opening of its new workhouse, and Droxford soon followed to A'Court's pleasant surprise and support despite the fact that while the order's issue at Fareham coincided with the seasonal peak in employment, that for Droxford commenced on 1 September shortly before demand for labour customarily declined. Although A'Court was convinced that 'the wholesale dread of workhouse discipline' was a key ingredient in labourers' changing attitudes, he was also aware that the dread extended to ratepayers; the costs of workhouse accommodation were paid by inmates' individual parishes, and those for men with large families were huge. The threat to issue workhouse orders for such families was used to virtually force employers to up wages, or find other methods of assisting such people, for example by employing their children, providing potato plots and reducing or waiving rents for tied cottages. Indeed, the Droxford Union implemented this tactic with respect to three such families from Exton with immediate success, convincing farmers that the Board had an effective weapon against employers paying sub-minimal wages. Many of these developments were duly reported in A'Court's contribution to the Commission's second propagandist annual report, replete with citations from chairman Stares, despite (or perhaps due to) his penchant for exaggeration, and published in mid-August 1836. It also revealed that Droxford and Fareham were amongst the most advanced Unions in Hampshire, a distinction clinched by the prohibitory order. They therefore comprised positive examples for emulation by lesser-achieving Unions, among them Catherington.

The 1834 Act re-affirmed the clauses of the 1819 Select Vestry Act providing powers for vestries to sell parish-owned real estate, though henceforth these were to be exercised 'under the control, and subject to the rules, orders and regulations of the . . . commissioners'. The parliamentary draftsmen no doubt assumed – in what can only be described as their customary incompetent fashion – that this would suffice; it caused problems and some turmoil. A'Court was among the assistants who

quickly realised that sales of parish land and buildings, including cottages and redundant workhouses, would at once provide capital towards the substantial costs of new edifices, despite the availability of loans stretched over a ten – later twenty¹⁰¹ – year span, and moderate potential opposition from ratepayers. It would also eradicate a significant form of outdoor relief. Very early in 1835, he vigorously and very publicly promoted disposals with the unrealisable aim of completion before the new Unions were even formed let alone functioning, and he secured the Commissioners' approval for the immediate sale of all cottages belonging to Droxford parishes.¹⁰² Southwick sold off what passed as its workhouse before the Fareham Union was operative and with the Commission's sanction, reflecting A'Court's enthusiasm and Lefevre's opportunistic playing on parish officers' fears that it might otherwise be commandeered by its new Board.¹⁰³ At its first meeting (29 May 1835) the Guardians announced that it would promote the sale of old workhouses, cottages and lands owned by component parishes.¹⁰⁴ By that date, the Commission had realised that its powers over the disposal of freehold property were ambiguous, and non-existent with respect to copyhold; although the new Unions could requisition existing parish workhouses, to use them while new institutions were erected, there was no power for Unions to pay rents to hire these parish buildings as an interim measure.¹⁰⁵ Ratepayers might well rebel if no income was realised during it. In anticipation of securing exigency and retrospective legislation, the commission sanctioned the latter and the sale of freehold property. Wickham's ratepayers proved just how parsimonious they could be, with a protracted argument over whether the Union should pay an annual rent of £15 or £16 for their workhouse.¹⁰⁶

The Parish Property Act, was quietly passed at the end of the parliamentary session in the summer of 1835, attracting little if any press coverage, and has been virtually ignored by even specialist historians. A two-thirds majority of ratepayers had to cast their plural votes for disposals, specified in the 1819 Act was re-affirmed, and proceeds were to be spent on the legitimising criteria – 'for the permanent improvement of the parish'. Power thus resided with individual ratepayers, and hence the Fareham Board's May ruling that properties 'for the use of, and unemployment of the poor *which may no longer be wanted*, for the purposes of this Union', *could* be sold.¹⁰⁷ Parliament eschewed immediately dealing with the complexities of sales of copyhold property, and even the new statute proved deficient as it failed to define 'permanent improvement'. The first of two short amending Acts passed in 1837–8, addressed the copyhold problem, while the second quite critically permitted funds realised from sales to pay off illegally incurred parish debts,

which were often substantial, and a source of 'great uneasiness' to the Commission.¹⁰⁸

A'Court reported that where the gentry were active on Boards, as at Fareham, they favoured speedy disposal,¹⁰⁹ and once the legal position was at least partially resolved and Fareham's new workhouse opened in mid-1836, the three used in the interim period were sold off quickly. Portchester and Wymering parishes followed suit. There are suggestions of a shortage of buyers for such properties, with falling values reflecting the extinction of parish rent guarantees. Fashionable Titchfield advertised that its site was 'eligible . . . for building'. Wymering's house did not reach its reserve price, and was promptly given to the parish debt-holding curate in return for a £300 reduction. Fareham itself was the only component parish to add tenement property, namely two 'very small and very old cottages' in unusually good repair, and in the High Street, which were valued alone at the extraordinarily high price of £700. In the event it realised but £550 for both the cottages and the workhouse. Wickham's house, which had cost £600 fetched but £285. There were few other problems, except at Portchester, where – as we have seen – the building was a former Quaker Chapel with a graveyard, which delayed disposal until 1838. Most parishes used the funds towards payment of their respective costs to the new workhouse, though Wickham illegally used some to pay off as yet still ineligible debts. Almost all purchasers appear to have been locals. Titchfield's pesthouse was sold to a baker for £110, while the workhouse went to a basket-maker, for £500. At Portchester, where the bidding commenced at a mere £50, a Fareham grocer got it for £150; only Wickham was bought by a builder. He, the grocer and baker may have been traditional speculators in this type of property, though their precise motives elude, and it is possible that the apparently wealthy basket-maker was interested in conversion to a factory. Widley's workhouse was the only one to remain in parish hands.¹¹⁰

Although there are evidential problems which obscure whether the decommissioned workhouses in the Droxford Union were rented – and only Bishops Waltham's certainly was – or owned, there are no minuted parish sale applications to sell such buildings which went to the Board for approval, and then to Somerset House for sanctioning. The first sale application, from the Revd. Haygarth on behalf of Upham, referred mysteriously to a piece of Stroud Wood Common and 'building materials thereon', which turned out be the customarily recyclable rubble from a row of four parish copyhold cottages 'recently burnt down'. The parish had already pocketed the insurance money, precipitately auctioned it, and realised a further £80 from 'yeoman' villager George Scard, with the result that the Commission refused its sanction. However, this evidential

snippet is of considerable significance in that it suggests that the vestry's decision to sell was entirely dictated by the loss of the cottages, and that undoubtedly reflects both the housing shortage and the difficulties of meeting rent payments by especially men with large families.¹¹¹

Dr Broad erroneously states that sales of all parish property was mandatory under the 1834 Act. The 1835 clarifying statute did not amend the relevant section; the reasons, though never stated were simply that political considerations dictated non-compulsion, though expenditure on the maintenance of such properties *from the poor rate* were forbidden. However, as the two High Street cottages at Fareham were the only cottages sold by any parish in either Union in the later 1830s, the sole explanation is that vestries decided against the sale of usually dilapidated buildings, and though some cottages were rented out, others are known to have remained occupied – notably by large families – at no cost. So too were former poor- and workhouses. In aggregate the numbers so housed must have been considerable.¹¹²

Prohibitory orders also aimed to encourage especially larger farmers to increase their workforces, successfully in the cases of Stares and his Guardian colleague Goldsmith.¹¹³ At Fareham, it appears to have generated few problems,¹¹⁴ probably owing to its timing. In stark contrast, it was seriously fractured within four months at Droxford because most, but not all, farmers customarily laid-off men during spells of severe winter weather, particularly additional hands hired at 'infinitely higher wages' by those with coppicing interests between December and March.¹¹⁵ Heavy snow at the end of December 1836 saw about twenty coppicers affected, who applied and received outdoor relief on the grounds that they were regularly employed, and in anticipation that their unemployment would be brief. In fact it lasted for three weeks. In accordance with procedures, the Board sought the Commissioners' sanction, which was granted be it with the categorical rider that no further payments would be tolerated; the Board also received a copy of a 'doctrinal' letter sent to several Sussex Unions in the same position, including particularly rebellious Petworth, where the numbers of men laid off were much larger and constituted a contrived tactic against the Commission. It regretted that heavy snowfalls were 'still to be considered' a legitimate cause of lay-offs, that farmers as employers had not changed their practices in conformity with the new realities under the Act by hiring men for the entire year, and added, somewhat contradictorily, that recourse to outdoor relief would deter farmworkers from saving part of their peak harvest earnings to meet exigencies in the slack season.¹¹⁶

The Commissioners' annual reports were of course in part aimed to counter opponents' criticisms and prognostications that the new system

would implode, with empirical evidence to the contrary. In some senses this optimism was surreal. As the Revd. Stephen Butler later commented,

the poor are generally quiet in their demeanour . . . but there is a very wide separation between the labourer and the farmer . . . the poor are stunned; a law has suddenly come upon them, for which they are not prepared; [outdoor] relief to large families has been taken away; poorhouses are rising up . . . [with] the outside appearance of a prison; the poor . . . are completely stunned but . . . that feeling ought [not] to be supposed to arise from any acquiescence . . . in the . . . new law.¹¹⁷

While the likes of A'Court and his fellow local enthusiasts including Stares would argue that tensions would decline as the new system bedded down, they also knew that in addition to enduring ideological divisions, that the new system also generated something of a record comprising incidents and questionable decisions, perhaps to be also written off as inevitable glitches, but with the potential to return explosively. The determination to further reduce costs was one underlying cause. The Commission encouraged Boards to use the Liable Persons clauses of the unrepealed part of the 1601 Act, which enabled relief costs to be reclaimed, for example from children deemed adequately affluent to assist elderly parents. Some of the resultant decisions were harsh; the Fareham Board ruled that a labourer with two children should support his mother and 74 year-old father because the son had some 'interest' in a 'horse and cart'. If this went unchallenged, in other cases exemplified by the fact that an elderly man cut turf for his own use was interpreted as his not being 'wholly incapable of labour', and used to reduce his weekly entitlement, the Fareham Petty Sessions chaired by a regular attendee at the Board, overturned the decision. The Droxford Board terminated the relief paid to an elderly couple on the grounds that the mother 'could earn' the weekly shilling to pay the rent, and their two single sons who lived with them and jointly earned a weekly 13/6, could support them. This was one of the two Droxford cases where a refusal to comply dictated application for an attachment of earnings order, which the Petty Sessions – chaired by Butler's father – rejected on the grounds that the children's incomes were too low. The Board's acquiescence in the decision as final brought a fierce riposte from Commissioner Lefevre, who argued that the issue of workhouse orders for the parents was 'a sufficien[t] test of the ability of the children to support their parents'. However, he also seized this opportunity to insist that no 'general rule' could be devised for Boards' guidance; each case must be

decided on its merits, and in this one he confirmed that the magistrates' decision was final.¹¹⁸

Pauper funerals were also subjected to less eligibility principles; a number of inter-related issues included the burial of workhouse inmates in the parish where located, rather than in the deceased's home parish, the non-provision of palls, refusals to pay for bell-tolling, and utilitarian coffins. Although these were national issues, they resonated locally. The Fareham Board formally ruled that its contractor supplied cheap coffins 'perfectly free from every ornamental work whatever', and were subsequently approached over relatives paying for bronze handles; the archetypal less-eligibility condition imposed was that they paid 'the whole expence of the Funeral'. After the Commission's general intervention, suggesting new grave yards for inmates 'without friends' in rural workhouse locations, but agreeing to extra expense where appropriate to secure burials in home parishes, with Union provision of a 'decent hearse', the Fareham Board purchased one costing £16, 'with Shafts and Hand pole . . . to convey the Dead [inmates] to their respective Parishes and to be drawn either by a Horse or Men according to distance', a thick-skinned decision given the notoriety of human-power used on road-maintenance before 1834. The hearse was ultimately an economising measure, as was the decision to secure a local graveyard for the friendless dead. On one contractor supplying a defective coffin responsible for 'disgraceful circumstances', he was changed immediately and basic specifications introduced respecting the thickness of 'sound Elm Board . . . sufficiently nailed and screwed'. The Board reminded parish officers that 'the principle of claiming the goods of deceased Paupers is so just and important'.¹¹⁹ This comprised what was no doubt interpreted popularly as a cumulative negation of proletarian funeral rites driven by penny-pinching motives and probably contributed to the 'stunning' impact described by Butler. However, it might have been worse given the Commission's ostensible if semi-covert support of the disgusting 1832 Anatomy Act whereby the corpses of 'friendless' inmates could be handed over to the medical schools for anatomical classes.¹²⁰

Cost-cutting also impacted unfavourably on securing medical aid and other relief. Initially, the Commissioners instructed their assistants to attend Boards when they formulated medical districts and appointed the officers (on one year contracts), to ensure that the former were not too large or populous, and that in the latter a preference was given to 'local Medical men'.¹²¹ Subsequently Boards often adjusted districts and made appointments unilaterally, though central confirmation was required. On its foundation, the Droxford Union was divided into four, each with a doctor on an annual contract, all four of whom were existing practi-

tioners, and had had previous contracts with individual parishes. They continued to combine the treatment of both public and private patients. That Board found little fault with their medical officers *per se*, apart from investigating an allegation of non-attendance on a 'seriously burnt' child, though this may reflect less rigorous policing of the required full bureaucratic recording of public patients. One medic provided 'every comfort' to pauper patients 'when a case required', and it was this supposed generosity, coupled with the fact that the medics rarely attended the Boards, which led it to rule that all non-urgent requests for medical assistance were reported by doctors to the appropriate relieving officer for him to authorise or seek authorisation from the Board, with the result that some medical relief came in the form of loans. The districts were reviewed after the experience of the first year, and reduced to three. While neither geographical nor demographic factors compromised the efficacy of doctors in the revised districts, the Board resorted to offering reduced *per capita* rates based on populations, and curtailed extra attendance payments for certain patients including midwifery, in full knowledge that numerous newly-qualified medics looked to New Poor-Law contracts to launch practices; indeed, they constituted 'a stepping-stone to practices among the rich'. Two from this category replaced established practitioners in March 1836, while the third, comprised father and son Bulbeck, survived only by accepting a *de facto* basic earnings cut of 25 per cent, aggravated by 'no possible chance of extras' for treatment, especially operations, not covered in contracts, 'which used to be numerous'. On this occasion the son made direct representations to the Commission, which shortly followed another complaint over a niggardly increase to a sick pensioner's allowance, just before his death, but the central authority was statutorily forbidden to intervene in individual cases. And these two lost their poor-law contract in March 1837 after the Board introduced competitive tendering, with an outsider unsurprisingly securing the contract. The ousted practitioners argued unsuccessfully that their greater experience and familiarity with their patients represented losses to the latter and the local authority. One typical loser was farmworker Wild; the relieving officer's denial of medical assistance for a difficult birth, on the grounds that he had but three children at home, was confirmed by chairman Stares, and Wild found himself with a ten-shilling debt to the doctor.¹²²

The Fareham Board repeatedly found fault with its medical establishment, including the doctor – Blatherwick – whose responsibilities embraced the new workhouse. Most involved inadequate records, but medical officers' prerogative to order victuals to accelerate recovery was often converted into more generous provision aimed at entire house-

holds, on occasion without even seeing the patient. The Board ruled that it would not sanction any medical aid without a doctor's prior visit, and also imposed restraints on items supplied as nourishment; unlisted articles could be supplied only after reference to the Board. Although this ruling was bitterly condemned by one medic, he was rebuked, and on a subsequent fracture the Board railed 'against giving such great allowances whereby pauperism is likely to be greatly increased and [claimants'] Industry disencouraged [sic]'. From January 1836 the Board ruled that all medical aid to able-bodied people aged fifteen to sixty and their families was to be 'loaned', with household heads obligated to repay the cost; widows with young children were the sole exception.¹²³

Relieving officers were the key functionaries between the Boards and claimants, responsible for taking down details of applicants, deciding on immediate relief or referral of cases for the Board's decision, and paying those in receipt of regular outdoor relief. One of the initial appointees at Fareham, already in trouble for inadequate accounting, was fired after five months for 'Want of mildness in his treatment of Paupers'. Droxford's three, each with a district comprising a number of parishes, visited twice or thrice a week. One, Charles Newman, 'rather inclined to drink', was sacked for accounting discrepancies, though no monies were lost. He was replaced, but when all three had their salaries cut by around a quarter in March 1836, only two accepted though the third was replaced. During the following summer, their slackest season, the Board learned that their inordinate leisure time – reputedly spent partly in hunting and at 'cricket matches' – and calculated further savings if they were reduced to one, who if mounted, could cover the entire Union. A'Court was clearly worried at this prospect, but after a lengthy interview with Thomas Hayden, the officer identified to remain, the assistant commissioner was impressed: Hayden 'seemed to know every pauper & every case ... astonishingly'. A'Court advised a 'fair trial' from Christmas, despite the fact that winters were their busiest season; he promised to intervene to secure a second if difficulties transpired, though the Union Clerk airily asserted that relief applications had 'most wonderfully decreased', reflecting loaned medical relief. The Commission sanctioned the arrangement, and within days A'Court supported an identical reduction of relieving officers at Fareham.¹²⁴

But it was Droxford which experienced severe problems. In part conditioned by the fact that one of the redundant relieving officers was another of Bulbeck's sons, and secondly no sooner was the redoubtable Hayden in post and working his new weekly itinerary, than an influenza epidemic – which was national and killed principally people aged over sixty – struck in January 1837. A'Court, who succumbed briefly to the

disease, exuded complacency, despite the fact that the Commissioners recognised that this might prove the first national test of medical aid under the new system, and demanded specific reports from all assistants. Although mortality outside Portsmouth, Southampton, and around Marlborough, was much less than anticipated, A'Court was impressed by the scale of 'private charity' – including subscriptions – for victims. He received no complaints of 'neglect or insufficiency of attendance', though he knew that medical officers were 'worn down by fatigue', evidenced by one who visited 330 patients in a week. Under the pressure, Hayden's itinerary imploded; the Revd. Stephen Butler claimed that over fifty victims waited for five days for Hayden to call and that he 'never visited a great many of the most distressed & afflicted families'. Meanwhile, the younger Dr Bulbeck – for not exclusively Hippocratic reasons – partially filled the breach in his own estimation by having 'never waited for any order to attend . . . sick poor persons, pauper and otherwise', and where appropriate paid for meat for patients out of his own pocket, omitting to mention that he had written authorisation from a Guardian to intervene in this crisis without the relieving officer's clearance. In an interchange of correspondence with the Board, justice Butler stressed the numbers of sick bereft of medical attention and with it orders for nutritious dietary items to expedite recovery, which he attributed to the pressure on the solitary relieving officer; if a reconsideration of this issue was promised, the Board correctly emphasised that on representation parish officers could summon medical assistance – a power which extended to magistrates as Butler must have known. But, public opinion appeared to be fairly unanimous that one relieving officer was utterly inadequate, representative of one cut too many, and some – including the Revd. Brock – believed that it was calculated to deter relief applications, specifically 'to tease, torment, and put off the poor'.

Workhouses also generated numerous problems. Both Boards quickly discontinued outdoor relief to bastards and their mothers, with the result that a high proportion of child inmates were illegitimate, whose mothers – if they came in at all – repeatedly abandoned them in the house.¹²⁵ Both acted against farmers' attempts to continue with the customary practice of hiring inmates, mainly adolescent boys and elderly men with some working capacity, at nominal wages, and imposed standard and reduced dietaries in conformity with 'less eligibility' in all retained workhouses. At Titchfield governor Bourne was perhaps surprised to have his confinement of lads aged eleven and thirteen on bread and water for leaving their work, investigated by the Board, and no doubt relieved when the penalty was approved with the rider that 'severe Punishment' was to follow any repetition. In another case, involving

two younger boys, accommodated at the Fareham house, who destroyed their marked shirts and absconded, the Board ruled that the father of one should meet the cost of his son's garment, on pain of both children being prosecuted. The Bournes secured the appointment at the Union's new house, but Thomas was soon in trouble with the newly-designated visiting committee and the recently-installed chaplain, for what was possibly a joke over an inmate's visitor 'incurring a risque of being imprisoned'; he was cautioned against any 'expression' suggestive of impeding 'access to Pauper relatives', and made to pen a statement which the Board forwarded to Somerset House.¹²⁶

Although the latter response reflected the Board's continuing apprehension of hostile publicity, such workhouse incidents could have derived from any Union in the country. Droxford's comparative record was, with one exception, unspectacular, though not problem free. In William Harrison, latterly assistant overseer and presently governor of Hambledon workhouse, the Board inherited a professional poor-law official with at least fifteen year's experience with different authorities.¹²⁷ His duties were subsequently extended to 'superintend the several Poorhouses' the Board retained as an interim measure. His principal task in this capacity was to implement a standard diet in all four and ensure that only people issued with an order by the Board were admitted; once the protracted negotiations with Fareham concluded, in October 1836 he moved to the remaining workhouse retained for the aged and impotent at Bishops Waltham.¹²⁸

His survival reflected the fact that despite his overall superintendence he was not implicated in the most serious incident with any Droxford workhouse during this interim stage. Among Harrison's predecessors were Edmund and Elizabeth Privett, appointed at some point under the Old Poor Law, and in February 1836 accommodating predominantly aged people. Mrs Privett was a notoriously 'scolding' foul-mouthed drunkard, who eschewed one major customary role of matrons, namely superintending sick women, which she left to the discretion of other female inmates. In the case of the relatively recently-arrived senile – and unwell – Honour Shawyer, aged 71, her worsening condition was reported by her bed-mate Rachel Barnes to Mrs Privett, and suggested that she called medical officer Smith. Privett replied 'that it was no use to send for a doctor to such an old creature as that', and though Smith's assistant was called on the morrow after further delays admitted by Mr Privett, and prescribed medicine, Shawyer's condition worsened and she died shortly before the re-summoned medic arrived. Mrs Privett left Barnes and other women to deal with the corpse, and under questioning by Smith's assistant they complained of Mrs Privett's neglect; no doubt

in the interests of his own protection, Smith performed an autopsy, concluding that the death would probably 'have been prevented . . . if I had been called in proper time'. The coroner's formal verdict was 'mortification of the bowels', but the jury identified 'great neglect', and 'much stigmatised' Mrs Privett. The coroner wrote officially requesting that the couple be dismissed. Thereafter the responsible medic called daily at the house – to the Board's disquiet – and the entire episode not unnaturally 'excited considerable sensation' locally, and made the press. The Privetts were sacked immediately, yet finding temporary replacements took over two months.¹²⁹

Harrison's intervention with diet also provoked argument. He insisted that pea soup, made from stock in which bacon had been boiled, and without bread, sufficed for some evening meals, and in order to save on the cost of suet for puddings, substituted fat skimmed from the bacon water too; 'if . . . skimming of . . . [bacon] is done in farmers' houses', he asserted on one occasion, 'there should be no exception for the work-houses'. At Soberton at the end of 1835, the Revd. Butler, intervened, and eventually made representations to the Board in person; he succeeded in getting the 'trashy soup' thickened with potatoes, though that house was shortly closed. Ironically, the Privetts' successors at Bishop's Waltham, the Murphys, resisted Harrison's pet economiser with Rector Brock's blessing; not only was the soup too salty, but the suet-substitute made inedible puddings, and the inmates 'grumbled about the house, with imprecations upon the heads of those responsible'. John Murphy ignored Harrison's instructions, even when supported by Guardian Wyatt, doggedly concerned with 'less eligibility' principles applied to diet and the cost of Murphy's substitution of mutton for salted pork and bacon in making gruel – not to be confused with soup; eventually Wyatt personally went through Murphy's accounts, and gruellingly calculated that instead of a meat consumption of 73 lbs 4 ozs, he had used 1,136 lbs and 8 ozs. The clergy's intervention in these developments and others, according to Stephen Butler, was 'not very pleasing to the guardians', who also publicly denounced their 'improper interference', discouraging future representations and shortly cemented by the pointlessness of challenging cases coming under the outdoor relief prohibitory order. Brock, who as Rector frequently visited the Bishops Waltham establishment, complained to A'Court specifically about conditions and the Privetts as early as May 1835; deemed 'meddling' by the recipient, his reverence's letter went unanswered, and when Brock approached the parish's Guardian, he merely said that the new workhouse would be 'shortly' erected, and that 'nothing would be done' in the interim period. That of course proved greatly protracted. The Board was a little more receptive to their

own medical officer's strictures against Harrison's culinary contrivances when applied to the Droxford workhouse while it remained in use; salty pork water made older inmates sick, and when the doctor demanded the substitution of twenty pounds of fresh beef, he secured twelve. It was 'generally understood throughout the neighbourhood that no fresh meat is allowed . . . to paupers in health'. Murphy, unsurprisingly given Bishop Waltham's riotous reputation, publicly denounced Harrison's stuff as fit 'only for pigs', and thereby even the 'trashy soup' was a matter of 'common report . . . many people were talking of it'. So many, in fact, that the tale gravitated the twelve miles to Portsmouth, where it became grist to the mill of the emergent anti-New Poor-Law campaigner, the Anglican Revd. Dewdney, whom we will encounter later.¹³⁰

Meanwhile, Droxford's arrangement with Fareham proved problematic. Despite demanding assurances that the house was free of disease before the first despatch of inmates, and receiving notification that a few children had ringworm – an 'inveterate' and 'very tedious complaint' especially in children's institutions which 'baffled' medics.¹³¹ In October 1836, six new arrivals were returned after an emergency meeting of the Fareham Board learned that four had ringworm, while two others were 'insane . . . one decidedly dangerous'; that Board insisted that all Droxford folk for admission had medical certificates. None accompanied some new residents in November, including one married couple with eight children, and two lasses who shortly proved to be pregnant; now the Fareham Board ruled that its own medical officer inspected new Droxford arrivals, resulting in one being returned in December, but accompanied by formal notification that Fareham was anxious to 'uphold the spirit of the agreement' and to 'cautiously . . . avoid . . . trifling or frivolous objections to the reception of any Paupers'. Whether this included accommodating an inmate with 'cronic Rheumatism' as requested is not known, but complaints about Droxford's uncomfortable workhouse beds were addressed through the substitution of 'sacking' for 'wood spleaks' – at Droxford's expense. In early January after further uncertificated arrivals, Fareham announced that any repetition would be followed by refused entry, and decided to identify perennially sick Droxford children for return. On 3 February 1837 that Board – attended fortuitously by A'Court – decided to return the three seriously incontinent little boys who were moved on the 10th; before the cart conveying them reached Bishops Waltham workhouse, it was encountered by the Revd. Brock, who inspected the lads and interrogated the driver. His reverence then accompanied them to the house and ordered Harrison to call-in medical officer Lovekin, and inform both parish Guardians.¹³²

Ironically, A'Court had also attended the Droxford Board on 7 Febru-

ary during the crisis germinated by the influenza epidemic, when it deferred reviewing the relieving officer issue for a month. One week later, members heard a report on the condition of the three little lads, asked the Fareham Board for 'an immediate and strict enquiry', and expressed surprise that their return had been permitted, let alone with 'no report . . . or notice . . . of their sickness'. Droxford emphasised that the episode might 'prove exceedingly injurious to . . . members of both boards', adding:

Unfortunately . . . this neighbourhood is greatly excited, on account of the numerous and contradictory reports that have been circulated respecting the treatment of the children . . . no doubt . . . so circulated by their mothers and friends.

Droxford was especially 'anxious, if possible, to rebut' these stories 'with confidence', not least because its Guardians were implicated; individual Guardians – though not all – visited their parish's 'own poor' at Fareham when convenient, and chairman Stares often called in on his own. Several such visits occurred during the period when the three boys were inmates. Fareham's enquiry on 17 February was expeditious but superficial, and unsurprisingly in view of their neighbour's difficulties, the Board speedily reversed its month-old decision and re-installed a second relieving officer.

Their workhouse governor, Bourne, deposed that the three were 'diseased' on arrival, 'being incapable of retaining their urine or faeces', with their clothing made 'extremely filthy' on a daily basis; admitting that all three had weakened during their time at Fareham, he asserted that despite 'repeated' reference of the cases to medical officer Blatherwick, no treatment was given except when one contacted a fever, and the doctor had also stated that they were sufficiently healthy to undergo the eight-mile cart-journey to Bishops Waltham. One, Cooke, was supposedly 'weak in intellect', and according to an adult male inmate who had slept with him – a common device to address children's bed-wetting – Cooke had been 'flogged for it' by Bourne, an equally regular response. The schoolmistress said that all three 'have no liveliness nor energy like other children', while Blatherwick euphemistically attributed their state to 'a deficiency of bodily powers'. This report was considered at the Droxford Board's next scheduled meeting on the 21st – with A'Court present again; he ordered a written report from Lovekin but only on the issue of the boys' fitness for travel, and instructed the Fareham Board to produce weekly reports on the health of inmates from Droxford. A'Court did not bother to travel the two miles to inspect the boys. These were obvious precautionary moves; if there was concern that

Guardians' reputations would suffer, there was no hint of a pending crisis, though A'Court was aware of the imminent Commons investigation, as yet scheduled to investigate principally the Petworth Union. What they did not know, was that Brock had discussed the matter with his friend, the Revd. Stephen Butler, and he had already 'hastily written' to John Walter MP.

VI. South-eastern Hampshire Poor-Law Scandals Break

The Commissioners read Walter's speech as reported in *The Times* on the morning of 25 February, and immediately sent copies to both A'Court and the Droxford Union. He was to mount a full investigation, though he pointed out the impossibility of getting definitive intelligence to London in time for another Commons debate on the 27th. He ordered a further enquiry under the Fareham Board's auspices, informing them that he would attend their next scheduled meeting on 3 March with a deputation of Droxford Guardians. In the interim he saw the boys. They remained 'still in a very low and helpless condition', despite constant attention over the past eighteen days, and A'Court was convinced that 'gross neglect' was the cause, though unprepared as yet to attribute blame. On 28 February the Droxford Board reconvened, and A'Court was joined by justice Butler; it helpfully minuted elected members' profound outrage:

Our Rector waylaid an old Man . . . and asked him a great many questions. From Evidence so little to be relied on as this it is no wonder that a . . . [MP] should be misinformed and untruths consequently find their way into the public prints.

Lovekin reported that although he could not identify any disease, the boys arrived 'haggard . . . faint and exhausted', 'the very pictures of distress and misery', unable to 'walk, or even stand, without assistance', while Cooke went into a 'lethargic state' for sixteen hours and on reviving, was unable to swallow food. Lovekin specifically denied that he had said they were starving or that their bruises were caused by being 'severely beaten' – as claimed by Walter – which derived from Rector Brock. The second Fareham enquiry, conducted by the Fareham Union Clerk and the workhouse Chaplain, and confined to adolescent and child inmates, also revealed that one lad had been beaten with a bell-cord whilst being supervised by girl inmates aged around fifteen, 'placed in the stocks two or three times week', and reduced to 'half allowance' of food 'for some time by way of punishment', though who imposed these penalties went unmentioned. This more ominous evidence reached

A'Court on 2 March, the day before he went to Fareham with the Droxford delegation, and it was now clear that the original strategy of preserving both administrations' reputations was ruined. Moreover, in the Fareham 'district' rumours 'created an extraordinary sensation'.

Droxford remained vulnerable over the relieving officer issue too, and A'Court sought to neutralize it by a statement from the elder Dr Bulbeck to the effect that in populous Hambledon there was 'no case of suffering' owing to the relieving officer's 'absence', as the medics ordered dietary items, though 'inconveniences' through delays occurred. It was read through to Bulbeck, though the latter rider was edited out of the citations from it appearing in a letter from chairman Stares to the *Hampshire Telegraph*, refuting Walter's claims made in the Commons on 24 February. Stares also asserted that the Guardians devoted eight hours a week to assiduous administration aimed to make the 'Act work as mildly as possible'. Sectors of the regional press were salivating at the prospect of being at the heart of a local poor-law crisis of national significance.¹³³

On 3 March A'Court resorted to formally and very thoroughly examining the workhouse governor, his wife – the matron – Dr Blatherwick and the schoolmistress, in the presence of the full Board and the delegated Droxford Guardians. New and amplificatory evidence revealed that the 'school stocks' were brought by the mistress from her failed dame school, and that their disciplinary use extended to child inmates of all ages for various misbehaviour, including the three Droxford lads for fouling their clothes; in their case, they were additionally punished by dietary reductions, and made to stand unaided in the stocks for up to two three-hour periods in one day. Both the master and the schoolmistress – the wife of the porter – authorised such punishment; both used canes on older children and a 'twig birch' on their younger charges. The porter assisted in the school, usually containing well-over a hundred, including infliction of corporal punishment. In the case of the three's 'declining health' – and one, Withers, developed a common child's complaint namely a '*prolapsus ani*' with the 'gut' protruding from the anus – the master restored their diet, but owing to their incontinence, and offensive smells, they were moved to a windowless, stone-floored and unheated store room in an outbuilding, where they slept in one bed. Blatherwick claimed that he was not told about Withers's condition or dietary deprivation, and although he was aware of the incontinence problem, he asserted that he was not asked for any advice. The doctor did see the boys on their departure, but was unaware that they were travelling in an uncovered cart and had no winter coats. At least some of the Guardians on the visiting committee knew about the stocks, as did the chaplain – though not the length of time spent in them – and the dietary

reductions for incontinence; the only remedial measure taken, was to support the governor's defensive and belated complaint against brutal caning by the porter, who was prohibited from further physical chastisement. However, A'Court mustered 'all the inmates . . . in their separate wards', in the presence of many Guardians but without any workhouse officer, and put a variety of questions to them. Almost all were satisfied with their treatment, but perhaps the calibre of this interaction was revealed by the sole complainant – one of around 45 men – who said he would like more food, whereupon A'Court secured his 'honest' admittance that it was more than he ate out of it, 'the quaintness of manner' greeted by 'a hearty laugh' from the others.¹³⁴

Once the Board reconvened, it minuted its findings; surgeon Blatherwick was, on his own admission, guilty of 'great neglect' over the Droxford three. The governor had not 'used a sound discretion' over food deprivation and exceeded his authority concerning physical punishment. Guardians advanced their ignorance of the use of the stocks for such young lads, and agreed that the practice was 'most objectionable' not least on health grounds. They concluded by testifying to the overall 'humanity' of the governor and matron, and emphasised the response of the inmates. A'Court's formal report to the Commissioners – accompanied by the depositional evidence – in addition to supporting the Board's findings, lambasted Blatherwick for sanctioning the boys' removal 'to throw the burden . . . upon other parties'; privately his dismissal was recommended, together with a strong reprimand for the schoolmistress. The Chaplain, the Revd. Sir Henry Thompson, regularly walked unattended to any part of the building; he went unmentioned, as did the fact that the visiting committee was lackadaisical with the duty devolving on one member, occasionally accompanied by another – his brother. Also conveniently ignored was the Droxford Guardians' visits, and their apparent superficiality. Subsequently, the Chaplain twice wrote to A'Court, first in support of the governor, and secondly – once anticipating that 'some one would be sacrifice[d] . . . to public opinion . . . After an explosion such as has taken place at our workhouse' – in favour of the schoolmistress, Thompson's protégé. A'Court preserved the stocks as a 'precaution' in expectation that 'much will be made of the use of them' by New Poor-Law opponents in general, and particularly those on the rapidly approaching select committee, over which he was 'very anxious' in anticipation of his own appearance, now that two administrations in his jurisdiction were embraced by Walter. Finally, details of A'Court's investigation were leaked to the local press, with the result that this 'ugly business' was promiscuously generating 'severe animadversions . . . on the Guardians'.¹³⁵

On receipt of the documentation, the Commissioners followed their usual procedure of ruling on the evidence, and announcing a verdict, in this case, within a week – a week which included the first sitting of what was usually dubbed ‘Mr Walter’s Committee’.¹³⁶ The Droxford three were ‘too weak’ when removed from Fareham, where they had had inadequate medical attention; indeed, when they had needed it most, they had been punished. Dietary deprivation and the stocks for children of that age were ‘decidedly objectionable’ and illustrative of how usual punishments in schools, could ‘degenerate into abuse’ in workhouses. The Commission attached little blame to the schoolmistress’s conduct, as she was acting under the governor, whose censure by the Board was endorsed, together with their ruling on Blatherwick; if his ‘general performance’ saved him from dismissal, only future ‘greater vigilance’ – notably monitoring inmates’ ‘general . . . health’ and not waiting for formal referrals from the governor – would preserve him in post. However, the real reason for the non-dismissal of Blatherwick, was the power of the British Medical Association, which became rapidly apparent from its formation in 1836.¹³⁷

Although after their 28 February meeting the Droxford Board could anticipate that blame for the three lads issue would fall on Fareham, local opponents continued to exploit the relieving officer debacle, alleging that claimants would have starved if it were not for ‘private charity’. On 1 March the Union’s vice-chairman, Henry Wooldridge privately circulated incumbents asking them if they knew of any person suffering through not being ‘properly and punctually attended’ by any officer, or destitute persons saved from starvation only by philanthropic intervention. Of the twelve who responded, seven answered both questions in the negative. The Revd. Brock airily replied that while he was prepared to inform the Board, he would ‘decline any private correspondence’ – though he did respond to an official letter asking identical questions.¹³⁸ The younger Butler reported that the relieving officer had not visited all influenza cases, and named one destitute family. Rector Haygarth of Upham also knew of many cases of belated attendance by the medical officers, and named a further case of destitution. Hambledon’s curate claimed nobody became ‘in danger of starvation’ through a combination of Dr Bulbeck’s visiting without waiting for authorisation, and charitable aid, but added that many widow’s allowances were inadequate. The Revd. Scard said that the entire system ‘has not worked well’. Even one of those reporting in the negative, Rector Bayley of Westmeon, and Dean of Westminster, who made a few positive general statements too, including that Old Poor-Law ‘*administration[s] . . . were a canker on the vitals of the State*’, added that all incumbents ought to be

ex-officio Guardians with greater discretionary powers extended to the Boards. A'Court annotated selected replies and sent them all to Somerset House. Scard had '*always* opposed' the new law. No formal referrals had been received from Upham or Hambledon about the complaints made now. In Haygarth's named case, the mother of the Hayes family with six children was 'a very bad character', who had refused an offer of work for herself, and kept children at home who ought to be employed. As for Butler's example, the Green family, the father was working away as a railway navvy, leaving his wife to apply for outdoor relief, yet there was 'not a worse character in the Union', a view substantiated by A'Court by her alleged theft of a silver spoon, though he did not enlarge on any prosecution in this matter. Wooldridge's second circular, to the medical officers, asked only if their duties had been impeded since the relieving officers had been reduced; one said no, Lovekin seized the opportunity to denounce the Revd. Brock, while the Bulbecks, doubtlessly smarting over the elder's edited statement, did not reply, and later that month they were ousted after a lower tender from a newcomer. Although Wooldridge's initiative had elicited some useful empirical evidence, it hardly comprised a sound basis for the Droxford administration's defence, and the cases of neglect identified required investigation. Not one even of the satisfied clergymen offered further help in the Board's defensive cause, as exchanges between local press correspondents became increasingly ascerbic.¹³⁹

VII. Hampshire Witnesses and the Commons Select Committee

In anticipation of the select committee, the Commissioners through their assistants orchestrated the submission of pro-New Poor Law 'testimonies' from particularly enthusiastic Boards, which began to arrive at Somerset House in December 1836, where they were vetted before being forwarded to Home Secretary Russell. A long letter to him from Commissioner Lefevre on 23 February, the eve of Walter's motion, emphasised a number of positive points which these and other evidence would substantiate, the greatest of which were widespread and usually large poor-rate reductions, notably through cuts in allowances in-aid-of wages, with their allegedly complete eradication in East Kent, Berkshire, Oxfordshire, Gloucestershire and 'most' of Sussex, usually with the support of prohibitory orders; over much of East Anglia the same result had materialised through Boards' commitment without recourse to formal orders. Lefevre omitted to say that some of the orders in the southern counties identified, had been imposed. Many workhouses had few, if any,

able-bodied male inmates, thus firmly proving the efficacy of deterrence. However, the Commission was perplexed over exactly what Walter's attack would focus on, and although it found out on the morrow, Lefevre added that as an *ex-officio* member of the Board of Guardians in his home Union of Wokingham, Walter had attended a mere ten out of 79 meetings, and nine of them were in the earliest days when the Union's 'general arrangements' were finalised, and therefore absent when the 'real business . . . [was] transacted'. This intelligence, it was suggested, might be entrusted to a 'friend' in the Commons, and used as it duly was.¹⁴⁰

Walter's absences from both that Board's inaugural (5 August 1835) and its last meeting on 14 February 1837 went unmentioned, though Somerset House knew that Walter was but one of twelve eligible *ex-officios*, and that 'several . . . are not cordial supporters' of the Act. In July 1836 the then responsible assistant commissioner, Stevens, had urged the Commission against 'Contention with the Board . . . by all possible means', while at its 14 February meeting a motion to compose a 'testimonial' had passed, and if it sounded generally favourable to the new system, it also asserted exactly the opposite to what the Commissioners wanted to hear, namely the need for greater discretionary powers for individual Boards over workhouse dietary, and – most distressingly for the recipients – respecting relief to the able-bodied: in other words, the Wokingham Board supported outdoor relief to selected claimants in that category.¹⁴¹ This document's receipt was dishonestly minuted by Chadwick as supportive; however, in a subsequent comment in a formal return to the Commons, Wokingham was revealed as one of those Unions on which the prohibitory order had been imposed (May 1836), whereupon the Board assumed the discretionary powers it claimed to have negotiated, though on referral to the official 'correspondence . . . no trace is to be found of such communication'. Given Walter's attendance record, Wokingham's trajectory could not be legitimately attributed to him.¹⁴²

The select committee convened on 6 March, and Walter's first witnesses, from the very obstructive five-parish Petworth Union in West Sussex, were scheduled to appear on the 9th. In response to rumours that Walter and his allies were going to call individual paupers to give evidence, the Commissioners had asked them for witnesses' names so that their assistants could supply details, but were rebuffed. It was then decided – after consultations with Russell – that secretary Chadwick would attend every committee hearing, accompanied by the relevant assistant commissioner, each Union's Clerk with their minute and other books, in order to point out any inaccuracies and also to speedily orches-

trate the provision of evidence from official sources, which would be vital. From a governmental perspective, the wisdom of this counter-strategy soon paid dividends. Although there is little detail of the relationship between Walter and Hampshire anti-New Poor-Law activists, A'Court briefed the Commissioners personally on the younger Butler, just after he wrote to the local press on 13 March announcing his offer to 'vindicate' the evidence he had already supplied to Walter, before the committee. That body was occupied on five days between 9 and 20 March, and included interrogations of farmworkers. Walter's argument that he had 'closed' the Petworth case and wanted to move on to his Hampshire informants, was rejected by the committee, in order to examine the Clerk to the Westhampnett Union, Petworth's neighbour and dominated by the fiercely pro-New Poor-Law Duke of Richmond, in order to provide positive information about the Act's implementation by an enthusiastic administration in the same district as an antidote to the hostile account received from Petworth witnesses. Indeed, the responsible assistant, Hawley, was unable to identify a favourable witness from that Union, though his own evidence clearly revealed its Board's fierce resistance, which was soon underscored by a battery of copied correspondence he and Chadwick selected, and printed by the committee as a substantial appendix to its minutes. Hawley also penned a very long private letter to the committee chairman. After hearing the Westhampnett Clerk, the lawyer Raper – and one of Richmond's local political agents – Easter intervened.¹⁴³

After these initial sessions, Chadwick complained bitterly over pro-New Poor-Law committee-men's insufficiently rigorous questioning of hostile witnesses, while Walter's group unsuccessfully tried to get independent investigators sent to the localities.¹⁴⁴ Although it was subsequently claimed that 'lawyers and agents from London' descended on the Droxford Union in cahoots with the Butlers, Brock and the Bulbecks, 'to agitate the laborers', the sole known outsiders were Walter's solicitor, Rogers, and the Portsea Anglican clergymen, Dewdney, an excitable, rash, 'vain' yet inexperienced publicist, but unjustly ignored by historians of the anti-New Poor-Law movement. His latest 'outrageous letter' to the *Morning Herald*, published on 17 March, argued that poverty, not just destitution, warranted relief.¹⁴⁵ Later that month, both liased with the younger Butler and Brock, seeking empirical evidence of administrative failings, and more generally the harsh impact of the new system from those on the receiving end, by way of preparing evidence which they intended to give to the committee once it reconvened on 10 April. On the 6th Butler arranged a meeting at a Warnford inn, allegedly publicising it by placards, certainly by word of mouth, and

some plebeian emissaries were sent to other parishes. Butler interviewed small groups of attendees, having asked the landlord, a former overseer, to select farmworkers with sound reputations and exclude disreputable characters who might give unreliable evidence about their personal circumstances, family size and incomes, indebtedness, employment, living costs, gardens and allotments. Beer was supplied on his reverence's account. Subsequently he encouraged labourers from his own and adjacent parishes to call at his Soberton house, a tactic also used by Brock at Bishops Waltham for over a week. They intended to present the information collected as part of their evidence to the committee, and A'Court anticipated 'a vast number of labourers for examination as well'.¹⁴⁶

During these proceedings, the clergymen broached the idea of a mass application of labourers on behalf of their entire families for workhouse orders, though at this stage there was little plebeian enthusiasm for such a strategy designed to 'swamp' the institutions. Dewdney was the real instigator. Although the details are obscure, it was attempted on 2 May when around 45 applicants, a record number, attended the Board at its customary venue, a Droxford inn, allegedly 'laughing and talking outside'. If Butler calculated that this tactic might push farmers into paying higher wages, for which there was something of a local precedent, as we have seen, Brock more ambitiously hoped that it would expose to 'the Commissioners the inexpediency of their rule', and explode their fallacy that workhouse orders acted as a deterrent – operative '*in terrorem*' – issued in anticipation 'that the poor will not comply with' them.¹⁴⁷

This campaign, commencing in the immediate aftermath of the Fareham workhouse and Droxford relieving-officer scandals, and in the context of the intensifying anti-New Poor-Law movement and great expectations generated by the select committee enquiry, was responsible for a supposedly rapid transformation in Droxford Union farmworkers' attitudes according to *Guardians*, and other more affluent individuals including some clergymen. While there are ample indications that many from that social sector became complacent once original fears – that the new system would provoke fierce protest on a scale experienced during Swing – evaporated, they clearly had misinterpreted labourers' post-1834 subordinatory posturing as expressions of 'harmonious' community relations; now they detected 'sulkiness' and 'discontent' with even model employees complaining over inadequate wages. Despite his denials under hostile interrogation by committeemen, Butler appears to have publicly said that higher wages were an objective, generating 'considerable . . . excitement', one 'natural consequence', 'the labourers saying, "Mr. Butler is the man for us, he is going to do everything for us; I have

seen the Sun newspaper” – which carried detailed reports of each day’s committee hearing. Rumour had it that the new Droxford workhouse, presently under construction, was to be fired.¹⁴⁸

A’Court revealed symptoms of panic on realising he was ‘totally unacquainted with’ the ‘cases’ of many individuals now expected to be called; on 6 April he learned the names of those formally ‘summoned’ by Walter through the committee, but was relieved to hear the Union Clerk speak ‘very slightly’ of ‘most’ of them. Chairman Stares led a small group of Guardians to collate intelligence with the primary aim of character assassination, and if he recruited the enthusiastic Revd. Cockerton, the Guardians were clearly divided. Although Edward Wyatt gave evidence he pointedly refused to name workers who supplied him with details of current improved living standards, though once he was personally implicated in the furore over Harrison’s workhouse gruel, he returned from London between select committee meetings to interview some of those involved. The Guardians’ inquiries also aimed to expose those who had withheld key personal details from the clergymen. Finally, they aimed to recruit their own counter-witnesses from the labouring ranks, who would testify that as pre-1835 recipients of regular outdoor relief they were now ‘much better off’; some were identified, and although two went to London, there were strong implications that more were deterred by peer pressure. Wyatt equally emphatically told the committee that he had ‘nothing to do’ with the process of encouraging ‘fit’ labourers in Stares’ parlance to appear before the committee. In the event the committee got increasingly bogged down, and these two returned unheard – ostensibly in the interests of being with their families – but in expectation of returning. That call never came, but as we shall see, some of the details collected during this operation proved invaluable for what was essentially the Commission’s defence.¹⁴⁹

A’Court’s testimony was as central as his Petworth counterpart, Hawley’s had been. A’Court selected the best Hampshire witnesses on behalf of the Commissioners. In stark contrast to the preceding investigation into Petworth, witnesses who supported the New Poor Law were integral to the enquiry, especially Droxford Union chairman Stares and his deputy Wooldridge; so too was the experienced Old Poor-Law administrator and current Bishops Waltham workhouse master, Harrison. Somerset House bureaucrats were instructed to produce an ‘analysis’ of official correspondence with the Fareham and Droxford Unions, and the result was despatched directly to committee chairman Fazakerley.¹⁵⁰ Nineteen witnesses were called, on thirteen days between 10 April and 10 May, with some recalled once, and in Harrison’s case, thrice, usually to challenge subsequent claims of later witnesses. Walter’s included

Brock, the younger Butler, two labourers, Wild and Ford, and the former Droxford medical officer, Smith. As the enquiry progressed both sides summonsed additional witnesses, thereby prolonging proceedings, including the Revd. Cockerton, principally to testify to the destabilising impact of the Butler-Brock campaign, and the sole Droxford relieving officer, Thomas Hayden. The opponents subsequently added Dewdney, and another former medical officer, the younger Bulbeck. The adversarial nature of the enquiry, including interventions often intended to throw witnesses, together with questions designed to establish the same point from different witnesses, when coupled with the recall of some, had a convoluting effect on the investigation's trajectory, and gave it a repetitive element. Some 6896 questions were posed, of which 4184 were asked by Walter's group.

There can be no doubt that Fazakerley shared his intelligence supplied by the Commission with MPs belonging to the majority, and provided them with the wherewithal for incisive questioning; their strongest participants were another Whig, John P B Chichester, MP for Barnstaple, and two Tories, William Miles MP for East Somerset, and particularly Sir James Graham. Walter and Wakley were the dominant opponents. *The Times* claimed – certainly correctly – that pro-New Poor-Law witnesses were 'crammed' by Chadwick and the assistant commissioners; briefing was organic to some testimonies. Stares, and his deputy Wooldridge, performed impressively during long – and with Stares – recalled appearances. If their testimony also reflected some briefing from Chadwick, both revealed familiarity with utilitarian ideology together with a capacity to mobilise empirical evidence to underpin the case for the Act's successful application in reforming poor relief in their Union. Conversely, Fareham workhouse master Bourne was hung out to dry by all MPs.¹⁵¹

Walter's group aimed to challenge the efficacy of the new system generally, and to exploit the Bishops Walton and Fareham workhouse scandals, and especially the medical inadequacies revealed by the Droxford relieving officer issue. Exploiting the scandals was more problematic than it ostensibly appeared. The first, was over a year-old, and those implicated in the death of Mrs Shawyer had been dismissed. If the treatment of the three boys was emotive grist to their mill, by the time the committee considered it, the germane evidence was already committed to paper, the Commission had formally reported, identifying failures, resulting in official rebukes for the schoolmistress and especially the workhouse governor and the medical officer, together with an appropriate revision of institutional rules.¹⁵² All the written evidence was supplied to the committee, either on paper or later read out by A'Court or

other witnesses. Harrison claimed – unconvincingly – that the three boys' incontinence had been successfully addressed prior to their removal to Fareham, and also supplied graphic details of their condition on return. Bourne's performance was characterised by dignified humility, with only a couple of understandably evasive relapses over the precise details of disciplinary proceedings against him. A'Court candidly admitted that Bourne had had too much discretion, the use of stocks being one product, and explicitly blamed the lackadaisical visiting committee, but that had been addressed too.¹⁵³ Bourne was the only witness from Fareham, and though the former mainstay of the original workhouse visiting committee attended, he was not called.¹⁵⁴

The relieving officer issue proved more problematic, but here A'Court explained that the Board had recently twice postponed consideration of a second officer, claiming somewhat disingenuously that the Guardians did not wish to 'stifle inquiry' by a pre-emptive appointment while the committee was sitting, shortly after testifying that they believed that they could safely continue with one once the influenza epidemic was over: he exonerated himself by insisting that they nevertheless intended to appoint, in deferment to what he misrepresented as his 'recommendation from the first'. Although he went on to admit that Fareham had re-installed their second officer owing to influenza, this contradiction was not exploited by Walter's group.¹⁵⁵

Through the questioning of Harrison, and the complementary experiences of Old Poor-Law officials and present Guardians, Stares and Wooldrige, the committee's majority extracted comparative evidence of the new system's beneficial impact,¹⁵⁶ and ironically, the Revds. Butler and Brock had little option but to confirm at least some of these details, as did their two witnesses – Ford and Wild – from the ranks of the farmworkers. Poor rates had declined drastically,¹⁵⁷ while labourers' motivation was transformed. They sought work when unemployed, with especially young bachelors keen to accept positions wherever they could be found in the district, including those available by temporary migrations to railway construction sites. Demand for labour rose: unemployment fell significantly. Increased subordination to employers and hard work, including acceptance of that paid by the piece, enhanced productivity and was proof of labourers' commitment wherever possible to secure permanent employment.¹⁵⁸ They were also keen to get their children into employ to compensate for the loss of 'head money', and their wives too, to boost family income.¹⁵⁹ Deference replaced the threatening attitude behind demands for assistance experienced under the old law,¹⁶⁰ and the Tory Barneby in a rare intervention even managed to exact confirmation of delayed marriage in conformity with Malthusian prognostics.¹⁶¹

However, reliable answers to some key questions proved difficult. Did enhanced family earnings fully compensate for lost benefits? Were modest rises in adult male earnings of around thirteen per cent the simple corollary of farmers' savings on rate-bills being re-channelled, or were they a response to rising food prices? Did supposed declines in cottage rentals, and the increase in free or low-rent tied cottages, compensate for lost public assistance? What proportion of labourers secured allotments, or potato patches from their employers? In short, had plebeian living standards risen in conformity with much-publicised utilitarian theory? Had the erosion of publicly-organised work on parish roads, quarries and farms, had a deleterious impact on those workers remaining on the margins of the labour market, and dependent on casual labour? To what extent did those with repetitively deficient family incomes benefit from private charity? Graham repeatedly enquired whether the notorious new bastardy clauses had precipitated a decline in illegitimacy, or an increase in infanticide, the latter a constant refrain with critics? Finally, what had happened to the chronically sick, the disabled, and especially the elderly?

Only the last question received something approaching a definitive answer, and here several case histories which had been written up and given to the chairman, were used effectively through exploration in greater details during Stares' examination. There were relatively few in workhouse accommodation, because it cost more than outdoor relief; most lived independently or with family and friends, and received relief be it now in cash and kind. Although hostile witnesses came up with examples indicating specific hardships, the evidence suggested overall that the value of *de facto* pensions had not declined.¹⁶² Witnesses clashed over whether a general wage increase was owing to farmers' ability to afford it, or simply the orthodox (and usually non-timeous) response to pronounced rises in food prices: Wooldridge and Stares were adamant that the increase took place in November 1836, when wages were customarily reduced for the winter season, to compensate for the outdoor relief prohibition order, but the adequacy of that rise was challenged, together with whether casual workers received it.¹⁶³ In some parishes the unemployed were put to roadwork, be it in much reduced numbers, paid about a third less than those in permanent work for farmers, and subjected to close managerial control.¹⁶⁴ Children's earnings were often scanty, exemplified by the three-pence per ton for stone-picking: work was commonly short-term, and if more boys worked with their fathers, girls were sometimes set by waywardens to removing stones on farmland, and were paid by the parish not the benefiting farmer, representing a continued Old Poor-Law abuse.¹⁶⁵ Mothers secured a variety of odd-jobs,

while some did cleaning and washed clothes on a regular basis, but nobody could calculate with any accuracy how much these pickings contributed to family incomes.¹⁶⁶ One untypical village, West Meon had a plethora of charitable organisations – ‘on a most munificent scale’ – run by philanthropists, with clubs for coal, clothes, and medical aid; Rector Bailey supplied sixpences for Curate Cockerton to give to the deserving in need, and he also invited folk from that category to call for basins of soup when necessary. In other communities individuals gave occasional support to deserving neighbours, often food – “throwing open the kitchen” in local parlance.¹⁶⁷

The termination of public assistance with rents impacted hard on many, but certainly not all farmworkers; for perhaps a majority rents became a major item of expenditure, and a source of increased indebtedness. But a proportion of those petty speculative cottage proprietors whom we encountered while rents were paid or at least guaranteed by vestries, on their withdrawal ceased expanding their portfolios. Some of the bigger farmers erected a few cottages, but they proved but a partial compensation, and the supply remained unequal to demand, with the result that rents fell little, if at all. This was contested,¹⁶⁸ but Stares was adamant that they remained ‘much too high’, though again some farmers reduced their rents, and in the main labouring cottagers with a legal settlement in their parish of residence – but not those domiciled without – were excused rates. The non-settled were further impoverished when their ‘home’ vestries were stopped from their old practice of paying the rates to host parishes. Under the new Parochial Assessment Act, all property had to be rated, illegalising the customary practice of ignoring many cottages. Revaluations remained politically explosive and usually costly, as later events were to reveal. Critics attacked the supervisory powers accruing to the Commissioners and even some supporters, among them vice-chairman Wooldridge lambasted the failure to make the owners of lowly cottages responsible for the rate rather than tenants.¹⁶⁹

Harrison confirmed that locals believed that the Commissioners had directed the cessation of outdoor relief for illegitimate children, resulting in its continued payment to only one from eleven original recipients. Many fathers subjected to maintenance orders simply stopped payments, after being told that mothers should ‘make [voluntary] terms with them’. Men who had married the mothers of bastards found that their weekly payments of 1/6 per child promptly ceased. But witnesses differed over bastardy rates; Harrison believed that the new arrangements whereby mothers and their offspring were offered only the workhouse had diminished rates, and strongly supported Graham’s suggestion that previously some women had borne several bastards to engineer ‘quite an income

for her'. Guardians claimed a significant reduction in Bishops Waltham and Meonstoke, a view confirmed by former medical-officer Smith, who also knew of no cases of infanticide. Butler said illegitimacy rates had increased in Soberton and Hambledon, but admitted this might represent a blip, and carefully added – uncharacteristically – that he did not hold the New Poor Law responsible.¹⁷⁰

Despite various witnesses juxtaposition of parish and privately-owned land, it is clear that more from the latter category had been devoted to allotments, though their provision was far from universal. Butler 'thought' that the system extended to Droxford parish, only to be contradicted by Stares. The overwhelming majority of larger farmers remained 'very much opposed'. The vigorously pro-allotment Wyatt, who in the early thirties as a prominent vestryman promoted parish allotments at Bishops Waltham, made more of his land available though he significantly restricted these to a quarter acre. Two or three clergymen hired land – and would have rented more but for farmers' refusals – for sub-letting to men with large families, who were also the beneficiaries of Wyatt's extra quarter acres; all were principally concerned to off-set the impact of this category's loss of allowances in-aid, and allottees confirmed that without they 'could not have subsisted' over the 1836-7 winter. Henry Wooldridge, a new provider, stated that his tenants mainly grew potatoes consumed by their families and pigs, from which came manure with more scavenged from the roads. Such heavy fertilisation exceeded levels on normally-farmed land, and Wooldridge exuded satisfaction – in common with providers everywhere – 'to see' allottees 'in the evenings at work'. However, Hambledon's parish tenants were more generously treated, with between a quarter and one and a half acres dependent on family size, but here as in all that minority of Droxford parishes in which allotments were available, none could satisfy demand. Rents varied from one to two pounds the acre, though Butler had never had a defaulter. Conversely, at West Meon, heavy pressure from the clergy resulted only in farmers' allocations of potato grounds, which Dr Burchardt correctly insists cannot be classed as allotments, because the corners of fields used and manured, changed annually commensurately with crop rotations. The only beneficiaries were labourers in permanent employment, and for this fortunate group further compensation came in the form of employers' provision of piglets.¹⁷¹

Brock and Butler succeeded in stressing the marked increase in plebeian indebtedness, principally to shopkeepers, who anticipating over-exposure, were refusing further credit, evidence confirmed by the two labourers' testimony.¹⁷² Butler especially also emphasised dietary deficiencies, increasing dependence on bread and potatoes, with little or

irregular meat, and trifling expenditure on tea, sugar and milk. Farm-worker Wild told the committee that his family economised by substituting potatoes for bread, despite which he 'had known a hungry belly this winter than I ever knew' – owing to ensuring his seven children had sufficient food – and that the Union doctor diagnosed malnutrition as the cause of occasional fainting.¹⁷³ The former medical officer Bulbeck confirmed that while in post, including the influenza epidemic, that first-rate labourers with families complained of inadequate diet owing to insufficient earnings, aggravated in the case of the second rate, and especially the casually employed, who experienced 'great distress'.¹⁷⁴ Butler and Brock asserted that only charitable neighbours preserved some from starvation.¹⁷⁵ In this context, once influenza struck the deficiencies engendered by the single relieving officer were stark, though when the Union Clerk received details of some examples, the Board's enquiry concluded that not one revealed the neglect alleged, a finding vigorously advanced to the select committee in continued defence of the decision by Guardian witnesses.¹⁷⁶

Between them, Butler, Brock and Walter's group made six major, compounded by lesser, mistakes. First, Butler especially was forced to admit his ignorance of respectively the administrative profile, and the legal provisions of old and new laws. Of the former he was 'sorry to say that in my younger days, I did not attend sufficiently to the state of the poor'. Of the latter – and here he was joined by Brock – he was unaware that parish officers and magistrates currently could order urgent relief in emergencies, and ignorant of the Droxford Board's specific instructions to medical officers to act on their own initiative in cases of sickness, without waiting for referrals from the relieving officer.¹⁷⁷ Secondly, what appeared to be copious detail about individual families, was rendered less effective by careless collection, doubtlessly due to haste, but initially delivered with great confidence and with radical asides, exemplified by Butler's assertion that the aged poor were as entitled to 'pensions . . . in the same way as men in the higher walks of life have pensions for not more important services' to their country.¹⁷⁸ Moreover, they repeatedly were unable to confirm important aspects, including the numbers, ages and gender of children in large families, and their earnings, and in the case of labourer Leman and his wife, the couple 'were very much hurt in consequence of their being named by Mr. Brock as being in distress'; although some improvement can be detected in their reverences' presentation of evidence, their testimony was further compromised when the committee exuded impatience when confronted with further long lists of 'cases', which they had already experienced during the Petworth hearings.¹⁷⁹

Thirdly, their informants often concealed germane facts, among them the labourer earning a weekly 7/6 whose three boys working on the roads went unmentioned. Equally seriously, Lenman's details given to Butler omitted the additional income, free house and fuel derived from his wife's management of his employer's dairy, and children's occasional earnings, an example of intelligence derived through Stares' investigations and given to Walter's opponents on the committee. That enabled them to seriously embarrass Butler and undermine the validity of his testimony, despite the probability that Leman had deliberately misled Butler in the first place.¹⁸⁰

Fourthly, Walter's addition of the younger Bulbeck, who had been in post during the influenza, but had lost his contract to an incomer, was a disaster. Although he claimed to know about agriculture, only the chairman's vigorous questioning forced an admission of a significant fall in the unemployed, and that was the direct effect of the Act, in Bulbeck's own words 'By throwing... [labourers] more upon their own resources'. He persisted in asserting that most ratepayers were opposed to the Board's strict policies, only to be confronted with the fact that most Guardians had been re-elected unopposed. He was finally demolished by a series of hostile questions from Fazakerley and Graham. Having agreed that he 'never had any hostility to the new law' – incredibly boasting that 'no man in Hampshire has done more than I to forward it' – Bulbeck was then pushed into admitting that between them, he, his brother and father, had all lost their Union posts, and with them an annual income of £160, and when that failed to satisfy his interrogators upped that sum to nearly £200, whereby generating the correct impression that lost earnings were the real cause of his testimony. Luckily, nobody picked up on the fact that his own father, literally days before the Bulbecks lost their contract, had confirmed to the Guardians that he knew of no cases of suffering claimants at Hambledon owing to the relieving officer's absence.¹⁸¹

Fifthly, the decision against insisting on the examination of the absentee chairman of the Fareham workhouse visiting committee, or one of the two brothers who called-in on occasion, is incomprehensible. Finally, in an attempt to pre-empt opponents' challenges to individual workers' characters, at the outset Butler suggested with 'great confidence' that MPs were 'not aware how... very uncommon strict honesty is among the lowest classes'. Despite evidence of a commonly held perception that labourers were compelled to thief to survive – dubbed 'steal or starve' by Guardians themselves¹⁸² – these clergymen reiterated the point, Butler asserting that in 'many cases, people are driven to... theft by poverty'. He additionally argued that the 'scrutinizing inquiry' by his

local opponents was certain to 'rake up every little thing' to discredit those whose individual cases were advanced, but when that inevitably happened his reverence was visibly wrong-footed.¹⁸³ Committee chairman Fazakerley accused labourer Benjamin Wild of being sacked by a farmer for abusive language from Wild and his wife, questions which Wild tried unconvincingly to evade. Butler knew that another of his witnesses, labourer Green or at least his wife, had a poor character, and after another committee member revealed details, Butler was forced to send him and others back from London without giving evidence.¹⁸⁴ Only one labourer, in addition to Wild, Richard Ford, testified, and if his character went unchallenged, they appeared at the end of a long hearing. Their evidence was not as dramatic as both sides expected, although they were convincing over their low living standards and particularly their families' depleted diets, scanty worn-out furniture, threadbare clothing and bedding. The farmworkers identified by A'Court were not in the event called possibly because they may have confirmed their neighbours' picture of domestic realities, despite cramming. During these hearings A'Court privately arranged for another investigation into individual farmworkers' diets, by relieving officer Longford of the Fordingbridge Union. He visited labourers' dwellings at meal times to uncover the 'real situation' of farmworkers' families and reported dietary reflecting 'real deprivation', illustrated by dinners comprised 'Bread and Potatoes', breakfasts of bread soaked in hot water with a little salt, and the classic 'usual beverage . . . water with a burnt crust in it'. Longford also confirmed that parents repeatedly fasted in order to feed their children, though – conversely – the little meat obtained was all consumed by fathers. That evidence was quietly filed away.¹⁸⁵

After the Hampshire investigations, the committee interviewed more witnesses from Sussex, before proceeding to examine the very different circumstances where the new system had been implemented in a mixed agrarian-manufacturing district in Wiltshire, and in the industrial City of Nottingham. The latter initiative became imperative once militant opposition escalated in the North, with critics arguing that whatever the appropriateness of the 1834 Act for welfare reform in agricultural regions, it was ill-conceived for industrial districts vulnerable to economic slumps and mass under- and unemployment. These later stages of the committee's activities coincided with William IV's protracted fatal illness, and his death on 20 June precipitated an automatic general election and abruptly guillotined the Wiltshire and Nottingham hearings. Political circumstances – namely unfinished business on a delicate and controversial topic – dictated that the enquiry be recommenced once the new parliament convened, but pragmatism also dictated an interim

report from the outgoing committee. At the end of the Hampshire hearings, some close observers detected that Walter's group appeared 'heartily sick of the inquiry', soon ostensibly confirmed by Harvey's resignation from the committee, and further testified by the group's denunciation of the proceedings of this 'unparalleled', unbalanced investigation, during a Commons debate on 16 June; Somerset House's well-resourced 'perfect . . . machinery' had been deployed against Walter's minority group's 'complete . . . helplessness', symbolised by dependency on their own money. Indeed, a sympathetic leader in *The Times* claimed that the majority of committee-men had succumbed to the Commissioners' 'dictation . . . in a shuffling under-hand manner'. Paradoxically they feared the committee's report recommending greater autonomy for Boards of Guardians over outdoor relief, which would seriously weaken the Commission's powers, and with it terminate prohibitory orders.¹⁸⁶

Rather than attribute these contrasting interpretations to understandable frustration on the opponents' side, and pessimism on the Commissioners' part, we might attempt to evaluate the performance of each side of the committee, focusing on the Hampshire hearings, as in most aspects – and on many topics – these exhibited similarities to the other localities. No less than eleven witnesses, answered hundreds of questions on what became something of a Droxford saga on the gruel-soup issue. This attention did not reflect pedantry; nor could the incredible detail entered into be written-off as nitpicking. Workhouses engendered contemporary emotions, with dietary important on two principal grounds. First, were they inadequate and therefore a 'cruelty' inflicted on the poor? Secondly – and inherently contradictorily – was this an accurate reflection of their 'less eligibility' role in the lexicon of New Poor-Law supporters? That attempted to be imposed by governor Harrison was based on the Commission's model number 1 diet, and the opponents proved that inmates refused to consume salty gruel and puddings made with skimmed fat – described as 'scum' – and, it will be recalled, a topic of hostile conversation in the district. Stares confirmed that the workhouse diet was 'Not so solid' as that affordable by 'an able-bodied man in his own cottage'. His colleague Wyatt, agreed on one occasion, before contradicting himself to claim the exact opposite, partly based on the lack of meat consumed in independent labourers' families.¹⁸⁷

Two former Droxford medical officers, both of whom previously were doctors contracted by individual parishes, agreed that medical aid was better under the New than the Old Poor Law, though this was compromised badly during the influenza outbreak, and had failed to save Hannah Shawyer's life and appropriately treat the three little lads, even when institutionalised.¹⁸⁸ Some contemporary views that the committee's pro-

ceedings became 'bogged down' in their detail, have been endorsed by one historian who writes of presumably majority members being sucked into a 'sceptical investigation of abuses in a few unions'.¹⁸⁹ In reality, this was an inevitable consequence of its adversarial nature. It was difficult for the minority group to calculate when to eschew pursuit of some details, and it is a moot point whether their apparent minor failings derived from decisions – or oversights – among them the exploitation of the contradictions between Droxford's dogged persistence with one relieving officer and Fareham's speedy reversal of its parallel decision.

During the hearings, MPs on both sides continually resorted to leading questions. For example, Walter asked Brock over claimants' urgent applications to parochial officials in the absence of relieving officers, whether such 'methods . . . [were] circuitous, vexatious, and calculated to deprive the sufferer of the relief he wants', and elicited an affirmative reply using some of the questioner's terminology. Sir James Graham inquired of Stares whether a clergyman informing labourers that increased wages were being campaigned for 'would . . . create hopes . . . which would cause discontent until they were satisfied'? In response to Stares' short answer that such would be the 'natural consequence', Graham continued, 'Especially coming from a clergyman?', Stares replying 'Yes; they expect a good deal from clergymen'.¹⁹⁰ Walter's group asserted that their opponents on the committee adopted the 'worst style of over-zealous and not very mannerly advocates', namely those 'who browbeats and . . . bullies' witnesses. Indeed, Graham was 'really mistaken by one of the [educated] witnesses . . . as counsel for the Poor Law Commission'. Both Butler and Brock came under particularly heavy questioning as to their campaigning, and the former was also quizzed on the ethics of extending his activity into other parishes without even informing their resident clergymen. Butler repeatedly evaded questions about the workhouse swamping tactic, and only avoided a lie by adding to a denial, 'I would not swear that I did not' advise it. Brock received some nineteen questions from Graham before half admitting advising mass applications, and only confirmed the 'swamping' strategy after a further forty, when an exasperated ally interrupted by firing-in a leading question using that word. Brock went on to deny any intent to generate plebeian 'dissatisfaction'. Dewdney's fiery character, and his intervention in a locality some miles from his ministry, rendered him vulnerable to being made 'an example of' by majority members, resulting in a 'tussle' with the chairman, who reminded his reverence that two Anglican bishops were among the architects of the 1834 Act, to which he riposted superbly that infallibility did not derive from their office.¹⁹¹

Ironically, Walter's opponents made similar criticisms of the minor-

ity's conduct. According to a substantial statement drafted under the Duke of Richmond's auspices, and particularly concerned to defend the evidence given by pro-New Poor-Law witnesses from the Westhampnett Union, the Duke was painfully surprised by

The temper with which the Inquiry was carried up by the opponents . . . there was a fixed determination to treat with marked contempt those [favourable] . . . Witnesses . . . to endeavour to accomplish by ridicule and misrepresentation what the Evidence adduced in opposition to us altogether failed in proving a necessity for.¹⁹²

In some respects, Walter's group were more honourably treated than their protests implied; Somerset House's 'analysis' of official correspondence, sent to the chairman, was made available, and if its content was as to be expected, loaded against them, they were thereby enabled to anticipate topics that the Commission's supporters would exploit.¹⁹³ Moreover, they won the crucial argument over publicity; at its fourth hearing of the Petworth witnesses – 17 March – the committee voted narrowly in favour of publishing its minutes of evidence on the same day, in Walter's view a 'valuable concession' achieved by 'firmness, discretion, and perseverance' with the issue splitting the majority. In fact it constituted a public relations triumph for Walter.¹⁹⁴

Despite this advantage, the minority were less effective interrogators than leading members of the majority, exemplified by Walter's failure to exploit the fact that the Droxford clergy's replies to the vice-chairman's unofficial circular revealed more criticism of the new system than the latter postulated. Nor did the minority seek to establish what their articulate witnesses, especially Butler and Brock, advocated by way of change to the system they denounced. If they were deterred by the fact that both opposed many Old Poor-Law practices, majority members elicited this information. The essence of these clergymen's case was that no discrimination between deserving and undeserving able-bodied claimants was common to both the old and new laws; the undeserving benefited under the former, while the deserving were penalised by the latter. The poor as an entity were worse off under the New, leaving Butler to wearily insist that 'something must be done for the able-bodied labourers'.¹⁹⁵ If these characteristics probably underlay some observers' perceptions that Walter's group were losing their enthusiasm, it encouraged members of the majority to elicit evidence from 'properly directed' witnesses favourable to the Commissioners' future objectives – a strategy agreed between the Commission and the Home Secretary. It was exemplified by Scrope's seizure on Wyatt's admittance that parish officers used their continued autonomy over the highways to put the unemployed to

roadwork – a minor feature in Droxford and Fareham, but a major one elsewhere¹⁹⁶ – to secure his agreement that the control of roads should be put under Union Boards, which was already high on Somerset House's agenda for further legislative intervention.¹⁹⁷ However, given this plethora of complexity, it is surely misleadingly simplistic to write-off Walter's group's performance as a 'waste[fully] . . . long investigation of alleged abuses where the opposition had not even bothered to check its facts beforehand', as does Professor Edsall.¹⁹⁸

The committee interviewed its last witness on 28 June, and proceeded to consider its report. Walter – in the curious if fatalistic absence of his allies – unsuccessfully advanced a number of recommendations, including making incumbents *ex officio* Guardians, restoration of all magisterial powers over relief to the aged, and most critical of all, giving Boards discretion over outdoor relief. The report, expeditiously published on 5 July, categorically concluded that the Commission had exercised a 'great discretion. A more difficult task could hardly have devolved on any department of government'. However, it expressed surprise that the key Fareham workhouse officials, the master, the schoolmistress and the doctor, had not been dismissed; both Boards and the Commission itself should vigilantly supervise workhouses,¹⁹⁹ and it criticised the magistrates' virtual boycott of the Droxford Board. It argued that child inmates should not be punished by dietary deprivations. It accepted that influenza-induced problems over medical relief were aggravated by inadequate knowledge of the powers of other officials to order urgent assistance, which should be addressed. Evidence from Droxford and Sussex had revealed that in agricultural districts the 1834 Act had reduced poor-rates, thereby improving farmers' economic equilibrium, though it failed to pronounce whether visibly more buoyant demand for labour at somewhat higher wages fully compensated for the loss of allowances in-aid, but it was satisfied that prospects of large families' expensive incarceration in workhouses served to push farmers into various modes of increasing such families' incomes. The committee was concerned over (non-Hampshire) locations confining relief for widows with several children under working age to workhouses,²⁰⁰ and that able-bodied labourers with large numbers of the same category of offspring were experiencing difficulties in securing adequate food. The committee asked the Commissioners to review their policy 'in districts where employment should not be readily obtained' to both categories of claimants, though in the latter only towards those families whose parents had married before the passage of the 1834 Act in August. The logic here was simple, though unstated; utilitarian orthodoxy decreed that as the Old Poor Law had encouraged early marriage and with it commensurately large families, the New would

operate to delay marriage and with it limit the numbers of children. People marrying before August 1834 should not be penalised; those who married subsequently would be aware of new realities. Indeed Graham's allies Barneby and Miles elicited from labourer Ford, that if he did not have a wife and six children to support, he could live on his present earnings; pressed, he agreed that he would not have married at nineteen if he had had no prospect of *de facto* child allowances, an admission somewhat compromised by confiding that 'I had got into trouble and I married to get out'. The *implication* was that outdoor relief might be safely reintroduced to able-bodied males married before the Act's passage as an interim measure, which would be naturally extinguished within a short period.²⁰¹

VIII. Changing Contexts: the Beleaguered Poor Law Commission, July 1837-41

Home Secretary Russell ordered the Commission to address these two issues. Ironically, under pressure from Chadwick, the Commissioners were considering extending outdoor relief prohibition orders to able-bodied women, and some were already in force where requested by more aggressive Boards;²⁰² they were the logical next stage in the gradual implementation of the Act. The Commissioners – again on Russell's instructions – referred the select committee's queries to their assistants; almost all were horrified at the suggestion turning on dates of marriage criteria: if implemented, it would prove the thin end of a wedge reversing what had been achieved. The committee's protracted investigation had already encouraged resistance by Boards, sometimes amounting to open defiance of the assistants; very few new outdoor relief prohibitory orders were issued while the committee sat, and a handful were suspended after representations by grandees.²⁰³ In its annual report published very shortly after the committee's, the Commission dishonestly welcomed the government's proposed reconstitution of the committee, and if it tactfully eschewed 'any . . . commentary . . . observations' on the MPs' verdict, and promised to 'carefully' investigate the two issues, the defence of the Somerset House edifice commenced simultaneously. The 'testimonies' were listed and their 'emphatic declarations' cited at considerable length, while the copious statistical tables for each Union revealed huge falls in poor-law expenditure achieved, especially in the predominantly rural South. The successes of prohibitory orders, despite a wet autumn and the heavy winter snowfalls, were emphasised, and if it was admitted that some relaxations of the rule had been made, these were allegedly much fewer than anticipated and transient. Those Unions

which had responded to lay-offs with workhouse orders, found that hardly any recipients became inmates, thus proving the efficacy of deterrence for claimants, and they might have explicitly said rather than implied it, for ratepayers too. If these claims were conditioned by optimism and driven by propaganda, that respecting the Commissioners' pleasure that the influenza epidemic had not exposed any weaknesses in the new system, despite the heavy pressure on medical officers, was pure fiction.²⁰⁴

In fact the select committee's reconstitution was an almost unmitigated medium-term disaster for the Commission. It was bitterly divided over extending prohibitory orders to able-bodied women, with some exceptions, among them destitute women in the first six months of widowhood, and the temporary provision of *de facto* outdoor relief to able-bodied men with large families in the form of the admission into workhouses of one or more children; the latter would require the Commissioners' *prior* consent in every individual case. These issues undermined the confidence of the assistants in the field. A'Court was one who categorically told his superiors that there was 'no hope' of getting any of his Unions to voluntarily implement it with respect to women, and if imposed, it would precipitate mass resignations 'of our most valuable Guardians', while sparking 'so alarming an excitement as to endanger the Work house system altogether'. These revised prohibitory orders were to be embraced in a general order, needing the Home Secretary's authorisation – and to date an eschewed option – to be issued to all Unions with existing orders. Determined behind-the-scenes lobbying by Chadwick, replete with a brilliant – if customarily verbose – missive to Russell, persuaded him that its issue would be illegal.²⁰⁵

The Commissioners' proposals in high political terms, represented a clever compromise, but at the populist level it could have only stimulated opponents' foci on workhouses. As it was the revelations about the Fareham and Bishops Waltham workhouses – unambiguously under the supervision of the Commissioners and the only two investigated by the committee in 1837 – were partly responsible for opponents everywhere homing-in particularly on this linchpin of the new system, which was reflected in the numbers of workhouse scandals uncovered during their intense campaigning over the following twelve months and beyond. Knowledge of the committee's further investigation encouraged opponents to publicise every scandal, however minor, and more were invented; either way, the Commissioners and their assistants were forced to mount scores of time-consuming and wearing investigations. The Revd. Dewdney remained active in a newly-formed 'anti-poor law association' in Portsmouth, while various opponents in the county – including

a relieving officer – were in contact with Earl Stanhope who rapidly became their leading spokesman in the upper House. Indeed, such was the explosion of scandal-mongering, that the government set up a Lords select committee in 1838 solely to rigorously investigate these claims. Their report had no difficulty in rubbing the unchecked stories forming the substance of that avid campaigner, Parson Bull's claims, and challenging other publicists' details, but some issues were visibly ducked; the evidence given on the deficiency of the workhouse diet and incompetent medical relief in the Bridgewater Union, to which the committee devoted no less than fifteen of its 28 meetings, generated an irrevocable division and no 'resolutions' eventuated.²⁰⁶ The members' offer to reconvene in the next Session was never taken up, not least because definitive outcomes of even searching investigations of scandals – and their lordships revealed patience and incisiveness – could only serve to reinforce opponents' perceptions of the vulnerability, notably of workhouses, which was played out repeatedly in the years leading to Andover.

From the day of Russell's announcement, the prospect of a further Commons enquiry had stimulated public expectations of at least ameliorative amendments to the 1834 Act, which also served to further encourage recalcitrant Unions. Moreover, following the 1837 general election, parliament convened in the autumn, and the assistant commissioners believed this unusual timing would provide an immediate dangerous focus for opponents; as one assistant exclaimed, the autumnal period was 'more grievous from Parliament sitting . . . to encourage the disaffected'. Thereafter, customary parliamentary scheduling would extend these uncertainties well into 1838. Another assistant commissioner anticipated that he would become 'enviored in a perpetual ocean of difficulties & trials' of strength with Boards over the 1837-8 winter. Hawley fulminated against 'This temporizing policy . . . so unfairly forced upon us' long before the committee even reconvened, while a colleague opined that the process had inflicted 'infinite harm' two days after its interrogation of witnesses began in February. If the Steyning Board merely petitioned for discretionary powers over claims from fathers of large families, one of its most obstructive counterparts, Hambleton in west Surrey, whose 'factious' Board's campaign against its prohibitory order commenced in September 1837, soon introduced a scale of flour allowances for able-bodied fathers of large families, applicable only to children born before August 1834. In April 1838 it minuted its somewhat premature view that the committee was 'about to make a final report, and . . . the general impression now prevalent' was that it would recommend 'discriminatory powers' to Boards over the relief of the able-bodied, a view personally communicated by some opportunistic MPs to

Guardians, which greatly inflamed assistants' fears that resistance would soon constitute the 'death blow to the [New] Poor Law'.²⁰⁷

In the event the committee's 48 days of hearings extended from February to July 1838; one major cause derived from John Fielden, MP for Oldham, who took over Walter's mantle after he decided not to contest his Berkshire seat in 1837. Fielden sent agents into several Unions, notably Ampthill in Bedfordshire, to collect evidence of individuals' great hardships, which intensified the pressure on Somerset House where the 'correspondence is now so multifarious, that it is impossible to recollect with accuracy, so as to meet . . . [MPs'] questions without preparation'. The Commission found itself in the 'embarrassed' position of having to publish its 1838 annual report before the committee's was finalised. Embarrassed or not, the Commissioners latched on to the fact that the committee, concerned over allegations that men with large young families were suffering seriously, had required a comprehensive list of prohibitory orders issued, relaxations and the performance of Unions without them – a task that took four and a half months – to pre-emptively report on that situation. It therefore categorically stated that assisting them necessitated the re-introduction of a 'scale system' which would depress wages and eradicate the demarcation between 'pauperism and independence'. Ironically, the committee's report was much more favourable than the Commissioners expected, though they had very carefully orchestrated evidence from several assistants, parts of which read like a shopping list of Somerset House demands for additional powers. The report unequivocally affirmed that the New Poor Law was applicable to manufacturing regions, not least owing to the introduction of the outdoor labour test for the unemployed when workhouses were full, and critically re-affirmed that relief to the able-bodied of *both sexes* was 'best administered in the workhouse'. The claims of severe distress by no less than forty Bedfordshire labourers were unfounded because they had misrepresented their situations generally to Fielden's investigators, especially women and children's earnings in the buoyant straw-plaiting domestic industry.²⁰⁸ Great hardships were found only in isolated cases, exemplified by the denial of outdoor relief to an Ampthill wife while her husband served a prison term. The bastardy clauses were supported with the rider that a clause should be added 'inflicting some punishment for the crime of seduction' – namely on men. Some medical districts were too large; it also recommended that in rural areas no relieving officer's district should exceed between five and six thousand inhabitants, thus echoing Droxford opponents' complaint. All claimants should have the right to personally make their case before Boards, and the committee very strongly recommended private allotment provisions, no doubt

infuriating Chadwick. Not only was the Commission's role indispensable, on no occasion had its powers been abused; they needed strengthening notably to end all current ambiguities over the relationship between it and Gilbert Unions and Local Act administrations, all of which should be abolished.²⁰⁹

Moreover many other factors were coming into play from the summer of 1838. If the industrial depression deepened further, rising food prices following the low-yielding 1838 wheat harvest aggravated existing problems for the rural poor. In the main, tight-fisted farmers resisted a commensurate increase of their workers' wages, and the Commissioners came under considerable pressure to use 'our influence' to secure them. Protesting that that was 'beyond our province', they were only too aware that famine conditions in the mid-1790s had vastly inflated resort to allowances in-aid-of farmworkers' wages as utilitarians had relentlessly emphasised ever since, and the Commission was now determined to resist a feared repetition. Wage increases or resort to allowances would 'aggravate . . . the scarcity and the ultimate amount of suffering': 'prudence' dictated that shortfalls in the supply of wheat should be countered by resort to 'other grains or wholesome substances as substitutes', the infamously unpopular policy adopted by Pitt during the wartime famines. Over 1838-9 Somerset House relentlessly reiterated this solution in its correspondence with Boards of Guardians whenever opportunity presented itself.²¹⁰

This propagandist initiative also fell on deaf ears. In late 1838, a number of southern Unions, again tried to resort to allowances in-aid-of wages; there was a 'natural limit to the price of labour' which if exceeded 'would depress farming Profits so much as to drive Capital from the land', opined the Havant Board, where farmworkers received an average twelve shillings weekly, the highest-paid in Hampshire. The solution piloted through by chairman Barton was a sliding scale based on bread prices, under which fathers of more than three children would be entitled to payments in kind. This was precisely what the Commissioners feared most, reflected in their resort to yet another long 'doctrinaire letter', replete with the 'reminder' that the 'imperfect views during the . . . [wheat] scarcity of 1795' had precipitated the allowance system which 'almost destroyed the natural connection between masters and servants, and threatened the social order'. Told to abandon their scheme, the Havant Guardians rebelliously replied that they were 'intelligent Agents . . . with their own convictions of what is right and expedient', and were not going to be 'blind and passive agents of a superior Power'. Barton copied the correspondence to the *Hampshire Telegraph*, and added that only the intended payments would save large families

'from *perishing by hunger*'. However, his fracture of the normal privacy of rural boardrooms created an oppositional faction, which A'Court exploited to threaten an imminent prohibitory order, which served to effect a retreat.²¹¹

A'Court had a very different adversary in the rapacious John Benett, the long-serving Wiltshire MP where wages hovered between seven and nine shillings; he too claimed that farmers in the Tisbury Union could not afford to pay 'under any circumstance' wages adequate to the support of 'above 3 children', and had spearheaded voluntary private-rate schemes to finance allowances in-aid. Not only was A'Court powerless to prevent such resort, but he was concerned that as so 'many . . . advocate the head money system', this might be expressed psephologically in the forthcoming annual elections for Guardians.²¹²

One of the Commissioners' reproving letters to Fareham was lithographed and enclosed with responses to other resistant Boards,²¹³ a procedure which also reflects the scale of recalcitrance displayed by rural authorities at this juncture.²¹⁴ A'Court nevertheless remained adamant that wage rises were 'absolutely necessary' owing to 'very serious' corn-price increases, and was horrified when Benett's view typified that of many landowners; 'little could be expected from the farmers' unless propelled by their landlords. For labourers, he asserted, the 'true cause' of their sufferings attributed to the New Poor Law, was the 'parsimonious conduct of their employers'. If he tried to pressurise the gentry, thereby not 'keep[ing] aloof' as he projected, his anger and frustration understandably provoked his resort to an uncustomary acidic comment that 'the Poor L C must in no way be mixed up in the real grievances of the labourers'.²¹⁵

Widespread resistance also coincided with the Chartist offensive. Ironically, southern Chartism partly developed from renewed resort to trade unionism by farmworkers in East Dorset – embraced by A'Court's enlarged district – over the summer of 1838, focusing on wage increases, centred on the Tolpuddle district, and directly involving some of the Martyrs just returned from Australia under their 1836 pardon. He repeatedly referred to them as the 'Dorchester rioters' when reporting trade union delegations over the Hampshire border; he genuinely feared that the Tolpuddle movement might penetrate the county, though by the end of 1838 these were unambiguous Chartist missions. It would be unlikely if there was no response in some of those countryside communities politicised in the early thirties, though the evidence is slight. Titchfield hosted 'several Chartists' to one resident's knowledge, which he seized on to embellish a report of arson to the Home Office, but elsewhere people were muted over their radical neighbours. Chartists

established presences in the major towns, notably Portsmouth, Southampton²¹⁶ and Winchester, and which – in spite of the muted populist responses to the New Poor Law – served as a bitter reminder of Swing’s awesome precedent, and the populist political movement spawned within and subsequently beyond the rising. One typical regular Chartist meeting at Portsea opened with ‘vehement . . . abuse’ of the New Poor Law, while the newly-founded Ultra-Tory *Portsmouth . . . Pioneer* – ‘to stem the torrent of democracy’ – argued that only the repeal of the ‘unconstitutional, unchristian and inhuman’ statute could dissolve that movement. The southern Chartist press, in the form of the *Brighton Patriot*, latched on to what it dubbed the Commission’s “coarser food” laws’, which embraced soup, and reported northern resistance to the Commissioners’ remit, arguing that regional Boards should defy them too. A’Court knew, not least owing to the events in 1830, that the South did not exist in a vacuum. In Sussex Lord Lieutenant Richmond personally orchestrated moves against Chartism; as his fellow grandee the Earl of Chichester opined in 1839, the real threat might well derive from southern responses to a Chartist insurrection in the North.

Hampshire Chartism was not one of the stated factors in the County Bench’s expeditious decision to adopt the permissive Rural Police Acts of 1839-40; however, Swing passed unmentioned too, though there can be no doubt that that experience was embedded in every justice’s memory. Critically Wellington was a strong supporter of adoption, and although it united sectors of both the Tory and Whig local press against, organised opposition proved ephemeral. The force created was substantially larger and relatively efficient when compared to one of its closer counterparts in East Sussex, which was hopelessly under-manned and so ineffective that it faced recurrent political agitations for its disbandment, though the costs of the much more expensive Hampshire establishment had to be exclusively met by county ratepayers. The professional police’s presence certainly re-assured the wealthier elements of the county’s rural population.²¹⁷

Despite the problems generated by the first Chartist phase, the Commission could take some satisfaction in the derisory Commons vote in 1838 for Fielden’s repeal motion, the outcome of the 1837-8 select committees, and the failure of Lord Stanhope to create a London-based national anti-Poor Law movement, though Edsall’s view that thereafter ‘the North [was] on its own’ represents something of a distortion.²¹⁸ On the other hand, despite the 1838 committee’s powerful advocacy, repeated attempts at significantly amending the Amending Act were torpedoed by restive MPs of all persuasions exploiting the Melbourne government’s enduring parliamentary weakness after 1837. One early

casualty was the proposal to put highway administration under Union Boards, despite a strong supportive case orchestrated by Somerset House to yet another Commons select committee in 1838, a policy which incidentally also horrified A'Court.²¹⁹ Over rural England in general, and the South and East in particular, the Commission had unionised much of the territory although un-dissolved Gilbert Unions remained a painful thorn in its side. While it is true that some Boards, for a range of reasons, resisted the eradication of all non-medical outdoor relief to *all* able-bodied labourers, be it to different degrees, others wanted outdoor relief prohibition orders, not least because they deflected the odium from Boards to the Commissioners, though this did not mean that on occasion Guardians never wanted exceptions. By the end of the 1830s, most Boards contained a core of experienced and active members, and became less deferential to those key intermediaries, the assistant commissioners. One, be it a minor though nevertheless suggestive expression, was when Fareham Guardians 'laughed at the consequences' of A'Court disallowing the costs of inmates' Christmas dinners.²²⁰ The fact that their laughter was in his presence also reflected the fact that they, like many of their counterparts, *really wanted greater autonomy*. The marginalisation of the ideologically-rigid Chadwick achieved by Cornewall Lewis and Sir Edmund Head, who replaced Commissioners Frankland Lewis and Lefevre on their respective resignations in 1839 and 1841, and in the continuing absence of the most doctrinaire Commissioner Nicholls, responsible for the implementation of the Irish Poor Law between 1838 and 1842, were critical to the development of a less 'thorough' and more flexible central board. The realisation of these changing circumstances seems to have filtered down disparately to different Boards. One key element did not occur until 1842 with the new Act pushed through by Peel's more stable administration. Part of the compromise – and compromise it was despite his huge majority – involved the reduction of assistant commissioners, to a mere nine. This emasculated the assistants, owing to the inflated size of their districts, which represented the last straw on the proverbial camel's back, and with it guaranteed an effective increase in Union Boards' autonomy.²²¹

IX. Fareham and Droxford Unions 1837–42

These then were all important influences conditioning the local context in which to examine the trajectory of these Unions' administrations after their traumatic scrutiny in 1837.²²² This evaluation is more complicated than it might superficially warrant as a number of factors require analysis. First, in some senses the two Unions were at different stages in

their implementation of the 1834 Act. Although both had addressed the most notorious pre-1835 problem, namely the systematic payment of allowances in-aid-of wages to able-bodied males, and had enforced the less-eligibility principle through workhouse provision, their administrative experience with the favoured central institution were different despite the scandals. Droxford's new workhouse was only nearing completion, and the Board had the task of launching it, including the establishment of the visiting committee whose importance had been underlined in 1837. Secondly, another significant question loomed in the disposal of redundant workhouses and other parochial real estate including cottages and tenements, under the terms of the 1834 Act as clarified by the 1835 Parish Property Act. Thirdly, the 1836 Parochial Assessment Act had also to be implemented (the date set by the Commission was September 1837), and as we have seen property revaluations for rating purposes were notoriously politically sensitive.²²³ Fourthly, between June 1837 and August 1838, a new assistant commissioner was in charge, an important matter with which we begin.

The select committee's 1837 sessions coincided with the protracted takeover of Hampshire Unions from the relatively mild A'Court by W H T Hawley. A Hampshire man, of solid gentry stock, he had been in charge of East Sussex since the autumn of 1834, to which West Sussex was added in mid-1835, and in May 1836 to took over some Hampshire Unions, including Andover. He lost East Sussex when his responsibilities were extended to the rest of Hampshire in mid-1837. A workaholic, probably the most ideologically committed of all the assistant commissioners, and despite the bruising conflicts he had had – and was having – with several Unions, notably Petworth which led to his lengthy examinations by the committee, he remained tough, austere and utterly committed to the preservation of the theoretical principles so that implementation of the Act advanced inexorably towards its ultimate goals. He interpreted – with some justification – every requested or unilaterally taken relaxation of the rules as a dangerous threat. Even the seemingly innocuous request for inmates to be let out to attend Sunday church services was 'only one of the side winds by which our opponents are endeavouring to undermine the whole system of workhouse Government'. His invariably strong and dramatically phrased communications, which extended to quarterly and yearly statements submitted for possible publication in the Commission's annual reports, led to rebukes and a typical defence; 'I am apt to let feeling get the better of discretion from a fear of appearing an abettor of existing [administrative] abuses unless I lash the perpetrators as they deserve'. His first direct engagement with Droxford focused on the deepening travails of the Auditor over what he

claimed were the sharp deteriorations in parish officers' accounting, and his particularly 'great trouble' in calculating those functionaries' legitimate expenses. Commissioner Lefevre, in anticipation of Hawley's aggressive response, neatly pre-empted it by stressing the 'painful' course of disallowing proper expenses; if Lefevre had 'no means of legalising the proceeding legitimately – the most I can do is to be *silent* & let the matter pass'. Hawley was to inform the Auditor 'privately & by word of mouth', emphasising confidentiality while making it categorically clear that 'He must not allow similar charges in future'.²²⁴

Typically, Hawley prioritised; he would concentrate on those several unco-operative Unions which seized every opportunity to manipulate outdoor relief for able-bodied males; although he identified a 'Majority of Gds disaffected' at Basingstoke, no Hampshire Union appeared on his list of delinquent administrations which were all in West Sussex. Knowledge of his priorities probably underlay the Droxford Board's defiant rejection by a large majority of a proposal to appoint a second relieving officer, and shortly to raise Hayden's salary from £85 to £100.²²⁵ On the other hand, when in the late autumn of 1837 the Droxford Board requested to break the prohibitory order by taking one of labourer Ford's children into the workhouse, it was rejected by Hawley as a 'dangerous precedent', in which the Board meekly acquiesced, probably because it was divided on the issue: chairman Stares was certainly strongly opposed to the device. Hawley argued strongly for unemployed workers to migrate to work on the London–Southampton railway under construction, on intelligence direct from the constructors and personally directed some claimants to go, with the Droxford Board's unanimous approval; loans were made for both their subsistence and tools, though demand proved less robust than Hawley's information suggested. However, his term in Hampshire (and Surrey) ended in September 1838, when he was transferred to an even harder project, namely implementing the recent Irish Poor Act,²²⁶ on which A'Court returned. Although he had retained responsibility for Droxford and Fareham while the select committee sat, Hawley was in effective charge for the fifteen months from June 1837.²²⁷

On the positive side, poor-law expenditures had declined dramatically in both Unions. Between 1832 and 1835, Droxford's parishes' combined average annual expenditure had been £9717, while Fareham's figure was £10,708; in 1836–7 they were respectively £5241 and £4445 – reductions of 46 and 58 per cent – though they shortly began to rise as it modestly.²²⁸ On the negative side, the committee's evidence and report had unambiguously confirmed the distressing details of the Fareham workhouse scandal, and lambasted the responsible officers, thereby implicat-

ing the Board. If its Droxford counterpart emerged relatively unscathed, in terms of the report, the minuted evidential mountain available in the press, confirmed many locals' prejudices against the new system. Both Boards, it will be recalled, were initially dominated by enthusiastic Guardians, though neither had sent 'emphatic . . . testimonials' to the increasingly pressurised Commission over the winter of 1836-7; indeed, Hampshire was represented only by Andover in the Commissioners' lengthy list.²²⁹ Both our Boards now operated in what was a manifestly hostile climate, and it could not be argued that they were merely unfortunate contributors to its national causal factors; they were demonstrably responsible for the decisions, complacency and failures which had precipitated the district crisis, and Winchester Union symbolically withdrew from its new contract for places in Fareham's workhouse; it was too discredited.²³⁰ As early as November 1836 sectors of the Hampshire press began to accuse the Whigs of accepting all the credit for rate decreases, and challenged the entire expensive apparatus – workhouses, local and national officers – and concluded that 'the saving, if any, is obtained by treating poverty as a crime'. The issue resonated in the 1837 General Election and helped unseat a number of Whig MPs; a widespread 'cry against the Poor Law' engulfed Hampshire hustings, with blame attributed to the Whigs, though the issue was not invariably exploited by Tory candidates.²³¹ If the eulogies delivered by fervent supporters in speeches – notably at public dinners of Guardians in some places – gained considerable press coverage, this type of self-congratulatory publicity can have converted but few. Moreover, especially at Droxford, the entire parliamentary episode very visibly exacerbated social divisions and for some people these were personalised and enduring, with 'both sides' – including justice Butler – resorting to pamphleteering, and it is unlikely that Fareham remained unscathed from parallel manifestations of 'strong discussions'.²³²

In some senses the impact of events between January and June 1837 on Fareham, was more dramatic than Droxford. At the former, neither the chairman nor his deputy sought re-election in March 1837; the workhouse chaplain and its medical officer resigned, while the inactive chairman of the workhouse visiting committee, Captain Purvis JP 'withdrew' along with all three of the Wooldridge brothers. It is significant that the new chairman was a magistrate, though his deputy fortified the Union practice of senior office for elected Guardians. Nevertheless, a marked increase in attendance by *ex-officios* surely represented a strategy for stabilisation, with up to seven there on important occasions, as at the re-election of their chairman and his deputy in March 1838; from 1840, Lord Cholmondeley, a recent addition to the Bench, chaired the

visiting committee. If in the March 1837 election of Droxford Guardians Durley parish failed to find a candidate, most Guardians were returned unopposed, and re-selected Stares and Henry Wooldridge respectively chairman and his deputy. Nevertheless, the outgoing Board at its last meeting in March 1837 referred to 'their arduous duties' and shortly afterwards minuted 'the confusion . . . in the Union' deriving from the preceding furore and the subsequent protracted hearings in London.²³³

Both Boards exuded nervousness almost immediately over adverse publicity. Droxford launched a full enquiry into yet another 'most disgracefully made . . . coffin', which disintegrated on its arrival from Fareham workhouse at Hambledon churchyard, to defuse the inevitable 'great excitement' spawned by the incident. The Board also remonstrated with an anti-New Poor-Law publisher who misrepresented the enquiry evidence of former medical officer Smith, demanding – and securing – a public apology. Nor were the Boards' established local critics silenced. Although the Commission brushed off complaints from justice Butler over misrepresentations in the select committee's minutes deriving from Sir James Graham's leading questions, a letter to chairman Fazakerley from the Revd. Scard complaining that relieving officer Hayden had stated that the furthest distance from his house to claimants was between four and five miles, when the accurate distance was seven, led Hawley to order the Board to rule on the issue, which proved Scard's point. Further claims from the Revd. Brock of pro-New Poor-Law witnesses' inaccuracies, notably against Guardian Wyatt, were published in *The Times*, among them that the Bishops Waltham workhouse master did not notify the sexton of deaths in his establishment, customarily recognised by the tolling of the church bell, the non-payment of any fees to clergymen or church officials for pauper burials, and that their coffins were not covered by a pall – as promised by the Board – but a 'common sheet'. Greater degrees of caution were manifested; the pall issue had been overlooked due to the interruptions, and when the workhouse finally opened in late October – under William Harrison's superintendence in part rewarding his sterling contribution before the select committee – its readiness for occupancy was certified by all three medical officers; only then were the inmates removed from Bishop Waltham together with those people still at Fareham, who arrived with the last invoice including 1/6 for Sally Hunt's 'wilfully broken' window pane, an almost daily form of inmate protest.²³⁴ Ironically, shortly before, the coffin of one of the last Droxford inmates dying in the Fareham house, was – according to the Revd. Dewdney – sent in a cart together with live pigs, resulting in another full investigation. When Captain Travers, the chairman of the Portsea Union, and an ally of the Duke of Rich-

mond, exposed Dewdney's 'many charges' against him as 'wholly without foundation', the Droxford Board vengefully minuted their congratulations on Travers' 'triumphant refutation'. Nevertheless, both Boards remained under hostile scrutiny from their established adversaries.²³⁵

If the Fareham Board was wary of public opinion, it did not stop occasional robustness; the workhouse schoolmistress's prerogative to inflict corporal punishment was restored with the provision of a 'small Cane', though only after the *Guardians* inspected the instrument. They strongly reiterated the policy of seizing the goods of deceased claimants, one Old Poor-Law option that survived, and over which parish officers now ostensibly had no control. More importantly the Board took determined action against medical officer Case, who resisted a new rule sanctioned by A'Court and Hawley, that when awarding extra diet for sick patients, doctors should not designate its nature but refer that decision to the Board. Designed to curb medics' increasingly notorious penchant for liberality, Case responded by directly informing Somerset House of four patients endangered by the *Guardians*' decisions, one of whom had actually died. An internal enquiry, with four magistrates present, heard expert testimony from another of the Union's doctors, and factual information from the relieving officer. Their evidence forced Case into admitting he had erred in all four instances. He was unaware that the three children of a widow with cancer earned a weekly five shillings, and was also ignorant of the fact that the dead patient lived in a rent-free house courtesy of his father, a typical small business man, namely a 'higler' dealing in what could be a prosperous trade, buying perishable foodstuffs in the country, for urban markets, who had sufficient means to support his son's small family. These were exemplars of patients misrepresenting their circumstances to medical officers which Boards were encouraged to detect, combined with what was alleged – often correctly – as doctors' humanitarianism. Case was not only forced to admit his faults and 'attempt . . . to usurp' the Board's authority in writing to the Commission, but compelled to resign. In Hawley's estimation, this represented a triumph; the Board had

Completely overthrown an attempt, which has been making in many quarters besides the Fareham Union, by the Medical Men, to usurp the authority and prerogative of the Board, and establish for themselves a cheap sort of popularity amongst the lower Class by being liberal with other people's money.

Ironically, Case was re-instated in undocumented circumstances.²³⁶ However, in November 1838 with high food prices generating concern, Fareham applied for an exemption to its prohibitory order in common

with other Unions, and if this was for but one child from a large labouring family to go into the workhouse, the Board incautiously added its intention to extend the arrangement to more households. The application was considered by the Commissioners on the 23rd immediately after they had minuted their rejection on the same subject to the notoriously rogue regime at Hambledon; that despatched to Fareham was a toughened version and the one lithographed for enclosure to other Unions, among them Havant and Colchester, to the great embarrassment of the Fareham Board. However, subsequently A'Court brokered relaxations for a few families with five or more small children.²³⁷

Evidence from 1837 and into the forties, including that from the 1846 Andover select committee, reveals further significant details respecting parochial disposals and retentions of property. There were few sales in either Fareham or Droxford. In the latter, there were none until the 1842 auction of Bishops Waltham's pest house on Waltham Chase, followed by a copyhold tenement divided into two in 1844, the same year in which Droxford parish sold a row comprised three freehold cottages. All were occupied by labouring families, as were the Exton properties 'known as Hayes Cottage', and divided into four in 1848, when the vestry ruled that officials were to take 'any legal steps to protect and recover', though the outcome went unrecorded.²³⁸

The Andover minutes between November 1836 and 1842 reveal sale applications from only seven rural parishes of the 31 comprised in the Union. Two were stimulated by the opening of the workhouse in early 1837, including the first and largest application from Amport for thirteen cottages 'partly joined together', and in abnormally 'good and tenantable repair'. Occupied by non-rent paying farm labourers and the elderly, the vestry intended to transfer the latter to the workhouse 'as soon as it is finished', and the proceeds of the sale were earmarked for the parish's contribution towards its costs – currently the only 'paramount claim' on the ratepayers. The unanimous vote at Vernons Dean for the sale of five freehold cottages 'under one Roof', and two others, involved only four men, three of them owners – one of whom as owner and occupier had ten votes – suggests a united and unassailable majority of 'principal inhabitants'. But these two applications coincided with the peak from across the country; expeditious authorisation through the time-consuming checking of legal documentation was 'prevented by the pressure of business', and further delays occurred when inadequate paperwork dictated answering various queries. Hurstbourne Tarrant's poorhouse fetched £227 in 1842, though the parish's current debt on its Union workhouse contribution account was almost £300. Moreover, once again monies realised were far below expectations, exemplified by

Vernhams Dean's receipt of a mere £40 instead of the anticipated excess of £100 for nine cottages. Ratepayers' enthusiasms wore off; in the event, those at Amport for undisclosed reasons, abandoned the sale. Their Abbots Ann counterparts clearly engaged in such a lengthy re-think that the time limit expired, though eventually the vestry reapplied. Even if all tenants had been evicted, the total numbers involved would have been modest over the five-year period, even given Abbots Ann's seven cottages housing 53 people from twelve families in 1840. The Quarley vestry convened in 1838 to decide 'what was to do be done relative to the poor's houses', and agreed to refer the matter to the Lord of the Manor, and the issue appears to have been dropped.²³⁹

Six years later witnesses told the select committee that demolitions had occurred in some but not all parishes, without identifying any communities, but acknowledging a universal 'great deficiency' of housing accommodation for farmworkers and overcrowding especially in "open" villages. This precipitated migrations into the town itself – the only one in the Union – dramatically symbolised by the development of a district known as 'mud town', presumably reflecting customary mud-hovels run up by incomers seeking work.²⁴⁰ Such migrations were universal in the South. During the later forties

In some of the crowded allies of Guildford, Farnham, Chichester, and other Towns, inhabited by rural labourers, the state of the impurity and loathsomeness there to be witnessed, cannot be exceeded, save in the worst districts of London.

Urban residence commonly dictated lengthy walks to work for farmworkers, though compensation came in the form of greater demand for women's and children's work. Migrants from Fareham and Droxford parishes were more likely to have headed for the Portsmouth conurbation, a traditional magnet, with a few, including Stephen Crawte who – after a spell in Titchfield workhouse in 1835–6 – became an 'excellent Excavator' on various railway projects in Berkshire and Hertfordshire. In the Andover Union only labourers domiciled in the town were erroneously said to have sought navvying jobs; the Abbots Ann labourer injured on the Southampton line was significantly working there during the harvest period. No Droxford or Fareham parishes took the opportunity of emigration under the Commission's auspices, with the exception of Hambleton in 1835 and Fareham town with a handful departing in 1838.²⁴¹

The only conclusion to be drawn from the information in the foregoing three paragraphs, is that parish property remained unsold and inhabited in these three Unions. This cannot be ascribed simply to pressure on housing stocks. Although Portchester parish officers claimed that

it was 'almost the general will' that their workhouse was sold, this was in response to the Commissioners' advice not to sell. Sales generated opposition. Those against the sale of Titchfield workhouse – orchestrated by a wealthy character with six votes – grandiloquently announced:

We Protest against the sale of the Old Poor House – because, in the event Of a reverse of Fortune, it would prove congenial to our feelings to end our Days in this Parish Assylum rather than in a Malthusian Poor House

somewhat romantic, though ideologically understandable sentiments. There are examples of sales provoking riots, as at Eaton Bray (Bedfordshire) in 1841, where the 'mob' demolished cottages to prevent their sale with 'several of the Ratepayers . . . parties to the outrage'; that was reported to Somerset House, though it represents that common category of minor riotous assemblies which usually evade the documentary record. More subtle disincentives were also at work. At Twyford in the Winchester Union carpenter Voles – representative of that category of tradesmen continuing to invest – purchased the former workhouse, which was still in use with some residents at least paying rents, which he increased; the tenants responded by a rent strike, and refused to obey eviction notices, all matters of indifference to the parish officers. It seems probable that some Droxford, and one Fareham Union poor – and workhouses remained inhabited, mirroring Twyford, as recorded in evidential snippets, among them the elderly Robert Holeway's residency in Warnford poorhouse in 1839, when his sons were investigated as possible liable persons.²⁴²

Nor did parishes which sold, necessarily include all their cottages. The official documentation is usually silent on this issue. Occupiers of parish houses included Richard Ford, the labourer who gave evidence to the 1837 select committee, which was informed that since 1830 he had lived in a cottage erected by Warnford parish, and now rent free; he conceded that it was worth '1s. a week certainly', though not 1/6. In 1846 a widower with seven children earning a weekly nine shillings at Penton Grafton, told the Andover inquiry that he too lived rent free in an old parish house converted into five 'tenements' – his comprised two rooms, with collapsing ceilings – and 'given . . . up' by officials: pressed, he wearily affirmed 'who they belong to . . . I cannot tell', though a more knowledgeable observer, a medical officer, said that the vestry 'will not own it'. The probable answer was effectively nobody, because worth little they sufficed as habitations for those with large families unable to pay rents, and who otherwise faced the workhouse – with the ratepayers

meeting the resultant substantial bill, and the Andover regime developed a powerful deterrent culture. At Grately where the vestry was usually chaired by the Revd. Dodson – the exceedingly unpleasant chairman of the Andover Union – it ‘directed . . . the Overseers to enforce payment for the parish houses’, only two of which were sold off in 1853. Amport eventually disposed of all but two of its portfolio in 1848. Shipton Bellinger retained three cottages – which were all occupied in 1887; on their sale in the next year to a wealthy incomer, significantly but one tenant remained. As the buyer, in the common style of his ilk, went on to negotiate the closure or re-routing of footpaths on his newly acquired estate, his objective was clearly in the interests of personal privacy, and demolition probably followed.²⁴³

The Commission was well aware of this situation. If it proudly reported its national registration of nearly four thousand conveyances by late 1839, it also stressed that most disposals were dilapidated former workhouses and cottages, with many of the latter being virtually hovels.²⁴⁴ On the other hand it acknowledged that parish officers retained much property, despite the fact they had no funds to repair it; indeed, in February 1836 the Andover Board ruled re-thatching Amport cottages costing £5-17-8 illegal, but declined to intervene in 1839 when Penton Grafton resorted to a voluntary rate – a common mechanism for circumventing the law²⁴⁵ – to repair cottages in late 1839. By 1844 sales nationally had declined to a tenth of their 1837 peak, and some clergymen were complaining that especially former workhouses remained ‘occupied by various persons of different ages and sexes’, a common euphemism for a brothel. Nothing resembling a policy appears to have resulted, though in 1846 the Commission belatedly and weakly instructed Auditors to seek rental accounts from overseers.²⁴⁶ All this evidence proves that a significant proportion of labourers in all three Unions remained in what was still parish property throughout the 1840s, many of them probably without paying rent, though Droxford when discussing sick relief for Richard Ford, took his rent-free home into account. The details imply that some more affluent villagers happily acquiesced in what they saw as a compromise, were at one with the occupants, and had no desire for the ‘expense and bad feelings’ that the Commission brusquely conceded usually accompanied sales.²⁴⁷

‘Bad feelings’ commonly accompanied the implementation of the 1836 Parish Assessment, or Scrope’s Act as it was known, which addressed some of the complexities in existing law and practices relating to rates and valuations. Its key stipulations were that *all* real estate should be valued and then rated at their *real value* as reflected in actual rents or their equivalents rather than the customary conveniences com-

monly used by parish officers, together with the seductive provision of loans – requiring the Commission's sanction – to fund the operation which was very expensive when done by professionals for larger parishes. It did not give powers to rate owners of cottages rather than their plebeian tenants, a power provided under the second Sturges Bourne Act, but used fitfully by only some parishes, on occasion illegally. Before 1835 most country labourers did not pay rates, and overseers never bothered to value their tenements. After 1835, cottage proprietors, already smarting after the termination of parochial rent subsidies and direct hirings, came under increasing difficulties of collecting rents owed, which endured into the 1840s, though this largely failed to register in the form of rents stipulated. Where rents were collected weekly or monthly, which became more usual and replaced traditional annual payments, owners were often forced – especially during winters – to acquiesce in response to pleas: 'We can do no work; we have not any money; we cannot get food and firing; we are almost starved'. Arrears built up, not least because eviction would dictate losing both tenant – perhaps to the workhouse – and with him any chance of debt recovery. Moreover, alternative tenants were no better, according to one Berkshire rural slum proprietor, William Benham, who testified no doubt with some exaggeration:

They are all so poverty-stricken, there is very little difference; want of employment, and sickness and distress, is very great.

Proprietors like Benham were naturally adverse to having rates thrust upon them too in these circumstances, though many substantial farmers including Droxford's vice-chairman would have welcomed it; the entire Fareham Board concurred.²⁴⁸

It was technically possible for overseers to implement Scrope's Act, despite the need to value every field, by making adjustments to existing valuations, even with their common antiquity, and add previously un-rated tenement properties based on their rentals, the option taken in all Fareham parishes; relative costings suggest that professionals were involved only in Fareham itself, but expensive cartography was eschewed.²⁴⁹ This proved politically impossible in at least some rural communities, though as revaluations coincided with the work of the tithe commissioners implementing the Commutation Act also of 1836, in places there were trade offs enabling savings where one comprehensive map could be used for both operations.²⁵⁰

Most Droxford parishes decided on a full revaluation. This ostensibly caused few problems in the smaller and more "close" villages, though no doubt Soberton ratepayers were horrified to find that they would

have to finance the survey of the 500 acres of Crown estate, which was poor rate-free under some ancient arrangement, a problem not shared by Upham and West Meon. At the latter the principal ratepayers identified a mutually acceptable man 'who lived near' and undertook the operation without mapping for a relatively paltry £25. At Droxford the cantankerous Peter Lovekin tried to cause trouble but was outmanoeuvred by vestrymen led by Union chairman Stares, and in these locations the exercise was concluded expeditiously.²⁵¹ However, it proved problematic in populous and extensive Hambledon and Bishops Waltham. In the former, its 9600 acres and all that stood on it, would take at least a year to value. Tempers were lost when the Commission ruled that a map of 1810 vintage, drawn up for the Bere Forest enclosure commissioners, was inappropriate, thereby dictating a new one, and ratepayers were soon 'violently opposed to each other'. On a vestry vote between two surveyors, many tenant farmers sided with the smaller owners, and despite plural voting narrowly defeated the bigger landowners' candidate. The same alignment seems to have been behind the huge majority who agreed not to pay rates based on the old valuation, with the result that the Union's liquidity was compromised, while the luckless overseers faced repeated threats of litigation. Although a ratepayers' committee was appointed to 'render information' to the valuer, the 1839 outcome was contested by justice Butler and supporters, with the result that the revision engineered in 1841-2 cost the ratepayers a further £250.²⁵²

At Bishops Waltham ratepayers boycotted the first vestry called on the valuation issue, but once cajoled by the Board and told that the Commissioners would not sanction a loan unless notified of the required two-thirds vote, they very belatedly applied in mid-December 1837. Further rows erupted when the surveyors demanded interim fees, not embraced by their contract, and suspended operations for eight months. When it was finished in late 1839, a tranche of ratepayers led by Peter Lovekin's son, claimed during successive argumentative vestries that the result was 'manifestly erroneous in very numerous instances' threatening 'serious injury to many individuals', and agreed only to use the old figures. A'Court's intervention secured the use of the new, leaving further negotiations to a panel comprised parish officers and aggrieved ratepayers' representatives, which concluded in April 1840 with those left unsatisfied to either acquiesce or fight their cases in the courts.²⁵³

Both Fareham and Droxford experienced further problems with their workhouses. The latter's was not ready until October 1837. During its first two years the numbers of inmates averaged roughly 180, close to the maximum 200, but this number was exceeded (228) only briefly

during the latter part of its first winter. It is surely significant that among the Board's actions was a public relations exercise, under which rate-payers could obtain an 'order' from any Guardian to inspect the work-house during prescribed hours, which suspiciously excluded meal-times. However, Guardians' tempers were first soured by substantial cost overruns. Secondly, more than teething troubles were experienced with the cold and hot water systems, the former inadequately lagged where exposed, and the latter repeatedly breaking down. Inferior locks, obviously an important item in workhouses, disintegrated, while two of the exercise yards were pitted with holes which filled with water. The Board retaliated by withholding final payments from the main contractor; after members quibbled over 'extra Steam apparatus', its five guineas cost – 'a great deal too much' – and repeatedly stressed their 'exceeding annoyance' at the 'many defects' in writing. They finally brought in a new plumber who replaced several of the stoves. This seems to have at least have had one positive effect, namely the installation of fire-guards in the school room, the absence of which had recently proved fatal in the Winchester Union, though the defective yards were not paved for over two years. These expenses, combined with the Hambledon ratepayers' strike, led the Board to default on its Exchequer loan repayments, but it shrugged off the threat of legal action in August 1838, saying that as the Union was 'purely agricultural' raising money before the harvest was difficult, and asking for an extension until the next quarter.²⁵⁴

Perhaps ironically given the earlier furore over the Board's dietary, bread portions were increased, and Hawley finally convinced members that beef stew once a week in place of bacon was appropriate, despite pig-raising, and the Board voluntarily increased potato portions, which in Hawley's later estimation represented a 'superior' diet encouraging some inmates to prolong their stay.²⁵⁵ However, the last of these changes almost coincided in January 1838 with the speedily implemented decision to install a bone treadmill at a cost of £1500, requiring further borrowing, but 'sufficient for the strength of 12 men', preferred by some assistant commissioners, including A'Court; treadmills made very 'irk-some work', and an additional legitimate deterrent. Although the contracted Southampton iron founder's installation was late, it was in use by the end of May, though the 'same plate' broke repeatedly, and then the 'Men are idle'. This appears to have been rectified though whether it retained the same manpower capacity is doubtful. Fareham initially decided against either a bone- or flour treadmill after a thorough investigation revealed that both were 'more expensive and complicated than ... contemplated'; inmates continued picking oakum, though

eventually bone-crushing was introduced though done by individuals using reinforced boxes and heavy metal pounders.²⁵⁶

The Droxford Board took a tough line on unmarried mothers; it continued with its refusal of outdoor relief, insisted that mothers and their offspring were institutionalised, and on learning that forcing single mothers to wear 'yellow dresses . . . Gowns and Stockings' was an effective 'punishment for Bastardy and other misconduct', somewhat contradictorily and certainly parsimoniously, ordered just two sets. When this archetypal Old Poor-Law formulae – and Andover was another adoptee – was terminated by the Commissioners in late 1839, the Board investigated creating another ward to 'separate Girls of Abandoned Character' on which it eventually spent a further £122. The *Guardians* also repeatedly complained of unmarried mothers decamping, leaving their children in the house, but on their final decision to prosecute, the local Bench still chaired by justice Butler, claimed it was outside their competence: when the Commission confirmed it was not, the Board asked the justices to state their full reasons in writing, and challenged the Bench to 'enforce the law'; their letter went unanswered. Where appropriate the Board also pursued those with pre-1834 maintenance orders, and in one instance obviously involving an affluent father under rulings respecting two children, threatened to take the case expensively to the Quarter Sessions.²⁵⁷

Droxford's established opponents remained active, with the Revd. Stephen Butler resorting to a contrived altercation in 1839 by exploiting the Board's policy respecting ratepayers' inspections of the workhouse. Having obtained a visitor's order, on 7 February, Soberton 'gentleman farmer' James Gale entered the workhouse at 12.30pm, in the middle of the two-hour dinner break in visiting hours, with the stated intention of observing inmates dining, and gave the document to the porter. The Board subsequently claimed that these regulations had been approved by the Commission, but in fact according to the *Guardians*' own minutes this regulation was in fact a verbal instruction to governor Harrison. He refused Gale entry, and within minutes he re-appeared at the dining room door with Butler. Harrison became 'very excited', declaring that "strangers must withdraw" – an expression doubtlessly remembered from his time with the select committee – 'and took hold of Mr Gale to put him out', with Butler advising him not to resist despite Harrison's 'very considerable violence'. This incident went unreported by Harrison, but an unidentified *Guardian* brought it up at the Board on the 12th, and formal statements were taken from Harrison, the porter and the schoolmistress. Almost three weeks later Butler wrote to A'Court seeking clarification whether a clergyman had unrestricted access, but adding

that Harrison 'shut the [dining room] door with great violence against me'. A'Court replied regretting any 'uncourteous treatment' but sensing that Butler might bring an assault charge, noted that he 'possibly demanded admission *as a right*', which was legally restricted to magistrates. A'Court copied this correspondence to the Board, received the statements made on 12 February, and attended the Board's meeting on 5 March. Here he learned that Gale, not Butler, had secured an assault summons against Harrison, and if A'Court believed the evidence was inadequate, Butler's father chaired the Petty Sessions; a Somerset House lawyer confirmed that he ought not to involve himself, and the Board asked justice Long, who had issued the summons, to postpone the trial while the Commission was contacted. It agreed that Harrison's legal costs should be met by the Board. Despite the probability of imminent adverse publicity, on 2 April Stares and Wooldridge accepted reelection, but when the case was heard a fortnight later the Bench ruled on technical grounds relating to 'rights of property in a workhouse' that it should go to the Assizes. This appears to have been a blatant attempt to maximise publicity; Gale and Harrison were bailed to appear in respective recognizances of ten and twenty pounds. A'Court thought that Gale would not honour it, despite the inevitable forfeiture, but in the interim the Board amended visitors' entitlements; they could, by arrangement, be present during dinners, but were not allowed to speak to inmates.²⁵⁸

In the event the trial went ahead in July; *The Times* regularly covered proceedings at the Hampshire Assize, and published two full columns on Harrison's trial, the only one it reported from Winchester on that day. Prosecuting counsel – who claimed he personally supported the New Poor Law – nevertheless delivered a lengthy opening and emotive speech enlarging on the wide and fierce social divisions caused locally by the Act's implementation, and insisted on Gale's 'laudable purposes' in inspecting the food, which did not warrant his being assaulted 'by the bashaw of this workhouse'. Gale told the jury that the 'dinner looked very bad – indeed not fit for paupers to eat'. The defence argued that he was an 'illegal intruder' and that Harrison had every right to use reasonable force on the farmer's refusal to leave voluntarily; it was analogous to any householder facing an intruder. Although the judge saw little point in Wooldridge's appearance for the defence, his refusal to produce the Board's minutes was suspicious, though the judge also noted that Gale's visitor's order was unavailable too. The jury were clearly unimpressed by a former inmate's evidence that Harrison repeatedly swore and that after the incident he boasted that he gave 'Gale a good shaking up, and would have given . . . Butler a d—d good pinching if

he had not got off'. Prosecuting counsel's denigratory dismissive reference to the main defence witnesses, namely the porter and the schoolmistress, as 'menials of the workhouse mixed up with Mr. Harrison', was perhaps unwise. The judge intimated that the jury's verdict should depend on whether the master had used excessive force, and acquitted him, though *The Times*' claim that the outcome caused the 'greatest surprise' was not reiterated in the pre-empted local press coverage, and which possibly explains the lack of more than partly plagiarised brief factual accounts, even in the Tory anti-New Poor-Law *Portsmouth . . . Herald*.

After the 1837 Fareham scandal, lads over fourteen were excluded from the school owing to their 'disruptive behaviour' though their legacy remained in 1840 with the younger boys – mostly bastards and orphans – rendering the schoolroom 'generally disorderly and inattentive'. Those over nine also worked at times with the men at oakum picking; this all dovetailed with experience revealing that inmate youngsters were 'unable to compete . . . [in] the Labour Market', and led to the Board's belated acceptance of Hawley's view that oakum-picking was of 'a degrading character and of no utility whatever . . . educational[ly]'. They secured the services of a 'gardener' to teach agrarian skills.²⁵⁹ A few inmates were prosecuted for 'disobedience', 'disorderly conduct', fracturing the rules, and leaving the workhouse in Union clothes, with offenders – including 'lads' – sentenced to three-week hard-labour prison terms; one was let-off on a promise to 'behave better', but the perennially difficult Strangmore received sentences of up to two months. During governor Bourne's prolonged illness, the new Chaplain was specifically asked to be extra vigilant, apparently successfully; but it was subsequently discovered in 1838 that women inmates had for months been illegally egressing after dark, often returning drunk and/or with liquor, despite an iron perimeter fence erected in late 1837. The porter, who had previously turned a blind eye to female inmates slipping out for Saturday nights, and Bourne, clearly knew of this practice, and if the evidence is obscured by their mutual recriminations, both were formally admonished, with the porter – on pain of dismissal – ordered to nightly check security, and thoroughly search all inmates on their return from permitted 'holidays'; he was also to keep a 'diary' of untoward incidents for Bourne's perusal.²⁶⁰

Bourne soon proved to be part of the problem, owing to his lust for teenage girl inmates with his wife's apparent complicity, though full intercourse – rather than mere molestation ('indecent liberties') – appears to have occurred only when the matron was absent at night, and then with lasses over thirteen, the age of consent. Bourne's seduct-

ive prowess was bolstered by gifts of 'bulls eyes' and 'cakes'; rumours of his conduct were rife in the house, and penetrated plebeian circles in the town. Bourne's simple denial was accepted once, but on his exposure by a widow inmate in May 1840, Bourne's attempted resignation to pre-empt an investigation, presided over by A'Court and Lord Cholmondeley, failed. The Board's renewed confidence evaporated, in part owing to an erroneous expectation of Bourne's prosecution on a capital charge, though re-assured by A'Court's exclusion of legal action in the interest of avoiding 'serious inconvenience' deriving from the inevitable 'publicity to the misdemeanours which have taken place'. Bourne was fired, protesting his innocence to the last – a 'long premeditated & concocted plot against me' – though the Commission when confirming the decision, noted that principal witness Jane Warren's deposition was authenticated with a cross rather than a signature, observed that it 'reflects discredit' on the house's educational provision, only to spare the Guardians' feelings by exorcising the comment from the final draft. In the event only the Whig *Hampshire Independent* reported the Board's 'special meeting'; it specified that the master was sacked for 'indecent conduct' with lasses aged thirteen and fourteen, and pointedly observed that such 'shameful abuse . . . require[d] something more than a simple dismissal', namely the prosecution which A'Court had effectively determined against. In his formal quarterly report, he merely recorded that the Fareham master was 'dismissed for misconduct'. Subsequently the Board gave Mrs Bourne a 'testimonial', and if it the same had to be specifically refused for the husband, the Guardians committed to paper their view that he was 'quite honest'.²⁶¹

In the aftermath of the 1837 investigation, and despite its fairly rigorous profile, Fareham decided that inmates should have a traditional Christmas dinner of roast beef and fruit pudding, just as Hawley was concentrating on rebellious Boards in Surrey and Sussex. The Fareham Guardians escaped censure, which they followed by another culinary treat to celebrate Victoria's coronation, this time with beer for toasts, and swept aside the vice-chairman's strong animadversions on inmates securing advantages over 'independent labourers' and precedent setting. Although Hawley knew that Fareham was but one of several of his Unions so celebrating, he had merely protested, no doubt adding to what he wrote in his quarterly report, that 'inmates are generally the outcasts of their parishes', rather than require Auditors' interventions. His replacement by the familiar and more pragmatic A'Court, saw Christmas dinners being introduced at Droxford too in 1838. However, their provision was becoming quite widespread, so much so that in East

Kent, resistant Boards came under pressure from inmates. The Commission refused to sanction such expenditure, and after Christmas 1840 A'Court enforced it at Fareham and Droxford, only to be 'laughed at' by the former's Guardians. Elsewhere, further Yuletide workhouse feasts were increasingly and favourably reported in the press. Some squires subsequently seized on the opportunity for philanthropic gestures by paying the entire cost, among them J M Cripps at Chailey, and in 1840 the rigid Andover Board, having rejected an earlier initiative,²⁶² very surprisingly agreed to the subscription route which endured, though such Guardians as turned up seem to have gravitated to the master's private apartments.²⁶³

According to A'Court, both Fareham and Droxford Unions were 'very well conducted'; the sole rider to that was the latter's continued refusal to appoint a second relieving officer. He concluded in 1839 that it would be counter-productive 'to restrict the [Fareham] Guardians too closely', at least for the present while food prices remained high. But even in this context, some successes with 'prudence' manifested themselves, exemplified at Bishops Waltham, with a subscription charity – not for the first time extending a regular urban mechanism to the countryside – supplying soup at a halfpenny a pint, with a maximum of a gallon weekly for each family, from which 'persons of notoriously Idle and disorderly habits' were excluded.²⁶⁴ Droxford also purchased an identical hearse from the same Fareham coachmaker who had earlier supplied his neighbouring workhouse, though there is no mention of human motive power.²⁶⁵ A'Court had succeeded in minimising the fall-out from Bourne's predatory activities at Fareham, though the implications behind the Board's response to the request for references suggests a residual degree of inappropriate loyalty to the former governor, though not the same absurd pig-headedness later revealed at Andover in parallel circumstances. Moreover, other features of the changes launched by the Commission, including the revaluations of ratepayers' and the sales of parish properties, had generated further conflicts in which there were more losers than winners. In Droxford, Butler's transparent attempt to reignite controversy, was the victim of a flamboyant barrister whose supposedly witty repartee found an unreceptive audience in a jury comprised pro-Poor Law farmers. But if *The Times* immediately dropped that case, there was little doubt that its campaigning would continue in alliance with sectors of the provincial press. In that context, and given further real scandals and contrived hostile initiatives in the county, the complacency – notably of its visiting committee – revealed at Andover is a matter of some surprise.

X. Conclusions

Dr Engländer, in a series aimed principally at undergraduates, in 1998 observed magisterially that 'the substantial literature' deriving from 'local studies' of the New Poor Law, 'has by its sheer bulk and variety become an obstacle to the advancement of knowledge'. Apart from the delightful irony that he then goes on to complain at discrepancies between authors addressing the question of the abolition of 'outdoor relief' in the localities – and he does not demarcate between claimant categories – he also favourably quotes a historian of poverty in London who regrets that 'there is no single history' of the new system.²⁶⁶ And I would add, that a history of the Poor Law Commission itself would be a start. One of the problems in researching, not to mention composing, this Hampshire study, derives in part from these historiographical realities. The inter-reactive processes – which includes collisions – between the centre and the localities producing Engländer's perceptions of endless variation, simply cannot be understood *unless* what happens in the latter is related at least in part in the context defined by the centre. Hence my repeated references to the Commission's minutes, its annual reports (despite their deliberate distortions), and its quest for additional powers. Hence the recurrent concentrations on the Commission itself, its objectives and the Commissioners' repetitive tailoring of their responses to very differently-minded and often very differently-situated local administrations. And hence the continual referrals to the attitudes and potency (or lack of it) of successive governments, and their problems with parliamentarians in both houses, but especially the volatile Commons. There can be little doubt that the Hampshire workhouse and other poor-relief scandals investigated in 1837 could have derived from any region in the country where implementation of the 1834 Act was in progress, and indeed ironically from other districts – notably those embraced by obdurate Gilbert Unions where the Commissioners' attempts to intrude were vigorously resisted – where it was not. Here, we have established the complicated local developments, which ideologically split communities, and once exploited by opportunistic local opponents in cahoots with equally opportunistic politicians, led to the two south-eastern Hampshire Unions going on Walter's agenda and catapulted on to the country's.

On the supposition that Engländer's strictures will be ignored, a number of considerations might be advanced. First, Old Poor Law practices were greatly embedded and much more complex than they are portrayed by historians. The system – while nominally national – was very varied, not least because while the 1601 Act remained it was signi-

ificantly altered by adoption of permissive Acts, including Gilbert's and the second Sturges-Bourne statute. Local Act administrations further complicate the picture. The details of local practices also reveal very broad variations and these both defined and reflected community cultures – of actual and potential claimants *and* ratepayers. Put simply, various practices also reflected many other considerations, among them the structure of landowning and tenancy, demography and topography; in Hampshire, lightly populated downland and oft-“close” parishes were very different from their afforested counterparts, replete with commons, wastes and surviving common right. But having acknowledged this, attitudes of landowners, their greater tenants and substantial farming freeholders, could be crucial over for example, the adoption of the 1819 Select Vestry Act and with it moves aimed at cutting relief expenditure; despite the sterling support of at least some Petty Sessional Benches it must be doubted whether even the most determined economising select vestry made more than a dent in the dependency culture which we have encountered.²⁶⁷ But the attempt was one of the causes of Swing; Hampshire Justice Lockhart observed during the rising that ‘our economy and Retrenchment has operate[d] too much on our social defences’. That experience did not stop some communities reneging on both promises to up wages and make more generous relief provisions. As late as 1846, labourer Lewis of Penton Grafton was unable to ‘recollect that [he] ever did’ receive any allowances in-aid ‘except after the mobbing time’, and payment proved ephemeral.²⁶⁸

Nevertheless, the Old Poor Law remained central to all pre-1834 communities, quite literally part of the culture. Economising vestries may have eradicated regular allowances paid to all but men with the largest families, but that did not mean that they were ineligible for other benefits, paid on a ‘casual’ basis, grants in kind or of money for specific items, shoes, clothes, bedding, fuel and at least assistance with rents if not free housing. Moreover, even in the Gilbert Unions, the parish remained the key component, and if this was less true of some places under Local Acts, very localised autonomy remained the critical characteristic. The scale of vested interests is often under-estimated by historians, despite their contemporary notoriety. They extended way beyond claimants to embrace many ratepayers. The most obvious were the grander farmers whose wage bills were effectively subsidised in many rural communities, and incidentally their poor rate bills were used in negotiations with landlords to restrain rent increases and – during the depression – to win significant rent reductions.²⁶⁹ But compensation for other ratepayers came in the form of public contracts with cottage proprietors or the under-writing of plebeian rent payments, maintenance

work on publicly-owned domestic accommodation for joiners, thatchers and builders, contracts with doctors for medical services, shoemakers for footwear, tailors for clothes, bakers for bread, carpenters for coffins, and other shopkeepers for varieties of other necessities. This constituted another form of dependency, and of key importance for the survival of some businesses. If that jobbing scenario, together with the sheer scale of relief, was used to legitimate the 1834 Act itself, some employers – notably the larger farmers – perceived personal advantages from the reformed system, while many others were disadvantaged. All tradesmen were adversely affected, except that minority who emerged with contracts for supplying the new Unions, especially for the goods consumed in workhouses. Village publicans whose premises were used for regular vestry meetings – and where there were several pubs vestries commonly distributed custom by rotating venues²⁷⁰ – saw this source of profit diminish, though those in Union centres may have enjoyed a usually brief period before their hostelrys were replaced by new workhouse board-rooms, as at Droxford. The Commission may have initially recommended existing doctors, but Boards subsequently sought financial savings by contracting under-cutting incomers, again exemplified by Droxford. In short, there can be little doubt that plebeian families lost quite heavily – with perhaps the sense of security being the most psychologically significant – together with a substantial number of local rate-payers. The impact on cottage proprietors probably reduced the supply of housing. The new beershop proprietors who mushroomed after the 1830 Beer Act's passage, with some tradesmen becoming dual occupationists, shrank markedly after 1835; the New Poor-Law's impact on working-class incomes was inestimably more profound on alcohol consumption than repetitive denunciatory homilies from Quarter Sessions chairmen.²⁷¹

Concessions to the tradition of local autonomy were in reality very limited: even the annually-elected Guardians had little power individually, though of course tough characters who assiduously attended Boards could exercise a strong influence in those bodies, which we have encountered particularly with Stares at Droxford. Some of the *ex-officios*, additionally advantaged by their social positions, could be very dominant figures in these local administrations, as exemplified by the Revd. Christopher Dodson JP the first chairman of the eventually notorious Andover Board.²⁷² The Bench lost much of its historic controls over the welfare system. Droxford Petty Sessions used its residual powers, as we have seen to effectively obstruct – even harass – their Board of Guardians, though the magistrates clearly had no stomach through the exercise of their *ex-officio* rights for a weekly guerrilla campaign against their

ideologically enthusiastic elected colleagues. Conversely, their Fareham counterparts, whom it will be recalled formed an important element of the Board and regularly attended the Petty Sessions, were co-operative and on occasion played a complementary role. Co-operation came in the form of imposing attachment of earnings orders on liable persons, punishing men for failing to maintain their families and imprisoning inmates who disrupted workhouse life. But it was Captain Purvis, the target of the blood-curdling anonymous Swing missive and subsequently lackadaisical workhouse visiting committee chairman, once faced with yet more adolescent lads in the dock, who subsequently drove through the decision to replace soul-destroying oakum-picking by education in the form of teaching horticultural skills.²⁷³

The central authority was the key and *radical* innovation. It represented the legally-constituted source – rather than just a symbol – specifically designed to eradicate local autonomy in the process of imposing a uniform welfare system. But the machinery was compromised by a huge range of factors. While, as we have seen, men like Stares at Droxford and Richard Wooldridge who became Fareham's vice-chairman in 1837, were more than enthusiastic and enduringly assiduous local administrators, they *understood* utilitarian philosophy. Edward Wyatt was also of their ilk, though he represented that minority of substantial farmers who were prepared to provide modest allotments. On the other hand, they were also representatives of those who unambiguously profited from the reforms, as were most major landlords: hence the Duke of Bedford's dramatic statement cited at the start of this piece. Even if we discount irredeemable opponents among the grandees, like the Duke of Buckingham, others clearly had reservations about the process of full implementation, and there is a sense that the indelible experience of Swing – and the enduring if fluctuating incidence of arson – was re-ignited by the spectre of Chartism whatever that movement's comparative manifest weakness in the South. One peak in that national movement coincided with the incremental impotence crippling Melbourne's government, and the changing balance within the Poor Law Commission itself. That climaxed in 1841-2 and coincident with Chartism's second surge. Thereafter, if the Commissioners' powers were strengthened – if not to their complete satisfaction – under Peel's auspices, ironically a combination of their more pragmatic stance and the severe compromise to their system's operational effectiveness with the reduction in assistant commissioners, served to restore to degrees the local autonomy whose demise was originally aimed at. In the later 1840s, the Commission actually publicised this reality as a *virtue*.²⁷⁴ But, between 1834 and 1840-1, political realities – both at the centre and in the localities – dictated that even in

rural England the Commissioners proceeded at different speeds, even with adjourning Unions. Hence the apparent confusions over the implementation of prohibitory relief orders to able-bodied men – let alone their female counterparts – revealed by the wide disparities uncovered by local studies. And, this endured throughout the 1840s. Some local administrations remained committed to utilitarian purity. Andover was one. However, at the time of the scandal in the mid-forties the vice-chairman of its neighbour, Stockbridge, boasted

“We go on very well, because we do not carry the Poor Law out; we evade the rules as much as possible. The Poor Law is not carried to the letter; we could not do it . . . the Commissioners will allow us to do anything, if we chose to ask for it; they do not want to be bothered; we may go on quietly if we do not bother them”.²⁷⁵

In effect, that was an eloquent testimony to the restoration of localised autonomy, if not quite so localised as under the forty-third of Elizabeth. It enabled some authorities to re-introduce – be it in reduced form – some of the Old Poor-Law practices still embedded in countryside communities’ culture, not necessarily after the asking for permission allegedly sought by Stockbridge. Moreover, as the Andover scandal was to reveal, the Victorian welfare system remained under hostile public and political scrutiny, which was brilliantly exploited by a much more experienced core of critical MPs, notably Wakley, Fielden and Captain Pechell be it in very different circumstances, namely the collapse of Peel’s ministry and his replacement by Russell; by then the Commissioners’ credibility had been compromised and within a month of his kissing hands it was annihilated.²⁷⁶

Finally, as we have seen, despite the fact that in the wake of the 1834 Act, and those few statutes refining it that were piloted through parliament, more was attempted than is to be found in New Poor-Law historiography. Ironically, again, here are to be found rather more residual elements of parochial autonomy. Funding for emigration under the Commissioners’ rules required the consent of the individual parish’s ratepayers who thus decided for or against taxing themselves. The retention of that over highways was important for many communities, though as the one unpublished doctoral thesis reveals, the scale of *de facto* outdoor relief for able-bodied males provided by parish vestries and their waywardens varied.²⁷⁷ There is little literature on the Parochial Assessment Act, and if as we have seen its implementation posed few problems for some parishes, in others it re-ignited fierce, prolonged and expensive disputes between ratepayers. It may have been more important in some parliamentary boroughs, and despite urban landlords practice of compounding

for rates, impacted significantly on the exercise of the franchise.²⁷⁸ Moreover, despite the biggest disposal of public – and locally-owned – property under the Parochial Property Act before the Thatcher era, the entire episode is known but indistinctly to a small number of specialist scholars, and Dr Englander is not among them. It requires investigation. Here too we find a powerful exercise of parochial autonomy and the continuation of what the Old Poor-Law's strident critics identified as an blatant abuse. The national context for that policy needs to be established, but the disposal – or retention – of community housing for the poor can only be studied in the localities.

Notes

- * I wish to thank the staff of the Hampshire County Record Office for their assistance in responding to enquiries, in addition to producing archival materials, and also Professor and the late Mrs Rule for their hospitality facilitating repeated visits to Winchester. Thanks are also due to historical geographer and enclosure expert, Dr John Chapman, of the University of Portsmouth, for helpful discussions and information on various aspects of rural Hampshire's history.
1. For the Andover scandal see N Longmate, *The Workhouse. A Social History* (1974), Ch.10. I Anstruther, *The Scandal of the Andover Workhouse* (1973 edition, Gloucester). The principal primary sources are *The Times*, later August to 22 September 1845, copious coverage of the public inquiry held in the Andover workhouse by assistant commissioner Parker. B[ritish] P[arliamentary] P[apers], House of Commons, select committee report, 'Andover Workhouse', (1846) [subsequently Commons, (1846)], Vol. V. In references to published parliamentary select committees' minutes of evidence, the question number(s) are followed by the witnesses' name(s), where necessary with a brief identificatory note, together with any other germane considerations, on an individual's first appearance in the notes.
 2. *The Times*, 19 June 1837.
 3. Fareham parishes: Boarhunt, Fareham, Portchester, Rowner, Southwick, Titchfield, Wickham, Widley, Wymering.
 4. Droxford parishes: Corhampton, Droxford, Durley, Exton, Hambledon, West Meon, Meonstoke, Soberton, Upham, Bishops Waltham, Warnford.
 5. A Brundage, *The Making of the New Poor Law 1832-39* (1978), esp. Chs.6-7. A Digby, *Pauper Palaces* (1978), esp. Ch.6, and pp.320-2. *Idem.*, 'The rural poor law', in D Fraser (ed.), *The New Poor Law in the Nineteenth Century* (1976), esp. p.158. But cf. esp. W Apfel and P Dunkley, 'English rural society and the new poor law: Bedfordshire 1834-47', *Social History*, 10 (1985), *passim*. P Mandler, 'The making of the new poor law *redivivus*', *Past and Present*, 117 (1987), *passim*, and K Williams, *From Pauperism to Poverty* (1981), esp. p.75. See also L H Lees, *The Solidarities of Strangers. The English Poor Laws and the People, 1700-1948* (Cambridge, 1998), esp. pp.15-6, 115-6, 145-6, 151-2, and S King, *Poverty and Welfare in England*

- 1700–1850; a *Regional Perspective* (Manchester, 2000), pp.27–9, 33, 66–70. For a useful, if idiosyncratic review of historians' debates on the New Poor Law, see D Englander, *Poverty and Poor-Law Reform in Nineteenth-Century Britain, 1834–1914* (Harlow, 1998), Ch.6.
6. P Slack, *The English Poor Law, 1531–1782* (Cambridge, 1990) pp.34, 38–40, 55–6. King, *op cit.*, esp. pp.18 (and note 2), 22, 24.
 7. D Roberts, 'How cruel was the Victorian poor law?', *Historical Journal*, 6 (1963), pp.97–107; U Henriques, 'How cruel was the Victorian poor law?', *ibid.*, 11 (1968), pp.365–71. In M Crowther, *The Workhouse System, 1834–1929* (1981), historians have an excellent study of the institution, its officers and the development of its facilities, but the book does not systematically address scandals.
 8. Commons, (1846), Q[uestion]s.1–27, 342–6, Hugh Mundy, Borough JP, considerable farmer, and elected Guardian for a town ward.
 9. Mandler, *op cit.*, p.136. Bedford to Lord William Russell, 4 April 1841, G Blakiston (ed.), *Lord William Russell and his Wife 1815–46* (1972), p.444.
 10. A R Wilks, 'Adjustments to arable farming after the Napoleonic Wars', *Agricultural History Review*, 28 (1980).
 11. R Wells, *Wretched Faces: Famine in Wartime England, 1793–1801* (Gloucester, 1988), pp.290–7, 299–301. Relief scales adopted by Fawley Petty Sessions, 31 August 1822, ordered printed by the House of Commons, 24 August 1831, with covering letter from justices' clerks; B Wills, to Sir Thomas Baring, 2 and 10 October 1822. H[ampshire] C[ounty] R[ecord] O[ffice], 92M95, F2/14, ff.26–7; F2/19, ff.97–8. *The Times*, 2 October 1822.
 12. J Harwood, Overton, to W Sturges-Bourne, 25 February 1819; owner-occupier farmer Simmons, Winchester, to Sir T Baring, 4 December: Hambledon vestry minutes, 20 November 1830, HCRO. 92M95, F/14, f.4; F/19, f.153; 46M69, PV/1. Overseer Roberts, Northington, to Chadwick, 25 November 1834; assistant commissioner A'Court to Commissioner Lefevre, 9 June 1835, P[ublic] RO. M[inistry of] H[ealth], 12/12063; 32/2. K D M Snell, *Annals of the Labouring Poor; Social Change and Agrarian England 1660–1900* (Cambridge, 1985), Ch.2. B M Short, 'The decline of living-in servants in the transition to capitalist farming: a critique of the Sussex evidence', and M Reed, 'Indoor farm service in 19th century Sussex: some criticisms of a critique', *Sussex Archaeological Collections*, Vols. 122 and 123, (1984 and 1985). BPP. 'Reports of the Commissioners on the Poor Laws', (1834), Vol.XXVIII, answers to rural query 46, communications, Appendix C, p.2. Subsequently, Poor Law Report.
 13. The standard work on the Swing revolt, which is not definitive, remains E J Hobsbawm and G Rudé, *Captain Swing* (1973 edition); its narrative account of the rising in Hampshire is relatively slight, though much Hampshire material figures in the analytical chapters. J L and Barbara Hammond's classic, *The Village Labourer* (4th edition, 1927, and many later reprints) is still useful, particularly Ch. XI. D Kent, 'Popular Radicalism and the Swing Riots in Central Hampshire', *Hampshire Papers*, 11 (Hampshire County Council, May 1997) focuses on the Dever Valley. R Foster, *The Politics of County Power. Wellington and the Hampshire Gentle-*

- men 1820-52 (1990), Ch.4, concentrates on the revolt's suppression. I Dyke, *William Cobbett and Rural Popular Culture* (1992), Ch. 7, uses much Hampshire evidence of Cobbett's followers active in the mobilisations. Jill Chambers, *Hampshire Machine Breakers; the Story of the 1830 Riots* (Clifton, Bedfordshire, 1990), provides a narrative heavily dependent on press reports, but gives a mass of details on most prosecuted participants from court records, and the substantial documentation – including additional evidence of individuals' precise role in events – deriving from appeals for clemency and pardons, most of which is held in PRO. H[ome] O[ffice], 17/ series, but not from the main HO. provincial correspondence files, series 40 and 52; further details derive from convict records held in Tasmanian and New South Walian archives. A Charlesworth, 'Protest in a Rural Society; the Spatial Diffusion of the Captain Swing Disturbances of 1830-31', *Historical Geography Research Series*, 1 (1979), offers an alternative analysis based on mapping the conflagration and places considerable emphasis on the insurgents' politics; cf. A M Colson, 'The Revolt of the Hampshire Agricultural Labourers and its Causes, 1812-1831', (Unpublished MA thesis, University of London, 1937), Ch.IX. For less substantial additional information, and interpretations, see esp. R Wells, 'Rural rebels in southern England in the 1830s', in C Emsley and J Walvin (eds.), *Artisans, Peasants & Proletarians 1760-1860* (1985), pp.127-45, *idem*, 'Social protest, class, conflict and consciousness, in the English countryside, 1700-1880', in M Reed and Wells (eds.), *Class, Conflict and Protest in the English Countryside 1700-1880* (1990), esp. pp.161-70, 181-98, *idem*, 'The moral economy of the English countryside', in A Randall and A Charlesworth (eds.), *Moral Economy and Popular Protest. Crowds, Conflict and Authority* (2000), esp. pp.235-43.
14. W Bingham Baring to Lady Baring (in London), 25 November 1830, HCRO. 100M70, F.1.
 15. *Ibid.* Stockbridge, printed agreement, 8 December; H Budd to Bonham-Carter, n.d. but 23 November; Bonham-Carter to his wife, n.d. but November 1830, HCRO. 94M72, F.15: 92M95, F/2, f.3. *The Times*, 24 and 28 December 1830. For the under-reportage of incendiarism, see Wells, 'Social protest...', p.159. BPP. House of Commons, select committee report on 'The Poor Law Amendment Act', (Reports 1-22, 1837) Vol. XVII, [subsequently, Commons (1837)], Q[uestion] 6173, Harrison. For some biographical details on the south-eastern Hampshire witnesses to this key source, see the Appendix, pp.219-27 below.
 16. Grey to Ellice, 2 March 1830, cited I Newbould, *Whiggery and Reform, 1830-41. The Politics of Government* (1990), p.45. J Sperber, *Revolutionary Europe 1780-1850* (2000), pp.352-5.
 17. O Jackson, 'Revolutionary reports: French news coverage in the Bristol press, c.1792-1848', *Southern History*, 24 (2002), pp.72-4, 77, 84. M Brock, *The Great Reform Act* (1973), Ch.3, part of cite from pp.98-9. D le Marchant to Francis Baring, 14 August 1830, Earl of Northbrook (ed.), *Journals and Correspondence of Francis Thornhill Baring, Lord Northbrook*, 2 vols. (privately printed, 1905), I, p.66. R Quinault, 'The French Revolution of 1830 and parliamentary reform', *History*, 79 (1994). R Wells, 'Mr William

- Cobbett, Captain Swing and King William IV', *Agricultural History Review*, 45, 1 (1997), esp. pp.34–6.
18. Some of this evidence is given in Hobsbawm and Rudé, *op cit.*, pp.182–3. See also C Griffin, "There was no law to punish that offence". Re-assessing "Captain Swing": rural Luddism and rebellion in East Kent, 1830–31', *Southern History*, 22 (2000).
 19. Wells, *loc.cit.*, esp. pp.35–6.
 20. Brock, *op cit.*, pp.106, 110–1, 130–2. Foster, *op cit.*, pp.68–74. For some Hampshire troubles in the 1790s, see Wells, *Wretched Faces . . .*, pp.101, 128, 162, 180. BPP, House of Commons, select committee report on 'The Sale of Beer', (1833), Q's.120, 122, Wright.
 21. Cited by Chambers, *op cit.*, p.49; unfortunately no reference is given.
 22. I have deliberately concentrated on often undated communications despatched between gentry to both their wives and their allies in the field against the insurgents, rather than the commonly more calm and calculated reports sent especially to the Home Office. This and the following three paragraphs are based on: letters to Bonham-Carter from J Hugenio [? but the 'old Soldier'], W Mitchell, 24 and 25 November, and J Budd n.d; circular, governor Bennett of Winchester jail, n.d; Bonham-Carter to his wife, three undated letters: Bingham Baring to Lady Baring, 21 and 25 November, and two undated: Sir William Heathcote to Sir T Baring, 19 November; paper in Sir T Baring's hand, esp. re. attack on Winchester gaol, n.d. (December), and deposition of W Pain, 1 December 1830, HCRO. 94M72, F.15: 100M70, F1–4: 92M95, F2/9, ff.1, 10, 13. Letters to Wellington from Lord Fitzroy Somerset, Buckingham, Carnarvon, respectively, 21, 22 and 29 November 1830, S[outhampton] U[niversity] L[ibrary], Wellington Papers, 4/1/2/2, ff.9, 19; 1/1152, f.27. Pollen to Phillipps, 26 November, and Heathcote to Col. Mair, 31 December 1830, PRO.40/25 (5), ff.492–494A; 52/7, ff.25–7. *The Times*, 29 December 1830 and 3 January 1831. Lord Ellenborough diary entry, 24 November 1830, A Aspinall (ed.), *Three Early Nineteenth-Century Diaries* (1952), p.24. Commons, (1837), Q's.4310, 6170, Harrison. Chambers, *op cit.*, pp.42–3, 338–9.
 23. Hambledon vestry minutes, 25 March, 13 April, 3, 9 and 20 November 1830, HCRO. 46M69, PV/1.
 24. Nicholas Freemantle who assaulted Long's man Watts at Corhampton, in the process of getting money, was not only charged with that capital offence, but with a similar assault and riot, ten miles away at Owlesbury on the 23rd. Chambers, *op cit.*, pp.20–1, 23, 25, 46–7, 60–1, 127, 198–200, 218, 223–4, 236–7, 249–50. G Buttley, Soberton, to Sir T Baring, n.d. but December 1830, HCRO. 92M95, F/2, f.2. H Atkins JP, Bishops Waltham, to the Home Office, 23 November 1830, PRO. HO.52/7, ff.68–9. Colson, *op cit.*, p.101.
 25. Soberton vestry minutes, 24 November: Hambledon vestry minutes, and loose document, draft agreement re. rents, both 23 November 1830, HCRO. 46M69, PO/4; PV/1: 50M73A, PV/1. Cf. Wells, 'Social protest . . .', pp.139–40.
 26. Chambers, *op cit.*, pp.47, 55–6. Hobsbawm and Rudé, *op cit.*, Appendix

- III, p.9. Titchfield vestry minutes, 27 November 1830, HCRO. 37M73A, PV/2.
27. Foster, *op cit.*, pp.82-3. Printed bill, 25 November 1830; cutting from *Hampshire Chronicle*, 31 January 1831, about events a century before: Baring to his wife, 25 November; Bonham-Carter to his wife, n.d. [November 1830], HCRO. 100M70, F.1-2: 94M72, F.15, f.7. Heathcote to Mair, 31 December 1830, PRO. HO.40/27(5), ff.492-494A.
 28. Phillippis to Tallents, and reply, 25 December 1830 and 6 January 1831, PRO. HO.40/27(6), ff.628-9: 41/9, p.195. 'Prisoners whose Cases have not been settled': 'List of Labourers of William Pain': list of Stratton pig-keepers, HCRO. 92M95, F2/9, ff.1-2; F2/11, f.1.
 29. Computed from Chambers, *op cit.*, pp.73, 159, 190, 199-200, 209, 218, 223-4, 227, 236-7, 250-1, 295-6, 311, 314, 328-9.
 30. *Hampshire Chronicle*, *loc.cit.* A Smith to Wellington, 28 November 1830, SUL. Wellington Papers, 4/1/2/2, f.34. BPP, 'Beer', Q's.3-9, Wright. *Salisbury and Winchester Journal*, 10 January and 14 February 1831. Revd. Butler JP, enclosing notice of 'Hambledon Independent Union Society', early November 1831, sent to Melbourne, 6 January 1832, PRO. HO.64/3, ff.70-3. R D Storch, 'Policing rural southern England before the police; opinion and practice 1830-1856', in D Hey and F Synder (eds.), *Policing and Prosecution in Britain 1750-1850* (Oxford, 1989), pp.218-9.
 31. Capt. Stewart, Life Guards, on 'dangerous sentiments . . . publicly disseminated' by his rank and file when off duty, to Wellington, 6 November 1830, SUL. Wellington Papers, 1/1149, f.23. Cf. anon., to Home Office, 5 November 1830, forwarded to Commissioner Rowan of the Metropolitan Police, PRO. HO.40/25(1), ff.47-8.
 32. Dyck, *op cit.*, pp.197-8. 'Winchester Political Union' secretary and *Poor Mans Guardian* correspondent, Henry Stripp, to the landlord of the White Hart, Wherwell, 26 October; Col. Iremonger, Wherwell, and H B Greene, Longparish, to Sir John Potten, 28 and 31 October; letters to Wellington from, Potten, 28 October and 5 (enclosing Barton Stacey Political Union rules) November, Mayor of Winchester, 6 and 16 November, Buckingham, and Blount, Kempshott, 20 and 30 November: Wellington to Mayor of Andover, Mayor of Winchester, and Woodham, 3, 20 and 30 November, and Blount, 30 December 1832, SUL. Wellington Papers, 4/1/4/1, f.211; 3/1/4/3, ff.29, 32, 34-5, 37, 39-41, 43. Sir R Jarvis, and T Lloyd, Winchester, to Sir T Baring, n.d. (but November), and 29 November 1832, HCRO. 92M95, F12/17, ff.7, 60. Wellington to Melbourne, 3 and 7 November 1832, L C Saunders (ed.), *Lord Melbourne's Papers* (1889), pp.148-51. *Reading Mercury*, 10 January 1831. *Brighton Gazette*, 22 November; *Poor Mans Guardian*, 1 and 8 December; *Hampshire Chronicle*, 3 December 1832.
 33. Mayor of Winchester to Melbourne, 5 May, enclosing letter from Snagg, 29 April 1833, PRO. HO.52/23, ff.63-4.
 34. M Chase, *Early Trade Unionism; Fraternity, Skill and the Politics of Labour* (Aldershot, 2000), pp.162-70. See also R Wells, 'Tolpuddle in the context of English agrarian labour history, 1780-1850', in J Rule (ed.), *British Trade Unionism 1750-1850; the Formative Years* (1988), esp. pp.121-3.
 35. *Morning Chronicle*, 9 December 1830. *Salisbury and Winchester Journal*, 31

- January 1831. J A Smith, South Tedworth, to Wellington, 20 January 1831, SUL. Wellington Papers, 1/1173, f.30. Wells, 'Social protest...', p.159, and sources cited there.
36. Wellington to Lamb (Home Office), 9 and 11 April; letters to Wellington from Smith, 7 and 10 April, and W Musson, Burton, 8 November 1831, SUL. Wellington Papers, 4/1/3/3, ff.3-4, 6, 8: 1/1173, f.9. B Herring, Winchester, to Sir T Baring, 2 May 1832, HCRO. 92M95, F2/1, f.46. *Hampshire Telegraph*, 11 February, 15 April, 20 May and 21 October 1833, and 6 January 1834. *Hampshire Chronicle*, 15 April and 21 October 1833. Poor Law Report, *loc.cit.* Commons, (1837), Q's.6646-8, 6670, Wooldridge; Q's.9218-21, Wyatt. J Broad, 'Housing the rural poor in southern England, 1650-1850', *Agricultural History Review*, 48, II (2000), pp.154-5. R E Foster, 'A cure for crime? The Hampshire Constabulary 1839-1856', *Southern History*, 12 (1990), pp.52-3.
 37. Micheldever allotment scheme details, (1816?), for just over eleven acres, divided into allotments of twenty poles; this added to an earlier scheme, started in 1811, which the overseers calculated had saved ratepayers a substantial weekly average over the winter months of £5-14-6, between 1811 and 1816. B Wills, from 1830 the editor of *The Labourers Friend*, to Sir T Baring, 21 October 1821, HCRO. 92M95, F2/14/1, f.3; F2/19, f.96. Cf. J Burchardt, *The Allotment Movement in England, 1793-1873* (Woodbridge, 2002), Ch.1, esp. p.35, and for Wills, pp.74-5, which surprisingly eschews systematic exploration of major landowners' estate and other personal records.
 38. J Chapman and S Seeliger, 'A Guide to Enclosure in Hampshire 1700-1900', *Hampshire Record Series*, Vol.XV (Winchester, 1997), p.101. House of Commons, *Journal*, Vol.82 (1826-7), pp.82, 355, 375, 424, 428, 533-4. House of Lords, Vol.59 *Journal*, (1826-7), pp.408, 420, which suggests that its proposer, the Bishop of Winchester, changed his mind.
 39. Bishops Waltham vestry minutes, 14, 19, 21 and 26 November, 19, 26 and 31 December 1830, 21 November, 6 and 14 December 1832. *Chester Courant*, 20 April 1830. The Acts are 1&2 William IV, Caps. 42 and 59, and 2&3 William IV, Cap.42, briefly discussed in Burchardt, *op cit.*, pp.52-3.
 40. Letters to Sir T Baring from Buckingham's steward, 1 January, and W Santer, former Labourers Friend Society agent, 24 and 28 December 1833: Hambledon vestry minutes, 28 March 1831; Soberton vestry minutes, 27 June 1833, HCRO. 92M95, F2/19, ff. 174, 178-9: 30M77, PV/2: 46M69, PV/1: 50M73A, PV/1. A'Court to Lefevre, 9 June 1835, PRO. MH.32/2. Commons, (1837), Q.3973, Harrison; Q's.5862-4, Wild. *Hampshire Chronicle*, 7 March 1831. *Hampshire Telegraph*, 20 January and 20 October 1834, and 6 July 1835.
 41. Commons, (1837), Q's.3973, 4053-60, 4074-8, 4147, Harrison; Q's.5062, 5066-9, 5070-3, 5340-1, 5533-9, Butler; Q's.5861-4, Wild; Q's.7061-70, Wooldridge; Q's.9233-8, 10098-10117, 10230-1, Wyatt; esp. Q's.7065, 9234 and 10114-7.
 42. Burchardt, *op cit.*, links together in his 'second allotment movement' the period from 1830 to 'c.1845', which I regard as unhelpful, and should be divided into two, with the first - the immediate response to Swing 1830-

- 4 – and a second from 1836 in direct response to the implementation as opposed to the passage of the New Poor Law. See his Part.II, *passim*, and cf. esp. pp.129–32: the 1837 select committee reports and minutes of evidence, and others on the New Poor Law, have not been consulted.
43. J Bulbeck, and A'Court (re. Hambledon), to the P[oor] L[aw] C[ommission], 19 October 1834 and 23 January 1835, PRO. MH.12/10751; 12370. Commons, (1837), Q.8915, A'Court. Cf. Wells, 'Moral economy . . .', esp. pp.225–7, where I acknowledged the attitudes of Cobbettite plebeian countrymen, and Hampshire hosted many, together with squatter communities on unenclosed commons and in the forest districts, including Hampshire examples. For those North-east Kent communities which rebelled in 1838, partly under the influence of millenarian-inspired notions of land reform, see B Reay, *The Last Rising of the Agricultural Labourers* (Oxford, 1990), esp. pp.103–5, 109, 176. Cf. A Armstrong, *Farmworkers. A Social and Economic History 1770–1980* (1988), p.68, Hobsbawm and Rudé, *op cit.*, pp.xii, 44, and Burchardt, *op cit.*, pp.136–7. I remain convinced that prior to the rigours imposed under the Poor Law Amendment Act, access to land was not a significant demand of agricultural labourers. See also below, p.151.
 44. *Hampshire Telegraph*, 1 July 1833. *Hampshire Chronicle*, 1 July and 27 September 1833. Anstruther, *op cit.*, p.70. Bentley, printed notice of the 1832 Act's adoption, listing names in different labouring categories, adults, young men, youths and boys: Hambledon vestry minutes, 5 December 1830, 2 April 1831, 2 February 1832 and 6 December 1833, HCRO. 92M95, F2/14, f.15: 46M69, PO/9; PV/1. Iremonger to Wellington, 29 October 1832, SUL. Wellington papers, 4/1/4/3, f.34. Butler to Melbourne, with enclosure, and J Atheridge, Hambledon, to under-secretary of state Home Office, 6 and 12 January 1832: A'Court to Lefevre, 21 January and 8 June, and the PLC, 23 January 1835, PRO. MH. 12/10767; 12370: 32/2: HO.64/3, ff.70–5. Poor Law Report, *loc.cit.* Cf. A Digby, 'The labour market and the continuity of social policy after 1834: the case of the eastern counties', *Economic History Review*, 2s. XXVIII (1975), p.78.
 45. Broad, *loc.cit.*, pp.151–70, though the situation is perhaps not so 'unknown' as he suggests, esp. p.166; cf. Wells, 'Social protest . . .', pp.134–41. For a superb concrete example of a 'close' parish landlord's exercise of direct control over housing, see Broad, pp.151–3. Poor Law Report, Appendix C, Revd. Blakiston, Lymington. BPP. House of Commons, select committee report, 'Payment of Rates to which Small Tenements are Liable', (1837–8), Vol.XXI, Q.564, assistant commissioner Gulson; Q's.3372, 3384, vestry clerk Causton of Godalming. Widley overseer, and parish officers, Titchfield, to the PLC, n.d. but 19 September 1834, and 3 May 1836, PRO. MH.12/10767. Note, 20 May 1821, re. Hambledon census, in overseers' accounts, HCRO. 46M69, PO/9. D R Mills, *Lord and Peasant in Nineteenth-Century Britain* (1980), Ch.4. S Banks, 'Nineteenth-century scandal or twentieth-century model? A new look at "Open" and "Close" parishes', *Economic History Review*, 2s. Vol.XLI (1988).
 46. B Biddle, *Bishops Waltham: A History* (Chichester, 2002), pp.78–84.

- Bishops Waltham vestry minutes, 3 February, 2 and 9 March, and 25 May 1832, HCRO. 30M77, PV/2.
47. A'Court to the PLC, 23 April: assistant overseer, Southwick, to the PLC, 15 May 1835; J G Marsham to Portchester vestry, 22 April; formal sale applications, Portchester, and Wickham, 5 May and 1 July; Widley parish officers to Fareham Union Clerk, 12 July 1836, PRO. MH.12/10767: 32/2. Hambledon overseers' accounts, April 1832 and May 1833: vestry minutes: Hambledon, 18 and 28 April 1809, and 25 April 1828; Droxford, 5 May 1820, 1 and 15 May, 6 April and 29 September 1822; Bishops Waltham, 9 July 1819, 15 May 1823, 7 March 1828, 3 February, 2 March and 25 May 1832, HCRO. 46M69, PO/4; 9: PV/1: 66M76A, PV/3: 30M77, PV/2.
 48. Droxford Union Clerk to Chadwick, 16 April; parish officers, Bishops Waltham, to the PLC, and Widley to Clerk, Fareham, 30 April and 12 July 1836: solicitors Poulden and George to Widley parish officers, 24 August and 2 September, and Somerset House lawyer Lumley's draft response, 12 October 1841: Chadwick to Treasury Solicitor Maule, 14 February 1837, PRO. MH.12/10751; 10767; 10768: HO.73/52. Titchfield vestry minutes, 6 February 1823, HCRO. 34M73A, PV/2. For parish indebtedness see King, *op cit.*, pp.88–91, Wells, 'Social protest...', pp.144–5, *idem*, 'Crime and protest in a country parish; Burwash, 1790–1850', in J Rule and R Wells eds.), *Crime, Protest and Popular Politics in Southern England 1740–1850* (1997) p.176; and for the trajectory of parish loans, R Wells, 'Poor law reform in the rural South-east: the impact of the "Sturges Bourne Acts" during the agricultural depression, 1815–35', *Southern History*, 23 (2001), pp.72–3, 78–9.
 49. BPP. 'Small Tenements...', Q.666, Gulson; Q's.2511–4, Benham; Q's.3357–8, 3364–5, 3384–6, 3414–7, Godalming vestry clerk. Commons, (1837), Q.6670, Wooldridge. R Wells, 'Migration, the law, and parochial policy in eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century southern England', *Southern History*, 15 (1993), pp.103–7.
 50. For Stares, see the Appendix, p.225. Vestry minutes: Titchfield, 29 July and 14 September 1820, 22 September 1822 and 6 February 1823; Droxford, 31 March, 3 April, 9 June and 15 December 1831, 3 January and 3 August 1832; Hambledon, 28 March 1831, HCRO. 37M73A, PV/2: 46M69, PV/1: 66M76A, PV/3.
 51. *Hampshire Independent*, 27 July 1840.
 52. Titchfield vestry minutes, 5 April 1831: Andover Union minutes, 19 November 1836, HCRO. 37M73A, PV/2: PL.3/4/7. Wells, 'Burwash...', p.182. Wells, 'Social protest...', p.145.
 53. Among them, Henriques, *op cit.*, p.370; U Henriques, *Before the Welfare State* (1979), p.33. P Dunkley, 'Whigs and paupers: the reform of the English poor laws, 1830–1834', *Journal of British Studies*, 20 (1981), pp.127–9.
 54. Wells, *Wretched Faces* . . . , pp.338–9, but cf. P Dunkley, *The Crisis of the Old Poor Law in England, 1795–1834; an Interpretative Essay* (1982), pp.117–8.
 55. For the South-eastern situation in 1831–4, see Wells, 'Social protest...', pp.166–70, though the brief Kentish recrudescence of the destruction of

threshing machines is unique, and for East Anglia, J Archer, "By a Flash and a Scare": Arson, Animal Maiming, and Poaching in East Anglia 1815-1870 (1990), pp.89-101.

56. For the 'Extracts', see Brundage, *op cit.*, pp.27, 43.
57. *Ibid.*, Ch.2. S G and E O A Checkland (eds.), *The Poor Law Report of 1834* (1974), esp. pp.33-9, 42-5, 341-53, 355-7, 486-7.
58. Fareham, Board of Guardians minutes, [subsequently Fareham minutes], 29 May 1835, HCRO. PL3/8/1; 1a. Commons, (1837), Q's.3968-9, 3977, 4018-28, 4277, 6093, 6098-7100, 6107, 6149-50, 6170-4, 9295, Harrison; Q's. 6182, 6187, Brock; Q.6486, Smith; Q.6945, Wooldridge; Q.7642, Stares; Q's.8892, 8898, A'Court.
59. Some elderly persons opted for the workhouse because they enjoyed a higher material standard of living there, finding the dietary more adequate than adolescents and younger adults. At least two justices were required to order outdoor relief for the elderly, one of whom had to certify the condition from 'his own knowledge' of individual cases. Commons, (1837), Q.4020, Harrison; Q.10057, Bulbeck. J Tidd Pratt, *The Act for the Amendment and Better Administration of the Poor in England and Wales with Explanatory Notes and a Copious Index* (1834), pp.21-2.
60. The Highway Rate remained under vestry control after the Amendment Act, and remained so despite attempts by the PLC to persuade ministers to legislate to put parish road maintenance under the Poor Law Unions; while in some counties this enabled vestries to employ men on the highways in large numbers, and thus evade applying for poor relief and risk incarceration in workhouses, evidence given to the 1837 select committee suggests that it was not widespread in south-east Hampshire after 1836. Commons, (1837), Q's.4070, 4179, 4184-6, Harrison; Q's.10168-77, 10256-68, Wyatt. J V Moseley, 'Poor Law Administration in England and Wales 1834 to 1850 with Special Reference to the Problem of Able-bodied Pauperism', (Unpublished Ph.D. thesis, University of London, 1975), esp. pp.33-5, 151-2, 201, 216, 220-42, 309. R. Wells, 'Resistance to the New Poor Law in the rural south', in Rule and Wells *op cit.*, p.123. Wells, 'Rural rebels . . .', p.148, and note 110.
61. Wells, 'Poor-law reform . . .', pp.80-9. M Neuman, *The Speenhamland County. Poverty and the Poor Laws in Berkshire, 1782-1834* (1982), pp.176-83. A Brundage, *The English Poor Laws, 1700-1930* (2002), pp.50-2.
62. *Hampshire Telegraph*, 4 and 25 May, 13 July, 21 September and 5 October 1835. J Knott, *Popular Opposition to the 1834 Poor Law* (1986), ch.3. N C Edsall, *The Anti-Poor Law Movement, 1833-44* (Manchester, 1971), pp.27-41. Wells, 'Resistance . . .', pp.91-126. J Lowerson, 'The aftermath of Swing; anti-poor law movements and rural trades unions in the south of England', in A Charlesworth (ed.), *Rural Social Change and Conflicts since 1500* (Hull, 1983), pp.55-82. A Digby, *Pauper Palaces* (1978), pp.218-24. Brundage, *The Making . . .*, pp.117-21.
63. Despite this false alarm, a further demand for troops in the Winchester region secured a cavalry detachment in mid-October 1835, when it was suggested that their 'timely appearance' would pre-empt a planned farm-workers' strike against the customary seasonal wage-reduction (this year

- from nine to eight shillings weekly), which coincided with the accelerating implementation of the New Poor Law. Similar strikes were organised in Sussex by a short-lived labourers' union, the 'United Brothers of Industry' at this juncture, only to be defeated by a lock-out. Phillipps, Home Office, to the PLC, 19 October 1834; Sir T Baring to Russell, 10 October 1835, and annotation, PRO. HO.19/63; 52/26, ff.80-1. Wells, 'Rural rebels . . .', pp.144-7.
64. The fact that the market price for the bread was used in the calculation, rather than the twopence off the quartern price negotiated with the contractor, constituted a gratuitously inflammable provocation, despite the fact that bulk purchases were PLC policy. Harrison to the PLC, 27 September 1834 and 18 January; A'Court to Lefevre, 21, 23 and 30 January, and 4 February, and the PLC, 23 January; Lefevre to Bingham Baring, 27 January 1835; anon. (Peter Lovekin) to Sir James Graham MP, 7 May 1837, PRO. MH.12/10613; 10751; 12370 (misfiled): 32/2. Commons, (1837), Q's.3977, 4187-92, 4195, 6101-4, Harrison; Q.6538, Smith; Q.8915, A'Court. Wells, 'Resistance . . .', p.94. E P Thompson, *Whigs and Hunters; the Origins of the Black Act* (1975), Chs.4-7.
 65. Commons, (1837), Q's.5245, 5467-8, Butler; Q.7582, Brock; Q's.7597-8, 7686-7, Stares. A'Court to Lefevre, 30 January 1835, PRO. MH.12/10751. Bishops Waltham vestry minutes, 11, 13, 25 and 29 January 1835, HCRO. 30M77, PV/2. *Hampshire Telegraph*, 1 June 1835.
 66. This initiated a process culminating in the celebrated era of 'high farming'. B Afton, 'The great agricultural depression on the English chalklands: the Hampshire experience', *Agricultural History Review*, 44, II (1996), pp.191-5. Commons, (1837), Q's.9871-82, 9893, 9896-9, Bulbeck; Q's.10091, 10098, 10100, 10147-50, 10156, 10163-5, 10182, Wyatt. BPP. 'Payment of Rates . . .', Q's.3410-1, Causton.
 67. See esp. Wells, 'Resistance . . .', *passim*.
 68. *Ibid.*, esp. pp.111-7. Fareham Clerk, to the PLC, 27 October 1835; Lefevre to Russell, 23 February 1837, PRO. MH.12/10767; HO.73/52. Brundage, *The Making . . .*, pp.97-100, 153-61. Knott, *op cit.*, pp.109-13. S A Weaver, *John Fielden and the Politics of Popular Radicalism 1832-1847* (Oxford, 1987), pp.159-60. Russell in the Commons, 28 July 1837, *Hansard*, 3rd ser., Vol.35 (1837), col.612.
 69. *Ibid.*, Vol.36, cols.987-1012. A'Court to Chadwick, and the PLC, 26 and 28 February: PLC minutes, 25 February 1837, PRO. MH.1/10, p.49; 12/10751.
 70. Snell, *op cit.*, pp.120-33, is one significant exception, though the information is used empirically.
 71. *The Times*, 7 March 1837. Weaver, *op cit.*, pp.171-2.
 72. The non-despatch of the questionnaire is inferred from the fact that I have never encountered one in any of the numerous substantial volumes of the correspondence between Somerset House and each individual Union, consulted to date; PRO. MH.12/series.
 73. Roberts to the PLC, 23 September 1834, PRO. MH.12/10613. See also below, pp.158-9.
 74. By this date Somerset House was inundated by enquiries, and if the Com-

- missioners stressed that parish officers had no power to hire cottages, and that therefore landlords could not sue defaulting parishes, the Commission recognised that if this 'objectionable species of relief' was suddenly prohibited it would 'inconvenience' owners. However, such payments on the behalf of able-bodied men were prohibited under the PLC's rules, and Union Auditors might refuse to allow such expenditure, and thereby provoke litigation; in that event the Commission would not involve itself. This ruling was an open invitation to vestries to carry on regardless, and for Auditors to overlook illegal parish disbursements. It seems to have divided the Commissioners, as when Lefevre learned that Droxford was to instruct member parishes to surrender leases in six months time, he angrily annotated the letter, 'the practice of hiring cottages was wholly unauthorised by law & the Poor Rates are in no way liable for any charge in respect of them'. PLC minutes, 26 January; Clerk, Droxford, to Chadwick, 10 April 1836, and annotation, PRO. MH.1/5, pp.137-40; 12/10751.
75. PLC minutes, 26 August, 4 September and 4 November 1834, PRO. MH.1/1, pp.7-9, 54-77. *Hampshire Chronicle*, 14 April and 20 October 1834, 9, 23 and 30 March 1835. Commons, (1837), Q's.7793-4, Stares. Droxford Clerk to Chadwick, 16 June 1836, PRO. MH.12/10751.
 76. Assistant commissioner Hawley [to select committee chairman Fazakerley, from internal evidence] unaddressed and undated but c.21 March 1837, erroneously filed at PRO. MH.32/38.
 77. An argument advanced by A Brundage, 'The landed interest and the New Poor Law', *English Historical Review*, 87 (1972), and refined in *idem*, 'The English poor law of 1834 and the cohesion of agricultural society', *Agricultural History*, 48 (1974), pp.405-17, reiterated with greater detail in Brundage, *The Making . . .*, Ch.V, briefly summarised with some riders in Brundage, *English Poor Laws . . .*, pp.71-3, and again in A Brundage, *England's "Prussian Minister": Edwin Chadwick and the Politics of Government Growth, 1832-1854* (1988), p.45, though at no time addressing the central critical points made by P Dunkley, 'The landed interest and the New Poor Law; a critical note', *English Historical Review*, 88 (1973). Cf. B K Song, 'Continuity and change in English rural society: the formation of Poor Law Unions in Oxfordshire', *ibid.*, 114 (1999), pp.314-38, and Mandler, *op cit.*, pp.152-4.
 78. Droxford land purchase sanction document, 28 April 1836, PRO. MH.12/10751.
 79. Hampshire evidence indicates that Brundage's picture of Union formation is somewhat complacent. For example, A'Court found William Portal, aged 83 and the owner of 'my two little Country Parishes of Lavestock and Freefolk Manor' plus Tufton, impossible to 'disarm'. The entire 1500 acres of Tufton was rented by one farmer '& consequently there is no poor rate & no parish accounts'; the other two parishes were 'managed entirely by Portal & the tenant', and no doubt partly conditioned by the old squire's age, A'Court decided that they 'remain unattached at all events for the present'. The Duke of Buckingham and his Duchess were middle-aged 'troublesome customers' and his lordship was determined to keep his seat at Avington, where the situation was the same as at Tufton, out, and

Easton too if possible. He succeeded with Avington but the Commissioners refused 'to extend that indulgence' to Easton. In late 1837 negotiations, the responsible assistant commissioner assumed that Buckingham's attitude would have been transformed by the economies achieved, only to be brusquely informed that 'every hours experience increases my objections both to the principle of the measure and the mode of its implementation': it 'only... incur[s]... expense, without doing the least service'. The repeated refusal of Fordingbridge Union to accept Ringwood or Barley resulted in the tiny five parish Union of Ringwood. Even smaller was the four parishes embraced by Hursley, because Sir William Heathcote 'deserves our best & kindest consideration' in Commissioner Lefevre's estimation, and not included in the substantial Winchester Union. Conversely, the Duke of Wellington's preference for a similar arrangement around Stratford Saye was resisted, though its inclusion in the big Basingstoke Union, resulted in magistrates being elected Guardians for most parishes, reflecting farmers' warmth towards 'the Upper Classes, which [A'Court]... had not found... everywhere'. A'Court to Lefevre, 10, 11 and 28 May, 9, 12, 18 and 19 June 1835, 10 (twice), 18 and 21 February 1836; Portal, and Lefevre, to A'Court, 9 May and 12 June 1835; Hawley to Buckingham and reply, 30 September and 6 November 1837; A'Court private memorandum, 4 October 1838, PRO. MH.32/2; 3; 4; 39. A'Court to Sir T Baring, 24 June 1835, HCRO. 92M95, F2/14, f.40. *Hampshire Independent*, 25 February 1836. Cf. Mandler, *op cit.*, pp.153-7.

80. By the end of July 1835 seven new workhouses were under construction or planned for Hampshire. In its first annual report the Commission asserted that only one new workhouse had been required for the whole of West Sussex, an archetypal exaggeration because at the time it was made two big recalcitrant Gilbert Unions remained un-dissolved, with the result that a quarter of the county remained effectively outside Somerset House's remit. BPP. 'First Annual Report of the Poor Law Commissioners', (1835), Vol.XXXV, p.17: BPP. 'Second Annual Report of the Poor Law Commissioners', (1836), Vol.XXIX, pt.i, appendix 3, pp.207-8. PLC minutes, 2 January 1837, PRO. MH.1/9, p.25.
81. A'Court to Lefevre, 24 February 1835 and enclosed memorandum re. Selborne, PRO. MH.32/2. Indictment against Selborne Swing rioter Cobb, December 1830, Chambers, *op cit.*, p.202.
82. A'Court to the PLC, n.d. (but February), and Lefevre, 3 March, 9 April (and enclosure), 20 May and 9 June 1835, and 17 January 1837; Lefevre to A'Court, 12 June 1835, PRO. MH.32/2; 4. A'Court to Sir T Baring, 9 June 1835, HCRO. 92M95, F2/14, f.39.
83. For him, see the appendix, pp.226-7.
84. Harrison to the PLC, 19 February, 25 and 30 March; A'Court to the PLC, 22, 23 and 31 January, and 3 April, and to Lefevre, 21 January, 4 February and 10 May; Hambledon overseer Higgins, enclosing details of emigrants from Harrison, and Exchequer loan document, 22 and 27 March; justice Butler to the PLC, 14 March 1835, PRO. MH.12/10751; 12370: 32/2. Vestry minutes, Soberton, and Hambledon, 20 and 29 January, and Bishops Waltham, 11, 13, 25 and 29 January, and 26 February 1835,

- HCRO. 50M73A, PV/1: 66M76A, PV/1: 30M77, PV/2. *Hampshire Chronicle*, 23 March, 6 April and 22 June 1835. Commons, (1837), Q's.7598-7600, Stares; Q.8915, A'Court; Q's.10229, 10232-5, 10238, Wyatt. Wells, 'Resistance . . .', pp.95-6.
85. Portsmouth and Portsea's amalgamation was delayed by multi-causal and politically-driven very public hostilities until 1836, whereupon it became the last Poor Law Union to be formed in Hampshire. PLC minutes, 9 June 1836; A'Court to Lefevre, 18 January, 29 May (and Lefevre's annotations), 3 and 17 June 1835, and to the PLC, 1 and 18 May: extract from *Morning Herald*, printed as a handbill, re. public meeting in Portsmouth, 14 May 1836; Hawley, and long-serving Alverstoke Guardian Hoskins, to the PLC, 12 July 1837 and 10 June 1844, PRO. MH.1/5, p.393: 12/10645; 10916; 12270: 32/2. *Hampshire Telegraph*, 4 May 1835.
 86. The first volume of the Droxford Union's minutes is not extant. Commons, (1837), Q's.6525-32, 6536-9, 6541-5, 6547-50, Smith; Q's.7107-9, 7113-4, Wooldridge. Fareham minutes, 29 May. A'Court to the PLC, 3 April and 20 May, and to Lefevre, 12 April, 2 and 29 May, and 11 June: Revd. Snooke, Titchfield, to A'Court, 19 May 1835, PRO. MH.12/10751: 32/2. Wells, 'Resistance . . .', pp.96-7. Victoria County History, *Hampshire*, Vol.3 (1908), pp.217, 278-9.
 87. Fareham minutes, May 1835-March 1837, *passim*. Commons, (1837), Q's. 4769-70, Bourne; Q's.6140-2, Harrison; Q's.6761-3, 7071-82, Wooldridge; Q's.7802-3, 8359, Stares; Q's. 8600-1, 8605-6, 8616-25, Goldsmith; Q's.9069-71, A'Court; Q.10273, Wyatt.
 88. Namely over workhouse diets, the agreements to have appropriate claimants from Droxford Union parishes accommodated in Fareham Union's new workhouse, and over the reduction in relieving officers. Droxford Minutes, 1 and 22 January, and 18 March 1836, 24 January and 28 February 1837, Droxford Board of Guardians minutes, [subsequently Droxford minutes] HCRO. PL.3/7/1; 2. Commons, (1837), Q's.6112-8, Harrison.
 89. For Lovekin, see the Appendix, pp.223-4. Commons, (1837), Q.7074, Wooldridge; Q's.7801-3, 7808, 7942-3, Stares. Droxford minutes, 1 and 22 February, and 18 March 1836, and 28 February 1837. Letters to the PLC from A'Court, 3 April 1835, and 15 March, P Lovekin, 26 March 1836, and Revd. Butler, 31 May 1837, PRO. MH.12/10751.
 90. Fareham minutes, 29 May 1835. A'Court, and Stares, to the PLC, and Lefevre draft personal reply, 4, 10 and 14 April; A'Court to Lefevre, 29 May 1835, PRO. MH.12/10751: 32/2.
 91. Fareham minutes, 29 May, 26 June, 10, 17 and 24 July, 18 and 25 September, and 23 October 1835, 13 May and 24 June 1836. Vice-chairman Borlace to the PLC, 29 May; Lefevre to A'Court, and reply, 23 and 24 July 1835, PRO. MH.12/10767.
 92. PLC minutes, 19 September 1836; A'Court to the PLC, 31 January 1835, and 15 January; Clerk, Droxford Union to Chadwick, 28 April, 10 May (and draft reply) 9, (and A'Court's endorsement), and 17 August, and 4 December 1836, 13 February, 15 March, 17 May, 14 June and 25 October 1837; Chadwick to Clerk, 11 June; Exchequer Loan documentation, 15 July 1836, PRO. MH.1/7, p.334; 12/10751. Droxford minutes, 4 March, 2

- and 12 April, 14 May, 30 June, 9 and 16 August, 4 and 25 October 1836, 7 February, 7 March, 30 May, 19 September and 3 October 1837. Droxford Clerk to P. Lovekin, 27 November 1835 and 4 March 1836, copy out-letter book, Droxford Union, HCRO. PL.3/7/72. Commons, (1837), Q's.8790-1, 8892, A'Court.
93. Wells, 'Resistance . . .', pp.99-102. Knott, *op cit.*, pp.70-2. Fareham Clerk to the PLC, 27 October, with non-extant press cutting, 'reflecting on the Character of the Board'; draft reply, 4 November 1835, advising against prosecution, and that the Board's 'strict adherence to their duty' would suffice to refute its claims. PRO. MH.12/10767.
 94. Fareham minutes, 7, 14 and 28 August, and 2 October 1835, 12 February and 17 June 1836. A'Court to Lefevre, and to the PLC, 19 March and 21 April 1835, PRO. MH.12/10767: 32/2. Droxford minutes, 19 February, 26 March, 19 and 26 April, 3 May and 26 July 1836. Commons, (1837), Q's.6783, 6902, Wooldridge.
 95. Commons, (1837), Q's.8790-7, A'Court.
 96. Fareham minutes, 1 January 1836. A'Court to the PLC, 15 January; Clerk, Fareham, enclosing copies of his correspondence with his Droxford counterpart, and A'Court's annotations, 15 April 1836, PRO. MH.12/10751.
 97. Fareham minutes, 4 March, 22 April, 13 and 20 May, 3 June, 15 and 22 July 1836. Droxford minutes, 19 February, 18 March, 12 April, 24 May, 12 and 26 July, 13 September and 4 October. PLC minutes, 16 August 1836, PRO. MH.1/7, p.163. Commons, (1837), Q's.3945-7, Harrison; Q.8894, A'Court.
 98. See also below, pp.167-8. Fareham minutes, 30 October, 6, 13, 20 and 27 November, 4 and 24 December 1835, 12 February, 4 March, 30 September, 17 October, 11 and 25 November, 16 and 30 December 1836, 13 and 30 January, and 13 February 1837. Droxford minutes, 11 March, 20 September, 18 October, 29 November, 6 and 21 December 1836, 10 January and 14 February 1837. Droxford Union, out-letter copy book, Stares to Harrison, 6 November 1835; Clerk to Abbot and Burdett, 10 January and 11 March: Bishops Waltham vestry minutes, 31 March and 13 November 1836, 15 and 20 January 1837, HCRO. PL.3/7/72: 30M77, PV/2. Commons, (1837), Q.8874, A'Court. Stares, 15 May 1835, and Droxford Union Auditor Roberts, 16 April and 19 August 1836, to the PLC, PRO. MH.12/10751.
 99. For the issue of the disposal of parish real estate under the 1834 Act, as codified by the 1835 Parochial Property Act, see below, pp.125-8, and 172-9.
 100. This and the following paragraph are based on: *Hampshire Telegraph*, 12 October 1835. PLC minutes, 8 February: letters to the PLC from Stares, 14 June, and A'Court, 15 January, 5 February and 9 August 1836, PRO. 1/5, p.229: 12/10751; 10767. Fareham minutes, 5 February and 15 April 1836. BPP, 'Second Annual Report . . .', p.208 and appendix B7. Commons, (1837), Q's.6225-31, Brock; Q's.7648, 7834-6, Stares; Q's.8490-4, 8593-5, Goldsmith; Q's.8907-12, 8935, 9097, A'Court.
 101. 6&7 William IV, Cap.107.
 102. Hawley to the PLC, 24 December 1834; A'Court to the PLC, and Lefevre,

- 31 January and 5 February 1835, PRO. MH.12/10751: 32/2; 38. Bishops Waltham vestry minutes, 26 February 1835, HCRO. 30M77, PV/2.
103. Southwick assistant overseer, to the PLC, 15 May 1835, PRO. MH.12/10767.
104. Fareham minutes, 29 May 1835.
105. 4&5 William IV, Cap.76, section 21. I have used barrister and assistant draftsman, Tidd Pratt, *op cit.*, for legal opinions on the Act's stipulations, and another draftsman, solicitor, John Meadows White, *Remarks on the Poor Law Amendment Act, as it affects Unions, or Parishes*, (1834), penned in October to counter 'much misapprehension' which had already 'arisen as to its application', which makes only a basic reference to section 21.
106. Fareham minutes, 4 and 18 September 1835.
107. My emphasis. The exception is Broad, *loc.cit.* However, Dr Broad misconceives both the legal situation, and the disposal process, (esp. pp.166-7 and note 71) which I am addressing in a forthcoming article. The Commission was to keep a register of all properties sold under its superintendence. Parish Property Act, 5&6 William IV, Cap.69. PLC minutes, 9 March and 28 September 1835, 26 November 1836 and 7 February 1837, PRO. MH.1/2, pp.115-8; 1/3 (unpaginated); 1/8, p.105; 1/9, pp.347-55. Fareham minutes, 29 May 1835.
108. 1 Victoria, Cap. 50. Act to amend Parish Property Act re. 'Enfranchisement of Copyhold and Customary Tenure'. 1&2 Vic. Cap.25, 'An Act to Explain and Amend . . .', the New Poor Law. BPP, 'Fourth Annual Report of the PLC', (1837-8), Vol. xxviii, p.35.
109. A'Court to Lefevre, and to the PLC, 28 May and 2 June 1835, PRO. MH.12/10613: 32/2.
110. Fareham: J Panden, 8 and 19 February, and Clerk, 2 April to the PLC; sale application, 4 June: Portchester: T Marshman to parish officers, 22 April; formal sale application, 5 May; PLC to Fareham Clerk, 4 June and 6 July; parish officers to Chadwick, and draft reply, 11 July and 2 August 1836: Titchfield: parish officers to the PLC, 3 May; formal sale application and Chadwick's reply, 25 and 26 July 1836. Wickham: sale application, and PLC reply, 1 and 5 July; overseer Newton to Union Clerk, 21 July and sale confirmation, 28 October 1836. Widley: parish officers to the PLC, 29 June 1835, and to the Union Clerk, 1 July, and Lefevre's undated draft reply: Clerk to Chadwick, 19 and 26 August, and Lefevre's belated draft reply, 12 November 1836, PRO. MH.12/10767. Fareham minutes, 5 and 22 July, 2 August, 26 October 1836, and 20 March 1838. Fareham, property sales table, in BPP, 'Fourth Annual Report of the PLC', (1837-8), Vol. XXVIII.
111. Letters to the PLC from Revd. Haygarth, 30 November 1835, Droxford Clerk, 15 January, 10 and draft reply 19 April, W Gummer, Bishops Waltham, and draft reply, 9 and 12 July 1839; copy, Chadwick to Droxford Clerk, 30 September 1836, PRO. MH.12/10751; 10752.
112. Broad, *loc.cit.* Tidd Pratt, *op cit.*, pp.15-6. White, *op cit.*, pp.5-6, 9. 5&6 William IV, Cap. 69, esp. sections iv and viii. See also below, pp.172-9.
113. If Stares employed more men, he also gave them the option of working for others on more highly-paid coppicing work in mid-winter. Commons, (1837), Q's.7610-3, Stares; Q's.8431-5, Goldsmith.

114. BPP, 'PLC returns to House of Commons Order for Returns of Outdoor Relief Prohibitory Orders, and Relaxations Sanctioned', issued 29 March and printed 13 August 1838, (1837-8), Vol. XXXVIII, Hawley's section. Fareham had received sanctioned relaxation in sixteen cases, namely cash for boys' merchant navy apprenticeships, clothes for girls going into service, for inmates leaving the workhouse, and one case of workhouse accommodation of a child from a very large family.
115. Goldsmith never laid men off, though he hinted that he was in a small minority. Commons, (1837), Q's.8431-5.
116. *ibid.* PLC minutes, 4, 7 and 10 January: Hawley to the PLC, 5 January: Droxford Clerk to Chadwick, and draft reply, 6 and 10 January 1837: Clerk, Petworth Union, to the PLC, and draft reply, 29 December 1836 and 4 January: Clerk, Horsham Union, to the PLC, and reply drafted Hawley, 4 and 10 January 1837, PRO. MH.1/9, pp.31-2, 85-6, 96-7: 12/10751; 12989; 13060; 13061. Commons, (1837), Q's.7738, 8301, Stares. Droxford minutes, 3 January 1837.
117. Commons, (1837), Q.5680, Butler.
118. A'Court, perhaps nervously in the broader context of current legal cases brought by the PLC against various authorities in the King's Bench, was 'confident' that that Court would not overturn a Petty Sessional decision that the children's incomes were inadequate. Droxford Clerk to Chadwick (and Lefevre's annotations), and A'Court's memorandum, 6 and 9 September 1836, PRO. MH.12/10751. Commons, (1837), Q's.5026-9, Butler; Q.7739-42, Stares; Q's.8525-30, Goldsmith. Fareham also used the Liable Persons clauses; minutes, 19 February and 26 August 1836, and 20 January 1837.
119. *Ibid.*, 18 August and 16 October 1835, 8 and 15 July, 23 September, 2 and 23 December 1836, 14 April and 18 August 1837. Clerk, Fareham, to the PLC, and reply, 23 September and 29 November 1836: PLC minutes, 17 October 1838, PRO. MH.1/16, pp.75-81: 12/10767. Commons, (1837), Q's.3956-7, Harrison; Q's.8871-91, A'Court. Droxford minutes, 7 November 1837.
120. The best study of the Act, R Richardson, *Death, Dissection and the Destitute* (1988), offers a rousing polemic but exaggerates notably in her claim that the 'Act was in reality an advance clause to the New Poor Law'; see esp. pp.244-5, 266.
121. PLC minutes, 9 September 1835, PRO. MH.1/3 (unpaginated).
122. Dr John Bulbeck to the PLC, 19 June and 6 September 1836, and draft replies, PRO. MH.12/10751. Droxford minutes, 6 December 1836. Commons, (1837), Q's.5154-7, 5226, 5233-5, 5312-20, 5565-7, 5656, 5671, 5679, Butler; Q's.5755-68, Wild; Q's.6270-4, Brock; Q's.6561-5, 6578-9, Smith; Q's.8266-70, 8276-9, 8281, 8286-7; Q's.9561-6, 9770-1, 10023-8, 10041-8, Bulbeck. BPP. House of Commons, select committee report, 'Medical Poor Relief', (1844), Vol.IX, Q.93, Commissioner Cornewall Lewis; Q.3650, former president of the Royal College of Surgeons, Guthrie.
123. Fareham minutes, 8 and 29 January, 26 August, 30 September, 14 and 21 October 1836, 27 January, 3 February and 3 March 1837.

124. This and the following paragraph are based on: PLC minutes, 15 December 1836, 6 and 7 February 1837: Droxford Clerk to Chadwick, 14 December 1836 and 28 February 1837: A'Court to Lefevre, 19 January and 20 February, and to the PLC, 8, 26 and 28 February: S Butler, Soberton, to Clerk, Droxford Union, n.d. but c.9 March 1837, PRO. MH.1/8, p.238; 1/9, pp.345, 369-70: 12/10751: 32/4. Commons, (1837), Q's.4104-6, 4111, 6161-4, Harrison; Q's.5126-33, Butler; Q's.6257-60, 7397, 7405, 7584, Brock; Q's.6349-54, Smith; Q's.6719, 7084, Wooldridge; Q's.7698, 7950-9, Stares; Q's.9997-10000, 10016, Bulbeck. Droxford minutes, 10, 14 and 24 May, 18 October 1836 and 24 January 1837. Fareham minutes, 28 August and 4 September 1835, and 23 December 1836.
125. *Ibid.*, 11 September 1835. Droxford minutes, 11 March 1836 and 24 October 1837. Fareham Clerk to the PLC, 14 March 1840, PRO. MH.12/10768.
126. Fareham minutes, 10 July, 7, 14 and 28 August, 4, 11 and 18 September, 5 and 9 October 1835, 22 January, 5 February, 15 April, 17 June, 29 July and 2 September 1836. Droxford minutes, 12 February 1836. A'Court to the PLC, 21 January and 21 April 1835, PRO. MH.12/10767: 32/2.
127. For him see the Appendix, pp.222-3.
128. Droxford minutes, 24 December 1835, 19 and 26 February, 4 and 26 March, 12, 19 and 26 April, 17 May, 26 July and 4 October 1836. Commons, (1837), Q's.3925, 6317-23, Harrison; Q's.8894-5, A'Court.
129. The depositional evidence as supplied to the coroner is printed in Commons, (1837), as an appendix to evidence given on 24 April; see also Q's.6181, 6194-6200, 6206-7, 7134, 7146-7, 7150, 7160-7, Brock; Q's.6206-7, 6134, 6344-58, 6364-6420, 6429-37, 6442-4, 6485-99, Smith; Q's.6773-86, 6794-5, 6799-6800, 6804-5, 6853-61, 6902, Wooldridge. Droxford minutes, 26 February and 8 April 1836. *Hampshire Telegraph*, 4 April 1836.
130. A close reading of the text reveals that witnesses' references to 'pork' indicated the salted variety, while 'fresh meat' meant mutton. Supplies of preserved pork derived in part from pigs reared and fattened at Bishops Waltham workhouse, a common Old Poor-Law practice, and continued under the New. Commons, (1837), Q's.5134, 5160, 5170-83, 5195-8, 5284-9, 5386-9, 5419, 5502-11, 5563, Butler; Q's.6180-6205, 6209-16, 6241, 7128-33, Brock; Q's.6316-43, 9292-9301, 9308, 9323-6, Harrison; Q's.6471-5, Smith; Q.6910, Wooldridge; Q's.9101-8, 9113-50, 9159-60, 9169-71, 9173-7, Murphy; Q's.9179-9212, 9254-9, Wyatt; Q's.9260-91, Wilkins; Q's.9786-92, 9796-9808, 9846, 9855-60, Bulbeck. A'Court to Lefevre, 2 April 1837, PRO. MH.32/4. For Dewdney, see the Appendix, pp.221-2.
131. Hawley's draft quarterly report, 31 March 1838, PRO. MH.32/39.
132. This and the following two paragraphs are based on the depositional evidence, Dr Lovekin's report, and the relevant letters between the two Union Clerks, which are printed in Commons, (1837) as Appendix A, after the minutes of evidence heard on 3 May, and supplemented by: Q's.4473, 4669-72, Bourne; Q's.6895, 6900, 6908-9, Wooldridge; Q.8518, Goldsmith; Q's.8734-5, A'Court. Droxford Minutes, 7, 14 and 21 February

1837. Fareham minutes, 3, 10 and 17 February, and 3 March 1837. PLC minutes, 6 and 25 February, and 1 March; A'Court to Lefevre, 26 February; A'Court to the PLC, 28 February, and 3 March, and reply, 13 March 1837, PRO. MH.1/9, p.345; 1/10, pp.49, 83-4; 12/10751. Droxford Clerk to Fareham Guardians, 21 October 1836, Droxford Union, out-letter copy book, HCRO. PL.3/7/72.
133. By way of a partial and belated defence, the Droxford Board also agreed to re-print and circulate an explanatory pamphlet, written by assistant-commissioner Clive, outlining the responsibilities of parish officers under the New Poor Law, which included the power to order emergency relief. Commons, (1837), Q's.7751-71, Stares; Q's.9820-37, Bulbeck. Droxford minutes, 28 February 1837. *Hampshire Telegraph*, 6 March 1837.
134. This and the following paragraph, except where supplementary sources are indicated, are based on Commons, (1837), depositional evidence printed as Appendix D, to the minutes of 3 May; A'Court's letter respecting the inquiry of 4 March is printed in his evidence, Q.8734; see also Q's.4595, 4659, 4696-7, Bourne. A'Court to Lefevre, 4 and 9 March 1837, PRO. MH.32/4.
135. Commons, (1837), Q's.4544-55, 4559-61, 4572, 4717-22, Bourne; Q.9022, A'Court; Thompson's letters to A'Court are printed in Appendixes D and E. Fareham minutes, 12 and 19 May 1837. *Hampshire Telegraph*, 6 and 13 April 1837.
136. Fareham minutes, 7 April 1837.
137. A'Court to Lefevre, 9 and 12 March, and Commissioners' report, 13 March 1837, PRO.12/10751: 32/4. It was also read to the select committee by A'Court, Commons, (1837), Q.8735.
138. That came from the Clerk on the Board's instructions; Brock replied at some length, detailing six cases, and sagely added that as relieving officers were responsible for investigating all individuals' cases, this task was beyond one official with the result that 'you [the Clerk on behalf of the Board] can never know all the cases'. The correspondence is printed in Commons, (1837), Q's.6306-7, having been read in evidence by Brock.
139. Copies, Wooldridge circulars, 1 March, and replies, dated 3 to 6 March 1837 and annotated by A'Court, PRO. MH.12/10751. Some of this material was read out at the inquiry on 21 April during Brock's evidence, Commons, (1837), Q's.6307-14, Brock; Q.8734, A'Court. *Hampshire Telegraph*, 13 March 1837, letters from the Revd. Steven Butler, 'Vindicator' and 'Ratepayer'.
140. PLC minutes, 21 January and 13 February: Chadwick to Phillipps, Lefevre to Russell (with details supplied by assistant commissioner Hall, 16 February), 18 and 23 February 1837, PRO. HO.73/52; 53; MH.1/9, pp.201-2, 420; 12/362. BPP. 'Third Annual Report of the PLC', (1837), Vol. XXXI, Appendix A5.
141. The Board also awarded medical relief 'most profusely and unjustifiably'. Wokingham Clerk to the PLC, 15 August 1835 and 21 February 1837 (and annotations); letters to Commissioner Nicholls from assistants Gulson, 15

- August and 8 September 1835, Stevens, 8 July 1836, and Hall, 26 February 1837, PRO. MH.12/362.
142. BPP, PLC returns re prohibitory orders, *loc.cit.*, Hall's section.
 143. PLC minutes, 13, 16 and 20 February, 6, 9, 10, 14 and 23 March; Hawley to Chadwick, and to Fazakerley, 7 and n.d. but c.21 March 1837, PRO. MH.1/9, pp.420, 458-9, 495; 1/10, pp.23, 154, 165, 194-5, 289; 32/38; 39. Commons, (1837), second report, p.xxiii. *The Times*, 30 March 1837.
 144. Brundage, *The Making* . . . , p.161. Commons, (1837), third report, pp.iv-v.
 145. In late March 1837, A'Court - as the responsible assistant commissioner - and who had been frequently 'taunted' when attending its Board, rushed across to Portsea Island to 'remonstrate against' Dewdney's 're-election' as chairman, only to find that his reverence had not even stood in that year's annual Guardian elections. Anon., but Peter Lovekin, Bishops Waltham, to Sir James Graham, 7 May 1837: A'Court to the PLC, 18 May and 20 October 1836, and to Lefevre, 30 March and 2 April 1837, PRO. MH.12/10751; 10916: 32/4. *Hampshire Telegraph*, 3 and 24 April 1837.
 146. Commons, (1837), Q's.6950-68, 6981-5, 6988-93, 7035-6, Wooldridge; Q's.7172-98, 7293-4, 7334-41, 7509-10, Brock; Q's.7979-8001, 8003-5, Stares; Q's.8006, 8010-32, 8045-57, 8075-8, 8093, Butler; Q's. 9359-62, 9492-6, 9508-9, 9573-4, Cockerton; Q's.10680-5, Hayden. A'Court to Lefevre, 30 March, 2, 4 and 6 April 1837, PRO. MH.32/4.
 147. The attempted swamping went unminuted; both the chairman and his deputy were absent in London at the select committee. Droxford minutes, 2 May 1837. Commons, (1837), Q's.6969-74, Wooldridge; Q's.7199-7220, 7232, 7241-3, 7252-6, Brock; Q's.8041-2, 8073, Butler; Q's.8802, 8806-8, A'Court; Q's.9498-9512, 9517, Cockerton. A'Court to Lefevre, 30 March and 2 April 1837, PRO. MH.32/4.
 148. Commons, (1837), Q's.6953-5, Wooldridge; Q's.7978, 8001-2, 8033-4, 8211-2, Butler; Q's.8225-6, 8304-6, Stares; Q.8802, A'Court; Q's.9484-6, 9496-7, Cockerton; Q's.10238, 10242-3, Wyatt.
 149. *Ibid.*, Q.7681-6, 8005, Stares; Q's.9480-2, 9486-91, Cockerton; Q's.9187-91, 10118-41, 10216-27, Wyatt. A'Court to Lefevre, 4, 6 and 7 April 1837, PRO. MH.32/4.
 150. A'Court to Lefevre, and recipient's annotations (viz.: 'all papers to be collected': 'Have been collected': 'Write to Fazakerley . . . asap'.), 4 and 6 April 1837, PRO. MH.32/4.
 151. Bourne was asked nearly 700 questions, of which around two-thirds were posed by Walter's group, with Wakley using his medical expertise to incisively investigate matters of inmates' health. Although the chairman commenced Bourne's examination with 74 questions to elicit a broad picture of the course of events, further questions from the majority were often penetrating and clearly not designed to enable Bourne to conceal his own responsibilities for failings; Commons, (1837), Q's.4324-4991, Bourne. PLC minutes, 25 February, 1, 6, 9, 10, 11, 14 and 17 March, and 17 April 1837, PRO. MH.1/10, pp.49, 81, 123-4, 154, 156, 165, 185, 194-5, 424.
 152. Among those directly deriving from the furore were: the schoolmistress could make children stand on a stool in the corner, wearing a dunce's hat, with maximums of half and an entire hour for those respectively under

and over six; the governor retained the prerogative to birch boys with a maximum four stripes, but heavier punishment required the Board's prior authority. Fareham minutes, 30 March 1837.

153. Commons, (1837), Q's.3777-3877, Harrison; Q's.4324-81, 4395-4470, 4513-51, 4816-33, esp. 4374, 4395, 4461 and 4517, Bourne; Q's.8719-87, 8800-10, A'Court.
154. Richard Wooldridge, now the vice-chairman of the Fareham Union, not to be confused with Henry Wooldridge, the Droxford Guardian, though possibly related, was sitting in the committee-room auditorium and was briefly questioned by Walter, though not formally called. Commons, (1837), Q's.8995-9001, R Wooldridge. Fareham minutes, 7 and 28 April 1837. A'Court to Lefevre, 6 and 7 April 1837, PRO. MH.32/4.
155. Commons, (1837), Q's.8800-2, 8810-1, A'Court.
156. *Ibid.*, Q's.4013, 4159-60, 4178-81, 4273, 4285, Harrison.
157. Commons, (1837), Q's., 6689-90, Wooldridge; Q's.8191-7, Stares; Q's.8658-60, Goldsmith; Q.9611, Cockerton; Q's.10145-6, Wyatt.
158. *Ibid.* Q's.5021, 5248-51, 5475-6, Butler; Q's.5826, and esp. 5926-9, Wild; Q's.6603-9, 6615-7, 6635, 6662-3, 6666-7, 6669-6705, Wooldridge; Q's.7417-20, Brock; Q's.7601-3, 7609-15, 7627-8, 7833, 8115-6, 8121-4, 8127, Stares; Q's.8369-70, 8499, 8568, Goldsmith; Q.8911, A'Court; Q's.9917-30, Bulbeck; Q's.10151-61, Wyatt.
159. *Ibid.*, Q's.6618-29, 6688, Wooldridge; Q's.7849-60, 7875, 7891-2, 7924-5, 8127, Stares; Q's. 8370-5, 8445, 8475, 8479, Goldsmith: Mrs Wild had not worked, except occasionally in haymaking, since she married, hardly surprising given her reproductive trajectory, Q.5803, Wild.
160. *Ibid.*, Q.6173, Harrison; Q.6631, Wooldridge; Q's.7615-21, 7829, 8130, Stares.
161. *Ibid.*, Q's.5499-5501, Butler; Q's.6066-71, Wild; Q's.6159-60, Harrison.
162. *Ibid.*, Q's.3926-55, 4120-3, 6084-6, Harrison; Q's.5016-8, 5683-5, 5689, Butler; Q's.6242-9, Brock Q's.6684-7, Wooldridge; Q's.7658-67, 7935-6, Stares; Q's.8523-4, Goldsmith; Q's.8765-8, 8774-6, A'Court; Q.10057, Bulbeck; Q's.10240-1, Wyatt.
163. *Ibid.*, Q's.5022-3, Butler; Q's.5794-5, Wild; Q.6533, Smith; Q's.6596-9, 6601-3, 6827-31, 6866, 6872-4, 6995-7, Wooldridge; Q's.7531-2, 7542-3, Brock; Q's.7624-6, 7650, 7785-9, 7805, Stares; Q's.8451-67, 8559-60, Goldsmith; Q's.8918-26, A'Court; Q's.9226-7, 10256-60, Wyatt.
164. *Ibid.*, Q's.5033, 5095, Butler; Q's.5905-13, 5924-6, Wild; Q's.7544-7, Brock; Q's.7605, 7634-6, Stares; Q's.8695-8704, Goldsmith; Q.9399, Cockerton; Q's.10172-7, 10190-203, 10211-6, Wyatt.
165. *Ibid.*, Q's.5051, 5480-1, Butler; Q's.5996-6000, 6038-9, 6054, Wild; Q's.7882-7, 8168, 8170-3, Stares; Q's.8417-23, 8485-6, 8573-9, Goldsmith; Q's.9634-8, Cockerton.
166. *Ibid.*, Q.8413, Goldsmith.
167. *Ibid.*, Q.4149, Harrison; Q's.9369, 9372, 9486, 9489, 9522, 9547, 9563-6, 9587-8, Cockerton.
168. Only Harrison claimed a significant fall in rents, and then but at Hambleton; his argument turned on a peculiar perception of market forces, namely that owners would have to reduce rents to secure tenants, a con-

- trivance aimed to convince the committee that farmworkers' living standards had not fallen. He gave no real evidence on rents, and his answers to questions, principally from Graham suggest that in Harrison's case, this was one Chadwickian cramming too far. *Ibid.*, Q's.4091-6, 4145, 4242-7.
169. 6&7 William IV, Cap.96. Walter and Captain Pechell in the Commons, 4 May 1836, Hansard, 3rd ser., Vol.43 (1836), cols.607-8. Commons, (1837), Q's.5732-4, 5738, 5788-9, Wild; Q's.6643-58, 6668-79, Wooldridge; 7865-70, 7968, Stares. Bishops Waltham vestry minutes, 1 December 1837, HCRO. 30M77, PV/2. Revaluations in the Droxford and Fareham Unions are examined below, pp.175-7.
170. Commons, (1837), Q's.4215-26, 4270-5, Harrison; Q's.5343, 5662, Butler; Q's.6569-75, Smith; Q.7094, Wooldridge; Q.7937, Stares; Q's.10078-82, Wyatt.
171. Commons, (1837), Q's.3973, 4053-60, 4074-8, 4147, Harrison; Q's.5062, 5066-9, 5070-3, 5340-1, 5533-9, Butler; Q's.5861-4, Wild; Q's.7061-70, Wooldridge; Q's.9233-8, 10098-10117, 10230-1, Wyatt; Q's.9437-51, 9596, Cockerton. Burchardt, *op cit.*, pp.39, 53, 57, 59, 241, and Appendix 3.
172. *Ibid.*, Q's.5055, 5062, 5077-9, 5094, 5107, 5644-7, Butler; Q's. 5746-54, 5769-72, Wild; Q's. 6007-10, 6020-2, 6029-36, Ford; Q's.7266, 7527, Brock; Q's.8204-5, Stares; Q's.8546-55, Goldsmith.
173. *Ibid.*, Q's.5011, 5031, 5051-2, 5059-60, 5079, Butler; Q's.5773-82, 5786-7, 5890, 5906-11, Wild; Q's.5969, 6977-83, 5991-4, 6002-5, Ford.
174. *Ibid.*, Q's.9662-82, 9715-6, 9812-9, 9894-6.
175. *Ibid.*, Q's.5106, 5120, Butler; Q.7530, Brock, and cf. Q's.9887-90, Bulbeck.
176. *Ibid.*, Q's.5121-7, 5133-4, 5443-53, 5680, Butler; Q's.6257-65, 6277-6300, 6306-15, 7395-7401, Brock; Q's.6465-70, Smith; Q's.6717-59, Wooldridge; Q's.7699-7707, Stares.
177. *Ibid.*, Q's.5202-13, 5221, 5360-81, 5443-62, 5583-94, 5610, 5628-35, Butler; Q's.7268-78, 7305-11, 7414, Brock; Q's.10428-32, Hayden.
178. *Ibid.*, Q's.5011, 5020, 5078-9, 5092, 5332, 5488, Butler; Q's.7459-60, 7465, Brock.
179. *Ibid.*, Q's.5037-8, Butler; Q.7452, Brock.
180. *Ibid.*, Q's.5499-5501, Butler; Q's.6984-6, Wooldridge; Q's.10058-68, Wyatt.
181. Commons, (1837), Q's.9893-9930, 9955-89, 9992-10009. However, in a recent oleaginous letter to the PLC, 6 September 1836, Bulbeck had claimed that when his public patients expressed hostility to the new system, he 'endeavoure[d] to impress on their mind the [medical] provision . . . was provided for their benefit', as he saw it as his 'duty . . . to have at least endeavoured to reconcile them to the measure', PRO. MH.12/10751.
182. *Ibid.*, Q's.9331, 9333, Mrs Steven Butler, levelling this charge against Henry Wooldridge who unconvincingly denied it, Q's.9336-42, 9345-7.
183. *Ibid.*, Q's.5013, 5383-5, 5391-3, 5625, Butler; Q's.7176-7200, 7220, 7475, Brock; Q's.10063, 10068, Wyatt.
184. *Ibid.*, Q's.5397-8, 5405-8, 5527-31, 8075-8, Butler; Q's.5796-5813, Wild; Q's.7038-9, Wooldridge; Q's.7679-81, 7684-6, 8100-5, Stares; Q's.8431,

- 8436, Goldsmith; Q's.9399, 9432-74, 9484-91, Cockerton; Q's.10058-68, Wyatt.
185. In 1838 a parallel survey of farmworkers' diet by a Fareham medical officer, revealed that the 'majority of the labourers never taste meat for three weeks together, and their Children not for four Months at a time'. Clerk, Fordingbridge Union, to A'Court, 9 May 1837: Hawley, annual report, 30 June 1838, PRO. MH.32/4; 39.
 186. PLC minutes, 17 June; Hawley to the PLC, 15 May 1837, PRO. MH.1/11, p.438: 32/39. *The Times*, 19 June 1837. Hansard, 3rd ser. Vol.38 (1837), cols.1518-39.
 187. Commons, (1837), Q's.7905-7, Stares; Q's.9191, 9194-5, 9213-5, Wyatt; Q.9855, Bulbeck.
 188. *Ibid.*, Q's.6437-8, 6453-7, 6554-6, Smith; Q's.9650-3, 9813-5, 10016, 10021, 10044, Bulbeck.
 189. Weaver, *op cit.*, p.176.
 190. Commons, (1837), Q.7375, Brock; Q's.8304-6, Stares.
 191. *The Times*, 30 May and 17 June 1837. Commons, (1837), Q's.7172-7247, esp.7200 and 7242, Brock; Q's.8006-42, esp.8042, Butler; Q's.10274-404, esp.10279-81, 10283, 10293-5, 10304-19, 10346-52, 10368, 10373-4, 10396-400, Dewdney. Walter in the Commons, during his short return for Nottingham, 23 February 1843, Hansard, 3rd ser. Vol.69, (1843), col.1257.
 192. From the 56 page voluntary report on Westhampnett Union, signed by Richmond, three other *ex-officios* and 31 elected Guardians, 5 March 1838, PRO. MH.12/13199.
 193. These included copies of the clergymen's replies to the unofficial circular sent by the vice-chairman, replete with A'Court's annotations, (see above note 138), and see esp. Commons, (1837), Q.6926, Walter's question to Wooldridge: cf. *The Times*, 25 and 29 March, and 14 June 1837.
 194. The select committee was effectively bounced into this by one of its own members, the radical Harvey, owner of the *True Sun*, which immediately printed details from the hearings; on 17 March, mindful of the potential misrepresentation possible through edited versions, the committee ruled that the press must publish the entire minutes of evidence on each sitting; these were printed and published officially, which is why the minutes of each day constitute consecutive formal reports. The rule caused problems even for major newspapers, exemplified by *The Times*, which did not publish the minutes from the first day, 9 March, until the 25th, and reasons of space meant that its coverage never caught up, despite the fact that the committee did not necessarily sit on consecutive days, and as late as 14 June it was publishing evidence heard on the 3rd. *The Times*, esp. 25 and 29 March, 14 and 16 June 1837.
 195. Commons, (1837), Q's.5010, 5013, 5015-7, 5023, 5025, 5246, 5267, esp.5271, 5322, 5336, 5360, 5364, 5375-85, 5427-8, 5465-7, 5690, Butler; Q's.7199-7200, 7267-79, 7304-7, 7359, 7395, Brock.
 196. In May 1836, Stares claimed that Hambleton put the able-bodied male unemployed to work on the highways, and in November 1838 the Board more-or-less forced Hambleton surveyors to offer work to several men with large families, or they would be subjected to workhouse orders. Ironically,

- Hawley insisted that 'the efforts of [Sussex] Guardians are powerless against a parochial control', after he discovered receiving officers' books repeatedly recording "recommended to the Waywarden". However, A'Court asserted that as only a residual few at most were offered roadwork, they were now made to toil harder and therefore did not 'degrade and pauperize the whole of the labouring classes', and the remaining problem was minor in Hampshire. In January 1837 the Bishops Waltham vestry voted for schemes for road-widening and a new road, but went ahead with only the former, probably reflecting the fact as also claimed by A'Court that most farmers were more interested in retaining core workforces. BPP, 'Second Annual Report . . .', p.288. Hawley's quarterly report, 5 May: A'Court to Chadwick, 21 April 1838, PRO.32/4; 39. Droxford minutes, 20 November 1838. Bishop Waltham, vestry minutes, 15 and 20 January 1837, HCRO. 30M77, PV/2. Commons, (1837), Q's.10256-65, Wyatt. Cf. Digby, *op cit.*, pp.78-9.
197. S E Finer, *The Life and Times of Sir Edwin Chadwick* (1952; reprint 1970), pp.130-1.
 198. Edsall, *op cit.*, pp.137-8. Walter's group did not call any witnesses from Bradford or Nottingham. Their main witnesses from Petworth were Guardians and a few labourers identified by the latter, all of whom knew their facts. Apart from Fareham and Droxford, the only other rural Union from which witnesses were drawn was Westhampnett, and if Edsall's comments apply to them, he might have acknowledged that they were hurriedly identified by Walter's local allies, while others were equally hurriedly orchestrated by Richmond's agents. Henriques, *Before the Welfare State . . .*, pp.53-4, puzzlingly asserts that the select committee based its entire report on the Petworth evidence. See also above, pp.93-4.
 199. Curiously, the select committee's stricture was on the Board and not the much more legitimate target of its visiting committee. Roberts, *op cit.*, p.103, puts the blame for workhouse scandals on rogue officers and ignores the role - or lack of activity - of visiting committees.
 200. A critique aimed at Richmond, responsible for pioneering the policy at Westhampnett; voluntary annual report, sent Clerk to Chadwick, 14 March 1836, PRO. MH.12/13198.
 201. Commons, (1837), Report, pp.2-12; Q's.6065-71, Ford.
 202. Some were apparently issued by mistake, including Fareham and Hambledon; Chadwick to Fareham Clerk, 26 April 1836, PRO. MH.12/10767. PLC assistant secretary Coode to Hambledon Clerk, 26 September 1837, printed in Hawley's contribution to BPP, 'PLC return re prohibitory orders . . .', *loc.cit.* Curiously, Englander, *op cit.*, pp.17-8, opines that the 'condition of the female population was of no concern' to the PLC.
 203. A Randall and E Newman, 'Protest, proletarians and paternalists: social conflict in rural Wiltshire, 1830-1850', *Rural History*, 6, 2 (1995), pp.216-7, who do not appreciate the national context. PLC minutes, 21, 25 and 28 July, and 16 August; PLC circular to assistant commissioners, 28 July, and replies, A'Court, 7 August, Wade (n.d. but August), Tufnell, and Hawley, 3 and 25 September: Commissioner Lewis to Phillipps, 22 July

- 1837: A'Court to the PLC, 9 November 1838, PRO. MH.1/12, pp.170, 198, 221-2, 354-69; 10/3; 32/2: HO.73/53.
204. Chadwick vigorously lobbied Russell against the reconstitution of the select committee, Weaver, *op cit.*, p.178. BPP, 'Fourth Annual Report . . .', esp. pp.1, 25-7, 31-8, and Appendix B.5.
205. Brundage appears not to realise that the institutionalised maintenance of the children was a form of outdoor relief to able-bodied males. Brundage, *The Making . . .*, pp.169-72. Cf. Finer, *op cit.*, pp.135-9. PLC minutes, 28 September, 6, 20, 24 and 31 October, and 6 November; A'Court to the PLC, 22 August 1837: Chadwick memorandum to Russell, n.d. (October 1837): former Commissioner Sir Thomas Frankland Lewis to Russell, 17 August [1846 - wrongly filed under 1847], PRO. MH.1/12, pp.354-68; 1/13. pp.55, 130-41, 165-6, 190-2; 32/4: HO.73/53; PRO. [Russell private papers] 30/22/6E, ff.132-3. Commons, (1846), Q's.22446, 25058, 25071-5, 25079, 25088, Frankland Lewis; Q's. 24906-8, 24937-8, 24944, 24949, 25112-3, Chadwick.
206. A'Court to the PLC, 30 August and 9 November 1838, 4 February and 31 March 1839, PRO. MH.32/4. BPP. House of Lords, select committee report, 'The Several Cases Alluded to in Certain Papers respecting the Operation of the Poor Law Amendment Act', (1837-8), Vol. XIX, esp. the 'Resolutions', pp.i-xi.
207. Assistant commissioner Tufnell to Nicholls, 12 October, 2 and 6 November; Hawley to Nicholls, 12 May, and copy, Steyning minutes, 12 September 1837: Westhampnett Union, voluntary annual report to the PLC, 5 March; Hawley to Nicholls, 24 January; assistant Stevens to Lefevre, 10 February 1838; PRO. HO.73/53: MH. 12/12950; 13099; 13199: 32/39; 69.
208. Given this circumstance, Edsall's comment, *op cit.*, p.138, that the 'opposition performed rather better' in 1838, is baffling. See above, pp.155-8. Neither P Horn, 'Child workers in the pillow-lace and straw-plait trades of Victorian Buckinghamshire and Bedfordshire', *Historical Journal* - XVII, 4 (1974), nor N Verdon, *Rural Women Workers in Nineteenth-Century England: Gender, Work and Wages* (Woodbridge, 2002), Ch.5, 'Alternative employment opportunities: domestic industries', have consulted the mass of evidence in the second committee's report (see note 209).
209. BPP. House of Commons, select committee report, 'Poor Law Amendment Act', (1837-8), Vol. XVIII, esp. pp.11-8, 29-31, 33-4, 38-40. BPP. 'Fourth Report . . .', *loc. cit.* pp.1, 21-2.
210. BPP, 'Fifth Annual Report of the PLC', (1839). Vol.XX, pp.1-2. PLC minutes, esp. 17 and 23 November 1838, 20, 21 and 23 February 1839, PRO. MH.1/16, pp.436-40, 495-503; 1/18, pp.378-9, 383-5, 401: for other recipients December 1838 to February 1839, see, 1/17, pp.2-3, 25, 125-9, 135-6, 143-5, 158-63, 200-2, 252-3, 271-2, 275-7, 291-3, 295-7; 1/18, pp.1-3, 13-20, 203-5, 383-5. For Pittite antecedents see, Wells, *Wretched Faces . . .*, Chs.12-3.
211. Original emphasis. Copies, resolutions of Havant Board's resolutions and minutes, 16 October and 17 November; PLC to Havant Board, and reply, 5 and 12 December 1838; Clerk to the PLC, and reply, 8 and 14 January;

A'Court to Lefevre, 3 January, and to the PLC, 7 February 1839, PRO. MH.12/10826: 32/4. *Hampshire Telegraph*, 17 and 31 December 1838.

212. This episode is mentioned by Randall and Newman, *op cit.*, esp. pp.215, 222, where Benett is portrayed as an authoritarian paternalist. Perhaps that facilitated his 1841 switch from the Whigs to the Tories, without troubling the South Wiltshire electorate. In 1817 in evidence to a Commons select committee, he represented himself as the agency for a downward revision of a static scale of relief for family men (cf. above, p.95), his opposition to the public provision of allotments, then on the agenda, and blandly admitted that in one of the parishes he wholly owned, he would have otherwise demolished cottages because he was able to let them to family men 'of good character', with settlements secured elsewhere. This meant that they, their children, and probably later descendants, would never be eligible for poor-relief paid from Benett's rates. The rest of his labour force was domiciled in Hinton, then a rotten parliamentary borough, who walked the daily round trip of six miles to work, and equally ineligible for relief paid from his rates. For as these authors note, Benett opposed the New Poor Law Bill during its Commons' passage, though not the grounds; these included his hostility to the proposed illegalisation of allowances in-aid-of wages, which he opposed in the committee stage by supporting amendments. He was not an assiduous voter, specifically refusing to use it on the second reading. In his disbelief in the notion of 'surplus labourers' he joined the Bill's architects, though it was possibly a myopic perception based on his downland estate, and his argument that southern farmworkers were paid more than their northern counterparts was ludicrous. In 1836 he argued that funds derived from the sale of parish-owned property in his domain, should be expended on contributions to new work-house erection, and the purchase of land for strictly-managed 'small allotments', a device to evade any costs falling on him; his critique of the new system sought to preserve welfare costs being shared with non-labour employing ratepayers. Both positions symbolised not paternalism but a typical English grandee, anxious to enhance their rentals and minimise their rates. He was hand-picked by the Duke of Wellington to be Grand Jury foreman at the Hampshire Special Commission, to take the final decisions on which Swing prisoners should face trial (see also above, pp.102-4). A'Court to the PLC, 16 January 1839: undated sale application, Semley, annotated by Benett, 19 July 1836, PRO. MH.12/10661; 13849. BPP, House of Commons, select committee report, 'Poor Laws', (1817), Vol. VI, pp.86-95. Hansard, 3rd ser. (1834), Vol. 23, cols.837, 999; Vol.24, cols.317-8, 339, 349-51, 433, 473, 531-3, 541, 548, 719, 919, 1035-41; Vol.25, cols 1218-9, 1223. Dyke, *op cit.*, p.177.
213. See below, pp.171-2.
214. For the distribution from 1 December 1838, see sources in note 211 above.
215. This and the following paragraph are based on: R Wells, 'Southern Charism', in Rule and Wells, *op cit.*, *passim*, but esp. pp.129-30, 137-8. D Campigne, Gosport, to Home Secretary Normanby, 4 May 1840: A'Court to the PLC, 7, 8 and 10 August, 19 September, 4 October, 3, 9 and 17 November 1838, 3 January and 21 March 1839, several of which were

- copied to the Home Office, PRO. HO.64/10, f.142: MH.32/4. *Brighton Patriot*, 18 December 1838. *Hampshire Telegraph*, and *Portsea, Portsmouth and Gosport Pioneer*, 3 June and 18 July 1839.
216. In my original study I underestimated Chartism's strength and endurance in Southampton, Portsmouth and Portsea; Chartist activity weakened Dewdney's anti-New Poor Law association. *Portsmouth, Portsea and Gosport Free Press*, 4 April 1839.
 217. D Foster, *The Rural Constabulary Act 1839*, (1982), pp.18–21. R E Foster *loc.cit.*, Ch.5. R E Foster, 'A cure for crime? The Hampshire Constabulary 1839–1856', *Southern History*, 12 (1990), pp.52–65. R Wells, 'Implementation and non-implementation of the 1839–40 policing acts in East and West Sussex', *Policing and Society*, 1 (1991), pp.299–317.
 218. Edsall, *op cit.*, Ch. VII.
 219. Shortly after Chadwick gave evidence to the 1838 select committee on highways, where he outlined the difficulties with continued parochial autonomy over the roads, A'Court privately informed him that if the highways were transferred to the Guardians, it would add to their workload, which given their reluctance to volunteer to serve on workhouse visiting committees, might well precipitate mass resignations. Relieving officers were too busy to supervise road-working. Alternatively, A'Court may have pragmatically calculated that retaining this parochial safety valve had its values. BPP. House of Commons, select committee report, 'Highways Act 4&5, William IV, Cap.50', (1837–8), Vol. XXIII, pp.i-iii. A'Court to Chadwick, 21 April 1838, PRO. MH.32/4.
 220. A'Court to the PLC and Lefevre, 7 and 14 February (and annotations) 1841, PRO. MH.12/10768.
 221. Commons, (1846), Q's.12703–6, 13191, 13196, 13943, Nicholls; Q's.19057–9, 19065–6, 19129–34, Chadwick; Q.20377, assistant-commissioner Parker; Q's.21593–4, 21831–6, 21843–4, 21847, 24696–703; Cornwall Lewis; Q's.23436–8, assistant commissioner Gulson. Finer, *op cit.*, Book 4, Ch.2; Book 6, Ch.1. Cf. Brundage, "Prussian Minister" . . . , pp.53–5.
 222. Unfortunately, the key volumes of correspondence between the Commission and individual Unions, has in Fareham's case been lost for 1837–9, and that for Droxford (1837–8) has been badly damaged by damp, PRO. MH.12/10752.
 223. See above, pp.110–1.
 224. Hawley to Nicholls, 5 December 1836, the PLC, 19 January 1837, and Lefevre, 1 February 1838; Droxford Auditor Roberts to the PLC, 19 May 1837, and annotations by Lefevre and Hawley, PRO. MH.12/10751: 32/38; 39. Andover Union minutes, 5 May 1836, HCRO.PL3/4/7. Some of Hawley's activities in Sussex are covered in Wells, 'Resistance . . .', pp.95–7, 110–2.
 225. Hawley's quarterly report, 1 January; Hawley to Nicholls, 18 and 24 January 1838, PRO. MH.32/39. Droxford minutes, 20 June and 5 September 1837.
 226. Within days of his arrival, and in one of the fiercest nationalist strongholds, the City of Limerick, one of his astounded hosts reported Hawley

- making "it his business to penetrate into the most abject abodes of misery and destitution"; cited G O'Brien, 'The establishment of poor law unions in Ireland, 1838-43', *Irish Historical Studies*, XXIII (1982-3), p.100.
227. Commons, (1837), Q's.7655, 7928-34, Stares. Droxford Clerk to the PLC, Hawley's annotations, and Chadwick's reply, 1 and 13 November; Clerk, and Hawley, to the PLC, 22 and 30 November, and reply 2 December 1837; Hawley to Lefevre, 4 September 1838, PRO. MH. 12/10751: 32/39. Droxford minutes, 14 February and 21 November 1838. Andover Union minutes, 8 August 1838, HCRO. PL.3/4/7.
 228. BPP, 'Third Annual Report . . .', pp.33-4.
 229. Andover Union minutes, 2 February 1837, HCRO. PL.3/4/7.
 230. Fareham minutes, 3 March 1837. Commons, (1837), Q.4673, Bourne.
 231. *Hampshire Advertiser*, 12 November 1836. A'Court to Lefevre, 16 July 1837, PRO. MH.32/4. Wells, 'Resistance . . .', pp.115-6, which presents a different argument from Brundage, *The Making . . .*, pp.163-9.
 232. Former relieving officer Bulbeck to the PLC, several letters, May-June, and Chadwick to Droxford Clerk, 23 June 1837; Lovekin to the PLC, 24 March 1838, PRO. MH.12/10751; 10752. Droxford minutes, 13 June 1837. *Hampshire Independent*, 20 July 1838 and 20 April 1839. *The Times*, 16 July 1839.
 233. Conversely, one magistrate, John Kelsall, named in the published list of Fareham Board members, wanted "declines to act as Guardian", entered against it; the Board refused. Fareham minutes, 22 April 1836, 7 April, 12, 19 and 26 May, 22 September and 1 December 1837, 6 April 1838, 28 March and 5 April 1839, 3 April, 28 May and 1 June 1840. Droxford minutes, 28 March, 3 April, 23 and 30 May 1837. Annotations on the inside cover, Fareham Petty Sessions minutes, 1837-49, re. Cholmondely, HCRO. 27M28, XP/1.
 234. *Ibid.*, 30 May, 20 June, 11 July, 5 and 19 September, 3 and 10 October 1837. Clerk to Revd. Colpoys, 21 September and 25 October 1837, Clerk out-letters copy book, HCRO. PL.3/7/72. Clerk to the PLC, 25 October and 29 November; letters to Fazakerley from Scard, 10 June and 11 July, and Hawley, 15 July 1837, PRO. MH.12/10751. Fareham minutes, 29 September 1837.
 235. *Ibid.*, 10 November 1837. Droxford minutes, 3 April 1838. Westhampnett Union annual report, 5 March 1838: A'Court to Lefevre, 14 February 1841, PRO. MH.12/13199: 32/4. *The Times*, 12 May 1840.
 236. Case's reinstatement probably reflects concern that the loss of office could seriously damage doctors' private practices. Fareham minutes, 14 April, 23 June, 7 July, 17 November and 1 December 1837, and 28 December 1838. Hawley to Lefevre, 9 January 1838, PRO. MH.32/39. BPP. 'Medical Poor Relief . . .', Q.93, Cornewell Lewis.
 237. PLC minutes, 27 November 1838, and lithographed copies, PRO. MH.1/16, pp.495-504: 12/3439; 10826.
 238. Vestry minutes, Bishop Waltham, 26 March 1842 and 1 March 1844; Droxford, 25 January 1844; Exton, 27 February 1848, HCRO. 30M77A, PV/2: 66M76A, PV/4: 86M71, PV/3.
 239. Andover Union minutes, 17 December 1836, 11 February, 25 March, 8

- July, 9 and 30 September, and 21 October 1837, 10 August 1839, 25 January, 8 February and 1 August 1840, 2 April 1842 and 28 January 1843. Sale applications, and various annotations, Amport, 11 November 1836, Hurstbourne Tarrant, 21 February and 10 June, Vernhams Dean, 17 June and 10 August 1837, Abbots Ann, 31 January 1840; Clerk to the PLC, 18 April and nd. [c.May] 1836, 7 March, 2 August and 21 October 1837, 1 September 1839 and 14 August 1841; Andover copy out-letters (abandoned in 1837) re. emigration and housing (Upper Clatford and Penton Mewsey); vestry minutes, Vernhams Dean, 20 October 1837, and Amport, 23 September 1838, HCRO. PL.3/4/7; 8; 53: 43M67, PV/2; 110M70, PW/1: PRO. MH.12/10661.
240. Commons, (1846), Q's.10819, 12404, relieving officer Cook; Q's.17744-8, Borough Guardian F Loscombe; Q's.17542, 17566-72, Guardian J Lywood; Appendix 5, Andover assistant overseer Thorne, to the PLC, 6 January 1845.
241. Commons, (1846), Q's.17744-8, Loscombe; Q's.17272, 17572, Barton Stacey Guardian and vice-chairman, L Lyewood; Appendix 5, Thorne to the PLC, 6 January 1845. Clerk, Fareham, to A'Court, 28 November 1835, PRO. MH.12/10767. C R Dod, *Electoral Facts* 1832-53 (1853, 1972 edition, introduced H J Hanham), pp.3-4. BPP. 'Report of the Poor Law Board on the Laws of Settlement and Removal of the Poor', (1850), Vol.XXVII, pp.82, 89. Andover Union minutes, 10 June 1837 and 29 August 1840, HCRO. PL.3/4/7. Fareham minutes, 6 March 1840, (lengthy interrogation of Mrs Crawte). *The Times*, 18 August 1845.
242. PLC minutes, 3 March 1841: B Voles to PLC, and reply, 18 and 25 June; Twyford parish officers' solicitor to the PLC 10 July, and annotations, and Winchester Clerk to the PLC, 4 October 1839; Portchester parish officers to Chadwick, 12 July 1836, PRO. MH.1/28, pp.65-6: 12/10767; 11168. Titchfield vestry minutes, 5 July 1836, HCRO. 37M73A, PV/2. R Wells, 'Counting riots in eighteenth-century England', *Bulletin of the Society for the Study of Labour History*, 37 (1978), pp.68-72.
243. Commons, (1837), Q's.5983-5, 6082-3, Ford. Commons, (1846), Q's.9390-9426, 9699-9704, 9717-20, 9723-4, labourer Lewis; Q's.9710-6, medical officer Westlake. Vestry minutes: Gravely, 26 March 1840 and 17 November 1853; Amport, 23 September 1848; Shipton Bellinger, 5 November 1887, 6 and 10 May 1888, and 2 May 1891, HCRO. 32M76A, PV/2: 43M67, PV/2: 22M76A, PV/2.
244. BPP. 'On the Continuation of the PLC and Some Further Amendments of the Laws relating to the Relief of the Poor', (1840), Vol. XVII, pp.58-9; 'PLC Seventh Annual Report', (1841), Vol.XI, pp.25-6; 'PLC Eighth Annual Report', (1842), Vol.XIX, p.25.
245. Wells, 'Resistance . . .', pp.123-4. Cf. Digby, *op cit.*, p.79.
246. BPP. 'Tenth Annual Report of the PLC', (1844), Vol.XIV, p.16; 'Twelfth Annual Report of the PLC', (1846), Vol.XIX, p.19. Andover Union minutes, 8 February 1836 and 9 November 1839, HCRO. PL.3/4/7.
247. Droxford minutes, 31 October 1837. BPP. 'Seventh Annual Report . . .', p.25.
248. Some grandees stipulated maximum rentals farming tenants could charge

- when sub-letting cottages and gardens to labourers. Parish Assessment Act, 6&7 William IV, Cap.96. J V Beckett, *Local Taxation. National Legislation and the Problems of Enforcement* (1980), pp.34-5, 37. BPP. 'Small Tenements . . .', Q's.2506, 2530-3, Benham; Q's.2425, 2462, J Church of Reading; Q.2469, J Vines, near Wokingham. BPP. 'Laws of Settlement . . .', p.89. Commons, (1837), Q's.6645-52, 6670-4, 6679, Wooldridge. Droxford minutes, 21 April 1837. Fareham minutes, 8 June and 30 November 1838. *Sherborne Journal*, 20 December 1838.
249. The paucity of vestry minutes obscures the full situation, but the Board's minutes give no hint of serious difficulties. Fareham minutes, 8 and 22 December 1837, 5, 12 and 26 January, 2 February and 6 April 1838.
250. E J Evans, *The Contentious Tithe. The Tithe Problem and English Agriculture 1750-1850* (1976), esp. pp.141-3, 150-3, though Scrope's Act goes unmentioned. Andover Union minutes, 20 April and 27 July 1839, and 18 January 1840, HCRO. PL.3/4/7.
251. Commons, (1837), Q's.6671-8, Wooldridge. Droxford minutes, 30 January and 3 April 1838, and 19 February 1839.
252. Droxford minutes, 16 January and 18 September 1838, and 18 February 1840; out-letter book, Clerk to PLC, 18 January 1838. Vestry minutes, Droxford, 2 November; Hambledon, 20 October, 8 and 17 November, and 14 December 1837, 9 and 16 February 1838, 28 February 1841, 10 and 30 June 1842, HCRO. PL.3/7/72: 46M69, PV/1: 66M76A, PV/3.
253. Droxford minutes, 21 November and 5 December 1837, 12 June 1838, 12 February, 6 August, 8 October, 12 and 19 November, 10 and 17 December 1839, 18 and 25 February, and 31 March 1840. Bishops Waltham vestry minutes, 1 and 15 December 1837, 5 and 26 January 1838, 19 October, 2, 15, 19 and 26 November 1839, 25 March and 2 April 1840, HCRO. 30M77A, PV/2.
254. Clerk, Winchester Union to A'Court, and A'Court to the PLC, 1 and 2 November 1839, PRO. MH.12/11168. Droxford minutes, 17 and 24 October, 7 and 28 November, and 5 December 1837, 2, 9 and 23 January, 6, 13 and 20 February, 6 and 20 March, 19 June and 28 August 1838, 9 July and 12 November 1839. *Hampshire Telegraph*, 20 July 1839.
255. The PLC was relatively relaxed over extra vegetables, including potatoes in workhouse dietaries, but not meat. Droxford minutes, 17 October, 14 and 21 November 1837, and 20 March 1838. Droxford Clerk to Chadwick, 31 May 1837, and annotation; Hawley to Lefevre, and quarterly report, 21 March and 30 June 1838; Clerk, Winchester Union to the PLC, 1 April 1839, PRO. MH.12/10751; 11168: 32/39. Commons, (1846), Q.13806, Nicholls; Q.13808, Guardian Thorpe of Bromley.
256. Droxford minutes, 2, 23 and 30 January, 6 February, 6 and 27 March, 3 and 24 April, 11 and 29 May, 10 and 17 July 1838, 8 January, 26 February, 12 March and 9 July 1839, and 7 February 1840. Fareham minutes, 10 and 17 August, 7, 14 and 21 September, and 5 October 1838. A'Court to Lefevre, 17 January 1837, PRO. MH.32/4.
257. Droxford minutes, 24 October 1837, 30 January and 11 September 1838, 2 and 30 April, 19 and 26 November 1839, and 3 March 1840. Clerk to

- Droxford Petty Sessions. 4 April 1839, HCRO. PL.3/7/72. Cf. Henriques, *op cit.*, p.55
258. This and the following paragraph are based on: Butler to A'Court, and reply, 26 and 27 February; A'Court to Lefevre, 20 March, and the PLC, 14 March and 17 April, and various annotations: depositions, Harrison, porter and schoolmistress Evans, taken by A'Court, 14 March; copy, extract A'Court's diary, 5 January 1839, PRO. MH.12/10752: 32/4. Droxford minutes, 12 February, 5, 12 and 19 March, 2 and 9 April and 2 July. Clerk to Gale, 12 March 1839, HCRO. PL.3/7/72. *The Times*, 16 and 18 July 1839. *Hampshire Independent*, and *Hampshire Telegraph*, 20 and 31 July 1839. *Portsmouth, Portsea and Gosport Herald*, 20 July 1839.
259. This also reflected the PLC's recently introduced policy, and the Board typically killed two birds with one stone through the appointment of a permanently disabled man. Fareham minutes, 22 January and 5 February 1836, 28 April and 22 September 1837, 2 February 1838 and 6 March 1840. Hawley to Lefevre, 28 February 1838, and Clerk to the PLC, 14 March 1840, PRO. MH.12/10768: 32/39. BPP. 'Fifth Annual Report . . .', pp.13-4.
260. Fareham minutes, 2 and 23 February, 9 March and 18 May 1838, and 6 March 1840. Fareham Petty Sessions minutes, 7 February, 21 March, 25 April and 6 May 1838, 6 and 30 March, and 6 May 1840, 19 May 1841 and 9 March 1842, HCRO. 27M78, XP/1.
261. Clerk, and A'Court, to the PLC, 29 May and 1 June; PLC to Clerk, draft 2 June: copies in A'Court's hand of depositions of inmates, Juliette Fudge (aged 55), E Chiddle (17) and her mother (not an inmate and age unknown), Mary Marshall (13), Mary Williams (13), and Sarah Wilkins (16), 1 June; A'Court's quarterly report, 30 June 1840, PRO. MH.12/10768: 32/4. Fareham minutes, 18 May 1838, 29 May, 1 June and 3 July 1840. *Hampshire Independent*, 6 July 1840.
262. Andover Union minutes, 16 December 1837, HCRO. PL.3/4/7. Clerk to the PLC, and draft reply, 18 and 22 December 1837, PRO. MH.12/10661.
263. Fareham minutes, 15 December 1837, 15 June 1838 and 11 December 1840. Droxford minutes, 18 December 1839 and 11 December 1840. Hawley's annual report, 30 June 1838: A'Court to the PLC, 7 February 1841: petition by 36 inmates, Eastry Union workhouse, n.d., enclosed by Clerk to the PLC, and draft reply, 19 and 21 December 1839, PRO. MH.12/4992; 10768: 32/39. Andover Union minutes, 10 December 1840: Bishops Waltham vestry minutes, 3 January 1839, HCRO. PL.3/4/7: 30M77, PV/2. Commons, (1846), Q.1043, Mundy. *Kent Herald*, 20 December 1838. *The Times*, 8 September 1845.
264. Fareham minutes, 2 November 1838, 11 January and 19 April 1839. A'Court's quarterly reports, 31 December 1837 and 31 December 1838, and to Lefevre, 17 February and 30 June 1839, PRO. MH.32/4.
265. Droxford minutes, 31 October and 7 November 1837.
266. Englander, *op cit.*, pp.84-7. D R Green, *From Artisans to Paupers. Economic Change and Poverty in London, 1790-1870* (1995), p.210.
267. Wells, *Poor-law reform . . .*, esp. pp.80-9.

268. Lockhart, cited Foster, *Politics of County Power* . . . , p.72. Commons, (1846), Q's.9812-4, 9817, labourer Lewis.
269. Wells, 'Social protest . . .', pp.137-9.
270. See for example the venues recorded in Burwash select vestry minutes, 1819-33, East Sussex CRO. Par.284/12/1.
271. Hawley to Nicholls, 18 July 1835, annual and quarterly reports, 16 June 1836 and 1 January, and to the PLC 5 May 1838: assistant Tufnell's annual report, 28 June 1838, PRO. MH.32/38; 39; 70. Wells, 'Social protest . . .', pp.143-4.
272. I hope to shortly publish a study revisiting the Andover scandal which needs to be firmly located within its Board's administrative trajectory since foundation, and the local (namely the parliamentary borough) and national political contexts.
273. Fareham Petty Sessions minutes, 7 February, 21 March and 8 August 1838, 9 October 1839, 6 and 30 March, 6 May and 23 December 1840, 19 May, 2 June and 6 August 1841, 26 January, 9 and 23 March, 27 April, 8 June, 27 July and 12 October 1842, HCRO. 27M78, XP/1. Fareham minutes, 6 March 1840.
274. BPP. 'PLC Thirteenth Annual Report', (1847), Vol.XXVIII, pp.5-7.
275. Commons, (1846), Q.21355, Stockbridge medical officer Fox.
276. The best account remains, *Finer, op cit.*, book 6, Chs. 2 and 3.
277. Mosley, *op cit.*, *passim*. Wells, 'Resistance . . .', pp.122-3.
278. D Foster, *Urban Politics in Victorian England* (1976), esp. Ch.3. Cf. P Wood, 'Finance and the urban poor law: Sunderland Union, 1836-1914', in M E Rose (ed.), *The Poor and the City: the English Poor-Law in its Urban Context 1834-1914* (Leicester, 1985), pp.28-9.

APPENDIX

Hampshire Witnesses (and one aspirant) appearing before the Commons Select Committee on the Poor Law Amendment Act, 10 April to 10 May 1837.

In alphabetical order, with dates of appearance(s), followed by overall question numbers, and date(s) of hearing, except for Peter Lovekin.

At the end of each entry, the precise question numbers for these details from the witnesses are given, together with the identity of other witnesses in parenthesis where they provided further information. Where applicable, other sources of information are provided. Unless stated otherwise, biographical details given are the individual's own in 1837.

A'Court, Colonel Charles Ash, Q's.8714-8917, 8918-9097, 3 and 5 May.

Assistant Poor Law Commissioner, a Wiltshire magistrate and deputy lieutenant; younger brother of Lord Haytesbury. One of the first batch of assistants appointed in October 1834. Professor Brundage describes

him as the 'chronic complainer of the corps' and if he more frequently privately articulated his exhaustion to Commissioner Lefevre in what was a very difficult job, requiring constant journeying across their jurisdictions, over oft-appalling roads, like that of ten miles, linking Faccombe to Kingsclere 'little better than a bridle path' over 'a very rugged and difficult Country'. He also volunteered to give up his clerk as an economy measure. More importantly, he was neither 'timid' nor 'timorous', as Brundage asserts; and nor was A'Court envious of the publicity gained by his colleague Major Head for his rumbustious account of his work in East Kent in the *Quarterly Review*, which proved extremely counter-productive, in the eyes of his successor, E C Tufnell, who inherited a tranche of difficulties caused by the self-opinionated Head's rushed decisions. Brundage, *The Making . . .*, *op cit.*, pp.82-3, 87-8, 99-100, 164. PLC minutes, 2 December; A'Court to Lefevre, 15 January and 20 May, and the PLC, 11 May 1835; Tufnell quarterly report, 24 February, and to Lefevre, 26 and 27 January, 21 February, 7 March, 24 April, and 8 October 1836, MH.1/4 (unpaginated):12/10751: 32/2; 69.

Bourne, Thomas, Q's.4324-4991; 14 April.

Former marine; master of Titchfield parish workhouse 1833 to 1836 and wife matron, when successful candidates for the governorship of the new Fareham Union workhouse; as Titchfield was embraced by the new Union, they were essentially internal candidates, and Thomas's was a common trajectory.

Q's.4324, 4467-70, 4496-9.

Brock, Revd. William, Q's.6177-6355, 7115-7590, 21 and 26 April.

Rector of Bishops Waltham since c.1833; regular visitor to the local workhouse. According to the cantankerous Lovekin, his reverence was a 'a disagreeable malicious man . . . much disliked by his parishioners', whose 'very sermons . . . have a conspiratorial tendency'. Anon., but P Lovekin to Sir James Graham, 7 May 1837, PRO.MH.12/10751.

Q's.6177-9.

Bulbeck, John, Q's.9650-10057, 8 May

Born Hambledon c.1791, and joined his father's ('a mere *Cow Leach*' according to an enemy) long-established practice, in c.1819, and they were jointly contracted doctors to Hambledon and Droxford (where John moved in 1831) under the Old Poor Law. In John's own words most clients were among the 'second and lower classes of society'. In the autumn of 1834, John wrote a number of ingratiating letters to the PLC, praising the new Act, but emphasising local levels of under- and unemployment, dreadful living accommodation for labourers and their families, and diets 'derogatory . . . to Englishmen', while castigating the attitudes of big farmers and landlords. Privately at least, he was hostile to

grander farmers, and he asserted his strong belief in allotment provision. With his father they 'conjointly' secured the medical district embracing both parishes (and Soberton) from the new Union in June 1835, with John doing much of the work, but were undercut by a rival when the Board adopted tendering in March 1837. He later rejoined the Droxford Union medical establishment, another example of his self-serving hypocrisy.

Q's.9650-4, 9718-9, 9902, 9996, 10044. Stares' thought that John was rather younger than he was. [Q's.5312, 5316, 5320, Butler; Q's.8273, 8275. 8292-3, 8299, Stares.] John Bulbeck to the PLC, 9 and 22 October 1834, 26 March and 6 September 1836: P Lovekin to Sir James Graham, 7 May 1837, PRO. MH.12/10751.

Butler, Mrs Stephen, Q's.9330-50, 8 May, interviewed privately by the chairman and John Walter, and her evidence was read to the committee.

Butler, Revd. Stephen, Q's.4992-5004, 5005-5289, 5290-5694, 8006-95, 14, 17 and 19 April, and 1 May.

Curate of Soberton, a wholly agricultural parish, since c.1826; son of Revd. Thomas, Rector of Hambledon, and Chairman of Droxford Petty Sessions. Stephen, born in London, had lived all life bar eighteen months in the district. Before 1835 he attended major farmers at the workhouse on outdoor relief pay-day to consult with the overseers, and Butler had on occasion intervened against those he knew were misrepresenting their circumstances, occurring odium when such payments were stopped. On the implementation of the New Poor Law, Butler rented nine acres from Edward Wyatt (see below) of Bishops Waltham, for sub-letting as allotments to Soberton labourers, despite most farmers' opposition. He made representations in person to the Droxford Board including over Soberton workhouse diets, but it was shortly closed by the Union, and he later learned that his intervention was regarded by Guardians as 'improper . . . interfere[nce]'. Thereafter, like many incumbents, he gave small sums to some of the needy.

Q's.4992-4, 4998-9, 5062, 5066-8, 5071-2, 5126, 5134, 5148-95160, 5245, 5267-9, 5272, 5340, 5354-6, 5368-75, 5421-3, 5431, 5506, 5533-6, 5563

A'Court to the PLC, 14 March 1835, PRO. MH.12/10751.

Cockerton, Revd. James, Q's.9351-9649, 8 May.

Curate Shenley, Buckinghamshire, c.1826-32, when became curate of West Meon. Pro-New Poor Law, and with a record of much-resented intrusion into his plebeian parishioners' domestic economies, in both villages. Encouraged farmers to let permanent labourers have potato patches, though ignorant about yields.

Q's.9351-5, 9359-62, 9399-9404, 9408-27 (esp.9410), 9437, 9449-50, 9483, 9491, 9596-7.

Dewdney, Revd. Edmund, Q's.100274-10404, 10 May.

Anglican; perpetual curate of St John's Chapel at Portsea. Chaired the Portsea Island Poor Law Union from its 1836 provisional creation (prior to proposed incorporation with Portsmouth), aiming, in his own words to 'oppose oppression' notably 'the most awfully wicked' bastardy clauses of the 1834 Act, and to 'denounce and thwart [the PLC's] measures and maxims which . . . are an outrageous violation of the word of God'. Under him the Board was 'not only opposed' to A'Court's propositions, but 'to the new Poor Law generally'. Did not seek re-election to the Portsea Board in March 1837, when a more co-operative membership was elected, though he continued his anti-New Poor Law activities into the 1840s.

Q's.10274, 10284, 10373, 10403-4. Copy, Portsea Island Board's inaugural minutes, 19 July 1836; A'Court to Lefevre, 30 March: Hawley to the PLC, 12 July 1837, PRO. MH.32/4: 12/10916. *Portsmouth, Portsea and Gosport Free Press*, 4 April 1839.

Ford, Richard, Q's.5930-6083, 19 April.

Agricultural labourer, Warnford, aged 30; married the mother of two illegitimate children; in 1837, six children under 12; youngest seven months. Went looking for work at Basingstoke on railway construction in late 1837. Wife died in 1840, when he agreed for three of those he fathered to be put in the workhouse, where they stayed for some months. Q's.5930-9. Droxford minutes, 21 and 28 November 1837 and 16 June 1840.

Goldsmith, James, Q's.8360-8713, 3 May.

Medium-sized tenant farmer, Soberton, since 1826, who had served as overseer, highway surveyor and churchwarden. Guardian since March 1836, but after re-election in 1839, refused to serve.

Q's.8360-8, 8501. Goldsmith to parish officers, 17 April 1839, PRO. MH.12/10752.

Harrison, William, Q's.3774-4312, 6084-6176, 6316-43; 10 and 21 April.

Presently governor Bishops Waltham workhouse, and from October he and his wife became master and matron of the new Union workhouse erected at Droxford, respectively salaried at £40 and £20. In the early 1820s he had been some sort of agent for Sir James M'Donald at Bramshott (Hampshire), and supplemented his income as that parish's paid post of Guardian in the Headley Gilbert Union, for which he was also treasurer. On M'Donald's death he became the governor of the nearby Selborne workhouse, and doubled up as assistant-overseer. He was the 'old

Harrison' whose bedroom was targeted by nocturnal gunmen the night before that house was sacked by Swing rioters in 1830. On 2 February 1832 he secured an identical twin office at Hambledon, on a salary of £50, and was confirmed by the Bench in accordance with the Select Vestry Act which that parish had adopted. He initially retained the governorship when the assistant overseership was made redundant by the appointment of relieving officers for the Droxford Union; he was also given a supervisory brief over the other Droxford houses retained after the Union was formed, and as a 'very old servant' moved to Bishops Waltham in October 1836 on the closure of Hambledon workhouse. A 'clever man' who kept 'good order', 'firm and decisive' with a 'great command of temper', in the private opinion of the younger Bulbeck in his obsequious stage, but like most of Harrison's ilk, he perennially used obscene language and resorted to physical violence too. On the other hand, both assistant overseerships and workhouse governorships were amongst the toughest occupations.

Q's.3774, 3925, 3968-9, 4003-9, 4014, 4016, 4018, 4020-8, 4227-30, 4248-50, 4277, 4310, 6158, 6170. Bulbeck, and Clerk, Droxford, to the PLC, 3 November 1834, and 25 October 1837, PRO. MH.12/10751. Chambers, *op cit.*, pp.35, 42. Hambledon select vestry minutes, 2 February 1832, HCRO. 46M69, PV/1. *The Times*, 16 July 1839.

Hayden, Thomas, Q's.10409-10689, 10 May.

Appointed in March 1836, and in 1837 the remaining Droxford relieving officer. Aged 23, former baker - a notoriously low-waged trade, working largely at night - and now earning an £85 salary.

Q's.10409-14, 10486, 10685. [Droxford minutes, 4 March 1836].

Lovekin, Peter, aspirant witness.

Purchased substantial properties in Bishops Waltham and Droxford, including Manor Farm, where he came to live in 1835. The first of a number of letters to the PLC reported correctly that one of the relieving officers had defaulted, complained that property ratings were unfair, and questioned Union contracts with tradesmen. He received only courteous thanks for this information. A son, Louis James became one of the Union's medical officers in 1836. In early May 1837, while the select committee was engaged with the Hampshire witnesses, Peter wrote anonymously to one leading member, Sir James Graham, denouncing New Poor-Law opponents in general and the local clergy in particular, both Bulbecks (who were also his son's rivals), who 'conspired together to agitate the labourers'; he also denounced the younger Butler's legitimisation of the poor's resort to theft in his evidence, and added that his reverence's father as a magistrate would be reluctant to charge those accused of offences. Nor did Lovekin spare the Guardians, including

Stares, whom he accused of using surrogates to secure Union contracts, made nepotistic appointments, including the Union's Clerk and Treasurer, surreptitiously got roadworkers to labour on their land, exclaiming that 'though farmers they are cunning and crafty', with the real object of 'plunder[ing] the ratepayers pockets'. Despite the letter's anonymity, it appears to have constituted a bid to give evidence; within days of its despatch he managed to secure an audience with the full Commission at Somerset House where he delivered a 'violent and diffusive tirade', and if that was unfortunately un-minuted, the assistant commissioner unluckily directed for purely pragmatic reasons to follow up his accusations, noted that he was 'one of those persons who will talk for more than an hour than most others in a month', delivering a 'near . . . two hours harangue' during which Lovekin reiterated all his serious charges against the Guardians' probity, only to end by withdrawing the lot. In fact he seems to have been as neurotic as he was cantankerous, stressing at extraordinary length 'the bad character and evil disposed' and very volatile 'people living on the Forest . . . the Waltham Blacks well known of old hence the riots and mobbing of 3 or 4 years since'. During the fractious revaluation at Droxford in 1837, he briefly emerged as a leading player, though he was easily outmanoeuvred by a majority led by R H Stares, yet remained cussed to the end even when signing the minutes of a meeting Lovekin chaired, 'reserving himself the right of appeal against the Manor Farm Assessment'; this confirmed his fellow substantial ratepayers' belief that he was 'a very dangerous & troublesome meddler', and they excluded him from participating in the vestry. In 1847, after his death or departure, the rating on his successor at Manor Farm was significantly reduced after an unanimous vote of the parish officers, a rather fitting finale to Lovekin's aspirations.

Lovekin to the PLC, 26 March 1836 and to Graham, 7 May 1837; L J Lovekin to H Wooldridge, 5 March, and Hawley to Lefevre, 30 May 1837, PRO. MH.12/10751: 32/39. Droxford vestry minutes, esp. 2 November 1837 and 25 March 1847, HCRO. 66M73A, PV/3; 4.

Murphy, John, Q's.9098-9177, 5 May.

Former marine with thirty years service; originally governor of Droxford workhouse, then at Bishop's Waltham for six months, after his predecessor the Privetts, were sacked. According to the medical officer, Murphy kept the place clean and managed it well. Replaced by Harrison, when Hambledon workhouse closed, and currently an inmate.

Q's.9098-9, 9166-8, 9195 [Q's.6094-6, 6338-41, Harrison; Q's.6503, 6517, Smith; Q's.9844-6, Bulbeck].

Smith, Robert, Q's.6344-6586, 24 April.

Surgeon, of Bishops Waltham since c.1828, and previously contracted

to that parish; then had qualified assistant. Union medical officer (1835-6) for district comprising Bishops Waltham, Upham and Durley, and assistant's (unrelated) resignation, hired an unqualified assistant, Hollis, a common practice, and paid him less than his predecessor, though the assistant's role was vital to ensure timeous responses to call-outs. Regularly visited Bishop Waltham workhouse to inspect elderly inmates, and also ordered generous dietary 'extras' for the sick's consumption in their own homes, to the annoyance of the chairman and his deputy, which was aggravated by their belief that he sought to 'swell' his call-outs, and submitted too lengthy reports to boot. On the reduction of the Union's medical establishment from four to three, and once tenders were invited, Smith knew that he would be undercut by a rival if he submitted the £100 he wanted, with the result that the lowest - for £80 - was accepted. Q's.6344-5, 6355-6, 6359-60, 6364-7, 6386, 6395-5, 6417-20, 6422-8, 6442, 6461, 6467, 6497-8, 6551-6.

Stares, Robert Hatch, Q's.7592-7687, 7688-7959, 7960-8005, 8096-8369, 26 and 28 April, and 1 May.

First chairman of the Union. Domiciled in Droxford, where most but not all of his land lay. Owner-occupier of 500 acres since c.1817, part of which was downland, and rented another 300; in 1835, assumed tenancies of three or four run-down farms, including some water meadows, which increased his holdings by 400 acres, and a water-driven corn mill, where he installed a manager. Recurrently overseer of the poor for Droxford between 1817 and 1835, and a parish reformer, reflected in his support for the speedy adoption of the new Select Vestry Act on its passage, and subsequent appointment of an assistant overseer. Also a supporter of church rates, and a keen actor in the revaluation of 1831-2. Commonly chaired the select vestry, including the meeting with A'Court in January 1835, who described him as 'very Zealous & intelligent'. Became parish highway surveyor, in that year, a post he still held in 1845. At first a critic of the New Poor Law, but was soon persuaded of the potential economic and social benefits for his category of major agrarian capitalists ('strikingly beneficial'), though in common with many other substantial farmers an opponent of allotments.

Q's.7592-7, 7635, 7960-2, 8109-12, 8138, 8180-1, 8186, 8340-1. Droxford select vestry minutes, 25 March 1817, 19 May, 14 October and 11 November 1819, 15 and 26 June 1826, 25 March 1828, 25 March 1830, 31 March, 3 April, 9 June and 15 December 1831, 3 January and 3 August 1832, 22 September 1834, 29 January and 2 November 1835, and 26 March 1845, HCRO. 66M76A, PV/3, 4. A'Court to the PLC, 2 June 1835, PRO. MH.12/10613. Chapman and Seelinger, *op cit.*, p.106.

Wild, Benjamin, Q's.5695-5929, 19 April.

Agricultural labourer of Soberton since c.1817, aged 50, ten children, of whom three were dead, and another three in work elsewhere; the rest, eldest 11, youngest five months, at home. Believed that children 'should be made to work . . . as soon as they got able'.

Q's.5695-5705, 5826, 5875-6.

Wilkins, Solomon, Q's.9260-91, 5 May.

Soberton workhouse master until it closed; presently a casual agricultural labourer.

Q's., 9260, 9278-9, 9290-1.

Wooldridge, Henry, Q's.6587-7114, 10405-8, 24 April and 10 May.

Since 1820 of Meonstoke and owner-occupier of 470 acres of which 200 were unenclosed downland. Formerly, long-serving overseer. Allotment provider. Vice-chairman since Union foundation.

Q's.6587-91, 6593-5, 7611, 7065-9.

Wyatt, Edward, Q's.9178-9239, 10058-10273, 5 and 10 May.

Droxford Union Guardian April 1835-March 1838; aged about 40 and domiciled in Bishops Waltham. A very substantial farmer with land and a 'good many cottages' in at least three of that Union's parishes, and more in Nottinghamshire: his second examination reveals a confident New Poor-Law enthusiast, with a firm grip on utilitarian theory, who might have been connected with the famous Old Poor-Law reform movement in Nottinghamshire. Like Butler, he succeeded in preempting Swing, (bar belated receipt of one threatening letter), at Bishops Waltham by orchestrating a wage increase. Unusually, he was an outspoken supporter of allotments, and let lands to others, including Butler, for sub-letting as allotments, before 1835. Like Stares he farmed more intensively from 1835, with notably fodder crops to sustain his increased stock of sheep. He, also like Stares' was a road surveyor, 'if you call that an occupation', though his home parish had united with neighbouring Durley under a rarely-adopted permissive clause in the 1835 Highways Act, and paid a salary of £25; his aim was to take personal control, employing the bare minimum of workers, and thus preventing vestries from circumventing the New Poor Law by giving work to the unemployed on the roads. Originally he wanted to remain overseer of the poor while Guardian, but told that the offices conflicted in some senses, and would not be allowed to, unless no other candidate for the Guardianship came forward. Ironically, unlike most Droxford parishes, Guardian elections at Bishops Waltham were hotly contested, and if the results were close, candidates hostile to the new system lost, and although claims of machinations were made by the latter, on referral these were not upheld by the PLC. Unsurprisingly, given Bishop Wal-

tham's reputation for unruliness, and given his profile, not to mention his wealth, he had his enemies, who were responsible for alleging that misappropriated a considerable volume of parish straw; the Board referred the allegation to the vestry, which concluded that the accusation had 'no foundation . . . according to the evidence here shewn'. He claimed that his neighbour, the Revd. Brock was particularly infuriated by the Union's adoption of the lowest burial fee paid in any parish for pauper funerals, namely four shillings which in some cases was under half the old rate.

On behalf of the Board and his parish, he prosecuted Frederick Allen for non-payment of maintenance (see above, p.179); in the process, Allen was arrested under a warrant issued in Devon rather than Hampshire, and he unsuccessfully sued Wyatt at the Exeter Assizes in 1838. However, Bishops Waltham vestry repeatedly refused to reimburse his costs of £50, and he ceased to be a Guardian, though he remained an active vestryman.

Q's.9178, 9192, 9218-21, 9233-8, 9247-53, 10091, 10093-104, 10154, 10163-8, 10181-5, 10205, 10209, 10211-2, 10254, 10256-60. Hobsbawm and Rudé, *op cit.*, Appendix III, p.15. Letters to the PLC from Wyatt, 24 March 1835, and annotations, John Heath, and Bishop Waltham parish officers, 24 and 30 April, and reply 7 May 1836, PRO. MH.12/10751. Bishop Waltham vestry minutes, 27 April 1827, 31 March and 2 December 1836, 14 August 1840, 26 March 1842, 19 February 1847 and 21 February 1852, HCRO. PL.3/7/72: 30M77, PV/1; 2. Droxford minutes, 5 December 1837, 16 and 30 January, 10 July and 16 September 1838, and 29 October 1839. Chapman and Seelinger, *op cit.*, p.106.